



In Focus: Simplifying Trade Through Self-Certification of Origin



Rules of Origin (ROO) refer to the criteria used to determine where a product was made and its eligibility for preferential tariff treatment. Applying specifically to the ASEAN region, products that comply to the ROO provisions, as indicated in the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), are classified as being of ASEAN origin, and in turn, will be able to enjoy the ATIGA preferential tariff rates.

Simple, business friendly ATIGA ROO, both in design and in application, will strengthen ASEAN's production value chain. To this end, continuous reform and enhancement of the ATIGA ROO are being considered, more specifically on the improvement of the ATIGA Form D Certificate of Origin (CO). This document is issued by a national government to exporters so that it can be used by counterpart importers for a preferential tariff rate under ATIGA.

Against this background, the ASEAN-wide Self-Certification Scheme (AWSC) was just recently launched to further facilitate intra-ASEAN trade. This initiative allows exporters who have demonstrated their competence to comply with ATIGA rules of origin requirements, known as "certified exporters", to self-certify the origin status for their goods to be eligible for ATIGA tariff preferences. With this new implementation, Certified Exporters are now able to make out Origin Declaration to all ASEAN Member States.

About the Bulletin

ASEAN for Business is a bulletin published by the Enterprise and Stakeholder Engagement Division of the ASEAN Secretariat.

This bimonthly bulletin provides quick updates on specific topics related to the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) for businesses operating in the region.

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The Core Concept of AWSC and Its Benefits

The core concept of Self-certification is the shift of responsibility from the government (Issuing Authority/Customs officers) to the private sector (exporters/manufacturers). This concept results in certain benefits: (i) Enabling authorised/certified exporters to make out invoice declarations on the origin of good exported that can be performed anytime; (ii) Simplifying trade procedures that will encourage the private sector to enhance their utilisation of ATIGA commitments; (iii) Minimising implementation issues that discourage traders from utilising the free-trade agreement (FTA); and (iv) Promoting regional production network and reducing cost of doing business (money and time).

Key Differences between AWSC and E-Form D

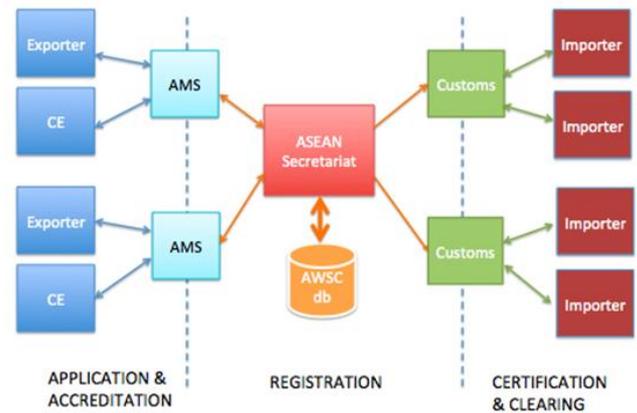
Table 1. AWSC and E-Form D Key Differences

	AWSC	E-Form D	Form D
Issuer of the Certificate of Origin	Certified Exporters	Issuing Authorities	
Time Required to issue an Origin Declaration	Very quick	Longer	
ROO knowledge requirement of the manufacturer/trader	Extensive knowledge of ROO is required	No extensive knowledge of ROO is required	
Obligations or Compliance by the trader	Follow strict requirements as guided on the ATIGA OCP Rule 12A Paragraph 4	Not as strict as the AWSC	
Direct Cost in issuing Origin Declaration	No direct cost	Administrative costs incurred	

AWSC Business Process

The business process for the AWSC can be broken down into three separate phases:

Figure 1. AWSC Business Process



Phase I: Application and Accreditation

This is a transaction between an exporter in one of the 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS) and the Competent Authority in the respective AMS. It is the process by which the exporter submits an application to be a Certified Exporter (CE), provides the necessary documents and proof of compliance to the respective AMS's requirements.

Phase II: Registration

This phase covers the process whereby the respective AMS registers their accredited CEs into the AWSC database maintained by the ASEAN Secretariat.

Phase III: Certification and Clearing

This phase covers when the Certified Exporter issues self-certified origin declarations which are then used by the Certified Exporter by presenting them to Customs in the receiving country for the purposes of claiming the ATIGA preferential tariff.

Becoming a Certified Exporter

Certified Exporter (CE) in the AWSC Scheme is able to produce their own invoice declarations on the origin of goods exported that can be performed anytime for seamless trading among ASEAN Member States. In general, the steps to become a certified exporter are:

1. Check your [company's eligibility](#);
2. Contact and register at the [Competent Authority](#); and
3. Fulfil [CE Obligations](#).

Recent Updates

Inclusive business models offer relief for ASEAN businesses hit by COVID-19

[The Third ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit](#) was convened on 29 September 2020 with government officials and business leaders advocating for inclusive business strategies that support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to recover from economic setbacks during the COVID-19 pandemic in the South-East Asia region. The Summit also introduced the [Guidelines for the Promotion of Inclusive Business in ASEAN](#) and explored its practical application on a national and regional level. The Guidelines were endorsed by the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) during the 52nd AEM Meeting in August 2020 and serve as an outline on how inclusive businesses can be supported at all levels and the institutional requirements to do so.

Ensuring the resilience and sustainability of the agriculture and food sector in ASEAN in the context of COVID-19

[The first 'ASEAN on Point' public forum series](#) produced by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and the ASEAN Secretariat was held on 3 September 2020 to share insights on relevant topics of post-pandemic recovery. Several issues were discussed during the forum, namely: (i) the impacts of COVID-19 on agriculture and food sector in ASEAN; and (ii) opportunities to enhance the resilience and sustainability as well as to promote investment in the agriculture and food sector. Furthermore, the forum resulted in some recommendations and policy options in addressing the impact of COVID 19, such as: increasing investment through R&D and entrepreneurship, and ensuring food trade through diverse supply chains.

52nd ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting

[The 52nd Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers \(AEM\)](#) was held virtually on 25 August 2020. It was chaired by H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam. The Ministers exchanged views on global and regional

developments, including the economic impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Ministers also reviewed the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025, the progress on the 13 Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under Viet Nam's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2020, as well as developments in ASEAN's external economic relations. Furthermore, the AEM also held brief consultations with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) and 10 regional business councils.

Endorsement of the Cambodia - Lao PDR - Myanmar - Viet Nam (CLMV) Action Plan 2021-2022

The CLMV Action Plan 2021-2022 was endorsed at [the Twelfth CLMV Economic Ministers' Meeting \(EMM\)](#) held on 24 August 2020 via videoconference. The Action Plan consists of five areas, namely trade and investment cooperation; implementation of regional commitments; pandemic recovery plan; Framework for CLMV Development; and human resource development

29th Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Directors-General

[The 29th Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Directors-General](#) was held via video conference on 18-19 August 2020. The Meeting endorsed several initiatives and programmes, namely: (i) the Strategic Plans of Customs Development (SPCD) 2021-2025; (ii) updated Terms of References (TORs) of the Customs working bodies; and (iii) the ASEAN Customs Valuation Guide (ACVG) 2019. Furthermore, the ASEAN DGs of Customs also engaged with the private sector, namely representatives of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) and the US-ASEAN Business Council (US-ABC) to strengthen Customs-to-Business partnerships in the region.

Upcoming Events

The 24th ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting (AFMM), 6th ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (AFMGM) and related meetings

Virtual,
1-2
October 2020

The 11th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation (IAMMSTI-11)

Virtual,
5-9
October 2020

The 29th Meeting of Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation Working Group (CPTFWG)

Virtual,
6-8
October 2020

The 38th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting and Related Meetings (AMEM 38)

Virtual,
2-6
November 2020

The 37th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits

TBC,
11-15
November 2020

The 33rd Meeting of the Coordinating Committee on Customs (CCC)

TBC,
25-27
November 2020