

May 14, 2024

Ms. Stéphanie Brière
A/Director, Commercial and Trade Branch
Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)
100 Metcalfe Street, 8th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1A 0L8
Canada

Dear Ms. Brière,

We are writing to you today to express our concern with the continued moratorium on new applicants to the Courier Low Value Shipment (CLVS) Program, as outlined in Customs Notice 19-12.

The Customs Notice was published in June 2019 as a retroactive notice, thus the trade community was not aware nor did it have any opportunity to apply to the program before the moratorium was enacted. We appreciate and acknowledge that when the moratorium was announced, no one could have foreseen the pandemic and its resulting challenges to the supply chain, however we are now nearing its five-year anniversary with no substantive information on the CBSA's plans to redesign the CLVS program or lift the moratorium.

The Border Commercial Consultative Committee (BCCC) did have a working group on this topic many years ago, which industry supported. More recently, in early 2022 the BCCC Policy and Programs Committee provided some limited updates on the ELVIS system, which we understand to be one pillar of a redesigned CLVS program. However, we have not seen any communication on the remaining pillars, nor have we received any further updates or consultations on when the new program will be introduced.

The moratorium has created and continues to exacerbate an unfair competitive advantage for those few participants in the existing CLVS program. It is a significant barrier to those who wish to engage in the ever-growing e-commerce market.

While we understand that the Agency has competing priorities, including the implementation of CARM, that may limit resources for a redesign project, it is wholly unfair and impractical to continue to penalize trade chain partners by preventing them from participating in the CLVS program.

If the CBSA is not ready to launch the redesigned CLVS program, the moratorium on access to the existing program should be lifted. Trade chain partners should not be arbitrarily excluded from participation in an active trade facilitation system for the largest import growth market, especially when privileged access continues to be maintained for a small group of participants with no basis on merit or qualification.

CSCB representatives stand ready to engage in further discussions with the CBSA on this important topic and to provide active support to the creation and implementation of a redesigned CLVS program that offers fair, objective and consistent treatment for all parties that wish to engage in the e-commerce market.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Harker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "H".

Janine Harker
President
Canadian Society of Customs Brokers