

IMPORTING AND EXPORTING

# SHIPPING TO CANADA NINE STEPS TO CLEARING YOUR GOODS AT THE CANADIAN BORDER

## Importing and Exporting

# Shipping to Canada Nine steps to clearing your goods at the Canadian border

Once your carrier picks up your goods, you may be tempted to sit back and forget about your shipment. But, if problems arise that you need to troubleshoot, you should know the steps your goods go through when being cleared by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Being aware of what's happening with your shipment – and your responsibilities – could save you both time and money if your goods get stuck at the border.

## Nine steps to clearing your goods at the Canadian border

### 1 Customs documentation completed

Before the carrier arrives, complete the necessary documentation for Customs, then double check that it's correct. Since your carrier uses your documentation in the clearance process, it's a good idea to review your documents one last time for any errors or omissions.

A mistake here can have a significant impact on the export process.

### 2 Shipment picked up

The carrier picks up your shipment, assigns a cargo control number (CCN) to the shipment and attaches a CCN barcode label to the paperwork you completed. The carrier will use this CCN and your paperwork to obtain clearance into Canada. You can also use the CCN to help track your shipment as it makes its way through the release process.

### 3 Customs documentation sent to customs broker

Normally, the carrier faxes the documents to your customs broker a minimum of three hours in advance of the truck's arrival at the border. Experienced drivers will send the paperwork and then follow up with a confirmation call to ensure your broker received the fax transmission.

### 4 Paperwork verified by broker

While your carrier transports your shipment to the Canadian port of entry, your customs broker reviews



**Learn the nine stages**  
of clearing goods through  
Canadian Customs.

the paperwork for accuracy and to note any special requirements. If the broker discovers an issue or has questions, they will contact you to obtain the required information.

### 5 Release submitted to CBSA

With the paperwork complete, the broker submits the release to the CBSA for clearance. Any Other Government Department (OGD) requests will also be prepared and submitted at this time. Traditionally, these requests were submitted manually on paper; however, the CBSA now requires that all requests be electronically transmitted. Electronic submissions are more effectively transmitted than hardcopy submissions and more efficiently stored. Nonetheless, it is still important to get these documents completed fully and correctly by the time they are given to your customs broker. If the broker needs to spend time contacting you or your customer to complete or clarify paperwork, it can lead to release delays.

## 6 Shipment arrives at border

Once at the border, the carrier presents your shipment to the CBSA for release and entry into Canada. The CBSA officer will look for the corresponding release request submitted earlier by your customs broker. At this point, the officer can release the shipment or refer it for inspection (also known as “sending it to secondary”).

Normally, provided the release request is in order, the shipment will be cleared for entry into Canada. However, if the release request isn't in the CBSA's computer system (for instance, if the release request wasn't submitted or was submitted late), a CBSA officer will send the carrier to the importer's customs broker to have the issue resolved.

## 7 CBSA releases shipment into Canada

The CBSA releases your shipment and your carrier continues the delivery process. Your shipment is now on its way to your customer in Canada.

## 8 Broker accounts for shipment

Your customs broker completes the accounting on your shipment and sends a package to the CBSA to pay the duties and taxes. If you want to take advantage of preferential tariff treatment (and you qualify), you must also include a completed North American Free Trade Agreement

(NAFTA) Certificate of Origin with the accounting package. Keep in mind that just one error on a NAFTA certificate can change your customer's costs to purchase from you.

## 9 Broker completes B3 form

Once the broker has completed the accounting entry (also called a B3), they electronically transmit the accounting entry to the CBSA within one hour of receiving the fax documents from the carrier/shipper. Note that if additional documents such as import permits are required, this process will take longer

At this point, your goods have legally entered into Canada and are free to be shipped to your importer.

## Contact Livingston

**Have questions or need help with your shipments?** Contact your account executive, write to us at: [simplify@livingstonintl.com](mailto:simplify@livingstonintl.com) or give us a call at **1-800-837-1063**

