

election was made. Such a written request shall constitute a verification letter under paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section, and the requested cost submission shall be submitted to Customs within 180 calendar days after the close of the producer's fiscal year or within 60 days from the date on which the request was made, whichever is later.

§ 181.73 Notification of verification visit.

(a) *Written notification required.* Prior to conducting a verification visit in Canada or Mexico pursuant to § 181.72(a)(2)(iii) of this part, Customs shall give written notification of the intention to conduct the visit. Such notification shall be delivered:

(1) By certified or registered mail, or by any other method that produces a confirmation of receipt, to the address of the Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer whose premises are to be visited;

(2) To the customs administration of the country in which the visit is to occur; and

(3) If requested by the country in which the visit is to occur, to the embassy of that country located in the United States.

(b) *Contents of notification.* The notification referred to in paragraph (a) of this section shall include:

(1) The identity of the Customs office and officer issuing the notification;

(2) The name of the Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer of the good, or producer of the material, whose premises are to be visited;

(3) The date and place of the proposed verification visit;

(4) The object and scope of the proposed verification visit, including specific reference to the good or material that is the subject of the verification;

(5) The names and titles of the Customs officers performing the proposed verification visit;

(6) The legal authority for the proposed verification visit; and

(7) A request that the Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer of the good, or producer of the material, provide its written consent for the proposed verification visit.

§ 181.74 Verification visit procedures.

(a) *Written consent required.* Prior to conducting a verification visit in Canada or Mexico pursuant to § 181.72(a)(2)(iii) of this part, Customs shall obtain the written consent of the Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer of the good or producer of the material whose premises are to be visited.

(b) *Written consent procedures.* The written consent provided for in paragraph (a) of this section shall be delivered by certified or registered mail, or by any other method that generates a reliable receipt, to the Customs officer who gave the notification provided for in § 181.73 of this part.

(c) *Failure to provide written consent or to cooperate or to maintain records.* Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (d) of this section, where a Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer of a good, or a Canadian or Mexican producer of a material, has not given its written consent to a proposed verification visit within 30 calendar days of receipt of notification pursuant to § 181.73 of this part, Customs may deny preferential tariff treatment to that good, or for purposes of determining whether a good is an originating good may consider as non-originating that material, that would have been the subject of the visit, provided that, as regards the good, notice of intent to deny such treatment is given to that exporter or producer of the good and to the U.S. importer thereof prior to taking such action. A failure on the part of the Canadian or Mexican exporter or producer of a good, or on the part of the Canadian or Mexican producer of a material, to maintain records or provide access to such records or otherwise cooperate during the verification visit shall mean that the verification visit never took place and may be treated by Customs in the same manner as a failure to give written consent to a verification visit. However, in the case of a Canadian or Mexican producer of a good who is found during a verification visit to have not maintained records in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles applied in the producer's country, Customs may deny preferential tariff treatment on the

good based solely on a failure to so maintain those records only if the producer does not conform the records to those Principles within 60 calendar days after Customs informs the producer in writing of that failure.

(d) *Postponement of visit in Canada or Mexico.* Following receipt of the notification provided for in §181.73 of this part, the Canadian or Mexican customs administration may, within 15 calendar days of receipt of the notification, postpone the proposed verification visit for a period not exceeding 60 calendar days from the date of such receipt by providing written notice of the postponement to the Customs officer who issued the notification of the verification visit, unless a longer period is requested and agreed to by Customs. Such a postponement shall not constitute a failure to provide written consent within the meaning of paragraph (c) of this section and shall not otherwise by itself constitute a valid basis upon which Customs may:

(1) Consider a material that is used in the production of a good to be a non-originating material; or

(2) Deny preferential tariff treatment to a good.

(e) *Verification visits within the United States—(1) Notification and consent procedure.* When the Canadian or Mexican customs administration intends to conduct a verification visit in the United States, notification of such intent will be given, and consent will be required, as provided for under Article 506 of the NAFTA. For purposes of the required notification to Customs, such notification shall be sent to Project North Star Coordination Center, P.O. Box 400, Buffalo, New York 14225-0400.

(2) *Postponement of visit.* Following receipt of notification from the Canadian or Mexican customs administration of its intention to conduct a verification visit in the United States, Customs may, within 15 calendar days of receipt of the notification, postpone the proposed verification visit for a period not exceeding 60 calendar days from the date of such receipt by providing written notice of the postponement to the Canadian or Mexican customs administration.

(3) *Designation of observers.* A U.S. exporter or producer, including a pro-

ducer of a material, whose good or material is the subject of a verification visit by the Canadian or Mexican customs administration shall be allowed to designate two observers to be present during the visit, subject to the following conditions:

(i) The U.S. exporter or producer shall not be required to designate observers;

(ii) There shall be no restriction on the class of persons that may be designated as observers by the U.S. exporter or producer;

(iii) The observers to be present are designated in the written consent to the proposed visit or subsequent thereto;

(iv) The observers do not participate in the verification visit in a manner other than as passive observers;

(v) The presence of observers shall in no way affect the right to have legal counsel or other advisors present during the visit;

(vi) There shall be no obligation on the part of the United States government or on the part of the Canadian or Mexican government to designate observers from its staff, even when the U.S. exporter or producer fails to, or specifically declines to, designate observers; and

(vii) The failure of the U.S. exporter or producer to designate observers shall not result in the postponement of the visit.

§ 181.75 Issuance of origin determination.

(a) *General.* Except in the case of a pattern of conduct within the meaning of §181.76(c) of this part, following receipt and analysis of the results of an origin verification initiated under §181.72(a) of this part in regard to a good imported into the United States and prior to denying preferential tariff treatment on the import transaction which gave rise to the origin verification, Customs shall provide the exporter or producer whose good is the subject of the verification with a written determination of whether the good qualifies as an originating good. Subject to paragraph (b) of this section, the written origin determination shall be sent within 60 calendar days after conclusion of the origin verification