

SELLING TO SAUDI ARABIAN BUYERS

Meeting New Testing Requirements

Selling product to Saudi customers or want to begin doing so? Distributors are reporting increased Saudi customs enforcement for imported products. From toys to cosmetics to automotive aftermarket products, every shipment imported into Saudi Arabia is required to be accompanied by the correct documentation.

The Saudi government has begun enforcing a new product safety program known as SALEEM, and U.S. suppliers have begun hearing of these new requirements from their distributors as a result. During a March trip to Riyadh and Dammam, Saudi Arabia, *SEMA News* learned that local distributors were struggling to learn the new system and were concerned about the costs associated with complying.

SEMA recently sponsored a webinar to provide U.S. manufacturers with information on the program. Joel Molina, international trade specialist at the North America office of conformity assessment body SGS spoke at the webinar on the details. SGS is one of the testing agencies approved by the Saudi government. (Molina's contact information is included at the end of this article along with a link to all six assessment bodies.) Below are some details of the program.

1. The compliance conformity program is known by the name SALEEM, and the electronic platform in which products are registered is known as SABER.
2. The Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO) is the standard-setting body for a wide range of products, including auto parts, and is the lead agency on the SABER SALEEM program.
3. On the opposite page is a list of products covered by technical stan-

dards. If your products are on the list, third-party testing is required. If your products are not on the list, it is recommended that you doublecheck that this is the case with a certification body. (A list of approved certified bodies and a list of regulated products by HS code are available on the www.sema.org/international webpages.) The certified body can work with SASO to confirm if a technical regulation exists for your product.

4. Third-party testing is required on regulated products. Only a Saudi-government-approved testing agency can be used. In addition, certain aftermarket products require a factory audit.
5. The government specifically notes that many auto parts are not covered, including chassis, engines, differentials and gear boxes.
6. If it is confirmed that your products are not covered by a technical regulation, a self-certification by the importer is sufficient. So called "non-regulated products" do not require the services of a technical body but rather the completion of a self-certification form by the importer.
7. SABER is the online portal used to register both regulated and unregulated products and the required shipping documents for all imports.

Once the Saudi distributor registers the company on the SABER portal (only a Saudi-based business can enter the required information onto the online system), all products to be imported are to be registered as well. This task may be performed directly by the importer or by hiring the certifying body to do so. The portal can be accessed by importers, SASO-approved certification bodies and Saudi customs officials.

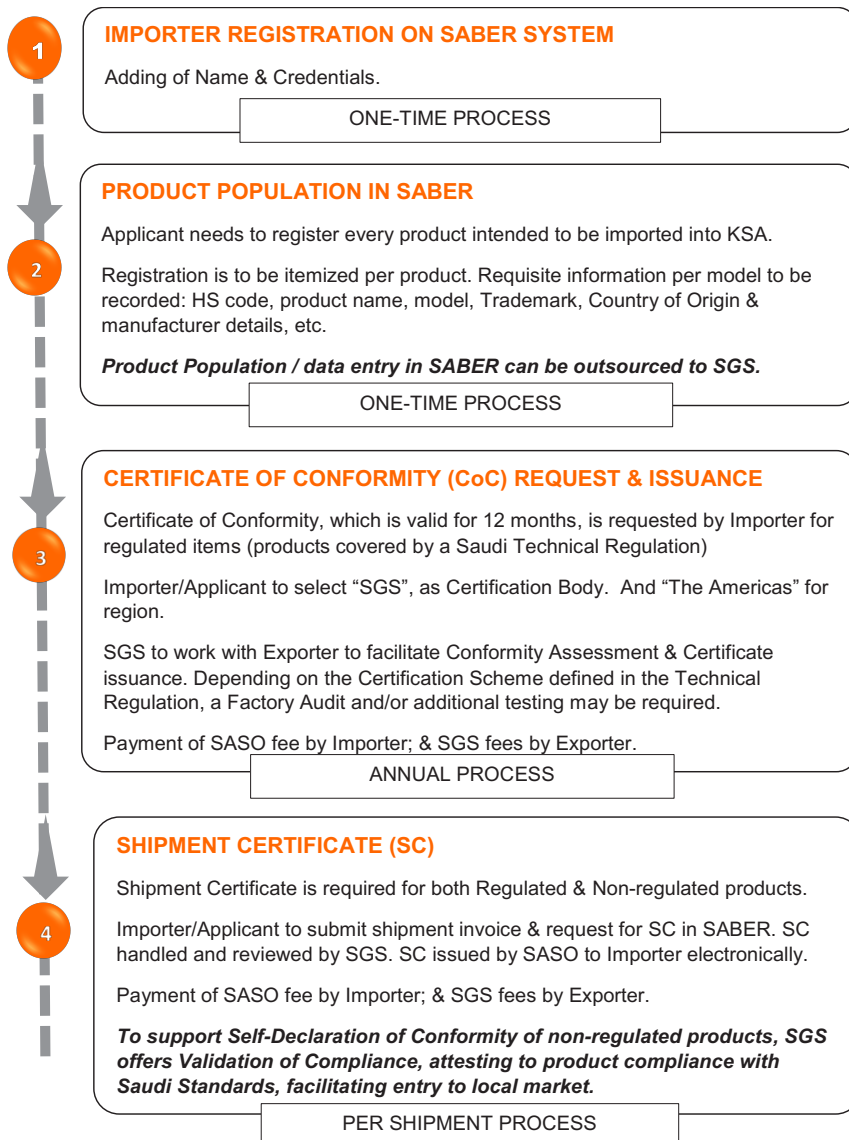
8. Many U.S. suppliers arrange for the testing and thus own the data, and its contents can be kept proprietary, shared only with government officials. The U.S. manufacturer selects one or more distributors as desired, with each needing to register on the SABER site but if the manufacturer handled the testing authorized importers can refer to the completed test data. Conversely, if a distributor arranges the test, each distributor carrying the U.S. supplier's product will need to arrange its own testing.
9. There are four standards that cover most but not all specialty automotive product technical regulations: auto spare parts, lubricants, tires and batteries.
10. To submit a regulated product for importation, the importer initiates the certification request by first registering the product(s) into the SABER system, including product details, the appropriate HS code, and selecting the chosen SASO-approved certification body to carry out any required third-party testing. If the product meets the requirements of the tech-

Selected Automotive Products Covered Under Saudi Technical Regulations

Airbags	Electric Wiring	Pulleys
Alarms	Engine Coolant	Radiators
Alternators	Filters-Air	Rearview Mirrors
Ball Joints	Filters-Fuel	Rims
Batteries	Filters-Oil	Seat Belts
Belts	Glass-Windshield	Shock Absorbers
Brake Linings	Head Support	Spark Plugs
Bumpers	Ignition Coils	Tie Rods
Child-Restraint Systems	Lighting	Tires
Control Arms	Lubricants	Wheel Bearings
Door Locks and Door Hinges	Motor Oil	Window Washing Systems

■ This list was compiled by SEMA, drawing from relevant Saudi technical regulations. If your product does not appear on this list, confirm with a compliance body. SGS is one such entity. The full list of the six approved bodies is available at www.saber.sa

SALEEM-SABER Certificate of Conformity Issuance Flow Chart



nical regulation, an approval certificate is issued and the importer is then issued a shipment certificate. Each shipment requires a unique shipping certificate. The entire process is done online through the SABER system.

11. Regulations: <https://saber.sa/home/regulations>.

12. Approved certifying bodies: The SASO SABER website lists six approved testing agencies with a North American presence. The list is located at <https://saber.sa/home/cborganizations>.

SABER SALEEM Resources

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The full list of the six Saudi government-approved certifying bodies is available at www.saber.sa. More information on the Saudi SABER SALEEM system, including a recording of a recent SEMA webinar on the testing requirements, is available at www.sema.org/international. For questions, contact Linda Spencer at lindas@sema.org.

Upcoming SEMA International Programs

Overseas Business Development Trips:

- SEMA Middle East (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates/Riyadh, Saudi Arabia), March–April 2021
- SEMA Australia (Melbourne, Australia), May 2021
- SEMA Nordic (Stockholm, Sweden), September 2–7, 2021

2020 SEMA Show:

- International Networking
- International Roundtables, Monday, November 2
- International Happy Hour, Wednesday, November 4

2020 PRI Trade Show:

- International Networking
- International Happy Hour, Friday, December 11
- International Roundtable, Friday, December 11

Courtesy of SGS