



SELF ASSESSED CLEARANCE (SAC) DECLARATIONS

(AS OF 10/09/07)

A self assessed clearance (SAC) declaration is an electronic declaration that Customs requires to clear goods imported by air and sea that have a value at or below the AUD\$1000 import entry threshold. Goods valued above the import entry threshold need to be cleared on an import declaration (FID).

SAC declarations must be made electronically through Customs Integrated Cargo System (ICS). There is no documentary or paper version available for an importer to submit to Customs.

Each SAC declaration requires basic information including the identity of the importer, details of the consignment, and a description of the goods. Clients lodging a SAC declaration are required to declare:

- that the value of the goods does not exceed the AUD\$1000 import entry threshold
- information to help determine if the goods require further assessment by Customs
- if they wish to refer the goods to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

SAC declarations reported in the ICS and of AQIS interest are processed in the AQIS system. This system enables status messages, including the ultimate release notification, to be communicated to the ICS, the client, and other interested parties.

LODGING SAC DECLARATIONS

SAC declarations can only be submitted to Customs electronically. There are no manual or documentary lodgement options available.

SAC declarations must be made through Customs Integrated Cargo System (ICS). There are several options for importers wishing to communicate directly with the ICS, including the Customs Interactive (web-based) facility and electronic data interchange (EDI) software packages.

Alternatively, importers may choose to use a service provider such as a broker or bureau to communicate on their behalf. For further information about communicating electronically with Customs, see the Communicating Electronically with Customs fact sheet.

TYPES OF SAC DECLARATIONS

There are three different types of SAC declarations. The two most common types include the cargo report SAC declaration and the SAC (short form) declaration. A third type, SAC (full declaration format) declaration is also available, however its use is optional and at the discretion of the client. The SAC (full declaration format) allows users to pay duties, GST and taxes against all types of goods where circumstances warrant.

The type of SAC declaration to be used depends on the nature of the goods being imported.

WHO CAN LODGE A SAC DECLARATION?

Cargo report SAC declaration

A SAC declaration can be communicated as part of a cargo report (on behalf of an importer), but only by a cargo reporter.

Goods subject to quarantine conditions may be lodged as cargo report SACs, and are directed to AQIS systems via profiles based on goods descriptions and client details. This means clients do not need to make a declaration about the quarantine status of goods that appear on a cargo report SAC.

SAC (short form) declaration

The importer of the goods, or anyone acting on the importer's behalf, can communicate a SAC (short form) declaration to Customs. The person acting on the importer's behalf does not need to be a licensed broker. This means that cargo reporters, freight forwarders, or similar parties are able to lodge SAC declarations on behalf of an importer.

SAC (short form) declarations also provide an opportunity for the communicator to indicate to AQIS if there are quarantine considerations with the consignment.

The communicator of the SAC (short form) declaration must have a digital certificate and be registered in the ICS. If a SAC (short form) declaration is lodged by someone on behalf of an importer, it is **not** necessary for the importer to be registered. For further information on registration in the ICS see Preparing for CMR imports booklet.

SAC (full declaration format) declaration

Where a SAC (full declaration format) declaration is used, it can be communicated only by the importer or a licensed broker. This can be accessed through the Import Declaration (N10) create screen and checking the SAC indicator on the Header Create screen. Where a licensed broker is lodging the SAC (full declaration format) declaration, the importer needs to be registered in the ICS.

Circumstances exist where, at times, importers are required to pay duties, GST and taxes even though the declaration value may be under the entry threshold. In these circumstances the importer, or licensed customs broker, must use the SAC (full declaration format), via the Import Declaration (N10) create screen to enter the goods.

Brokers wishing to use their AQIS accreditation to address packing concerns and nominate inspection/treatment actions under the terms of their Compliance Agreement with AQIS, need to do so using a SAC (full declaration format) declaration.

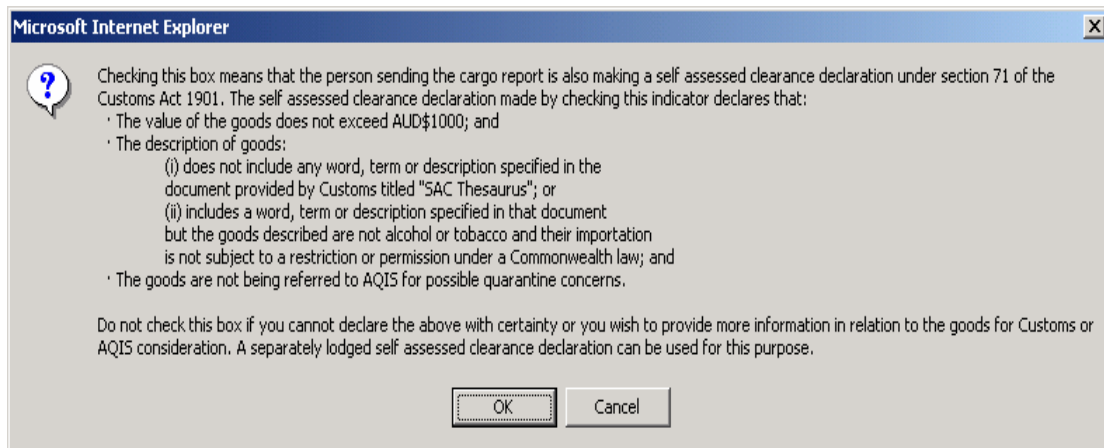
In all other cases, the use of the SAC (full declaration format) declaration is optional.

HOW TO DECLARE IMPORTS USING A SAC DECLARATION

Cargo report SAC

The cargo report SAC declaration is made when a cargo reporter lodges the cargo report. The cargo report SAC declaration is completed by checking an indicator on the cargo report.

To declare low value consignments through the cargo report, the cargo reporter must be able to agree to statements about the goods. These statements are shown in the following screen.



If the cargo reporter cannot agree with certainty with these statements, the goods cannot be declared on a cargo report SAC declaration and must be declared on a separately lodged SAC declaration or an import declaration if the value of the consignment exceeds the AUD\$1000 import entry threshold.

The SAC thesaurus refers to a list of words that is generated by Customs. This list is available to industry as a reference file for cargo report SAC declaration purposes.

Customs has also provided the information to software developers and the service provider industry. The reference file includes a list of words, terms, and descriptions that will need to be cross-checked against the description of any goods contained in a low-value consignment. The SAC Thesaurus is available on the Customs website at http://www.customs.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/SACThesaurus_050725.pdf

If there is any uncertainty about the statements a separate SAC declaration must be completed.

SEPARATELY LODGED SAC DECLARATIONS

There are two formats available for separately lodged SAC declarations; short form and full declaration format. The choice of declaration is for the importer to decide. The difference between the declarations is the amount of information required.

SAC (SHORT FORM) DECLARATION

The SAC (short form) declaration enables the importer, or someone acting on the importer's behalf, to provide additional information to Customs or AQIS about goods being imported. This declaration is required prior to goods being released.

The need for additional information on the SAC (short form) declaration is determined by the responses to the SAC declaration questions. Additional information is required if:

- a consignment contains alcohol or tobacco products
- an importer (or agent) wishes to refer the goods to AQIS
- importation of the goods is subject to a restriction or condition under a Commonwealth law.

If the value of the goods does not exceed the import entry threshold, and the consignment does not contain alcohol or tobacco, is not being referred to AQIS and has no community protection concerns, only minimal data is required to identify the importer, describe the goods, and allow linking to the cargo report before release of the goods.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

If the SAC declaration includes alcohol and tobacco products, duty and taxes are payable. These goods cannot be released without payment of the duty and taxes.

When a shipment contains alcohol and tobacco products, additional information needs to be provided to enable calculation of duty and taxes. This includes:

- tariff classification
- quantity
- value
- transport and insurance costs.

PROHIBITIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND QUARANTINE

Extra information must be provided for shipments where the value of the imported goods does not exceed the entry threshold, but:

- the goods are prohibited or restricted imports or you wish to refer the goods to Customs for assessment of prohibited or restricted status and/or
- the goods are being referred to AQIS.

If one or both of the above apply to a shipment, the SAC communicator has to provide additional information including:

- importer details, goods description and cargo linking data
- a reason for referral
- an AQIS inspection location (only when there are quarantine considerations).

Where the importation of the goods is subject to an import restriction or condition, importers need to provide to Customs a permission that authorises the importation of the goods. For more information on prohibited and restricted goods refer to the prohibited imports page of the Customs website.

SAC (FULL DECLARATION FORMAT) DECLARATION

A SAC (full declaration format) declaration is used to clear goods where an importer or broker chooses to provide more detailed information.

The advantage of using the SAC (full declaration format) declaration is that it allows a broker or importer to:

- provide more information electronically to Customs and AQIS to facilitate clearance of goods;
- input information such as tariff concessions and preference conditions against certain commodities; and
- pay duties, GST (or calculation for deferral) and taxes on all of the goods entered where circumstances warrant.

The SAC (full declaration format) declaration is accessed through the Import Declaration (N10) create screen with the exception of the additional SAC threshold question.

EXEMPTIONS FROM SAC REQUIREMENTS

Certain goods, such as personal effects, are exempt from the requirement to communicate a SAC declaration. Unaccompanied personal effects (UPE) must be declared to Customs and AQIS on the approved form - B534 Unaccompanied Personal Effects Statement.

Customs screening and release of low-value postal imports will continue and there is no requirement to lodge a SAC declaration for postal imports.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SEND MY SAC DECLARATION?

On receipt of an electronic SAC declaration Customs will send a SAC advice to the communicator's email address provided with registration.

The SAC advice contains details of any messages, duty and taxes that may apply. A SAC 'authority to deal' is also provided if applicable.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SHORT FORM AND FULL DECLARATION FORMAT SACS

SAC (short form)	SAC (full declaration format)
Fewer input fields, minimal data needs to be supplied.	Uses the Import Declaration (N10) create screen. The input data, edit and validation rules are the same as the import declaration (N10). Additional indicators allow the user to declare as a SAC declaration and pay revenue where circumstances warrant.
Importer is not required to be registered as a client in the ICS (the communicator of the SAC however, must be registered).	The importer must be registered as a client in the ICS.
Tariff and valuation information is only required when alcohol and tobacco has been declared.	For consignments at or below the import entry threshold, unless otherwise indicated, the ICS will only calculate duty and taxes on alcohol and tobacco products. No dumping duty calculations are performed.
Concessional rates of duty cannot be claimed.	Concessional rates of duty can be claimed.
No facility for supplying AQIS with an AQIS Processing Type (Automatic Entry Processing Code) for the purposes of an AQIS Compliance Agreement.	Provides a facility for AQIS Compliance Agreement holders to use AQIS Processing Types for automated entry processing (sea cargo only).

More information

Go to www.cargosupport.gov.au
Email cargosupport@customs.gov.au
Phone 1300 558 099.