UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Under Secretary

PRESS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO RELEASE PRELIMINARY DATA ON MONTHLY IMPORTS OF STEEL PRODUCTS

For a one-year period, beginning with a release on January 28, 1999, the Department of Commerce will publish on a monthly basis preliminary data on imports of steel products. This exception to the Office of Management and Budget's Schedule of Release Dates for Principal Federal Economic Indicators has been approved to support analyses of import surges. The January 28 release will provide preliminary data covering steel imports for the month of December. The schedule for the release of the preliminary data is as follows:

Statistical Month	Release Date
December 1998	January 28, 1999
January 1999	February 25, 1999
February 1999	March 25, 1999
March 1999	April 22, 1999
April 1999	May 20, 1999
May 1999	June 24, 1999
June 1999	July 22, 1999
July 1999	August 26, 1999
August 1999	September 23, 1999
September 1999	October 21, 1999
October 1999	November 24, 1999
November 1999	December 23, 1999

The data will be released at 10:00a.m. on each of the days indicated in conformance with the lock-up security guidelines set forth in Statistical Policy Directive #3.

Analysis of import data for recent months indicate that, for total steel imports, the value of the preliminary data has equaled about 96 percent of the final value reported in the regular monthly trade statistics report. Preliminary data reported for individual steel categories and at the individual country origin level have been less consistently predictive of the final data reported in the regular monthly trade statistics. The release dates and content of the regular monthly trade statistics report, "U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, (FT-900)" will remain unchanged.