



Authorized Economic Operator (AEO)

An **Authorized Economic Operator (AEO)** is any party involved in the international movement of goods that has been approved by a national Customs Administration as compliant with **World Customs Organization (WCO)** or equivalent supply chain security standards.

The WCO strongly recommends the implementation of an AEO programme, and also supports various **Customs compliance programmes** and **Authorized Operator schemes** in terms of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) as stepping stones towards implementation of a fully-fledged AEO programme.

The WCO Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme has been in existence for more than a decade. It has come to be acknowledged as a key driver in promoting a secure, transparent and predictable trading environment through the voluntary demonstration of compliance and safety and security provisions in trade-related business. International trade is widely recognized as a fundamental driving force for economic prosperity. Given the increasing risks of disruption and terror-related events, the need to ensure that trade takes place within a safe and secure environment is crucial. The modern Customs administration is in a unique position to steward the national safety and security response within the broader context of the global supply chain.

The [AEO Implementation and Validation Guidance](#) aims to expand on the existing programmes and practices to assist both Customs administrations and prospective economic operators to secure the international supply chain. This Guidance reflects the commitment both of the WCO and its Members to efficiently facilitate the secure movement of trade by improving the understanding of AEO provisions and standards, and by their collaborative implementation. Ultimately, this will improve the quality and overall uptake of the programme.

The historical variations and success of the AEO programme can be improved through the articulation of tangible benefits and by enhanced levels of cooperation and collaboration amongst the stakeholders. The trading community has a role to play in promoting and facilitating enrolment in the programme and working with national Customs administrations to co-create C-2-B modernization initiatives to support expedited trade facilitation for AEOs.

Many WCO Members are implementing their own AEO programmes, either at a national or a regional level. The WCO maintains this information in the **AEO Compendium**, which is intended to be a primary source of information, including good practices, for developing and enhancing national and regional AEO programmes.

The Compendium contains a concise but concrete and structured overview of the current AEO programmes and MRAs implemented by WCO Members, as well as the **programmes/initiatives** under development/implementation. In addition to the provision of basic information on AEO and Customs compliance programmes, the Compendium also includes a short overview of the respective AEO programmes' **criteria, accreditation procedures** and **benefits**. Information is not only confined to the current situation as it also includes planned future developments/initiatives.

Traders can refer to the [WCO AEO Compendium](#) to find out more about the initiatives being implemented around AEO for their country or region.

Download Links:

- [WCO AEO Implementation and Validation Guidance](#)
- [WCO AEO Compendium](#)

Coming Soon

Complete an Authorised Economic Operator (AEO)
Readiness Check to perform a self-assessment
and assess your company against global best practices