

# NIGERIA

## EXPORTER GUIDE

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# 1 STANDARDS ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIA CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME (SONCAP) FOR GOODS SHIPPED TO NIGERIA

**For the attention of importers:** This document is intended for exporters in order to explain how to comply with Nigeria and approved International/ National Standards. It is the responsibility of importers to inform exporters of the existence of the present procedure. Verifications are executed at origin on seller or exporter's initiative; therefore importers are not required to initiate any process in Nigeria.

<b>PROGRAMME MANDATED BY</b>	Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON)
<b>STARTING DATE</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> of February 2013
<b>APPOINTED COMPANIES</b>	includes COTECNA Inspection S.A. and affiliated companies (hereinafter referred as Cotecna) <a href="http://www.exports-to-nigeria.com">www.exports-to-nigeria.com</a>
<b>SELECTION OF INSPECTION COMPANY</b>	Exporter's choice
<b>SCOPE OF SONCAP PROGRAMME</b>	To verify that SON regulated products intended for importation into Nigeria conform to Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) and/or approved International Standards. Scope includes one or a combination of the following verifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Documentation verification</li> <li>- Laboratory testing</li> <li>- Physical inspection in exporting country</li> <li>- Factory audit</li> </ul>
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## 2 PROCESS OF VOC (ON SHIPMENT BASIS) TO COMPLY WITH SONCAP REQUIREMENTS

In order to clear their goods in Nigeria, importers need to have for every consignment of regulated products, a Product Certificate (PC) and a SONCAP Certificate (SC) issued by Cotecna. The PC is used to open the Form M while the SC is used to raise the Pre-Arrival Assessment Report (PAAR) for clearance of the good.

The SC can be obtained by exporters in the Country of Supply using three levels of Compliance called Routes. The choice of the route will depend on the nature of the products and its impact on the health and safety of consumers, the risk profile of the manufacturer, and the level of conformity met by existing certifications.

### ROUTE A – For unregistered/Unlicensed products (Conformity Verification)

This route towards obtaining the PC is advised only for infrequent exporters or traders.

#### Step 1 – Issuance of Product Certificate (PC)

The Product Certificate (PC), valid for six months is issued following inspection, sampling, testing to applicable Nigerian or approved International standards. Samples for testing are drawn from the shipment at the time of shipment inspection. The PC issued is valid for obtaining the SC for the applicable shipment only.

#### Step 2 – Sample Testing

Submission of test report/documents issued from an accredited ISO 17025 laboratory or an approved laboratory as per Cotecna/SON's procedures. In the absence of test reports, samples to be taken for testing. The samples submitted for testing shall be drawn by Cotecna or drawn under Cotecna's supervision. Testing of samples should always be based on verification as per Applicable Nigeria, Regional, International or National standards.

#### Step 3 – SONCAP Certificate (SC)

The SC is issued for the shipment following successful:

- > Request for SC form duly completed
- > Submission of a valid Product Certificate (Unregistered, unlicensed)
- > Consignment Inspection and witness of stuffing and affixing of seals for Full Container Load (FCL) – 100% loading supervision
- > Receipt of satisfactory final documents

In the event of non-compliance with the testing and/or inspection requirements, the shipment shall be issued a Non Conformity Report (NCR).

## ROUTE B – For Registered Products (Registration and Conformity Inspection)

Manufacturers/Exporters that have frequent shipment to Nigeria are suggested to apply for Product Certification under Route B if they have a Quality System in place in order to determine that the manufactured products are produced consistently over time with the same quality product.

This route allows for registration of products following:

- > Testing of the products to determine conformity with the applicable standards
- > Assessment of the manufacturer's Quality System to ensure that the manufacturer has the necessary systems in place to produce consistently over a time the same quality product.

### Step 1 – Product Certificate (Registered Status)

The Product Certificate (Registered Status), valid for one year, is issued upon satisfactory assessment of the exporter's or the manufacturer's Quality System and collection of acceptable test reports.

### Step 2 – Testing

Test Reports provided are acceptable as long as these are issued by an accredited ISO 17025 laboratory or an approved laboratory as per Cotecna/SON's procedures.

### Step 3 – SONCAP Certificate (SC)

The SC is issued for the shipment following:

- > Request for SC form duly completed
- > Submission of a valid Product Certificate (Registered)
- > Selective Shipment Inspection with the witnessing of stuffing and affixing of seals for Full Container Load (FCL) at least for 40% of shipments per quarter.
- > Receipt of satisfactory final documents

In the event of non-compliance with the testing and/or inspection requirements, the shipment shall be issued a Non Conformity Report (NCR).

## ROUTE C – For Licensed products (Product Certification Systems)

Manufacturers who have regular shipments to Nigeria and/or those who have demonstrated an excellent level of compliance under Route B are qualified to apply for Product Licensing under Route C. Salient features:

- > Product evaluation and licensing to applicable standards (NIS or approved equivalents)
- > Selective Consignment Inspection
- > Witness of stuffing and affixing of seals for Full Container Load (FCL)

Licensing of products is based on:

- > Detailed product evaluation (including testing)
- > Factory audit and regular surveillances

### Step 1 – Product Certificate (Licensed Status)

Product Certificate (Licensed Status), valid for one year, is issued upon satisfactory audit of the manufacturer's factory.

Manufacturers under Route B could be elevated to Route C based on good compliance history (minimum of four fully compliant transactions and two factory verifications).

### Step 2 – Testing

Type Test Reports provided are acceptable as long as these are issued by an approved laboratory or the manufacturer (witnessed by Cotecna). These should be for every product within the scope of the licensed Product Certificate.

### Step 3 – SONCAP Certificate (SC)

The SC is issued for the shipment following:

- > Request for SC form duly completed
- > Submission of a valid Product Certificate (Licensed)
- > Selective Shipment Inspection with the witnessing of stuffing and affixing of seals for Full Container Load (FCL) at least one shipment every six months
- > Receipt of satisfactory final documents

In the event of non-compliance with the testing and/or inspection requirements, the shipment shall be issued a Non Conformity Report (NCR).

## Definition of “Valid Conformity Document”

Exporter will submit to Cotecna “Valid Conformity Documents”, such as test reports, quality certificates and analysis reports. The testing of products shall be carried with emphasis on quality, performance and safety with regards to Route A (PCU), Route B (PCR), i.e. “essential requirements”, or on all the test parameters, i.e. “Type test”, with regards to Route C (PCL). If they are not available, Cotecna will arrange for the necessary tests to be performed.

A conformity document is valid when it has been issued by:

- > Third Party or in-house ISO/IEC 17025 accredited laboratory
- > Approved laboratory as per Cotecna/SON’s procedures

Testing shall be performed against applicable NIS, regional standards or approved equivalents, technical regulation or international standards as applicable.

## PC / SC e-Portal Online Activation

After a Product Certificate (PC) and a SONCAP Certificate (SC) are issued and successfully sent to SON from our platform, the importer will need to activate the certificates on the web portal of the Federal Government of Nigeria Single Window for Trade, so as to be detected on the Customs platform. The activation launches the certificates into the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) system. In order to do this, the following steps need to be taken:

### For PC:

1. Visit <http://son.gov.ng/activate-product-soncap-certificate/>
2. Click on the Apply to Activate Product Certificate button
3. Complete the form by inputting the Certificate Number, the Importer Name, the TIN Number and the Importer Phone Number
4. Click on the SUBMIT button. Upon completion of the process, a pop-up message will confirm activation. To ensure it has been sent to the Customs/NICIS portal, the importer should do the following:
5. Visit: <https://trade.gov.ng/son/search.do>
6. Input the Certificate Number and click on the Product Certificate radio button
7. Click on Search to display the certificate
8. Proceed with the Form M process.

### For SC:

1. Visit <http://son.gov.ng/activate-product-soncap-certificate/>
2. Click on the Apply to Activate SONCAP Certificate/Import Permit button
3. Under Type of Activation, select SONCAP Activation for PAAR from the dropdown list
4. Complete the form by inputting the SONCAP/Certificate Number, the Importer Name, the TIN Number and the Importer Phone Number
5. Click on the SUBMIT button. Upon completion of the process, a pop-up message will confirm activation. To ensure it has been sent to the Customs/NICIS portal, the importer should do the following:
6. Visit: <https://trade.gov.ng/son/search.do>
7. Input the Certificate Number and click on the SONCAP Certificate radio button
8. Click on Search to display the certificate
9. Proceed with the PAAR process.

### 3 PRODUCTS REGULATED UNDER THE SONCAP PROGRAMME

All products other than those exempted are regulated under the SONCAP programme.

### 4 PRODUCTS EXEMPTED FROM THE SONCAP PROGRAMME

Products mentioned below:

- > Food products
- > Drugs (Medicines)
- > Medicals other than equipment and machines
- > Chemicals used as raw material by bonafide manufacturers
- > Military wares & equipment
- > Goods classified as contraband by the Federal Government of Nigeria
- > Used products other than automobiles
- > Machinery or related spare parts for bonafide manufacturers who intend to use this for their own manufacturing purposes are advised to apply to the SON for SONCAP import permit

### 5 FEES

Process	Description	Fee Per Certificate
<b>Registration and Licensing</b>	PC (U) - Product Certificate Unregistered (validity 6 months) - Single model	300 for 6 months per certificate
	Additional model in PC(U) (7 USD/month)	42 per model for 6 months
	PC (R) - Product Registration (validity 1 year) - Single model	300 per year per certificate
	PC (L) - Product Licensing (validity 1 year) - Single model*	1'300 per year per certificate
	Additional model from the same product (when included in initial PC)	84 per year / per model
	Additional model from the same product (if included after the first release = amendment) - All type of PC	7 USD per month per model for the remaining months
<b>Shipment Certification</b>	SONCAP Certificate (SC)	300 per shipment
<b>Others</b>	Non Conformity Report (NCR)	350 per shipment
	Certificate Amendment	100 per certificate
	New product on PCU, PCR and PCL	300 USD

\* The fee for Product Certificate (Licensed) includes factory audit where applicable.

## 6 CONDITIONS

- > All costs incurred for presenting the goods for inspection, such as unpacking, handling, repacking, are borne by the exporter/seller.
- > If the goods do not conform to the requirements, fees for physical inspection, testing and Non Conformity Report issuance remain due to Cotecna.
- > This programme is subject to the General Terms and Conditions of Cotecna (<https://www.cotecna.com/en/terms-and-conditions>).

## 7 ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1      [SONCAP Non-Regulated Product List](#)

ANNEXE 2      [PC & SC Activation / PAAR Guidelines](#)

COTECNA Commercial Offices and Laboratories Worldwide can be contacted through:  
[www.exports-to-nigeria.com](http://www.exports-to-nigeria.com)

For further information, please check our website: [www.cotecna.com](http://www.cotecna.com)

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