



BISNIS BULLETIN

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U.S. Department of Commerce • International Trade Administration



April 2002

U.S. EXPORTS TO EURASIA BACK ON TRACK

by Tanya Shuster and Derek Nowek

U.S. exports to the NIS countries of Eurasia in 2001 exceeded levels in 2000 by 12 percent, fueled by a noticeable jump in U.S. exports to Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, as well as increased exports for a number of industry sectors. Russia remains the leading importer of U.S. goods in this region, attracting 70 percent of overall U.S. exports to the NIS. Top exports to the region included poultry, equipment for oil and gas-related projects, aircraft, and a wide range of technology products.

Russia

Russia imported nearly \$2.6 billion worth of U.S. products in 2001, rising by roughly 25 percent in 2001 and continuing the trend of U.S. export recovery from the effects of Russia's 1998 financial crisis. U.S. exports to Russia fell 42 percent between 1998 and 1999; as of 2001, the United States had recovered one-third of its post-crisis losses, albeit by shifting its export product mix.

Poultry accounted for 25 percent of U.S. exports to Russia in 2001, surpassing even machinery as the top U.S. export to the country. In contrast, in 1998 the leading U.S. export to Russia was aircraft, particularly commercial aircraft under tariff waivers granted by the Russian Government. Machinery was the next most important U.S. export

in 2001 (third in 1998), with oil and gas equipment in particular accounting for the second highest level of exports overall. The United States also exported large amounts of technology equipment—computers and components,

	1999	2000	2001
Russia	\$2,059.8	\$2,092.4	\$2,724.1
Turkmenistan	\$18.4	\$84.4	\$248.4
Ukraine	\$204.6	\$190.9	\$205.1
Kazakhstan	\$179.5	\$124.2	\$162.9
Uzbekistan	\$339.0	\$157.7	\$147.6
Georgia	\$83.5	\$109.5	\$106.9
Azerbaijan	\$54.8	\$209.6	\$64.5
Armenia	\$51.2	\$55.6	\$49.9
Moldova	\$10.6	\$27.3	\$35.5
Belarus	\$26.0	\$31.1	\$34.9
Tajikistan	\$13.8	\$12.1	\$28.9
Kyrgyzstan	\$22.7	\$22.8	\$27.7
TOTAL	\$3,064.2	\$3,117.8	\$3,836.5

Source: Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

telecommunications equipment, and medical equipment. Autos and parts, while playing a smaller role than these others, gained a placing among top U.S. exports.

Russia remains the most important U.S. export destination among former Soviet bloc countries. Although the United States is the third most important supplier to Russia, it provides only 8 percent of Russia's imported goods. U.S. exports to the country are slim by comparison with Germany's (\$5.4 billion in 2001, with 40 percent expansion last year), and pale in comparison to the \$14.5 billion in exports provided by all EU countries, which includes high volumes of machinery, telecommunications equipment, pharmaceuticals, cars, and medical equipment, as well as beauty products and furniture.

Preference and buying power continues to shift among Russian consumers, and these trends are playing out with U.S. exports. U.S. sausage—which the U.S. exported in

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Destination Eurasia: Building Infrastructure for Tourism

May 29–31, 2002
Istanbul, Turkey

Conference web site:
www.trademeetings.com

This U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA)-sponsored conference will cover projects in the tourism infrastructure sector, focusing on architectural services, construction and engineering services, hotel management companies/franchises, furniture/equipment suppliers, roads, airports, environmental controls and other infrastructure such as water, waste and sewage treatment. Featured countries are Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Turkey. U.S. company participants will receive a detailed project resource guide/CD, and one-on-one meetings will be pre-scheduled with project delegates.

BISNIS
*Business Information Service
for the Newly Independent States*

BISNIS is an information resource for U.S. companies doing business in the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Operated by the Market Access and Compliance unit of the International Trade Administration, BISNIS disseminates information in print form, electronically, and through consultations by its staff of trade specialists. For more information, please contact:

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Articles by non-U.S. government employees express the views of the authors and should not be construed as a statement of U.S. government policy.

COMMERCE DEPT. SEMINAR LOOKS AT RUSSIAN VENTURE CAPITAL

The venture capital industry in Russia is still in its infancy but has made major strides over the last few years in terms of the development of venture capital funds and associations, knowledge of how venture capital funds work in other countries, and the improvement of investment legislation. These were some of the conclusions of the "U.S.-Russian Seminar on Venture Capital for Technology Business Growth" on March 15 at the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) in Washington.

The seminar, organized by DOC's Technology Administration (www.ta.doc.gov), and co-sponsored by the Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF—www.crdp.org) and BISNIS, aimed to provoke discussion and creative thinking about how the United States and Russia might collaborate to promote venture financing as a source of funding for technology-based businesses in Russia.

Seminar participants first looked at venture capital in the United States and then discussed the development of the venture capital industry in Russia. Speakers on the U.S. side included Mark Heeson, President, National Venture Capital As-

sociation (www.nvca.com) giving an overview of U.S. venture financing; Kenneth Rind, General Partner, Infinity Venture Capital Fund and CRDF board member, talking about "What do Venture Capitalists Look for in Global Investing Opportunities?"; and Paul Sofianos, Senior Vice President, U.S.–Russia Investment Fund, spoke about "Investing in Russia—Lessons Learned." Russian speakers included Andrei Fursenko, Russian Deputy Minister of Industry, Science, and Technology, who discussed the unrealized potential of high tech investments in the Russian economy; Albina Nikkonen, president, Russian Venture Capital Association (RVCA—www.rvca.com), about the realities and prospects for the venture industry in Russia; Igor Gladkikh, RVCA, about the annual RVCA Venture Fair as a tool to attract investment to technological companies; Larisa Kopysova, director of ER-Capital JSC in Perm, Russia, about the problems and prospects of a regional venture capital fund in the Perm Region; and Maxim Tikhonov, senior associate, Baker & McKenzie, about current trends and key issues as they relate to legislation and legalities of the Russian venture capital industry. Discussion was led by Under Secretary of Commerce for Technology Philip J. Bond and Vice-Minister Fursenko.

UKRAINIAN LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS: NEW LAND CODE

by Anton Lymar and Sergei Onishchenko

On October 25, 2001, the Ukrainian Parliament took a significant step toward land reform by adopting a new Land Code ("Code"), which became effective on January 1, 2002. Some important provisions of the Code, however, will not take effect until January 1, 2005.

The most progressive innovation of the Code is the concept of private ownership of land. Under the previous Code, private land ownership was limited to Ukrainian individuals and the sale-purchase of land was permitted under very limited circumstances.

Although progressive, the Code imposes a number of restrictions and limitations on land ownership (discussed below). In addition, the Code contains many concepts from the previous Code, particularly those related to land use classifications and zoning. Similar to the previous Code, lands are divided into a few major categories, e.g., agricultural lands, lands for residential construction, lands for industry, transportation, energy. The Code, however, now simplifies the procedure for land reclassification, shifting much of the authority from the Parliament to local Councils.

Private Ownership and Limitations on Transfer

Although the most progressive concept is full private ownership of land, the Code establishes a moratorium on the sale-purchase of agricultural lands until January 1, 2005. Also, until January 1, 2010, the area of an agricultural land plot that may be privately owned may not exceed 100 hectares. Moreover, until January 1, 2005, land ownership and use rights cannot be contributed to the charter capital of legal entities.

Another innovation introduced by the Code is the right to pledge (mortgage) privately owned land. However, only Ukrainian banks may act as pledgees, and then only if they comply with the requirements established by law.

Nonagricultural Land

After January 1, 2002, any legal entity or individual can acquire nonagricultural land, except for beaches, roads, and strategically important state-owned lands (e.g., lands of railways, airports, pipelines, atomic energy). No significant limitations are imposed on a nonresident's ownership of nonagricultural land other than those imposed on Ukrainian residents, with the exception of certain important restrictions discussed below.

Agricultural Land

Agricultural land may be privately owned by legal entities and individuals, with the exception of foreigners. However, the sale or other alienation of such land, except for exchange or inheritance, is allowed only after January 1, 2005. Agricultural land inherited by foreigners must be sold within one year after the inheritance.

Only members of farmer organizations and former members of collective agricultural enterprises enjoy the right to privatize agricultural land. However, even after January 1, 2005, agricultural land may only be sold to Ukrainian citizens with a degree in agriculture or work experience in agriculture or who conduct agricultural production activity as well as to Ukrainian legal entities engaged in such activity.

Rights of Nonresidents

Under the Code, foreigners are allowed to own nonagricultural land within city limits, in case of acquiring buildings and structures and for construction purposes, as well as nonagricultural land outside of city limits, in case of acquiring structures situated on such land. Foreigners are also entitled to participate in the privatization of land. However, sales of state-owned land to foreigners must be carried out by the Cabinet of Ministers and agreed to by the Parliament. As for municipal land, sales to foreigners must be carried out by the appropriate local Council and agreed to by the Cabinet.

Further, the sale of state-owned and municipal land is allowed on condition that the foreigner registers a permanent establishment in Ukraine. Foreign countries desiring to acquire state owned or municipal land (e.g., for embassies and consulates) must apply to the Cabinet of Ministers.

New Concepts

The Code also introduces some new concepts in land relations: good-neighborliness and land servitudes (easements). Under the concept of good-neighborliness, land owners and users are required to use land in accordance with its designated purpose to provide the least nuisance to neighboring land plots. As for land servitudes, easements may be given to a landowner or user with regard to the limited free or paid use of another land plot.

Conclusion

The Code may be considered a revolutionary legal enactment that will lead to the development of a functioning land market in which transactions involving the alienation of land will eventually become commonplace. But, at this stage, the Code should mainly be viewed as a basic legal framework for land ownership, with implementation to a large extent dependent on supplementary legal enactments to be adopted on issues such as land surveys and appraisals, as well as the creation of a land register.

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*For more information on Ukraine, visit **BISNIS Online** at www.bisnis.doc.gov/ukraine.*

(EXPORTS, continued from p. 1)

high volumes through the mid-1990s, despite the fact that Russian consumers reportedly did not have much of a taste for it—has all but disappeared from U.S. exports, as have some other prepared foods. Meanwhile, although many would-be U.S. exporters to Russia struggled with certification, nontariff barriers, and financing challenges, 2001 Russian imports from the United States showed growth in such areas as vitamins, beauty products, gaming and fitness equipment, and even furniture.

Central Asia

In 2001, combined U.S. exports to the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan totaled \$616 million, well above the \$385 million in 2000 and the \$570 million in 1999. On a country-by-country basis, Turkmenistan emerged as the largest importer of U.S. goods and services (\$248 million), followed by Kazakhstan (\$163 million), and Uzbekistan (\$148 million). Exports to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan increased slightly to \$29 million and \$28 million, respectively.

Four Boeing aircraft valued at \$180 million led Turkmenistan's import purchases from the U.S. The order included one Boeing 757-200 and three 717-200s and was part of Turkmenistan Airlines continued transition to an all-Boeing passenger fleet. U.S. deliveries to Kazakhstan were dominated by machinery and parts, \$59.4 million—of which oil and gas equipment accounted for about \$35 million—while sales of telecommunications equipment closed at \$20 million. Deliveries of machinery, including about \$15 million for the oil and gas sectors, also accounted for the bulk of U.S. exports to Uzbekistan (\$53.2 million). U.S. wheat products shipments to Tajikistan were worth \$13.3 million. Charitable donations worth \$20 million accounted for the largest portion of U.S. exports to Kyrgyzstan, of which \$7 million was donated medical supplies.

The Caucasus

Combined U.S. exports to the Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) decreased to \$222 million in 2001, from \$376 million the year before. The regional decline in U.S. trade deliveries chiefly reflects the absence of new aircraft sales to Azerbaijan, which purchased two Boeing B757-200 aircraft the year before. Within the region, exports to Georgia and Armenia remained roughly unchanged at \$107 million and \$50 million each, and exports to Azerbaijan closed at \$65 million.

The strongest import orders from the region were for oil and gas machinery and parts (\$23 million from Azerbaijan), frozen poultry products (\$18.2 million from Georgia), and donated goods (\$23 million from Armenia).

Western NIS

The Western NIS countries of Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus imported \$276 million worth of U.S. goods and services in 2001, about \$32 million up from the year before. Ukraine's purchase orders, the biggest importer in the region, were valued at \$205 million, up 7 percent from \$191 million

8th International Conference The Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Sector in Russia

May 14–15, 2002
St. Petersburg, Russia

Organized by: The Adam Smith Institute

For more information, email: pharma@asi-conferences.com or visit www.asi-conferences.com

in 2000. The country's imports were dominated by variety of machinery and parts (\$77.2 million), followed by electrical (mostly telecommunications) equipment (\$23.2 million), and frozen poultry products (\$11 million). Machinery—especially for the oil and gas sector—and donated goods led U.S. deliveries to Belarus and Moldova and were valued at \$12.4 million and \$10.1 million each. Moldova alone received \$7 million in donated U.S. medical goods.

The Bottom Line

Exporting to the NIS region is difficult but it can be done. A market for Western-standard goods exists there, as is evidenced by Western European exports to the region. In the first seven months of 2001, for example, the European Union member countries sold more than \$17 billion worth of goods and services to the NIS. Leading EU export categories included machinery and parts (\$4 billion); electrical equipment (\$1.8 billion); passenger cars (\$1.4 billion); plastic materials (\$683 million); optical and medical products (\$575 million), and pharmaceuticals (\$572 million).

Moreover, exporters should be aware that figures for U.S. exports to the NIS may be misleadingly low because many U.S. goods destined for NIS markets are transported through Moscow and, therefore, counted as exports to Russia.

U.S. exporters to the NIS can expect growing, albeit slowly, demand for their products and services in the region in 2002 and beyond. Food and machinery purchase orders from Russia will continue to dominate U.S. deliveries to the region, followed by sales of machinery, electrical equipment, aircraft, and food products to the other NIS countries. Exports to the NIS region will remain challenging but offer niche opportunities for U.S. companies patient enough to try to enter the market.

For more information on Eurasia-U.S. trade, visit **BISNIS Online** at www.bisnis.doc.gov/country/2001usnistd.htm.

Tanya Shuster and Derek Nowek work for **BISNIS** in Washington, DC.

CURRENCY CONTROL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVELERS TO RUSSIA

by Oganés Sarkisov

In December 2001, the U.S. Commercial Service Russia issued a report about currency and customs regulations governing the carrying in and bringing out of Russia of currency and equivalents by foreign travelers. Unfortunately, cases when U.S. and other foreign citizens fail to comply with the regulations and consequently experience problems with Customs authorities continue to occur. Such failures can result in fines, detention, or arrest. This report is an additional attempt to increase awareness of U.S. travelers about proper currency registration with Customs authorities.

U.S. and other foreign travelers coming to Russia should be aware of the important rules of currency registration.

When Entering Russia

When entering Russia, American travelers should complete a Russian Customs declaration form indicating the amount of all currency and financial instruments, including travelers' checks, being brought into Russia. Although Customs does not require the form be filled out on arrival in order to bring amounts under \$10,000 into Russia, travelers cannot take foreign currency out of Russia unless they can show, via a stamped Customs declaration form, that they declared it upon arrival. Therefore, it is recommended that every traveler over 16 years old fill out a customs declaration.

The following steps should be taken upon arrival:

1. Filling out a declaration—Copies of the declarations are distributed on board the plane or available upon arrival after immigration services. In the declaration, please pay specific attention to field 3.1 (National and other currency in cash, currency valuables, articles made of precious stones in any form and condition). In this table, clearly state all currencies (US \$, DM, Euro, etc.) and use a separate line for each type of currency (to see the two-page sample declaration, please refer to www.buyusa.gov/russia/en). The traveler shall be liable for the information presented in the document. All amounts must be declared. Note that in case money is not declared, such amounts may legally be confiscated by state officials.

2. Personally signing the declaration—Once all data is input and both sides of the declaration are filled out, the traveler must sign the declaration.

3. Passing through Immigration—The first check point you go through once you are off the plane is immigration. At immigration services (a row of glass booths after you get to the airport premises), present only your passport and visa. Do not submit a customs declaration to the immigration officer.

4. Obtaining a Stamp at Customs—After you pass through immigration services and pick up your luggage, you need to

pass through customs. A declaration form is not valid unless a Customs official stamps it upon entry into Russia; therefore, make sure that you: (a) walk through the "Red Corridor" (watch for "Red Zone" signage) not the "Green-Nothing to Declare" lane; and (b) present the filled out and signed customs declaration to a customs officer in a green uniform.

The customs officer stamps the declaration and makes notes in field 3.1.

When in Russia

Keep the declaration safe throughout your visit in Russia in order to present it to customs officials upon departure.

When Exiting Russia

Upon departure, travelers should present the stamped, incoming declaration form to the customs officer at the Red Corridor along with a completed, outgoing declaration form. Travelers need to declare any and all currency and financial instruments, including travelers' checks, being exported.

If the amount exceeds that shown on the original, declaration form, you are required to furnish proof that the excess amount originated from a non-Russian source and was obtained legally. Acceptable documents include a receipt proving either purchase of the cash or cash equivalents in Russia (obtained at the bank upon purchase of foreign currency) or a wire-transfer of cash from abroad to the recipient in Russia.

Unfortunately, Customs does not consider an ATM receipt as sufficient proof. Also, dollars obtained through Embassy check

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World Russian Forum

April 29–30, 2002

Washington, DC

May 2, 2002

New York, New York

The main goal of this forum is to discuss and generate new ideas for the U.S.-Russia business, economic, and political alliance.

For more info., call (202) 986-6010,
email forum@russiahouse.org, or
visit www.russiajournal.com/WRF

BISNIS REACHES OUT TO U.S. COMPANIES

BISNIS overseas and Washington, DC, representatives received a hearty welcome from more than 700 U.S. companies across the country during the week of March 18–22. BISNIS held briefings and one-on-one meetings in 14 cities with U.S. companies interested in business opportunities in the NIS. The events afforded an opportunity for U.S. businesspeople to talk to on-the-ground staff from 10 regions of Russia and 7 NIS countries, and in turn, allowed BISNIS representatives to hear about problems and prospects directly from U.S. firms.

This year's BISNIS outreach celebrated a decade of work with "BISNIS in Eurasia: 10 Years of Lessons—Future Strategies & Best Practices for U.S. Companies for 2002 & Beyond," concentrating on four main themes: (1) lessons learned—avoiding missteps to business development in Eurasia; (2) best practices for business development in Eurasia; (3) financing resources for U.S. exports and other commercial transactions; and (4) business trends and opportunities in specific NIS regions.

One of five outreach groups, each including one BISNIS DC staffer and 3-4 overseas staff, visited the following cities: Chicago, Minneapolis, and South Bend, Ind. (in addition, a video-conference was organized with Fargo, N. Dakota); Sacramento, Cupertino, and Los Angeles, Calif.; Lafayette and Lake Charles, La., and Houston, Tx.; Miami, Fla., and Atlanta, Ga.; Lexington and Louisville, Ky., and Indianapolis, Ind.

High points of the outreach included participation by representatives of the Overseas Private Investment Corp., the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the U.S. Export-Import Bank in several locations, and site visits to U.S. company facilities, including **Apple Computer** (Cupertino, Calif.), **Trans-Oceanic International Freight Co.** (New Orleans), **McDermott** (Morgan City, La.), **Universal Ensco** and **Cameron** (Houston), **System Controls Equipment** and **Petrotech** in New Orleans, **Bio-Nucleonics** (Miami), **A. Finkl & Sons Co.** (Chicago), **Minnesota Wire & Cable Co.** in St. Paul and **Aeration Industries International, Inc.**, in Chaska, Minn., the Indianapolis Speedway (sponsored by **Clabber Girl** of Terre Haute, Ind.), and **Raque Food Systems, Inc.**, and **Papa John's Pizza** of Louisville, Ky.

*For more information on BISNIS' outreach tour, including (eventually) video footage and powerpoint presentations of each group, visit **BISNIS Online** at www.bisnis.doc.gov/outreach02.cfm.*

New at BISNIS OnLine!
www.bisnis.doc.gov

Forbes selected BISNIS OnLine as a "Best of the Web" in its spring 2002 list of top picks of the Internet.

See www.forbes.com/bow for other top picks

BISNIS would like to thank its co-organizers and sponsors for their support and assistance.

The U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs) of Chicago, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Silicon Valley, Sacramento, New Orleans, Houston, Ft. Lauderdale, Atlanta, Lexington and Louisville, Ky. (www.usatrade.gov)

World Trade Association of Los Angeles and Long Beach – www.wtcanet.org

Sacramento Center for International Trade and Development – www.sacramentocitd.org

California-Mexico Trade Assistance Center – www.svcitd.org/cmtac.htm

Chicago Council on Foreign Relations – www.ccrf.org

Illinois District Export Council – www.illinoisdec.org

International Trade Association of Greater Chicago

Greater Houston Partnership – www.houston.org

City of Lake Charles Mayor's Office
 – www.cityoflakecharles.com/mayor

Le Centre International Lafayette – www.lecentre.org

World Trade Center of New Orleans – www.wtc-no.org

World Trade Center of Atlanta – www.wtcatlanta.com

Southern Center for International Studies
 – www.southerncenter.org

Florida Foreign Trade Association – www.ffa.com

Apple Computer – www.apple.com

Armenian-American Chamber of Commerce

California Chamber of Commerce – www.calchamber.com

Inland International Trade Association

National City Bank of Kentucky –
www.kentuckynational.com

Kentucky Department of Agriculture – www.kyagr.com

Union Planters Bank – www.unionplanters.com

KAZAKHSTAN GAINS MARKET ECONOMY STATUS

In March 2002, the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) announced that it is revoking Kazakhstan's non-market economy (NME) status under the U.S. antidumping law. The DOC found that Kazakhstan has operated as a market-economy country, effective October 1, 2001, and that this finding will be effective for all current and future administrative proceedings.

This decision was made in the context of the DOC's ongoing antidumping investigation of silicomanganese from Kazakhstan. In conjunction with this investigation, the Government of Kazakhstan submitted a letter requesting that Kazakhstan's NME status be revoked. In reviewing Kazakhstan's non-market economy status, the DOC was required to take into account six statutory factors: (1) the degree of currency convertibility, (2) free wage rate determination, (3) foreign investment, (4) government ownership or control of production, (5) government ownership over the allocation of resources, and (6) other appropriate factors.

The DOC review found that: Kazakhstan's currency is now fully convertible for current account purposes; wage reforms are well advanced in Kazakhstan, with workers able to unionize and negotiate wages and benefits on an individual and collective basis; the country is open to foreign investments and significant investment has flowed to oil, gas, and metals sectors; most sectors of the economy have been privatized, although a number of large companies remain in majority state ownership; and the allocation of resource decisions in Kazakhstan now rests with the private sector, except regarding price regulation of natural monopolies. The review also notes that corruption and barter deals remain a problem in Kazakhstan.

The impact of the ruling on Kazakhstan's market economy status is that the calculation of dumping for products from Kazakhstan in future antidumping proceedings will be determined by using a normal value (market economy) methodology based on prices and costs within Kazakhstan, rather than a factor valuation (non-market economy) methodology based on costs in a similar "surrogate" market economy country.

American-Uzbekistan Chamber of Commerce (AUCC) May 15, 2002 - Washington, DC

This year's conference will focus on the ongoing process of privatization of former state industries.

For more information, contact:
Robert S. Pace, Executive Director, AUCC, at
tel: (202) 828-4317 or email: aucc@erols.com

(CURRENCY, continued from p. 5)

cashing services are technically not considered legal for export because the Embassy cashier is not considered a registered bank.

Penalties in Case of Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with Customs regulations can result in fines, detention, and/or arrest. If the amount of the currency equals or exceeds a certain sum (which at this point is just under \$5,000 and varies with exchange rate fluctuations), the infraction is considered a criminal case. The money will be confiscated, and the traveler may be arrested and prosecuted.

Potential Future Improvement of the Regulations

Unlike foreigners who need to provide the above-mentioned documentation in order to be able to carry any amount of money out of the country, Russian nationals may legally export up to \$1,500 without a declaration.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Russia (AmCham) is advocating for equal treatment under currency control laws for foreign nationals. In March 2002, AmCham President Andrew Somers reported that a high-ranking official confirmed the Government's intention to favorably resolve this issue in a draft currency control law. The Chamber has also asked the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, an active participant of the Russian American Business Dialogue, to support its efforts in resolving of the problem.

Oganes Sarkisov is a Commercial Specialist at the U.S. Commercial Service Moscow. He can be contacted at tel: +7 (095) 737-5030 or email: Oganes.Sarkisov@mail.doc.gov.

CREDIT RATING RESOURCES

Moody's Investors Service (www.moody's.com), a global credit rating, research, and risk analysis firm, provides ratings and information on governmental and commercial entities in 100 countries, including in Russia.

Standard and Poor's (www.standardandpoors.com) rates corporate finance, financial institutions, insurance, managed funds, non-U.S. public finance, and sovereign entities.

Fitch Inc. (www.fitchratings.com) Fitch Ratings covers the spectrum of corporate, structured, and public finance. They cover sovereign (including supranational and subnational), financial, bank, insurance, and other corporate entities.

Coface North America (www.coface-usa.com) @rating Solution, a worldwide company rating system backed by transaction protection, uses a database of 41 million companies, including in Russia.

This list is by no means exhaustive and does not represent an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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TRADE EVENTS CALENDAR

6th International Oil & Gas Exhibition (OGU)	May 23–24, 2002	Tashkent
Organized by:	ITE Group Plc	
Telephone:	+44 (207) 596-5000	
Email:	oilgas@ite-exhibitions.com	
Website:	www.ite-exhibitions.com	
Food & Drinks. Food Technology	May 22–26, 2002	Chisinau
Organized by:	MoldExpo	
Telephone:	+373 (2) 74-74-19	
Facsimile:	+373 (2) 74-74-20	
Email:	moldexpo@ch.moldpac.md	
Website:	www.moldexpo.md	
Dallesexpo	May 23–26, 2002	Khabarovsk
Organized by:	Far Eastern Intl. Trade Center	
Telephone:	+7 (4212) 343-926	
Email:	dvmtc@dvmtc.khv.ru	
Website:	www.dvmtc.khv.ru	
Sectors:	Forestry, wood-processing equipment, sawmills, woodworking products, furniture.	
KievBuild,Santekhnika, HeatVent, Windows/Doors	May 25–27, 2002	Kyiv
Organized by:	ITE Exhibitions	
Email:	building@ite-exhibitions.com	
Website:	www.buildingshows.com	
Sectors:	Intl. building and construction, sanitary, HVAC, windows & doors	

Ninth International Caspian Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference

June 4–7, 2002
Baku, Azerbaijan

Organized by: Spearhead Exhibitions, Ltd.

The conference will feature a USA Pavilion, housing the American Chamber of Commerce in Azerbaijan, the U.S.-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce, and the U.S. Embassy Commercial Service in Baku, which will offer business counseling, market research, networking opportunities, and a Caspian Finance Seminar.

For more information on the conference, email caspian@spearhead.uk.co or visit www.caspianoilgas.co.uk. For information on the USA Pavilion, contact the U.S. Commercial Service at email: baku.office.box@mail.doc

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