

Pre-arrival Examination System (Japan)

The Pre-arrival Examination System allows the importer to submit import-related documents to customs before the cargo arrives in Japan or before import related procedures, such as import licenses issued by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry are complete. By completing the examination before the cargo arrives, customs can notify the importer whether an inspection is necessary.

The Pre-arrival Examination System can be applied to imported cargoes that are in need of quick processing: namely, those shipments which require speedy clearance due to the nature of the goods, such as fresh food, those under strict delivery terms, those with a seasonally limited market, such as Christmas and New Year's articles, etc., those requiring procedures under other laws and regulations, and those requiring extensive examination of import declarations, such as items requiring various documents.

Advantages of Pre-arrival Examination System

1. Documents are examined prior to the arrival of the shipment.
2. Some cargoes are required to undergo other legal procedures. This system allows such procedures to be conducted simultaneously with customs procedures.
3. Since the importer knows if inspection is required in advance, he or she can make prior arrangements to facilitate the hand over of goods. However, after giving prior notification, if inspections are required, contents of prior notification can be changed.

To Use the Pre-arrival Examination System

- 1) Target cargo: All imported cargoes
- 2) Documents to be submitted: Pre-arrival declaration form (an import [duty payment] declaration form is used for this purpose), invoice, other necessary information for the determination of tax base.
- 3) Customs office for the submission of documents: A pre-arrival declaration form should be submitted to the customs office which controls the bonded area where the cargo is expected to be brought in.
- 4) Submission time: A pre-arrival declaration can be made at any time either after the bill of lading (Air Way Bill in the case of air cargo) related to the pre-arrival declaration is issued or after the foreign exchange rate for the scheduled import declaration date is announced; whichever is later.