

May 26, 2009

ISF report cards

Last week we received the first ISF report cards, and after 4 months into the process, the results were not good – we observed a 75 percent late rate! Out of about 80 importers we file the ISF for, only 6 had perfect scores, but none of those 6 had over 5 ISF filings! We will be contacting each ISF customer with their individual results.

Please note that ONLY TIMELINESS was graded, which means that late filing is the problem. While we have good reason to believe that there is a programming glitch at Customs causing SOME filings to APPEAR late, we find all too often that we are given the information too late to file the ISF before the 24-hour prior to sailing cut-off. Further, when CBP begins checking the accuracy of the data in the next few months, we anticipate additional problem areas.

We would also like to remind you that you must make a “good faith effort” to file the ISF during the “flexible enforcement period”, which started January 26, and will run until January, 2010. CBP has clearly indicated they will deal harshly with importers that have not made such an effort for at least most of the period. While CBP has not stated they would fine blatant offenders during this period, they have stated that fines are NOT “off the table”. We strongly urge you to develop and refine your ISF processes now. Clearly, the ISF is not as easily accomplished timely and accurately as many had thought.

Please remember also that we need 2 working days to verify and process the ISF before the 24-hour-prior-to-sailing cut-off. This means we need the complete information 3 working days prior to sailing to insure an accurate and timely ISF.

Please contact us with any questions.

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