

Items to Consider When Shipping Internationally: Shipment Preparation

1. Does the shipment need a license to leave the US?

The shipment may require a license from the Commerce Department depending on the following items:

- the shipment
- who will receive it
- in what country
- how they will use it

It is illegal to conduct business with individuals and companies that are blocked by the US Government. The Office of Research Compliance and Assurance conducts restricted parties screening to make this determination.

To determine if the shipment needs a license, start by using the International Shipping Export Review Worksheet (found on the Research Compliance, Export Controls Page) and submit to aswilliams@southalabama.edu. The Office of Research Compliance and Assurance will apply for export licenses or other authorizations required for university exports.

2. Customs in the destination country

Any export from the US will be an import to the destination country. Animals, plants, pathogens, genetic material, drugs, radioactive materials, and electronic devices with encryption may be restricted (by requiring prior approval, quarantine, or inspection) or prohibited outright.

- Determine the destination country's requirements
- Plan to meet the destination country's requirements
- Make sure the shipping paperwork addresses the destination country's requirements.
- To determine the destination country's requirements, the best source for information about what clearances the destination country may require is usually someone in that country (such as the recipient).

3. Shipping Logistics

Packages (up to 150 pounds) and freight (over 150 pounds) can be handled by the international networks of delivery services like FedEx Express International, FedEx Freight International, DHL or UPS.

If you use an international package/freight delivery network, the freight forwarding and customs brokerage roles are bundled into the service. A freight forwarder/customs broker can assemble the right combination of carriers, clearances, and documentation for more complicated shipments. There are some restrictions (for instance, some FedEx services will not handle carnets for temporary import).

The following companies provide international package/freight delivery network service:

- FedEx Express International
- FedEx Freight International
- DHL
- UPS Global Trade

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4. Packaging and labeling

Some items will require special packaging to protect the contents (e.g., biological samples packaged with dry ice). Other items will require special packaging and labeling to protect the transport system (e.g., hazardous biological, chemical, or radioactive materials). If you are shipping biological substances, you must complete the online CITI training module “Shipping and Transport of Regulated Biological Materials”. Additional information can be found [here](#).

5. Documentation

Complete and accurate documentation helps a shipment leave the US legally and enter the destination country smoothly. This is even more important if the item is intended to be a temporary import that will return to the U.S.

A carrier or forwarder/broker can help with documentation, but remember that the shipper of record (referred to as the "Principal Party in Interest" or PPI) is responsible for what the documentation says, that the carrier or forwarder may not have the familiarity with the item that is being shipped to determine the correct export control classification or tariff code, and that errors can lead to delays, expense, or legal issues. It will be necessary to provide the shipment address, item descriptions (including export classification, tariff code, and value), and the purpose of the shipment, export control authorization, and declaration control statement.

International documentation: a commercial invoice (for sales) or pro forma invoice (for shipments not related to a sale, but containing essentially the same information) is the central document that typically accompanies an international shipment.

US government documentation is required through an Electronic Export Information (EEI) filing to the Automated Export System (AES) if certain criteria are met, including:

1. **If** an export license is required
2. **If** the Strategic Trade Authorization (STA) license exception is being used
4. **If** the value is over \$2,500 under a single tariff code (Schedule B or Harmonized Tariff Schedule)

The key elements of a typical commercial invoice, pro forma invoice, or EEI (AES) filing are listed below:

- Date
- Sender
- Recipient
- Destination port of entry (*not required for EEI*)
- Waybill number (*not required for EEI*)
- Item description
 - Example, do not indicate “Cells”-indicate the type of cells
 - Example Incorrect: cells. Correct: – human liver cells
- Item quantity (accurate number of each piece shipping)
- Item country of origin (*not required for EEI*)
- Item value
- Item tariff code (Schedule B or Harmonized Tariff Schedule)

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- Export Control Authority (*not required for commercial or pro forma invoice*) for EEI: license, exception, or NLR; ECCN may be required
- Destination control statement (DCS) for all items except EAR99. According to 15 CFR 758.6: At a minimum the DCS must state, *“These commodities, technology, or software were exported from the United States in accordance with the Export Administration Regulations. Diversion contrary to U.S. law is prohibited”*.
- Shipper representation of compliance (*not required for commercial or pro forma invoice*)
- When no EEI is required, the following statement needs to be noted on the invoice: *“No EEI required - no individual Schedule B number valued over \$2,500”*

6. Insurance

Generally, items that are university owned should be covered by the university’s insurance. It is recommended to purchase additional insurance provide by the shipping company. If you have questions about insurance, please contact the [Office of Risk Management & Insurance](#) for advice.

7. Temporary Exports

If you are planning a trip or expedition to a foreign country and you are planning a temporary importation of equipment that will be returned to the US in less than one year, you may wish to consider shipping your goods under a US ATA Carnet.

The ATA Carnet can be a very powerful tool to avoid all custom duties by taking advantage of laws protecting temporary imports.

All countries have procedures allowing for the temporary importation of goods across their borders. Such importations are generally valid for up to one year.

Importers may choose from three options when considering a temporary importation:

- ATA Carnet see atacarnet.com
- Temporary Importation under Bond (TIB)
- Duty Drawback

The ATA Carnet provides the best option for university scientists shipping field research equipment internationally. The other options are logistically exhausting and financially prohibitive.

The ATA Carnet was created by international convention thirty years ago. It is an international customs document used worldwide to facilitate temporary imports into member countries. ATA Carnets:

- May be used for unlimited exits from and entries into the U.S.
- Are valid for one year
- Are accepted in over 55 countries
- Eliminate payment of value-added taxes (VAT) and duties
- Simplify customs procedures

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ATA Carnets cover virtually all goods, including ordinary goods such as computers, tools, cameras and video equipment, industrial machinery, automobiles, jewelry, and apparel. Carnets do not cover consumable goods (food and agriculture products), disposable items, or postal traffic.

8. Tax

The shipment will be subject to duty and possibly tax (e.g., VAT) on entering the destination country. Some tariff codes have a 0% rate, and many countries allow duty-free importation for temporary imports.

- Research and estimate duty and VAT if it's a concern
- For temporary exports, get a carnet, plan on posting a temporary import bond, or plan to drawback the import duty when the item is returned.

Resources:

[Export Control International Shipping Guidelines](#)
[International Shipping Export License Review](#)
[Worksheet](#)