

NO EXPORTS TO ZAMBIA WITHOUT CERTIFICATE OF CONFORMITY

Earlier this year, the Zambia Bureau of Standards (“ZABS”) announced the planned implementation of a pre-Verification of Conformity Programme which will be a new requirement that will apply to exports of certain goods to Zambia. The implementation date was supposed to be 01 May 2011, but this has been put on hold until ZABS completes its own awareness campaign on this project.

Zambia is not the first African country to implement pre-import verification requirements.

The new requirement is that the exporter must present the Certificate of Conformity (“COC”) to the Zambian Revenue Authority when the goods are cleared for import and consumption in Zambia. This is significant for South African exporters to Zambia, as, approximately 50% of goods that are imported into Zambia emanate from South Africa.

These measures are designed to foster consumer and environmental protection, conformity assurance, and to stem the tide of counterfeit goods entering Zambia. It is also hoped that the programme will lead to faster clearance and release through Zambian Customs.

Once implemented, the following goods will require COCs prior to entry into Zambia:

- Toys, sporting equipment and childcare products
- Electrical and electronic products
- Vehicle parts
- Chemical products
- Mechanical products
- Building materials
- Gas equipment and appliances
- Textile products and footwear
- Furniture (wood and metal articles)
- Paper and stationery
- Safety equipment (personal and protective)
- Food and food products
- Used goods

The process to obtain the COC is that either the importer or exporter must lodge a request for verification with one of two companies that have been appointed by ZABS to conduct the

compliance verifications. The information that must be submitted to obtain the COC include:

- The list and designation of goods intended to be exported (including product description; brand name or manufacturer; quantity; and Harmonised System tariff code)
- Name; address and contact details of the importer and exporter
- Third party certificates or test reports or reports of analysis according to health and safety standards
- Information relating to the location and provisional date of availability of the goods that have been registered.

There are three types of verification:

- Route A which is applicable to any trader and goods
- Route B which is for frequent traders of the same goods
- Route C which is for manufacturers

Exporters to Zambia are also reminded to make provision for the fees that will be payable to the companies that are tasked with the inspection, verification exercise and issuance of the COC.

For further information about the programme and the companies that have been appointed by ZABS to conduct the compliance verifications, please contact the Zambia Bureau of Standards via e-mail at zabs@zamnet.zm or telephone on +260-1-231385/227075.

Virusha Subban
Bowman Gilfillan