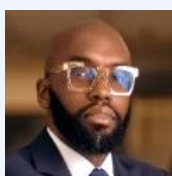


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Client Alert

Nigeria Operationalises New Oil & Gas Export Guidelines

The Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (the “**NUPRC**”), on 17 June 2025, issued the Guidelines for the Operationalisation of Advance Cargo Declaration Regulation” (the “**Guidelines**”).

These Guidelines give effect to the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Advance Cargo Declaration Regulation, 2024 (the “**Regulations**”) and are issued pursuant to Section 10(1) of the Petroleum Industry Act, 2021 (the “**PIA**”) and are to be read in conjunction with the Procedure Guide for the Determination of the Quantity and Quality of Petroleum and Petroleum Products in Nigeria (the “**Q&Q Procedure**”).

The Guidelines introduce a comprehensive regime for regulating the declaration, measurement, and documentation of exports of crude oil, condensates, natural gas liquids, and petroleum products from all terminals and export points in Nigeria. The Guidelines are applicable to all licensees, lessees and to all exporters of crude oil, natural gas, natural gas liquid and petroleum in Nigeria.

In view of this, all exporters and upstream operators must be aware of the following key compliance obligations going forward.

The Advance Cargo Online Portal¹

Before we get into the details, interestingly, the NUPRC has launched a real-time, tech-driven Advance Cargo Declaration Portal. This platform integrates with other government export systems to enable real-time tracking and reconciliation of exports, timely submission of export documentation within 24 hours of cargo loading, and greater transparency in crude and gas export activities.

Mandatory Export Permits, Vessel Clearance, and Unique Identification Number

Under the Guidelines, no shipment of crude oil, gas, or petroleum products may proceed without the prior issuance of:

- i. An Export Permit, obtained via the NUPRC's Crude Oil Transport & Export Permit System ("COTEX");
- ii. A Vessel Clearance, based on a submitted Documentary Instruction via the Advance Cargo Declaration Portal² (the "**Portal**");
- iii. A Unique Identification Number ("**UIN**"); auto generated after vessel clearance validation.

Export Permit Application

Exporters must obtain an Export Permit through the COTEX platform before any loading operation.

Vessel Clearance Request

Once a valid Export Permit is obtained, exporters must file for vessel clearance on the Portal. The application must include detailed cargo and shipping information, submitted as a **Documentary Instruction**³, and is subject to:

- i. Validation of the permit holder's identity;
- ii. Verification that the volume to be exported is within the approved threshold;
- iii. Terminal-based measurement and accounting oversight by the NUPRC.

Issuance of UIN and Clearance Notification

Upon clearance, the portal will generate a UIN, which will be embossed on the Certificate of Quantity and Quality and reflected on all related shipping documents listed in the Guidelines.

The NUPRC is required to upload these documents to the Portal within 24 hours of cargo completion to enable real-time tracking and data integrity.

Application Refusal and Penalties

The NUPRC reserves the right to refuse vessel clearance⁴ if the applications are incomplete or improperly documented or false or misleading information is provided.

¹ This is an electronic database created and maintained by the NUPRC.

² An electronic database that is maintained and created by the NUPRC.

³ An electronic form for advance cargo declaration provided by NUPRC to exporters on the advance cargo declaration portal.

⁴ Vessel Clearance means authorisation granted by the NUPRC for a vessel to export crude oil, condensate, natural gas liquids and/or petroleum products.

Notably, the Guidelines do not state the penalty for providing false or misleading information. However, under the Regulations⁵, an exporter who provides false information in the advance cargo declaration form shall be liable to an administrative fine not exceeding USD20,000 or the Naira equivalent.

⁵ Regulation 7(1) of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Advance Cargo Declaration Regulations, 2024