



Sierra Leone: advanced cargo declarations continue to require particular attention

Mandatory requirements for advanced cargo declarations and cargo tracking numbers were introduced in 2015 for all shipments to and from Sierra Leone.

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Gard has received numerous enquiries from Member and clients regarding the import/export procedures for Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone introduced advanced cargo declarations in 2015 and all cargoes to be imported or exported to, or in transit in Sierra Leone, must be accompanied by an Entry/Exit Summary Number (ENS) which must feature on the bill of lading as required by the ISPS Code.

Requirements

Below is a summary of some of the requirements. The full requirements can be found on the [Sierra Leone Ports Authority's \(SLPA\) website](#).

The carrier/agent must declare all cargo on board destined for a Sierra Leone port or loaded at a Sierra Leone port, including details of the vessel's legal status, crew list and security interest, in the form of a movement reference number (MRN) up to 24 hours before berthing or at most 24 hrs after sailing.

A shipper must declare any cargo to the SLPA in the form of an Entry/Exit Summary Number before the cargo can be loaded on board any vessel. Advance cargo declarations must be done by the bill of lading issuing carrier in a vessel sharing arrangement.

A cargo tracking note in the form of an Advanced Cargo Declaration must form part of the documentation submitted to the SLPA/Customs for cargo clearance. Consequently, each bill of lading must correspond with the movement reference number issued by www.acdsl.com.

Cargo information to be submitted

Entry Summary Declaration: the ship operator must declare the cargo information in advance using the www.acdsl.com website, in the form of an Entry Summary Declaration, unless an ENS exemption has been granted by the Sierra Leone government.

The ENS must be submitted prior to arrival in Sierra Leone ports as follows:

- Long distance shipping; containerised cargoes - 24 hours prior to arrival, conventional or bulk cargoes - 4 hours prior to the ship's arrival.
- Short distance shipping; containers/trailers/conventional/bulk cargoes- 2 hours prior to arrival, towed trailer - 1 hour prior to arrival.
- Goods carried onboard ships that operate domestic services solely between ports located within Sierra Leone are exempt from the requirements.

Exit Summary Declaration (EXS): The vessel operator must declare the cargo information in advance using the www.acdsl.com website.

Goods remaining on board, typically referred to as freight remaining on board (FROB), and goods on vessels which are carried domestically between ports in Sierra Leone are exempt from the requirements.

Validation of Movement Reference Numbers

Sierra Leone has appointed the following companies as authorised agents to validate the Movement Reference Number:

Associated Transport and Port Management System (International Operation Office). Email: info@atpms.be, Website www.acdsl.com. Postal address: Noorderlaan 117, 1st floor, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium.

Transport and Ports Management System SL West Africa Ltd (Local Operation Office). Email: tpmswasl@gmail.com, info@acdsl.com. Website: www.acdsl.com. Postal address- TPMS-WA House, 19 Liverpool Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone. Tel: +232 76 725332 / +232 25 315418.

Various fees will be charged by the authorities for the Advanced Cargo Declaration/Cargo Tracking Note the details of which can be verified by contacting the companies listed above. Non-compliance with the requirements can lead to fines ranging from EUR 100,000 to EUR 500,000.

Members and clients trading in Sierra Leone should take note of the above and familiarise themselves with all relevant requirements as set out on the SLPA webpage and obtain the latest information from their local agents before calling at any ports in Sierra Leone.

We would like to thank our correspondents, [Africa Marine Services \(Europe\) Limited](#), for their assistance in preparing this Alert.