



Instructions and Guidelines

Damages Policy

September 2010

**This Instruction & Guideline refers to Practice Statement No:
PS2009/22 – Inspection and Examination of Sea Cargo**

Published date: 1 March 2011
Availability: Internal and External
Subject: Damages Policy
Purpose: Sets out Customs and Border Protection policy for identifying and documenting damage to goods
Owner: National Director Cargo
Category: Operational
Contact: National ISO coordinator, Sea Cargo Improvement

The electronic version published on the intranet is the current Instruction and Guideline

Summary of main points

- Competencies required by officers
- Safety requirements
- Goods damaged prior to unpack
- Goods damaged during unpack/repack

This Instruction and Guideline applies to staff in:

- Container Examination Facilities in Brisbane, Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney
- Cargo Examination Facilities in Adelaide, Darwin, Launceston, Newcastle, Townsville

Introduction

This Guideline sets out the procedures to be followed when damaged goods are identified in the Container and Cargo Examination Facilities.

Instructions and Guidelines

Competencies

All staff working in the Examination Hall must have undergone CEF Induction Training.

All officers and contractors on duty must have the appropriate levels of training for any specialised tools they may use (eg. SCBA) or machinery they may operate (eg. forklift).

Safety Requirements

All officers working in the CEF environment should be familiar with Customs' Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines. Further details can be found on the Customs Intranet.

Procedures

Goods Damaged Prior to Customs Unpack

1. When damaged goods are first discovered, work should be halted while an assessment of the damage is conducted.
2. Notify the Team Leader/ Case Officer that damaged goods have been found.
3. The damaged goods must be photographed in the state they were in when discovered. The visual record of the damage should also include any external factors that may have contributed to the outcome (eg. collapsed pallets, evidence

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of poor packing, etc). In cases where the damage is extensive or is likely to be of a high value, serious consideration should be given to also utilising CCTV footage and/or video footage to record the rest of the unpack.

4. Contemporaneous notes describing the damage must also be included in the EXAMS record.
5. Contract unpack staff should also keep records of the damage on their examination records and take digital photographs of the pre existing damage.
6. Once the damage has been assessed and visually documented, unpacking may continue. Caution should be exercised to prevent/minimise any further damage. All subsequent stages of the unpack, including any further damage that may occur, must be visually documented.
7. When the goods have been fully unpacked (or once the threshold of the partial unpack is reached), the full extent of the damage should be assessed. The following details must be added to the Examination Running Log:
 - the number of items/packages that were found to be damaged;
 - a description of the damage;
 - whether any additional damage occurred during the unpack; and
 - the apparent cause of the damage.
8. When repacking the container, ensure that care is taken to safeguard the goods from additional damage. A visual record of the repack must also be maintained, including a photo of the goods prior to the doors being closed.
9. All relevant photos relating to the unpack/repack, including any x-ray images that may illustrate the state of the cargo prior to unpack, are to be stored and cross-referenced to the Examination Running Log.
10. In the EXAMs 2 system, activate the "Damages" option in the "Unpack Detail" screen. Enter the details from the Examination Running Log into the "Description" field of EXAMs 2 under the heading of "Damaged Goods".

Goods Damaged During the Customs Unpack/Repack

1. Immediately after an incident occurs or damaged goods are noticed, work should be halted to avoid any further disruption to the scene until the extent of the damage has been assessed. This may mean temporarily halting work or, if the damaged goods can be isolated, working around it.
2. Inform a Team Leader or Supervisor that goods have been damaged.

3. The damaged goods must be comprehensively photographed. In cases where the damage is extensive or is likely to be of a high value, serious consideration should be given to utilising CCTV footage and/or video footage for the remainder of the unpack/repack.
4. In consultation with the Team Leader/Case Officer, make a determination as to whether the damage was:
 - a) an unavoidable result of the unpack/repack;
 - b) a necessary deconstruction in order to conduct a thorough inspection;
 - c) a result of Customs officer action; or
 - d) a result of CEF contractor action.
5. Unpack contract staff must also keep digital photos and notes of any damage caused during the unpack/repack process.
6. Details of the incident should be noted in the *Examination Running Log*, including:
 - the total number of items/packages damaged;
 - a description of the damage;
 - how the damage occurred;
 - a determination as to how the damage .
7. Once the damage has been assessed and documented, work may continue. In cases where further unloading of the container is required, all stages of the unpack should be continuously documented. Caution should be exercised to prevent/minimise any further damage. Any additional damage should be recorded both visually and in the Exam Log.
8. When repacking the container, ensure that care is taken to safeguard the goods from additional damage.
9. All relevant photos relating to the unpack are to be stored in accordance with Associated Documents for Image Storage and Retrieval and cross-referenced to the Examination Running Log.
10. In the EXAMs 2 system, activate the “Damages” option in the “Unpack Details” screen. Enter the details from the Examination Running Log into the “Description” field of EXAMs 2 under the heading of “Damaged Goods”.
11. If damages have been a result of a Customs officer’s action, details of damages are to be sent to Sea Cargo Improvement complaint’s inbox.

Related Policies and References

Practice Statements:

- Inspection and Examination of Sea Cargo

Other Instructions & Guidelines

- National Guideline Complaint Handling
- Instructions and Guidelines relating to CEF Operations

Key Roles and Responsibilities

National ISO Coordinator, Sea Cargo Improvement, Canberra
CEF Managers

Copies of this document are controlled. Master copies of the document are on the Intranet. National ISO coordinator is responsible for version control.

Consultation

Internal

The following internal stakeholders have been consulted in the development of these Instructions and Guidelines.

- CEF Management and staff
- ISO Coordinators
- Sea Cargo Improvement

External

Approval

Approved on	(date)	(signature)
By	National Director Cargo	
Review Period	This guideline is to be formally reviewed on biennially by Sea Cargo Improvement.	