

Southern Currents



Notice to the Area Port of New Orleans Trade Community

Date: September 25, 2023

No: 23-029

SUBJECT: Vessel Entrance and Clearance System [VECS] Rollout in Tri-port Seaports {New Orleans, Gramercy, Baton Rouge}

The rollout of the Vessel Entrance and Clearance System (VECS) will allow vessel masters, operators, and agents to submit certain vessel entry and clearance data and requests to CBP electronically, instead of submitting paper forms, completely automating the entrance and clearance process. Specifically, the system will allow participants to submit the data required on CBP Forms 26, 226, 1300, 1302, 1303, 1304, and 3171 electronically through VECS prior to arrival or departure from designated ports.

With the roll out of the VECS pilot program, the CBP Tri-Port (New Orleans, Gramercy and Baton Rouge) will no longer accept Entrances and Clearances via email after **October 2, 2023**. Until CBP mandates the exclusive use of VECS, vessel agents will have two options to conduct vessel entrances and clearances in the Tri-Port: (1) via the Vessel Entrance and Clearance System or (2) via in person appointments presenting paper documents.

Agents that continue to conduct Entrances and Clearances in person will still be allowed to email the CBP Form 3171 to the appropriate port, however all entrances and clearances must be completed in-person by appointment only.

Agents using VECS are reminded to input the following required details of the remarks section.

- APIS Bond (Name and Number)
- Owners Agent Bond (if applicable)
- Cargo Operations Start/Stop Time

For local questions concerning VECS please contact Port Director James Welch at JAMES.J.WELCH@cbp.dhs.gov.

For questions or issues establishing your ACE accounts or the VECS program please contact OFO-MANIFESTBRANCH@cbp.dhs.gov.