
❖ SPC&B Update ❖

A Newsletter for Clients of Sharretts, Paley, Carter & Blauvelt, P.C.

February 9, 2011

Do Your Competitors Have Access to Your Company's Manifest Information?



Over the years and as recently as our November 10, 2010 *Update*, we have reminded our clients that, absent an affirmative request for confidentiality, the information on shipping manifests can be obtained by import/export data reporting services from U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) under the Freedom of Information Act for publication. Typically, the reporting services' customers would pay significant fees for reports to be generated on their particular products and/or industries.

As technologies have developed, the information on inward manifests is now being made available from a variety of sources at much lower costs, making it increasingly easy for businesses to learn about the sourcing and pricing practices of others in their industry. For example, websites now provide virtually unlimited access to their databases for users to generate their own reports, upon payment of relatively low monthly fees.

Now is the time to take action to avoid having manifest information published in this manner. We regularly submit official requests to CBP that names and addresses of our importing clients, as well as all foreign shipper names, be withheld from publication by reporting services. We work with our clients to ensure that all possible variations of the company names are included in the request, to prevent the information from appearing on the reports. Upon approval of such a request, CBP deletes the confidential information from what is made available to the public for a period of two years.

If you are concerned that your company's information is being published, please contact Gail Cumins at gcumins@spcblaw.com or Allison Baron at abaron@spcblaw.com or call us at 212-425-0055, to learn more about gaining confidential treatment.

75 Broad Street
New York, New York 10004
Phone: 212-425-0055
Fax: 212-425-1797
212-742-2180

SHARRETTS, PALEY, CARTER & BLAUVELT, P.C.

www.spcblaw.com
Email: customs@sharretts-paley.com

1660 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202-223-4433
Fax: 202-659-3904
