

Export checklist: South Africa

Seaway Project Cargo · prepared October 18, 2026

1,134

U.S. machines shipped here in 2025

37–42 days

Fastest published transit

\$15,000

Duty and VAT, \$100,000 excavator

Limited

RoRo from the East and Gulf Coast

SHIPPING METHODS

- Container: Direct sailings published. Published services: MSC USA – South Africa (weekly). Container ports: Port of Durban, Port of Cape Town, Port of Port Elizabeth.
- Flat rack: Booked on request. For machines too wide or tall for a closed box, on container lines that accept out-of-gauge cargo. Discharge at Port of Durban, Port of Cape Town, Port of Port Elizabeth, subject to the terminal taking flat racks.
- RoRo: Limited from the East and Gulf Coast, none from the West Coast. Published services: Sallalum Lines USA to West Africa. RoRo ports: Port of Durban, Port of Cape Town, Port of Port Elizabeth.
- Breakbulk: Liner breakbulk or charter. For cargo too large or heavy for a flat rack, loaded by ship or shore crane. Breakbulk and heavy-lift ports: Port of Durban, Port of Cape Town, Port of Port Elizabeth, Port of Richards Bay.

DUTY AND TAX

- Import duty: 0% of \$100,000 CIF is \$0 (HS 8429.52, 2023 tariff).
- VAT: 15% of the duty-inclusive \$100,000 is \$15,000 (SARS (South Africa), checked June 2026)
- Total duty and tax: \$15,000, or 15% of CIF.
- Excavators 0% · Wheel loaders 5% · Crawler dozers 0% · Motor graders 0% · Backhoes and other excavating machines 0% · Crawler and rough-terrain cranes 0%

U.S. EXPORT STEPS

- File the EEI in AES before loading (every vehicle, and any Schedule B line over \$2,500) and pass the ITN to the carrier.
- Titled machines: original title and EEI to U.S. Customs at the port at least 72 hours before export.
- Wood packaging and dunnage must be ISPM 15 heat-treated and stamped.
- Check the export classification (EAR99 or an ECCN) before booking.

DOCUMENTS AT DESTINATION

Commercial Invoice · Packing List · Bill of Lading · Certificate of Origin · DA 500 Import Declaration · Letter of Authority (if required) · Equipment Specifications

USED-MACHINERY RULES

- Licence or permit: International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC): an import permit is required for all used or second-hand goods under the International Trade Administration Act, 2002 (Act 71 of 2002), even where the new item is not import-controlled.
- Licence or permit: ITAC may grant used-goods permits only if the goods are not manufactured domestically. This creates a de facto ban on most used goods, aimed at protecting sectors including machinery and motor vehicles.
- Documents: Register as an importer with SARS, then file ITAC form IE230 (first-time importer registration) and IE461 (commercial import permit) with the Directorate: Import and Export Control. No ITAC fee. Usually issued within five working days.
- Documents: ITAC turnaround averages 3-5 working days. Some applications need supporting documents from other departments (environment, NRCS, mineral resources, agriculture, SAPS) depending on the product. ITAC inspects for compliance with permit conditions.

SOURCES

Sources: World Bank WITS; Sallalum Lines; UNCTAD TRAINS via World Bank WITS; MSC; ITAC - Import Control; trade.gov Country Commercial Guide - South Africa Prohibited and Restricted Imports; South African Government - Import permit for general goods. Full citations and dates on the web page.

Planning guide, not a customs ruling. Confirm rates and rules with your broker before shipping.

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