

South Africa

South African authorities require that goods entering the country, for whatever purpose, be entered in a proper and legal way.

As experts in the handling of trade shows and exhibitions in South Africa, we are highly experienced and qualified customs agents, shippers and on-site handlers and able to provide local partners at main trade fairs who act as importers of foreign goods.

The importance of documentation

Required documentation varies according to several factors in South Africa. Any shipment with a value, even if the goods are free of charge to the recipient, will still require the fully completed air waybill and a commercial invoice for customs clearance. If you are shipping electronic goods and computer parts for personal use or resale you need a test report from the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). If the Letter of Authority is not available within five days of the goods arrival, the shipment will be confiscated.

Classification and the bonded warehouse

When goods arrive in South Africa, whether by sea or air, the carrier will deliver the required documentation to the consignee or their legalised representative who will issue the authority for transfer of the goods from the port/airport to the bonded warehouse. This procedure can take up to 48 hours. Once the materials are in Bond, a process of classification will commence. Classification is a procedure when the customs brokers must physically inspect the goods and identify each item listed in the accompanying documents and then specify the customs tariff heading and number for each item. This is a time consuming process which, depending on the number and complexity of the items, can take up to 10 working days.

Entry and customs examinations

Once the classification is completed the entry document is prepared and submitted to the customs authority. The cargo is then checked against the invoices by the South African customs. Examination is under the control of customs officials responsible at the point of entry. This process can take 2-5 working days. If all the documentation is in order and the freight is identified customs will grant permission for material to be removed from the bonded warehouse and delivered to the exhibition venue.

On the show floor

Under no circumstances can goods or equipment be sold from the exhibition floor, whether in bond or under temporary import. All cargo must be returned to the bonded warehouse and be placed back under customs control, only then can the importer start the nationalisation process.

South Africa

South Africa, officially the Republic of South Africa, is a country located at the southern tip of Africa. It has 2,798 km (1,739 mi) of coastline stretching along the South Atlantic and Indian oceans.

South Africa has a population of almost 53 million people and is a multi-ethnic society encompassing a wide variety of cultures, languages, and religions. Its pluralistic makeup is reflected in the constitution's recognition of 11 official languages, which is among the highest number of any country in the world. Since the end of apartheid, South Africa's unique multicultural character has become integral to its national identity.

South Africa is ranked as an upper-middle income economy by the World Bank, and is considered to be a newly industrialised country. Its economy is the largest and most developed in Africa.

Certain items are prohibited by Customs for import to South Africa. These items are in addition to items forbidden by IATA. Senders are responsible for making sure that the goods they are shipping are acceptable.

Forbidden items include cash and cash equivalents, credit card blanks, credit cards other than telephone cards, Dangerous goods as defined by IATA, Dry ice, Furniture, Furs and Personal effects. Restricted items include Jewellery, gold, precious metals, and precious stones are limited to USD2000.

DO's

- Contact us early
- Pack your goods in suitable packaging material (the best you can afford and rainproof) External packaging must be made from pre-treated wood and carry the necessary IPPC stamps.
- Make use of our Temporary Bond Facility. This avoids paying unnecessary duties/taxes to the South African Customs Authorities.
- Pack and List your Temporary and Permanent items on separate invoices. Please indicate serial numbers on your invoices.
- Supply us with a PDF of your brochures/data sheets relating to your products. This can help with customs clearance.
- Let us know what you plan to ship early—some equipment requires special documentation of licences such as: Medical equipment, Arms/Ammunition, Alcohol, Foodstuffs and Plants.

DON'Ts

- Ignore our shipping deadlines
- Send any foodstuffs (even mints or boiled sweets) - the import regulations are very strict.
- Panic about the paperwork as we will guide you through all the documentation to ensure your goods arrive safely to your stand.
- Forget to tell us if you require secondary forklift hire at the venue (for lifting heavy machines out of packing cases etc).
- Book your return flight home for the same evening the exhibition finishes.
- Do not use a courier or attempt to hand carry.
- Do not address cargo to yourself, your hotel or exhibition site—it will not be delivered.
- Do not ship without taking copies of all shipping documents.

