

CUSTOMS PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING OF VESSELS AND ISSUANCE OF SUFFERANCE IMPLEMENTED ON EMAILS

1. OVERVIEW

At present HIPG and Sri Lanka Customs are working together to establish an electronic gateway for processing of applications for sufferance.

Along with this initiative it is expected to align the application process with the provisions of the Customs Ordinance, standardizing the present practice of manual submission of application by HIPG on behalf of the shipping agents.

It is inevitable, however, that considerable time is taken for the development and implementation of the electronic gateway. Therefore, it is resolved to device an alternative interim measure on existing electronic mail infrastructure with a view to bringing down, time and costs associated with the compliance process.

2. OBJECTIVE

To introduce an efficient and effective procedure and a mechanism for application of sufferance to be made over email by vessel agents to Customs at International Port of Hambantota, and the consent to follow from HIPG on the same to Customs for granting of sufferance, till the electronic gateway is implemented.

3. OUTCOME

- Lowered cost of compliance in vessel reporting and sufferance processing
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness by minimizing manual processes
- Decreased vessel turnaround time
- Alignment of the procedure with the Customs Ordinance

4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1. Agent of the ship/vessel shall report the vessel to Customs (Hambantota International Port - HIP) over email (new email-thread using email-addresses agreed upon) prior to 24 hours after the arrival.
- 4.2. Agent of the ship/vessel shall apply sufferance to Customs (HIP) over email (new email-thread) with a copy to HIPG, followed by reporting of the vessel) before the commencement of cargo operations.
- 4.3. HIPG to report its consent to Sri Lanka Customs in replying to the application for sufferance by the Agent over email (preserving the email thread of step 2).
- 4.4. Sri Lanka Customs to grant sufferance over email (preserving the email thread of step 3) copying to HIPG and the Agent.

4.5. Amendments to any of the reports/applications, if any, shall be made without breaking the email conversation (preserving the email thread).

4.6. Agent shall submit the originals of the vessel report & sufferance application to Customs (HIP) before commencing cargo operations.

5. E-MAIL ACCOUNTS

It is important to understand that this mechanism of processing of vessel reporting and sufferance application over e-mails is merely facilitation to bring down costs and improve efficiency and effectiveness where success depends heavily on trust and compliance.

E-mails clearly provide a simple and very economical platform for all the parties which they can easily adapt to the existing infrastructure, while it is necessary to maintain responsibility and the e-mails to be regarded as non-repudiable on the part of all the participants in the system. It is also necessary to keep all the emails safe and secure under respective accounts for long as required by law in respect of similar paper documents.

Therefore, all the parties are advised to be aware of their responsibilities and are required to use only the e-mail accounts approved and agreed upon and also to maintain a high degree of access security.

It is also helpful to use standardized email addresses for this purpose instead of emails assigned to individual employees by their names, as easy identification of the email address would expedite the whole approval process and avoid possible human errors.

An email address follows the syntax *local-part@domain* and therefore has three parts that are local-part, @ sign and the domain name. While the domain name represents the company or the organization, local-part is generally used to represent a division, branch, director, partner or employee of an organization or even any combination thereof.

To make this effort pragmatic and less prone to errors, it is advised to avoid the use of only the names of individuals in the local part of the email addresses allocated for this purpose, as living entities are subject to frequent changes in positions and responsibilities.

Therefore, the naming convention suggested below is proposed for this purpose:

If chose not to use personal names

[division@domain](#)

[division.subdivision@domain](#)

[division.subdivision.subsubdivision@domain](#)

If chose to use personal names

[nameoftheperson.division@domain](#)

[nameoftheperson.division.subdivision@domain](#)

[nameoftheperson.division.subdivision.subsubdivision@domain](#)

For example, if the name of the division is operations and the name of the employee responsible for reporting is Nimal Perera, then the email address could take the following formats:

Examples:

nimal.perera.operations@abcdshipping.lk

nimal.p.ops@abcdshpping.lk

6. NOTICE OF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

All the parties concerned are required to notify Customs in writing in their company letterheads signed and authorized by respective company Chairman/Managing Director, its intention of using email addresses and respective email signatures given therein with a declaration of their commitment and maintain due diligence in all communications extended under this facility.

It is also necessary that any changes to the email address or addresses are to be notified to Customs forthwith, which is a responsibility of the Chairman/Managing Director of the respective company.

Any misuse of email addresses shall entail liabilities on the parties concerned, in terms of the provisions of the Customs Ordinance.

7. TITLE/SUBJECT OF E-MAILS

It is also necessary for all the emails to follow the same subject /title formulating convention for easy reference. Therefore, it is suggested following format:

For Reporting of Vessel

Syntax: Vessel_name/voyage_number/RV

Example: Prestige Ace/v.0154A/RV

For Application of Sufferance

Syntax: Vessel_name/voyage_number/AS

Example: Prestige Ace/v.0154A/AS

8. CUSTOMS EMAIL ADDRESSES

The email accounts below are available for reporting of vessels and application of sufferance to shipping agents, port operators, terminal operators and port users.

	Division/Branch	Email address (Hambantota International Port)
1	Main Office	hip@customs.gov.lk
2	Wharf Admin	wa.hip@customs.gov.lk

9. IMPLEMENTATION

This edition of the operating procedure shall be treated provisionally as it only intends to provide a foundation for a gradual refinement over the time although the expected adaptation time could be short.

Therefore, it is sensible to implement this in different phases over the time, it is advisable, initially, that the port/terminal operator to inform only the shipping agents/port users who are willing to contribute and adjust themselves with the above requirements.

Such will not only minimize time and costs associated with conducting awareness programs but will also provide space for refinements to the procedure minimizing possible unseen risks on the way.

Finally, a formal operating procedure to be issued by Customs for wider application, once the procedure is refined and proved to meet the initial objectives and confidence is developed.

10. EMAIL TEMPLATES – FROM VESSEL REPORTING TO SUFFERANCE

Email - Vessel Arrival Report Template

Director General of Sri Lanka Customs
International Port of Hambantota

VESSEL ARRIVAL REPORT

Name of Vessel & Voyage No.:
Country of Vessel:
Date & Time of Arrival:

The arrival of the above vessel with the particulars below is reported for issuance of sufferance upon application for the same. Please acknowledge the receipt of this report.

Last port of loading:
Port of discharge:
Total gross weight:
Total CBM:

Type	Description	Quantity	Units
Local			
Transshipment			
Transit			
Restricted / Controlled	Liquor		
	Tobacco & products		
	Dangerous goods		

As the authorized agent of the vessel, I do hereby declare and certify that the information given herein is true and accurate.

Authorized Email Signature
For Name of the vessel agent
Contact Number:

Email - Application for sufferance Template

Director General of Sri Lanka Customs
International Port of Hambantota

APPLICATION FOR SUFFERANCE

Name of Vessel & Voyage No.:
Date & Time of Arrival:
Location of Berth:

Please grant permission to unlade the goods of the vessel reported and berthed at the location above, and store/deposit the same which are declared in the ship's cargo manifest except (Arms, Ammunition, and Dangerous Cargo landing of which is prohibited without special approval from the Director General of Customs) at the Hambantota International Port premises.

As the authorized agent of the vessel, I do hereby declare and certify that the information given herein is true and accurate.

Authorized Email Signature
For Name of the vessel agent
Contact Number:

Email - Port Consent for Unlading Template

Director General of Sri Lanka Customs
International Port of Hambantota

PORT CONSENT FOR UNLADING

Place of storage/deposit:

We hereby express our consent for the unlading and deposit of the goods at the place above and we do undertake that these goods/cargos will not be delivered/removed until receipt of the due clearance from the Sri Lanka Customs.

Authorized Email Signature
For Name of the port/terminal operator
Contact Number:

Email - Customs Sufferance Template

Vessel Agent/HIPG,

SUFFERANCE

Sufferance is hereby granted for the unloading and deposit of the goods declared in the manifest on the consideration of the information and undertakings furnished, for the purposes under Sections 33 and 34 of the Customs Ordinance (Chapter 235).

Email Signature of DDC/SC/ASC
(Name of the Port)

For Director General of Customs

Contact Number:

11. MANUAL TEMPLATES – FROM VESSEL REPORTING TO SUFFERANCE

MANUAL - Vessel Reporting Template

COMPANY LETTERHEAD OF THE SHIP'S AGENT			
Director General of Sri Lanka Customs International Port of Hambantota		Reference: Date:	
VESSEL ARRIVAL REPORT			
Name of Vessel & Voyage No.: Country of Vessel: Date & Time of Arrival:			
The arrival of the above vessel with the particulars below is reported for issuance of sufferance upon application for the same. Please acknowledge the receipt of this report.			
Last port of loading: Port of discharge: Total gross weight: Total CBM:			
Type	Description	Quantity	Units
Local			
Transshipment			
Transit			
Restricted / Controlled	Liquor		
	Tobacco & products		
	Dangerous goods		
As the authorized agent of the vessel, I do hereby declare and certify that the information given herein is true and accurate.			
Authorized signature, stamp & date: For <i>Name of the vessel agent</i> Contact No.:			

MANUAL - Sufferance Application Template

COMPANY LETTERHEAD OF THE SHIP'S AGENT	
Director General of Sri Lanka Customs International Port of Hambantota	Reference: Date:
APPLICATION FOR SUFFERANCE	
Name of Vessel & Voyage No.:
Date & Time of Arrival:
Location of Berth:
<p>Please grant permission to unlade the goods of the vessel reported and berthed at the location above, and store/deposit the same which are declared in the ship's cargo manifest except (Arms, Ammunition, and Dangerous Cargo landing of which is prohibited without special approval from the Director General of Customs) at the Hambantota International Port premises.</p> <p>As the authorized agent of the vessel, I do hereby declare and certify that the information given herein is true and accurate.</p> <p>Authorized signature, stamp & date: For <u>Name of the vessel agent</u></p> <p>Contact No.:</p>	
PORT CONSENT FOR UNLADING	
Place of storage/deposit:	
<p>We hereby express our consent for the unloading and deposit of the goods at the place above and we do undertake that these goods/cargos will not be delivered/removed until receipt of the due clearance from the Sri Lanka Customs.</p> <p>Authorized signature, stamp & date: For <u>Name of the port/terminal operator</u></p> <p>Contact Number:</p>	
SUFFERANCE	
<p>Sufferance is hereby granted for the unloading and deposit of the goods declared in the manifest on the consideration of the information and undertakings furnished, for the purposes under Sections 33 and 34 of the Customs Ordinance (Chapter 235).</p> <p>Signature, stamp & date of DDC/SC/ASC: (<u>Name of the Port</u>) For Director General of Customs</p> <p>Contact Number:</p>	

End