

New Rule for Imports of Swordfish to the US

I&E Notice No. 14/99

17 May 99

To: All Traders, Freight Forwarders,
Cargo Agents and Carriers

From **14 Jun 99**, all imports of swordfish into the US must be accompanied by a swordfish Certificate of Eligibility (COE) stating that the shipment of swordfish:

- a. contains no swordfish harvested from the Atlantic Ocean; or
- b. contains no swordfish or pieces of swordfish harvested from the Atlantic Ocean that are less than 15 kg (33 lbs); or
- c. contains pieces of swordfish harvested from the Atlantic Ocean that are less than 15 kg (33 lbs) that were derived from a swordfish that weighed greater than 15 kg (33 lbs) dressed weight (ie, headed and gutted).

To protect young Atlantic swordfish from over-fishing, the US and other members of the International Commission for the Conservation of Tunas (ICCAT) have adopted minimum size limits for Atlantic swordfish. The US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has passed a new rule that prohibits the import into the US of Atlantic swordfish or Atlantic swordfish pieces weighing less than 15 kg (33 lbs) dressed weight unless the pieces were derived from an Atlantic swordfish weighing greater than 15 kg (33 lbs) dressed weight.

Swordfish Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

To determine if the swordfish are eligible for import and to track swordfish imports, each shipment of swordfish exported to the US must be accompanied by the COE regardless of where harvested. The ocean of origin and the flag of the harvesting vessel must be stated on the COE, which will be endorsed by TDB if the application for the COE is in order. A COE may refer to swordfish taken from one ocean area of harvest (Atlantic, Pacific or Indian) and by vessels under the jurisdiction of one nation. If a shipment contains more than one ocean area or swordfish harvested by several vessels from different flag states, a separate COE must accompany the shipment for each ocean area of harvest and for each flag nation of the harvesting vessel. ([Click here to download a sample of the COE](#)).

Application for COE

If your buyer requires a COE for your export of swordfish to the US, you may submit your application for the COE to the Imports and Exports Office (8th floor) of TDB at 230, Victoria Street, Bugis Junction Office Tower, Singapore 188024. Please submit the following documents:

- a. Request for the COE on your company's letterhead stating the number of COEs applied for.
- b. Completed 'Application for Swordfish COE'. Please submit a separate 'Application for Swordfish COE' for each ocean area of harvest and for each flag nation of the harvesting vessel if the shipment contains swordfish taken from more than one ocean area or harvested by several vessels from different flag states.
- c. Copy each of the Export Invoice, Bill of Lading and Export Permit for each COE application.

We will process your application within half a working day from the time of receipt of the

submission provided that all your documents are in order. The US importer is required to present the original copy of the COE to the US authority for the clearance of the consignment.

Retention of Production Records

An exporter who requires the COE from TDB must maintain proper records on the production, imports (including the individual weights of headed and gutted swordfish) and exports of the swordfish, ocean of origin, flag of harvesting vessel for the shipment and other information related to the shipments covered by the COE. In addition, he will retain the supporting documents including invoices, certification and statements from the ship's captain or supplier of the swordfish. These records and documents must be made available to TDB to verify the shipments such as the origin or size of the swordfish exported to the US.

For further enquiries, please call Customs Call Centre at Tel No: 63552000.

PETER CHEAH
MANAGER
TRADE FACILITATION DIVISION