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AUTHORITY  
OF SINGAPORE

# IRAS e-Tax Guide

GST: Guide on  
Approved Marine Fuel Trader (AMFT) Scheme  
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## **1 Aim**

- 1.1 This guide explains the mechanism, qualifying criteria and application procedure of the AMFT Scheme.
- 1.2 The AMFT Scheme is relevant to you if you trade substantially in bunker fuel and hold a valid bunkering licence issued by Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA).

## **2 At a glance**

- 2.1 GST is chargeable on local supplies of marine fuel oil. The AMFT Scheme is designed to relieve approved persons from the payment of GST on standard-rated purchases of specified marine fuel oil from GST registered suppliers.
- 2.2 To qualify for the scheme, you must be a GST-registered person and must meet all the qualifying criteria which include holding a valid bunkering licence and trading substantially in bunker fuel. More details of the qualifying criteria can be found in section 6.1 of this guide. Upon approval, the approved person must discharge all the responsibilities as detailed in section 8 of this guide.
- 2.3 The AMFT status is generally granted for 3 years from the date of approval. A shorter period may be granted at the discretion of the Comptroller.

## **3 Glossary**

### **3.1 Marine Fuel Oil (MFO)**

This refers to marine fuel oil used by ocean going vessels for their engines e.g., MFO 380cSt, but excludes marine diesel oil (MDO), marine gas oil (MGO) and liquified natural gas (LNG).

Based on the Singapore Standards for bunkering i.e., Code of practice for bunker mass flow metering [SS 648] and Code of practice for bunkering [SS 600], the quality of MFO should conform to or be better than the standards set by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) for “Petroleum Products – Fuels (Class F) – Specifications of marine fuels” [ISO 8217].

In the event of a dispute on the definition of MFO, the Comptroller may rely on MPA and/or qualified third-party surveyors to distinguish the type of marine fuel (e.g., between MFO and other non-MFO) as governed by the latest standards set by MPA.

### **3.2 Approved person**

This refers to a business approved as an approved marine fuel trader under the AMFT scheme.

### **3.3 GST group registration**

Group registration is a facility that allows companies within a group to report GST as a group and submitting one GST return instead of reporting their GST individually. Under group registration, one of the companies will be nominated by the group as the representative member to file the GST return. Group registration will be in the name of the representative member.

### **3.4 Major Exporter Scheme (MES)**

MES is a GST scheme designed to ease the cash flow of businesses that have substantial exports through the suspension of the payment of GST on the importation of goods.

### **3.5 Section 33(1) agent**

An overseas entity that is not a resident in Singapore and/or does not have an established place of business in Singapore may register for GST in Singapore. As a requirement, the overseas entity must appoint a local agent in Singapore (known as a section 33(1) agent) who will act on the entity's behalf for its GST matters. This agent is responsible for the accounting and payment of GST for the overseas entity.

## **4 Background**

- 4.1 The AMFT Scheme was introduced on 1 Jan 2005 to help qualifying GST registered bunker suppliers ease their cash flow by waiving the GST payable on the local purchase of MFO for bunkering purposes.
- 4.2 Under the Scheme, GST need not be paid on the sale of MFO to approved persons. This alleviates the cash flow difficulties of the approved persons by eliminating the need to pay GST upfront and to subsequently claim it back by obtaining a refund from IRAS.
- 4.3 However, the import of MFO still attracts GST unless the importer is an approved business under an import GST suspension scheme (e.g. MES).

## 5 How the AMFT Scheme works

- 5.1 An approved person may purchase MFO without having to pay any GST to the supplier. Only MFO can be purchased without the payment of GST by approved persons. MDO, MGO and LNG are excluded from the AMFT scheme.
- 5.2 The buyer, as an approved person, is required to keep its suppliers informed of its approved status under the scheme. The buyer must ensure that the suppliers provide the relevant tax invoices not showing any GST amount and contain the required annotation: "*Payment of GST is not required under the AMFT Scheme*", per section 8.2(a) of this guide.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 illustrates the GST treatment where a local supply of MFO is made to an approved person compared with one that is made to a non-approved person.
- 5.4 A list of approved persons under the AMFT Scheme can be found on IRAS' website at [www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg)

## 6 Qualifying Criteria

For avoidance of doubt, conditions and/or requirements in paragraph 6 have the force of law.

- 6.1 To qualify for the AMFT Scheme, the applicant must satisfy **ALL** the following requirements:

- (a) The business is incorporated or registered in Singapore;
- (b) The primary activity of the business is supplying bunker fuel for use on board ocean-going ships and at the time of application, it holds a valid MPA bunkering licence with at least 3 months validity period;

As a general guide, the Comptroller considers a business as being primarily engaged in supplying bunker fuel if its revenue from the sale of bunker fuel is at least 50% of its total sales within a 12-month period<sup>1</sup>.

At the time of application, the business must have commenced supplying MFO.

- (c) The business must be a GST-registered person, and have good compliance and payment records in terms of customs and excise duties, income tax, property tax and GST;
- (d) The business must have good internal controls and maintain high standards of accounting and record-keeping. It must also comply

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix 3 for an illustration.

with all the requirements of the Scheme set out by the Comptroller<sup>2</sup>;  
and

- (e) The business must assume full responsibility and accountability of GST should it fail to meet any of the conditions as required under the scheme after it is approved to operate under the scheme.

The Comptroller may exercise its discretion to vary the requirements or impose additional requirements.

Apart from the above conditions, the Comptroller may impose a security for the granting or renewing of the AMFT Scheme where the Comptroller thinks fit. We will notify you in writing if a security is required.

## 7 Application Procedure

- 7.1 A business that can meet all the qualifying criteria stated in section 6 of this guide may apply for the Scheme.
- 7.2 To apply, the following information and documents together with the completed form GST F16 (Application for Approved Marine Fuel Trader Scheme)<sup>3</sup> must be submitted:
- (i) A concise description of the nature of business, specifying the main products that the applicant is supplying and its major suppliers and buyers of MFO;
  - (ii) A copy of the bunkering licence<sup>4</sup> issued by MPA;
  - (iii) A copy of the latest set of audited financial statements;  
If the financial statements for the latest financial year are not yet audited, please give the most recent audited financial statements together with a letter from your external auditor indicating the expected date of audit completion. If the audit completion is expected to be delayed, the letter should also include the reason(s) for the delay in completing the audit.
  - (iv) For businesses engaged in MFO trading for less than 12 months (e.g. newly incorporated businesses or existing businesses venturing into MFO trading), the application should include a 12 months projection of the value of purchases of MFO, value of bunker fuel sales (including MFO, MDO, MGO, LNG) and total revenue from the date of commencement of MFO trading. The basis of projection should be explained and supported by the relevant contracts/agreements.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to section 8 of this guide.

<sup>3</sup> This form can be downloaded from [www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg) > Quick Links > Forms > GST > GST Schemes

<sup>4</sup> This refers to a bunker supplier licence permitting the supply of MFO. Bunkering licences solely for the supply of MGO and/or LNG, and bunker craft operator licences are not accepted.

7.3 All applicants will be notified on the outcome of their applications within one month from the date when complete information have been received by the Comptroller.

## **8 Responsibilities of an Approved Person**

For avoidance of doubt, conditions and/or requirements in paragraph 8 have the force of law.

8.1 The approved person must:

- Provide the MFO suppliers with a copy of the approval letter stating the validity period of the AMFT Scheme status (to support the purchase of MFO without the payment of GST);
- Maintain separate records for the purchases and sales of MFO;
- Be able to extract the purchase and sales records of MFO upon any request made by the Comptroller;
- Comply with all the accounting and record-keeping requirements that the Comptroller may determine from time to time (refer to Appendix 2);
- Notify all the MFO suppliers immediately when it is aware that its AMFT Scheme status will be revoked or not renewed; and
- Notify the Comptroller immediately when it is aware that its bunkering licence will be revoked or not renewed.

8.2 The approved person is also required to-

- (a) Maintain tax invoices issued by the supplier(s) of MFO. The tax invoices should not show any GST amount and should contain the following annotation: "*Payment of GST is not required under the AMFT scheme*";
- (b) Maintain copies of delivery orders from the supplier(s) of MFO duly acknowledged upon delivery;
- (c) Maintain other documentary evidence (such as payment evidence, certification from marine surveyors, where applicable) to support the MFO purchase transactions;
- (d) Record the value of local MFO purchases as taxable purchases in Box 5 of the GST return. No GST is to be included in Box 7 since the payment of GST is not required for MFO purchases made under the scheme.

## **9 Non-compliance under the Scheme**

9.1 The following constitutes non-compliance under the AMFT Scheme:

- (i) Where an approved person ceases to be qualified under the AMFT Scheme (e.g., its bunkering licence is revoked) and yet continues to remain in the Scheme without notifying the Comptroller; or
- (ii) Where an approved person fails to comply with any of the conditions imposed by the Comptroller under the Scheme.

9.2 In such instances, the approved person (the buyer in the transaction) must repay the tax that the supplier (due to the buyer's non-compliance under the Scheme) did not previously charge<sup>5</sup>. The buyer must declare such tax as if it is its output tax (Box 6) in its GST return. The Comptroller will not allow any corresponding input tax claim on this tax amount as this payment is due solely to the buyer's non-compliance under the Scheme.

## **10 Frequently Asked Questions**

10.1 How long must records be kept?

Under the Income Tax Act and the GST Act, you are required to keep your business records for a period of at least 5 years.

These records can be kept in other forms (e.g., electronic media) instead of paper form. No prior approval is required from the Comptroller of GST if you wish to keep your records in non-paper form. However, you must comply with the record keeping requirements set out in the e-Tax guide 'Record Keeping Guide for GST-registered Businesses' which can be downloaded from [www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg) > Quick Links > e-Tax Guides.

10.2 How should a supplier of MFO (i.e., regardless of whether the supplier is an approved person under the Scheme) declare the value of its local sale of MFO to an approved person under the Scheme in its GST return?

The supplier of MFO should report the value of the local sale of MFO as standard-rated supplies (Box 1) without the corresponding output tax<sup>6</sup> in its GST return. The value to be reported should be based on Singapore dollar value indicated on the tax invoice issued to the approved person.

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<sup>5</sup> This does not apply to instances where it is due to supplier's omission to charge the tax and there is no reasonable basis to determine that the supplier's omission is the result of non-compliance on the part of the approved person.

<sup>6</sup> No output tax needs to be declared since payment of GST is not required for approved persons' local purchases of MFO under the Scheme.

10.3 *How should an approved person under the Scheme declare the value of local purchase from a MFO supplier in its GST return?*

For the local purchase of MFO from a MFO supplier, the approved person should report the value of MFO purchased as its taxable purchase (Box 5) without the corresponding input tax<sup>7</sup> in its GST return. The value reported should be based on the Singapore dollar value indicated on the tax invoice issued by the MFO supplier.

10.4 *What is the validity period for the AMFT Scheme?*

Approval is usually valid for a period of 3 years from the date of approval. However, the Comptroller may, at the Comptroller's discretion, grant approval for a shorter specified period if the Comptroller thinks fit.

If the approved person is found to have breached any of the conditions or ceases to be qualified under the Scheme or provided false, misleading or inaccurate declaration or information in its application, the Comptroller may revoke the approval without prior notice.

10.5 *Do the requirements for businesses upon de-registration from GST apply to the approved person under the Scheme should it de-register from GST?*

When the approved person de-registers from GST, it must fulfil all the requirements pertaining to de-registration like all other GST-registered businesses. Specifically, all the goods (including those purchased under the AMFT Scheme or any other scheme where GST was suspended) would form part of the assets or stocks where output tax is accountable, where applicable. This is despite that tax was not paid when the goods were purchased under the Scheme.

10.6 *How is the AMFT Scheme status renewed?*

The approved person will have to seek approval from Comptroller for renewal at least 3 months before the expiry date of its AMFT Scheme status if it wishes to continue to operate under the Scheme immediately after the expiry date of the earlier approval.

10.7 *What are the supplier's responsibilities under the AMFT Scheme?*

The supplier would not have any additional responsibilities under the AMFT Scheme, other than the normal obligations as a GST-registered person under the GST Act.

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<sup>7</sup> No input tax should be claimed as payment of GST is not required for purchases of MFO under the scheme.

**10.8 If my business is under GST group registration, is the AMFT Scheme status granted to all members of the GST group?**

No, the AMFT Scheme status is only granted to the member who has met all the qualifying criteria of the Scheme. If the approved person was not originally registered under a GST group but subsequently becomes a member of a GST group, the AMFT Scheme status remains with the approved person.

**10.9 If I am acting as a section 33(1) agent, can my overseas principal use my AMFT Scheme status to purchase MFO locally without paying GST?**

No, your overseas principal cannot use your approved Scheme status to purchase MFO locally without paying GST.

**10.10 Is there any additional requirement for a tax invoice issued by a supplier for the sale of MFO under the Scheme?**

An approved person purchasing MFO without having to pay GST under the Scheme must ensure that the supplier issues a tax invoice that does not show any GST amount and contains the annotation “Payment of GST is not required under the AMFT Scheme”.

## **11 Contact Information**

**11.1 For enquiries on this e-Tax Guide, please contact the Goods and Services Tax Division at [www.iras.gov.sg](http://www.iras.gov.sg) (select “Contact Us”)**

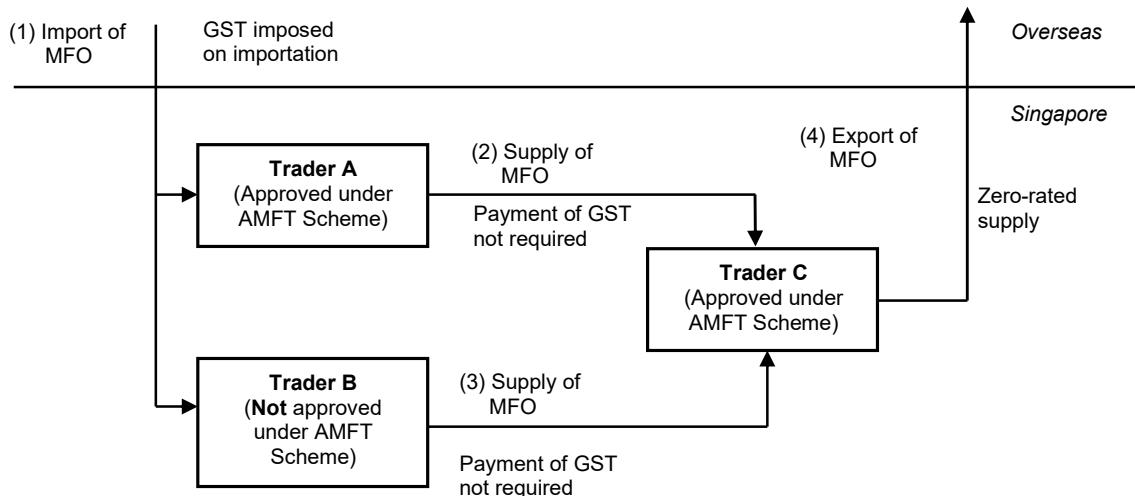
## 12 Updates and amendments

	Date of amendment	Amendments made
1	1 Dec 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Updated section 3.1 to reflect the latest bunkering standards and references</li> <li>(ii) Amended section 6.1(c) to clarify the requirement to have good compliance and payment records for customs and excise duties in addition to various tax types</li> <li>(iii) Updated section 10 on the guide for record keeping and added section 10.10.</li> <li>(iv) Updated section 11 on the contact information</li> <li>(v) Updated Appendix 2(D) to clarify on other scheme requirements</li> <li>(vi) Appendix 4 on letter of guarantee removed. Applicant will be notified in writing if a security is required.</li> <li>(vii) Editorial changes</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1: Illustration On The Operations Under The Scheme

The following diagram illustrates the basic scenario under the AMFT scheme:

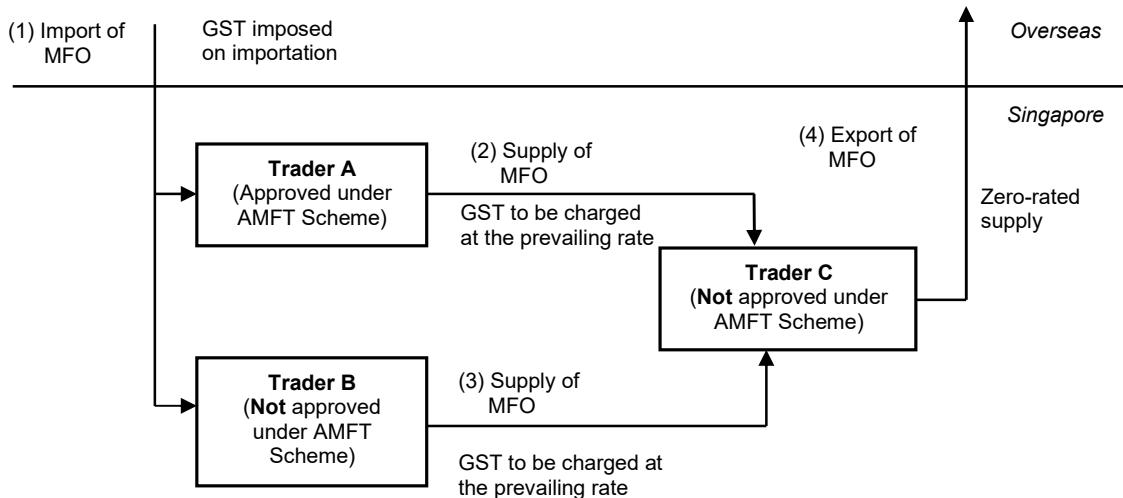
### (A) Where GST- registered suppliers (either approved or not approved under the Scheme) sell MFO to an approved person



Under the Scheme, an approved person can purchase MFO locally, without payment of GST.

- (1) Traders may purchase MFO locally or import MFO from overseas. Where MFO is imported by traders, GST on import of MFO will still be imposed unless the trader is under an import GST suspension scheme (e.g. MES).
- (2) Payment of GST is not required when Trader A (an approved person) sells MFO to Trader C (another approved person).
- (3) Payment of GST is similarly not required when Trader B (not an approved person) sells MFO to Trader C (an approved person).
- (4) If MFO is sold and delivered directly on board a foreign bound ship / exported by Trader C, such a supply of MFO can be zero-rated (i.e., provided proper export documents are maintained).

**(B) Where GST registered suppliers (either approved or not approved under the Scheme) sell MFO to a non-approved person**



- (1) Traders may purchase MFO locally or import MFO from overseas. Where MFO is imported by traders, GST on import of MFO will still be imposed unless the trader is under an import GST suspension scheme (e.g. MES).
- (2) Trader A (an approved person) will have to charge and account for GST on the sale of MFO to Trader C (not an approved person).
- (3) Similarly, Trader B (not an approved person) will also have to charge and account for GST on the sale of MFO to Trader C (not an approved person).
- (4) If MFO is sold and delivered on board a foreign bound ship / exported by Trader C, such a supply of MFO can be zero-rated (i.e., provided proper export documents are maintained).

## **Appendix 2: Internal Control, Record-Keeping and GST Accounting Requirements of Approved Persons**

An approved person must comply with the following requirements:

### **(A) Internal Control**

1. An approved person must be able to track sales of MFO (where the payment of GST is not required), to the respective approved buyers under the Scheme. It must maintain an inventory system to track the purchase of MFO.
2. An approved person must be able to provide all documentary evidence on:
  - The quantity and value of MFO purchased or sold;
  - The quantity and value of MFO purchased or sold where the payment of GST is not required.
3. An approved person must perform a complete internal stock-take or inventory audit at least once a year (where applicable). Reconciliation reports must be prepared for all discrepancies.
4. Upon request from the Comptroller, an approved person must produce the proper certification from the licenced bunker surveyor who conducted sample checks on its inventory or sale of MFO.

### **(B) Record-keeping requirements**

1. An approved person must maintain proper documentation to track each sale and each purchase of MFO under the Scheme. The supporting records for each sale or purchase of MFO must be produced, such as the
  - purchase order
  - collection of payment
  - delivery order duly acknowledged by the buyer
  - certification by the marine surveyor [where applicable]
  - invoice from supplier
2. An approved person must be able to reconcile and distinguish, from its accounting or business records, the value as well as quantity of MFO sold to approved persons and purchased from suppliers under the Scheme, from all its other taxable supplies and purchases.

An approved person must readily produce all these documents upon request by the Comptroller. Business records must be kept for at least 5 years.

### **(C) GST Accounting**

1. An approved person should declare the value of MFO purchased and sold to other approved persons as its "Value of taxable purchases" (Box

- 5) and "Value of standard-rated supplies" (Box 1) respectively in its GST returns based on the time of supply rule. There will be no corresponding "Input tax claimed" (Box 7) or "Output tax due" (Box 6) since no GST is charged or paid on sales and purchases of MFO made under the Scheme.
2. An approved person is required to issue a tax invoice for the sale of MFO to another approved person under the scheme. The tax invoice should not show any GST amount and must contain the following annotation: "Payment of GST is not required under the AMFT Scheme".

**(D) Others**

1. If an approved person under the Scheme wishes to purchase MFO without having to pay GST, it must ensure that the supplier issues a tax invoice that does not show any GST amount and contains the proper annotation "Payment of GST is not required under the AMFT Scheme" (whether or not the supplier of MFO is an approved person under the scheme). .
2. If the quantity of MFO delivered to the approved person cannot reconcile with the actual quantity/type of MFO that should be available/sold, the approved person and the supplier are responsible to account for the GST on any discrepancy (subject to our audit findings).
3. If the approved person de-registers from GST, he must fulfil all the requirements pertaining to de-registration like all other GST-registered businesses. Specifically, all the goods (including those purchased under the AMFT Scheme or any other scheme where GST was suspended) would form part of the assets/stocks where output tax is accountable, where applicable. This is despite that GST was not paid when the goods were purchased under the scheme.

**Appendix 3: Example on the computation of the 50% qualifying threshold**Period : From dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy<sup>8</sup>

Name of Applicant : \_\_\_\_\_

Unique Entity Number (UEN) : \_\_\_\_\_

	SGD (\$)	Remarks
a Value of bunker fuel sales (including MFO, MDO, MGO, LNG) <sup>9</sup> :	e.g., 2,000,000	Includes supplies made in the capacity of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ section 33(2) local GST agent of overseas principals; and</li> <li>■ principal, for own business</li> </ul>
b Value of other revenue :	e.g., 690,680	e.g., Rental, interest income
c Total revenue :	e.g., 2,690,680	
<b>Computation of qualifying threshold (exceeding 50%) [a/c]</b> :	74.33%	

<sup>8</sup> This will be the same 12 months period as stated in Section 2.2 of GST F16<sup>9</sup> Under the AMFT scheme, only MFO can be purchased without the payment of GST by approved persons. MDO, MGO and LNG are excluded under the AMFT scheme. The inclusion of MDO, MGO and LNG in the above computation is only for the purpose of determining if the applicant can meet the qualifying threshold.