

Free Trade Agreement Transshipment Facilitation Scheme (The FTA Scheme)

Briefing Notes

I. Free Trade Agreement

The Mainland of China has been proactive in establishing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements with different countries and regions in recent years. It is stipulated in the FTAs and Preferential Trade Agreements that consignments routed through a third place can also be regarded as direct consignments / transport and are qualified to apply for tariff reduction under certain circumstances, in particular, if they remain under the control of Customs or designated authorities in the third place.

II. Free Trade Agreement Transshipment Facilitation Scheme

To further enrich the facilitation services provided under the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) and to facilitate more transshipment cargo in Hong Kong to be qualified for preferential tariff, the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) has launched the Free Trade Agreement Transshipment Facilitation Scheme (the FTA Scheme) since 20 December 2015. This voluntary scheme provides traders with Customs supervision service and issues “Certificate of Non-manipulation” to certify transshipment cargo that have not been undergone any further processing during their stay in Hong Kong.

III. Scope of Service

Coverage of the FTA Scheme has been extended from the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement to other 22 FTAs and Preferential Trade Agreements signed by the Mainland of China.

The FTA Scheme covers transshipment cargo in Hong Kong **heading for the Mainland of China** under the following agreements:

- (1) Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement between the Mainland of China and Taiwan
- (2) The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement
- (3) Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People’s Republic of China
- (4) The China-Chile Free Trade Agreement
- (5) The China-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

- (6) The China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement
- (7) The China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement
- (8) The China-Peru Free Trade Agreement
- (9) The China-Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement
- (10) The China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement
- (11) The China-Switzerland Free Trade Agreement
- (12) The China-Korea Free Trade Agreement
- (13) The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement
- (14) Special Preferential Tariff Treatment to the Least Developed Countries
- (15) The China-Georgia Free Trade Agreement
- (16) The China-Mauritius Free Trade Agreement
- (17) The China-Cambodia Free Trade Agreement
- (18) The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
- (19) The China-Nicaragua Free Trade Agreement
- (20) The China-Ecuador Free Trade Agreement
- (21) The China-Serbia Free Trade Agreement
- (22) The Early Harvest Arrangement of China-Honduras Free Trade Agreement
- (23) The China-Maldives Free Trade Agreement

The FTA Scheme also covers transshipment cargo in Hong Kong **heading for other places** (currently including **Taiwan, Korea^(Note1), Singapore^(Note2), Vietnam^(Note3), Nicaragua, Australia and Myanmar^(Note3)**) under the following agreements:

- (1) Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement between the Mainland of China and Taiwan
- (2) The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement
- (3) Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China

- (4) The China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement
- (5) The China-Korea Free Trade Agreement
- (6) The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement
- (7) The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
- (8) The China-Nicaragua Free Trade Agreement

Note 1: Korea Customs Service accepts traders to use the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED to apply for preferential tariff under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, the China-Korea Free Trade Agreement or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Note 2: Singapore Customs accepts traders to use the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED to apply for preferential tariff under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People’s Republic of China, the China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Note 3: Vietnam Customs and Myanmar Customs accept traders to use the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED to apply for preferential tariff under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People’s Republic of China or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Traders should pay attention to the requirements concerning whether transshipment cargo could be regarded as direct consignments under respective FTAs and Preferential Trade Agreements, e.g. maximum period of stay in third party, cargo storage and processing arrangements etc. For details of the requirements of related FTA and Preferential Trade Agreement, please visit the website of the China Free Trade Agreement Network by the Mainland Ministry of Commerce –

fta.mofcom.gov.cn/english/index.shtml

<http://english.mofcom.gov.cn>

Under different agreements, the maximum period of stay in the third place may vary and a summary is provided here under (the information provided by related trade agreements prevails)

	Free Trade Agreements and Preferential Trade Agreements	Maximum Transshipment Period
1	Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement	60 days
2	The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement	-
3	Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of South East Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China	-
4	The China-Chile Free Trade Agreement	3 months
5	The China-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement	6 months
6	The China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement	3 months
7	The China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement	-
8	The China-Peru Free Trade Agreement	3 months
9	The China-Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement	3 months
10	The China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement	-
11	The China-Switzerland Free Trade Agreement	-
12	The China-Korea Free Trade Agreement	3 months
13	The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement	12 months
14	Special Preferential Tariff Treatment to the Least Developed Countries	6 months
15	The China-Georgia Free Trade Agreement	3 months
16	The China-Mauritius Free Trade Agreement	6 months

17	The China-Cambodia Free Trade Agreement	-
18	The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement	-
19	The China-Nicaragua Free Trade Agreement	6 months
20	The China-Ecuador Free Trade Agreement	6 months
21	The China-Serbia Free Trade Agreement	-
22	The Early Harvest Arrangement of China-Honduras Free Trade Agreement	6 months
23	The China-Maldives Free Trade Agreement	3 months

IV. Principle of Application [Summary Table at Annex]

The following are the respective requirements of the Mainland of China and relevant signatory countries / regions on transshipment cargoes via Hong Kong:

(A) Transshipment Cargo via Hong Kong to the Mainland of China

1. If consignees of imported goods or agents (Importers) can provide to the Mainland Customs any of the following documents when applying for a convention tariff rate or preferential tariff rate, there is no need to provide the “Certificate of Non-manipulation”:
 - (a) A single through bill of lading issued by the carrier stating that the place of departure is within the boundary of the exporting country / region of the goods and the place of destination is within the boundary of the Mainland of China. In particular, for transshipment cargo by sea originating from an inland country / region, the departure point can be the port of loading of the cargo.
 - (b) For goods transported in containers throughout the entire journey, documents which can prove that the container number and seal number remain unchanged during the whole transportation journey.

2. If the above two requirements could not be fulfilled, importers are required to observe the following requirements to provide “Certificate of Non-manipulation”:
 - (a) For both containerized and bulk cargoes, which are required to have inspection and quarantine by the China Inspection Co. Ltd. (CIC Ltd.) during their stay in Hong Kong, importer is required to submit a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by the CIC Ltd.
 - (b) For containerized cargo which is unsealed not owing to the inspection and quarantine conducted by the CIC Ltd. and bulk cargo requiring no inspection and quarantine during their transshipment stay in Hong Kong, importer is required to submit a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED.
3. When submission of "Non-manipulation Certificate" to the Mainland Customs is required, importers are required to specify “Certificate of Non-manipulation” and the certificate number in the “Marks and Remarks” column of the declaration form, without being required to electronically upload the “Certificate of Non-manipulation”.

[Remarks: For goods requiring inspection and quarantine, please contact CIC Ltd. for details.]

For related announcement by the Mainland Customs, please refer to the following website:

<http://gdfs.customs.gov.cn/customs/302249/zfxxgk/zfxxgkml34/6110883/index.html>

(B) Transshipment Cargo via Hong Kong to Taiwan

1. Trader is required to submit a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED for all transshipment cargo via Hong Kong to Taiwan under the ECFA.

(C) Transshipment Cargo via Hong Kong to Korea

1. For bulk cargo, if a single through bill of lading cannot be provided and storage is required during their transshipment stay in Hong Kong (except those cargo stored at recognized locations¹ for less than seven days), a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED is required.
2. For containerized cargo, which is unsealed causing to the change of container number or seal number during their transshipment stay in Hong Kong, and bulk cargo which require cargo consolidation / vanning / devanning / repacking in Hong Kong, a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED is required.

(D) Transshipment Cargo via Hong Kong to Singapore, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Myanmar

1. If a single through bill of lading cannot be provided for containerized cargo and bulk cargo, a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED is required.
2. For containerized cargo, which is unsealed causing to the change of container number or seal number during their transshipment stay in Hong Kong, and bulk cargo which require cargo consolidation / vanning / devanning / repacking in Hong Kong, a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED is required.

(E) Transshipment Cargo via Hong Kong to Australia

1. For transshipment cargo via Hong Kong to Australia, traders are not necessary to apply for a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED.
2. When transshipment cargo via Hong Kong arrives Australia, traders can directly apply for preferential tariff from the Australian Border Force with supporting document.

For related announcement by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Australian Government, please refer to the following website:

www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/in-force/chafta/doing-business-with-china/Pages/chafta-frequently-asked-questions

¹ Kwai Tsing 1-9 Container Terminals, Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal, SuperTerminal 1, The Hong Kong International Airport Express Centre, Cathay Pacific Cargo Terminal, Asia Airfreight Terminal and DHL Central Asia Hub.

V. Application Methods

Method 1: The application should generally be submitted to C&ED at least one calendar day before the arrival of the consignment by completing the application form and providing the supporting documents required. The application form and supporting documents can be submitted through email.

Method 2: The application should generally be submitted to C&ED at least one calendar day before the arrival of the consignment by submitting the electronic application and providing the supporting documents required through the Trade Single Window (TSW).

Based on the mode of transportation and the processing required, C&ED will calculate the fee and issue a General Demand Note to the Applicant or the Applicant settles the fee online. After payment of the fee by the applicant, C&ED will process the application and provide supervision services (if applicable). Upon completion of application processing, a “Certificate of Non-manipulation”² will be issued to the Applicant. The importing signatory countries / region can check the consignments against the information provided on the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” issued by C&ED when considering an application for preferential tariff. Trader has the responsibility to provide the importing signatory countries / region with the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” or documents supporting their eligibility to apply for preferential tariff.

VI. Supporting Document required for Application

- a. The through bill of lading of the cargo concerned;
- b. Certificate of Origin of the cargo concerned;
- c. Packing list (only applicable to bulk cargo or cargo that needs to be consolidated/vanning / devanning / repacking in HK);
- d. Authorization Letter of the cargo owner (if applicable); and
- e. Other relevant supporting document (if applicable).

² The Mainland Customs may require traders to provide original copy of “Certificate of Non-manipulation” to apply for preferential tariff.

VII. Submission of application

Method 1. Email : fta_china_application@customs.gov.hk (for transshipment cargo to the Mainland of China)
fta_others_application@customs.gov.hk (for transshipment cargo to other places, currently including Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Myanmar)

Method 2. Website: www.tradesinglewindow.hk

VIII. Service Fees

All applications of the FTA Scheme are required to pay the fee under Category D for documentary processing as shown in the following table. For cargo that needs to be consolidated or repacked in Hong Kong, an additional fee will be applied based on different modes of transport and processing methods under Categories A to C as follows:

Category	Mode of Transport	Processing Method	Fee (HK\$)
A	Consignment arriving by Air / Land / Sea	Cargo consolidation (vanning / devanning)	675
B	Consignment arriving by Air	Cargo consolidation (repacking / others)	975
C	Consignment arriving by Land / Sea	Cargo consolidation (repacking / others)	1,600
D	Consignment arriving by Air / Land / Sea	Documentary processing	184

Remarks: For Categories A to C, the above standard fees will be charged on the basis of a continuous service not exceeding 8 hours on each occasion. The standard fee will be charged again for a continuous service over 8 hours.

IX. Payment Method

The applicant may choose one of the following methods to settle payment and get a payment receipt:

1. Pay by cash or cheque at Kwai Chung Customhouse or SuperTerminal 1, Hong Kong International Airport (for application via email only);
2. Pay at any office of the Hongkong Post (except mobile post office);
3. Pay at convenience stores specified in the General Demand Note;
4. Pay at any automated teller machine (ATM) affixed with “Bill Payment Services” or “JET Payment” signage;
5. Through internet banking;
6. Through Payment by Phone Service (PPS) by Internet (Merchant Code: 9174);
7. Through Faster Payment System (FPS);
8. Through “Pay e-Cheque” Portal; or
9. Through online payment via TSW.

- Remarks:
- (1) The payment receipt should be submitted to C&ED through email as soon as possible to facilitate further processing of application (except online payment via TSW).
 - (2) Fees are non-refundable after payment.
 - (3) The applicant must present concerned supporting document for collection of Certificate of Non-manipulation.

X. Enquiry

Tel: (852) 3152 0233
Office hours: 9 am – 10 pm (Mon - Fri); 9 am – 5 pm (Sat and public holidays)
Email: fta_enquiry@customs.gov.hk
Website: www.customs.gov.hk/en/trade_facilitation/fta/index.html

Customs and Excise Department
1 February 2025

申請原則 Principle of Application

海峽兩岸經濟合作框架協議(ECFA), 中國-韓國自由貿易協定 The China-Korea Free Trade Agreement, 亞太貿易協定(往韓國) The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (To Korea), 區域全面經濟夥伴關係協定(往韓國) The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (To Korea)

			往中國內地 ^{4.5} To the Mainland of China ^{4.5}	往台灣 To Taiwan	往韓國 To Korea	
可出示單份全程運輸提單 ¹ Able to provide single through bill of lading ¹	I	集裝箱運輸及散裝貨物 Containerized Cargo & Bulk Cargo	X	✓	X	
未能出示單份全程運輸提單 Not able to provide single through bill of lading	II	集裝箱運輸貨物 ² Containerized Cargo ²	X	✓	X	
	III	散裝貨物 ³ Bulk Cargo ³	✓		沒有在香港儲存 Without storage	X
					在指定地方作短暫儲存 ⁶ With temporary storage at recognized locations in HK ⁶	X
					在香港儲存 With storage in HK	✓
在港拆併或重新包裝 Cargo consolidation / vanning / devanning / repacking in HK	IV	集裝箱運輸及散裝貨物 Containerized Cargo & Bulk Cargo	✓ + 海關監管 + Customs supervision	✓ + 海關監管 + Customs supervision	✓ + 海關監管 + Customs supervision	

其他自由貿易協定及優惠貿易安排

Other FTAs and Preferential Trade Agreement

			往中國內地 ^{4.5} To the Mainland of China ^{4.5}	往其他地方 [*] To other places [*]	往澳洲 ⁷ To Australia ⁷
可出示單份全程運輸提單 ¹ Able to provide single through bill of lading ¹	I	集裝箱運輸及散裝貨物 Containerized Cargo & Bulk Cargo	X	X	X
未能出示單份全程運輸提單 Not able to provide single through bill of lading	II	集裝箱運輸貨物 ² Containerized Cargo ²	X	✓	X
	III	散裝貨物 ³ Bulk Cargo ³	✓		
在港拆併或重新包裝 Cargo consolidation / vanning / devanning / repacking in HK	IV	集裝箱運輸及散裝貨物 Containerized Cargo & Bulk Cargo	✓ + 海關監管 + Customs supervision	✓ + 海關監管 + Customs supervision	X

✓ 需要申請 Application is required

X 不需要申請 Application is not required

備註 (Remarks)

* 其他地方包括新加坡、越南、尼加拉瓜及緬甸

Other places include Singapore, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Myanmar.

1. 單份全程運輸提單為於同一份提單上載有貨物詳細資料的運輸單證(包括空運提單)，包括運輸安排、始發及目的地／港口、貨物名稱、數量及重量。The Single Through Bill of Lading means a bill of lading (including Air Waybill) issued with detailed information of the shipment including transportation details, port/place of departure and destination, description and quantity of the cargo, etc. showing on a single set of bills of lading.
2. 可提交能夠證明貨物在運輸過程中集裝箱箱號、封條號碼未發生變動的全程運輸提單。 Able to provide Through Bills of Lading which can prove that the container number and seal number of the container remain unchanged during its whole transportation journey.
3. 可提交能夠證明貨物在運輸過程中貨物名稱、數量及重量未發生變動的全程運輸提單。 Able to provide Through Bills of Lading which can prove that the description of goods, number of packages and weight remain unchanged during its whole transportation journey.
4. (如適用) 進口人應當在向內地海關進口申報時在報關單“標記號碼及備註欄”內填寫“中轉確認書”字樣及「中轉確認書」的號碼，無需以電子方式上傳「中轉確認書」。 (If applicable) Upon submission of Import Declaration to the Mainland Customs, the importers have to specify “Certificate of Non-manipulation” and the certificate number in the “Marks and Remarks” column of the declaration form, without being required to electronically upload the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” .
5. 經香港中轉往內地所有需進行預檢驗的貨物(包括集裝箱運輸及散裝貨物)，應當向中國檢驗有限公司申請「中轉確認書」。 For all containerized and bulk cargo, which are required to have inspection and quarantine by the CIC Ltd. during their stay in Hong Kong, trader is required to apply the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” from the CIC Ltd. direct.
6. 於認可存倉地點(葵青1號至9號貨櫃碼頭、屯門內河碼頭、超級一號貨站、香港國際機場速遞中心、國泰航空貨運站、亞洲空運中心及敦豪中亞樞紐中心)儲存不多於七天。 Storage at recognized locations (Kwai Tsing 1-9 Container Terminals, Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal, SuperTerminal 1, The Hong Kong International Airport Express Centre, Cathay Pacific Cargo Terminal, Asia Airfreight Terminal and DHL Central Asia Hub) for not more than seven days.
7. 澳洲邊防局接受貿易商直接向澳洲申請關稅優惠而無須向香港海關申請確認書。 Australian Border Force accepts traders to apply for preferential tariff without applying Certificate of Non-manipulation from C&ED.
8. 貿易商有責任向進口締約國/地區提交「中轉確認書」或其它證明其可享有關關稅優惠資格的證明文件。 Trader has the responsibility to provide the “Certificate of Non-manipulation” or supporting documents to the importing signatory country/region to prove their eligibility for preferential tariff.
9. 香港海關在其他清關環節有機會查驗本來無須申請「中轉確認書」的貨物。如在查驗後收到企業申請的要求，香港海關可在審查申請後簽發「中轉確認書」。 In the course of Customs clearance, transshipment cargo, which originally needs not to apply for “Certificate of Non-manipulation”, may be selected by C&ED for examination. Upon receiving application by traders after examination, C&ED may issue a “Certificate of Non-manipulation” after vetting the application.