



LABELLING REQUIREMENTS FOR CLOTHING

The *Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act 1905* and *Commerce (Imports) Regulations 1940* set out the labelling requirements for goods imported into Australia. Customs administers this legislation.

Clothing requires a trade description with the name of the country in which the goods were made or produced, and a true description of the goods.

What constitutes a true description will vary according to the goods. A general guide is to provide a factual description that will help inform the consumer about the nature of the goods, for example, a description such as '100% cotton' on a shirt, would be acceptable, provided that description is correct.

The trade description must be in the English language, in prominent and legible characters, and on a principal label or brand affixed in a prominent position and in as permanent a manner as practicable to the goods, or if affixture to the goods is impracticable, to the coverings containing the goods.

Any other information included on the label brand or packaging must not contradict or obscure the required trade description. This includes illustrations, wording or size of lettering.

In addition, the *Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act* prohibits the importation of goods that bear a false trade description. A false trade description can be any description of goods that is false or misleading.

A trade description may also be false if information is omitted from the description and this misleads the consumer as to the true description of the goods.

Prominent positioning of labels

As mentioned above, trade descriptions on clothes must be on a principal label or brand affixed in a prominent position and in as permanent a manner as practicable to the goods, or if affixture to the goods is impracticable, to the coverings containing the goods. As such, for the majority of garments labels should be affixed in the centre back of the item and not obscured by any other label.

Please note that labelling for fibre composition may be applied in a position in line with the Australian Standard for Textiles – Labelling of clothing, household textiles and furnishings.

Other requirements

Please note that although the *Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Act* and *Commerce (Imports) Regulations* specify certain requirements for labelling imported clothing, clothing may require specific labelling not covered by this legislation and administered by agencies other than Customs.

For example (as mentioned above) the Australian Standard (AS/NZS 2392:1999 Textiles – Labelling of clothing, household textiles and furnishings) also sets out labelling requirements.

Information regarding Australian Standards may be found on the Standards Australia website at www.standards.org.au

What if my goods have a false trade description?

While Customs may permit the re-labelling of contravening goods where it is considered that the contravention was neither intentional nor reckless, we recommend that you ensure your goods comply with the legislation prior to their importation.

Where re-labelling is permitted, goods can only be released once the trade description is correct and all Customs formalities have been completed. You may also be asked to provide evidence that you have instructed your suppliers to correctly label goods in future.

For more information

Further information regarding labelling on imported goods can be found on the Customs website www.customs.gov.au in Australian Customs Notice 2006/39.

Click on the following links for information on related topics:

[Labelling Requirements for Exported Goods](#)
[False Trade Descriptions](#)

If you would like further information about importing goods into Australia, go to the Customs website at www.customs.gov.au

Alternatively you can email your inquiry to information@customs.gov.au or phone the Customs Information and Support Centre on 1300 363 263.