

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

FACTSHEET

Importing Handicrafts Into Australia

The Australian Customs Service (ACS) grants importers a concession which permits the duty free entry of genuine handicrafts into Australia.

To qualify for this concession the manufacturer or supplier of the goods, through the importer, will be required to prove to the ACS that the items were, in fact, "handmade".

For the purposes of the concession, the term "handmade" means:

- (a) fabric made by one or more of the following processes, and by no other process:
 - i. by hand;
 - ii. by non-mechanical, non-powered tools held in the hand; or
 - iii. produced on hand or foot powered looms.
- (b) goods made by one or more of the following processes, and by no other process:
 - i. by hand;
 - ii. by non-powered tools held in the hand; or
 - iii. where the concession specifically allows, by machines powered by foot or hand; and
- (c) are wholly, or in chief part by weight, of materials traditionally used in the production of handicrafts; and
- (d) have attained, by reason of being

"handmade", an artistic or decorative character generally comparable with traditional "handmade" products of the country in which the goods were made.

Acceptable evidence of this should be in the form of:

1. a video or a series of photographs of the manufacturer's factory showing all processes of manufacture; and
2. a written description of the manufacturing process.

NOTE: *The photographs must be signed and dated on the back by a senior officer of the manufacturing company. The description must be written in English on the manufacturing company's letterhead. Any video or photographs should show views of the crafts people in action during all stages of manufacture, with location names if possible.*

This information should be sent to the Regional Director of the ACS in the Australian State through which the goods will be imported **prior** to the arrival of commercial consignments of the goods into Australia. Once a decision has been made that the specific goods from a particular supplier are eligible for the concession, they will be registered as such on an Australia-wide basis. Unless the manufacturing process is altered, future shipments will not require evidence of manufacture to be provided with each

importation. The registration of such "handmade" evidence will be valid for five years. After this time new evidence will be required for the eligibility process to be repeated.

*It should be noted that this registration process is only an aid to the clearance of the goods and that **all normal Customs entry procedures will still apply**, including import processing charges and the application of Goods and Services Tax.*

Goods not complying with handicraft requirements will be subject to normal rates of import duty. While goods may be, *prima facie*, eligible for concessional entry, registration alone does not automatically grant them concessional admission. Importers must ensure that their freight forwarder, courier company, shipper and/or Customs broker has all relevant

documents required to facilitate entry and possible examination of the goods.

It should also be noted that, as most handicrafts are made from natural plant or animal products, such as wood, leather, feathers, leaves, etc., Australia's **strict quarantine requirements** will be applied. Items may be examined by a Quarantine officer and treatment required before entry processing can be completed.

Some products are also restricted or prohibited due to international agreements protecting endangered or threatened species of wildlife. If in any doubt please contact Environment Australia Wildlife Protection by phone on (02) 6250 0302 or (02) 6250 0712 or by fax on (02) 6250 0303. Alternatively, you may write to them at GPO Box 636, Canberra ACT 2601 or at e-mail address wps@ea.gov.au.

For information on any Customs matters, contact a Customs Information Centre on 1300 363 263