

Are you ready for Single Window Initiative (SWI)?

CBSA is modernizing the import processing and has implemented the Single Window Initiative (SWI).

What is Single Window Initiative (SWI)?

SWI is an initiative under the Beyond the Border Action Plan, where Canada and the United States have each agreed to provide commercial traders with a single window through which they can electronically submit all information required to comply with customs and other government regulations.

With SWI, traders will be able to provide all the required import information electronically to the CBSA. In turn, the CBSA will transmit the information to the appropriate department or agency responsible for regulating the goods. The Other Government departments and agencies (OGD) will assess the information and provide any border-related decisions required. It is supposed to streamline and simplify the import process and will significantly reduce the paper burden on the business community.

There are currently 9 Participating Government Agencies (PGA) that is involved with SWI. Transport Canada (TC), National Resource Canada (NRCAN), Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Health Canada (HC), Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFAIT) and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

How will this affect you (the importer)?

Prior to SWI, not all information required by the OGD was listed in the customs declaration. If further details on the import is required, the OGD agencies would contact the importer of record directly. To make a border clearance decision before import, shipment information required by the Other Government Departments such as licenses, permits, and certificates would need to be validated.

Under the new SWI, all information required by CBSA and PGAs will need to be provided in a single declaration. This customs declaration is the Integrated Customs Declaration (IID) which has many more data fields than the current ACROSS declaration. These additional fields capture information on the imported goods that the regulating PGA need to know. As a result of this additional declaration an ancillary brokerage fee of SWI will apply for each of the agencies involved with your shipment.

How to prepare for SWI?

As an importer, it is important that you understand which Participating Government Agencies (PGAs) are regulating your products. Some products are regulated by multiple PGAs, and the PGA requirement of your product may have changed under SWI. Some products that did not have requirement data submitted at time of clearance may now have to provide these requirement data. This will require additional information from the importers and/or your vendors. Importers will have to provide this new information to the customs brokers prior to customs release. Understanding what information and documentation you require prior to customs clearance will make the clearance process into Canada smoother and more efficient. If you are not sure what PGA regulates your products, Ameri-connect can help you.

For more information please contact your Ameri-connect customs specialists.

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