
STEEL IMPORT MONITORING AND ANALYSIS SYSTEM (SIMA) NEWSLETTER



Volume VI

<http://ia.ita.doc.gov/steel/license/>

August 2005

The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate changes to the license system, steel import monitoring and analysis system (SIMA), and other items of interest to make the program run smoothly.

Inside This Issue

- 1** Expanded SIMA System
- 2** Data Reconciliation Methods
- 3** September's Final Rule
- 4** Albert's Troubleshooting Tips
- 5** An Intern's Experience
- 6** One Millionth License Contest
- 7** Fascinating Statistics

Welcome

Although only three months have passed since our last newsletter, a lot has happened with the expansion of the Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis System (SIMA)—the licensing module has been expanded and the import monitor now incorporates the additional products and provides more detailed views. We continue to emphasize quality in the data we collect and that which we post in the monitor; we describe our efforts on that front. At the same time, we encourage SIMA users and applicants to give us feedback on the new Import Monitor. Finally in this issue our summer intern describes his experience with our team and we provide some fascinating SIMA facts to closeout our sixth issue.

Best Regards,

The Steel Licensing Team

The Expanded Steel Import Monitoring & Analysis System (SIMA)

On March 11, 2005 after a long period of uncertainty about SIMA's future, it was announced that the SIMA system would be continued and expanded to include all steel mill products.

The first step occurred on May 26th when the license system was amended to include basic steel mill products (some 649 10-digit HTS codes), replacing Section 201 product categories (which covered some 261 HTS codes). The purpose of this data collection continues to be a statistical one--to collect this information to be able to provide the public with real time information about these imports. The licenses now cover product categories such as semi-finished steel, hot-rolled and cold-rolled steel, bars-reinforcing (rebar), plate and standard pipe, along with other major steel product categories such as wire rod, heavy structural (beams), oil country tubular goods (OCTG), and stainless steel sheet and strip.

For a list of all basic steel mill products, (by HTS code mapped to the 36 Steel Mill categories), please refer to the SIMA website.

The new steel mill import monitor was officially released on August 2nd. A week later the former 201-monitor was removed from the website. All concepts that were available in the old monitor are available now—albeit in a slightly different form. For now, this monitor provides two basic types of tables:

1. Detailed 6-digit HTS- level tables (showing data collected from the license system only) – see Figure A
2. Aggregate tables and graph (showing data combined from both Census and license) – see Figure B

The detailed tables are the new component. In these tables we provide weekly updates of the 6-digit HTS detail collected from the 1,400-1,500 licenses issued each day. After performing some basic statistical checks of the raw, detailed (10-digit) data, we roll up this information to the 6-digit level. This level of detail was chosen in response to a concern voiced during the public comment period; using 10-digit data in the reports could inadvertently release proprietary data especially since the report are updated weekly. While we don't directly link this detailed information to the Steel Mill categories, we provide a link to indicate which category that 6-digit product falls within and in what proportions. For example, the 6-digit HTS 722540 code 94.6% of its coverage fell into plates cut to length in 2004 in weight terms, in the period June- August 2005, this percentage increase to 95.0%. Having this information allows the user to make certain assumptions about the HTS codes that fall into multiple categories without SIMA reporting it at the 10-digit level.

Product Groups Included in HTS Code 722540

		2004 Census Data		Licensing Data Early Warning June - August 2005	
6-digit HTS Code	Product Groups	Percentage of Product's Quantity Makes of 6-digit code	Percentage of Product's Value Makes of 6-digit code	Percentage of Product's Quantity Makes of 6-digit code	Percentage of Product's Value Makes of 6-digit code
722540	Plates Cut Lengths	94.6%	91.0%	95.0%	91.9%
	Sheets Hot Rolled	2.01%	2.51%	1.67%	1.53%
	Tool Steel	3.37%	6.44%	3.37%	6.57%

Note: Some 6-digit HTS codes contain 10-digit codes that call into multiple steel mill categories. So as not to release proprietary information, we are not dividing these codes into their respective product groups. These tables show the proportion of products within this 6-digit code that fall in each product group.

Each of the underlined words represents a hyperlink, which takes the user to a new table.

The aggregate tables are similar to the former monitor's views in that they are built up from the 10-digit detail to the product categories. The big change is that the census data and the license data are now combined into one chart. To the left of each line is a link to a bar graph of that concept's imports.

We would appreciate any emails that comment, question, or make suggestions about the recent changes to SIMA. Please direct the emails to Steel_License@ita.doc.gov with the phrase "SMP Comment" in the subject bar.

For more information on the expansion, please refer to the '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)', '[Getting Started](#)', and '[Import Monitor](#)' links on the website.

All Products Table (Census and License)

US Imports of Steel Mill Products

[For All Products](#)

Quantity in Metric Tons

[Same Table in US Dollars](#)

[Same Table in Average Unit Value](#)

- Shows All Basic Steel Mill Products by Country (both census and license data in a single table).

Graph	Country	Census Data										Preliminary Census Data	License Data	
		AUG04	SEP04	OCT04	NOV04	DEC04	JAN05	FEB05	MAR05	APR05	MAY05	JUN05	JUN05	JUL05
M	WORLD	3,236,784	3,299,123	3,200,960	3,115,404	2,652,886	2,634,811	2,448,636	2,516,325	2,794,321	2,398,917	2,327,236	2,411,240	2,257,091
M	CANADA	440,568	409,957	384,001	372,074	329,079	425,627	407,802	474,870	459,232	447,786	432,069	432,900	325,797
M	MEXICO	389,173	376,207	350,817	262,217	335,192	316,975	339,784	350,023	334,145	318,129	344,278	347,740	245,296
M	BRAZIL	211,638	333,663	264,253	247,859	265,331	343,308	161,112	163,895	371,908	222,612	89,014	88,761	315,901
M	CHINA	244,945	246,865	209,886	146,356	263,909	210,134	203,692	133,145	217,372	223,650	166,909	150,125	215,392
M	RUSSIA	346,444	330,984	297,086	324,134	77,340	57,444	114,068	257,742	162,185	44,811	179,671	216,460	61,944

Figure A

6-Digit HTS Code Tables

US Imports of Steel Mill Products

FROM WORLD

Quantities in Metric Tons

- Shows All Basic Steel Mill Products for the World in more detail using 6-digit HTS codes

Product	HTS Description	APR05		MAY05		JUN05		JUL05	
		Tons	AUV (\$/ton)	Tons	AUV (\$/ton)	Tons	AUV (\$/ton)	Tons	AUV (\$/ton)
All Products	All Products	-	-	-	-	2,411,240.8	\$811.24	2,257,091.8	\$830.73
720712	SMFD IR/NAL STL LT .25 PCT CRB RECT CS WID 2X THK	-	-	-	-	347,681.9	\$510.71	425,858.5	\$458.97
721420	OTH BRS RDS IOS NA HOT-WRKD, CONC REINFRNG	-	-	-	-	207,551.5	\$440.06	136,139.7	\$425.68
721049	FR IR/NAS CTD/PLTD W ZINC NT ELEC NT CORR 600MM DM	-	-	-	-	107,043.5	\$735.87	62,930.4	\$757.41
730630	PIPE ETC NESOI, WELD CIR CR SECT, IRON OR NONAL ST	-	-	-	-	110,506.6	\$873.08	86,624.1	\$882.13

Figure B

Data Reconciliation Methods

The members of the Steel Licensing Team take great pride in producing accurate data and appreciate our license applicants' help during this process. We process between 7,000-9,000 licenses on a weekly basis that require us to identify and request the correction of any major invalid or incorrect licenses. Those could include unusual import patterns, duplicate licenses, noticeable typos, etc.

Our team has written various programs to expedite the process of identifying single licenses that pose large inaccuracies to the data. To spot outliers we also use graphical analysis and compare our license data with census data. Once we distinguish the possibly incorrect licenses, we contact the applicant to validate or correct the information in their license application. When we receive a response from the applicant we can correct or confirm the license to achieve our goal of making SIMA as accurate as possible. Occasionally, a monitor user spots a discrepancy and informs us; we, in turn, locate the license(s) causing the problem and notify the applicant.

Furthermore, we use email as our primary form of communication for specific questions and also for mass distribution, such as this newsletter. Each time we do a mass distribution, approximately 100 emails are returned because of an increasingly large amount of outdated addresses and phone numbers. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of your responsibility to keep your information current. Changing contact information is quick and easy: log into the system, as you would to fill out a new license and click on "modify profile." We appreciate your efforts in assisting us in our maintenance of the SIMA system.

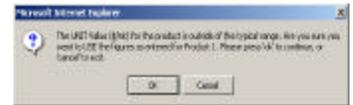
September's Final Rule

Please expect to see a Final Rule for the SIMA system prior to September 30th. At this time we do not anticipate changes in the licensing procedures.

However it is possible that there could be changes to the Steel Mill Import Monitor, which do not require regulatory authority. We value your suggestions so we can take them into consideration for future alterations.

Albert's Troubleshooting Tips

- When submitting an application, a pop-up box may appear if the quantity or value of your item(s) is out of the normal range. If your figures are correct, simply press OK and proceed.
- After submitting a license, the submit button will fade not allowing multiple applications. Please do not create another license, because a duplicate license will be followed by an email asking for a cancellation of one of the duplicates. This is done to ensure the accuracy of our data.
- If you do submit a license with incorrect information you can easily go back and change that information using the **Correct License** feature available once you login with your user ID.
- Make sure you check the box in the bottom left corner verifying that you completed the license to the best of your knowledge, if you do not check this box the license will not be processed.



If you still experience problems, please do not hesitate to call or email the SIMA team for help. Also, if you have ideas on how to better the system, please do not hesitate to contact us with suggestions. ❖

An Intern's Experience (by Albert Cruz of San Antonio, TX)

On June 3rd, I began my first internship at the Department of Commerce in the Import Administration with the Steel License Team. This opportunity was offered through the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) organization that places students of all backgrounds into federal and corporate internships. I arrived in Washington eager to gain professional experience and a true desire to participate in office operations. My first task was to make myself familiar with the lingo, my team members, and most importantly the purpose we serve by performing our daily tasks. I was able to learn a lot quickly with the direction of my supervisor and the commitment of all six of the team members. I am struck by the kindness and professionalism of the SIMA team shown in the office and extended to the people who call and email us. When it became necessary to utilize me in the daily operations of helping applicants with questions or problems, licensing procedures, data reconciliation, and other duties, the whole steel team was there for me. After being prepped by each SIMA member about how to complete my tasks and answer applicants questions, I was informed enough to stand on my own. Now that I have a working knowledge of the function of the SIMA system and witnessed first hand the complexities of expanding the system, I am able to bring this newsletter together. I want to give my deepest thanks to the Steel License Team and the people who were patient with me when I was assisting them. As a Hispanic American, I believe the experience I gained from this internship and living in the busy city of Washington, DC is invaluable. I appreciate all the organizations involved in making opportunities like mine happen and their efforts to diversify the workplace with willing and capable scholars.

One Million - Steel Licenses Sweepstakes

As of today SIMA has issued more than 870,000 licenses. We are looking forward to seeing the 1 millionth license some time by the end of the year. We will be sure to recognize the lucky applicant with a specially hand crafted award

❖ Please Note: This contest is completely unofficial and no government funds will be used. ❖

Fascinating Statistics



- Number of Registered Users to the License System: **3,100**
- Average Number of Licenses Issued Daily: approx **1,400**
- Total Number of Licenses Issued: **870,605**
- Largest Number of Licenses issued: **Bars-Hot Rolled**
- Number of Users of the Monitor: **???**

Updated As of August 24, 2005

<http://web.ita.doc.gov/License/Surge.nsf/Track?OpenForm>

**We encourage you to contact us
with your ideas and suggestions.**

Email: Steel_License@ita.doc.gov

Steel License Team
Import Administration
Department of Commerce
Room 2845
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230
Phone: (202) 482-2105
Fax: (202) 501-1377



Photograph of the 14th Street entrance to the
Department of Commerce, Albert Cruz, 2005