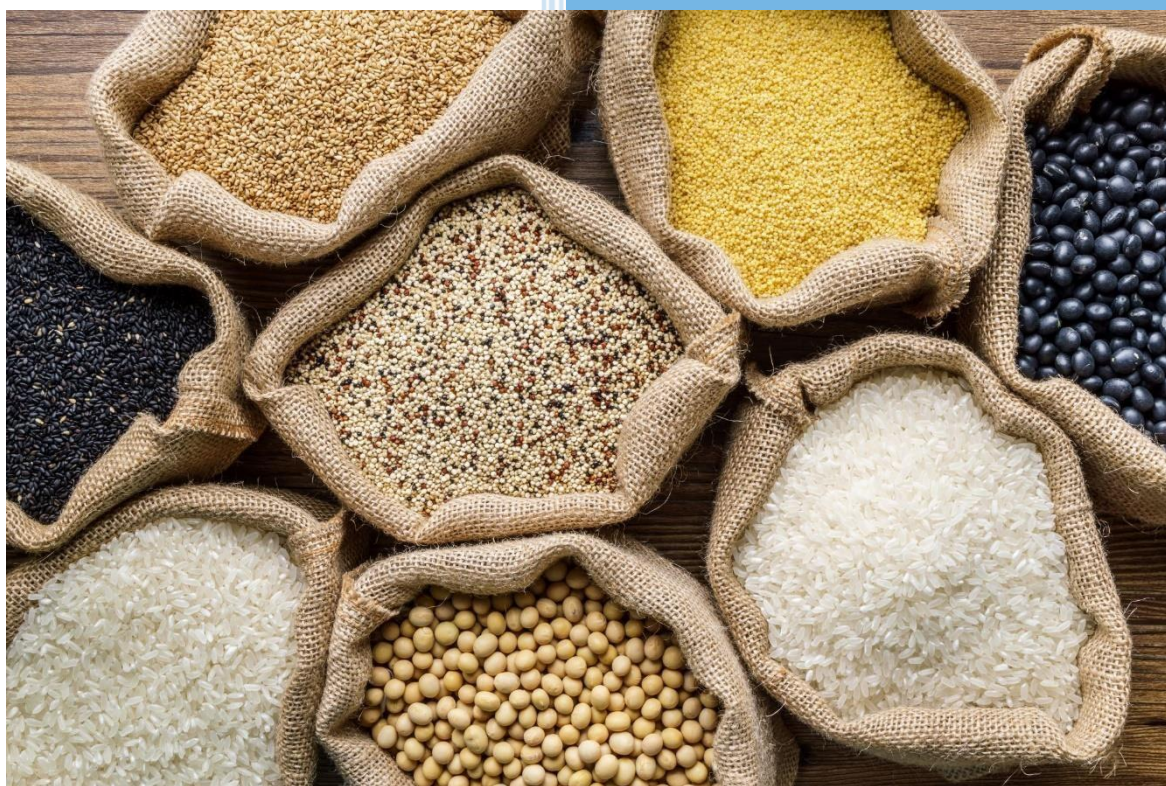


# A Beginner's guide to

## EXPORT INSPECTION



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## PREFACE

The Ministry of Commerce & Industry under the Niryat Bandhu scheme has undertaken several awareness generation and outreach activities for the exporters and importers. This information booklet is another step in that direction to enlighten the exporters about the basics of Export Inspection procedures. It was presented keeping in mind the needs of the budding entrepreneurs who sometimes find themselves in the middle of the maze of export compliances.

While this manual covers the basic requirements, more keen readers are encouraged to explore the resources provided at the end of the manual to further their knowledge about the subject.

This document is for educational/informative purposes only and is not an official document.

## WHAT IS EXPORT INSPECTION

When referring to a commodity, the term "export inspection" refers to the process of determining whether a batch of goods in that commodity complies with any additional specifications stated in the export contract, typically by inspecting the entire batch or a chosen sample or samples that purport to represent the entire batch.

According to the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act of 1963, the central government may specify which goods must undergo quality control, inspection, or both before export. It can,

- ✚ Indicate the kind of quality control or inspection that will be performed on the notified commodity;
- ✚ one or more standard standards for a notified commodity shall be established, adopted, or recognised;
- ✚ Prohibit the export of a notified good in the course of international trade unless it is accompanied by a certificate issued under section 7 stating that the good complies with quality control or inspection requirements or has a mark or seal on it that has been approved by the Central Government as indicating that the good complies with the applicable standard specifications.

## WHY SHOULD I GO FOR EXPORT INSPECTION

The export sector needs quality control and pre-shipment inspection to keep expanding. Inspection of the quality and safety of Indian products is necessary to inspire confidence in importers as well as regulatory bodies of India's trading partners. Any operation that aims to assess a commodity's quality in order to determine if it complies with any applicable standard standards or additional specifications outlined in the export contract and whether it can be used for export is referred to as quality control.

## DOES MY PRODUCT REQUIRE EXPORT INSPECTION

The commodities that will be inspected during export to India have been declared by the central government. Additionally, limited quality control and pre-shipment inspection standards and practises have been implemented. The Export (Quality Control and Inspection)




Act of 1963 lists about 1000 products, including chemicals, ceramics, agricultural goods, textiles, footwear, minerals, and steel products. You can refer to the list of products currently subject to required pre-shipment inspection and certification before export from India by clicking on the following link.

<https://eicindia.gov.in/WebApp1/pages/menuInfo/documents.xhtml>

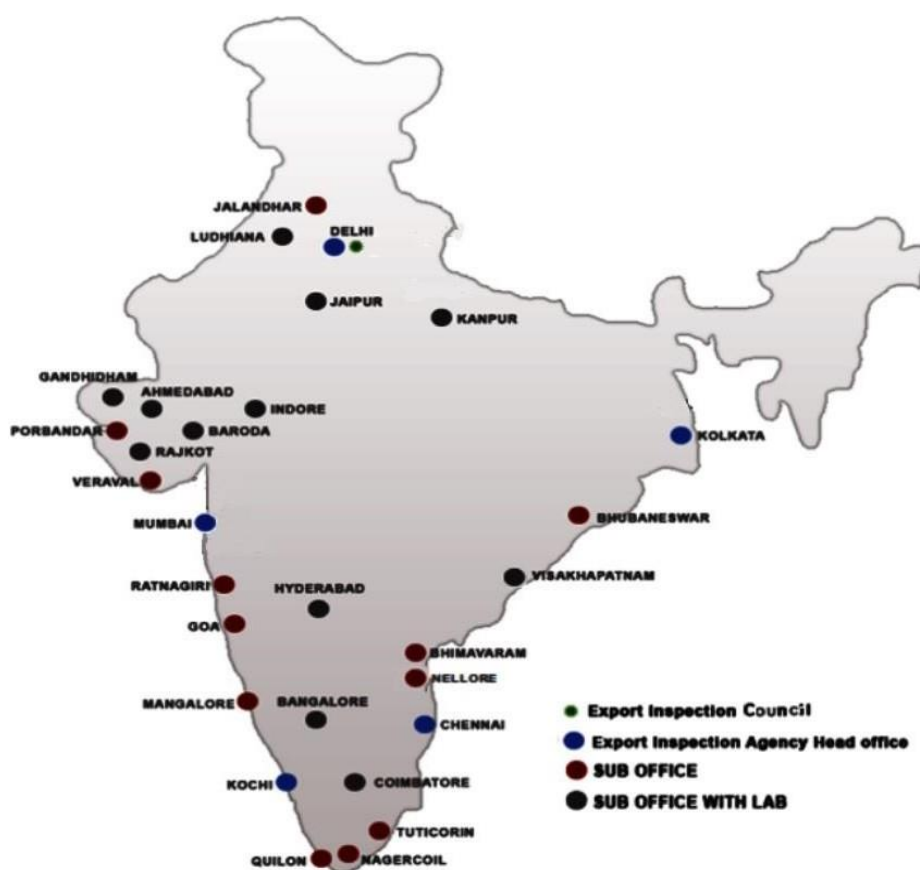
*Voluntary Certification Scheme:* To help the export trade, the EIC has developed the Voluntary Certification Scheme for products that are not notified under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act of 1963 but that the importing country needs a Certificate of Compliance from the competent authority of the exporting country.

#### WHERE SHOULD I APPLY

The Government of India established the Export Inspection Council (EIC) to ensure sound development of India's export trade through quality control and inspection, as well as for concerns related thereto. The Central Government is authorised by the Act to:

-  Notify commodities that will be subjected to quality control and/or inspection prior to export;
-  Establish quality standards for such notified commodities; and
-  Specify the type of quality control and/or inspection to be applied to such commodities. EIC serves as an advisory body to the Central Government.

The Export Inspection Council, which also serves as an advisory body, has administrative and technical authority over the five Export Inspection Agencies (EIAs), one of which is located in each of the following cities: Chennai, Delhi, Kochi, Kolkata, and Mumbai.



The field organisation of the Export Inspection Council provides services in the following areas: Certification of the quality of export goods through the implementation of quality assurance systems in the exporting units. Additionally, they provide exporters with certificates of origin in accordance with a number of favourable tariff programmes for export commodities.

The certification is of two types – (1) Consignment wise inspection and (2) Certification of quality of food items for export through installation of Food safety Management System in the food processing units

EIC runs training and capacity-building programmes for exporters to make it easier for them to install quality and safety management systems, lab testing, and other services trade-related activities. A calendar of outreach programmes with appropriate topics is released each year.

## HOW SHOULD I APPLY



On the EIC website, an exporter must submit an online application to the relevant EIA. The exporter must receive a one-time Username and Password using an online weblink on the EIC website in order to use the aforementioned e-certification function. Additionally, exporters must complete an online application form (using their User Name and Password to log in), upload copies of the invoice, packing list, test results, and other applicable supporting documents, and then make an online payment to the relevant EIA office as and when the health certificate is required.

#### CONSIGNMENT WISE INSPECTION (CWI)

Export Inspection Agencies (EIA) inspect export consignments at a frequency of one in every 50 consignments under the Consignment Wise Inspection (CWI) system before shipping. But depending on the risk involved with the product, any import alerts received from the importing country, or inputs during surveillance control visits to enterprises, the frequency of inspection may be reduced with the agreement of the Competent Authority.

EIAs may issue a health certificate the same day after receiving an online application if all the required paperwork is in order. Inspection and sampling can be done periodically, if necessary. The officer sent for inspection must physically check the shipment to ensure its export-worthiness and determine whether or not its sanitary and hygienic storage conditions are adequate.

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#### PLACE OF INSPECTION

If relevant, the inspection will be conducted by the Export Inspection Agency at the port of shipping, the packer's facility, or any other location where the exporter offers the goods, providing those locations have the necessary inspection capabilities. The exporter will be liable for providing all necessary facilities for inspection. In addition to the inspection on the premises, the Agency shall have the authority to supervise the examined consignments at any storage facility, during transit, or at the port prior to the actual shipment, including the ability to extract samples for lab testing, as it may see fit.

Randomly chosen packages and boxes will be chosen for inspection. The inspection officer will choose the bags for the samples in accordance with the procedures outlined in IS 2: 1960 (Rules of Rounding Off Numerical Values), IS 4905: 1968 (Method of Random Sampling), and Sampling Method of Commodity (Intend to Export) as per Indian standards.

The samples taken from the bags chosen as described above will be homogeneously mixed before being split into three parts and placed in sample bags. One sample may be transferred to the laboratory in the right refrigerated / acceptable condition, as may be required, and sample bags will be sealed using paper seals carrying the EIC monogram as a mark of identification of the sampled bags. One of the two remaining samples will be supplied to the exporter as their sample, and the other two samples will be submitted to the concerned EIA as reference samples. If there are any disagreements regarding the test findings, the exporter must submit a written request and pay the necessary testing fees to the relevant party before retesting using the reference sample.

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#### TESTING OF SAMPLES IN THE LABORATORY

The samples that are received at the lab will be examined for the many criteria included in the laboratory intimation format, which will be based on the buyer's specified standards as long as they are not less stringent than the importing nation's/National Standard standards or Codex standards.

Testing can be carried out in accordance with the pertinent National standards if none of the standards are present. EIA will receive the lab report. The applicant (exporter/processor) will be responsible for paying the costs of the laboratory tests.

If the lot is rejected for not meeting the requirements stated in the applicable standards following sample analysis, a rejection letter will be sent with a clear explanation of the grounds for rejection. The exporter/processor is free to continue process the lot at his discretion and submit a new application for inspection via the CWI System together with the necessary inspection fee.

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#### ISSUANCE OF HEALTH CERTIFICATE & ATTESTATION



The EIA will issue health certificates based on the lab results of the tested consignments, in the format required by the importing country. Health certificates can be granted based on

- ✚ laboratory test results that are good and meet the standards outlined in the standard, as well as microbiological testing (if applicable).
- ✚ Laboratory test(s) for the parameters must be specified in the health certificate with clarity regarding the consignment's compliance with the importer's requirements/codex

The following three consignments must be tested in EIA labs prior to the issuing of a health certificate in the event that the exporter is the subject of a complaint, rejection, or violation regarding consignments that were exported from the importing country. The exporter or processor is responsible for paying for the testing.

#### IN PROCESS QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM (IPQC)

If requested by the applicant, approval of processing units under the In Process Quality Control System (IPQC) System may be given for the particular items.

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#### PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL UNDER IPQC SYSTEM

The processor who requests approval must submit an application in the format specified and pay the required charge online. The following documents must be included with the application, where appropriate along with a brief summary of the product and the specifics of the processing.

- ✚ Operation manual / HACCP manual, including Sanitary Standard Operating Procedures (GMP/GHP broadly as per Codex guidelines), if applicable, and an organizational chart.
- ✚ Layout plan of the establishment
- ✚ Process flow chart

- ✚ Testing facilities in plant
- ✚ Certified copies of documents proving legal identity of the applicant 's plant and scope of their operations
- ✚ Certified copy of lease agreement for the premises and building, where necessary.
- ✚ Bio-data of the technologist(s)/ chemists working in the plant.

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#### PROCESSING THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL

The application that the applicant submits must be carefully examined, and any errors or deficiencies must be immediately reported to the applicant for correction by EIAs. The application must be submitted to the Assessment Panel Convenor in its whole in order for the unit to be assessed. EIA In-charge shall propose the Convenor AP.

- ✚ The convener of the assessment panel will see to it that the applicant's plant is evaluated by the assessment panel within 15 days of receiving their entire application. All AP members' travel, boarding, and accommodation costs will be covered by the applicant unit.
- ✚ The Assessment Panel must include at least two members, including representatives of the EIC, the government department, or any other appropriate technical expert with solid product knowledge. However, the size of the unit to be examined will determine the content and size of the AP. The EIAs must ensure that there are no members who have direct or indirect relationships with the unit of the applicant when forming the AP.
- ✚ Within three days following the conclusion of the visit to the applicant's unit, the Assessment Panel must submit its findings to the EIA Head in accordance with the. The AP's recommendations must declare unequivocally whether or not the facility should be allowed.

- ✚ The EIA-Head must assign the plant an approval number if the Assessment Panel recommends that it be approved and if its recommendation is accepted. Each unit's approval number must be distinct.

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#### ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE FOR EXPORT

According to the permission given by EIAs, the approved units must only issue Certificates of Export for export consignments containing the approved product(s). For the required fees, blank Certificates books can be ordered from the relevant Export Inspection Agency. On demand, EIAs will provide empty certificate forms to the authorized units. A forty-five day term is the validity period for the export certificate.

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#### VALIDITY OF APPROVAL

The approval's validity shall be for a term of three years, which may be extended up to five years depending on the product's risk, the lack of an import alert, and the establishment's satisfactory performance during surveillance inspections. Any modification to the approval's validity requires EIC approval. When a permission is renewed, EIAs must evaluate the performance of the approved enterprises and submit a report to the EIC for examination of the approval's validity.

#### REVIEW OF CERTIFICATE

The agency may, by order, revise, suspend, or cancel the certificate in the manner and pursuant to the procedure that may be required if it has grounds to think that the commodity for which the certificate was issued has changed or its quality has declined. As long as the certificate holder is given a fair chance to be heard before any such certificate is amended, suspended, or revoked.

Any person who feels wronged by an agency's failure to grant a certificate by amending, suspending, or cancelling one may file an appeal within the allotted amount of time.

## APPEAL

Any applicant who is aggrieved with the Export Inspection Agency's decision under CWI or IPQC may file an appeal within 10 days of receiving notice of the agency's decision, and the Director will be notified of it (I&QC). Following receipt, the appeal will be decided within fifteen days. In such an appeal, the Director's (I&QC) decision shall be final.

## SUMMARY

Export inspection procedures have become a sine qua non for quality compliance all over the world today. Exporters from India are our brand ambassadors abroad and the quality of their products from India will determine the goodwill and global reputation of the nation. In this context, export inspection should be looked at as an opportunity for value addition and upscaling of the product image globally. With the recent initiatives of Government of India, these procedures are now made more easier for compliance by all exporters big or small.

The exporters, trade bodies and budding entrepreneurs must harness these great opportunities and ensure that India realizes the dream of 'Local to Global' and 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat'.

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## USEFUL RESOURCES

1. [Export Inspection Council \(eicindia.gov.in\)](http://eicindia.gov.in)
2. [Role Of Export Inspection Agency In India | Impexperts](#)
3. Document No. EIC/ Vol. Certification Scheme / 2017/ Issue 4
4. Annual report 2019-20, EIC.

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