



ICS User Representative Newsletter

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Exports Update

From all accounts, or more particularly the lack of any significant reports to the contrary, the exports release continues to perform reliably and much faster than the EXIT system.

Customs is aware of several outstanding issues and is working to address them.

If your company is having trouble with the exports release please contact me so I can ensure that the matter is being investigated.

New Sign On procedures for Customs Interactive

When the Customs Interactive Facility went live in October last year, many of you called me (and Customs) to express frustration with the multiple clicking-to and fro navigation that is the current sign on procedure.

To address these concerns, Customs has installed a new sign in program that is simpler and streamlined.

*****Caution***** The new login procedure uses the Sun Java Runtime environment which is INCOMPATIBLE with the current FormSecure environment. If you install the new login system before March 14, you MUST disable the Sun Java Runtime environment so you can continue using the current login system. My advice is to hold off loading the new facility until after 14 March.

Here is an extract from the ACS website on this issue. The full article can be found here: <http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=5425>

the common-use signing interface (csi)

As a result of feedback from clients, Customs is changing the way clients log into the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) via the Customs Interactive facility. Currently a software package called 'FormSecure' is used to provide the security layer between clients and the ICS. From 14 March 2005 you will be able to use a new product called the 'Common-use Signing Interface' (CSI). From this date you will also be able to 'self register' entirely electronically and will be able to undertake certificate maintenance online for your organisation.

What benefits does the CSI offer?

The CSI is a Java application that uses the Sun Java Runtime Environment (JRE). The Sun JRE is a supported product, which means that it will be easily available and updated when Sun become aware of bugs or security vulnerabilities. Clients who have web deployed applications will be less likely to have interoperability problems.

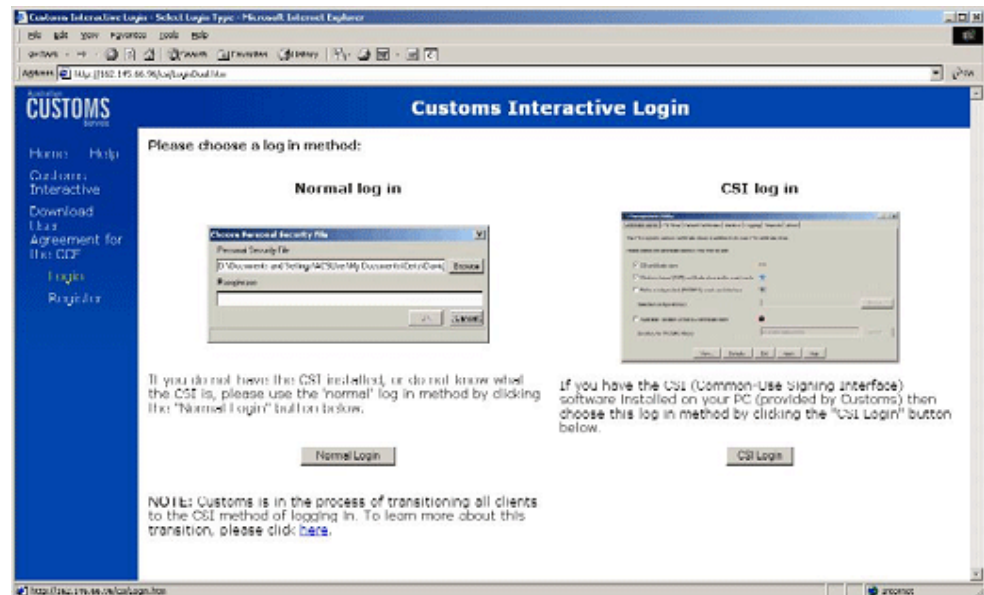
The CSI resides entirely on the user's computer, this means that ICS clients should see some performance improvements.

The CSI allows for the use of hard tokens. These are hardware devices such as universal serial bus (USB) keys or smart cards.

Do I have to change straight away?

No, clients do not have to change over to CSI straight away. CSI and FormSecure will run in parallel until the 14 June 2005. You will be able to continue logging into the Customs Interactive facility with software via a dual login window similar to the one shown below.

From 15 June 2005 **only the CSI will be available.**



Imports Testing

Customs recently loaded the full Import Declaration functionality into the Customs Interactive Testing environment. The Customs Imports Development team is keen for Customs brokers to take advantage of the opportunity to begin testing the Customs Interactive system now so any issues can be identified early on.

brokers who do take this opportunity will be able to get an early understanding of the way the Customs interactive works for Import declarations and get a learning head start before the system goes live in 2005.

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"Customs is keen for brokers to 'have a go' at trying out the new system through the Customs Interactive facility"

"I will be calling for volunteers to attend half day Customs Interactive testing sessions in various regions"

While the majority of you will probably use third party software for entry creation and lodgement, Customs is keen for brokers to 'have a go' at trying out the new system through the Customs Interactive facility.

To take advantage of this opportunity several steps need to be followed:

1) You must have a valid Digital Certificate that has been set up in the TEST environment. Customs advised that if you have been setup in the Production environment already, you should have access to the test system; if this is not the case, you need to contact the Customs Business Support Help desk where they will organise this.

Phone: 1800 022 267 (select option 1, then option 2)

2) You will then need to contact steven.whitehorn@customs.gov.au by email asking to be setup as a broker in the test environment. Steven will register you as a broker in test, provide a dummy bank account and provide you with AQIS accreditation for testing purposes.

If that all sounds too complex call me and I will assist with the arrangements.

Once you have done this, you can access the ICS TEST environment through your normal login process. Once in the test environment, you simply click on the Imports menu down the left hand side and you can begin creating Import Declarations, SACs, etc and become familiar with how the diagnostic facility operates in the new environment.

Customs has created dummy manifests and flights that can be used to simulate cargo reports for matching purposes.

In the next few weeks I will be calling for volunteers to attend half day Customs Interactive testing sessions in various regions. I would like to get examples of "real" data with accompanying COMPILER printouts to ensure the new system does what the current one does. If you prefer to attend one of these, you can avoid the about registration process as we will be using my registration details. Call me to register your interest.

AQIS has agreed to be involved in this testing exercise once their profiles are loaded into the ICS Test environment. This will ensure we have had a full end-to-end test of the interactive. I am happy to provide assistance in using the imports system and talk you through any problems you may have in the new system. My contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

I should stress this testing exercise is in addition to the comprehensive testing Customs, AQIS and software developers are currently conducting.

Imports Go Live Date

Customs has a legislative requirement to have the Imports module of the ICS go live by 20 July this year. Following 'go live' there will be a transitional period of up to 40 days.

As with the exports release, Customs is working closely with a group of core software developers to ensure that the decision to go live is taken only after ensuring the system is robust, reliable and efficient.

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Imports Transition and Contingency Procedures

In the next few weeks, Customs and industry will be engaged in the development of the transition and contingency arrangements that will come into effect once the new system is operational.

The industry group that worked with Customs to develop the exports BCP (Business Continuity Plan) will be expanded to address the needs of imports.

Watch this newsletter for updates on this topic in the next few months.
