

PRESS RELEASE

Celtic Forwarding Ltd achieves exclusive AEO status for fast-tracking goods into and out of the EU

New EU customs security amendment raises the bar for compliant participants in cross-border trade

Dublin, 4th February 2010 – Celtic Forwarding Ltd, one of Ireland’s leading freight forwarding companies, has become the first indigenous Irish company in international transport and logistics to achieve the official EU status of an Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) which ensures its ability to move goods efficiently and effectively across the EU’s borders.

As one of the world’s most open economies, Ireland is totally dependent on the seamless flow of its exports and imports. Having a supply chain with AEO status is going to be critical for all Irish importers and exporters going forward.

In 2006, the EU enacted legislation to amend the customs and excise regulations across all 27 member states which requires that those engaged in cross-border trade (“economic operators”) submit pre-arrival and pre-departure information electronically on goods entering or leaving the EU. Failure to comply with the correct submission of e-trade data will lead to delays in the movement of goods. The new rules were enforced in July 2009 and will be mandatory EU-wide from 1 January 2011.

As part of the legislation, the EU created the concept of an Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) to enable those companies with compliant practices and systems to be easily identified and facilitated in the new security framework. The introduction of AEO status is the EU’s response to the need to secure international supply chains and follows similar moves in the US where companies must comply with the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). The World Customs Organisation (WCO), which represents Customs from 174 member countries, has been a major driving force behind these developments which are part of a global paradigm shift to paper-free trade.

The aim of AEO is to provide a company with an internationally recognized quality mark which indicates that its role in the international supply chain is secure and that its customs controls and procedures are compliant.

An AEO certified forwarder receives a low security risk rating, thereby opening up what is effectively a “Fast Lane” for its shipments. Even if a shipment is randomly selected for Customs inspection, the AEO forwarder will be given priority over non-AEO forwarders and clearance agents.

Additional benefits include Guarantee Waivers, Simplified Customs Declarations and Mutual Recognition of AEO status by major non-EU Customs Authorities. Also, AEO Certification will become the global “Quality Mark” for supply chain security.

“AEO is a Government-led audit of our financial well-being, security and customs compliance. With this AEO accreditation, our clients both domestic and overseas, can be assured that Celtic Forwarding Ltd is a secure, efficient and effective component in their supply chain” commented Finbarr Cleary, Director, Celtic Forwarding Ltd.

Celtic Forwarding is an official paper-free trade partner of TradeFacilitate, the only EU validated web-based solution designed for SMEs for the electronic submission of pre-arrival and pre-departure information in compliance with new EU rules for the inbound and outbound movement of goods (known as EMCS, ECS and ICS).

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