Topic: Business Activity Log

What's Inside:	
• Understanding the Business Activity Log (BAL)	Page 1
• Acknowledging the BAL Disclaimer	Page 2
• Viewing BAL Notifications	Page 2
• Viewing the BAL	Page 3
• Searching the BAL	Page 3
• Creating a New BAL	Page 5
• Adding/Editing a BAL	Page 6
• Adding/Editing Associated Contacts to a BAL	Page 7
• Updating a BAL Activity	Page 8
• Additional ACE Resources	Page 8

Understanding the Business Activity Log

The Business Activity Log (BAL) contains a historical log of information exchanged between U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and an Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) portal account. It can be used to document any activity related to an ACE account with respect to CBP business. It does NOT, however, replace regular or required communication between CBP and any account user.

Using the BAL to communicate with CBP will provide users with the following benefits:

- An itemized list of communications for future reference.
- Easy reference to an organized storage of communication by activity type.
- Important notifications (e.g., periodic monthly statement participants will receive payment overdue notices).

Acknowledging the BAL Disclaimer

Please note the Disclaimer shown on the BAL portlet when the BAL tab is selected. By using the BAL, any account user is acknowledging the following disclaimer:

> *"For purposes of this ACE Release, the Business Activity Log, BAL, is a repository for historical reference of communications, between the Account and CBP, effectuated through other means. It does not replace regular or required methods of communication. Statements made within the BAL, are not to be considered the official position of CBP. No statement made through the BAL implies or creates a requirement that; (1) the statement be verified, or (2) the statement is accurate or correct. The Account is reminded that the official position of CBP is established through binding Rulings issued by the Office of Regulations and Rulings (see 19 CFR part 177), and that the appropriate way of making prior disclosures are set forth in 19 CFR 162.74 (also reference Part 181, subpart H). The BAL is not to be considered as a medium for establishing the official position of CBP."*

Viewing BAL Notifications in Your Task List

A BAL notification entry is placed in the *"Task List"* on the *"Home" tab* when a new BAL has been created. BAL notifications can only be viewed by the Trade Account Owner and the Proxy Trade Account Owner (PTAO).

Once a BAL activity has been created, it cannot be edited or deleted.
A reply can be created as a related BAL activity.

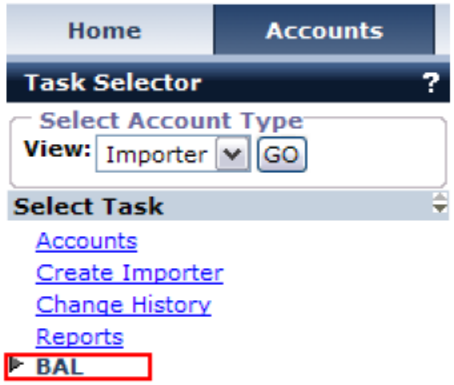
To view a BAL notification, select the item in the "*Description"* column of the *"Task List."*

The BAL notification portlet will appear within the *"Task List."* Select the **Keep on Task List** button to keep the entry, or select the **Remove from Task List** button to remove the entry from the *"Task List."*

Viewing the BAL

When you get a notification stating that your account has a new BAL entry:

1. Select the **BAL** link which is found under the *"Accounts" tab.*



2. Choose the appropriate level in the account list to find the BAL. BALs may be entered and viewed at each level in the account list.

3. To view all BALs for an account, select the "Account Name" (top level of account) in the Account List portlet and select **Rollup.**

*If the **Sub-Account name** is selected, users will only see the BALs associated with that level in the account.*

Searching the BAL

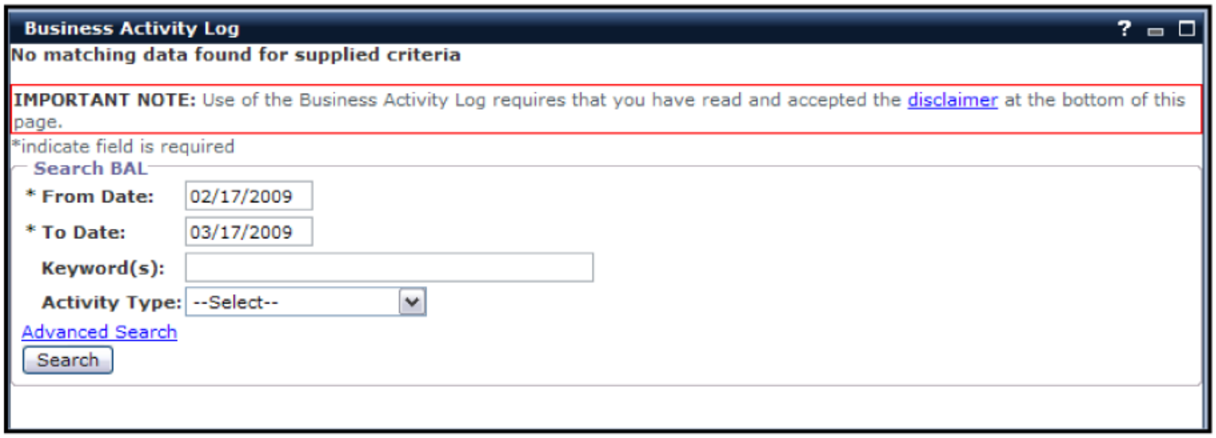
The two types of search mechanisms in the BAL are basic and advanced. A basic search allows the user to search by date, keyword, and/or type. An advanced search allows the user to narrow the search for BAL entries by using additional sets of criteria.

Performing a Basic Search of the BAL

The BAL view can be filtered using any combination of date ranges, keywords or activity types. The activity types available for filtering are:

- Release
- CBP Notices
- PGA
- Certificates/Permits
- Compliance
- Special Program
- Payment Overdue Notice
- Deactivate Account
- Re-Activate Account
- Merge Accounts
- Deactivation Notice
- EDI Profile

1. Select the **BAL** link which is found under the *"Accounts" tab.*



2. Enter one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate:

    a. Enter a start and end date in the "*From Date"* and *"To Date"* fields.

    b. Enter one or more words on which to base the search in the "*Keyword(s)"* field.

    c. Select an "*Activity Type*" from the drop-down menu. If a type is not selected, all options will be searched.

3. Select the **Search** button.

4. When the search results are displayed, select the corresponding link in the *"Subject"* column. An icon appears to the left of the business activity if there are related activities.

5. Select the icon to view related activities.

You can filter BALs based on keywords found within the BAL subject. There is a 40 character limit for keyword searches. You may conduct a wildcard search using an asterisk (*) as a wildcard at the beginning, middle, or end of a string of characters. You cannot filter the BAL based on a single contact by entering the contact's name in the "keyword" field.

Performing an Advanced Search of the BAL

The advanced search capability allows the user to narrow the search for BAL entries using additional criteria.

1. Select the **BAL** link which is found under the *"Accounts" tab.*

2. Select the **Advanced Search** link. The Advanced Search portlet displays.

3. Enter one or more of the following criteria, as appropriate:

    a. Enter a start and end date in the "*Date*" fields.

    b. Enter one or more words on which to base the search in the "*Keywords*" field.

    c. Select one or more IR #s (importer view), port codes (broker view), SCAC codes (carrier view), etc.

    d. Enter a first or last name in the "*Author*" field.

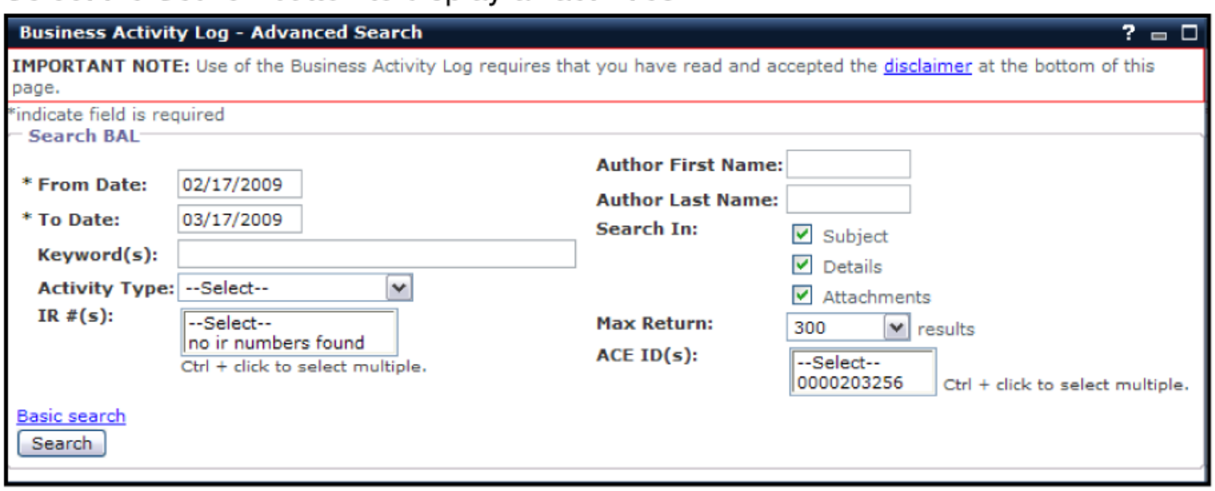
    e. Select the check boxes for "Subject," "Details" or "Attachments," as appropriate for the search. The attachments will be searched only if the Attachments option is checked.

    f. Select one or more "*ACE IDs*."

    g. Select an option from the "*Activity Type*" drop-down menu. If a type is not selected, all options will be searched.

4. Select an option from the "*Max Return*" drop-down menu to limit the number of search results displayed.

5. Select the **Search** button to display all activities.



Creating a New BAL

1. Select the **BAL** link.

2. Within the "*Create New Business Activity*" portlet, select an activity type from the drop down menu and select **Create**.

3. A new screen is displayed with fields relevant to the activity type selected. The "*Author*", "*Creation Date*" and "*Type*" fields are automatically filled in.

4. Enter a "*subject*." There is a 40 character limit.

5. Enter "*Details*" for the activity (optional). There is no limit on this field.

6. Add attachments, if applicable, by selecting the **Add/Edit Attachment(s**) button.

7. Add one or more contacts that are relevant to the activity by selecting the **Add/Edit Trade Contacts** button and selecting the contact name.

8. Select the **Save** button to post the activity to the BAL.

Once the BAL is saved, with or without attachments, it becomes a permanent record and cannot be changed. Any updates must be made in a related BAL.

Adding/Editing a BAL

The "*Add/Edit Attachments*" feature allows files to be attached to BAL activities. All attachments are automatically scanned for viruses before being added to the system.

1. Within the "Create New Business Activity – Create New BAL" portlet, select **Add/Edit Attachment(s).**

2. Select the **Browse** button to find your file. Selecting the "Browse" button launches the standard dialogue box.

3. Navigate to the appropriate folder within the dialogue box and select the file you want and select **Open**.

4. The dialogue box closes and the filename appears in the "Add File" box.

5. Select the **Attach** button. This adds the file to the "Attachment(s)" list.

6. Select the **Save** button to save the attachment.

Adding/Editing Associated Contacts to a BAL

This feature allows the account user to add or remove a contact associated with a BAL activity.

Add/Edit Trade Contacts

To Add a Contact:

1. Select the **Add/Edit Trade Contacts**.

2. Select a contact in the "*Available*" list box and select the single right arrow button. The contact is moved to the "*Selected*" list box. You can select more that one contact by pressing the control key while selecting a contact.

3. Select the **Save** button to save the contact.

To Add All Contacts at Once:

1. Select **Add/Edit Trade Contacts**.

2. Select a contact in the "*Available*" list box and select the double right arrow button. All contacts are moved to the "*Selected*" list box.

3. Select the **Save** button to save the contact.

To Remove a Previously Selected Contact:

1. Select **Add/Edit Trade Contacts.**

2. Select a contact in the "*Available*" list box and select the single left arrow button. The contact is removed from the "*Selected*" list box.

3. Select the **Save** button to save the contact.

To Remove All Previously Selected Contacts:

1. Select **Add/Edit Trade Contacts**.

2. Select a contact in the "*Available*" list box and select the double left arrow button. All contacts are removed from the "*Selected*" list box.

3. Select the **Save** button to save the contact.

Updating a BAL Activity

A business activity cannot be edited or deleted once it has been posted to the BAL. CBP and trade account users can reply with history or reply without history, either of which creates a related activity.

1. Select the **BAL** link and use the BAL filter controls on the BAL portlet to find the specific BAL activity.
2. Select the specific activity by selecting the appropriate link in the "*Subject"* column.
3. Select the **Reply** button to add or create a new related activity that does not contain text from the current activity or select the **Reply w/ History** button to create a new related activity that contains the text of the current.

Additional ACE Resources

For additional assistance, take the available web-based training (WBT) courses.

The URL for the ACE Online Training Center and the required user name and password are:

http://nemo.cbp.gov/ace_online

Do you need additional assistance with the Business Activity Log? *If you are a trade caller or if you are calling outside the United States, please contact* ***Technology Service Desk*** *at 1-866-530-4172.*