



**SECURE
EXPORTS
SCHEME**

APPLICATION COMPANION GUIDE

FEBRUARY 2022



NEW ZEALAND
CUSTOMS SERVICE
TE MANA ĀRAI O AOTEAROA

**Protecting and promoting
New Zealand across borders**



NAU MAI - WELCOME

This companion guide helps you understand how you can become an Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) as a part of New Zealand's Secure Exports Scheme (SES).

When you decide to formally apply to become an AEO SES partner, we will work at your pace and we will provide you with the advice and direction you need as you progress through the application process.

This is your toolkit. It contains information to help you deliver:

- Process Flowchart
- Site Plan(s)
- Security Plan(s).

You can work through the required documents in any order, however, we recommend the following:

Step 1

Reflect on your existing security arrangements which protect against tampering and theft.

Step 2

Develop and consider how your process flowchart and site plan support each other to demonstrate the security of your supply chain.

Step 3

Complete your security plan.

Many transport operators are already members of AEO SES. We can advise if your transport operator needs to submit a security plan and support your transport operator if they aren't already an AEO SES member.

We are here to help

Please contact our SES Team, we are here to help.

If you have any questions, require assistance or clarification, call 0800 4 CUSTOMS (0800 4 28786) or email SES@customs.govt.nz

Ngā mihi
THE SES TEAM

AEO SES APPLICATION PROCESS FLOWCHART

STAGE 1

PRE-APPLICATION

We assume that you have either:

- Completed a Registration of Interest, or
- Emailed interest to SES@customs.govt.nz, or
- Given us a call on 0800 4 CUSTOMS (0800 4 28786), or
- We have approached your business about becoming an AEO SES partner

STAGE 2

APPLICATION

Review the Application Companion Guide and submit;

- Application for Customs-approved Secure Exports Scheme (C15)

Our SES Team will send you a Security Plan template.

At any point, our SES team is available to meet with you or discuss your application and how to complete:

- Process flowchart
- Site plan(s)
- Security plan

Send your completed forms and documents to SES@customs.govt.nz

STAGE 3

VALIDATION

An SES team member will visit your business to review your Operation and meet with key staff.

We will work together to identify opportunities that may improve your supply chain security.

We will assess whether your supply chain security meets the required standard.

STAGE 4

ACCREDITATION

We will assess your application, and work with you to reach AEO SES partnership requirements.

When partnership is offered, you will enter into an agreement with the New Zealand Customs Service to operate as a formal AEO SES partner.

STAGE 5

PARTNERSHIP

Partnership is ongoing. We will visit your site(s) from time to time to work with you to ensure that your Supply Chain is still meeting applicable standards. Benefits of being an AEO SES partner is ongoing.

SES APPLICATION PROCESS

The Secure Exports Scheme is open to exporters with all type of goods that are transported within approved secure packages via any mode of transport and to a number of MRA destinations around the world.

Every business is unique and implements different measures to achieve the outcome of securing cargo.

There is no joining fee or ongoing Customs charges throughout the sign up process or during the ongoing partnership. However, there may be some costs in getting your business ready to meet AEO SES standards which could be seen as an Investment.

The application process is a collaborative. We will proceed at a pace set by you and your team, based on the delivery of key information that is needed to progress and complete the application process.

Application, Approval and After Care	Considerations
<p>Stage 1 Receipt of the completed Secure Exports Scheme Application Form</p>	<p>Our SES team will check your application. The complexity of the supply chains can vary. Some exporters have completed their application relatively quickly and others have taken longer.</p>
<p>Stage 2 Complete your Security plan</p>	<p>You will need to show us how you meet the AEO SES requirements for all your company sites through completion of your security plan, process flow chart and site plan(s). The security plan is to show that your policies, processes and procedures meet the AEO standards. The process flow chart shows that the flow of goods and information from receipt of order through to the point of export. The site plan shows the layout of the site and surrounding areas where goods are packed/ stored/ loaded for export. The plan allows Customs to have an overview of the surrounding environmental aspects of a site, including buildings, access ways and specific areas where export containers/ secure packages are loaded, as well as other security features on-site. With the exception of air cargo transported under Civil Aviation Rule Part 109, your transport operators will need to show how they can maintain security of your shipment; pickup from your Approved Load site - to the consignment being delivered to the Port of Loading. Many of your current practices will already contribute to security, especially those related to Ministry for Primary Industries, your Regulated Air Cargo Agent and occupational Health and Safety.</p>
<p>Stage 3 SES partner approval</p> 	<p>Once your on-site details are verified, and your security plan is validated, you will be asked to sign our AEO SES partner document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will have the right to purchase AEO SES seals. You will be issued with the AEO SES partner certificate for display. You will have the right to display the official AEO SES logo on your business information – online and print. We can support you with external promotion to media and customers about your AEO SES status.
<p>Stage 4 Ongoing support and maintenance of your SES secure supply chain status.</p>	<p>We will support you with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security assurance to maintain your status. These will be undertaken by email, phone, video conferencing or physical site visits at a time agreed with you. If there are changes to your supply chain then we can help you to adjust your security plan so you maintain your AEO SES status. Training and awareness of supply chain security matters for your personnel. Ongoing communications on Customs matters.

PROCESS FLOWCHART

Your Secure Exports Scheme (SES) Security Plan needs to be supported by a process flowchart. To assist you with the production of your process flowchart, we have included some questions to ask yourself and an example process flowchart follows.

What information should a process flowchart contain?

The process flowchart should identify each step of your company's process from production to arrival at the Loading Port for export. During these steps please identify and state the paperwork/ documents generated by these activities i.e. packing list, Invoices, loading documents used etc. It should show what security practices you use and support your Security Plan.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. What is the first stage of your process? [for example - customer places an order]
2. What happens next? [e.g. a sale is generated]
3. How is each sale captured and on what?
4. What steps are used to pack each product?
5. What security processes are involved in these steps?
6. How is this packing data captured? [e.g. packing list]
7. What checks do you perform before the container is sealed?
8. How this information is captured and kept secure?
9. How do you ensure the correct consignment is sent to the right end customer?
10. What steps do you take to ensure the transport operator knows what is expected of them at each stage of the process?
11. How is the consignment signed off?
12. What is the final step in your process?

We suggest you answer all of the questions above and arrange them in order from the first to the last step, like in the example that follows.

SITE PLAN

A site plan shows the layout of the site and surrounding areas where goods are packed/ stored/ loaded for export. The plan allows The Customs SES team to have an overview of the surrounding environmental aspects of the site including; buildings, access ways, operational areas where export containers/ secure packages are loaded, as well as other security features on-site.

We understand that you may not have had to produce a site plan before. To assist with this process, some questions to ask yourself and a site plan example follows.

Questions you should ask yourself:

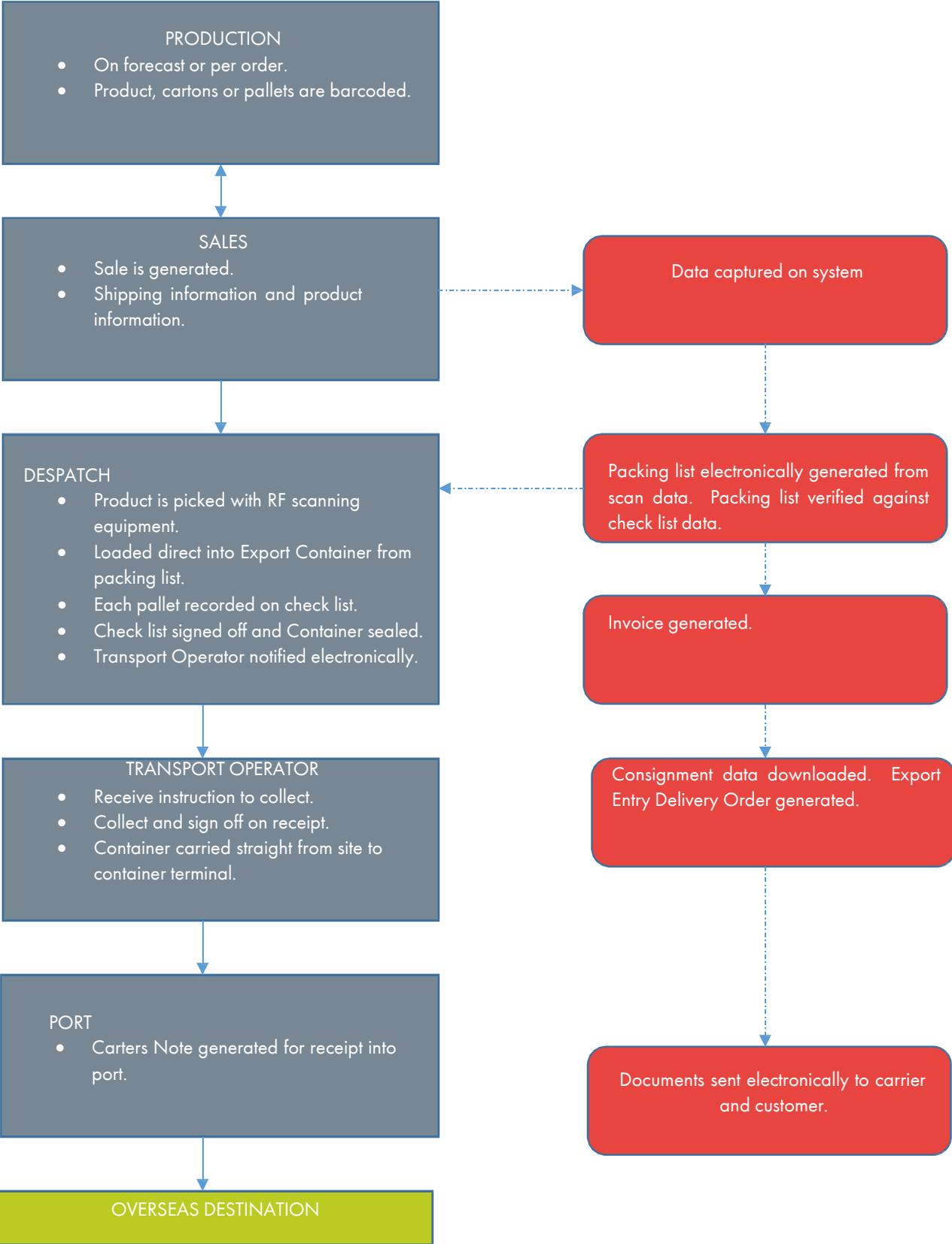
1. What is the external perimeter of the area? Include features such as boundary roads, railway lines, streams/ rivers, neighbouring properties and other features e.g. park, forest etc.
2. What access points are there? E.g. vehicle, rail and pedestrian entrances. Include arrows to show transport operator traffic flows.
3. What buildings are there? Identify each building with access ways e.g. administration office, export storage areas, export packing areas, export container load-out store.
4. What lighting facilities are there that contribute to security? Include Internal and/or external lighting.
5. Are there any other security features? E.g. security cameras and/or electronic access gates.
6. What parking areas are there? Include visitor, contractor and company personnel parking areas.
7. What perimeter fences are there? Include a description of their construction e.g. 2-metre-high security fence.
8. What areas are used for loading containers? Include all areas used for loading sea containers and/ or packing air cargo consignments for export.
9. What areas are used for sea container storage? If applicable.

The following site plan example gives you a guide to the features needed on your plan.

PROCESS FLOWCHART - EXAMPLE

Name of company:
Version Number:

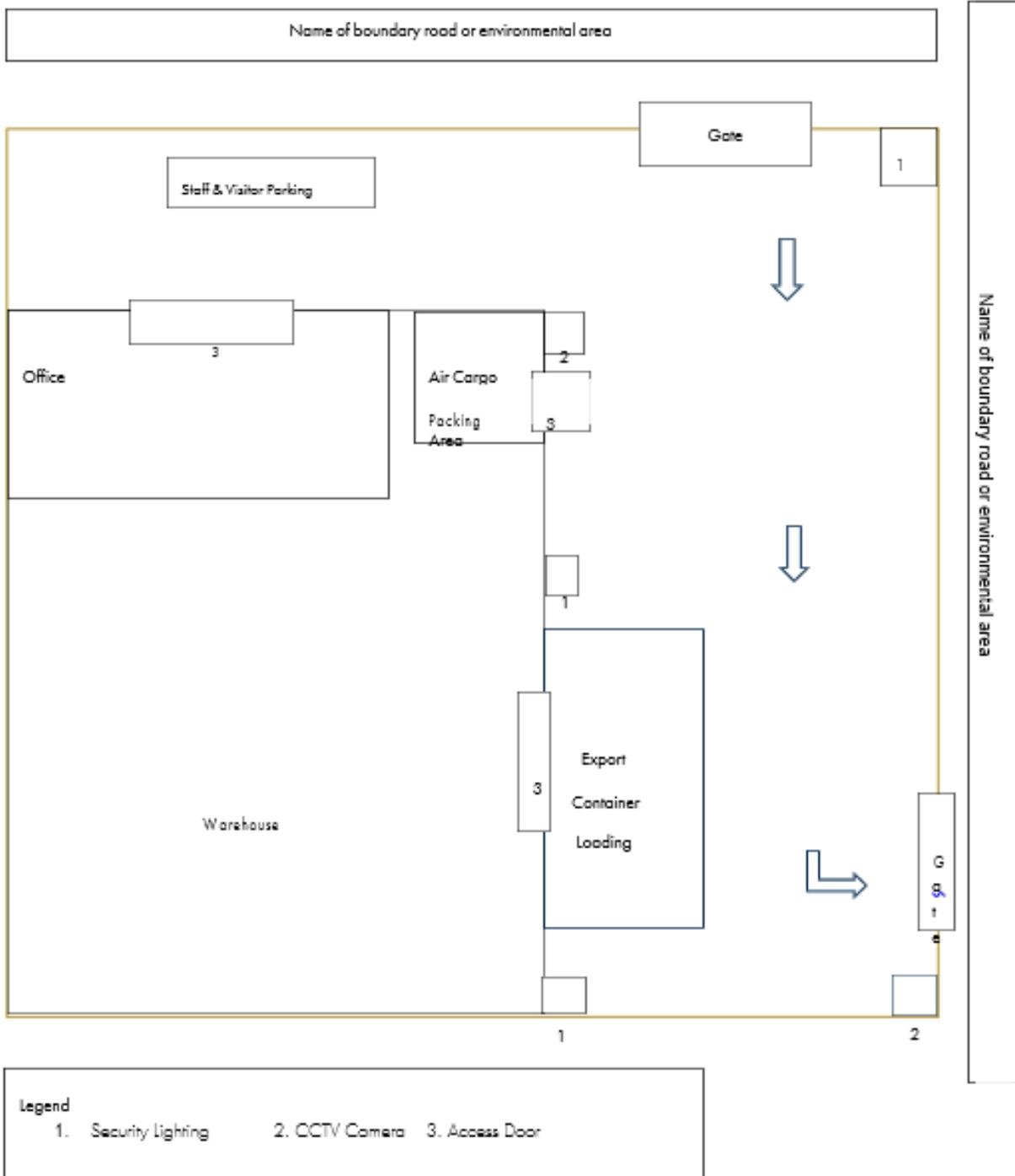
Date:



SITE PLAN - EXAMPLE

Site Name:
Site Address:

Date:
Version number:



SECURITY PLAN

A Security Plan documents the policies, processes and procedures that a company has in place to meet the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) standards by ensuring that goods for export are securely packed, accurately accounted for and securely transported to the point of export from New Zealand.

What information is required with the Security Plan?

The Security Plan must detail the company's written and verifiable policies, processes and/or procedures in place to meet the following criteria:

- Procedural security
- Document security
- Physical security
- Access controls
- Personnel security
- Education and training
- Other government agency requirements (where applicable)

What if one of these security criteria doesn't apply to my company?

Some of the elements within the security criteria will not be applicable to all export companies e.g. businesses operating solely from an office environment will not be loading containers onsite. Please include a comment in your Security Plan, under the security element heading about why it does not apply.

Can I include references in the Security Plan?

Yes, you can include references to standard operating procedures (SOP's), provided this is prefaced with a short summary which covers the criteria and is clearly referenced to your SOP's. You can also include documentation you may have already submitted as part of other Government department security documentation i.e. Ministry for Primary Industries requirements, ISO28001.

What about storage sites/ packing sites and transport operators handling my export goods?

As part of your Security Plan, you will need to include Security Plans provided by third party operated sites and transport operators that are contracted to either pack, store or transport your export goods. This is explained further in the transport operator security plan section.

Customs needs to see that your arrangements with these companies/ operators include the security standards and that there is a method of checking that these standards are met. If the contracted third party sites and transport operators have already been approved by Customs, you will need to ensure their existing Security Plans align with your company's specific secure handling requirements.

Do all sites need to be covered by the Security Plan?

Yes, the Security Plan/s must cover all sites where your export goods are packed into approved secure packages and held ready for transportation.

Port/ Airport environment, a Security Plan is not required from port companies or international airports where containers/ packages are stored until exported.

Regulated Air Cargo Agents are not required to lodge a Security Plan unless they are also packing, on behalf of AEO SES Partners, product at their site into approved secure packages.

Does my company have to put up fences and buy cameras or alarm systems?

Customs recognises that all businesses operate differently. While fences, alarms and cameras are common methods of monitoring or deterring unauthorised access to a site, your company may have other acceptable means of doing this. Document these methods in your Security Plan so that they can be assessed against the required standard.

Security Plan Template

A Security Plan template is available. Please contact AEO SES Team for a copy or if you have any questions at SES@customs.govt.nz

TRANSPORT OPERATORS SECURITY PLAN

This document explains the standards for the Secure Exports Scheme security plan required by transport operators involved in the transport and storage of 'secure packages' on behalf of AEO SES partners or sites. The transport operator security plan is only required for those exporting via sea freight.

The conveyance of air cargo for export is already covered by the security arrangements contained within the Civil Aviation Rules Part 109 and a security plan is not required for this purpose.

What are the responsibilities of Secure Exports Scheme partners?

Approved AEO SES partners and sites are required to:

1. Apply an approved seal to the 'secure package' at the final point of packing.
2. Document all their processes from the place of manufacture, and/or packing, to the port for export. This includes who has carried the goods, how that package is accounted for throughout the delivery process and confirmation that the package has been delivered for export.

How does the Secure Exports Scheme affect transport operators?

To comply with the conditions of the Scheme, you must be able to show that the approved seal has remained intact throughout the transportation process. The transport operator that has been employed or contracted to carry the secure package, on behalf of the AEO SES partner or site, must:

- Monitor the integrity of the approved seal.
- Maintain security around the container or secure package (including storage, if applicable).
- Retain documentary or electronic evidence of the checks that are undertaken during transport and at the time of delivery for export.

How do transport operators obtain AEO SES approval?

Transport operators must lodge a Transport Operator Security Plan with Customs, which describes how the standards will be applied to maintain the integrity of sealed containers or secure packages during the transportation and/or storage to the port for export.

Does the requirement for a Transport Operator Security Plan only apply to sea containers?

Yes. While AEO SES also covers Air Cargo, a security plan is not required as the security and movement of air cargo consignments is already controlled under Civil Aviation Authority regulations.

What do I do if I pick up goods and see something suspicious?

Notify AEO SES partner and contact Customs on 0800 428786 (0800 4CUSTOMS) as soon as possible. The information you provide will be kept confidential.

What happens if we fail to complete the agreed container seal secure package checks for an exporter approved under AEO SES?

The security status of the package and goods cannot be assured and this may result in the loss of benefits available to the AEO SES partner.

What do I need to document?

You need to supply a security plan that details what procedures your company uses to meet the standard criteria for transport operators. Please contact the SES Team for information on these standards.

What if my transport company is also involved in the packing or storage of secure packages?

If, in addition to the cartage of secure packages, your company is involved with the overnight storage of secure packages on behalf of AEO SES partners, your security plan will need to include the information set out in the Part B: Overnight Storage section of the following template. If your company is also involved in the packing/ loading of secure packages on behalf of AEO SES partners, you will need to be approved as a secure site.

Security Plan Template

We understand that producing a security plan can be challenging so a security plan template for transport operators is available. Please contact the AEO SES Team for a copy or if you have any questions at SES@customs.govt.nz

WHAT'S NEXT?

Contact has been made with our SES team. You've worked through and submitted required documents including your security plans, flowchart and site plan/s.

Validation and Accreditation

Once your details are verified.

We will assess your supply chain security and visit your business site/s to review your operations and meet your key staff.

We can work together to identify opportunities that may improve your supply chain security.

When everything meets the required standards for the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Secure Exports Scheme, we will offer a formal agreement and approve you as a partner.

- You will have the authorisation to purchase the AEO SES seals.
- You will be issued with the AEO SES partner certificate for display.
- You will have the right to display the official AEO SES logo on your business information – online and print.
- We can support you with external promotions to media and customers about your AEO SES status.

You will benefit from

- Global recognition as a secure trader.
- International recognition of exports via a secure supply chain.
- Less documentation checks and inspection interventions.
- SES Export transaction fee is 50% cheaper than other export entries.
- Customs International Liaison Officers accessible to assist with International trade clearance issues.

Partnership

We will support you with:

- Maintaining your AEO SES status through email, phone and via virtual or physical site visits at a time agreed with you. If there are changes to your supply chain then we will help you to adjust your security plan and revalidation processes may occur pending on the changes.
- Customs will audit your business within the first year of membership and then approximately every three years to ensure you are up to date with your SES requirements.
- Training and awareness of supply chain security matters available for your personnel.
- Ongoing communications on Customs matters.
- Customs will regularly update our MRA Partners on your AEO status and provide the appropriate codes, as necessary, for your shipments to receive facilitation privileges.

Information Privacy

All information submitted to Customs as a part of your joining process will be held electronically. Access to these files is restricted and recorded. You will have the right to access and update your information at any time.

We are here to help

If you have any questions, require assistance or clarification please email SES@customs.govt.nz or call 0800 4 CUSTOMS (0800 4 28786).