

fication Act of 1962 note preceding section 1202 of this title.

### § 1490. General orders

#### (a) Incomplete entry

(1) Whenever—

(A) the entry of any imported merchandise is not made within the time provided by law or by regulation prescribed by the Secretary;

(B) the entry of imported merchandise is incomplete because of failure to pay the estimated duties, fees, or interest;

(C) in the opinion of the Customs Service, the entry of imported merchandise cannot be made for want of proper documents or other cause; or

(D) the Customs Service believes that any merchandise is not correctly and legally invoiced;

the carrier (unless subject to subsection (c)) shall notify the bonded warehouse of such unentered merchandise.

(2) After notification under paragraph (1), the bonded warehouse shall arrange for the transportation and storage of the merchandise at the risk and expense of the consignee. The merchandise shall remain in the bonded warehouse until—

(A) entry is made or completed and the proper documents are produced;

(B) the information and data necessary for entry are transmitted to the Customs Service pursuant to an authorized electronic data interchange system; or

(C) a bond is given for the production of documents or the transmittal of data.

#### (b) Request for possession by Customs

At the request of the consignee of any merchandise, or of the owner or master of the vessel or the person in charge of the vehicle in which the same is imported, any merchandise may be taken possession of by the Customs Service after the expiration of one day after the entry of the vessel or report of the vehicle and may be unladen and held at the risk and expense of the consignee until entry thereof is made.

#### (c) Government merchandise

Any imported merchandise that—

(1) is described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(1); and

(2) is consigned to, or owned by, the United States Government;

shall be stored and disposed of in accordance with such rules and procedures as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 490, 46 Stat. 726; Pub. L. 91-271, title III, § 301(b), June 2, 1970, 84 Stat. 287; Pub. L. 103-182, title VI, § 658, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2212; Pub. L. 104-295, § 21(e)(9), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3531.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 490, 42 Stat. 963. That section was superseded by section 490 of act June 17, 1930, comprising this section, and repealed by section 651(a)(1) of the 1930 act.

Prior provisions authorizing the collector to take possession of, or store merchandise were contained in

the following sections, all of which were repealed by act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 642, 42 Stat. 989:

R.S. § 2789, authorizing the collector, when an entry was imperfect, to take the merchandise into his custody until the quantity, quality, or value could be ascertained;

R.S. § 2840, providing that when the collector should suspect that merchandise was not invoiced at a sum equal to that for which it had usually been sold, he should take possession and retain the same until its value had been ascertained and the duties paid or secured;

R.S. § 2926, providing that merchandise of which incomplete entry had been made, or entry without specification of particulars, should be conveyed to some warehouse or designated by the collector to remain until the particulars, cost or value should have been ascertained, and the duties paid or secured, and a permit for delivery granted;

R.S. § 2963, providing that when merchandise had not been entered it should be deposited in a public warehouse, and there remain until an invoice was produced, but that it should not be construed to prohibit sales of merchandise to discharge duties and charges;

R.S. § 2964, authorizing the collector to take possession of merchandise, and deposit it in public stores, or other stores to be agreed on, in case of failure or neglect to pay duties, or when the owner, etc., should make entry for warehousing;

R.S. § 2965, providing for the storage in a public warehouse, or private bonded warehouse, of unclaimed merchandise required to be taken possession of by collectors, and making provision for payment of charges and expenses;

R.S. § 2966, as amended by act June 26, 1884, ch. 121, § 24, 23 Stat. 58, providing for the deposit in a bonded warehouse of merchandise imported in vessels, when it should appear by the bills of lading that it was to be delivered immediately after entry of the vessel, or on request, when it did not so appear.

A prior provision authorizing the collector to require a bond for the production of proof to enable the collector to ascertain the class or description of manufacture, or rate of duty to which merchandise was liable, was contained in R.S. § 2925, which was also repealed by act Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 356, title IV, § 642, 42 Stat. 989.

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 104-295 substituted “subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (a)(1)” for “paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a)”.

1993—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103-182, § 658(1), amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (a) read as follows: “Whenever entry of any imported merchandise is not made within the time provided by law or the regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or whenever entry of such merchandise is incomplete because of failure to pay the estimated duties, or whenever, in the opinion of the appropriate customs officer, entry of such merchandise can not be made for want of proper documents or other cause, or whenever the appropriate customs officer believes that any merchandise is not correctly and legally invoiced, he shall take the merchandise into his custody and send it to a bonded warehouse or public store, to be held at the risk and expense of the consignee until entry is made or completed and the proper documents are produced, or a bond given for their production.”

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 103-182, § 658(2), substituted heading for one which read “At request of consignee” and in text substituted “Customs Service” for “appropriate customs officer”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 103-182, § 658(3), added subsec. (c). 1970—Pub. L. 91-271 substituted references to appropriate customs officer for references to collector wherever appearing.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 91-271, see section 203 of Pub. L. 91-271, set out as a note under section 1500 of this title.

## TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(l), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6. For establishment of U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the Department of Homeland Security, treated as if included in Pub. L. 107-296 as of Nov. 25, 2002, see section 211 of Title 6, as amended generally by Pub. L. 114-125, and section 802(b) of Pub. L. 114-125, set out as a note under section 211 of Title 6.

**§ 1491. Unclaimed merchandise; disposition of forfeited distilled spirits, wines and malt liquor**

**(a) Appraisal and sale of unclaimed merchandise**

Any entered or unentered merchandise (except merchandise entered under section 1557 of this title, but including merchandise entered for transportation in bond or for exportation) which shall remain in a bonded warehouse pursuant to section 1490 of this title for 6 months from the date of importation thereof, without all estimated duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, or other charges thereon having been paid, shall be considered unclaimed and abandoned to the Government and shall be appraised and sold by the Customs Service at public auction under such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe. All gunpowder and other explosive substances and merchandise liable to depreciation in value by damage, leakage, or other cause to such extent that the proceeds of sale thereof may be insufficient to pay the duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges, if permitted to remain in<sup>1</sup> pursuant to section 1490 of this title in a bonded warehouse for 6 months, may be sold forthwith, under such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe. Merchandise subject to sale hereunder or under section 1559 of this title may be entered or withdrawn for consumption at any time prior to such sale upon payment of all duties, taxes, fees, interest, storage, and other charges, and expenses that may have accrued thereon, but such merchandise after becoming subject to sale may not be exported prior to sale without the payment of such duties, taxes, fees, interest, charges, and expenses nor may it be entered for warehouse. The computation of duties, taxes, interest, and fees for the purposes of this section and sections 1493 and 1559 of this title shall be at the rate or rates applicable at the time the merchandise becomes subject to sale.

**(b) Notice of title vesting in United States**

At the end of the 6-month period referred to in subsection (a), the Customs Service may, in lieu of sale of the merchandise, provide notice to all known interested parties that the title to such merchandise shall be considered to vest in the United States free and clear of any liens or encumbrances, on the 30th day after the date of the notice unless, before such 30th day—

- (1) the subject merchandise is entered or withdrawn for consumption; and

(2) payment is made of all duties, taxes, fees, transfer and storage charges, and other expenses that may have accrued thereon.

**(c) Retention, transfer, destruction, or other disposition**

If title to any merchandise vests in the United States by operation of subsection (b), such merchandise may be retained by the Customs Service for official use, transferred to any other Federal agency or to any State or local agency, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe. All transfer and storage charges or expenses accruing on retained or transferred merchandise shall be paid by the receiving agency.

**(d) Petition**

Whenever any party, having lost a substantial interest in merchandise by virtue of title vesting in the United States under subsection (b), can establish such title or interest to the satisfaction of the Secretary within 30 days after the day on which title vests in the United States under subsection (b), or can establish to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the party did not receive notice under subsection (b), the Secretary may, upon receipt of a timely and proper petition and upon finding that the facts and circumstances warrant, pay such party out of the Treasury of the United States the amount the Secretary believes the party would have received under section 1493 of this title had the merchandise been sold and a proper claim filed. The decision of the Secretary with respect to any such petition is final and conclusive on all parties.

**(e) Appraisal and sale or other disposition of forfeited distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor**

All distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor forfeited to the Government summarily or by order of court, under any provision of law administered by the United States Customs Service, shall be appraised and disposed of by—

(1) delivery to such Government agencies, as in the opinion of the Secretary have a need for such distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor for medical, scientific, or mechanical purposes, or for any other official purpose for which appropriated funds may be expended by a Government agency;

(2) gifts to such eleemosynary institutions as, in the opinion of the Secretary, have a need for such distilled spirits, wines, and malt liquor for medical purposes;

(3) sale by Customs Service at public auction under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe, except that before making any such sale the Secretary shall determine that no Government agency or eleemosynary institution has established a need for such spirits, wines, and malt liquor under paragraph (1) or (2); or

(4) destruction.

(June 17, 1930, ch. 497, title IV, § 491, 46 Stat. 726; June 25, 1938, ch. 679, § 14, 52 Stat. 1083; Pub. L. 91-271, title III, § 301(j), June 2, 1970, 84 Stat. 289; Pub. L. 95-410, title II, § 208, Oct. 3, 1978, 92 Stat. 901; Pub. L. 103-182, title VI, § 659, Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2213; Pub. L. 104-295, § 21(e)(8), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3531.)

<sup>1</sup> So in original. The word "in" probably should not appear.