

Japan's Advance Filing Rules (JP24) FAQ

What are Japan Ocean Advance Filing Rules (AFR)?

On March 30, 2012, Japan's primary legislative body, the National Diet, enacted a law that will require additional advanced information for cargo bound for its ports. On May 25, 2012, Japan Customs announced that it would take action to enact the law. At this time, the requirements are expected to be for maritime or ocean cargo only. When fully enacted in March 2014, the rules will amend the current regulation by calling for robust information.

When does an Ocean AFR filing need to be submitted?

Unlike other global advanced manifest regulations, the exact timing for AFR filings to Japan Customs will depend on where the cargo originated and to what Japanese port the freight is destined to arrive. For example, if a shipment departed from South Korea and is bound for Tokyo, then advanced information will be required 24-hours prior to departure of the ocean vessel. For this reason, Japan Ocean AFR is also known as the Japanese Ocean 24-Hour Rule.

[Download a PDF provided by Japan's Customs and Tariff Bureau with more information on Japan's Ocean AFR submission guidelines and for a comprehensive matrix of anticipated cut-off times and origin-country submission details for certain short-distance shipping routes.](#)

Who will need to file Ocean AFR information?

Both carriers and NVOCCs (Non Vessel Operating Common Carriers) will be required to transmit cargo and party-related information to Japan Customs. In addition, all advanced filings must be transmitted electronically. [Download a PDF summarizing the Advance Filing Rules on Maritime Container cargoes provided by Japan's Customs and Tariff Bureau.](#)

What are the Ocean AFR data elements?

In addition to requiring more data elements, the quality of the information transmitted will also be of key importance. For example, in the 'Description of Goods' field, it will be no longer acceptable to simply state that a shipment contains 'apparel'. Instead, the field must be populated with a more robust description, i.e. "Women's knitted shirts, 100% cotton". Japan Customs has stated that incomplete filings will not be accepted.

Also, for some fields, further party and sourcing information will be required. Previously, for example, including only a consignee's name was acceptable. Under the new directive, a consignee's full address, telephone number and country code will be required.

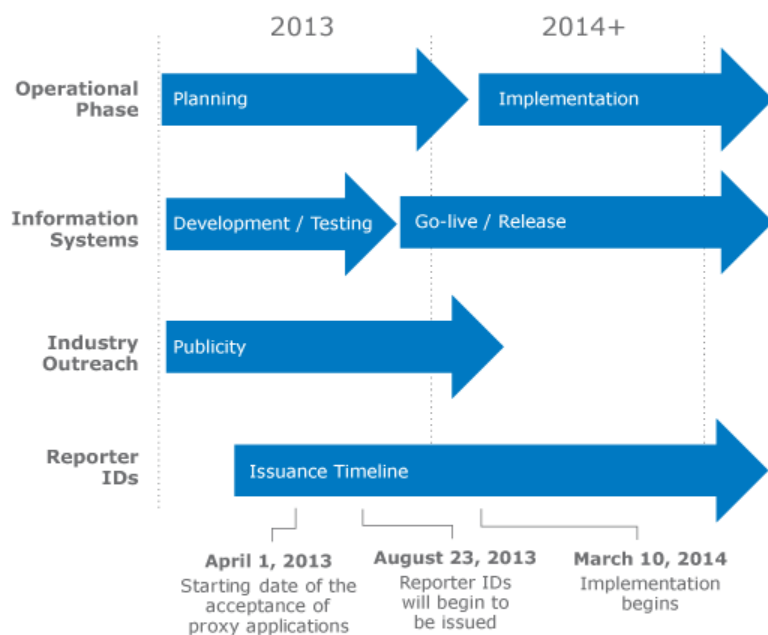
[For a full listing of the anticipated amended data elements that will be required for inclusion in a Japan Ocean AFR filing, download this PDF provided by Japan's Customs and Tariff Bureau.](#)

What will be the penalties for non-compliance?

Japan Customs has noted that "penal provisions could be applied" and that cargo may not be unloaded "without the permission of discharge by Japan Customs." In addition, the agency has stated that those who do not submit cargo information may be "liable to imprisonment with labor for up to a maximum period of one year or a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand yen."

What is the anticipated implementation time for Japan's AFR?

The rollout of Japan's AFR is structured in a tiered approach. The implementation will cover several areas including operational considerations, technical planning and development as well as a communications initiative. Japan Customs recently announced that the requirements will be implemented on 10th March 2014. For more information, [please download this PDF from Japan Customs](#). The below chart also summarizes the current planned implementation schedule.



As an authorized service provider, [Descartes can also help filers obtain a Reporter ID](#), a designation similar to a Standard Carrier Alpha Code (SCAC) in the United States. A Reporter ID will be required to file a Japan Ocean AFR submission.

Descartes has been working closely with the [NACCS Center](#) to electronically submit Japan Ocean AFR manifest information to Japanese Customs.

Potential benefits of our web-based solution to comply with Japan Ocean AFR include:

Reduced risk, improved compliance: The Descartes Japan Ocean AFR solution helps carriers and NVOCCs to comply with legislative requirements while helping mitigate the risk of errors, delays and penalties.

Improved efficiency and productivity: Descartes Japan Ocean AFR users can leverage a single point of access to manage their data entry and filing to ensure compliance with the ruling.

Global visibility: Descartes Japan Ocean AFR users can gain complete real-time global visibility into the status of cargo as it relates to Japan Ocean AFR, and can leverage the Descartes GLN to distribute Customs messages and status information to their client base.

Proven performance: Much of the data required for compliance with Japan Ocean AFR already flows through the Descartes GLN and can be easily modified to help meet current legislative requirements.

