

Authorised Economic Operator (AEO)

Background

The amendment to the Community Customs Code (the Security Amendment), adopted by the European Parliament in April 2005, allows Customs authorities to grant the status of AEO to any business that satisfies EU criteria. Member States successfully voted on the detailed legal provisions to implement the concept on 23 October 2006 and AEO status will become effective from 1 January 2008.

EC Regulation 648/2005 and its Implementing Provisions are available on the [Commission's Europa website](#).

Once a Member State (MS) has granted a trader (economic operator) AEO status, this status will be recognised across all Member States.

Authorised Economic Operators will be able to benefit from facilitations for customs controls or simplifications for customs rules or both, depending on the type of AEO certificate. There are three certificate types:

- **Customs Simplifications** AEOs will be entitled to benefit from simplifications provided for under the customs rules.
- **Security and Safety** AEOs will be entitled to benefit from facilitations of customs controls relating to security and safety at the entry of the goods into the customs territory of the Community, or when the goods leave the customs territory of the Community.
- **Customs Simplifications/Security and Safety** AEOs will be entitled to benefit from both simplifications provided for under the customs rules and from facilitations of customs controls relating to security and safety (a combination of 1 and 2).

Conditions and Criteria for granting a certificate

Full details of the criteria that have to be met to become an AEO will be published shortly. Criteria will include an appropriate record of customs compliance, satisfactory management systems that allow appropriate customs controls and proven solvency. Additionally for Security and Safety, it will include details of the security and safety standards to be met.

Implementation

A project team has been established to plan the processing of AEO applications in the UK. HMRC expect to be in a position to start accepting applications from 1 July 2007.

Further information

The AEO Project Team can be contacted at AEOteam@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk.

General queries (including from the press and media) about Authorised Economic Operators should be made to the NAS (National Advice Service) on 0845 010 9000.

The AEO Project Team is in the process of setting up a working group to establish guidance material and authorisation procedures for both HMRC and the trade. Further information on the outputs of the Working Party will be issued at a later date.

[FAQs: Authorised Economic Operator](#)

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