

# Customs Information Paper (14) 81

## Future of the Tariff Classification Helpline

<b>Who should read:</b>	All Customers who use the Tariff Classification Helpline
<b>What is it about:</b>	We are reviewing the need for the Helpline. In parallel with the review, we are trialling a new approach for the provision of verbal Tariff Classification advice
<b>When effective:</b>	1 December 2014
<b>Extant until/ Expires</b>	30 January 2015

### 1. Background

Tariff classification is the basis for determining customs duty, export refunds and the application of other related legal provisions when importing or exporting goods. Importers, exporters or their representatives are required to self-assess the correct tariff classification of the goods.

### 2. The Classification Helpline Service

The Tariff Classification Helpline Service is intended to provide telephone support when a business has attempted to self-assess the classification of goods but needs help. Callers are given verbal non-legally binding advice to help them determine the classification of specific goods.

The Helpline telephone service no longer fits with HMRC's Digital Strategy so we need to explore options for providing future support for business customers that is sustainable for HMRC and which provides extra help for those customers who need it.

We are opening a formal consultation on the future of the Tariff Classification Helpline. It will start on 26 November 2014 and end on 18 February 2015. We would like to hear from those who use the service. The consultation document can be viewed on the GOV.UK website at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-the-tariff-classification-helpline](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-the-tariff-classification-helpline).

### 3. Email Trial

In parallel with the consultation exercise, we will trial a new approach using a structured email for incoming enquiries. For the duration of the trial, the helpline service will not accept incoming telephone calls. Instead, all classification enquiries must be made by email. The email request for advice must include the information shown on the template in the annex to this CIP.

Requests for classification advice should be emailed to:

[classification.pilot@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:classification.pilot@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

A classification officer will telephone back in response to the email.

Please ensure the email request contains all the information we require, so that we can deal with your enquiry more efficiently.

We aim to respond to email enquiries within two working days of receipt, during the following operating hours

Monday – Thursday	13.00 – 17.00
Fridays	13.00 – 16.30

### 4. Further information

For further information on this paper, please contact Tariff Classification Policy via the email address below, inserting 'Helpline Review' in the subject box.

[tariff.classification@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:tariff.classification@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

Issued on the **26 November 2014** by Customs Directorate, HMRC.

For general HMRC queries speak to the VAT, Excise & Customs Helpline on telephone: 0300 200 3700.

Your Charter explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. For more information go to: [Your Charter](#)

**TARIFF CLASSIFICATION ENQUIRY (ONE ITEM ONLY)**

Please email the information below to: [classification.pilot@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:classification.pilot@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)

Please note that this service is for UK based customers only; we are unable to contact any number outside of the UK

\*mandatory information to be provided

*COMPANY NAME (if applicable)	
*CONTACT NAME:	
*CONTACT NUMBER: (Please provide a direct contact number, no switchboards)	
<p>*Please highlight the option which best describes your item:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>AGRICULTURAL / CHEMICAL / TEXTILES / CERAMICS</b> (including food, drink, plastics, cosmetics, sports equipment, games, toys, clothing, shoes)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>ELECTRICAL / MECHANICAL / MISCELLANEOUS</b> (including vehicles, optical &amp; measuring devices, machinery, musical instruments, metal, furniture, lighting, paper, printed matter, straw, glass, wood, jewellery)</p>	
<p>*GOODS DESCRIPTION: Please include a <b>DETAILED</b> description of the product, this <b>MUST</b> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>WHAT THE PRODUCT IS / WHAT IT IS USED FOR</b></li> <li>• <b>HOW THE PRODUCT WORKS / FUNCTIONS</b></li> <li>• <b>WHAT THE PRODUCT IS MADE OF, IF MADE OF MORE THAN ONE MATERIAL PLEASE EXPLAIN</b></li> </ul> <p>Please see additional guidance below**  (PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE A WEBLINK TO THE PRODUCT OR ATTACH PHOTOS, THIS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED)</p> <p>[[</p>	
<b>ENVISAGED CODE</b> (please look at our website <a href="http://www.gov.uk/trade-tariff">www.gov.uk/trade-tariff</a> to assist you with this)	

\*\*Footwear – include type (shoe, boot etc.), upper material, outer sole material, heel height

\*\*Food – composition and % of ingredients and manufacturing process e.g., fresh, frozen, preserved, or dried etc.

\*\*Chemical – include Cas No, liquid / powder / solid including % of ingredients

\*\*Textiles – material composition, how it is constructed (knitted / woven)

\*\*Vehicles – Age, engine type (petrol or diesel), engine size, new or used. If over 30 year's old, original condition? Everyday use?

**Two attempts will be made to contact you within two working days of receipt of your email**