

# Community/common transit declarations: completion of box 18 (identity and nationality of means of transport)

Customs Information Paper (13) 75	
Who should read:	All traders involved in the completion of declarations to the Community/common transit procedure.
What is it about:	A reminder of the requirement to complete box 18 of the transit declaration.
When effective:	Immediately
Extant until/expires:	Further notice.

## 1. Introduction

Box 18 of the Community/common transit declaration provides the identity and nationality of the means of transport on which the goods are directly loaded at the place of departure.

During a recent audit into the external transit procedure the EU Commission observed that, in many Member States, box 18 is often filled in inadequately with characters that do not correspond to the real identification of the vehicle. The Commission has therefore urged the Customs Authorities of all EU Member States and common transit countries to ensure that box 18 is completed with adequate and real information as it is an important data element for the control of the transit procedure.

## 2. Correct completion of box 18

Transit principals are reminded that Annex 37 of Commission Regulation 2454/93 specifies that box 18 is a mandatory field on the transit declaration. Depending on the means of transport concerned, the following details concerning identity must be entered:

Means of transport	Method of identification
Sea and inland waterway transport	Name of vessel

Air transport	Number and date of flight (where there is no flight number, enter the aircraft's registration number)
Road transport	Vehicle registration number
Rail transport	Wagon number

The nationality of the means of transport must be entered using the relevant ISO country code.

Principals making a transit declaration are reminded that they have a legal obligation to provide all the required information. Declarations that have not been completed correctly may be rejected by Customs at the office of departure. Repeated failures to provide the correct information may be considered a compliance issue and further action may be taken such as the issue of a warning letter or civil penalty.

### **3. Exceptions to the requirement to complete box 18**

Box 18 does not need to be completed in the case of postal consignments or carriage by fixed transport installations such as oil pipelines.

Where goods are carried in containers that are to be transported by road vehicles it is recognised that, at container terminals with high levels of traffic, the identity of the road means of transport to be used is not always known at the time the transit declaration is made. Annex 37 therefore allows the customs authorities to authorise principals to leave box 18 blank where the goods are carried in containers and moved by road, on condition that the container number is entered in box 31 of the NCTS declaration and the identity and nationality of the means of transport will be subsequently entered in box 55 of the Transit Accompanying Document (TAD). UK principals who wish to take advantage of this concession can apply in writing to National Simplifications Team at the address below with the following information:

- the circumstances in which the concession is required
- a list of the offices of departure concerned
- the arrangements the applicant will put into place to ensure the identity and nationality of the means of transport are entered in box 55 of the TAD prior to presentation at the office of destination

No other exceptions to the completion of box 18 are allowed.

## 4. Contacts

HM Revenue & Customs  
National Simplifications Team  
CCTO  
Custom House  
Main Road  
Harwich  
Essex  
CO12 3PG

Email: [national-simplifications.ccto@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:national-simplifications.ccto@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

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If you have a question about the content of this paper please use the details provided in the Contacts section. For general HM Revenue & Customs queries speak to the VAT, Excise and Customs Helpline on telephone 0300 200 3700.

Your Charter explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. For more information go to [Your Charter](#).