Transit transport refers to the transit of goods and means of transport across different state territories from its point of departure to its destination. The impressive growth of trade in goods amongst the ASEAN Member States (AMS) results in the rise of movements of goods, including an increase of transit transport. However, the absence of a single customs transit system potentially poses as a non-tariff barrier as transporters and traders have to go through multiple customs clearance procedures at each country’s border during the goods’ delivery to its final destination.

Recognizing the need for a simpler customs transit system to facilitate trade in ASEAN, and particularly in the effort to realize a single production and market as outlined in ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025, the AMS adopted the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Goods in Transit (AFAFGIT) in 1998. The implementing protocol of AFAFGIT, i.e. Protocol 7 (Customs Transit System) provides for the creation of a regional transit system which supports a road vehicle to operate under the system to carry goods from a point of departure in any AMS to a point of destination in any other AMS via any number of transit countries with minimal custom procedures at borders.

To this end, ASEAN, with support from the European Union through ARISE Plus Programme, has been developing the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) since 2012. Finally, ACTS is officially operating live from 2 November 2020 in the six participating ASEAN Member States.
The Main Features of ACTS

ACTS is an online computerized customs system that links all customs offices on the transit routes with custom offices at the point of departure and destination via a secure closed communication network. Simply, this system enables a road vehicle to transit across different AMS with a single custom procedure at the point of departure every border crossing and destination. ACTS significantly simplifies the movement of goods across different AMS territories by enabling the following features:

- **A Single Online Customs Transit Goods Declaration** submitted once at the point of departure and valid through multiple transits countries and at the destination country, providing real-time online data on goods in transit to relevant stakeholders
- **A Single Bank Guarantee** that is valid for the whole regional transit journey to cover the duties and taxes at risk
- **A Single Vehicle** for the whole road transport journey from departure point, crossing all borders to destination point
- **ACTS is available** in participating AMS, namely Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The system is expected to be available in Myanmar in 2021; and it sets a starting point for future development to provide support to multi-modal transport modes, such as rail, inland waterways and sea and air transport. Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, and the Philippines will join ACTS as commercial needs arise.

Benefits of ACTS

A simpler customs procedure and a more seamless movement of goods under ACTS will result in:

- **Lower logistics cost** as the mutual recognition of driving license, registration certificate, and operator license enables delivery without change of drivers and vehicle;
- **Quicker goods movement** with simplified customs procedures required at each border;
- **Secure and efficient customs system** with a full end to end computerization of operation and availability of real time data;
- **Increasing customs compliance** amongst traders with a simpler customs system based on mutual trust and commitment between private and public sector; and
- **Enabling Customs authorities to monitor and control transit effectively** with an improved control and risk system to detect and prevent smuggling and fraud

The multiple trade facilities offered in ACTS will benefit all trade stakeholders, including exporters, importers, transporters, freight forwarders, and customs agents who are eligible to use the ACTS.

Becoming ACTS Principal Traders

The potential users must register as transit traders with the Customs Administration of one of the participating AMS to be able to use ACTS. The registered traders who have used the system for a period of time and comply to other established criteria can then apply for Authorized Transit Traders (ATT) status. ATTs can then be granted simplified procedure authorisations, which among other advantages allow for transit movements to start from Trader’s premises without presenting goods to Customs authorities physically or allow, goods be delivered to Trader’s premises at the point of destination.

For Trader to use ACTS for regular transit operations, these following steps must be completed:

**Step 1. Registration document completion**
The principal trader completes the trader registration form; and employee declarant details and the authorization form

**Step 2. Submission**
Both forms are submitted to Customs Authorities of the participating AMS where principal is formally established

**Step 3. Registration**
- Customs Authorities registers the principal in the ACTS Trade Repository and issues a Trade Identification Number (TIN) to the principal
- Customs Authorities registers the employee in Trader Repository, records their relation to the principal, and issues a user account to the employee in for the access to ACTS Trader Portal
Step 4. Guarantee
- Principal obtains bank guarantee form the eligible bank and submits it to Customs;
- Customs registers bank guarantee details in the ACTS Guarantee Management System

Step 5. ASEAN Goods Vehicle Cross Border Permit (AGVCBP)
Truck used by the principal trader in ACTS movements must have AGVCBP if the truck will be crossing borders of participating AMS while under ACTS procedure. The validity period of the permit is defined by the respective AMS.

Step 6. Submission of ACTS declaration
Once the above-mentioned documents are ready, trader’s declarant can login into the trader portal to declare the goods and define the routes of the transit journey. Once ACTS declaration is submitted, the declarant needs to print it for the truck driver’s reference of Transit Accompanying Documents (TAD) to be clarified in the Customs office along the transit journey.

More Information about ACTS
Check the registration guide
Check the contact points of Customs Authorities
Check more information on ACTS
Check the FAQ of ACTS
Recent Updates

Adoption of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan

The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) was adopted by the 37th ASEAN Summit to help the region recover from the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The ACRF sets out five broad strategies which consist of (1) Enhancing the health system, (2) Strengthening human security, (3) Maximizing the potential of the Intra-ASEAN market and broader economic integration, (4) Accelerating inclusive digital transformation, and (5) Advancing towards a more sustainable and resilient future. The ACRF is supported by an implementation plan that sets out the initiatives being addressed in the respective key sectors, and segments of targeted societies.

Signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

ASEAN Member States (AMS) together with their Free Trade Partners (FTPs), namely, Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, and New Zealand signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) at the sidelines of the 4th RCEP Summit on 15 November 2020. The Agreement covers a third of the global population, a third of global GDP, 28% of global trade and 19% of global FDIs. Based on these figures, RCEP will create the world’s largest free trade area and expected to bring new business opportunities and employment to the people in the region as well as contribute to the post pandemic recovery efforts once it enters into force.

Fostering a vibrant ecosystem for start-ups across Southeast Asia

The ASEAN Guidelines on Fostering a Vibrant Ecosystem for Startups across Southeast Asia was endorsed by the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) on 11 November 2020. The Guidelines identify key factors and actors in a start-up ecosystem, highlight some priority intervention areas for AMS as well as ways of collaboration at the community level through concrete initiatives, and advocate for the continuation of policy-support for entrepreneurship and start-ups in order to manage the fallout from COVID-19, with focus on growth- and innovation-oriented new ventures.

The Adoption of ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework

ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework was adopted at the 37th ASEAN Summit which was held virtually on 12 November 2020. The framework is set to facilitate essential business travel among ASEAN Member states while providing a common set of pre-departure and post-arrival health and safety measures to protect the public health safety and well-being. The ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies will further coordinate and monitor the development process of an ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement and its future implementation.

The Mid Term Review of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint

ASEAN is conducting a mid-term review of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint to assess progress and to evaluate the outcomes, impacts, and gaps in its implementation. The review engages the private sector in its process by holding a discussion with representatives of the Joint Business Council in November 2020 and with the ASEAN Business Representatives on 9 December 2020. The final report of the mid-term review is expected to be published in April 2021.

Promotion of inclusive business in ASEAN

ASEAN continues to promote the inclusive business model (IB), a way for businesses to provide large-scale social impact while achieving commercial returns, through the Guidelines for the Promotion of Inclusive Business in ASEAN. Furthermore, in the effort to create awareness on IB, ten inclusive businesses received the ASEAN IB Awards at the ASEAN Business Awards 2020, held as a side-line event of the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ABIS) on 13 November 2020.
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<tr>
<th>Upcoming Events</th>
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<tr>
<td>The 1st ASEAN Digital Ministerial Meeting</td>
<td>Virtual, 20-21 January 2021</td>
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<td>The 19th ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC)</td>
<td>Virtual, 20-21 January 2021</td>
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<td>The 11th Meeting of the Committee of the Whole for the AEC (CoW)</td>
<td>Virtual, 23 January 2021</td>
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<td>The ASEAN Senior Economic Officials Meeting 1/52 (SEOM)</td>
<td>Virtual, 25-28 January 2021</td>
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