



Hong Kong Import Clearance Guidelines

General Import Clearance Information

Clearance Process

Most of Hong Kong's international traffic arrives at either its airport or at its cargo seaport and entry is submitted to the Customs & Excise Department (C&ED) at those locations. Shipments arriving by land from China are cleared through the electronic manifest submission to the C&ED in ROCARS (Road Cargo System). For air shipments, customs clearance is initiated by the carrier sending cargo information to C&ED electronically through the ACCS (Air Cargo Clearance System) prior to the arrival of the aircraft. C&ED staff will review the inbound cargo information and assign constraint codes to shipments which are restricted, prohibited from entry or which are subject to excise duty (Tobacco, Liquors with an alcoholic strength of more than 30%, Methyl Alcohol, Hydrocarbon Oil). Shipments with constraint codes must be presented to C&ED staff and any other relevant government departments upon arrival. Shipments subject to control by other government departments will be held until the controlling department has been contacted for their instructions and that department has granted an endorsement. The controlling department may perform a physical examination. Shipments without a C&ED constraint code and those which have been examined and released by C&ED are considered cleared through customs.

Persons importing counterfeit goods, infringing copyright laws related to computer software, music CD's and tapes, etc. will be held liable for criminal prosecution.

Except for certain exempted articles like sample shipments valued under HKD 1,000, import shipments usually require an import declaration and, depending upon the commodity, may also require an import license from the government agency which regulates that commodity. When required, the import declaration must be submitted by the importer to the Census & Statistics Department within 14 calendar days of shipment arrival and must include the Harmonized Schedule (HS) statistical data. Unlike many countries, it is possible for a shipment to be cleared through customs before HS number classification has been provided to the government. For those commodities which are subject to excise duty, the importer must pay the excise duty and obtain an import permit C&ED will release the shipment. It is the responsibility of the importer to follow the procedures necessary to become a licensed importer and to obtain the required import licenses and permits from the appropriate agency (ies). License application is made by the importer to the appropriate government department, if possible, prior to the shipments arrival. Carriers, forwarders, and agents may not apply for an import license on behalf of the consignee. It is important that the names and addresses of the foreign exporter and of the Hong Kong importer are consistent on all shipping and license documents.

Import licenses are specific and are issued by the relevant government departments. Examples of licenses and permits are found on various Hong Kong government department web sites such as the website for C&ED. https://www.customs.gov.hk/en/trade_facilitation/prohibited_articles/imports/index.html

Document Requirements

Airway Bill or Bill of Lading

There are no special requirements; however, whenever other documents such as a commercial invoice are included, it is important that the name and address of the foreign importer or exporter and the name and address of the Hong Kong party are consistent on all shipping and license documents. Moreover, specific and detailed description of articles on all shipping documents is required to facilitate customs clearance. The description should state what the goods are, what they're made of and what they're used for.

Commercial Invoice

Commercial invoices are not required to obtain clearance but are needed for advance clearance processing. They are used to identify the different types of licensable shipments and to contact importers prior to arrival in order to



obtain any missing information or documentation. It is recommended that all shipments shipped via FedEx have a commercial invoice prepared and included with the shipment when exporting to Hong Kong. Moreover, specific and detailed description of articles on all shipping documents is required to facilitate customs clearance. The description should state what the goods are, what they're made of and what they're used for.

Import Declaration

An import declaration must be lodged with the Census and Statistics Department for all shipments after the receipt of the goods but within 14 calendar days of importation. It is not required for sample shipments valued below HKD 1,000, or personal gift shipments. Declaration charges are assessed at the rate of HKD 0.2 for the first HKD 46,000 of value plus HKD 0.125 for each additional HKD 1,000 or part thereof and rounded up to the nearest 10 cents. The declaration must be submitted through EDI via Brio, Tradelink or Global e-Trading to the Census and Statistics Department.

Import License

Hong Kong is a free port and has very few trade restrictions. Import and export licenses are required mainly to enable the government to enforce their international obligations. Import licenses are specific and are issued by the relevant government departments. Application is made by the importer directly to the government department. See the "Regulatory Contact Information" section of this profile regarding information on government departments and specific products they control:

- Animal products like dog skin, canine plasma
- Controlled chemicals
- Dangerous drugs
- Dutiable commodities (tobacco, liquor with alcoholic strength of more than 30%, hydrocarbon oils and methyl alcohol)
- Food
- Hazardous chemicals
- Infectious goods
- Manufactured products made from endangered species
- Motor vehicles
- Optical disc mastering & replication equipment
- Chinese herbal medicines and proprietary Chinese medicines
- Pharmaceutical products and medicines
- Radioactive substances and irradiating apparatus
- Radio transmitting apparatus
- Reserved commodities (rice)
- Rough Diamonds
- Sand
- Strategic commodities (e.g. carbon fiber prepreg, cryptographic equipment, encryption/decryption equipment, field programmable logic devices, firewalls/fireboxes, integrated circuits under ECCN3A001, liquid crystal polymers, network equipment, radar systems, routers, security systems, servers, telecommunication systems and virtual private networks)
- Vehicle, Vehicle parts, Outboard engines exceeding 111.9 kilowatts

For details, please refer to the website of C&ED:

https://www.customs.gov.hk/en/trade_facilitation/prohibited_articles/imports/index.html

Dutiable Commodity Permit

Dutiable commodity permits, also called DCP are electronic permits and required for each importation of dutiable



goods. The permits are issued by C&ED to an importer after the payment of excise charges. Once obtained, it must be submitted to C&ED to obtain release of the shipments.

Customs Valuation

Customs valuation is applied to duty/tax assessment for import of dutiable commodities, i.e. liquor with alcoholic strength of more than 30%, tobacco, hydro-carbon oil and methyl alcohol. The value of goods for the purpose of assessing the ad valorem excise duties is determined under the Dutiable Commodity Ordinance.

Import / Excise Duties

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (HKSAR) is a free port and does not levy any Customs tariffs, tariff quotas or surcharges on imports. Nor does "value added" or "general services" taxes on imports apply. There are import / excise duties that are levied on 4 types of goods irrespective of whether they are imported or locally manufactured. These goods are:

- Liquors with alcoholic strength of more than 30%
- Tobacco
- Hydrocarbon oil
- Methyl alcohol

Remark:

Tobacco is not acceptable for carriage. Hydrocarbon oil and Methyl alcohol are subject to dangerous goods requirements.

C&ED assess duty/tax based on the value of goods. When assessed, import / excise duties must be paid prior to clearance and release of the shipment. Importers may pay prior to arrival in order to obtain an Import Permit. For shipments which have import charges assessed in an amount under HKD2,000.00, FedEx will normally advance payment to the appropriate department on behalf of the importer, but such advance is subjected to C&ED's approval and is made at FedEx's discretion.

Hong Kong Import Prohibitions

Certain items are generally prohibited from import into Hong Kong. Please visit the following FedEx website and select "Hong Kong, SAR China" at "Country-specific prohibited Items" for more details.

<https://www.fedex.com/en-hk/shipping/international-prohibited-items.html>

General Import Restrictions

Certain items are not acceptable for carriage to any international destinations unless otherwise indicated. (Additional restrictions may apply depending on destination. Various regulatory clearances in addition to customs clearance may be required for certain commodities, thereby extending the transit time.) Please visit the following FedEx website for our Standard Conditions of Carriage - section "Prohibited Items" for more details.

<https://www.fedex.com/en-hk/conditions-of-carriage.html>

Notwithstanding any other provision of the FedEx Service Guide, we are not liable for delay of, loss of damage to a shipment of any prohibited item. The shipper agrees to indemnify FedEx for any and all costs, fees and expenses FedEx incurs as a result of the shipper's violation of any local, state or federal laws or regulations or from tendering any prohibited item for shipment.

Special Import Provisions



Temporary Imports

Most goods (except liquors, tobacco, hydrocarbon oil and methyl alcohol) can be imported as temporary importations into Hong Kong if consigned for tradeshows, fairs, etc. using FedEx International Priority services. However, the shipper and importer need to be aware that some shipments may need to be moved under an ATA Carnet if they are being forwarded to another country that is not a free port such as Hong Kong. FedEx International Priority service cannot be used if an ATA Carnet is required. If the shipment is not moving under an ATA Carnet it is free to move in and out under normal import and export processing. Please contact your local FedEx customer service department if more information is needed on our services.

Personal Effects

Hong Kong importers and exporters of personal effects are required to lodge import or export declarations. Shipments containing goods that are subject to excise tax are not exempt from excise charges even when declared as gifts or as personal effects shipments.

Samples

Hong Kong allows shipments of samples to enter with a "0" value or "No Commercial Value". While importers and exporters of sample shipments valued at less than HKD 1,000 are exempt from filing import or export declarations, clear goods description on shipment paperwork is still required and there is no exemption from import permits for dutiable commodities even if the shipment value is under HKD 1,000 and the shipping documents state the contents are samples.

Gifts

Importers and exporters of gift shipments are exempt from filing import or export declarations but do require a statement on the shipping documents that the goods are for personal gift, no commercial value. Shipments containing goods that are subject to excise tax are not exempt from excise charges even when declared as gifts or as personal shipments.

Regulatory Contact Information

Branch or Agency Name

[Trade and Industry Department](#)

Trade and Industry Tower,
3 Concorde Road,
Kowloon City, Hong Kong
24 Hours General Enquiry Hotline: 2392 2922

[Customs & Excise Department](#)

3/F Customs Headquarters Building
222 Java Road, North Point
Hong Kong
License and Permit Division
Tel:
3759 2500 (permits)
3759 2398 (licenses)

Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau
Intellectual Property Intelligence and Licensing
Division

Areas of Responsibility

- Import and Export Licensing control (Rice, Strategic Commodities Powdered Formula and Rough Diamonds)
- Import and Export Clearance and Dutiable Commodity (tobacco, liquor with an alcoholic strength of more than 30%, methyl alcohol, hydrocarbon oils) Control of Optical Disc Mastering & Replication Equipment and Controlled Chemicals.



Tel: 2851 1625

Customs Drug Investigation Bureau
Controlled Chemicals Group
Tel: 2541 4383

[Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department](#)

5/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices 303
Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tel: 1823

- Import and Export control of Animals, Animal Products, Plants and Soil including licensing under CITES provisions

[Department of Health](#)

Drug Office
Suite 2002-05, 20/F
AIA Kowloon Tower, Landmark East
100 How Ming Street, Kwun Tong
Kowloon
Tel: 3974 4180

- Import and Export of Pharmaceutical Products and Medicines, Dangerous Drugs, Chinese Medicines, Infectious Goods

Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office
16/F, AIA Kowloon Tower,
Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon
Tel: 3904 9230

Port Health Division
Suite 1101, 11/F, AIA Kowloon Tower,
Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon
Tel: 3904 9316

Radiation Health Unit
3/F Sai Wan Ho Health Center,
28 Tai Hong Street,
Sai Wan Ho, Hong Kong
Tel: 2886 1551

- Import of Radioactive Substances and Irradiating Apparatus (X-ray machines, etc.)

[Environmental Protection Department](#)
Territorial Control Office (Hazardous Chemicals Control)
28/F Southorn Centre,
130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Tel: 2755 5462

- Import and Export of Hazardous Chemicals

[Office of the Communications Authority](#)
25/F & 29/F Wu Chung House,
213 Queen's Road East,
Wanchai, Hong Kong
Tel: 2961 6333

- Import and Export of Radio Transmitting Apparatus

[Census & Statistics Department](#)
Wanchai Tower,

- Control of Trade Data for statistical



12 Harbour Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong
Trade Declaration Enquiry Hotline: 2877 1818

purpose

[Civil Engineering & Development Department](#)
5/F, Civil Engineering and Development
Building, 101 Princess Margaret Road,
Homantin, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tel: 2762 5593

- Import and Export of Sand

[Food and Environmental Hygiene Department](#)
Food Import and Export Section
43/F, Queensway Government Office
66 Queensway, Hong Kong
Tel: 2867 5577

- Import of Food