



## Importing Personal Property into

# SAUDI ARABIA

### IMPORTING HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

#### DUTY-FREE ENTRY MAY BE PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET

- The goods are used.
- The value of the goods is under SR 10,000 (approximately US \$3,000). If the value exceeds this amount (which is subject to change), then duty will be assessed based upon CIF value. The following are the rates being assessed:
  - Electrical appliances: 12%
  - Audio Video: 12%
  - Furniture: 12 - 20%
  - Carpets: 12%
- Books are exempt from duties.

#### **Notes:**

- Shipper must be present at the time of Customs clearance.
- New items must have bills of sale attached. If bills of sale are not available, customs authorities will assess the items themselves and charge appropriate duty.
- Shipment is subject to close scrutiny of Saudi Arab customs officials who usually perform a thorough inspection. Saudi Customs Authorities regularly modify regulations.
- Importation of prohibited articles will subject the offender to fines, imprisonment and/or deportation. Offenders convicted of drug smuggling are subject to the death penalty.

- All goods must have "Make Mark" information or show country of origin, such as "made in USA," "made in Japan," etc. If an item or similar item is manufactured in Saudi Arabia, it will be subject to customs duties of 20%.
- All documents must have the shipper's name exactly as it appears on their passport. Do not use initials or abbreviations for companies.

#### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- ✓ Original Bill of Lading or Air waybill
- ✓ Copy of Passport/Iqama with entry visa
- ✓ Letter of undertaking authorizing agent to perform customs clearance
- ✓ Valid passport and visa
- ✓ Residence and work permits
- ✓ Declaration of sponsorship by shipper's employer.
- ✓ Health Certificate stating shipper does not have AIDS.
- ✓ Detailed, valued, original inventory with descriptions of contents of cartons. Terms such as PBO or "packed by owner," CU or "contents unknown," and MISC. or "miscellaneous" are unacceptable.
- ✓ Purchase receipts for major household good items.
- ✓ New items require Certificate of Origin -itemized, valued and legalized by Saudi Embassy or Consulate and translated into Arabic.
- ✓ Certificate of Insurance, if applicable.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (CONTINUED), PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR IMPORT

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (CONTINUED)

- ✓ Electrical items require SASO Certificate of Conformity.

### PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR IMPORT

- All food stuffs.
- Hazardous Materials, as defined by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, are not to be accepted for shipment. Some of the Hazardous Materials most common to household use include:
  - **Combustible liquids:** alcohol's, lubricants, anti-freeze compounds, cleaners (such as spot, clothing, office machine, etc.),
  - **Corrosives:** acids, drain cleaner, photographic acids used in developing film, iron/steel rust preventing compounds, bleach, batteries (wet or dry), water-purifying agents, such as those commonly used in swimming pools.
  - **Explosives:** fireworks, small arms ammunition, flash bulbs.
  - **Filled Compressed Gas Containers:** aerosol cans, fire extinguishers, scuba diving tanks, gas barbecue tanks.
  - **Flammables:** lighter fluid, matches, wood oil stains, show and furniture polish/wax, petrochemical based garden sprays, glues or adhesive's, paint or varnish, butane/propane/gasoline, signal flares, charcoal briquettes.
- Any material (literature, pictures, statues, paintings, etc.) of a religious, political or sexual matter, that is contrary to Muslim beliefs and morality or Saudi traditions, including Christmas trees and decorations.
- Pornographic recording including records, tapes, CDs, etc.
- Printed materials, including Bibles, and any symbols associated with a faith other than Islam. This includes crosses, rosaries, and Christmas trees, ornaments, cards or lights.
- Printed matter, paintings, photographs, statue and drawings that are prurient in nature (in the strictest definition of the word), designed to effect a sexual response, or display the human form partially undressed or nude, are subject to confiscation. This includes pornographic pictures, magazines, books, films and videotapes. Fashion magazines showing women posing in undergarments or swimsuits are forbidden.
- Exposed film including prints, slides, movies and video tapes.
- All weapons and firearms, whether real or ornamental, including guns, hunting and scuba knives, bows and arrows, ammunition, fireworks, spears, spear guns, etc. Toys and antique guns, including firearms used for firing blanks are included in this category. If imported, owner is subject to fines and possibly imprisonment.
- Any alcoholic beverages, including food items which contain alcohol such as vanilla extract, cooking wines, etc.
- Wine making kits, books on the manufacture of wine or beer, alcohol distillation apparatus and any other items used in the preparation of alcoholic beverages such as wine or beer yeast, essences, etc.
- Any kind of narcotic such as cocaine, hashish, marijuana, opium, gat, ghunja or husks and seeds thereof, etc.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR IMPORT (CONTINUED) & RESTRICTED ITEMS:**

### **PROHIBITED ITEMS (CONTINUED)**

- All games of chance, including chess sets, dice, backgammon sets, dominoes, playing cards and associated gambling equipment.
- Military uniforms, emblems or military equipment of any kind.
- Political or military material concerning the Kingdom and its foreign or domestic policies.
- Any kind of medicine, including vitamins, cough syrups, etc. Individuals requiring medication should obtain a letter from their doctors, testifying that such medication is necessary and should have a copy of the prescription. Such medicines must be hand-carried into Saudi Arabia. They should not be included in shipments of household goods / personal effects. Any type of radio transmitter or receiver, or communications equipment, including toy walkie-talkies and radio or cordless telephones, control devices for model airplanes/boats, etc., VHF's for marine or police bands. Any type of radio receiver or transmitter device which can be concealed on the person.
- Binoculars and telescopic equipment
- Any statue, figurine, carving or subject of the human, animal form, and contrary subject to Islamic morality.
- Stuffed animals
- Blueprints and designs
- Artificial pearls
- Foodstuffs of any kind, including those in sealed containers such as teas, spices, candy and jam.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PROHIBITED ARTICLES**

- There are considerable other items that are prohibited or banned from

entering Saudi Arabia. **THE SHIPPER MUST PERSONALLY CONSULT WITH THE SAUDI ARABIAN CONSULATE FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.**

### **RESTRICTED ITEMS**

- Fax machines
- Live plants, seeds, fresh fruit or flowers require a phytosanitary certificate.
- Pharmaceuticals require a certificate from the origin country's health department.
- The following items will be subject to censorship by the Ministry of Information: videos, tapes, laser discs, films, records, CDs, computer diskettes, photographs, books, magazines, periodicals, exposed film of any kind, floppy disks, phonograph records and other printed materials. If these items are included in a shipment, keep them separate and have them packed together in clearly marked containers. While these items can be grouped on the Itemized Valued Inventory form, keep an individual listing to help determine if any items were confiscated during the customs inspection. There is a fine associated with any confiscated materials, which is \$135 for each VHS tape confiscated and \$14 for each book confiscated. Once items are have undergone censorship, a separate delivery will be made, which will be charged to the customer.
- All suitcases, tool boxes or locked containers must have keys available to allow inspection by customs officials.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR EXPORT & IMPORTING MOTOR VEHICLES AND PETS:**

### **PROHIBITED ITEMS FOR EXPORT**

- The U.S Government presently prohibits importation of goods made in certain countries, for example, Libya and Iran. In some cases, these goods can be imported if they are authorized by an import license obtained prior to shipment. Items taken from “endangered species” are also prohibited by many nations to be transported, such as ivory, rhino horns, pelts, shells, etc.
- Antiques/Natural Artifacts including items of Saudi Arabian antiquities, defined as objects more than 200 years old, unless shipper has Approved Saudi Arabian government export authorization.

### **IMPORTATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

- Vehicles are permitted, but are subject to customs duty.
- All vehicles must comply with Saudi emission controls.
- Driving is hazardous and consequences of accidents can be disastrous.
- Shipments with vehicles in containers are prohibited entry into Saudi Arabia.
- One car per family is allowed importation.
- Vehicles made in 1974 or older are prohibited.
- Vehicle must be registered shortly after clearance which requires a valid Saudi driver’s license.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

- ✓ National and an international driver’s license
- ✓ Title or proof of ownership
- ✓ SASO Certificate
- ✓ Ocean bill of lading
- ✓ Copies of vehicle registration
- ✓ Legalized Purchase Invoice and Certificate of Origin
- ✓ Proof of insurance
- ✓ Letter from the car owner to customs duly attested by the local sponsor authorizing the destination agent for clearance.
- ✓ Copy of Passport and Residence Permit (IQAMA)
- ✓ Customs Fee Declaration
- ✓ Landing Authorization
- ✓ Used cars require Certificate from Interpol or origin traffic police providing proof that there are no police cases against the car.

### **IMPORTATION OF PETS**

- Pets may be imported, but are subject to quarantine in an IATA approved kennel.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

- ✓ Vaccination Certificate
- ✓ Health Certificate

## **AKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

- The Saudi Network, <http://www.the-saudi.net/saudi-arabia/saudi-customs.htm>, 2003.
- Four Winds S.A. Ltd., <http://www.fourwinds-ksa.com/cutoms.htm>, 2003.
- IM France, "Moving to Saudi Arabia, Section C – Customs Procedures" 2003.
- IELA, 2000.
- NAMMA, 2005.

**The information presented herein is based on customs data available at the time of printing and is frequently subject to change without notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with the current customs restrictions, regulations, and duties of the country to which the goods are imported. We strongly advise customers to contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country for the most current information on customs regulations, restrictions and duties for importing household goods, personal effects and vehicles.**