

if necessary. It is preferable not to send these documents by air mail, since there may be a 2-3 week delay.

When the goods are shipped by air, all documents (invoice, packing list and airway bill of lading) accompany the goods on the plane and the airline is responsible for their delivery to the importer or customs broker. The exporter should always advise, via fax or telephone, the importer or customs broker when the goods are shipped, the airline and flight number and the number of the airway bill of lading.

It is always useful to accompany the invoice by a catalog or other literature of the goods shipped (if available), since it may be very helpful for their proper classification for import duty purposes. It is recommended to send the original invoice and seven copies and, additionally, for the exporter to retain a copy of the invoice of the merchandise shipped. This number may, however, vary according to the importer or customs broker.

2. PACKING LIST

A packing list is necessary when more than one package is shipped. This document should be sent, together with the commercial invoice(s), to the buyer or customs broker as consignee. The number of copies needed can vary between 4 and 7, according to the means of transportation and the exporter should always retain a copy. The packing list may be included within the invoice. The list should include:

- a) number of packages;
- b) a detailed list of merchandise contained in each package (as described on the invoice);
- c) net, gross and legal (if applicable) weight in metric equivalents of each package and of the total shipment;
- d) volume or measurements, in the metric system, of each package and of the total shipment.

3. BILLS OF LADING

These vary according to the carrier. A bill of lading is required on maritime shipments and generally consists of three originals plus a varying number of copies. These should be sent, through an international messenger service, to the importer in Mexico, together with the other documents. An airway bill of lading accompanies air shipments, while truck or train shipments are accompanied by a similar document handed out by the individual carrier covering the goods shipped. The exporter should always keep one set of lading bills for any future reference and send one original to the importer and one to the customs broker.