

United States Customs Service, Treasury

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Example 4. Uncut textile fabrics exported in bolts from which wearing apparel components will be cut according to a pattern are not regarded as fabricated components. Similarly, other materials, such as lumber, leather, sheet metal, plastic sheeting, exported in basic shapes and forms to be fabricated into components for assembly, are not eligible for treatment as fabricated components.

(b) *Substantial transformation of foreign-made articles or materials.* Foreign-made articles or materials may become products of the United States if they undergo a process of manufacture in the United States which results in their substantial transformation. Substantial transformation occurs when, as a result of manufacturing processes, a new and different article emerges, having a distinctive name, character, or use, which is different from that originally possessed by the article or material before being subject to the manufacturing process. The mere finishing or modification of a partially or nearly complete foreign product in the United States will not result in the substantial transformation of such product and it remains the product of a foreign country.

Example 1. A cast metal housing for a valve is made in the United States from imported copper ingots, the product of a foreign country. The housing is a product of the United States because the manufacturing operations performed in the United States to produce the housing resulted in a substantial transformation of the foreign copper ingots.

Example 2. An integrated circuit device is assembled in a foreign country and imported into the United States where its leads are formed by bending them to a specified angle. It is then tested and marked. The imported article does not become a product of the United States because the operations performed in the United States do not result in a substantial transformation of the foreign integrated circuit device.

Example 3. A circuit board assembly for a computer is assembled in the United States by soldering American-made and foreign-made components onto an American-made printed circuit board. The finished circuit board assembly has a distinct electronic function and is ready for incorporation into the computer. The foreign-made components have undergone a substantial transformation by becoming permanent parts of the circuit board assembly. The circuit board assembly, including all of its parts is regarded as a fabricated component, the product of the United

States, for purposes of subheading 9802.00.80, HTSUS (19 U.S.C. 1202).

[T.D. 75-230, 40 FR 43022, Sept. 18, 1975, as amended by T.D. 89-1, 53 FR 51247, Dec. 21, 1988]

§ 10.15 Fabricated components not subject to the exemption.

Fabricated components which are not products of the United States are excluded from the exemption. In addition, the exemption is not applicable to any component exported from the Customs territory of the United States:

(a) From continuous Customs custody with remission, abatement, or refund of duty;

(b) With benefit of drawback;

(c) To comply with any law of the United States or regulation of any Federal agency requiring exportation; or

(d) After manufacture or production in the United States under subheading 9813.00.05, HTSUS (19 U.S.C. 1202).

Example. Partially completed components of an electric motor are imported in several separate shipments and are entered under a temporary importation bond to be manufactured into finished motors under the provisions of subheading 9813.00.05, HTSUS (19 U.S.C. 1202). The components are completed and assembled into finished electric motors. The finished motors are exported and are assembled abroad into electric fans which are subsequently imported into the United States. Irrespective of the fact that the assembly of the motors might involve such a substantial change that the motor could be considered a product of the United States, no exemption may be given for the value of the electric motors, since they were exported after manufacture or production in the United States under the provision of subheading 9813.00.05, HTSUS (19 U.S.C. 1202).

[T.D. 75-230, 40 FR 43023, Sept. 18, 1975, as amended by T.D. 89-1, 53 FR 51247, Dec. 21, 1988]

§ 10.16 Assembly abroad.

(a) *Assembly operations.* The assembly operations performed abroad may consist of any method used to join or fit together solid components, such as welding, soldering, riveting, force fitting, gluing, laminating, sewing, or the use of fasteners, and may be preceded, accompanied, or followed by operations incidental to the assembly as illustrated in paragraph (b) of this section. The mixing or combining of liquids, gases, chemicals, food ingredients, and

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amorphous solids with each other or with solid components is not regarded as an assembly.

Example 1. A television yoke is assembled abroad from American-made magnet wire. In the foreign assembly plant the wire is despoiled and wound into a coil, the wire cut from the spool, and the coil united with other components, including a terminal panel and housing which are also American-made. The completed article upon importation would be subject to the ad valorem rate of duty applicable to television parts upon the value of the yoke less the cost or value of the American-made wire, terminal panel and housing, assembled therein. The winding and cutting of the wire are either assembly steps or steps incidental to assembly.

Example 2. An aluminum electrolytic capacitor is assembled abroad from American-made aluminum foil, paper, tape, and Mylar film. In the foreign assembly plant the aluminum foil is trimmed to the desired width, cut to the desired length, interleaved with paper, which may or may not be cut to length or despoiled from a continuous length, and rolled into a cylinder wherein the foil and paper are cut and a section of sealing tape fastened to the surface to prevent these components from unwinding. Wire or other electric connectors are bonded at appropriate intervals to the aluminum foil of the cylinder which is then inserted into a metal can, and the ends closed with a protective washer. As imported, the capacitor is subject to the ad valorem rate of duty applicable to capacitors upon the value less the cost or value of the American-made foil, paper, tape, and Mylar film. The operations performed on these components are all either assembly steps or steps incidental to assembly.

Example 3. The manufacture abroad of cloth on a loom using thread or yarn exported from the United States on spools, cops, or pirns is not considered an assembly but a weaving operation, and the thread or yarn does not qualify for the exemption. However, American-made thread used to sew buttons or garment components is qualified for the exemption because it is used in an operation involving the assembly of solid components.

(b) *Operations incidental to the assembly process.* Operations incidental to the assembly process whether performed before, during, or after assembly, do not constitute further fabrication, and shall not preclude the application of the exemption. The following are examples of operations which are incidental to the assembly process:

- (1) Cleaning;

- (2) Removal of rust, grease, paint, or other preservative coating;

- (3) Application of preservative paint or coating, including preservative metallic coating, lubricants, or protective encapsulation;

- (4) Trimming, filing, or cutting off of small amounts of excess materials;

- (5) Adjustments in the shape or form of a component to the extent required by the assembly being performed abroad;

- (6) Cutting to length of wire, thread, tape, foil, and similar products exported in continuous length; separation by cutting of finished components, such as prestamped integrated circuit lead frames exported in multiple unit strips; and

- (7) Final calibration, testing, marking, sorting, pressing, and folding of assembled articles.

(c) *Operations not incidental to the assembly process.* Any significant process, operation, or treatment other than assembly whose primary purpose is the fabrication, completion, physical or chemical improvement of a component, or which is not related to the assembly process, whether or not it effects a substantial transformation of the article, shall not be regarded as incidental to the assembly and shall preclude the application of the exemption to such article. The following are examples of operations not considered incidental to the assembly as provided under subheading 9802.00.80, Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (19 U.S.C. 1202):

- (1) Melting of exported ingots and pouring of the metal into molds to produce cast metal parts;

- (2) Cutting of garment parts according to pattern from exported material;

- (3) Painting primarily intended to enhance the appearance of an article or to impart distinctive features or characteristics;

- (4) Chemical treatment of components or assembled articles to impart new characteristics, such as showerproofing, permapressing, sanforizing, dyeing or bleaching of textiles;

- (5) Machining, polishing, burnishing, peening, plating (other than plating incidental to the assembly), embossing, pressing, stamping, extruding, drawing,

annealing, tempering, case hardening, and any other operation, treatment or process which imparts significant new characteristics or qualities to the article affected.

(d) *Joining of American-made and foreign-made components.* An assembly operation may involve the use of American-made components and foreign-made components. The various requirements for establishing entitlement to the exemption apply only to the American-made components of the assembly.

Example. Diodes are assembled abroad from American-made components. The process includes the encapsulation of the assembled components in a plastic shell. The plastic used for the encapsulation is in the form of a pellet, and is of foreign origin. After the prefabricated diode components are assembled, the assembled unit is placed in a transfer molding machine, where, by use of the pellet, molten epoxy is caused to flow around the perimeters of the assembled components, forming upon solidification a plastic body for the diode. Upon importation, exemption may be granted for the value of the American-made components, but not for the value of the plastic pellet. If the plastic pellet used for encapsulation was of United States origin, its value would still be a part of the dutiable value of the diode, because the plastic pellet is not a fabricated component of a type designed to be fitted together by assembly, but merely a premeasured quantity of material which was applied to the assembled unit by a process not constituting an assembly.

(e) *Subassembly.* An assembly operation may involve the joining or fitting of American-made components into a part or subassembly of an article, followed by the installation of the part or subassembly into the complete article.

Example. Rolls of foil and rolls of paper are exported and cut to specific length abroad and interleaved and rolled to form the electrodes and dielectric of a capacitor. Following this procedure, the rolls are assembled with cans and other parts to form a complete capacitor. The foil and paper are entitled to the exemption.

(f) *Packing.* The packing abroad of merchandise into containers does not in itself qualify either the containers or their contents for the exemption. However, assembled articles which otherwise qualify for the exemption and which are packaged abroad following their assembly will not be disqualified

from the exemption by reason of their having been so packaged, whether for retail sale or for bulk shipment. The tariff status of the packing materials or containers will be determined in accordance with General Rule of Interpretation 5, HTSUS (19 U.S.C. 1202).

[T.D. 75-230, 40 FR 43023, Sept. 18, 1975, as amended by T.D. 89-1, 53 FR 51248, Dec. 21, 1988]

§ 10.17 Valuation of exempted components.

The value of fabricated components to be subtracted from the full value of the assembled article is the cost of the components when last purchased, f.o.b. United States port of exportation or point of border crossing as set out in the invoice and entry papers, or, if no purchase was made, the value of the components at the time of their shipment for exportation, f.o.b. United States port of exportation or point of border crossing, as set out in the invoice and entry papers. However, if the appraising officer concludes that the cost or value of the fabricated components so ascertained does not represent a reasonable cost or value, then the value of the components shall be determined in accordance with section 402 or section 402a, Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1401a, 1402).

[T.D. 75-230, 40 FR 43024, Sept. 18, 1975]

§ 10.18 Valuation of assembled articles.

As in the case of the appraisalment of any other import merchandise (see subpart C of part 152 of this chapter), the full value of assembled articles imported under subheading 9802.00.80, Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) (19 U.S.C. 1202), is determined in accordance with 19 CFR 152.100 *et seq.*

[T.D. 87-89, 52 FR 24445, July 1, 1987, as amended by T.D. 89-1, 53 FR 51248, Dec. 21, 1988]

§§ 10.19–10.20 [Reserved]

§ 10.21 Updating cost data and other information.

When a claim for the exemption is predicated on estimated cost data furnished either in advance of or at the