OFFICE OF TEXTILES AND APPAREL (OTEXA)

Market Reports
Textiles, Apparel, Footwear and Travel Goods

Australia

The following information is provided only as a guide and should be confirmed with the proper authorities before embarking on any export activities.

Import Tariffs

Australian import tariffs are assessed on an ad valorem basis, i.e., as a percentage of the FOB (free on board) value of the imported merchandise. On January 1, 2005, Australia and the United States entered into the U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement (USAFTA), which provides for the removal of import tariffs on goods traded between the two countries. Under this agreement, U.S. textile and apparel exports that meet the required rules of origin receive preferential tariff rates in Australia, and vice versa. For more information, see the U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement in the FTA section.

The following table provides a summary of Australia’s non-preferential tariffs.

| Australia: Tariffs (percent ad valorem) on Textiles, Apparel, Footwear and Travel Goods |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| HS Chapter/Subheading         | Non-preferential Tariff Rates (%) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Yarn                          |                                  |                 |
| -silk 5003-5006               | 0                                |                 |
| -wool 5105-5110               | 0 - 5                            |                 |
| -cotton 5204-5207             | 5                                |                 |
| -other vegetable fiber 5306-5308 | 0 - 5                         |                 |
| -man-made fiber 5401-5406/5501-5511 | 0 - 5                      |                 |
| Woven Fabric                  |                                  |                 |
| -silk 5007                    | 0 - 5                            |                 |
| -wool 5111-5113               | 5                                |                 |
| -cotton 5208-5212             | 5                                |                 |
| -other vegetable fiber 5309-5311 | 0                              |                 |
| -man-made fiber 5407-5408/5512-5516 | 5                          |                 |
| Knit Fabric                   | 60                               | 5               |
| Non Woven Fabric              | 5603                             | 5               |
| Industrial Fabric             | 59                               | 0 - 5           |
| Apparel                       | 61-62                            | 0 - 10          |
| Home Furnishings              | 63                               | 0 - 5           |
| including: bed, bath, kitchen linens, etc. |                        |                 |
| Carpet                        | 57                               | 0 - 5           |
| Footwear                      | 64                               | 0 - 5           |
| Travel Goods                  | 4202                             | 0 - 5           |

The complete harmonized tariff schedule and more detailed information can be found on the Australian Customs Service Website. See Schedule 3 - Classification of goods and general and special rates of duty - for non-preferential tariff rates. Schedule 5 shows the preferential tariff rates applied to US-origin goods under the USAFTA. Note that Australian tariffs on textile, apparel, footwear and travel goods, exported from the U.S. under the USAFTA have been phased to Free.

To return to the Foreign Tariff Information webpage, click here.

For information on local customs requirements and documentation, see:
- Importing Goods section of the Australian Customs Service website
- Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade U.S.-Australia FTA website

Standards

Australia has two types of standard: voluntary and regulatory (or mandatory). Mandatory standards include safety standards (e.g., children's nightwear) and information standards (e.g., labeling). The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission - ACCC website contains information on mandatory standards, bans and recalls. The majority of voluntary standards are developed and published by Standards Australia.
Nightwear for children—The Consumer Goods (Children's Nightwear and Limited Daywear and Paper Patterns for Children's Nightwear) Safety Standard 2017 is mandatory and applies to nightwear for children sizes 00–14. The regulation, which is based on Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1249:2014 - Children's nightwear and limited daywear having reduced fire hazard, prescribes requirements for safety testing and labelling of children's nightwear and paper patterns for making children's nightwear. For more information, see Product Safety Australia's webpage on Nightwear for Children.

Note: Until December 31, 2019, suppliers have the option to comply with the requirements from either the Consumer Goods (Children's Nightwear and limited daywear and Paper Patterns for Children's Nightwear) Safety Standard 2017 or the Trade Practices (Consumer Product Safety Standards (Children's Nightwear and Paper Patterns for Children's Nightwear) Regulations 2007. Beginning January 1, 2020, suppliers must comply with the requirements in Consumer Goods (Children's Nightwear and limited daywear and Paper Patterns for Children's Nightwear) Safety Standard 2017.

Drawstrings on children's clothing—The ACCC has issued a voluntary guideline for drawstrings requirements on children's clothing. The guideline is based on the European standard EN 146822 and the voluntary US standard ASTM F18163.

Children's product safety—See the Australian National Retail Association's Children's Apparel & Accessories – Product Safety Guidelines for information on safety hazards associated with children's apparel and accessories designed, marketed and intended for children up to and including 14 years of age.

Formaldehyde in textile and apparel products—The ACCC has issued non-regulatory reference limits for textile and garment products sold in Australia.

Some relevant standards for textile and apparel products include the following:

Protective clothing:
- AS/NZS 4502 - Method for evaluating clothing for protection against heat and fire
- AS/NZS 4501 - Occupational protective clothing
- AS/NZS 4503 - Protective clothing - Protection against liquid chemicals
- AS/NZS 4543.3 - Protective clothing and protective devices for gonads
- AS/NZS 4453 - Protective clothing for users of hand-held chainsaws

Home furnishings:
- AS 2663 - Textiles - Curtain fabrics for domestic use
- AS 2663.1 - Textiles - Woven and knitted fabrics for window furnishings
- AS 2687 - Textiles - Upholstery fabrics for domestic and commercial use

All medical devices and health-related products must receive approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) prior to use.

See Australia's current textile-related, mandatory standards on the Product Safety Australia website. Also see:

- Blinds, curtains and window fittings
- Bean bags
- Azo dyes (see also, ACCC -Consultation for options to limit consumer exposure to hazardous azo dyes)
- Safety guidance on concentrations of particular chemicals in certain consumer goods—The guidance includes a list of 22 hazardous aromatic amines that can be derived from certain hazardous azo dyes in clothing, textiles and leather articles. Guidance is also provided on formaldehyde in clothing and textiles and dimethyl fumarate in leather and textile articles.

Also see, ACCC publishes criteria for accepting international standards.

Local standards organization and other resources:
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission - ACCC website
- Product Safety Australia
- Standards Australia

Labeling

In Australia, the Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Regulation 2016 sets out the labeling requirements for imported goods. See the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection website for details of Australia's labeling requirements for imported products, such as textile products, apparel and footwear. Also see the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Labelling for Textile Goods and Apparel guide.

Information on labels must be written in English. See standard AS/NZS 2392:1999 - Textiles - Labelling of clothing, household textiles and furnishings, which specifies positions of attachment for permanent labels carrying the brand name, size or dimensions, care instructions, fiber content, country of origin and, for children's nightwear and some daywear garments, the fire hazard classification.

Fiber Content: Currently, there is no national mandatory information standard in place for fiber content labeling in Australia. Most of the standards in operation in various States prior to 2010 lapsed with the introduction of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) in January 2011. Reportedly, a national mandatory information standard for fiber content labeling may be considered in the future as part of the harmonization of information standards across Australia. In the interim it is recommended to show percentage of each fiber and list them in descending order (highest to lowest).

New South Wales still requires fiber content labelling of textile products, including the various percentages of different fibers, such wool or cotton. Further information on the NSW regulations can be found at the NSW Office of Fair Trading website.

Care Labeling: Consumer Protection Notice No. 25 of 2010 sets out the mandatory requirements that textile products (i.e., clothing, textiles, furnishing and suede skins, leathers and furs) have adequate care labeling instructions in English on a permanent label. This mandatory standard is based on certain sections of the standard AS/NZS 1957:1998 Textiles - Care labelling, which sets out words, phrases and symbols to be used for giving care instructions and specifies methods by which goods may be labelled. AS/NZS 2621:1998 - Textiles - Guide to the selection of correct care labelling instructions from AS/NZS 1957 provides guidance in the selection of appropriate care labeling instructions and specifies basic performance requirements and test methods.

Care symbols alone do not meet the requirement; however, care symbols or instructions in other languages may be provided. For more details, see the Care Labelling for Clothing & Textiles page on the Product Safety Australia website. Also see the Care Labelling for Clothing and Textiles Products: Supplier Guide. Also, for further reference, see the Intertek brochure on care labeling (Intertek is a private quality assurance provider).

Country of Origin: Country of Origin requirements vary depending on whether the product is made wholly or partially in Australia or is imported. For more information, see the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 [refer Volume 3, Schedule 2, Chapter 5, Part 5-3 Country of origin representations]. Also see the following guides on the ACCC website.

- Country of Origin guide for textiles, clothing and footwear industries
- Country of origin guidelines for the furnishing industry

Footwear: Additional rules that apply to footwear can be found in section 20 of Commerce (Trade Descriptions) Regulation 2016. Also see the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection guide on Labelling for Shoes.


AS/NZS 1249 specifies four categories for labeling children's nightclothes, depending on the degree of fire protection the garment provides. Categories 1–3 require a low fire hazard label and category 4 requires a high fire hazard warning label. The fire hazard information label must be permanent and conspicuous. Garments found to be too flammable and that do not meet any of the four categories' criteria cannot be sold in Australia. Garments must be tested to standard AS 2755.2-1985 (R2013) Textile fabrics - Burning behavior measurement of flame spread properties of vertically oriented specimens.


See the Product Safety Australia nightwear for Children webpage for more information.

Wool Products: Wool products may also be subject to special marking requirements.

Sun Protection Labeling: Voluntary standard is currently being updated, see draft standard update, DR AS/NZS 4399:2017 CP - Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification.

For information and assistance regarding labeling, contact:
- Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- Product Safety Australia
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission - ACCC
- Standards Australia

Market Information

- Australian Department of Industry, Innovations and Science.

For additional information on exporting textiles, apparel, footwear and travel goods, click here.