

available to the importer in advance of arrival at the border. The carrier must utilize barcode technology to expedite the release of the shipment by attaching a unique barcode label, which consists of the carriers Standard Carrier Alpha Code (SCAC) and either a pro bill of lading (BOL) number or a unique transaction (UT) number to each invoice and truck manifest prior to the importation of merchandise. The invoice and the SCAC/BOL or SCAC/UT number is then transmitted to the customs broker, who prepares a Cargo Selectivity entry via an ABI transmission in the Automated Commercial System (ACS) before the merchandise arrives at a FAST designated border site. When the merchandise arrives at the site, the CBP inspector electronically records (scans) the barcode information, which automatically retrieves the entry information from the ACS system. If no examination is needed, the inspector may release the truck from the primary booth; thus, reducing the carrier's wait time and easing congestion at that border crossing.

Eligibility requirements for participation in FAST vary according to the cargo release system option selected. Participation in either FAST-PAPS or the fully electronic cargo release version of FAST is subject to the guidelines provided below. In addition, participation in FAST utilizing the fully electronic cargo release system requires an importer to submit an application to CBP containing detailed information on its trading partners and carriers, and other pertinent information, in advance of commencement of shipping of merchandise. Updated and complete application instructions for the fully electronic cargo release method are provided under the *Application for FAST* section below.

FAST Participation Guidelines

Subject to the provisions of the notice of August 21, 1998 (63 FR 44949), all importers, highway carriers, commercial drivers, and some foreign manufacturers participating in either of the two cargo release methods available under the FAST prototype must meet certain guidelines, as summarized below:

Northern and Southern Border Requirements

In order to qualify for expedited processing along the Northern and Southern borders, imported merchandise must be:

- (1) Entered by an importer approved for C-TPAT membership;
- (2) Transported by a carrier approved for C-TPAT membership and approved

under either the U.S./Canada Border Highway Carriers Agreement or the Southern Border Highway Carriers Agreement; and

(3) Driven by a commercial driver registered and approved under either the U.S./Canada FAST Commercial Driver Program or the U.S. FAST Commercial Driver Program.

Southern Border Requirements

FAST processing along the Southern border requires compliance with the eligibility provisions (1)–(3), above, in addition to the following two provisions:

(4) Imported merchandise must have been manufactured by a manufacturer approved for C-TPAT membership;

(5) ISO/PAS 17712 high security seals must be affixed to the trucks, trailers and containers used to carry the goods to the port of arrival.

The C-TPAT is a joint government-business initiative to build cooperative relationships that strengthen overall supply chain and border security for the U.S. Under the FAST prototype, importers must be C-TPAT-approved, importers must utilize only C-TPAT-approved highway carriers participating under either one of the listed highway carriers agreements, and highway carriers must utilize only FAST-registered commercial drivers for FAST processing. Detailed information on C-TPAT approval, the highway carriers agreements, and FAST commercial drivers registration procedures are addressed on the CBP Web site.

For importations along the Southern border only, the foreign manufacturer of the merchandise being processed also must be C-TPAT-approved. The foreign manufacturer must affix ISO/PAS 17712 high security seals (manufactured to International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards from an approved ISO manufacturer) to the trucks, trailers, and containers used to carry the merchandise to the Southern border site. Incoming manifests for expedited Southern border processing must document seal numbers.

CBP will determine the eligibility of the importer, highway carrier, commercial driver, and foreign manufacturer, when applicable, to participate under FAST processing of merchandise. Conveyances not meeting the basic guidelines for FAST participation may be redirected to other non-FAST vehicle lanes or be otherwise delayed in processing at the port of arrival.

For commercial drivers seeking participation in FAST processing along the Southern border, but whom CBP deems ineligible for participation, CBP

plans to issue the applicant a CBP identification card instead, which will grant access to commercial truck facilities along the Southern border.

Application for FAST—Fully Electronic Cargo Release

For ease of reference, this notice provides complete and updated application instructions to importers wishing to participate in the fully electronic version of FAST.

To qualify for FAST processing utilizing the fully electronic cargo release system, importers must meet the FAST participation guidelines discussed above, and must submit an application to the St. Albans, Vermont, Service Port at the address indicated above, with the following information:

A. Importer's name, address, and IRS employer identification number or social security number;

B. Names and addresses of all manufacturers and all sellers/vendors for the electronic FAST prototype;

C. A listing of all the 6-digit HTS numbers under which the imported commodities will be classified;

D. The surety and surety code and the number of the continuous surety bond which will cover all cargo processed under FAST procedures. If the applicant plans to reconcile their FAST entry summaries, a commitment to file the bond rider prior to flagging underlying entry summaries for reconciliation, along with identification of the port in which the continuous bond and rider are filed must be included;

E. Names, addresses, and SCAC's of C-TPAT highway carriers who will be transporting FAST shipments across the international borders;

F. Names, addresses and filer codes of any customs brokers who will be filing data;

G. The approximate total number of entries per month expected to be processed at each of the following locations:

1. Port Huron (Blue Water Bridge), Michigan;
2. Detroit (Ambassador Bridge), Michigan;
3. Blaine, Washington;
4. Buffalo (including the Peace Bridge and Lewiston Bridge), New York;
5. Champlain, New York; and
6. Laredo, Texas.

H. Detailed description of anticipated issues and/or commodities for which the participant anticipates electing reconciliation.

CBP will make admissibility determinations on fully electronic FAST processing of merchandise based on cargo examinations and the information supplied with the application, which