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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233-0001

FTSR Letter No. 170

To: U.S. Customs Service Headquarters, Customs Management Centers, Port Directors, Foreign Trade Zone Operators, Department of Commerce District Offices, Freight Forwarders, Exporters, Exporting Carriers, Consolidators, and All Others Concerned

From: U.S. Census Bureau (Census Bureau) and
U.S. Customs Service (Customs)

Subject: Discontinuing Acceptance of Facsimile Copies of Shipper's Export Declarations (SEDs)

In October 1996, the Census Bureau and Customs agreed to allow exporting companies the privilege of sending facsimile copies of SEDs to their exporting carriers. This procedure was established to facilitate the movement of the required documentation to the port of export and allow the exporting carrier to meet manifest requirements in a timely manner. We provided specific instructions that would ensure the size, color, and legibility of the facsimile copies.

Recently, we have identified several problems associated with this procedure. The facsimile copies of the SEDs are illegible because we are receiving copies that have been transmitted several times. As a result, our processing cost have increased because of additional resources required to obtain information for these SEDs.

Therefore, effective 90 days after the date of this notice, we will instruct Customs to no longer accept facsimile copies of SEDs. The original SEDs must be forwarded to the exporting carrier prior to exportation and they must be in conformance with the Foreign Trade Statistics Regulations as stated in Section 30.3 and 30.4.

As an alternative to filing paper, we recommend that you pursue electronic filing through the Automated Export System (AES) or AES*Direct*, our free Internet application—you may obtain information on AES on our website, http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www, or contact the Automated Export System Branch, Foreign Trade Division, Census Bureau, on 301-457-3539 for further assistance.

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