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PRELIMINARY DRAFT
 NATIONAL TRADE OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURE GUIDE
 (SURINAME)



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

SURINAME

1. IMPORT REGIME

1.1 Customs duty policy

Suriname, independent since 1975, is a signatory to the Second Lomé Convention (see Annex II). Its tariff system is based on a condensed form of the Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature (CCCN). Suriname has a single-column schedule of import duties, predominantly ad valorem on the c.i.f value. Imports duty range from 5% to 90% depending on the type of license issued. Imports are allowed on an open general license on a restricted or quota basis or prohibited.

1.1.1 Import tariff

Duty rates (ad valorem and specific rates) range from 5% to 90% with a majority of items falling between 15% and 50%.

Goods entering Suriname under the National Development Incentives Program are admitted free of duty and administered by the Ministry of Finance. The list is amended periodically. These include all material used in the manufactures for export; production and transmission equipment for radio, television, telegraph and telephone systems; cultural, scientific and educational materials enumerated in the Florence Agreement; certain classes of religious supplies; orthopedic materials and equipment; and aviation fuel procured for domestic services.

Goods deemed to be initial capital investment, such as materials and equipment, are granted partial duty exemptions. Also if these goods are classed as important in the formation of capital goods.

Ad valorem duties are levied as a percentage of the value, which is computed by adding to the purchase price all costs of packing, shipping, insurance and handling (c.i.f value).

All prices quoted to importers should be the c.i.f. Paramaribo value. An invoice price of more than 6 months old usually is not accepted and is adjusted upward from 1% and 3%.

While duty is levied primarily on an ad valorem basis, a few items are subject to specific duty. The duty is normally imposed on the net weight, so that the method of packing is not a factor when computing the amount of duty. The net weight is normally determined by customs calculations of tare allowances against gross shipping weights, however, if in doubt actual weighing of the goods could take place.

No formal preferential duty is afforded to goods arriving from any country.

All goods entering Suriname are subjected to a surtax (statistical fee) of 1.5%. A further 1.5% is levied as licensing fee on imports requiring general import license. These taxes are levied on the c.i.f value of the goods.

1.2 Trade requirements

All imports into Suriname are controlled by general import license, on a quota basis or by prohibition or restriction. Imports by foreign companies with industrial activities in Suriname do not require licenses provided that the imports are paid for by using the company foreign exchange holdings. However, the importation of specified explosives and narcotics are prohibited for reasons of public policy or health.

The Suriname Central Import Service, a government agency, acts as the sole importer of certain staple foodstuffs.

Pre-shipment inspection is required for some goods being exported to Suriname. Under Decree E-30 of 3 December 1981, the Suriname Ministry of Economic Affairs reviews every import license to determine whether pre-shipment inspection will be required for that particular shipment. However, if the importers Form E.82 is stamped "Subject ot Inspection", then the goods must be inspected by a representative of the Société Générale de Surveillance of Geneva.

The authority to provide foreign exchange has been granted to the Central Bank of Suriname and is exercised through the commercial banks. The import license serves as a payment license, and as such exchange is made available upon presentation of the license.

1.2.1 Import license and permits

In principle all foreign exchange transactions are subject to license. All imports require a general import license. Some commodities are prohibited if they originated from non-European ACP members for protective reasons. These commodities are admitted from these European countries on a quota basis. Among the commodities are: coffee (roasted and unroasted), sugar, powdered milk, butter, most worked or unworked woods, and certain metal furniture. Prohibited are allowed in special cases.

Section 87.02(a) of the import tariff prohibits entry of cars with engines of more than 6 cylinders. However, most small cars^{1/} are imported on a yearly quota basis, under license. Cars not meeting the small car definition and less than 6 cylinders may be imported at special duty rates and also subjected to a luxury tax. However, only authorized dealers are allowed private imports of automobiles.

Some commodities are subject to quota, irrespective of origin, including matches; pre-fabricated wooden houses; certain women's wear; certain footwear and certain wooden or cane furniture. There are a number of commodities which are restrictive for protective reasons, but licenses are issued subjected to administrative decision rather than to quota. The importation of copra, rice, butter (over 500 g. packs), wheat flour (over 1,000 g.) veneer and furniture, which is neither on the prohibited or restricted lists.

In practice, most import licenses are issued routinely for imports, except for those listed as prohibited or restricted and tobacco, alcoholic beverages, luxury items and firearms. These licenses are issued by the Director of Economic Affairs, directed by the Foreign

^{1/} Small cars are defined as those with a cylinder volume of 1300 cc or less, and empty weight proper not exceeding 1000 kg, and within a specified maximum cif Paramaribo price set by the Government.

Exchange Board. Licenses are valid for 6 months during which time the goods must be landed in Suriname and paid for.

All importers must be licensed, usually such license is valid for five years.

1.2.2 Invoices

All shipping documents should be forwarded separately from the shipment as it is important that the importer or his agent be able to present them promptly upon the arrival of the goods themselves.

i. Commercial invoice

Two copies of this invoice are required, one of which must be sent to the Foreign Exchange Control Board. There are special stipulations and regulations to be considered in connection with invoices covering imported goods. The invoice must show the name and address of the consignee or importer; shipper's acknowledgement of receipt of goods for shipment; ports of embarkation and destination; and a description of the merchandise, weights, marks and numbers, and the shipping handling, and insurance charges in sufficient detail to compute the c.i.f. value.

ii. Consular invoice

Not required.

iii. Pro-forma invoice

May be required by importer to support license application.

iv. Invoice of goods shipment (packing list)

This is not a mandatory document; however, use will facilitate clearance of goods. Data in this document should agree with data in other shipping documents.

1.2.3 Bill of Lading

Although there are no special regulations governing the preparation of the bills of lading, it is assumed that normal commercial practice would be adhered to when completing such bill. "To Order" bills of lading are accepted.

Air cargo shipments require airway bills (in lieu of Bills of Lading), with the number of copies issued based on requirements of the importer and of the airline used, subject to the rules and regulations of IATA and ICAO governing the labelling and packaging of dangerous and restricted goods. ICAO rules may also require documents covering such shipments.

Mail and parcel post shipments require postal documentation in place of bills of lading. For each letter or package containing dutiable material, prints and small packages must have affixed to it, on address side of mail, a green customs label C1, Form 2976 "Authority for Customs to open International Mail". If the value of goods exceed US\$120 or the sender prefers that the description of the goods not be shown, then only the upper portion of this form is affixed. However, a "Customs Declaration" - Form C2, Form 2976A - must be enclosed inside the package.

Insured parcels must be sealed. Parcel post to Suriname is subject to weight and size.^{2/}

2/ Weight: Letters and letter packages: 4lbs.
Printed matter and books: 22lbs.
Small Packages: 2lbs.

Size: Greatest combined length and girth should not exceed 6ft.

1.2.4 Certificates

Of Origin: Required for the imports of fresh and salted meat, fruits and vegetables. Two copies are required.

A Health Certificate is required for the importation of certain live animals and plants from an authority in the country of origin.

For the Insurance Certificate, the importers or insurance company's instructions should be followed.

1.2.5 Technical specifications

Electrical current is 60 cycles, 127 volts, 110/220 volts (Paramaribo), 127/220 volts (Nickerie), 115/230 volts (Moengo, Paramaribo). Generally of 1,3 phases, 2, 3; 2, 4; 2, 3, 4 wires.

Weights and measures are in the metric systems.

1.2.6 Advertising material

Printed advertising matter may be entered duty-free subject to quantity limitations, which may be imposed by the Administrator of customs. Such materials must bear the names of both the foreign contractor and the consignee.

1.2.7 Labelling and marking

There are no special requirements for the marking and labelling of shipments except in the case of goods exempt from import duty. In this case shipments should bear the item number of the exempt classification as contained in Article 16 of the Custom Tariff of Suriname on gross and intermediate containers or packages.

Normal marking practices should be followed.

Exporters to Suriname should ascertain whether or not Suriname is currently adhering to the UN recommendation for the labelling and packing of hazardous and/or restricted materials in a standardized

manner and style.^{3/}

1.2.8 Brands or Trade Marks

No regulations are in force.

1.2.9 Packing

Added to the UN regulations governing packaging and labelling (see 1.2.7 above), packaging into Suriname may be subjected to duty.

1.3 Fines and Penalties

Merchandise may remain in customs for five days without charge. Thereafter it will be stored at the importers expense for up to 90 days prior to being sold by the Administrator of Customs.

Perishable or inflammable goods could be sold anytime after the fifth day following landing.

Provisional entry of goods is usually permitted on a surtax deposit of 2.5% of the value of the goods as assessed by the Administrator of Customs.

1.4 Specimens, Samples

Samples of no commercial value are admitted free of duty. Valuable samples may be imported temporarily duty-free under deposit or bond.

1.5 Shipping Restrictions

Imports into Suriname may be subject to a quality and quantity inspection and price comparison, before shipment is effected (see 1.2 above).

1.6 Distribution Channels^o

Except for the Suriname Central Import service - sole importer of certain staple foodstuffs, and the operators of the National Development Incentives Programmes, most of the imports and distribution is controlled by the private sector.

^{3/} In 1965 the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO now IMO) adopted the International Dangerous Goods Code, which includes the UN labelling system. It is now adhered, partially or totally by more than 30 countries. If goods are going by an IATA and/or ICAO regulation regarding packing, labelling and documentation must be met.

1.7 Agents or Representatives

No regulations are available.

2. EXPORT REGIME

2.1 Export Procedures

There are no specific regulations made on the procedures to be followed by exporters.

2.2 Exports Subject to Special Requirements

No list is available on commodities subject to special requirements.

2.3 Export Incentives

Incentives are offered under the National Development Incentives Programme.

2.3.1 Direct Incentives

2.3.1.1 Direct Tariff Incentives

Protection is offered to industries through the means of some prohibited imports, except for industrial activity.

The National Development Incentives Programme allows for the duty-free importation of all materials used in manufactures for export.

Partial duty exemptions are allowed on materials and equipment which are part of an initial capital investment or which are to be used in the formation of capital goods.

There may be duty reductions to a floor of 5% ad valorem if imports are to be used in construction, modification or expansion of industrial facilities.

2.3.3 Free Zones (Trade and Industrial Free Ports)

There are no free ports or free trade zones in Suriname.

3. MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND INTEGRATION SCHEMES

3.1 Bilateral

Suriname has signed bilateral agreements with some Latin American nations, United States and the Netherlands.

3.2 Multilateral

Suriname is a signatory to the Second Lomé Convention (See Annex II).

3.3 Integration Schemes

Suriname is a member of the Amazonian Pact, a co-operation treaty designed to promote integration among countries in this area.^{4/}

4. AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN FOREIGN TRADE

1. Department of Customs, Paramaribo
2. Foreign Exchange Board
Central Bank of Suriname, Paramaribo
3. Suriname Central Import Service
Waterkant 15, Paramaribo
4. Ministry of Economic Affairs
(Economic Information Division)
Paramaribo
5. Ministry of Finance
(The National Development Incentives Programme)
Paramaribo
6. Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries
Paramaribo.

5. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

Not being organized.

6. CHAMBER AND ASSOCIATIONS OF COMMERCE

1. Chamber of Commerce and Industries
J.C. Mirandastraat 10, Paramaribo
2. Kamer Van Koophandel En Farbieken to
Paramaribo (Paramaribo Chamber of Commerce)
3. Vereniging Surinaams Bedrijfslevel
(Suriname Businessmen's Association)
Gravenstraat 40, Paramaribo
4. Suriname Exporters Association, Paramaribo.

SOURCES: 1. Exporters' Encyclopaedia - 77th Edition, Dun and Bradstreet;
2. International Trade Manual - Export Shipping Manual, the Bureau of
National Affairs Inc. USA; 3. Data supplied to ECLA.

1/ The Treaty of the Amazonian Co-operation (The Amazon Pact), a Treaty designed to develop and protect the Amazon Basin. This was signed on 3 July 1978 by Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela. The