



Edition 1

Welcome to the launch edition of the SMME Traders Connect Newsletter. This will be a quarterly publication which focuses on trader-related tax matters to create awareness and share relevant information to make it easier for traders to remain compliant. We are excited that you will be part of this journey.

In pursuit of our Strategic Objectives, the aim of this newsletter is to:

- Provide clarity and certainty for taxpayers and traders of their tax obligations.
- Make it easy for taxpayers and traders to comply with their tax obligations.
- Work with and through stakeholders to improve the tax ecosystem.

Some traders have made us aware that they still struggle with understanding their Registration and/or Licensing requirements for various Customs and Excise products. To address their needs, this edition will focus on creating awareness about an online system that was specifically created and implemented for registration and licensing of traders. This will ultimately eliminate the current manual process and replace it with an efficient online system. This development is consistent with our vision to build a smart and modern SARS with unquestionable integrity, that is trusted and admired.

Where do you start

To understand the taxation requirements for a specific type of business, refer to the Small Business Essential Guide Leaflet via the following [link](#).

Customs and Excise registration

When you import or export goods across the borders of South Africa, or you manufacture certain controlled goods, you are classified as a Customs and Excise client, and therefore need to register or license (as applicable) under the Customs and Excise Act to be able to conduct such business.

Excise deals with specific locally produced or manufactured goods, whereas Customs deals with various imported or exported goods. Some client types need to be registered (that is, importers and exporters), while others need to be licensed (such as clearing agents, alcohol manufactures, etc.).

There are two ways to register and/or get licensed as a Customs and Excise client:

1. Online via eFiling on the RLA system- the types of clients allowed are expanded on the RLA web landing page [Registration, Licensing and Accreditation | South African Revenue Service \(sars.gov.za\)](#).

2. Manual completion of the DA185 form that is available [here](#). For clients such as the Excise clients, who do not yet qualify for the online application, we explain the application process and requirements on our website. The DA185 is a form that can be used by traders when applying to register or license with SARS to conduct cross border transactions.

Step by step guide to register on RLA

To register via eFiling, go to www.sars.gov.za and follow these steps:

Step 1 – Set up an eFiling Profile: Change your eFiling profile from Individual to Company by clicking “User” on the top left menu, then “Change Website Profile”. Click “my profile” then “Portfolio Management”. Click on the three dots, select “Change Portfolio Type” then change to “Organisation” and Save.

Step 2 – Accessing RLA: Your eFiling administrator must now allocate roles to the person who will be using RLA. Click on “User” on the top menu, then “User” again on the left menu, then “Change Details” to make a role selection. Once profile and roles are finalised, click on “Customs” and then “Registration, Licensing and Accreditation” to launch RLA.

Step 3 – Submission of RLA application: You should now see the Customs Trader Portal (CTP) dashboard. Click on RLA and select “New Application” from the pop-up. You will see options for client types. Select “desired client type” and an application form will be generated. Complete all fields and select “Conclude”, then upload the relevant supporting documents, if requested.

Lastly, click “Submit” and you will receive a case reference number and electronic notifications posted on the dashboard!

N.B. An existing trader must select the displayed Customs Code, while a new trader must select the New Registration option.

Benefits of the RLA system:

- Easy and convenient
- Cost saving
- Quicker turnaround time
- Ability to track your application and adherence to the Service Charter.

SMME: Customs and Excise

Education and Outreach

Trader education initiatives

In 2021 and 2022, SARS hosted two RLA webinars, which are available on the SARS TV YouTube channel. [Click here](#) for a list of traders and travellers webinars.

The SARS website has a dedicated Traders and Travellers Education page that provides useful information and updates for Customs & Excise SMME Traders and Travellers. [Click here](#) for information.

How do we help you?

Our strategic objectives are to provide clarity and certainty to make it easier for all traders to meet their tax obligations, to avoid costly penalties. We invite you to look out for announcements of our ongoing regional roadshows published on the SARS website.

The launch of this newsletter is a step to forge closer relations with you, dear trader, to make it easier for you to register and get licensed, onboard onto the RLA system, and to show you how to navigate the RLA eFiling system. [Click here](#) for self-registration.

For more information on how to register as a trader, you can email RLARegistrations@sars.gov.za.

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