



Documents Needed at the U.S.-Mexican Border

COMMERCIAL INVOICE

The Commercial Invoice is needed for all shipments clearing Mexican Customs or U.S. Without a Commercial Invoice, a shipment cannot be cleared through Customs. If the Invoice is in another language other than Spanish, the Freight Forwarder provides a Spanish translation along with the original invoice to Mexican Customs. U.S. Customs also requires an English translation for clearance.

BILL OF LADING

The Bill of Lading is needed to give the shipper and forwarder instructions. It serves as a legal document to show authority to move the shipment.

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS

A Carta de Instrucciones or Letter of Instructions is needed to convey information pertaining to the carrier, forwarder and customs broker being used. This letter should contain contact person address and phone number for all the parties involved. This document should also include information on the ultimate consignee and the originator of the document.

PACKING SLIP

The Packing Slip is used to verify that all packages arrive at destination intact from shipper. It is also used for verifying the amount of packages when the shipment changes hands between shipper, carrier, forwarder, broker and consignee. The packing slip is verified against the invoice to be certain that the amount on the invoice and the customs entry are the same. This is important because any discrepancy will cause problems with Customs. Any overage that is not declared will be confiscated by Customs as contraband.

NAFTA CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

The NAFTA Certificate of Origin is needed in order for merchandise coming from any (or going to any) of the three NAFTA countries to be eligible for preferential duty treatment – free or reduced rates. Without a valid NAFTA Certificate, brokers cannot verify NAFTA eligibility and claim preferential treatment.

INWARD CARGO MANIFEST

When the U.S. Customs broker pre-files the entry through the Border Cargo Selectivity system, an Inward Cargo Manifest is created for the shipment with the entry number printed on it. This document is given to the driver on the Mexican side of the border. He then proceeds to the U.S. Customs Import Lot and presents the manifest to clear Customs. The U.S. Customs system will then clear the shipment and allow it to proceed or send it to intensive examination prior to clearance.



PEDIMENTO (ENTRY)

The Pedimento is the equivalent in Mexico of a U.S. 7501 Entry Summary. This document is filed once the freight has been verified and classified at the freight forwarder's warehouse. The Pedimento is filed and paid to Mexican Customs electronically. Once filed, the merchandise may cross the border and enter Mexican Customs Import Lot. Once it clears primary and secondary inspection, it is released and may proceed.

SHIPPER'S EXPORT DECLARATION

The Shipper's Export Declaration (SED), Form 7525-V, must be filed for all exports or re-exports valued over \$2,500, or as otherwise required by either the US Export Administration Regulations or the US Foreign Trade Statistics Regulations--in other words, for the vast majority of shipments. This is a U.S. Department of Commerce reporting requirement. (It does not however apply to shipments destined for Canada as there is a reciprocal exchange of trade statistics in place.) The SED may be completed by the exporter or its authorized agent (broker, freight forwarder) and is either filed in hard copy at the point of exit or electronically through the U.S. Census Bureau's free, Internet-based AES (Automated Export System) Direct facility.

MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is required when shipping any merchandise that is classified as Hazardous. The MSDS is designed to provide personnel with the proper procedures for handling or working with that substance.

FREIGHT INVOICE

A freight invoice is needed because the cost of the transportation service is an added value to the cost of the merchandise that must be used to calculate the total I.V.A. charge in Mexico.