



## *Importing Personal Property Into Saudi Arabia*

### **CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

#### **Customs Regulations:**

CLIENT MUST BE IN SAUDI ARABIA AT THE TIME OF CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

All shipments are physically inspected, and subject to duty including used household goods. Importation of consolidation shipments is not allowed: heavy penalties will be imposed for violations.

All documents must show the client's name exactly as it appears on the passport.

DO NOT use initials or abbreviations for names or companies. The Saudi government will not accept the documents otherwise. Surface documents must be received at the destination agent a minimum of seven days prior to arrival of the vessel.

Vehicle over 2 years old consolidated into one container of personal goods will attract duty of 5%.

Vehicle under 2 years old must be sent separately on its own B/L to duty exemption under "Bayan Magassa". Process to obtain exemption is 20-25 days.

**Container Deposit:** 800.00USD per container, paid in advance to origin agent. Refundable up return of empty container. Any damages to the returned container will be deducted from the deposit. Container detention fees become applicable after 14 days "free time" has expired.

Jeddah Port takes 14 days minimum to clear personal goods shipments. Documents submitted timely to Customs will have the demurrage charge waived. Container detention fees will not be waived.

**NOTE:** All printed materials, books, pictures, records, Cd's, DVD's, films, tapes, slides, software, hard discs and personal computers are subject to censorship and confiscation. They must be packed separately and clearly noted on the inventory list. Do NOT mix these items with other personal effects and household goods. These items will be removed from the shipment during Custom's clearance and sent to the Ministry of Information for review. Once censorship has been completed, a separate delivery will be made to the client at their expense. Any prohibited and even restricted items in the shipment will cause delays, be subject to confiscations and may incur penalties and possibly fines to the client's account.

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Passport - including photo page & entry visa
- ✓ Bill of Lading – original (express release is acceptable) or Air Waybill – copy
- ✓ Pack List - per carton - Misc. (miscellaneous) CU (contents unknown) or PBO (packed by owner) are NOT acceptable. Major household purchases require receipts
- ✓ Valued Inventory - original, for Customs purposes
- ✓ Certificates of Origin - for new items
- ✓ Work Permit & Residence Permit – copies
- ✓ Proof of Employment - notarized by the Saudi Chamber of Commerce or a government agency
- ✓ Authorization Letter – from shipper, attested by the Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Certificate of Health stating client does not have Auto Immune Deficiency Syndrome

- ✓Keys for any locked items such as tools boxes, suitcases etc for Customs inspection
- ✓Certificate of Insurance - if applicable
- \* Inventory and Certificate of Origin MUST be notarized by the Saudi Embassy or Consulate translated into Arabic.

**Returning Nationals:**

- ✓Identity Card – copy; in lieu of Residence Permit

**Diplomat Status:**

**Required Documents:**

- ✓Passport, Visa and Diplomatic franchise
- ✓Authorization Letter – obtained from Embassy/Consulate to clear shipment ✓Letter from the Dept. of State attesting to the name, title, length and purpose of trip
- ✓Comprehensive Inventory List - translated into Arabic
- ✓Diplomatic Exemption Letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The below items are subject to censorship by Customs officials and SASO approval:

- ✓ANY medications MUST have the doctor's prescriptions and be for personal use only
- ✓SASO Certificate of Conformity for ALL electrical items imported into the country
- ✓Telefax machines
- ✓Exposed film of any type, phonograph records (LP's) ✓Floppy discs, CD ROMs, DVD's and audio and video tapes ✓All printed material
  
- ✓Alcohol, all items containing or mentioning alcohol including but not limited to, cooking wines, extracts, flavorings, liquors, wine kits, and books on manufacturing of such drinks etc.
- ✓Narcotics, drugs of any kind including medication without prescriptions
- ✓All 110 Volt appliances are strictly prohibited
- ✓Radio transmitter/communication equipment, walkie-talkie's, short wave, VHF, marine, police band equipment, CBs, binoculars, telescopes, etc.
- ✓Pornographic materials, publications, statues, figurines, and fashion magazines where undergarments or swimsuits are depicted
- ✓Politically sensitive materials, literature contrary to Muslim, and/or Arab beliefs and morality
- ✓Christmas trees, decorations, and any religious materials/articles other than the Muslim faith.
- ✓Military uniforms or paraphernalia of any kind
- ✓ALL weapons and firearms real or decorative, including ammunitions, fireworks, spears or swords  
**\*\*Client will be subject to investigation, fines and/or imprisonment**
- ✓ALL food items and stuffed animals (taxidermy)
- ✓Games of chance – chess, dice, backgammon, playing cards, dominoes etc
- ✓ALL statues and any objects of human or animal form –carvings, figurines, masks etc
- ✓

Other miscellaneous items such as designs, blue prints, artificial pearls etc.

\* Please check with your service agent for any changes or additions to these items

Exotic and non domestic pets are not allowed to enter Saudi Arabia unless used for government purposes. Dangerous and aggressive breeds of dogs such as Rottweilers and Pit bull types are not allowed to enter Saudi Arabia under any circumstances. Pets are quarantined in an IATA approved kennel.

**The below documents must be translated and submitted in Arabic.**

### **Required Documents:**

- ✓Certificate of Vaccination – Cover letter must attest the pet has been vaccinated against all possible diseases and is in good health. All vaccinations must be specified
  - ✓Health Certificate – Must be authenticated by:
    - The State Department Authentication Division – [www.state.gov/m/a/auth](http://www.state.gov/m/a/auth) ○  
Consular section of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia
  - ✓Import Permit – Obtained from the Agricultural Directorate in Riyadh, submitted in Arabic All dogs should be under one of these categories:
    - Hunting ○  
Guard
    - Seeing eye dogs
- \* These documents must be attested by the Saudi Embassy in country of origin. The Health and Vaccination certificates and letters must be addressed to: The Director of Customs, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Pets are collected from the Cargo Depot in Saudi Arabia, it is advised to use a professional animal transporter or bring a Saudi with you to fill the forms out in Arabic. Pets can accompany the client as accompanied baggage if feasible.

Client's name should match on all documents (i.e. passport, vehicle title and all shipping documents. One car is allowed per family and must be in accordance with Saudi Arabian standards. Vehicles over 4 years old are not allowed importation. The year, make, model, engine/chassis numbers, license and serial numbers, weight, dimensions of the vehicle and color must be provided to the steamship company. The origin address, date vehicle was last registered and the destination address, including phone contact must be provided. 5% Duty on CIF assessed value by Customs Authority.

Vehicle must be registered in Saudi Arabia after clearance through Customs with the Traffic Police.

### **Required Documents:**

- ✓Saudi sponsor Letter of Authorization from consignee to clear car ✓Certificate of Title and Registration, Proof of ownership & Purchase Invoice
- ✓Import Permit- From the Ministry of External Affairs must be approved before importation
- ✓SASO Certificate
- ✓Certificate from Interpol or local Police Department proving there is no case involving the car
- ✓Copy of Passport & Insurance Policy
  - ✓Valid Saudi driver's license - copy
  - ✓Residence Permit (IQAMA) - copy

## NOTES:

**Make Mark Information:** All goods imported into the country must show the country of origin; i.e.

“Made in the USA”. This mark must coincide with the notarized documents presented to Customs for Clearance of the Goods. Failure to comply with this regulation will prohibit entry of the goods.

**Shipment & Document Preparation:** Containers and trailers must have comprehensive inventory lists of all contents in a water proof envelope taped to the rear door. List must show the clients name as shown on Passport and address. Failure to comply will result in heavy fines. Shipments are valued locally and rates vary depending on the items.

**Entry & Exit Requirements:** All visas require a sponsor, and must be obtained prior to arrival. Effective May 2008, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed to issue 5-year multiple-entry visas to U.S. visitors and students. U.S. citizens have been refused a Saudi visa because their passports reflected travel to Israel or indicated that they were born in Israel.

Residents working in Saudi Arabia generally must surrender their passports to their sponsor while in the Kingdom. The sponsor (normally the employer) obtains work and residence permits for the employee and for any family members. Family members of workers are not required by law to surrender their passports, though some do. Residents should carry the Saudi Residence Permit (Iqama) for identification in place of their passports. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates General in Saudi Arabia cannot sponsor private U.S. citizens for Saudi visas.

Women visitors and residents must be met by their sponsor upon arrival. Women considering relocating to Saudi Arabia should be aware that women and children residing in Saudi Arabia as members of a Saudi household (including adult U.S.-citizen women married to Saudi men, adult U.S.-citizen women who are the unmarried daughters of Saudi fathers, and U.S.-citizen boys under the age of 21 who are the sons of Saudi fathers) require the permission of the Saudi male head of their household to leave the country. Married women require their husband's permission to depart the country, while unmarried women and children require the permission of their father or male guardian. The U.S. Embassy can intercede with the Saudi government to request exit permission for an adult U.S. woman (wife or daughter of a Saudi citizen), but there is no guarantee of success, or even of timely response. Mothers are not able to obtain permission for the departure of minor children without the father's permission.

Visitors who overstay their visit in the Kingdom are subject to a fine of 10,000 Saudi Riyals (or \$2,667) and incarceration pending deportation proceedings. Request clarification from Saudi Immigration authorities upon arrival as to your permitted length of stay. A common mistake among visitors is confusing the validity of their Saudi visa with the permitted length of stay in the Kingdom. Check your permitted length of stay online at the [Visa Validity Service website](#) by typing in your passport number and Saudi visa number.

**Safety & Security:** US citizens are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, to stay current with the latest safety and security announcements dispersed by the Embassy in your area. Your enrollment can also help the Department of State reach your family and friends in case of emergency.

Avoid staying in hotels or housing compounds that do not appear to apply stringent security measures. Be aware of your surroundings when visiting establishments frequented by Westerners. Keep a low profile, vary times and routes of travel, exercise caution while driving, entering or exiting vehicles, and ensure that your travel documents and visas are current and valid.

U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Saudi Arabia may restrict travel of official U.S. diplomats or suspend public services for security reasons. Whenever threat information is specific, credible, and non-counterable, this information will be made available to the U.S. public. In those instances, the Embassy and Consulates will keep the local U.S. citizen community apprised through the Warden System and make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. Warden messages for Saudi Arabia are available at the U.S. Embassy Riyadh website.

**Criminal Penalties:** Persons violating Saudi Arabian laws, may be expelled, arrested, imprisoned, or even executed. Suspects may be detained without charges or legal counsel, and with limited consular access, for months during the investigative stage of criminal cases. Penalties for the import, manufacture, possession, and consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs in Saudi Arabia are severe. Convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences, heavy fines, public floggings, and/or deportation. The penalty for drug trafficking in Saudi Arabia is death. Saudi officials make no exceptions. Saudi authorities do not permit criticism of Islam or the royal family. The government prohibits the public practice of religions other than Islam. Non-Muslims suspected of violating these restrictions have been jailed. Homosexual activity is considered to be a criminal offense and those convicted may be sentenced to lashing, prison, or death.

**Health:** All foreigners who are coming to work in the Kingdom must undergo a medical exam and present a medical report confirming that they are free from contagious diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Any worker testing positive for HIV/AIDS will not be allowed to work in the Kingdom. Please inquire directly with the Embassy of Saudi Arabia before relocation. A meningitis vaccination is recommended.

**Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials:** At this time Saudi Arabia does not ascribe to ISPM 15 requirements.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

East & West Express: Dammam, Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Embassy: <http://www.saudiembassy.net/>

Working in Saudi Arabia: <http://workinginsaudi Arabia.blogspot.com>

Saudi Arabian Customs Office website: [http://www.customs.gov.sa/CustomsNew/default\\_E.aspx](http://www.customs.gov.sa/CustomsNew/default_E.aspx)

Department of State: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1012.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1012.html)

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>

**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 clients 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.**