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## Argentina: Four Process Obstacles Faced by U.S. Exporters

Argentina remains a key market for U.S. exports to Latin America. However, recent controls have made exporting goods from any country to Argentina more difficult, as the Argentine Government has implemented progressively more processes that Argentine importers must complete in order to import goods into the country. This report summarizes several Argentine government regulations that U.S. companies should be aware of as they access the Argentine market. It is important for would-be exporters to Argentina to confirm that their Argentine customer has: A) Received the necessary permission to import; B) Has received a non-automatic import license if required, and; C) Has obtained permission to purchase foreign exchange to pay for the import prior to shipping goods to Argentina.

### **Step 1      Application for permission to import**

Since February 1, 2012, Argentina requires that all importers must request and receive approval from the Argentine Tax and Customs Authority (AFIP) prior to importing products from abroad. This sworn affidavit of intention to import (referred to as the DJAI) is required for each import transaction and is reviewed by AFIP. Processing time is officially 15 days, but many requests are put on hold for indefinite periods of review. An Argentine firm or individual who wishes to import must utilize the services of an Argentine customs broker to file the DJAI through the online Custom's system known as MARIA if they do not possess a customs brokerage license to handle their own imports. The requested merchandise must arrive in Argentina within 180 days of the DJAI being marked "Salida" by AFIP to signify approval to import. Follow this link for additional information on the DJAI process: [http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x\\_9655141.pdf](http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_9655141.pdf)

### **Step 2      Application for non-automatic import license**

The Argentine Government requires that many imported products receive a non-automatic license in order to enter the country. The list of items requiring non-automatic import licenses (NAILs) was expanded from 400 to 598 HS code categories in 2011. Long delays are common for Argentine importers who must provide detailed information to the Argentine Ministry of Economy and Production for review and approval prior to the shipment by the exporter. Once a NAIL is granted, it is valid for 60 days. Follow this link for additional information on the NAIL process: <http://export.gov/argentina/doingbusinessinargentina/exportingtoargentina/index.asp>

### **Step 3      Application to buy Dollars**

To maintain foreign currency reserves, the Argentine Government began imposing significant restrictions on remittances of capital and payments to service providers overseas by foreign

companies as well as access to foreign exchange to pay for imports. In October 2011, AFIP implemented a regulation requiring that a request be made in order to purchase U.S. dollars/foreign exchange with Argentine Pesos. Following the implementation on February 1, 2012 of the requirement to file a DJAI prior to importing goods, it became necessary for importing firms to present an approved DJAI to AFIP prior to gaining permission to purchase foreign exchange to pay for an import. AFIP evaluates each request based on the individual's or company's revenue stream, the amount of foreign exchange requested, and stated purpose to which the foreign exchange will be put.

On October 27, 2011 the Argentine insurance regulator issued Resolution 36.162 requiring "all investments and cash equivalents held by locally registered insurance companies be located in Argentina," including US Dollar denominated government securities held out of the country. Hard currency earnings on exports, both from goods and services, must be converted to pesos in the local foreign exchange market. In November 2011, the Government of Argentina eliminated the exceptions previously granted to hydrocarbon and mining exports. These firms must now exchange their revenues to pesos on the local foreign exchange market. Revenues from re-exports of some temporary imports and exports to Argentine foreign trade zones are still exempted from this requirement. For more information on currency controls see the Investment Climate Statement of the annual Country Commercial Guide for Argentina: <http://export.gov/argentina/doingbusinessinargentina/argentinacountrycommercialguide/investmentclimate/index.asp>

#### **Step 4      Miscellaneous and evolving customs requirements**

At the time of import, certain products (books, electronics, and toys, for example) will require additional inspections or testing. These requirements change frequently so the exporter is advised to factor possible delays into the shipping time and sales price. For an update on current measures in place, contact the U.S. Commercial Service at the contact info below. In addition, on March 30, 2012 AFIP Resolution 3304 which introduces new requirements for the verification, valorization, and inspection of imported goods came into effect. As many of the procedures that will be used to implement this expansive new regime of import inspection are not yet clear, the U.S. Commercial Service in Buenos Aires will post a separate document on its website under Exporting to Argentina at <http://export.gov/argentina/doingbusinessinargentina/exportingtoargentina/index.asp> documenting the implementation of Resolution 3304 as soon as implementing details for the resolution are sufficiently clear.

#### **For More Information:**

Please contact Josette Fiore at the U.S. Commercial Service in Argentina: email [josette.fiore@trade.gov](mailto:josette.fiore@trade.gov), telephone +54-11-5777-4683 and/or Ashley Rosen in Market Access and Compliance in Washington, DC: email: [Ashley.rosen@trade.gov](mailto:Ashley.rosen@trade.gov), telephone: +1-202-482-6311.

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