

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Section 236 of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-573, 98 Stat. 2992), as amended (codified at 19 U.S.C. 58b), authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to make Customs services available and charge a fee for the use of such services at certain specified airports and at any other airport, seaport, or other facility designated by the Secretary pursuant to criteria set forth in the statute. The statute further provides that the fee charged thereunder shall be in an amount equal to the expenses incurred by the Secretary in providing the Customs services at the airport, seaport, or other facility, including the salary and expenses of individuals employed by the Secretary to provide the Customs services.

The Commissioner of Customs has designated a number of airports within the United States as "user fee airports" pursuant to the authority set forth in 19 U.S.C. 58b which has been delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury to the Commissioner. Section 122.15 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 122.15) concerns user fee airports and includes a list of designated user fee airports. Although there are no other provisions within the Customs Regulations that deal specifically with user fee airports, each Memorandum of Agreement between the concerned airport authority and Customs, under which each user fee airport is established, sets forth the responsibilities of both Customs and the airport which include an agreement by airport to pay a flat annual fee (established at \$74,905 for Fiscal Year 1997 which ended on September 30, 1997) to cover the salary and benefits costs of one full-time inspector, plus any related costs for travel, transportation, per diem and cost-of-living allowances, and an agreement by Customs to provide 8 hours of service per day, Monday through Friday, for a total of 40 hours. Each Memorandum of Agreement further provides for an increase in the annual fee as may be necessary to reflect any increase in the costs to Customs for providing the services, as required by the statute.

Adjustment of Annual User Fee Airport Fee

Based on a review of the annual fee charged in Fiscal Year 1997 with reference to the actual salaries and expenses for Customs personnel assigned to user fee airports as of April 30, 1997, Customs has determined that the annual fee should be increased to \$78,500 in order to reflect the true costs to Customs in providing Customs

services at user fee airports. The new annual fee is effective October 1, 1997, and will be reflected in quarterly user fee airport billings issued on or after that date.

Dated: October 22, 1997.

Vincette L. Goerl,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Finance.

[FR Doc. 97-28489 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY**Customs Service****Live Entry Requirement for Non-Automated Entry; Comment Request**

AGENCY: U.S. Customs, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting and request for comment.

SUMMARY: In its efforts to redesign the trade compliance process, Customs would like to develop a more efficient way to process non-automated entry and entry summary documents. This notice announces that a public meeting will be in Hearing Room B of the Interstate Commerce Commission Building in Washington, D.C., commencing at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, November 14, 1997. The purpose of this meeting is to (1) discuss a possible change in regulations to require all non-automated entry documents to be filed as entry/entry summaries before the release of merchandise; (2) discuss differing public interpretations of this issue and (3) explore options for clarifying the differing interpretations. Due to limitations on available seating, those planning to attend are requested to notify Customs in advance. Written comments will also be accepted at the hearing and by mail.

DATES: Meeting will take place on November 14, 1997, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Written comments should be received on or before November 30, 1997, to be assured of consideration in the development of any proposed amendment to the current regulations.

ADDRESSES: Meeting will be held in Hearing Room B of the Interstate Commerce Commission Building at 12th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. Written comments regarding this notice should be addressed to Ms. Brenda Brockman, U.S. Customs Service, Room B-102, 1301 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC 20229.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

To attend the hearing, please notify Ms. Tonda Moton at (202) 927-1676.

For operational or policy issues: Ms. Kathryn Dapkins at (202) 927-0333.

For regulatory issues: Ms. Gina Grier at (202) 927-2397.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the Customs Modernization provisions (the Mod Act) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act, which gives Customs the flexibility to tailor its commercial operations to meet its needs and capabilities, Customs has undertaken an effort to redesign the entry process. While the majority of all entry summaries are sent to Customs electronically via the Automated Broker Interface (ABI), the remaining summaries are still submitted as non-automated documents. Customs is currently reconsidering the processing of non-ABI, fully paper entry documents.

Importers currently have the option of filing formal, non-ABI entries by one of the following two methods: (1) The entry (CF 3461) is submitted to Customs to obtain release of the merchandise, and the entry summary (CF 7501) along with payment of duties, fees, and taxes, is submitted within ten business days of the date of the entry (date of release of the merchandise); or (2) the entry/entry summary (generally referred to as a "live" entry), along with payment of duties, fees, and taxes, is submitted to Customs to obtain the combined effect of processing the documents and paying the duties and then obtaining release of the merchandise.

When a non-ABI entry is filed, Customs manually enters data from the entry documents into its automated system. When the entry summary is submitted, Customs again enters data manually, this time from the summary, into its automated system. This process of handling the entry documents twice is inefficient and burdensome. It also hinders Customs ability to perform the enforcement activities which are a part of its mission.

Customs would like to streamline this process by requiring importers who file non-automated entry documents to file them as entry/entry summaries, along with all documentation and estimated duties, fees, and taxes, prior to the release of the merchandise. This type of "live entry" would require only one-time processing by Customs, thereby decreasing the amount of time spent on these non-automated documents and freeing up resources for other work. This one-time processing would allow Customs to more efficiently handle the increase in importations within current resource levels. For importers who file non-automated entry documents, the

two-step process of submitting the CF 3461 to obtain release of goods, and then, within ten business days, submitting the CF 7501 entry summary with payment of duties, fees, and taxes, would be eliminated.

Customs ability to enforce trade laws would also be enhanced if the entry/entry summary were submitted prior to the release of the merchandise. The information on entry summaries tends to be more complete and accurate than that on entries. Having better data up front would make it easier for Customs to pinpoint compliance problems, ensure admissibility, and verify bond sufficiency, as these types of checks are performed manually with non-automated entries.

Customs will hold a public meeting to discuss a possible change in regulations to require all non-automated entry documents to be filed as entry/entry summaries before the release of merchandise. This meeting will begin with a brief description of possible proposals, followed by time for the trade community to ask questions and provide comments. Those wishing to provide verbal comments should so indicate when making seating reservations, and should also submit their comments in writing. Because seating is limited, reservations will be required. Individuals planning to attend are requested to notify Ms. Tonda Moton by fax at (202) 927-1363 or by

phone at (202) 927-1676. Written comments will be considered in the development of any proposed amendment to the current regulations, but will not be responded to individually.

Dated: October 21, 1997.

Charles W. Winwood,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Strategic Trade.

[FR Doc. 97-28491 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Fiscal Service

Treasury Current Value of Funds Rate

AGENCY: Financial Management Service, Fiscal Service, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of rate for use in Federal debt collection and discount evaluation.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 11 of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (31 U.S.C. 3717), the Secretary of the Treasury is responsible for computing and publishing the percentage rate to be used in assessing interest charges for outstanding debts on claims owed the Government. Treasury's Cash Management Regulations (I TFM 6-8000) also prescribe use of this rate by agencies as a comparison point in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a

cash discount. Notice is hereby given that the applicable rate is 5 percent for calendar year 1998.

DATES: The rate will be in effect for the period beginning on January 1, 1998 and ending on December 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Inquiries should be directed to the Program Compliance & Evaluation Division, Financial Management Service, Department of the Treasury, 401 14th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20227 (Telephone: (202) 874-6630).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The rate reflects the current value of funds to the Treasury for use in connection with Federal Cash Management Systems and is based on investment rates set for purposes of Pub. L. 95-147, 91 Stat. 1227. Computed each year by averaging investment rates for the 12-month period ending every September 30 for applicability effective January 1, the rate is subject to quarterly revisions if the annual average, on the moving basis, changes by 2 per centum. The rate in effect for calendar year 1998 reflects the average investment rates for the 12-month period ended September 30, 1997.

Dated: October 23, 1997.

Larry D. Stout,

Assistant Commissioner Federal Finance.

[FR Doc. 97-28533 Filed 10-27-97; 8:45 am]

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