



## Guidance Note for a Registered Road Cargo System Agent



### Introduction

The purpose of this Note is to suggest to a registered Road Cargo System (ROCARS) agent practical measures that it should take in compliance with the Import and Export (Electronic Cargo Information) Regulation.

Under the Import and Export Ordinance, it is an offence for any person to provide information which is false or misleading in a material particular to a member of the Customs and Excise Service.

**The content of this Guidance Note is provided for reference only. Compliance with this Note does not automatically exempt a company or a person from legal liability in relation to the import and export of road cargo. If in doubt, readers should seek independent legal advice.**

## Key Features of ROCARS

The key steps for using the system are as follows –

- (1) a shipper provides cargo data in eight fields<sup>1</sup> to C&ED electronically through ROCARS not earlier than 14 days before the cargo consignment enters or exits Hong Kong by truck;
- (2) as an acknowledgment, ROCARS returns a customs cargo reference number (CCRN) for the cargo consignment to the shipper who would then pass it on to the relevant trucker with the cargo description;
- (3) not less than 30 minutes<sup>2</sup> before his truck is due to pass through a land boundary control point (LBCP), the trucker does the “bundling” by providing to C&ED, through ROCARS :
  - (i) the CCRN of the cargo consignment; and
  - (ii) his vehicle’s registration number (VRN);
- (4) C&ED performs risk profiling on the cargo before a truck arrives at a LBCP and determines in advance whether inspection is called for; and
- (5) an instruction on whether a truck needs to be inspected will be shown on a visual display unit at the LBCP. A truck not selected for inspection may leave immediately after the trucker has completed immigration clearance.

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<sup>1</sup> The eight fields of cargo data are – (i) package description / gross weight or volume of cargo; (ii) number of package / quantity of cargo; (iii) description of articles in each package / cargo; (iv) name of consignor; (v) address of consignor; (vi) name of consignee; (vii) address of consignee; and (viii) expected departure / arrival date.

<sup>2</sup> ROCARS will notify a trucker to pass through a land boundary control point either 30 minutes later or immediately depending on whether, at the time the bundling work is done, C&ED has already completed the risk profiling. Shippers or freight forwarders are therefore advised to submit the cargo information well in advance.

## Good Practices Guide

### On initial contact with a new customer

#### *Record-keeping*

- ✓ Keep a proper record as regards the particulars of all the customers (either a shipper, cargo forwarder or trucker). The particulars include the name and HKID Card no. / passport no. (in the case of a person), the company name, address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, business registration number and the nature of business plus the name and address of the responsible person (in the case of a company);

#### *Reminder to Customer*

- ✓ Inform the customer that the legal liabilities imposed on the shipper and truck driver remain unchanged regardless of the delegation of data submission respectively to a ROCARS agent. Please refer to **Annex** for the suggested information sheet.

### Upon receipt of Customers' Instructions

#### *Details of Cargo Description*

- ✓ Enter the full and accurate description of the cargo. Avoid using the generic terms like electric goods, electronic appliances, foodstuff, etc.

#### *Data Entry Requirements*

- ✓ Enter the licence / permit details (if applicable) of the cargo as far as practicable to allow C&ED officers to conduct checking beforehand so as to speed up the customs clearance procedures at the control point.

### **Verification**

- ✓ Verify the following particulars, as far as practicable by, for example, comparing the details appearing in different documents or by making telephone enquiries according to the records provided by the customer:-
  - cargo description;
  - customer's particulars, for example, accuracy of address, contact phone number and nature of business; and
  - accuracy of the name and address of the consignor and consignee of the cargo.
  
- ✓ Ensure that any prohibited article being handled is covered by a valid licence / permit as required under relevant law, and check carefully the validity of such licence / permit, for example, the effective date of such licence / permit and the description of articles.

### **Retention of documents**

- ✓ Maintain a proper record for all the relevant shipping documents, for example, the packing list, bill of lading, shipping order, invoice, e-mails, etc. which are provided by the customer as reference for the submission of cargo information to ROCARS;

You should always provide the licence / permit information for any prohibited article and report any suspicious consignments by calling the Road Cargo Research Division of C&ED (Tel: 3106 4514) which is operated 24-hour or e-mailing to [rocars\\_doc@customs.gov.hk](mailto:rocars_doc@customs.gov.hk) as soon as possible.

### **After Submission of ROCARS Data**

#### **Inform trucker the CCRN and cargo description**

- ✓ Pass the CCRN and the relevant cargo description to the truck drivers as soon as possible.
  
- ✓ It is a recommended practice to:-
  - Pass a record of the bundled information to trucker, including the CCRN, cargo description and the VRN; and
  - Pass a record of the completed cargo submissions to shipper.

**Information for a registered ROCARS Agent's Customers**

- (1) A registered ROCARS agent only enters the cargo / vehicle information to Road Cargo System (ROCARS) on your behalf. The legal liabilities imposed on you under the Import and Export (Electronic Cargo Information) Regulation remain unchanged.
- (2) It is your responsibility to provide to a registered ROCARS agent the complete and accurate particulars of the cargo.
- (3) For any consignments whose particulars are found to be incomplete and inaccurate, a registered ROCARS agent reserves the right to refuse your instructions.
- (4) For trucker – you may always check for the cargo information in relation to the Customs Cargo Reference Number(s) which have been “bundled” with the vehicle(s) for which you are the registered driver.