

Less procedural burden, wider global market access for Indian industry: Defence Export SOP and Open General Export Licence framework simplified to make India a trusted global manufacturing & export partner

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The Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence has undertaken a comprehensive set of reforms to simplify the Defence Export Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the Open General Export Licence (OGEL) framework, in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of making India a reliable, competitive and trusted global defence manufacturing and export partner, while advancing the objectives of Make-in-India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Undertaken under the guidance of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, these reforms seek to reduce procedural requirements, facilitate faster access to international markets and enable Indian defence companies to respond more effectively to global business opportunities, while ensuring that national security considerations remain fully safeguarded.

DEFENCE EXPORT SOP

1. Stakeholder consultation has been dispensed with for exports of non-lethal defence items to most destinations, while appropriate safeguards have been retained for sensitive countries.
2. Stakeholder consultation has been dispensed with for exports of all items for international tenders and exhibitions, enabling Indian companies to showcase their products and pursue international opportunities more expeditiously.

OGEL FRAMEWORK

The OGEL is a standing one-time export authorisation that enables eligible exporters to self-generate export authorisations for multiple consignments of specified defence items, without seeking a separate authorisation for each consignment. It provides greater flexibility while reducing repetitive procedural requirements.

1. Three existing OGEL SOPs covering major platforms and equipment, parts and components, and intra-company transfer of technology have been consolidated into one unified OGEL SOP, providing exporters with a common and simpler framework.
2. OGEL validity has been increased from two to three years, reducing the frequency of renewals and associated compliance requirements.
3. OGEL coverage has been expanded from 41 to all countries, except negative/sensitive nations and those facing UN Security Council sanctions or arms embargoes.
4. A new provision facilitates Indian companies having long-term contracts or agreements with Foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (FOEMs). OGEL may be granted for eligible items and the particular FOEM, with validity aligned with the underlying contract or agreement, subject to prescribed conditions.

5. The range of items covered under OGEL has been expanded, providing greater flexibility to eligible exporters. The revised framework also permits civil-end-use exports of specified parts and components of small-calibre arms and protective equipment, further broadening legitimate international business opportunities.

The reforms move India's defence export regime towards a more comprehensive and facilitation-based system, reducing routine procedural requirements while retaining appropriate safeguards for sensitive items, technologies and destinations. The measures are expected to particularly benefit Indian defence manufacturers, including MSMEs, by enabling them to respond more quickly to international tenders and exhibitions, access wider global markets and reduce repetitive authorisation requirements. With defence production reaching an all-time high of Rs 1.78 lakh crore and defence exports touching a record figure of Rs 38,424 crore in FY 2025-26, these reforms further strengthen the momentum of India's defence manufacturing and export ecosystem.

VK/Savvy

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