

**§4.14 Foreign equipment purchases by, and repairs to, American vessels.**

(a) *Dutiability of foreign repairs and equipment purchases*—(1) *Items subject to duty.* The equipment, or any part thereof, including boats, purchased for, or the repair parts or materials to be used, or the expenses for repairs made, including the cost of labor incurred, outside the United States, upon any vessel documented under the laws of the United States with a registry, coastwise trade license, or Great Lakes license endorsement, or intended to be employed in such trade, are dutiable at the rate of 50 percent ad valorem on the actual cost in the country where the items are purchased or the repairs are made. Liability for declaration, entry, and payment of duties accrues at the time of the first arrival of the vessel in a port of the United States. For the purposes of this section, equipment, repair parts or materials purchased, or repairs made, in American Samoa, the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands are not considered to have been purchased or made outside the United States.

(2) *Dutiability costs on specific types of vessels*—(i) *Fishing vessels.* Documented vessels of the United States with a fishery license endorsement having a permit to touch and trade (see §4.15) and documented vessels with a fishery license endorsement which lack a permit to touch and trade are subject to this section.

(ii) *Government-owned or chartered vessels.* Vessels owned or chartered by the United States Government, if documented with a registry, coastwise trade, or Great Lakes trade endorsement, or if undocumented, intended to engage in foreign, coastwise or Great Lakes trade, are subject to this section. See paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section with respect to entry procedures for Government vessels.

(iii) *Vessels outside U.S. for two years or more*—(A) *Requirements for declaration and entry of dutiable items.* If a vessel which is documented with a registry, coastwise trade, or Great Lakes trade endorsement is operated in international or foreign waters two years or more after its last departure from the

U.S., the only dutiable items are fish nets and nettings whenever purchased and any other items purchased or repairs made during the first six months after the vessel's last departure from the U.S. Under these circumstances, only those items (with the exception of fish nets and nettings) purchased and repairs made outside the U.S. during the first six months after the vessel's last departure from the U.S. shall be declared and entered. Fish nets and netting purchased or repaired outside the U.S. shall be declared and entered whether or not purchased or repaired during the first six months after departure.

(B) *Exception.* The provisions of §4.14(a)(2)(iii)(A) do not apply to a vessel designed and used primarily for transporting passengers and property if such vessel departed the U.S. for the sole purpose of obtaining equipment, parts, materials, or repairs.

(iv) *LASH Barges.* Lighter-boardship (LASH) barges (see §§4.81 and 4.81a) and similar vessels documented with a registry, coastwise trade, or Great Lakes trade endorsement or, if undocumented, intended to engage in such trade, are subject to this section.

(b) *Declaration and repair entry*—(1) *Declaration.* Upon first arrival of the vessel in the United States, the owner or master shall declare on Customs Form 226 all equipment, parts, or materials purchased, and all repairs made, outside the United States. Except as provided in §4.14(a)(2)(iii)(B), the declaration is required regardless of the dutiable status of such items or expenses. The declaration shall be ready for production on demand and for inspection by the boarding officer and shall be presented as part of the original manifest when formal entry of the vessel is made. Estimated duties shall be deposited or a bond on Customs Form 301, containing the bond conditions set forth in §113.64 of this chapter shall be filed before the departure of the vessel, except as provided in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section. The amount of the bond shall be determined by the port director as provided in §113.13 of this chapter. See paragraph (g) of this section for applicable penalties.

(2) *Entry.* All equipment, parts, or materials purchased for, and all repairs made outside the United States to, any vessel subject to the provisions of this section shall be entered on Customs Form 226 by the master or owner of the vessel. The entry shall be filed with the appropriate Customs officer at the port of first arrival within five working days after arrival. The Customs officer with whom the entry is filed shall forward it to the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit. The party filing the entry shall mark it to indicate whether it is a full and complete account or an incomplete account. See paragraph (g) of this section for applicable penalties.

(i) *Entry procedures for vessels owned or chartered by the United States.* Whenever the appropriate Customs officer determines that a Government-owned or chartered vessel subject to the provisions of this section (see paragraph (a)(2)(ii)) is being operated by an agency of the United States, or that a Government-owned or chartered vessel is being operated by a private party for an agency of the United States under an agreement that obligates the Government agency to pay any duty on the costs of repairs or purchases, the vessel shall be allowed to depart the port of first arrival without depositing estimated duties or furnishing a bond to cover estimated duties. In all other cases, the vessel shall be treated as though privately owned.

(ii) *Time period for submitting evidence of cost.* Whenever a repair entry is submitted as a full and complete account, the entry papers shall include evidence showing the cost of each item listed on the entry. If a repair entry is submitted as an incomplete account, the evidence must be submitted within 90 days from the date of the vessel's arrival, except that evidence of estimated foreign shipyard cost in the possession of or known to the vessel operator must be submitted at the time entry is made. If before the end of the 90-day period, the party that is required to furnish the evidence of cost submits a written request for an extension of time beyond the 90-day period, together with a satisfactory explanation of the delay, to the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit, that unit may grant an additional 30-day exten-

sion of time to submit cost evidence. Any request for a further extension of time to furnish evidence of cost shall be submitted to the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit, which shall transmit the request to Headquarters, U.S. Customs Service, Attention: Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch, for approval. If the costs shown on the complete account differ from the costs declared on the entry, the appropriate Customs officer may permit amendment of the entry.

(A) *Investigation to obtain evidence.* If the required evidence is not furnished timely, or is of doubtful authenticity, the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit shall use all available means to obtain the necessary information and may refer the matter to the Office of Investigations. If an investigation is conducted, the Office of Investigations shall obtain all available evidence on the cost of the repairs and any evidence with respect to the reason for the party's failure to submit the evidence in a timely fashion.

(B) *Concurrent time period for submission of costs and filing application for relief.* The 90-day time period to submit evidence of cost on the entry is concurrent with the 90-day time period to submit an application for relief under paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of this section and will not operate to provide additional time to submit an application for relief. A request for additional time to submit evidence of cost may include a request for additional time to submit an application for relief.

(c) *Remission or refund of duty—(1) Vessel repair liquidation units.* Vessel Repair Liquidation Units (VRLUs) are located in New York, New York; New Orleans, Louisiana; and San Francisco, California. The New York unit processes and liquidates vessel repair entries filed at ports on the Great Lakes and on the Atlantic Coast of the U.S. north of, but not including Norfolk, Virginia. The New Orleans unit processes and liquidates vessel repair entries filed at ports on the Atlantic Coast of the U.S. from Norfolk, Virginia, southward, and all U.S. ports on the Gulf of Mexico, including ports in Puerto Rico. The San Francisco unit processes and liquidates vessel repair entries filed at all ports on the Pacific

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Coast of the U.S., including those in Alaska and Hawaii. After entries are processed and liquidated, bulletin notices of liquidation are returned to original ports of entry for posting.

(2) *Authority.* In cases in which both clearly applicable Headquarters precedent exists, and the resulting refund or remission of duty will be less than \$50,000, the proper VRLU may approve or deny Applications for Relief. In cases in which clearly applicable precedent does not exist, or the resulting refund or remission will be \$50,000 or greater, the Application for Relief will be referred for action to the Entry and Carrier Rulings Branch, Customs Headquarters.

(3) *Basis for remission or refund.* Remission or refund of duty is authorized if good and sufficient evidence is furnished which shows any of the following circumstances exist:

(i) *Stress of weather or other casualty.* The vessel, while in the regular course of its voyage, was compelled, by stress of weather or other casualty, while outside the United States, to purchase such equipment or make such repairs, to secure the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel to enable it to reach its port of destination in the United States. However, only the duty on the cost of the minimal repairs needed for the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel is subject to remission or refund. For the purposes of this section, the term "casualty" does not include any purchases or repairs necessitated by ordinary wear and tear, but does include a part's failure to function if satisfactory evidence shows that the specific part was repaired or serviced immediately before starting the voyage from the United States port and that the part failed to function within six months of such repair or servicing.

(ii) *United States parts and equipment installed with American labor.* The equipment, equipment parts, repair parts or materials used on the vessel were manufactured or produced in the United States and purchased by the owner of the vessel in the United States, and the labor necessary to install such equipment or to make such repairs was performed by residents of the United States or by members of the regular crew of the vessel.

(iii) *Dunnage.* The equipment, equipment parts, materials or labor were used as dunnage for cargo, or for the packing or shoring thereof, or in the erection of temporary bulkheads or other similar devices for the control of bulk cargo, or in the preparation (without permanent repair or alteration) of tanks for the carriage of liquid cargo.

(d) *Procedure for remission or refund of duties—(1) Application for relief—(i) Form and contents.* The application for relief need not be in any particular form. The application for relief should allege that an item or a repair expense covered by the entry is not subject to duty under paragraph (a) of this section, or that the articles purchased or the repair expenses are within the provisions of paragraph (c) of this section, or that both conditions are present. The application for relief also shall certify that all foreign equipment, parts, or materials purchased for, and all foreign repairs made to, the vessel within one year immediately preceding the application have been declared as required by this section, or the application shall be deemed incomplete. The application for relief shall be signed by the master, owner, or operator of the vessel, or their authorized agent. If the application for relief is filed by a corporation, it shall be signed by an authorized corporate officer.

(ii) *Place and time of filing.* The application for relief shall be filed with the appropriate Customs officer at the port where the vessel repair entry was made or with the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit (see paragraph (c)(1) of this section). If filed at the port where the entry was made, the Customs officer who receives the application shall promptly forward it, together with his comments, if any, to the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit. The application for relief, with supporting evidence, shall be filed within 90 days from the date of first arrival of the vessel. However, if good cause is shown, the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit may authorize one 30-day extension of time to file beyond the 90-day filing period.

(iii) *Supporting evidence.* Unless such evidence is already filed with Customs, each application for relief shall include

duplicate copies of the following evidence, in addition to any other documents the applicant wishes to submit in support of the application:

(A) All itemized bills, receipts, and invoices covering items specified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, segregating the cost of those items for which relief is sought from all other items listed in the vessel repair entry.

(B) Full and complete photocopies of the relevant parts of the vessel's logs.

(C) Photocopies of any American Bureau of Shipping or other classification society report of the cause and type of damage and the nature of the remedial action taken, together with photocopies of any certifications of seaworthiness.

(D) A certification by the master or other responsible vessel officer with personal knowledge of the facts relating to the relief sought, including, but not limited to, details of the claimed stress of weather or other casualty, when and where it occurred, the damages due to such stress of weather or other casualty, and the place and date where the vessel was repaired or the equipment for the vessel was purchased.

(E) A certification by the master as to whether the repairs or equipment purchases were necessary for the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel to enable it to reach its port of destination in the United States.

(F) A written description of the circumstances involved by the master or other responsible vessel officer having knowledge of the facts when remission or refund is sought under the provisions of paragraph (c)(3)(ii) (relating to the use of American equipment and labor) or (c)(3)(iii) (relating to dunnage) of this section.

(G) In the case of LASH barges and similar unmanned vessels, the evidence required in paragraphs (d)(1)(iii) (B), (D), (E), and (F) of this section may be omitted, and in lieu thereof, the owner or operator of each vessel shall submit evidence showing that: (1) The vessel was inspected immediately prior to its lading aboard the vessel which transported it to a foreign port on the voyage in which the damage occurred, (2) the vessel was then found to be in seaworthy condition, (3) the damage was

discovered during the course of the foreign voyage, and (4) the repairs were necessary for the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel to enable it to reach its port of destination in the United States.

(iv) *Documentary evidence.* All documents submitted in support of an application must be certified by the master or owner of the vessel to be originals or copies of originals. If a vessel is owned or operated by a corporation, the master or an authorized corporate officer shall certify the documents. Documents in a foreign language shall be accompanied by an English translation that is certified for accuracy by the translator.

(v) *Action.* Within 60 days after receipt of an application for relief by a vessel repair liquidation unit, the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit shall either approve or deny the application for relief or forward it to Headquarters, U.S. Customs Service, Attention: Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch, for advice, as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section. The appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit shall give prompt written notice of any final decision to the party who submitted the application. The notice shall advise the party of its right to petition for review of the decision under paragraph (d)(2) of this section. If the entry has been liquidated, reliquidation is required.

(vi) *Suspension of liquidation.* If an application for relief has been filed within the time period provided in paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of this section, liquidation of the vessel repair entry shall be suspended until 30 days after the date of the written notice provided for in paragraph (d)(1)(v) of this section.

(2) *Petition for review on a denial of an application for relief—(i) Form.* If an applicant is dissatisfied with the decision on its application for relief, the applicant may file a petition for review of that decision. The petition for review need not be in any particular form. The petition for review must identify the decision on the application for relief and must detail the exceptions taken to that decision. The petition shall be signed by the master, owner, or operator of the vessel, or their authorized agent. If the petition for review is filed

by a corporation, it must be signed by a duly authorized corporate officer.

(ii) *Place and time of filing.* The petition for review shall be addressed to the Commissioner of Customs and shall be filed with the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit within 30 days after the date of the written notice to the party of the decision on the application for relief, as provided in paragraph (d)(1)(v) of this section. However, if good cause is shown, the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit may authorize one additional 30-day extension of time.

(iii) *Action.* The appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit promptly shall transmit a copy of the petition for review, any comments and recommendations he may have on the petition for review, and the entire file on the application for relief to Headquarters, U.S. Customs Service, Attention: Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch, for decision. After notification of the decision by Headquarters, the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit shall give written notification of that decision to the party who filed the petition for review. The notice will inform the party that no further suspension of liquidation will be permitted.

(iv) *Suspension of liquidation.* If an original petition for review is filed within the time provided for in paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section, liquidation of the vessel repair entry shall be suspended further until the vessel repair liquidation unit notifies the party who filed the petition of the decision on the petition. Following notification of the Headquarters decision to the party who filed the petition, the vessel repair liquidation unit shall promptly initiate liquidation of the entry in accordance with that decision.

(e) *Liquidation of vessel repair entries, time limits.* If evidence of cost is available and the appropriate vessel repair liquidation unit receives written notification from the master, owner, or operator of the vessel, or their authorized agent, that an application for relief will not be filed, the vessel repair liquidation unit promptly shall initiate liquidation of the entry. In all other cases in which the evidence of cost is available, the entry may be liquidated 60 days after arrival of the vessel, or at

the expiration of any extension of time granted under paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section to furnish evidence of cost, unless an application for relief is filed timely as provided in paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of this section. If an application for relief is filed timely, the vessel repair entry may be liquidated 30 days after the date of the written notice to the party who filed the application for relief, as provided in paragraph (d)(1)(v), unless a petition for review is filed timely under paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section. If a petition for review is filed timely, the vessel repair entry may be liquidated after the date of the notification of the decision on the petition to the party who filed the petition.

(f) *Protests.* Following liquidation of an entry, a protest under part 174 of this chapter may be filed against the decision to treat an item or a repair as dutiable under paragraph (a) of this section, or against the decision denying the remission or refund of vessel repair duties under paragraph (c) of this section.

(g) *Penalties—(1) Failure to report, enter, or pay duty.* If the owner or master of a vessel subject to the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section willfully or knowingly neglects or fails to report, make entry, and pay duties as required, or if he makes any false statement in respect of the purchases or repairs described in this section without reasonable cause to believe the truth of the statements, or aids or procures the making of any false statement as to any material matter without reasonable cause to believe the truth of the statement, the vessel, with its tackle, apparel, and furniture, or a monetary amount up to the value thereof as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, to be recovered from the owner, shall be subject to seizure and forfeiture.

(2) *False declaration.* If any person required to file a declaration on Customs Form 226, by paragraph (b)(1) of this section, or to file an entry on Customs Form 226, by paragraph (b)(2) of this section, willfully and knowingly provides any false information, or willfully and knowingly omits any required information, that person shall

be subject to the criminal penalties provided for in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

[T.D. 80-237, 45 FR 64565, Sept. 30, 1980, as amended by T.D. 82-227, 47 FR 54065, Dec. 1, 1982; T.D. 83-214, 48 FR 46511, Oct. 13, 1983; T.D. 84-149, 49 FR 28698, July 16, 1984; T.D. 84-213, 49 FR 41163, Oct. 19, 1984; T.D. 85-123, 50 FR 29952, July 23, 1985; T.D. 91-77, 56 FR 46114, Sept. 10, 1991; T.D. 93-57, 58 FR 39655, July 26, 1993; T.D. 93-65, 58 FR 44128, Aug. 19, 1993; T.D. 93-66, 58 FR 44130, Aug. 19, 1993; T.D. 94-41, 59 FR 18481, Apr. 19, 1994; T.D. 95-77, 60 FR 50010, Sept. 27, 1995; T.D. 99-27, 64 FR 13675, Mar. 22, 1999]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: By T.D. 01-24, 66 FR 16397, Mar. 26, 2001, § 4.14 was revised, effective Apr. 25, 2001. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

**§ 4.14 Equipment purchases by, and repairs to, American vessels.**

(a) *General provisions and applicability.* Under section 466, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1466), purchases for or repairs made to certain vessels while they are outside the United States, including repairs made while those vessels are on the high seas, are subject to declaration, entry and payment of ad valorem duty. This does not apply to reimbursement paid to members of the regular crew of a vessel for labor expended in making repairs to the vessel. These requirements are effective upon the first arrival of affected vessels in the United States or Puerto Rico. The vessels subject to these requirements include those documented under U.S. law for the foreign or coastwise trades, as well as those which were previously documented under the laws of some foreign nation or are undocumented at the time that foreign shipyard repairs are performed, but which exhibit an intent to engage in those trades under Customs interpretations. Duty is based on actual foreign cost. This includes the original foreign purchase price of articles which have been imported into the United States and are later sent abroad for use. For the purposes of this section, expenditures made in American Samoa, the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands are considered to have been made in the United States, and are not subject to declaration, entry or duty. Under separate provisions of law, the cost of labor performed, and of parts and materials produced and purchased in Israel are not subject to duty under the vessel repair statute. Additionally, expenditures made in Canada or in Mexico are not subject to any vessel repair duties. Even in the absence of any liability for duty, it is still required that all repairs and purchases, including those made in Canada, Mexico, and Israel, be declared and entered.

(b) *Applicability to specific types of vessels.*

(1) *Fishing vessels.* As provided in § 4.15, vessels documented under U.S. law with a fishery endorsement are subject to vessel repair duties for covered foreign expenditures. Undocumented American fishing vessels which are repaired, or for which parts, nets or equipment are purchased outside the U.S. are also liable for duty.

(2) *Government-owned or chartered vessels.* Vessels normally subject to the vessel repair statute because of documentation or intended use are not excused from duty liability merely because they are either owned or chartered by the U.S. Government.

(3) *Vessels continuously away for two years or longer.*

(i) *Liability for expenditures throughout entire absence from U.S.* Vessels that continuously remain outside the United States for two years or longer are liable for duty on any fish nets and netting purchased at any time during the entire absence. Vessels designed and used primarily for transporting passengers or merchandise, which depart the United States for the sole purpose of obtaining equipment, parts, materials or repairs remain fully liable for duty regardless of the duration of their absence from the United States.

(ii) *Liability for expenditures made during first six months of absence.* Except as provided in paragraph (b)(3)(i) of this section, vessels that continuously remain outside the United States for two years or longer are liable for duty only on those expenditures which are made during the first six months of their absence. See paragraph (h)(3) of this section. However, even though some costs might not be dutiable because of the six-month rule, all repairs, materials, parts and equipment-related expenditures must be declared and entered.

(c) *Estimated duty deposit and bond requirements.* Generally, the person authorized to submit a vessel repair declaration and entry must either deposit or transmit estimated duties or produce evidence of a bond on Customs Form 301 at the first United States port of arrival before the vessel will be permitted to depart from that port. A continuous or single entry bond of sufficient value to cover all potential duty on the foreign repairs and purchases must be identified by surety, number and amount on the vessel repair declaration which is submitted at the port of first arrival. At the time the vessel repair entry is submitted by the vessel operator to the appropriate VRU port of entry as defined in paragraph (g) of this section, that same identifying information must be identified on the entry form. Sufficiency of the amount of the bond is within the discretion of Customs at the arrival port with claims for reduction in duty liability necessarily being subject to full consideration of evidence by Customs. Customs officials at the port of arrival may consult the appropriate Vessel Repair Unit

(VRU) port of entry as identified in paragraph (g) of this section or the staff of the Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch in Customs Headquarters in setting sufficient bond amounts. These duty, deposit, and bond requirements do not apply to vessels which are owned or chartered by the United States Government and are actually being operated by employees of an agency of the Government. If operated by a private party for a Federal agency under terms whereby that private party is liable under the contract for payment of the duty, there must be a deposit or a bond filed in an amount adequate to cover the estimated duty.

(d) *Declaration required.* When a vessel subject to this section first arrives in the United States following a foreign voyage, the owner, master, or authorized agent must submit a vessel repair declaration on Customs Form 226, a dual-use form used both for declaration and entry purposes, or must transmit its electronic equivalent. The declaration must be ready for presentation in the event that a Customs officer boards the vessel. If no foreign repair-related expenses were incurred, that fact must be reported either on the declaration form or by approved electronic means. The Customs port of arrival receiving either a positive or negative vessel repair declaration or electronic equivalent will immediately forward it to the appropriate VRU port of entry as identified in paragraph (g) of this section.

(e) *Entry required.* The owner, master, or authorized representative of the owner of any vessel subject to this section for which a positive declaration has been filed must submit a vessel repair entry on Customs Form 226 or transmit its electronic equivalent. The entry must show all foreign voyage expenditures for equipment, parts of equipment, repair parts, materials and labor. The entry submission must indicate whether it provides a complete or incomplete account of covered expenditures. The entry must be presented or electronically transmitted by the vessel operator to the appropriate VRU port of entry as identified in paragraph (g) of this section, so that it is received within ten calendar days after arrival of the vessel. Claims for relief from duty should be made generally as part of the initial submission, and evidence must later be provided to support those claims. Failure to submit full supporting evidence of cost within stated time limits, including any extensions granted under this section, is considered to be a failure to enter.

(f) *Time limit for submitting evidence of cost.* A complete vessel repair entry must be supported by evidence showing the cost of each item entered. If the entry is incomplete when submitted, evidence to make it complete must be received by the appropriate VRU port of entry as identified in paragraph (g) of this section within 90 calendar days

from the date of vessel arrival. That evidence must include either the final cost of repairs or, if the operator submits acceptable evidence that final cost information is not yet available, initial or interim cost estimates given prior to or after the work was authorized by the operator. The proper VRU port of entry may grant one 30-day extension of time to submit final cost evidence if a satisfactory written explanation of the need for an extension is received before the expiration of the original 90-day submission period. All extensions will be issued in writing. Inadequate, vague, or open-ended requests will not be granted. Questions as to whether an extension should be granted may be referred to the Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch in Customs Headquarters by the VRU ports of entry. Any request for an extension beyond a 30-day grant issued by a VRU must be submitted through that unit to the Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch, Customs Headquarters. In the event that all cost evidence is not furnished within the specified time limit, or is of doubtful authenticity, the VRU may refer the matter to the Customs Office of Investigations to begin procedures to obtain the needed evidence. That office may also investigate the reason for a failure to file or for an untimely submission. Unexplained or unjustified delays in providing Customs with sufficient information to properly determine duty may result in penalty action as specified in paragraph (j) of this section. Extensions granted for the filing of necessary evidence may also extend the time for filing Applications for Relief (see paragraph (i)(1) of this section).

(g) *Location and jurisdiction of vessel repair unit ports of entry.* Vessel Repair Units (VRUs) are responsible for processing vessel repair entries. VRUs are located in New York, New York; New Orleans, Louisiana; and San Francisco, California. The New York unit processes vessel repair entries received from ports of arrival on the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Coast of the United States north of, but not including, those located in the State of Virginia. The New Orleans unit processes vessel repair entries received from ports of arrival on the Atlantic Coast from and including those in the State of Virginia, southward, and from all United States ports of arrival on the Gulf of Mexico including ports in Puerto Rico. The San Francisco unit processes vessel repair entries received from all ports of entry on the Pacific Coast including those in Alaska and Hawaii.

(h) *Justifications for relief from duty.* Claims for relief from the assessment of vessel repair duties may be submitted to Customs. Relief may be sought under paragraphs (a), (d), (e), or (h) of the vessel repair statute (19 U.S.C. 1466(a), (d), (e), or (h)), each paragraph of which relates to a different type of claim as further specified in paragraphs (h)(1)–(h)(4) of this section.

(1) *Relief under 19 U.S.C. 1466(a)*. Requests for relief from duty under 19 U.S.C. 1466(a) consist of claims that a foreign shipyard operation or expenditure is not considered to be a repair or purchase within the terms of the vessel repair statute or as determined under judicial or administrative interpretations. Example: a claim that the shipyard operation is a vessel modification.

(2) *Relief from duty under 19 U.S.C. 1466(d)*. Requests for relief from duty under 19 U.S.C. 1466(d) consist of claims that a foreign shipyard operation or expenditure involves any of the following:

(i) *Stress of weather or other casualty*. Relief will be granted if good and sufficient evidence supports a finding that the vessel, while in the regular course of its voyage, was forced by stress of weather or other casualty, while outside the United States, to purchase such equipment or make those repairs as are necessary to secure the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel in order to enable it to reach its port of destination in the United States. For the purposes of this paragraph, a "casualty" does not include any purchase or repair made necessary by ordinary wear and tear, but does include the failure of a part to function if it is proven that the specific part was repaired, serviced, or replaced in the United States immediately before the start of the voyage in question, and then failed within six months of that date.

(ii) *U.S. parts installed by regular crew or residents*. Relief will be granted if equipment, parts of equipment, repair parts, or materials used on a vessel were manufactured or produced in the United States and were purchased in the United States by the owner of the vessel. It is required under the statute that residents of the United States or members of the regular crew of the vessel perform any necessary labor in connection with such installations.

(iii) *Dunnage*. Relief will be granted if any equipment, equipment parts, materials, or labor were used for the purpose of providing dunnage for the packing or shoring of cargo, for erecting temporary bulkheads or other similar devices for the control of bulk cargo, or for temporarily preparing tanks for carrying liquid cargoes.

(3) *Relief under 19 U.S.C. 1466(e)*. Requests for relief from duty under 19 U.S.C. 1466(e) relate in pertinent part to matters involving vessels normally subject to the vessel repair statute, but that continuously remain outside the United States for two years or longer. Vessels that continuously remain outside the United States for two years or longer may qualify for relief from duty on expenditures made later than the first six months of their absence. See paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section.

(4) *Relief under 19 U.S.C. 1466(h)*. Requests for relief from duty under 19 U.S.C. 1466(h) consist of claims that a foreign shipyard op-

eration or expenditure involves any of the following:

(i) *Expenditures on LASH barges*. Relief will be granted with respect to the cost of equipment, parts, materials, or repair labor for Lighter Aboard Ship (LASH) operations accomplished abroad.

(ii) *Certain spare repair parts or materials*. Relief will be granted with respect to the cost of spare repair parts or materials which are certified by the vessel owner or master to be for use on a cargo vessel, but only if duty was previously paid under the appropriate commodity classification(s) as found in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States when the article first entered the United States.

(iii) *Certain spare parts necessarily installed on a vessel prior to their first entry into the United States*. Relief will be granted with respect to the cost of spare parts only, which have been necessarily installed prior to their first entry into the United States with duty payment under the appropriate commodity classification(s) as found in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

(i) *General procedures for seeking relief*.

(1) *Applications for Relief*. Relief from the assessment of vessel repair duty will not be granted unless an Application for Relief is filed with Customs. Relief will not be granted based merely upon a claim for relief made at the time of entry under paragraph (e) of this section. The filing of an Application for Relief is not required, nor is one required to be presented in any particular format, but if filed it must clearly present the legal basis for granting relief, as specified in paragraph (h) of this section. An Application must also state that all repair operations performed aboard a vessel during the one-year period prior to the current submission have been declared and entered. A valid Application is required to be supported by complete evidence as detailed in paragraphs (i)(1)(i)-(vi) and (i)(2) of this section. Except as further provided in this paragraph, the deadline for receipt of an Application and supporting evidence is 90 calendar days from the date that the vessel first arrived in the United States following foreign operations. The provisions for extension of the period for filing required evidence in support of an entry, as set forth in paragraph (f) of this section, are applicable to extension of the time period for filing Applications for Relief as well. Applications must be addressed and submitted by the vessel operator to the appropriate VRU port of entry and will be decided in that unit. The VRUs may seek the advice of the Entry Procedures and Carriers Branch in Customs Headquarters with regard to any specific item or issue which has not been addressed by clear precedent. If no Application is filed or if a submission which does not meet the

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minimal standards of an Application for Relief is received, the duty amount will be determined without regard to any potential claims for relief from duty (see paragraph (h) of this section). Each Application for Relief must include copies of:

(i) Itemized bills, receipts, and invoices for items shown in paragraph (e) of this section. The cost of items for which a request for relief is made must be segregated from the cost of the other items listed in the vessel repair entry;

(ii) Photocopies of relevant parts of vessel logs, as well as of any classification society reports which detail damage and remedies;

(iii) A certification by the senior officer with personal knowledge of all relevant circumstances relating to casualty damage (time, place, cause, and nature of damage);

(iv) A certification by the senior officer with personal knowledge of all relevant circumstances relating to foreign repair expenditures (time, place, and nature of purchases and work performed);

(v) A certification by the master that casualty-related expenditures were necessary to ensure the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel in reaching its United States port of destination; and

(vi) Any permits or other documents filed with or issued by any United States Government agency other than Customs regarding the operation of the vessel that are relevant to the request for relief.

(2) *Additional evidence.* In addition, copies of any other evidence and documents the applicant may wish to provide as evidentiary support may be submitted. Elements of applications which are not supported by required evidentiary elements will be considered fully dutiable. All documents submitted must be certified by the master, owner, or authorized corporate officer to be originals or copies of originals, and if in a foreign language, they must be accompanied by an English translation, certified by the translator to be accurate. Upon receipt of an Application for Relief by the VRU within the prescribed time limits, a determination of duties owed will be made. After a decision is made on an Application for Relief by a VRU, the applicant will be notified of the right to protest any adverse decision.

(3) *Administrative protest.* Following the determination of duty owing on a vessel repair entry, a protest may be filed under 19 U.S.C. 1514(a)(2) as the only and final administrative appeal. The procedures and time limits applicable to protests filed in connection with vessel repair entries are the same as those provided in part 174 of this chapter. In particular, the applicable protest period will begin on the date of the issuance of the decision giving rise to the protest as reflected on the relevant correspondence from the appropriate VRU.

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(j) *Penalties.*—(1) *Failure to report, enter, or pay duty.* It is a violation of the vessel repair statute if the owner or master of a vessel subject to this section willfully or knowingly neglects or fails to report, make entry, and pay duties as required; makes any false statements regarding purchases or repairs described in this section without reasonable cause to believe the truth of the statements; or aids or procures any false statements regarding any material matter without reasonable cause to believe the truth of the statement. If a violation occurs, the vessel, its tackle, apparel, and furniture, or a monetary amount up to their value as determined by Customs, is subject to seizure and forfeiture and is recoverable from the owner (see §162.72 of this chapter).

(2) *False declaration.* If any person required to file a vessel repair declaration or entry under this section, knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact, or makes any materially false, fictitious or fraudulent statement or representation, or makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious or fraudulent statement, that person will be subject to the criminal penalties provided for in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

#### §4.15 Fishing vessels touching and trading at foreign places.

(a) Before any vessel documented with a fishery license endorsement shall touch and trade at a foreign port or place, the master shall obtain from the port director a permit on Customs Form 1379 to touch and trade.

When a fishing vessel departs from the United States and there is an intent to stop at a foreign port (1) to lade vessel equipment which was preordered, (2) to purchase and lade vessel equipment, or (3) to purchase and lade vessel equipment to replace existing vessel equipment, the master of the vessel must either clear for that foreign port or obtain a permit to touch and trade, whether or not the vessel will engage in fishing on that voyage.<sup>28</sup> Purchases of such equipment, whether intended at the time of departure or not, are subject to declaration, entry, and payment of duty pursuant to section 466 of the

<sup>28</sup>If such a vessel puts into a foreign port or place and only obtains bunkers, stores, or supplies suitable for a fishing voyage, it is not considered to have touched and traded there. Fish nets and netting are considered vessel equipment and not vessel supplies.

<sup>29–61</sup> [Reserved]