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Important Information for CTO Staff regarding Imports

October 2005 brought about a lot of changes within the importing industry. One of these major changes directly affects your clients, specifically those who are importing low-value goods or 'personal effects'.

The major change that affects your clients that fall under this category is the introduction of Self Assessed Clearance declarations (SAC).

Basically a SAC is a Customs clearance for low value goods.

All goods that arrive in to Australia by air or sea freight that have a Customs value at or below the import entry threshold of AUD\$1000, must have a SAC lodged with Customs before the goods can be released from Customs control.

A SAC is NOT used for goods that arrive through the post, carnets (temporary imports) or Unaccompanied Personal Effects (UPE).

What is a SAC declaration?

- A Self Assessed Clearance declaration (SAC) is an electronic declaration that MUST be made to Customs to clear goods through Customs control.
- Goods must be imported by air or sea.
- Goods must have a Customs value at or below AUD\$1000. *This value excludes the transport and insurance costs and is usually the amount for the goods that is stated on the invoice.*

SAC's Cargo Clearances offers an independent service:

- **Australia Wide.**
- **Full importer support.**
- **Average clearance time is 30 minutes.**
- **Clearances can be completed over the phone, fax, via email or in person.**
- **AQIS assistance. AQIS processing if required.**
- **Easy payment options (credit card, cash, EFT)**

Please note that Customs has strict guidelines in place regarding personal effects, and just because 'personal effects' is written on the shipping documents, does not mean the goods will be excepted as 'personal effects'. UPE (B534) Statements are used for 'personal effects' and 'unaccompanied baggage' when the importer has actually traveled overseas.

For example if the importer went to Vietnam on holiday and sent goods back as unaccompanied luggage then they can lodge a B534 with Customs and pay any applicable duty and GST. Alternatively if they brought something over the internet or someone sent them goods from overseas, then they would require a SAC to complete the clearance from Customs control.

Points of Interest

- Airway bills that have a description of '**personal effects' that are considered SACs for clearance purposes**, do not necessarily require an AQIS inspection. The goods are cleared on what the commodity is; for example, 'personal effects' might actually be books, in which case there is no AQIS concern and so no inspection is required.
- All importers who fall in to the SAC category, require a Customs clearance. However, many importers will still pay local charges, organise AQIS processing and collect the goods themselves once their SAC has been lodged with Customs.

SAC's Cargo Clearances is a company that specializes in completing SAC clearances. This is all we do...we are here to assist the one-off importers and low-value commercial importers with getting their goods cleared through Customs control.

At the moment, most of your clients are told to enquire with Customs as to how to organise the clearance of their goods. There is a lot of running in circles by the customer and frustration tends to mount.

Many of the people we deal with are frustrated at the importing process and the amount of loops they need to go through to collect their goods from the CTO. Especially when they are told to contact a Customs Broker to organise their clearance, and several locations or phone calls later they are still no closer to getting the required clearance. Most are not commercial importers and don't understand the ins and outs of the importing process.

We take the hassle out of clearing their goods by organizing their Customs clearance, answering all the questions related to their freight and also offer AQIS assistance (to save on costs, we can assist them step-by-step with AQIS processing or if they are short on time we will organise AQIS processing for them).

Our job is to make sure your clients get their goods as quickly as possible with minimum hassle.