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The Import Control System (ICS) is an advanced cargo information system designed to enhance the security and efficiency of goods entering the European Union (EU). Its implementation is critical for managing security risks associated with international trade. Definition and Stages of the ICS Program The ICS program is part of the EU's effort to preemptively identify and mitigate risks associated with imported goods. It involves multiple stages, each designed to incrementally enhance the system's capabilities:

1. Stage 1: Initial deployment focusing on high-level data collection from carriers.
2. Stage 2: Expansion to include detailed pre-loading data from all economic operators, enhancing risk assessment capabilities.
3. Stage 3: Full integration of all transport modes and comprehensive data analysis to support real-time risk management.

Current Status We are currently transitioning to Stage 2 of the ICS program. This stage mandates the collection and submission of more detailed cargo information before goods are loaded onto transport modes bound for the EU. This is crucial for enhancing the accuracy and timeliness of risk assessments and ensuring compliance with EU security regulations. Comparative Analysis with US Systems The EU's ICS-2 regime can be compared to the USA's Advance Loading Information systems, such as the Automated Manifest System (AMS) and the Importer Security Filing (ISF):

- AMS and ISF: Implemented years ago in the US, these systems require detailed cargo information prior to loading, facilitating risk assessments by US Customs.

- ICS-2: Similarly, the ICS-2 regime requires advance cargo information submission, focusing on improving data quality and timeliness. However, ICS-2 encompasses a broader scope by integrating multiple filing options and applying to all transport modes, not just maritime.

#### Immediate Requirements for Compliance

1. Data Submission: Economic operators, including shippers, carriers, and freight forwarders, must submit detailed shipment data to the ICS-2 system before loading goods destined for the EU.
2. Data Quality: High-quality, accurate data must be provided, including Harmonized System (HS) codes, consignee and consignor details, and other relevant shipment information.
3. Collaboration: Effective coordination between all parties in the supply chain is essential. This includes shippers, freight forwarders, and carriers to ensure timely and accurate data submission.

#### Action Items

- Training and Awareness: Ensure all relevant personnel are trained on the new requirements and understand the importance of accurate data submission.
- System Updates: Update internal systems and processes to comply with ICS-2 data requirements.
- Collaboration: Establish clear communication channels with partners in the supply chain to facilitate seamless data exchange.

The transition to Stage 2 of the ICS program is a critical step in enhancing the security and efficiency of the EU's import control system. Immediate and full compliance with the new requirements is essential to avoid delays and potential penalties. Should you have any questions or need further guidance, please reach out for assistance.

Click on the button below to view the best practices and lessons learned from the USA implementation of the PLACI regimes years ago.

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