Sea Cargo Manifest and Transhipment Regulations (SCMTR) – FAQs

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Acronyms used in this FAQ:

S.No.	Acronym	Full Form
1	ACU	Authorised Custodian
2	AEO	Authorized Economic Operator
3	ANC	Authorized other Notified Sea Carriers
4	AR	Arrival
5	ASA	Authorised Sea Agent
6	ASC	Authorised Sea Carriers
7	ATP	Authorised Transhippers
8	BL	Bill of lading
9	CFS	Container Freight Station
10	CIM	Customs Inland Manifest
11	CIN	Cargo Identification Number
12	CSN	Cargo Summary Notification
13	DP	Departure
14	ICD	Inland Container Depot
15	MCIN	Master Cargo Identification Number
16	MIG	Message Implementation Guidelines
17	NVOCC	Non-Vessel Operating Container Carrier
18	PCIN	Primary Cargo Identification Number
19	SAA	Sea Arrival Manifest Filing – Amendment
20	SAM	Sea Arrival Manifest
21	SB	Shipping Bill
22	SCMTR	Sea Cargo Manifest and Transhipment Regulations
23	SDA	Sea Departure Manifest Amendment Filing
24	SDM	Sea Departure Manifest
25	SDN	Sea Departure Notification- Acknowledgment
26	SF	Stuffing
27	SMTP	Simple Mail Transfer Protocol
28	ST	Stripping
29	VCN	Voyage Call Number
30	VOA	Vessel Operator

Q1. What is Sea Cargo Manifest and Transhipment Regulations (SCMTR), 2018?

The Sea Cargo Manifest and Transhipment Regulations (SCMTR), 2018 have been issued under statutory provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. The regulations seek to bring about transparency, predictability of movement, advance collection of information for expeditious clearance.

This Regulations supersedes the earlier regulations viz. Import Manifest (Vessels) Regulations, 1971 and Export Manifest (Vessels) Regulation, 1976. The new Regulations stipulate for advance notice by authorized carriers for goods arriving in or being exported out of India through gateway sea ports. It stipulates the obligations, roles and responsibilities for the various stakeholders involved in movement of customs cargo.

Details of SCMTR Notification are available on https://www.cbic.gov.in/

Q2. Who are the stakeholders obligated to register and operate under the new regulations?

As per details in Message Implementation Guide, following stakeholders would require registration,-

1) Authorised Sea Carrier (Including Shipping line)
2) Authorised Sea Agent (Steamer/ Shipping Agent)
3) Authorised Carrier (Transhipper and other notified carriers)
4) Terminal Operator
5) Custodian

Q3. Is the SCMTR application required to be filed by the stakeholders separately for each location they operate from?

Only one registration needs to be taken for one entity for each of its type of operation (ASC/ASA/ATP etc.). The application will be filed only by the master entity and will be available only in its login for viewing or amending. While the port of registration will have to be specified in the application form for the purpose of its approval by Customs, the entity will be free to operate from any other port in that entity type. Each of the branch offices can get separate ICEGATE ID as a child user of the Master entity. Master applicant specifically gives branch office details in his SCMTR application.

Q4. If I am already registered with ICEGATE and have an ICEGATE ID, do I still need to apply afresh for SCMTR, 2018?

In order to comply with the new regulations, a separate online application has been made available with the ICEGATE login for all the concerned stakeholders.

Therefore, every stakeholder who is either obligated or intends to operate under the new Regulations shall submit registration application from his ICEGATE login.

To read more about the SCMTR, 2018 application process, refer to the technical guidance note and Application advisory available on https://www.icegate.gov.in/SeaManifestRegulation.html

Q5. How do I know the status of my application?

The status of the application (submitted/approved/rejected with error) will be available on the Dashboard provided under the login. In case of any error, the application be modified accordingly and resubmitted.

Q6. Who will approve my application?

As per the new regulations, the application shall have to be approved by the Commissioner of Customs, or any officer delegated by him, at the port of registration chosen by the applicant at the time of filing application. The online application submitted by the applicant shall be transferred electronically to the approving officer at the port of registration who shall ordinarily approve or raise a query, the details of which will also be made available online on the Dashboard.

Q7. Is approval of Customs officer is required for registration of all the stakeholders? Are there any additional requirements like Bond/BG for registering/operating under SCMTR, 2018?

Different scenarios with respect to stakeholders type are explained in the table below:-

Entity Type (i)	Description (ii)	Messages/Manifests (iii)	Specific Requirements for Registration (iv)
ASC – Authorized Sea Carriers	Shipping Lines and Shipping Agents	SAM, SDM, SEI, SDN	
ANC – Other Notified Carriers	Freight forwarders, NVOCC	CSN	National Surety Bond (Bond Code = 'SB') as per Regulation 1A to be registered in System before approval of registration by officer
ATO – Authorized Terminal Operators	Terminal Operators	Vessel related messaged (VCN, VESPRO etc.), Container Loading/Landing Reports	Auto Approval – No requirement for officer approval.
ACU – Authorized Custodians	CFS/ICD/Port Custodians	SF/ST, Actual time of Arrival/Departure	Auto Approval – No requirement for officer approval. Requirement first to onboard ICEGATE MFTP
ATP – Authorized Transhippers	Transhippers executing the TP Bond and	ASR, CIM-AR, CIM-DP	

Entity Type (i)	Description (ii)	Messages/Manifests (iii)	Specific Requirements for Registration (iv)
	responsible for the cargo during transhipment		

Q8. Will the Indian offices of the foreign Shipping Lines be registered as Authorised Sea Carrier?

The Indian offices of the foreign shipping line may operate as Authorised Sea Carriers. Any agent employed by the Authorised Sea Carrier to act on his behalf shall be registered as Authorised Sea Agent.

Q9. If a user is already registered on ICEGATE as a shipping agent does he need a new registration as a shipping line to operate as Authorised Sea Carrier?

No, there is no requirement for a new ICEGATE registration as a Shipping Line in such cases.

If a user is already registered on ICEGATE as a shipping agent, he can apply as Authorized Sea Carrier in the SCMTR application directly using his existing ICEGATE login.

Q10. Does the Authorized Sea Agent (ASA) also include the Console Agents? What is the role of the Console Agents under the new regulations?

The Console Agents/Freight Forwarders/Non-Vessel Operating Container Carrier (NVOCC) who intends to comply the provisions under SCMTR will have to apply under the category as ANC.

Q11. What should be entered in "Doc. Type" field under page "Supporting Documents" during registration?

Doc. type is a code to denote the type of document being uploaded on e-Sanchit.

List of all codes is available in the registration advisory and application form.

Code (To be entered in the Supporting Document Section)	Code Name	Code description	*Reference Table	Associated Code (To be entered in the Section of the Reference Table)
380WB1	Water Bill	Proof of Water Supply Connection	P	WB
380TB1	Telephone Bill	Proof of Landline telephone or Post Paid mobile connection	P	TB

Code (To be entered in the Supporting Document Section)	Code Name	Code description	*Reference Table	Associated Code (To be entered in the Section of the Reference Table)
380EB1	Electricity Bill	Proof of Power Supply Connection	P	EB
102IT1	Income Tax Assessment Order	Scan of the copy or the PDF file without the password	P	IT
380GB1	Gas Connection Bill	Proof of Gas Connection	P	GB
101EC1	Election Commission Photo Id	ID card of Registered Voter issued by the Election Commission	P	EC
101AA1	Aadhaar Id (Uid)	Scan of hardcopy or e-Aadhaar generated from the UIDAI Website.	P	AA
149RA1	Rental Agreement	Current/Valid Rental agreement	P	RA
149RA1	Photo Passbook	Scan of the First Page of the passbook of running bank account (of a Scheduled Public Sector Bank) with photo stamped by the Branch Manager	P	PB
039PP1	Valid Passport	Scan of the front and back of Valid passport	P	PP
022CO1	SelfDeclaration on Customs Cases	Document/message providing declaration on the status of cases booked under Chapter XVI of the Customs Act.	M	CO

* Details of Reference Table to be given under the column "Section" in the supporting table Tab on the registration form. It represents the code of the section to which the uploaded document pertains. For Entity Information the section code is – M, for Authorised Operations – O and for Authorised Persons – P.

Q12. Who will receive the OTP code for verification: Master or Authorised User during the registration process?

The OTP for verification purpose will be sent to Master's Email id and mobile number mentioned in the entity information.

Q13. Can I amend my application post submission?

The applicant can edit or modify the details in submitted application if the same has not been approved by the officer concerned.

In case officer has already approved the submitted application for registration, the applicant can submit amendment for the already approved details.

Q14. What are all the Manifests/Messages to be filed under SCMTR, 2018 and who is responsible for filing them?

Reporting Event	Event Name	Filed By	Filing Event
VCN	Voyage Call Number	Terminal Operator (ATO)	Before Departure from last port of call
CSN(SCE/SCX/SCD/SCA)	Cargo Summery Notification	NVOCC/ASC	Before Departure from last port of call
SAM	Sea Arrival Manifets	ASC/ASA	Before Departure from last port of call
SAA	Sea Arrival Amendment	ASC/ASA	Before Departure from last port of call
SEI	Sea Entry Inwards	ASC/ASA	On Arrival at the Indian Port of Call
ATE (Arrival)	Actual Time of Arrival	Terminal Operator (ATO)	On Arrival at the Indian Port of Call
EI/EO		ASC/ASA	On Arrival at the Indian Port of Call
ELR(Equipment Landed)	Equipment Landed on Arrival	Terminal Operator (ATO)	On Arrival at the Indian Port of Call
SDM	Sea Departure Manifest	ASC/ASA	Before Departure from the Indian port of call
SDA	Sea Departure Amendment	ASC/ASA	Before Departure from the Indian port of call (without approval before the departure notificationand with approval afterwards)
ELR(Equipment Loaded)	Equipment Loaded at Departure	Terminal Operator (ATO)	Before Departure from the Indian port of call
ATE (Departure)	Actual Time of Departure	Terminal Operator (ATO)	After Departure from Indian Port of Call
SDN	Sea Departure Notification	ASC/ASA	After Departure from Indian Port of Call
SF/ST	Stuffing/Stripping	Custodian	Stripping report generated after filing Shipping Bill by custodian at Export/Import Departure
ASR	Allowed for Shipment Request	Transhipper (ATP)	Before Departure from Port of Call
AT/DT	Arrival/Departure Time	Custodian	Arrival & Departure Time by custodian at Export/Import Departure
DP	Export Departure	Transhipper (ATP)	Departure Message for Goods by transhipper at Gateway Port

Reporting Event	Event Name	Filed By	Filing Event
AR	Goods Arrival	Transhipper (ATP)	Arrival Message for Goods by transhipper at Gateway Port

Q15. What is the Electronic format and the structure of the manifest messages?

The manifests and other declarations under the SCMTR, 2018 will have to be submitted as a JSON file. Technical specifications of the same along with the description and format of every field have been given in the Message Implementation Guidelines (MIG). Sample JSON files for different messages have also been embedded in the respective MIGs.

Q16. What is the mechanism or mode for submission of the declarations under SCMTR 2018 by various stakeholders?

The Declaration is to be submitted to Customs by the declarant electronically through ICEGATE by using

- ✓ Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) or
- ✓ Web upload

(For more details, refer Link: https://icegate.gov.in/com_guideline.html).

Q17. Do I get an acknowledgement on successful filing of declaration?

Every submission by the declarant will be acknowledged (either with success or with error codes).

Q18. What are the different types of validations by the Customs System for the submitted declarations? Is there a reference list for the various possible errors?

Each declaration will be validated by the Customs System for the consistency of its format and data integrity. The details of structural and data validations along with the list of Error Codes are available in the MIG document (https://www.icegate.gov.in/SeaManifestRegulation.html)

Q19. What is Arrival Manifest?

The "Arrival Manifest" means an integrated declaration required to be delivered by an authorised carrier before or on arrival of, (i) the vessel carrying imported goods, export goods, or coastal goods or(ii) a train or a truck carrying imported goods or export goods.

Q20. What are the timelines for filing Sea Arrival Manifest (SAM)?

The general declaration and cargo declaration for SAM will be required to be filed before the vessel leaves the last port of call except for non-containerized cargo.

For non-containerized cargo SAM should be filed before arrival of vessel at the Indian port.

Application for entry inwards, vessel stores and crew/passenger list have to be submitted just before the arrival of the vessel at the port. This declaration will be referred to by the acronym SEI.

Q21. What is the first step in the process of filing an arrival manifest?

While filing an arrival manifest, the Authorised Sea Carrier will be required to quote the Voyage Call Number (VCN) for the vessel, among other things. VCN is a unique number assigned for every voyage of any vessel by the respective port of call. Thus, VCN being the reference identifier for every voyage carrying goods into Indian ports, is a prerequisite for filing the arrival manifest.

Q22. Once the VCN is available, will the arrival/departure manifest be required to be filed by the Authorised Sea Carrier as a single event?

Under the new Regulations, option is available with the Authorised Sea Carrier (ASC) to declare all the cargo in a single event as arrival/departure manifest.

ASC can also prepare the arrival/departure manifest by aggregating Cargo Summary Notification (CSN) filed separately by other Authorised Carrier.

Q23. What is CIN and how is it generated?

CIN is a unique identification number assigned by Customs System to every cargo declared. In order to account for every consolidation and segregation of cargo seamlessly, two types of CIN would get generated:

PCIN – Primary Cargo Identification Number

It is the identification number assigned by Customs automated System to uniquely identify a cargo contained in single Transport Document (like Bill of Lading) mentioning Actual Buyer and Seller in imports.

In exports, a PCIN corresponds to cargo covered under a single Shipping Bill. Having a PCIN for every cargo facilitates smooth filing of different declarations and removes duplicate filing effort, thereby simplifying the processes.

MCIN – Master Cargo Identification Number

Since multiple cargoes can get consolidated under a consolidated Bill of Lading (BL), MCIN is the identification number assigned by Customs automated System for all the cargo covered under a consolidated BL. Each MCIN will be an aggregation of multiple PCINs. Referring to an MCIN in any subsequent manifest would mean reference to all the underlying PCINs.

Q24. What is Departure Manifest?

The "Arrival Manifest" means an integrated declaration required to be delivered by an authorised carrier before or on arrival of, (i) the vessel carrying imported goods, export goods, or coastal goods or(ii) a train or a truck carrying imported goods or export goods.

Q25. What are the timelines for filing Sea Departure Manifest (SDM)? What is meant by Sea Departure Notification (SDN)?

SDM is the manifest required to be filed by Authorised Sea Carrier before departure of the vessel from any Indian sea port.

SDN is the declaration having final summary of the cargo actually carried by the vessel. SDN is filed by the Authorised Sea Carrier after the departure of the vessel within 24 hrs of the departure of the vessel for containerized cargo and 72 hrs for other cargo.

Q26. What are the list of messages involved in Arrival and Departure Manifest filing?

The list of messages involved in this process are as follows:

- ✓ Sea Arrival Manifest Filing (SAM)
- ✓ Sea Arrival Manifest- Acknowledgement
- ✓ Sea Arrival Manifest Filing – Amendment (SAA)
- ✓ Sea Arrival Manifest Amendment - Acknowledgement
- ✓ Sea Departure Manifest Filing (SDM)
- ✓ Sea Departure Manifest Filing - Acknowledgment
- ✓ Sea Departure Manifest Amendment Filing (SDA)
- ✓ Sea Departure Manifest-Amendment - Acknowledgment
- ✓ Sea Departure Notification (SDN)
- ✓ Sea Departure Notification- Acknowledgment

The details are available in Message implementation Guidelines.

Q27. Can the declarations (SAM and SDM) be amended after filing? What are the timelines for the same?

Both SAM and SDM can be amended after filing.

In case of SAM, amendments will not require any approval by the Customs officer if filed within following timelines:

- Short Haul Voyage (expected arrival less than 48 hrs) – 6 hrs before expected arrival
- Medium Haul Voyage (expected arrival 48 – 96 hrs) – 24 hrs before expected arrival
- Long Haul Voyage (expected arrival after 96 Hrs) – 48 hrs before expected arrival

If the amendments are filed beyond the above timelines, they will require approval by the proper officer. Such amendment approval will be given online.

In case of SDM, the amendment can be filed any time before SDN is filed.

Q28. What will happen if declaration is not provided to Customs within prescribed timelines?

Regulation 13 provides for a penalty which may extend to rupees fifty thousands for contravention of any provisions of these regulations.

Q29. Do I need to declare details pertaining to empty containers in my manifest?

Yes, empty containers will also have to be declared in the manifest as a part of equipment details with equipment status as Empty.

Q30. What is CSN and who can file it?

CSN stands for Cargo Summary Notification. It is the declaration filed with Customs regarding the details of cargo covered under a Transport Document (viz. Bill of Lading). The CSN can be filed by any notified party including Freight forwarders, NVOCC, consolidator etc. who are party to that Transport Document. On successful submission of this declaration, a unique CSN number would be generated that will act as a reference number for the next declaration by the consolidator or the vessel operator (VOA).

Q31. Once the CSNs are filed by the respective parties, who will be responsible to file the arrival manifest?

Under the new Regulations, the responsibility to file the arrival manifest lies solely on the Authorized Sea Carrier, i.e. the vessel operator or the VOA. The vessel operator, however, can reference the previous CSN declarations, if any, filed by the consolidators for the cargo being undertaken in a voyage.

Q32. Where can I find the guidelines and technical document on the Cargo Summary Notification and the Arrival Manifest?

The technical guidelines including the Message Implementation Guidelines (MIG) are available on the ICEGATE website (https://www.icegate.gov.in/SeaManifestRegulation.html).

Q33. Can the CSN be filed only by the other notified parties like freight forwarder or consolidator?

A CSN can be filed not just by the other notified parties but also by the vessel operator. A vessel operator can file CSNs for every transport document if it has the necessary details and just refer the CIN numbers in the final arrival manifest.

Q34. Can I get an illustration on arrival reporting under SCMTR, 2018 which comprises of one freight forwarders and one vessel operator?

    A. The Vessel operator will apply for VCN (Voyage Call Number) which will be assigned by port authorities

    B. CSN can be filed by the Freight forwarder by quoting just the Master BL issued by the vessel operator and giving details of the House BL issued by him to the importer/exporter. A PCIN would be generated by the Customs Automated System and communicated to the Freight forwarder for the cargo covered in the House BL.

    C. Alternatively, Vessel operator can also file CSN if details have been provided by the Freight forwarder.

    D. The CSN Numbers can be given to the vessel operator who will file the Sea Arrival Manifest.

    E. MCIN will be generated against the master Bill of Lading declared by the vessel operator.

Q35. In case of the same information being furnished by different stakeholders, say a freight forwarder and the vessel operator, which one will be considered?

A CIN Number is assigned to cargo covered under a BL primarily so that it can directly be referred by the next level consolidator. Once the cargo levels details have been furnished for a BL by the concerned freight forwarder, the consolidator or the vessel operator will not be able to give details for the same BL again.

Q36. Is CSN filing by freight forwarders or consolidators a mandatory requirement for filing the Arrival Manifest?

A CSN is only a facilitative measure using which the freight forwarder or the consolidator having the actual details of the cargo (or the B/L) can file the declaration directly with Customs without having to share these with any other entity including the vessel operator. However, the freight forwarder is at liberty to not file the CSN and provide all the necessary cargo details to the vessel operator to directly file in the arrival/departure manifest.

Q37. Who will file declarations in case the vessel is being operated by different slot operators under a "vessel sharing agreement"?

The person obligated to act as a Vessel operator under the commercial contract will also act as the Authorized Sea Carrier for the purpose of filing Arrival and Departure manifests.

Q38. What is Transhipment under Regulation 7?

Transhipment under the Regulation 7 refer to any movement of Customs cargo between two Customs areas.

Q39. Who is a Transhipper? What are the responsibilities of a Transhipper?

The person responsible for the movement of the import/export goods within India is a Transhipper. There would be only one authorized Transhipper responsible throughout the movement of the transhipped cargo, irrespective of the modes of transport. The Transhipment Bond will also be executed by the authorized Transhipper. For filing declarations under the new regulations, a transhipper should get registered in the category of ATP. Pl refer answers to Q No 2 to 7 for details on registration and application process.

Q40. If an entity is working as a Custodian as well as a Transhipper, does the entity need to take multiple registrations?

There are different manifests/declarations required to be filed by Transhipper and Custodians. If a Custodian is acting as a Transhipper, while the ICEGATE registration or ICEGATE ID will remain the same, two different applications will have to be made under the category as ACU and ATP.

Q41. What is the procedure for transhipment of goods?

The authorized transsshipper will have to file arrival and departure manifests for every stage of the inland movement of the cargo. The manifests pertaining to the transhipment are labelled as Customs Inland Manifest (CIM) – Arrival (AR)/ Departure (DP).The manifest will have to be filed for every vehicle (truck/train) carrying the cargo upto and between inland customs areas.

Q42. When CIM is required to be filed?

The authorized carrier will have to file arrival and departure manifests before departure and upon arrival of the conveyance at the respective Customs areas.

Q43. Do the stakeholders need to provide the entire data afresh in subsequent transhipments or the information provided in the manifest covering the earlier leg of the cargo movement can be referenced to?

While a declaration will have to be filed before departure and upon arrival of the conveyance at the respective Customs areas, the declarant will be able to link the declarations made in the previous manifests for every cargo using the cargo identification number (CIN) assigned to the cargo.

Q44. Is there requirement of executing a fresh bond for carrying imported of export goods during in-land movement?

No fresh bond is required to be executed.

However, the person responsible for the movement of the import/export goods within India may execute a National Transshipment Bond which is managed by Customs Automated Systems.

Q45. What are the responsibilities of an Authorised carrier in case of transshipment of goods?

Authorised Carrier shall file a Departure/Arrival manifest in prescribed form for imported or export goods in terms of Regulation 7.

Q46. What are other declarations to be filed to comply with the requirements under SCMTR?

Stuffing and stripping reports are required to be filed electronically by the Custodians including Terminal Operators wherever the cargo is being segregated or stuffed in different containers. Custodians can submit these declarations through the ICEGATE MFTP with ICEGATE ID.

In case any Custodian has not on-boarded the ICEGATE MFTP, they can approach the concerned System Manager of Customs for forwarding the prescribed application to ICEGATE.

Stuffing (SF) and Stripping (ST) messages will be filed for every equipment (container) giving the PCINs/MCINs being stuffed into or stripped out of that container. Additionally, Custodians will also have to file notifications of actual time of arrival and departure of conveyance (ATE/ELR for Terminal Operators and AT/DT for other Custodians). Message structure is available in Message Implementation Guidelines.

Q47. Is there any field in the Manifest for identification of cargo pertaining to AEO importer/exporter?

The new manifest format also includes declaration of the IEC/PAN of importer/exporter. This will enable the Customs System to identify the AEO clients and accord facilitation in terms of extant provisions.

Q48. Is there any relaxation for AEO status holders operating as an entity under SCMTR?

As per Regulation 3 (1A), AEO is not required to furnish any Bank Guarantee while other entities need to furnish Bank Guarantee for an amount of Rupees Ten Lakhs. Further AEO has the facility of extended period of registration after initial three years.

Q49. Is there any simple data entry tool/utility available to prepare the declarations in the specified format?

The declarants are free to use their own IT infrastructure or any other private software for preparing and filing the required declarations.

However, simple data entry utilities have also been made available on the ICEGATE website (https://www.icegate.gov.in/SeaManifestRegulation.html) which can be used to generate message files in the required JSON format.

The file can then be signed digitally and sent through designated channels. In addition to the above, a free digital signing utility is also available on ICEGATE website for the benefit of the users. (https://www.icegate.gov.in/digitalSign/digitalSign.html).

Q50. Is there any helpline available for resolution of queries or technical issues faced during registration or filing?

Yes, in order assist stakeholders a helpline has been provided in the following manner:

- ✓ Email- For registration related issues, email can be sent to registration@icegate.gov.in.
- ✓ Other issues can be raised to icegatehelpdesk@icegate.gov.in
- ✓ Phone no. - 18003010100o.

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