

vehicle is equipped at each front designated seating position with a combination lap and shoulder restraint that adjusts by means of an automatic retractor and releases by means of a single push button. The petitioner further states that the vehicle is equipped with combination lap and shoulder restraints that release by means of a single push button at both rear outboard seating positions, and with a lap belt at the rear center seating position.

Standard No. 301 Fuel System Integrity: installation of a rollover valve in the fuel tank vent line between the fuel tank and the evaporative emissions collection canister.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action on the petition will be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: July 25, 1996.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
[FR Doc. 96-19368 Filed 7-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

[T.D. 96-59]

Dissemination of Information Product and Elimination of Microfiche

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

ACTION: Final notice of new information dissemination.

SUMMARY: On February 22, 1996, the U.S. Customs Service published a document in the Federal Register soliciting comments on providing its rulings, future publications and

additional information in two new formats (CD-ROM and the Internet) with built-in search capabilities and "hypertext" links. In addition, the Customs Service solicited public comments on the elimination of one existing format used to supply rulings to the public by subscription (microfiche). After analysis of the comments received and further consideration, Customs in this document announces a decision not to issue CD-ROMS with a search engine at this time, advises the public that Customs information will be available on the Internet's World Wide Web, effective August 1, 1996, and sets October 1, 1996 as the date for elimination of the microfiche.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For the Internet: Karen Hjelmervik, 202-927-0826.

For the microfiche: Thomas Budnik, 202-482-6909.

For the Public CD-ROM: Stuart P. Seidel, 202-482-6900.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In accordance with OMB Circular A-130 and Section 2 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. 3506(d)), Customs published a document in the Federal Register on February 22, 1996 (61 FR 6892), soliciting comments from the public on (1) the dissemination of Customs information by CD-ROM (Compact Disc-read only memory); (2) dissemination of information on the Internet; and (3) the elimination of microfiche rulings by subscription. A total of 41 comments were received. Comments were received from importers, law firms, accounting firms, Customs brokers, consultants, commercial publishers, several trade organizations and a bar association. Some comments addressed all three issues, while others only commented on one or two of the issues presented. This document summarizes the comments received and the decisions reached as a result of those comments.

CD-ROM

A majority of the comments favored making the information listed in the notice available with a search engine in CD-ROM by subscription. Some of the comments expressed concern over use of a proprietary search engine and suggested that the material be issued in ASCII, WordPerfect or DOS text format as well as, or in lieu of, Folio Views®. This alternative would have made the information available in plain text, which could then be converted into other formats by the users. These

alternative formats could not, however, be linked to other documents. One comment suggested issuance of the CD-ROM in the Apple Macintosh Folio format. Those who favored issuing a CD-ROM believed that it would provide timely information in an easily searchable format, thereby meeting the Customs Modernization Act's authorization for the Secretary to make available in an efficient, comprehensive and timely manner, all information necessary for importers and exporters to comply with the Customs laws and regulations. Several comments were received which opposed making a CD-ROM with a search engine available to the public, because the product would directly compete with commercial CD-ROM publishers who had made considerable financial investments, and because the CD-ROM proposed by Customs would utilize a proprietary format, thereby preventing, or making more difficult, its use by commercial publishers of competing products. In addition to the written comments, representatives of Customs met with representatives of some of the commercial electronic publishers. At this meeting, concerns were expressed over Customs direct competition with commercial products, subscription costs, proprietary formats and publication frequency. Several publishers indicated that Customs proposed CD-ROM could put them out of business.

Internet

Customs also proposed placing its rulings, publications and other information of interest to the public on the Internet with hypertext links and search capability. Over 20 comments were received in favor of this proposal, although two suggested plain text or no search capabilities. Only one comment, based on security concerns was received in opposition to this proposal. Some commenters suggested that the Internet offered a better dissemination capability than the CD-ROM, because it was available to more users and could be updated more frequently.

Microfiche

Of the 16 comments received concerning elimination of the microfiche rulings, eight favored immediate elimination. Several other commenters believed that the microfiche could be eliminated if comparable material were made available in electronic media. Several commenters suggested that Customs prepare a cumulative index of the microfiche ruling numbers and make it available on a closeout microfiche and

electronically, if possible. Some commenters also suggested converting the microfiche rulings to electronic format (CD-ROM or Internet) or at least making older rulings which are cited in new rulings available electronically.

Decisions

The Customs Service agrees that in accordance with the "informed compliance" mandate contained in the legislative history of the Customs Modernization Act (Title VI, Pub. L. 103-182) the broadest dissemination possible should be made of Customs information. However, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and OMB Circular A-130, while encouraging electronic dissemination of public information, require agencies to encourage a diversity of public and private sources for information; not establish restrictive distribution arrangements which interfere with timely and equitable availability of public information; and consider the effect of competition with commercial sources. It appears that there are at least five commercial CD-ROM and printed media publishers who provide Customs rulings, regulations and other material to the importing public. As a result of the comments received, Customs has decided not to make a CD-ROM containing its rulings and other information available to the public at this time. Customs reserves the right to periodically review this decision and monitor the services provided by third party publishers to see if the need for public information is being met by their products.

The Customs Service has decided to go forward with its proposal to make information available on the Internet. Accordingly, on or about August 1, 1996, members of the public may seek access to Customs information by contacting its World Wide Web site at <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>. It is anticipated that the web site offerings will include all the rulings available in electronic format (including all Headquarters Rulings and New York Rulings previously available on diskette), as well as the Customs Regulations, title 19 of the U.S. Code, the Harmonized Tariff Schedules, Informed Compliance publications and the Valuation Encyclopedia. In addition, the web site would include information on Customs organization, importing and exporting, enforcement activities, travel information, career opportunities, and news releases. Finally, the web site will include an index to all rulings previously published on microfiche. All features and capabilities may not be immediately available, but will be

added over the next few months. Customs also invites the public to identify the types of materials it would like to see on the web site in the future. Suggestions may be submitted to Karen Hjelmervik, Room 2146, U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20229.

Finally, the Customs Service has decided to eliminate the microfiche rulings program effective October 1, 1996. However, in order to insure that the public has access to older rulings, Customs will provide a cumulative index to the microfiche rulings on microfiche itself and on the Internet web-site. Customs agrees that when an older ruling is cited in a new ruling, the older ruling should be available to the public and Customs will try whenever possible to scan or otherwise convert such cited rulings to an electronic format, both in the diskette rulings and the Internet. In addition, although no new rulings microfiches will be made, the previously issued microfiches will remain available for purchase for the foreseeable future from the Legal Reference Staff, Office of Regulations and Rulings, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW. (Franklin Court), Washington, DC 20229.

Dated: July 25, 1996.

Stuart P. Seidel,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Regulations and Rulings.

[FR Doc. 96-19423 Filed 7-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

[T.D. 96-58]

Determination of Origin of Textile Goods Processed in Israel

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

ACTION: General statement of policy.

SUMMARY: This document gives notice of Customs interpretation and application of section 334(b)(5), Uruguay Round Agreements Act (Pub. L. 103-465), which became effective July 1, 1996. That section excepts from the rules of origin governing textiles and textile products established in sections 334(b)(1) through 334(b)(4) goods which, under rulings and administrative practices in effect immediately before the enactment of section 334 (December 8, 1994), would have originated in, or been the growth, product, or manufacture of Israel.

Section 334, and its legislative history, require maintaining the status quo ante for goods processed in Israel. Accordingly, if, under the rulings and administrative practices in effect prior

to December 8, 1994, a good would have been the growth, product, or manufacture of Israel, without regard to the applicability of the United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement, it will continue to be the growth, product, or manufacture of Israel. If a good would not have been determined to be the growth, product, or manufacture of Israel under the rulings and administrative practices in effect prior to December 8, 1994, that determination would still apply to goods processed in Israel and entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption on and after July 1, 1996.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1996. This statement of policy shall apply to goods entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption, on and after July 1, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Phil Robins, Office of Regulations and Rulings, U.S. Customs Service, (202) 482-7029.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 8, 1994, the President signed into law the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (Pub. L. 103-465). Section 334 of the Act establishes rules of origin for textiles and textile products. In order to implement section 334, Customs published a notice of proposed rule making (60 FR 27378, dated May 23, 1995), and, after receiving comments thereon, promulgated § 102.21, Customs Regulations (19 CFR 102.21) (60 FR 46188, dated September 5, 1995).

Section 102.21(a) specifically states that the rules in § 102.21 shall not apply "for purposes of determining whether goods originate in Israel or are the growth, product, or manufacture of Israel." The basis for the Israeli exception is section 334(b)(5) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act which states:

This section shall not affect, for purposes of the customs laws and administration of quantitative restrictions, the status of goods that, under rulings and administrative practices in effect immediately before the enactment of this Act, would have originated in, or been the growth, product, or manufacture of, [sic] a country that is a party to an agreement with the United States establishing a free trade area, which entered into force before January 1, 1987. For such purposes, *such rulings and administrative practices that were applied, immediately before the enactment of this Act, to determine the origin of textile and apparel products covered by such agreement shall continue to apply after the enactment of this Act, and on and after the effective date described in subsection (c), unless such*