

Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The ACTS is a regional initiative that facilitates trade by allowing traders to transport their goods freely between the participating ASEAN Member States (AMS). Currently, there are six AMS participating in the ACTS and they are: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Lao PDR.

This means that a truck can travel from its point of loading (departure), for example in Singapore, to its destination in another country with minimal procedures at the borders. The potential amount of duties and taxes can be covered by a single journey or multiple guarantee that is recognised by all the countries involved in the transit operation. All the related information is electronically transmitted through a regional computerised management system (also known as the ACTS) from the office of departure to the transit offices and office of destination.

The implementation of the ACTS will be coordinated by the Customs Authorities and the Land Transport Authorities of the participating AMS.

More background information on ACTS can be found in the following website: <http://acts.asean.org>

2 What is legal basis for the implementation of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The legal basis for implementation of ACTS is set out in the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit (AFAFGIT) and its nine supporting Protocols.

Protocol 7 of AFAFGIT gives the headline structure for the Customs procedures and requirements of ACTS. The technical appendix of Protocol 7 provides detailed legal information towards implementation of ACTS. A copy of Protocol 7 can be found in the following website: <http://acts.asean.org>

3 What are the objectives of implementing ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

As one of the objectives of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is to make ASEAN a single production base, the ACTS is expected to:

- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of land-based transit procedures;
- Improve both the prevention and detection of fraud; and
- Accelerate the movement of goods carried out under a transit procedure.

4 What will be the benefits for the private sector to use the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) as compared to the current system of transporting goods across borders in ASEAN?

Being a trade facilitative system, users will benefit from the time savings, cost reduction and better connectivity in the usage of land transport mode of moving goods in ASEAN. Under the ACTS, the goods can be transported by road from departure in an AMS, transit in another AMS, and finally to the destination, that is in a third AMS (or further). Please note that national procedures may still apply to the movement of goods through ACTS, subject to the requirements of Customs Authorities. For example, import and export permits are still required in addition to ACTS declarations for goods entering and leaving Singapore.

Guarantees for Duties and Taxes Payable

5 Does the movement of goods under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) require any kind of financial security?

Yes, the movement of goods under the ACTS must be supported by financial guarantees lodged at the Customs office of departure (where the goods are loaded into the truck) to cover the potential amount of duties and taxes in any one of the countries involved in the transit movement.

As the duties and taxes on the goods are 'suspended', the trader must undertake to pay Customs the duties and taxes due if the goods are illegally diverted away without reaching the destination country. Each trader must obtain a guarantee from a recognised guaranteeing institution, such as a bank or finance company, in the departure country to cover the potential amount of duties and taxes, in case the trader does not pay the duties and taxes due for any reason, such as bankruptcy. In Singapore's context, the bank or finance company must be registered with the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS).

Under protocol 7 of AFAFGIT, AMS Customs Authorities have agreed to the use of a single guarantee for the whole journey to be issued by a recognised financial institution in the departure country where the goods are loaded. In this way the trader does not need to take out a separate guarantee at each border for the potential amount of duties and taxes, thus reducing the cost and time taken to transport goods between AMS. These guarantees are managed on-line by the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS), that is, each transit declaration is validated against an electronic record of the guarantee, to ensure there is sufficient cover for the duties and taxes at risk on that particular consignment. These guarantees may cover a single journey, or multiple journey, as described under protocol 7 of AFAFGIT.

6 Will the duties, taxes and other charges applicable in the departure country be considered in determining the reference amount when taking up a guarantee under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The highest amount of duties and taxes on goods in all the AMS involved in the transit movement (departure, transit and destination) will be considered in determining the reference amount to ensure adequate guarantee coverage. In some cases, the guarantee in the departure country would be needed to cover the outward transit of duty-free goods. The ACTS does not discriminate between duty-free and duty paid goods, so the guarantee will always be required in the country of departure. ACTS assesses the highest revenue risk when estimating the guarantee coverage required on a consignment.

7 Who is liable for the duties and taxes if the goods under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) go missing during the transit movement?

In placing goods under the ACTS procedure, the Principal shall be liable for the payment of any Customs duties and taxes which may become due as a result of an irregularity occurring before the termination of the transit operation. The Principal refers to the legal entity that is based in the country of departure.

If for example the goods do not arrive at the destination and are sold illegally or go missing en-route, the Customs Authority that has a stake to the claim will calculate the duties and taxes lost and instruct the Principal to pay. The Principal will be given 30 days to explain how the situation arose and to provide proof of correct termination of the transit movement.

8 On what basis can the Guarantor be liable for the duties and taxes under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The Customs Authority that has a stake to the claim will always attempt to recover the Customs duties and taxes due from the Principal first. If the Principal is unable to pay, the Guarantor of the single journey or multiple journey guarantee, a recognised guaranteeing institution, such as a bank or finance company in ASEAN, will pay the duties and taxes to the aforementioned Customs Authority. The instrument that governs the liability of the Guarantor is the Guarantee Undertaking document. There are two formats of the document, catering for single and multiple journey liabilities.

9 How can payment be made by the Guarantor under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

If the Customs Authority staking the claim is based in the same country as the Guarantor, the former can simply submit the claim directly to the Guarantor. If the Customs Authority is based in a different ASEAN country from the Guarantor, the former can submit the claim via a correspondent bank (based in the same country as the Customs Authority) which then passes the claim to the Guarantor. The Guarantor has 30 days to pay directly to the Customs Authority in the currency of that country.

10 How much guarantee does the Principal need to lodge for a single journey guarantee under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

If the Principal intends to take up a single journey guarantee to cover a single transit movement, the guarantee amount should cover the potential amount of duties and taxes, in addition to any currency fluctuation buffer. The guarantee amount is based on the highest amount of duties, taxes and charges applicable on goods in all the countries involved in the transit movement.

11 How much guarantee does the Principal need to lodge for a multiple journey guarantee under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

If the Principal intends to take up a multiple journey guarantee, the guarantee amount will be based on a reference amount, which shall be equivalent to the potential amount of duties and taxes which may be incurred in respect of the goods which the Principal places under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) procedure for a period of at least seven days.

12 How can traders find out about the highest duty rates of the goods involved in the transit movement under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

There is a query function in the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) system to allow traders to key in the HS code and the countries involved in the transit movement. The duty rates of the goods in the countries will be auto-generated and the trader could use the information to calculate the guarantee amount to be lodged.

To access this function in ACTS, the trader has to be first registered by Customs as a transit trader (Authorised Transit Trader (ATT) or non-ATT) and provided with a user account in ACTS.

13 What will happen if the amount of guarantee lodged is insufficient to cover any particular transaction under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

If the amount of guarantee lodged is insufficient to cover any particular transaction, the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) will not allow the transit movement to proceed. The Principal is required to take up a new guarantee before proceeding with the transit movement.

Eligibility to use the ACTS

14 Who will be eligible to use the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) system? How do I register to be a transit trader?

All traders (which include importers, exporters, transporters, freight forwarders, Customs agents) are eligible to use the ACTS to transport goods across borders who are registered as transit traders with the Customs Authority of the AMS.

Traders will need to complete the 'Trader Registration Form' and 'Employee Declarant Details and Authorisation Form', email them to [Customs_Documentation@customs.gov.sg]. Upon registration, Singapore Customs will issue a Trader Identification Number (TIN) to the registered transit trader (also known as Principal) and a Personal ID to each registered employee(s) for the submission of transit declarations in ACTS. A Principal can also authorise a different legal entity to submit the ACTS transit declaration on their behalf by submitting a Broker/Representative Authorisation Letter. Both the employee of the Principal Trader and the representative/broker authorised by the Principal Trader can submit the transit declaration in ACTS.

15 For a company with business entities set up in multiple jurisdictions (i.e. Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand), do they need to register separately with the Customs Authority of each country in order to move goods under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) through the 3 countries?

The trader must be registered at the country of departure where they take out the guarantee, submit an ACTS declaration and start the ACTS transit movement. For instance, if the trader intends to start loading the goods in Singapore for trucking to Thailand via Malaysia, they must first register with Singapore Customs. There is no need for the trader to be registered in the country of transit (Malaysia) and destination (Thailand) in this case. However, if the trader intends to move goods from Thailand to Singapore via Malaysia, the registration will be required in Thailand.

16 What is the ASEAN Goods Vehicle Cross-Border Permit (AGVCBP) in relation to the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

Vehicles that are used to transport goods under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) must each be allocated with the ASEAN Goods Vehicle Cross-Border Permit (AGVCBP). For more information on the AGVCBP and its application procedures, please contact LTA via the online feedback form: <https://www.lta.gov.sg/feedback/> and visit the AGVCBP webpage.

17 Will there be a cost for the private sector to participate in the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

Any registration fees imposed by the Customs Authority will be a national decision. Singapore Customs will not be imposing such fees.

Since the submission of declaration to Customs involves electronic declarations, the traders need to use internet-connected computers to lodge the ACTS declarations electronically. The trader must also make available the necessary financial guarantees to cover the potential amount of duties and taxes for the goods transported.

Customs Procedures

18 What is the Customs transit declaration that shall be made by the traders for goods to be moved under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The trader must submit an electronic ACTS transit declaration to Customs. A single transit barcoded document known as Transit Accompanying Document (TAD) would be issued by the system.

19 If the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) declaration has been submitted for movement of goods under the ACTS, is it still necessary to take up a separate permit from Singapore Customs?

For ACTS goods entering and leaving Singapore, traders are required to take up the necessary import/export/transshipment permits via TradeNet to fulfil existing domestic requirements. This is in addition to submitting the declaration via ACTS to account for the ACTS movement. For movement of ACTS into the territories of other AMS, please check with the respective Customs Authorities on the relevant requirements.

Traders are advised to indicate "ACTS Movement" in the Trader's Remark field in the TradeNet permit application for shipments which are covered by an ACTS transit declaration.

20 What are the required supporting documents for exportation of goods from Singapore under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

After submitting an electronic ACTS declaration to Customs, traders are required to print out the TAD for the driver to present the physical copy of TAD, corresponding Customs permit and supporting documents such as commercial invoice, packing list, Bill of Lading or Air WayBill etc. at the Woodlands/Tuas Checkpoint for domestic export clearance. For exportation of controlled goods, the supporting documents required will vary depending on the individual Competent Authority (CA)'s requirements. Traders are required to check directly with the respective CA for their requirements.

21 What are the required supporting documents for importation of goods into Singapore under ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

The driver is required to present the physical copy of TAD, corresponding Customs permit with supporting documents such as commercial invoice, packing list, etc. for domestic import clearance. For importation of controlled goods, the supporting documents required will vary depending on the individual Competent Authority (CA)'s requirements. Traders are required to check directly with the respective CA for their requirements.

22 Do I need to pay GST for importation of goods under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

In general, all goods imported into Singapore are subject to payment of GST levied at 7% of the goods' Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) value. This is inclusive of all other charges, costs and expenses incidental to the sale and delivery of the goods into Singapore.

In addition to taking up the ACTS permit to account for the transit movement, traders are also required to take up a Customs permit to account for the import and GST payment of the goods.

23 Will all categories of products be allowed to be moved using the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

Under ACTS, there will be a list of prohibited, excluded and restricted list of goods maintained by each AMS based on respective security and safety requirements. As long as the product is prohibited and excluded in any one of the three (or more) AMS involved in the transit movement, the product will not be allowed to be moved under the ACTS. The system will reject the ACTS declaration if the declared AHTN 2017 HS code matches any prohibited or excluded products.

While Singapore allows controlled goods to be moved under ACTS, traders who wish to move controlled goods under ACTS should obtain the proper authorisation/licences from Competent Authorities (CA), and adhere to the national requirements in addition to submitting the declaration in ACTS. You may wish to check with your customers in the country of destination on their import and licensing requirements.

Please be informed that [dutyable goods](#) in Singapore are not allowed to be moved under the ACTS. You are advised to check with the respective Customs Authorities of the other AMS on the relevant requirements.

24 Is return trip possible under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

Each ACTS declaration only covers one movement from departure to destination with one guarantee to cover the declaration. The return trip can be possible by submitting a separate ACTS declaration from the destination country which would now be considered as the departure country and covered by a Guarantee issued at the point of departure.

25 How many ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) declaration can be declared for one truck?

Please submit only one ACTS declaration for each truck movement. A separate ACTS declaration should be submitted to account for goods moved in a separate truck.

26 Can the truck be opened for inspection during the transit journey under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)? If the seals are broken on transit, how can the seals be replaced?

In exceptional circumstances, Customs may conduct an inspection on the truck and the goods contained therein. Breaking of seals affixed by Customs Authorities (for non-ATTs) or companies' own seals (for Authorised Transit Trader (ATTs)) can only be done in the presence of Customs. Once inspection is completed, Customs will re-seal the truck and update the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) system, i.e. registering the new seal. The next Customs office will have the information on the broken seal and replacement seal.

In case of accidental breakage of the seal, the driver must report the circumstances as soon as possible to the nearest official authority such as the police. This authority would have to endorse the TAD, for the next ACTS office to make a decision on the next steps to take, i.e. whether to allow the movement to continue or to terminate it (the transit), depending on the circumstances.

27 Is there a cap on the amount of goods to be declared in the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

Each ACTS declaration could accommodate up to 999 line items of goods. Traders are required to declare separate items of different HS codes as separate line items.

28 Does the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) allow for handling of consolidated cargo from multiple consignors and consignees?

Yes, the ACTS allows for multiple consignors and consignees to be declared, and when printed from the system, these details would be reflected in the TAD.

29 Are the trucks allowed to pick up or drop off cargo along the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) movement?

No. There should not be any removal, break-bulking, re-consolidation, or loading of cargo along the journey before the termination of the ACTS movement.

30 In the declaration page of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS), what do traders need to select for the Departure Office, Transit Office and Destination Office?

Outgoing ACTS movement from Singapore

If you are moving goods as a non-ATT under normal procedures, you will need to plan and indicate your preferred journey route. For goods departing from Singapore, please select either Woodlands Checkpoint or Tuas Checkpoint as Departure Office. The truck will need to be physically presented at the selected departure office. The transit office and destination office to be selected will be located in other countries, depending on the route.

If you are moving goods as an Authorised Transit Trader (ATT) under simplified procedures, please select either Woodlands Checkpoint or Tuas Checkpoint as both Departure Office and Transit office. If you select Woodlands as Departure office, it should also be reflected as Transit office. The same applies for Tuas Checkpoint.

	Non-ATT (Normal Procedures)	ATT (Simplified Procedures)
Departure Office	Tuas/Woodlands Checkpoint	Tuas/Woodlands Checkpoint
Transit Office	Customs office in other country(ies) e.g. Malaysia	Tuas/Woodlands Checkpoint and Customs office in other country(ies) e.g. Malaysia
Destination Office	Customs office in other country e.g. Thailand	Customs office in other country e.g. Thailand

Incoming ACTS movement into Singapore

If you are moving goods as a non-ATT under normal procedures, the overseas trader based in country of departure should select either Woodlands Checkpoint or Tuas Checkpoint as Destination Office in the ACTS declaration. The transit office to be declared in ACTS will be the border office in Malaysia.

31 Do traders get to benefit from simplified procedures at country of destination under the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

In Singapore's context, all incoming ACTS trucks have to be physically presented at Woodlands/Tuas Checkpoint for clearance. The driver is required to present both the physical copy of TAD and corresponding import permits with supporting documents such as commercial invoice, packing list, Bill of Lading or Air WayBill etc. for domestic clearance.

32 Upon the submission of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) declaration, is there a validity period for trader to present the TAD and goods at the Woodlands/Tuas Checkpoint for clearance?

There is no specified validity period. However, once the transit movement has been initiated in ACTS, the system will automatically track the movement of the truck and the time taken to reach the destination Customs office. Alerts will be automatically sent to relevant Customs authorities of the non-arrival and delays during the transit.

33 Are traders allowed to amend an ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) declaration?

After a transit declaration has been accepted (i.e. ACTS Reference Number allocated) in the ACTS, the transit declaration may be amended before it is released for transit. There is no limit to the number of times the declaration is amended and all declaration details except for the Principal TIN and the Customs Office of Departure may be amended.

34 Are traders allowed to cancel the declaration that has been submitted in the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)?

After a transit declaration has been accepted (i.e. ACTS Reference Number allocated) in the ACTS, a request for cancellation of the transit declaration may be submitted before it is released for transit.

A transit declaration should be cancelled if it is not utilised for transit movement due to reasons such as but not limiting to:

- Cancellation of shipment; and
- TAD could not be printed / used etc.

35 Is it possible to simplify the data fields required in the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) declaration, and to align the requirements with that of domestic system?

As a regional initiative, the ACTS was designed to cater to the needs and requirements of all the participating AMS. As part of our continuous consultation with the private sector, we welcome feedback from the industry to help us improve the system.