

IRAS e-Tax Guide

**GST: Major Exporter Scheme
(Eighth Edition)**



INLAND REVENUE
AUTHORITY
OF SINGAPORE

Published by
Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore

Published on 13 Mar 2018

First edition on 31 Mar 2014
Second edition on 10 Dec 2014
Third edition on 1 Jun 2015
Fourth edition on 18 Sep 2015
Fifth edition on 18 Dec 2015
Sixth edition on 01 Aug 2017
Seventh edition on 28 Dec 2017

Disclaimers: IRAS shall not be responsible or held accountable in any way for any damage, loss or expense whatsoever, arising directly or indirectly from any inaccuracy or incompleteness in the Contents of this e-Tax Guide, or errors or omissions in the transmission of the Contents. IRAS shall not be responsible or held accountable in any way for any decision made or action taken by you or any third party in reliance upon the Contents in this e-Tax Guide. This information aims to provide a better general understanding of taxpayers' tax obligations and is not intended to comprehensively address all possible tax issues that may arise. While every effort has been made to ensure that this information is consistent with existing law and practice, should there be any changes, IRAS reserves the right to vary our position accordingly.

© Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying and recording without the written permission of the copyright holder, application for which should be addressed to the publisher. Such written permission must also be obtained before any part of this publication is stored in a retrieval system of any nature.

Table of Contents

	Page
1 Aim	1
2 At a glance.....	1
3 Overview of Major Exporter Scheme (MES)	2
4 Qualifying conditions for MES.....	4
5 Operational procedures	6
6 Application procedures for MES	6
7 New application for MES	7
8 Renewal application for MES.....	8
9 Contact information.....	9
Appendix A - Suggested Measures in Authorising Declaring Agents to Clear Goods Under Your MES Status.....	10
Appendix B - GST Reporting Requirements- MES	11
Appendix C - Comptroller's requirements on internal controls, accounting and compliance records	13
Appendix D - Letter of guarantee.....	15
Appendix E - Conditions and record-keeping requirements of a GST agent acting on behalf of overseas principals	16

GST: Major Exporter Scheme

1 Aim

- 1.1 This e-Tax Guide explains the mechanism and qualifying criteria for the Major Exporter Scheme (MES)¹.
- 1.2 You should read the guide if you are a GST-registered business who would like to apply for the scheme where GST is suspended on your imports.

2 At a glance

- 2.1 Goods and Services Tax (GST) is charged on nearly all supplies of goods and services in Singapore and on the importation of most goods into Singapore. Singapore Customs (SC) collects GST at the point of importation.
- 2.2 MES is a scheme whereby the payment of GST is suspended at the point of importation of goods. MES businesses are allowed to import non-dutiable goods without paying GST to Singapore Customs (SC).
- 2.3 GST-registered businesses applying for MES or whose MES status is due for renewal will have to submit the Assisted Self-Help Kit (ASK) declaration form “ASK: Declaration Form on Completing Annual Review & Voluntary Disclosure of Errors” (Section 3 of ASK) certified by either their own in-house or external tax professionals who are Accredited Tax Practitioners (GST) or Accredited Tax Advisors (GST).

Alternatively, you can choose to participate in the GST Assisted Compliance Assurance Programme (ACAP²). Businesses with valid ACAP status do not need to submit ASK declaration form if they perform Post ACAP Review (PAR) and submit the “PAR Declaration” form (GST F28). Successful ACAP applicants also do not need to submit the ASK declaration form pending the result of ACAP review and submission of ACAP Report. If you subsequently withdraw from participating in ACAP, you are required to perform and submit the ASK declaration form within three months. If you fail to obtain an ACAP status, you may also be required to submit the ASK declaration form on a case-by-case basis.

¹ This e-Tax guide replaces the IRAS' e-Tax guide “GST: Major Exporter Scheme (Ninth Edition)” published on 02 Jan 2013.

² GST ACAP is a compliance initiative suitable for businesses that have a robust GST Control Framework to manage their GST risks. More information can be obtained from www.iras.gov.sg > GST > GST-registered businesses > Getting it right > Voluntary Compliance Initiatives > Assisted Compliance Assurance Programme (ACAP).

3 Overview of Major Exporter Scheme (MES)

3.1 Regulation 45 of the Goods and Services Tax (General) Regulations provides for the suspension of GST payment on importation of non-dutiable goods by GST-registered persons who qualify for MES. The MES status can only be used for approved purposes.

3.2 MES businesses that export their goods subsequently where the export qualifies as a zero-rated supply will thus not face cash flow problems because they do not have to pay GST on their imports. However, when MES businesses supply the goods locally, they must continue to charge and account GST at the prevailing rate.

3.3 Approved Purposes of MES Status

3.3.1 Once you have been granted MES status, you will enjoy import GST suspension and you can use your MES status in the following permissible scenarios:

- (a) Import your own goods in the course or furtherance of your business.
- (b) Import goods belonging to your overseas principal for supply (either in Singapore or for export) in the capacity of a section 33(2) agent.
- (c) Import goods belonging to your overseas principal which will later be re-exported by you as a section 33A agent.
- (d) Remove your own goods or goods belonging to your overseas principal in the capacity of section 33(2) or 33A agent from the ZG warehouse.

One of the conditions of sections 33(2) and 33A agents is that the overseas principal must not be GST-registered and do not belong in Singapore. For more information on this, please refer to the e-Tax Guide "GST: Guide on Imports".

With effect from 1 Jan 2015

- (e) Re-import goods which you have previously sent abroad for value-added activities belonging to your local customer or GST-registered overseas customer, under section 33B. Please refer to the e-Tax Guide "GST: Claiming of GST on re-import of value-added goods" for information on the eligibility conditions and requirements.

3.3.2 It is an offence to use your MES status to import goods, or remove goods from ZG Warehouses on behalf of persons other than the overseas principals for whom you act as the section 33(2) agent or section 33A agent or customers under section 33B. You may be considered to have abused your MES status and the relevant penalties may be imposed on you and/or your MES status may be revoked. In addition, you are required to repay to the Comptroller the import GST otherwise payable for the goods.

- 3.3.3 Other examples of abuse of MES status include: -
- (a) Importing personal items belonging to company staff (including directors).
 - (b) Importing goods or removing goods from the ZG warehouse that are owned by a local supplier, except for re-imports under section 33B. This is notwithstanding that the goods would subsequently be supplied to you.
 - (c) Importing goods or removing goods from the ZG warehouse that belong to your related company or business partners.
- 3.3.4 Please refer to Appendix A for the suggested measures to prevent the misuse of your MES status.
- 3.3.5 Also, you cannot use your MES status to import investment precious metals (IPM)³ or goods/materials used for refining into IPM that are for local sales or any good to make exempt supplies.
- 3.3.6 Similarly, you are not allowed to use your MES status to import goods or remove goods from the ZG warehouse on behalf of a GST-registered overseas principal even though you are acting as his section 33(1) agent⁴, except for re-imports under section 33B. Your GST-registered overseas principal has to apply for MES in its own name.
- 3.3.7 Your MES status is not transferable. If you transfer your business as a going concern to another taxable person, the transferee (new owner) is not allowed to use your MES status to import his goods. The transferee should apply for MES in his own name.

3.4 Additional GST Reporting Requirements of a MES Business

- 3.4.1 As a MES business, you will need to accurately declare the value of goods imported using your MES status for goods which belong to you or your overseas principals (i.e. in your capacity as a section 33(2) or 33A agent) as well as goods re-imported under section 33B. The additional GST reporting requirements are highlighted in Appendix B.

3.5 De-registration implications for a MES business

- 3.5.1 When you de-register from GST, you will have to ensure the following:

³ With effect from 1 Oct 2012, the supply and importation of investment precious metals is exempt from GST. For more information, please refer to the e-Tax Guide, "GST: Guide on Exemption of Investment Precious Metals (IPM)" at www.iras.gov.sg > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides > GST

⁴ Under section 33(1) of the GST Act, an overseas person, who is registered for GST, is required to appoint an agent as the substituted person and be accountable for any tax or duties accountable. The appointed agent steps into the shoes and assumes responsibilities as if he is the overseas person. For more information on sections 33(1) agents, please refer to the e-Tax Guide "GST: Guide on Imports" at www.iras.gov.sg > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides > GST

Type of goods	Requirements of MES business
Your own goods imported with GST suspended	Fulfill all the requirements pertaining to de-registration like all other GST-registered businesses and account for deemed output tax in your Final GST Return on these imported goods that form part of your assets and stocks if the value of taxable assets and stocks on hand as at the effective date of de-registration is more than S\$10,000.
Goods belonging to your overseas principal imported in the capacity of a section 33(2) GST agent with GST suspended	Refer to e-Tax Guide “GST: Guide on Imports” on the de-registration implications of a section 33(2) GST agent.
Goods belonging to your overseas principal imported in the capacity of a section 33A GST agent with GST suspended	Refer to e-Tax Guide “GST: Guide on Imports” on the de-registration implications of a section 33A GST agent.
Value-added goods belonging to your local customers or GST-registered overseas customers, which were re-imported under section 33B with GST suspended	Refer to the e-Tax Guide: “GST: Claiming of GST on re-import of value-added goods” on the de-registration implications under section 33B.

4 Qualifying conditions for MES

4.1 To qualify for this scheme, you must satisfy the following conditions:

- (a) Your business must be GST-registered.

You must be registered with the Comptroller of GST as a GST-registered person. Please refer to the e-Tax Guide “GST: Do I Need to Register?” for information on registration.

- (b) Your business must be active and financially solvent.

Being ‘financially solvent’ means your business must not be under bankruptcy, liquidation, receivership or judicial management.

- (c) You import goods for the purpose of your business.

- (d) Your zero-rated supplies must account for more than 50% of the total supplies or the value of your zero-rated supplies is more than S\$10 million for a 12-month period.

The relevant period for calculating the value of supply will be the immediate past financial year or any 12 continuous calendar months within the past 18 calendar months.

Zero-rated supplies include the export of goods and international services. International services are those defined in Section 21 of the GST Act.

Total supplies refer to the summation of standard-rated supplies, zero-rated supplies and exempt supplies.

If you make largely exempt supplies, you are not eligible for MES status. You may be granted MES status if your exempt supplies do not exceed the De Minimis limit. To be within the De Minimis limit, the total value of all your exempt supplies must not exceed on average S\$40,000⁵ per month and an amount equal to 5% of the value of your total supplies in that period.

- (e) You maintain good internal controls and proper accounting records (please refer to Appendix C).
- (f) You maintain good compliance records with Singapore Customs.
- (g) You maintain good compliance records with IRAS.

You fulfil all tax obligations such as filing your GST and income tax returns on time and paying your GST, income tax, property tax and withholding tax on a timely basis.

- (h) You must be able to comply with such other conditions as the Comptroller of GST may impose from time to time.

4.2 Apart from the above conditions, the Comptroller of GST may impose a security (in the form of a letter of guarantee). Please refer to Appendix D for more details.

4.3 Notwithstanding that you are able to satisfy the conditions above; the Comptroller of GST may reject an application in order to protect revenue.

4.4 As a MES business, you must fulfill the qualifying conditions at all times. The Comptroller will revoke your MES status if at any time you fail to satisfy the qualifying conditions. In the event of any material change in the nature of your

⁵ The threshold has been increased from S\$20,000 to S\$40,000 for prescribed accounting periods or longer periods beginning on or after 1 Apr 2008. For more information on the De Minimis limit, please refer to the e-Tax Guide "GST: Partially Exemption and Input Tax Recovery" at www.iras.gov.sg > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides > GST.

business such that you no longer satisfy the qualifying conditions, you must inform the Comptroller of GST immediately.

5 Operational procedures

- 5.1 As an approved MES business, you are able to clear non-dutiable goods from Singapore Customs (SC) at importation or from ZG warehouse with the relevant MES permits if you activate your Customs Account with SC and subscribe for TradeNet. For more information, please refer to SC website at www.customs.gov.sg and www.tradexchange.gov.sg
- 5.2 However, if you do not subscribe for TradeNet and/or if you choose to engage freight forwarding companies to assist you, you are required to appoint the relevant authorised declaring agent (e.g. freight forwarder) to clear the goods from SC on your behalf. You can appoint the declaring agent and make subsequent changes through the e-Service “Apply for Declaring Agents” via myTax Portal ⁶
- 5.3 At any one time, a MES business can have a maximum of 20 authorised declaring agents. It is your responsibility to keep and maintain the list of your authorised declaring agents. As you are accountable for all permits declared by your authorised declaring agents, you are advised to exercise due care and impose relevant controls after appointing the declaring agents for this purpose. Please refer to Appendix A for the suggested measures.
- 5.4 If your imports are handled by the 4 Air Express Companies (i.e. TNT Express Worldwide (S) Pte Ltd, Federal Express (S) Pte Ltd, United Parcel Service Singapore Pte Ltd and DHL Express (Singapore) Pte Ltd), you should request these companies to provide you with an **Inward Summary report** stating the details of imports belonging to you on a periodic basis. Alternatively, these companies may issue subsidiary import certificates to you. You may use the Inward Summary report / subsidiary import certificate to declare your MES imports in your GST returns.

6 Application procedures for MES

- 6.1 To apply for or renew your MES, you must perform a self-review using the Assisted Self-Help Kit (ASK) ⁷ and submit the certified ASK declaration form “ASK: Declaration Form on Completing Annual Review & Voluntary Disclosure of Errors (Section 3 of ASK).

⁶ Please ensure that you have been authorised by your organisation as the preparer or the approver under GST Tax Matters to access this e-service in myTax Portal. If not, you will need to get your EASY administrator to log in to e-Services Authorisation System (EASY) to authorise you. For more information on how this can be done, please refer to mytax.iras.gov.sg/easy.

⁷ ASK is a self-assessment package to manage your compliance. More information can be obtained from www.iras.gov.sg > GST > GST-registered businesses > Getting it right > Voluntary Compliance Initiatives > Assisted Self-help Kit (ASK).

- 6.2 The ASK declaration form has to be certified by either your own in-house or externally engaged tax professional who has been accredited with the Singapore Institute of Accredited Tax Professionals ("SIATP") as an Accredited Tax Practitioner (GST) or Accredited Tax Advisor (GST). For more information on accreditation, please visit www.siatp.org.sg
- 6.3 However, if you have a valid ACAP status, the ASK declaration form is not required if you perform a Post ACAP Review (PAR) and submit the "PAR Declaration" form (GST F28). Similarly, if you have successfully applied to participate in ACAP to be performed by an independent ACAP Reviewer, the certified ASK declaration form will not be required, unless you subsequently withdraw your ACAP participation or you fail to obtain ACAP status.
- 6.4 Details on the new application procedures to apply for or to renew your MES status are explained in paragraphs 7 and 8 below.

7 New application for MES

- 7.1 Any business who wishes to obtain the MES status must apply to the Comptroller of GST for approval. This section clarifies the application for the MES status.
- 7.2 You may apply for the MES status only after you have registered for GST and have commenced your trading activities. Please ensure that you satisfy all the qualifying conditions for the scheme.

7.3 Application process for MES

7.3.1 To apply for the MES, please submit the following documents:

- (a) A completed and signed GST F10 with the trading figures for a 12-month period. The figures declared in the form must be in Singapore Dollars.

The relevant period for calculating the value of imports, exports and total supplies will be a 12-month period that can be the immediate past financial year or any 12 continuous calendar months within the past 18 calendar months from the date of application.

- (b) A certified Assisted Self-Help Kit (ASK) declaration form "ASK: Declaration Form on Completing Annual Review & Voluntary Disclosure of Errors" (Section 3 of ASK).
- (c) A Letter of Confirmation & Undertaking if you import or will import goods belonging to third parties. Please refer to GST F10 for the specimen.

7.3.2 For newly incorporated business / business with change in business activity, you will have to give a projection of your trading figures and state the basis of

your projection in the GST F10. The relevant period for calculating the value of supplies will be a 12-month projection commencing from the start of your exporting activity/change in business activity. A letter of guarantee may be required in this case (for more details on the letter of guarantee, please refer to Appendix D). You will also be required to submit the actual trading figures and the certified ASK declaration form subsequently by the stated due date given by the Comptroller of GST.

For example, Company XYZ commences its import and export business activities on 1 Jan 2013. He applies for MES status on 15 Feb 2013. The relevant period for Company XYZ will be 1 Jan 2013 to 31 Dec 2013.

- 7.3.3 You will be informed of the outcome of your application within one month from the date of submission of your application.
- 7.3.4 If your application is successful, your MES status will be valid until the Comptroller of GST notifies you in writing that your eligibility of MES status is due for review, which is usually three years after the date of approval.
- 7.3.5 At any time, if you fail to satisfy any of the qualifying conditions, you are required to inform the Comptroller and your MES status may be revoked.

8 Renewal application for MES

- 8.1 You must continue to satisfy the qualifying conditions for MES in order for your MES status to be renewed. If you do not meet the qualifying conditions, you will not be invited to renew your MES status and you will be informed accordingly.
- 8.2 If you receive our renewal invitation packages, you will be required to submit the following to renew your MES status within the due date given in the invitation letter:
 - (a) Form R1: Application for Renewal of Major Exporter Scheme.
 - (b) The certified Assisted Self-Help Kit (ASK) declaration form “ASK: Declaration Form on Completing Annual Review & Voluntary Disclosure of Errors” (Section 3 of ASK).
- 8.3 We will inform you in writing of the outcome of the review. Your MES scheme will continue to be valid pending the outcome of our review.
- 8.4 If your application for renewal of MES is approved, your MES status will continue to be valid for usually, another five years from the date of approval or until the Comptroller revokes it. The Comptroller will revoke your MES status if at any time you fail to satisfy the qualifying conditions.

- 8.5 The requirement of a letter of guarantee will be reviewed during the renewal of MES. You will be informed when a letter of guarantee is required.
- 8.6 A security (in the form of a letter of guarantee) may be imposed where appropriate. You will be informed in writing when a letter of guarantee is required. Please refer to Appendix D for more details.

9 Contact information

- 9.1 For enquiries on this e-Tax Guide, please contact the Goods and Services Tax Division at www.iras.gov.sg (select “Contact Us”).

10 Updates and Amendments

	Date of amendment	Amendments made
1	10 Dec 2014	Inserted paragraph 3.3.1(e) and other consequential amendments in line with the new section 33B taking effect from 1 Jan 2015 Removed Appendix G
2	1 Jun 2015	Amended paragraphs 2.3 and 6.3 on ACAP Amended paragraph 8.4 to reflect the new MES validity period for renewed cases (up to 5 years from the current 3 years). Amended paragraph 5.2, 7.3.1 and removed Appendix F
3	18 Sep 2015	Amended paragraph 5
4	18 Dec 2015	Amended paragraph 2.3 and 6.3
5	03 Aug 2017	Amended paragraph 5.2
6	28 Dec 2017	Amended paragraphs 4.1, 4.4, 8.4 and Appendix C to elaborate on the MES qualifying conditions. Amended paragraph 9.1 on contact information.
7	13 Mar 2018	Amended paragraph 8.2(a) on Form R1 to be downloaded from invitation letter.

Appendix A - Suggested Measures in Authorising Declaring Agents to Clear Goods Under Your MES Status

Review all such import permits taken up to ensure that you are the rightful importer. Internal procedures should be put in place to ensure that this review process is implemented by the employees.

This can be done by:

- (a) Obtaining from your authorised declaring agents a complete listing of import permits and verify against your suppliers' invoices to ensure that the imports declared by the agents are yours; or
- (b) Generating a permit listing from TradeExchange (TX), on a regular basis, if you are a registered user, to ensure that there is no unauthorised usage of your MES status by matching the imports listed against your suppliers' invoices and your authorised declaring agents' listing.

Appendix B - GST Reporting Requirements- MES

(a) Importation of goods

You will declare the value of imports, including that of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) or 33A agent⁸) and re-imports under S33B, in Box 5 “Total value of taxable purchases” and Box 9 “Total value of goods imported under MES or A3PL or Other Approved Schemes only” of your GST returns for the relevant accounting periods. As there is no import GST payable, there is no input tax credit to be made in Box 7 “Input tax and refunds claimed” in the GST returns in respect of such imports.

Please note that the value of imports reported in your GST return must be duly supported by valid MES permits and relevant supporting documents (e.g. commercial invoices and appropriate shipping documents).

(b) Goods imported into/ removed from ZG warehouse

You will declare the value of goods imported into the ZG warehouse, including that of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) or 33A agent). When you remove goods, including that of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) or 33A agent) from the ZG warehouse, you will also need to declare the value of goods removed in Box 5 “Total value of taxable purchases” and Box 9 “Total value of goods imported under MES or A3PL or Other Approved Schemes only” of your GST returns for the relevant accounting periods. As there is no import GST payable, there is no input tax credit to be made in Box 7 “Input tax and refunds claimed” in the GST returns in respect of such imports.

Please note that the value of goods imported into/ removed from the ZG warehouse reported in your GST return must be duly supported by valid ME/ MC/Customs permits and relevant supporting documents (e.g. commercial invoices and appropriate shipping documents).

(c) Supplies of goods

You have to charge and account GST on all subsequent supplies of goods made, including those of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) agent). For local sales, GST will have to be standard-rated (7% GST) and reported in Box 1 “Total value of standard-rated supplies” and Box 6 “Output tax due” respectively. For sales that involve the exports of goods, GST can be zero-rated (0% GST) if the relevant supporting proof of exports are maintained and reported in Box 2 “Total value of zero-rated supplies”.

Please note that the value of standard-rated supplies or zero-rated supplies reported in your GST return must be duly supported by valid tax invoices (for standard-rated supplies) and relevant export documents (for zero-rated supplies). For further information on the relevant supporting documents to be maintained for proof of

⁸ For information and conditions on sections 33(2) and 33A agents, please refer to the e-Tax Guide “GST: Guide on Imports” at www.iras.gov.sg > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides > GST

exports, please refer to the e-Tax Guide “GST: Guide on Exports” at www.iras.gov.sg > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides > GST.

(d) Correcting errors made on importation of goods

If you have over-declared / under-declared the value of the imported goods, including that of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) or 33A agent), you will declare the correct value of the imported goods (and not the over-declared / under-declared value) in Box 5 “Total value of taxable purchases” and Box 9 “Total value of goods imported under MES or A3PL or Other Approved Schemes only” of your GST returns for the relevant accounting periods.

You are not required to take up an additional permit to declare the shortfall of the imported goods.

Please note that the correct value of imports reported and the reconciliation between the figures reflected on the invoices/permits and the figures reflected in your GST return must be duly supported by valid MES permits and relevant supporting documents (e.g. commercial invoices and appropriate shipping documents).

(e) Wrong declaration of permit type

If you have wrongly declared a GST payment permit for an import, including that of your overseas principals (i.e. where you are acting as the section 33(2) or 33A agent) and re-import under S33B, you may claim back the GST paid through your GST return. You should report the value of the imported goods in Box 5 “Total value of taxable purchases” and the GST paid in Box 7 “Input tax and refunds claimed” of your GST return for the relevant accounting period. Please note that you are required to maintain the import permit as proof of payment for the input tax claim.

Appendix C - Comptroller's requirements on internal controls, accounting and compliance records

Good internal controls and proper accounting records

Good internal controls and proper accounting records:

- (a) There must be proper and documented procedures on the identification and capturing of accounting information from your inventory and financial records into your GST accounting/ reporting system;
- (b) There must be sufficient original documents and proper records of the value of imports (including goods removed from ZG warehouse), exports and total supplies as follows:

Inward handling / Receipt of goods

- (a) Goods Received Notes (GRN) – to document the date, quantity and description of goods received
- (b) Duly acknowledged Delivery Orders (DOs) – to support the GRN
- (c) Copies of import/ME/MC permits, transshipment permits etc.
- (d) Copies of shipping documents such as air waybill or bill of lading
- (e) Copies of commercial invoices accompanying the goods, if available
- (f) Copies of insurance documents accompanying the goods, if available
- (g) Copies of correspondences from your overseas principals
- (h) Any other similar documents to document the date, movement, quantity and description of the goods received into its warehouse

The identity of the overseas principal(s)/supplier(s) as well as the value and description of the goods must be readily identifiable/ verifiable.

Storage/Custody of goods

- (a) The relevant warehouse records/ reports showing clearly the person(s) handing over and person(s) receiving the goods at each stage of their storage into the warehouse
- (b) The warehouse storage records/ reports showing the warehouse location where the goods are stored

Outward handling / Removal of goods

- (a) Purchase Orders (POs) issued by your customer(s)
- (b) Delivery Orders (DOs) issued by you
- (c) Copies of export permits, transshipment permits etc.
- (d) Copies of shipping documents such as air waybill or bill of lading
- (e) Copies of commercial invoices accompanying the goods, if available
- (f) Copies of insurance documents accompanying the goods, if available

- (g) Written instructions from your customer(s) to deliver the goods locally or to export the goods
- (h) Any other similar documents to document the date, movement, quantity and description of the goods removed from your warehouse

The identity of the overseas or local customer(s) as well as the value and description of the goods must be readily identifiable / verifiable.

Stock-taking / Inventory audit of goods

- (a) You must maintain sufficient evidence to indicate that a full and comprehensive internal and/or external stock-take / inventory audit has been performed.

Discrepancy reporting of goods

- (a) You must maintain reconciliation reports pertaining to discrepancies of the goods at the point of their:
 - i. Receipt into the warehouse (if any);
 - ii. Removal from the warehouse (if any); and
 - iii. After a stock-take/ inventory audit is conducted

Invoicing for the goods supplied

- (a) If you invoice your customer for the goods, you must maintain the following documents as evidence of the supply of the goods:
 - i. Tax invoices issued for all local supplies of goods
 - ii. Invoices issued for all sales which are exported (i.e. the supporting export documents must be maintained as proof of exports of goods)
 - iii. Evidence of payment received from the customer (if any)

You must produce all such records upon request by IRAS.

If you are an agent acting on behalf of overseas principals under section 33(2) of the GST Act, you must keep separate records of the goods owned by the overseas principal as detailed in Appendix E.

Good compliance records with IRAS and Singapore Customs

You must maintain good compliance records in the submission of GST returns / Income Tax Forms / Property Tax Forms and payment of GST / Income Tax / Property Tax / Withholding tax.

You must also have good compliance records with Singapore Customs.

Appendix D - Letter of guarantee

A letter of guarantee may be required for the granting or renewing of Major Exporter Scheme status where the Comptroller of GST thinks fit. We will notify you in writing when a letter of guarantee is required.

The Comptroller of GST only accepts letters of guarantee issued by banks or insurance companies in Singapore. This includes the Singapore branch of a foreign bank or insurance company.

The bank or insurance company must issue the letter of guarantee in accordance with the required format. A specimen format will be sent to you if you are required to furnish a letter of guarantee.

The Comptroller of GST will specify the validity period of the letter of guarantee. The Comptroller of GST may lodge a claim during the validity period.

When the letter of guarantee expires at the end of the guarantee period, the letter of guarantee is effectively null and void. Thus, the Comptroller does not return the letter nor issue a letter of release.

Appendix E - Conditions and record-keeping requirements of a GST agent acting on behalf of overseas principals [i.e. section 33(2) or 33A agent]

Record-keeping

- (a) Any correspondence or letter from each overseas principal, authorising the business as its local agent.
- (b) Stock records for each overseas principal containing the following details:
- i. Inward handling / Receipt of goods
- Date of import / goods removed from ZG warehouse / receipt
 - Total import value / value of goods removed from ZG warehouse / value of goods received
 - Description of goods
 - Quantity of goods

The stock records must be supported by copies of Goods Received Notes (GRN), Delivery Orders (DOs), Customs permits, shipping documents, commercial invoices, insurance documents, correspondences with overseas principals/suppliers and any other relevant documents.

- ii. Outward handling / Removal of goods
- Date of export/re-export/sale
 - Purpose of removals (local sale, export, re-export etc.)
 - Description of goods
 - Total value of goods exported/re-exported/sold
 - Quantity of goods exported/re-exported/sold

The stock records must be supported by the relevant documents such as Purchase Orders (POs), Delivery Orders (DOs), Customs permits, shipping documents, commercial invoices, insurance documents, written instructions from and correspondences with overseas principals or their customers, tax invoice (if invoicing is done by the GST agent), evidence of payment received from the purchaser (if payment made to the GST agent) as well as any other relevant documents.

- iii. Storage / Custody of goods
- Names of persons handing over and/or taking over the goods at each stage of their storage into the warehouse
 - Storage locations of the goods in the warehouse
- iv. Stock-taking / Inventory audit of goods
- Records of full and comprehensive internal and/or external stock-take/ inventory audit

v. Discrepancy reporting

Reconciliation reports pertaining to discrepancies of the goods (if any) at the point of their:

- Receipt into the warehouse;
- Removal from the warehouse; and
- After a stock-take / inventory audit is conducted

The GST agent must maintain proper stock reports and stock reconciliation reports for each of the overseas customers such that stock balance in the warehouse can be reconciled to the goods imported and the goods supplied.

- (c) Records of the overseas principal(s) for whom the GST agent is acting, as if the GST agent is the taxable person and complies with section 46 of the GST Act.

Accounting

(a) Importation

The GST agent needs to declare the value of the imports, including that of the overseas customer(s) or the value of goods imported into / removed from the ZG warehouse, as “Total value of taxable purchases” and “Total value of goods imported under MES or A3PL or Other Approved Schemes only” in Box 5 and Box 9 of the GST returns respectively, for the relevant accounting periods.

(b) Supplies

The GST-registered business has to charge and account GST on all local sales and zero-rate (0% GST) the supply if the goods are exported and/or re-exported back to the overseas customer(s). The local agent also has to account for all such transactions in the GST returns as “Total value of standard-rated supplies” and “Total value of zero-rated supplies”, in Box 1 and 2 of the GST returns respectively, for the relevant accounting periods.