

APEC Customs Transit Guidelines 2019

Endorsed by SCCP and CTI in August 2019

Guideline 1: Goods transiting through a non-party or transshipped by a non-party, per se, should not constitute sufficient reasons to reject the eligibility to apply for preferential tariff treatment.

Guideline 2: Measures to demonstrate the compliance of direct transport provisions should focus on the non-alteration of the goods and customs control rather than on the way in which the goods were transported towards the importing economy, according to each FTA.

Guideline 3: For the purpose of transparency and certainty, taking into consideration the existing FTA, APEC Economies should clearly identify a set of possible documents that demonstrate if the direct transport provisions are met. Those documents should be, as much as possible, electronic. Where possible, copies of such documents should be accepted. They could be required by the importing economy, for goods which have previously transited or transshipped through non-parties. This set of documents may include, among others, transport documents, invoice, cargo manifest, proof of origin and commercial documents. However, the importing economy should endeavor to accept equivalent documentation, according to each FTA.

The above-mentioned documents may include, one or more, documents that detail the complete route and they should be able, in a sufficient manner, to demonstrate that the goods in transit, transshipment or deposit have not undergone operations that are different from the ones authorized by the relevant FTA.

Each economy may consider the possibility to accept a document issued by any operator, who intervenes during commercial operations.

Guideline 4: Economies should maintain the requirements as minimum as possible to pursue the policy objectives and review periodically such requirements. Only the essential documentation to credit non-alteration should be required.

Guideline 5: In order to facilitate the demonstration of the compliance of direct transport provisions of goods that transited through a non-party or transshipped by a non-party, without undermining effective enforcement, APEC economies are encouraged to take greater advantage of their bilateral, plurilateral and regional agreements covering customs cooperation.

Guideline 6: To ensure the non-alteration of the goods during transit, transshipment or deposit, APEC economies should endeavor to use technology, such as seals (electronic or not) and adhesive labels, according to the nature of the packaging and, according to each FTA, to the operations authorized in non-parties.

Guideline 7: The SCCP should work towards the harmonization of information requirements through ensuring transparency and monitoring by peer-review. The information to be required should be limited to identify that the direct consignment criteria are satisfied.