

# Crossing the 49<sup>th</sup>



## How do I get my product across the border hassle-free?

Although the duties on most Mexican, Canadian and U.S. goods have been effectively eliminated as of January 1, 1998, duties on third-country goods still apply. All sovereign countries monitor what crosses their borders, and all merchandise coming into the United States must still clear U.S. Customs. Exporters must take this into account when developing a marketing plan.

Currently, the Customs Border Services Branch of Revenue Canada holds one-day seminars on cross-border issues, called Customs Information Days.

For more information on the seminars, call (613) 957-7256. For general information, contact Wendy McCauley, Revenue Canada, tel.: (613) 954-6820.

For details on U.S. Customs — regulations, information required on imported goods and other information — follow the links to the U.S. Customs site indicated in *ExportSource*.

To stimulate cross-border trade, efforts have been made to free up the flow of goods and people between the two countries via the Canada-United States of America Accord on our Shared Border, signed in February 1995. The Accord aims to reduce costs for government and business by sharing resources, streamlining border-crossing processes, introducing electronic customs declaration, and undertaking more effective inspection.

## What can a Customs broker do for me?

Customs clearance is a complex

process that can give rise to frustrating and expensive delays if proper advance preparation has not been carried out.

A reputable, full-service Customs broker will act as a trade facilitator, providing the information necessary to help your company negotiate the various steps involved in Customs clearance. Brokers will also advise regarding tariff classifications, duty rates and other fees collected by Customs, valuation rules, FTA rules of origin, Customs country-of-origin marking requirements, labelling requirements and current modernization/automation programs.

Customs brokers are listed in the Yellow Pages. For further advice contact your nearest ITC office or the Canadian consulate located in your target export region of the United States.

## How do I cross the border on business?

The system for crossing the border on business is not perfect, but here are some tips to help you.

To enter the United States under the NAFTA, you must be a Canadian (or Mexican) citizen. You must prove admissibility under all existing U.S. immigration laws. You must also establish that you fall into one of four categories of business travellers: Business Visitor, Professional, Trader and Investor, or Inter-company Transferee.

**Business Visitors** are persons who are engaged in international business activities related to research and design, growth, manufacture and production, marketing, sales, distribution and after-sales service,

but who will not receive remuneration from a U.S. source.

To qualify you must be a Canadian citizen travelling for business purposes, be conducting business that is international in scope, have a principal place of business with your "salary base" in Canada, and present a letter stating the purpose of the business trip — preferably a letter of invitation from the company or companies you will be visiting. You should also have your Canadian passport.

**Professionals** are persons who seek to enter the United States to engage in business activities at a professional level. This is especially necessary for people selling their services or skills as a consultant, trainer or designer.

To qualify you must be a Canadian citizen engaged in an occupation listed in Section D of Annex 1603 of the NAFTA (this list is included in the *ExportSource* Web site), be qualified to work in the occupation in which you will be engaged (you may need to bring a copy of your professional certification), and have a contractual agreement with a U.S. client or a pre-arranged employment agreement.

**Traders** are business people who conduct substantial trade in goods or services. To qualify you must be a Canadian citizen acting as an executive or supervisor for an enterprise that is either Canadian, American or Mexican, and whose

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