

# BAJA STUDIOS

## PRO-FORMA SHIPPING INVOICES

Pro-forma shipping invoices (a.k.a. shipping manifests and commercial invoices) must be completed for all materials/equipment being shipped from the U.S. to México, or returned from México to the U.S. If possible, each department should prepare their own pro-forma. You might consider hiring additional production assistants (trained to do shipping invoices) to assist your departments and vendors with this operation. Each manifest should be typed (not hand-written) and include:

**a) THE SHIPPER AND THE CONSIGNEE:** The Shipper is your production company c/o your U.S. address, and the Consignee is your production company c/o Studios de la Playa. If you have made arrangements to import certain items through a third-party (Mexican company), the Consignee will be the name of that entity.

**b) DESCRIPTION OF THE GOODS BEING SENT:** Make sure all descriptions are easy to understand. Do not merely use part numbers or overly technical descriptions without a brief explanation as to what the materials are and/or what they are to be used for. People who are not film technicians must translate and assign code numbers to each item, so make it “border friendly”. The pro-forma should clearly indicate where each item is contained, so if you have various crates, boxes, shelves, etc. -- each location on the truck should be numbered. You would, for example, indicate: Drawer #1, then list the contents of the drawer underneath that heading.

Those spot-checking and inspecting the truck at the border have to match the contents of the truck to the pro-forma shipping invoice; so the easier it is to match everything up, the faster the truck will pass through Customs. If you are manifesting a drawer full of tools, you could list “10 screwdrivers” without having to list the size and type of each one. You could indicate “10 assorted pieces of tubing” without having to record the length of each piece. You can combine descriptions on many small items contained in one drawer or box when describing *like-items*. Certain *kits* or *packages* can also be manifested as such without having to describe each piece contained within the kit or package. Check with your custom broker for more specific guidelines on manifest descriptions.

If your shipment fills more than one truck, you must manifest the shipment by the truckload, and each pro-forma should indicate the truck number or license number, so it is clear as to which items will be found in which vehicle.

The easier it is to identify the items on the truck and to be able to match the manifest to the goods in the truck, the faster the shipment will cross the border.

**c) DECLARATION OF TEMPORARY OR DEFINITE EXPORT:** You must indicate if shipments are temporary or definite, as they cannot be combined on paper or on a truck. The documentation to cross temporary and definite is different, so if you have a truckload that contains primarily rental equipment and perhaps a box or two of expendable items, the expendables may be pulled off the truck and held to cross at a later time. It is preferable to send expendables separately.

**d) YEAR, MAKE, MODEL, SERIAL NUMBERS, and DIMENSIONS** (whenever applicable) Listing serial numbers is essential to being able to return your equipment back into the U.S.

**e) PRIMARY MATERIAL CONTENT:** (i.e. steel, wood, plastic, etc. if applicable) This requirement is important because certain materials require special permits.

**f) COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** This does not mean where the items are purchased, but where they were manufactured.

**g) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:** Certain chemicals will require special permits, but assuming permits are not necessary on specific items that happen to be in aerosol cans and/or are flammable or toxic -- they should be accompanied by MSDS (Material Safety Data) sheets whenever possible. MSDS sheets can be obtained from the vendor or manufacturer.

**h) DECLARED VALUE FOR CUSTOMS PURPOSES:** There is an unwritten understanding that when asked to declare the value of a shipment, the value will be reduced for customs purposes. It is important to remember that misrepresenting the value to custom authorities is a felony in Mexico and if caught, the goods could be confiscated and the individual/entity may be subjected to a fine.

When purchasing new equipment or supplies to ship into Mexico, remove price tags. Having one value on a price tag and another (reduced) value on your pro-forma shipping invoice will create a customs headache and may hold up your shipment. Again, do not mix temporary and definite exports.

**i) TOTAL WEIGHT OF EACH ITEM/BOX AND WEIGHT OF TOTAL SHIPMENT TOTAL PIECES and TOTAL BULTOS:** *Pedimentos* (Mexican import/export documents) must indicate the number of pieces and the number of "bultos" associated with each shipment. Pieces and bultos are similar, but different. If a truck is carrying three boxes, each containing ten tools, there are 30 pieces and 3 bultos. A bulto could be a box, a container or an entire camera "package".