



ALL IN ONE GUIDE FOR CLEARANCE DOCUMENTS

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All in One Guide for the Custom Clearance Documents

As much as Custom Clearance looks tedious and daunting, it is a smooth and easy process if you follow all the steps cautiously. One of the important steps in getting customs clearance is the proper declaration of documents and completing the verification. Your customs broker will help you in making this process simpler and easier. If you are not sure about why you need to hire a customs broker, please read our post on '360 degrees on the need for a Customs Broker'.

Why should I file documents for my shipment?

The Indian Customs or Customs of any other nation has made it mandatory for the importer and exporter to file certain documents to make sure the international trade is safe and secure.

What are the documents needed to complete this process?

We have a small hiccup here. The necessary documents slightly differ based on the merchandise the importer/exporter wants to ship and also it might vary based on the destination country. To give you a broader overview, we have listed down the necessary legal documents, common documents, and specific documents for customs clearance in India.





Bill of Entry

This is one of the important import documents for customs clearance. It is the legal document to be filed by CHA or Importer duly signed and also serves as the indicator of 'total outward remittance of the country'. This is regulated by the Reserve Bank and Customs department. The Bill of entry must be filed within thirty days of the arrival of goods at a customs location.

The examination of goods happens once the bill of entry is filed. On successful completion of import customs formalities, a 'pass out order' is issued under the existing bill of entry. Now, these goods can be moved out of customs.

Bill of Lading / Airway bill

This is an important carrier's document required for submission with the customs for import customs clearance. Bill of lading or Airway bill issued by the carrier provides all the necessary details of the shipment with terms of delivery. Any discrepancy in declaring accurate details can lead to failure of customs clearance.

Insurance certificate

Insurance certificates can be considered as a supporting document against the importer's declaration on terms of delivery. This document helps customs personnel and authorities in verifying if the selling price includes insurance or not. This might be required to arrive at the assessable value which determines import duty amount.

Commercial Invoice

The invoice serves as the prime document in any form of business transaction. Invoice is one of the documents mandatory for import customs clearance for value appraisal by a concerned customs official. Calculation of assessable value is done based on terms of delivery of goods mentioned in commercial invoices produced by the importer at customs location. The appraising officer must verify if the value mentioned in the commercial invoice matches with the actual market value of the same goods. This inspection helps in preventing fraudulent activities during import or export by over-invoicing or under-invoicing. So, Invoice plays a pivotal role in value assessment in import customs clearance procedures.

Import License

Import license may be considered as one of the required documents for import customs clearance procedures and formalities under specific products. As per guidelines provided by the government, this license may be mandatory for importing specific goods which are because the import of such specific products may have been being regulated by the government from time to time. So, the government might insist on an import license as one of the documents required for import customs clearance.



Purchase order/Letter of Credit

A purchase order will reflect on almost all terms and conditions of sale contract which in turn will enable the customs official to verify and confirm on value assessment. The importer can file a copy of the Letter of Credit along with the documents for import clearance if an import consignment is under the letter of credit basis.

Industrial License if any

This is also required under specific goods importing and they help the importer in availing certain benefits. If an importer can claim any import benefit as per guidelines mandated by the government, such an Industrial License can be produced to avail the benefit.

Test report if any

In certain instances, the customs officials may not be able to identify and verify the quality of goods imported. To overcome this roadblock and to assess the value of such goods, the customs authorities may draw a sample of such imported goods and will arrange to send the sample for testing to government authorized laboratories. Based on the test report, the concerned customs officer will complete the appraisalment of goods.

DEEC/DEPB /ECGC or any other documents for duty benefits

If the importer wishes to avail of any duty exemptions for his imported goods under different schemes like DEEC/DEPB/ECGC etc., this license has to be produced along with other import clearance documents.

Technical write up, literature, etc. for specific good if any

These documents may be required as one of the documents for import clearance only under some specific goods. For example, if a piece of machinery is imported, a technical write up or literature explaining its function can be attached along with importing documents for the reference of the customs officials. This document will also help the customs official to derive the exact market value of such imported machinery which in turn helps for value assessment.

RCMC. Registration cum Membership Certificate if any

This document is filed for the sole purpose of availing import duty exemption from government agencies but under specific goods.



Central excise document if any

Similarly, if the importer avails any central excise benefit under imported goods, the documents concerned towards the same has to be produced along with other import customs clearance documents.

GATT/DGFT Declaration

As per the guidelines mandated by the Government of India, every importer must file the GATT declaration and DGFT declaration along with other import customs clearance documents with customs. GATT declaration has to be filed by Importer as per the terms of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade.

As much as the declaration of these documents seems like a long process, it is very crucial for carrying out international trade most securely and constructively possible. As we already mentioned, if you are associated with a reliable and efficient Customs Broker, this entire process can be completed at the bat of an eyelid. It is the responsibility of every importer to declare these documents without any discrepancies and utmost accuracy.



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