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Certificate of Origin Management in Supporting the Export Process: A Qualitative Descriptive Analysis on Marine Cargo Expeditions

Sumarwanto¹, Evada Rustina², Arief Dermawan³, Hening Nakuloadi⁴, Fajar Aribowo⁵, Alam Setiawan⁶ ¹²⁶Akademi Ketatalaksanaan Pelayaran Niaga Bahtera, Indonesia ³Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi SBI, Indonesia ⁴⁵Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi "YKP", Indonesia

Correspondent: <u>evadarustina7@gmail.com</u>²

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ABSTRACT: The complexity of managing export documentation and the lack of knowledge of regulations in the importing country cause non-fulfilment of requirements and cancellation of exports. This study aims to determine the stages and the mechanism for managing certificates of origin in the export process by freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition representing the exporter. The research used qualitative descriptive methods and approaches. Data was collected by observation and documentation at two marine cargo expedition companies in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. Data is analyzed and presented using a flowchart diagram. The results show that these companies manage COO documents through the eSKA website, with the completeness of filling in the basic information of exporters, consignees, route and transport, and supporting documents, including export declaration, packing list, invoice, goods, and cost structure. Overall, export documents are indispensable for international trade as they ensure goods' legal compliance and smooth flow across borders. The role of the freight forwarding company or marine cargo expedition in this process is to advise the exporter on the required paperwork, ensure compliance with relevant regulations, and communicate with the appropriate authorities to obtain the certificate. The positive implications of this research are that the administration of export documentation, particularly Certificates of Origin (COO) via the eSKA platform by marine cargo expeditions, enhances time efficiency for exporters and proves efficacious in ensuring the legal compliance of COO document handling. Moreover, COOs can yield favourable effects through preferential tariffs, thereby augmenting the competitiveness of exported goods.

Keywords: Export, Documents, COO, SKA, Forwarding

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INTRODUCTION

Many small and micro-entrepreneurs are trying to expand their market to other countries. Exports are critical to a country's economic growth as exports drive market expansion and new business opportunities (Arifin et al., 2022; Goodburn & Knoerich, 2022; Liu et al., 2013; Majumder et al.,

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2022). The same thing was also emphasized by (Dzawanda & Matsa, 2023) in their research, which states that international trade bolsters economic growth. International trade activities where crossing national borders require legal documents. Export documents are essential in global trade, serving as the legal and administrative framework that facilitates the smooth flow of goods between countries. These documents contain important information about the nature and value of the goods being shipped and the parties involved in the transaction. Some exporters may lack proficiency in foreign languages, leading to a limited understanding of export-import documents in those languages. (Jia et al., 2021; Le, 2022; Nufus et al., 2023). Without these documents, customs authorities may refuse to clear the goods, leading to delays and potential financial losses for the exporter. Furthermore, export documents prove compliance with international trade regulations, including customs, tariffs, and trade embargoes.

However, many exporters may lack a comprehensive understanding of export regulations and the processes of shipping goods to foreign destinations. Numerous small entrepreneurs possess significant potential but often encounter challenges navigating licensing requirements and meeting the documentation standards for successful export operations. It is essential to acknowledge documented illegal activities at different national borders (Asanova, 2022). Besides, Indonesia has one of the most extended dwelling times among all countries. The increased expenditure on goods is currently impacted by the field loading and unloading processes and the document and payment procedures (Hardayani et al., 2023). Occasionally, certain documents may reach their expiration date, necessitating their renewal before being dispatched. (Suwandi et al., 2023).

Exporting goods involves using various documents for legal compliance and smooth transportation. Meanwhile, the operational workflow of the business includes overseeing various template-based unstructured documents such as invoices, receipts, and bills, which currently require manual processing. For example, the commercial invoice provides detailed information about the shipped goods, including their quantity, value, and description. The commercial invoice details the goods, their value, and terms of sale. In business documentation, commercial invoices pose added challenges due to the diverse array of document formats and the variability in the quality of scanned documents. The packing list provides a comprehensive inventory detailing the variety and quantities of each good package (Amanda Istigomah et al., 2020; Angela & Anugerah, 2023; du Plessis et al., 2023). The bill of lading is a contract of carriage and is the official document that lists the goods currently aboard a vessel during its sea transport (Ahmadi et al., 2017). Certificates of origin confirm the origin of the shipped goods for trade agreements and import regulations. The certificate of origin (CO) is a vital document in the export process, as it verifies the country of origin for a product being shipped (Sutianti, 2023). This document, originating from the Regency/City/Provincial Department of Industry and Trade (Disperindag), holds the potential to provide importers with tariff exemptions, potentially reaching up to 0% based on the product policy, specifically applicable to nations engaged in a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Indonesia (Aritenang & Sonn, 2018; Duong et al., 2021; Mukunoki, 2017).

Furthermore, the literature on the country-of-origin (COO) effect suggests that a product's COO can impact its branding, leading consumers to prefer goods from specific countries (<u>Chintagunta</u> & Chu, 2021). Contrary to the statement, research conducted by (<u>Auernhammer & Roth, 2021</u>;

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Dreher et al., 2013; Mao & Yang, 2016; Sahara & Amelia, 2023; Wang et al., 2023) posits that the presence of the SKA document is deemed discretionary, with its significance being pertinent only under specific circumstances. However, findings from alternative studies demonstrate that the SKA, issued by the relevant authority, holds significant advantages as it enables goods entering the customs territory to avail preferential tariff rates (Sahara & Amelia, 2023). This information is crucial for customs officials to assess the appropriate duties and taxes and determine any restrictions or rules that may apply to the goods.

Given the complexity of export activities, many parties want document fulfilment processes that can be conveniently reviewed online from various locations. Logistics companies also require increased efficiency in the loading process and service. (<u>Safak & Erdoğan, 2023</u>). The primary challenge in utilizing FTA is acquiring certificates of origin (COOs) rather than meeting rules of origin (<u>Hayakawa, K., Matsuura, 2017</u>). Exporters through agency companies can utilize a digital platform based on a single window to manage export-import activities and documents (<u>Asanova, 2022</u>). The primary customer desire is low agency costs and quick response, and the primary technical step is customer relationship management (<u>Huang et al., 2019</u>). Indonesia National Single Window (INSW) is a form of debureaucratic transformation in Indonesia that provides convenience, smooth flow of goods, and business certainty (<u>Rustina et al., 2023</u>).

Based on the importance of export document management issues, the research focuses on how the SKA / COO management process flows and how documents are fulfilled digitally by freight forwarding or marine cargo expeditions representing exporters. This study differs from the previous study, which discussed export documents, including SKA, concerning international marketing to increase sales turnover (Kasmi et al., 2023). In research (Moesviara, 2022), both use descriptive qualitative methods with coffee export samples, but in this study, the management of general cargo exports. This study diverges from the prior research conducted by (Kasmi et al., 2023) that focused on export documentation, such as the SKA, within the context of international marketing strategies for sales enhancement. The study (Moesviara, 2022) both employed descriptive qualitative approaches utilizing examples from coffee exports, whereas the present research centres on the management of general cargo exports. This study's outcome will enhance exporters' comprehension and streamline export operations, instilling confidence in exporters and mitigating issues related to unauthorized exports or cancellations. By fulfilling the Certificate of Origin (COO) requirements in the export process, destination nations with existing agreements with Indonesia will benefit from preferential tariffs, enhancing competitiveness in export markets.

METHOD

The research was conducted on two freight forwarding or cargo expedition shipping companies, Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The object of study is Exporter X, which uses the company's services for Certificate of Origin document management. So, the exporter uses those companies as agents for managing export documents, especially the COO. The approach and method used is qualitative descriptive. These methods could describe the process and steps of managing

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documents in more detail. Data collection uses observation and documentation techniques in export documents, especially Certificate of Origin Form A management. Data include the invoice, packing list, PEB, HS Code, and other export-supporting data. The data is analyzed utilizing the tool diagram flowchart, explicitly focusing on examining patterns within document content and the document management processes facilitated by the eSKA website. It aids in illustrating the diverse stages of the research procedure, from data collection through data analysis to interpretation. Data is also analyzed in tabular formats within documents, providing an additional dimension to the unprocessed textual data and illustrating logical connections between various pieces of information (Riba et al., 2019). These companies serve as agents for exporters who handle Certificates of Origin (COO) documents via the eSKA platform by analyzing this diagram and table, gaining insights into the systematic procedures involved in exporting goods, and ensuring a smooth and efficient process for all parties involved.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The process of exporting goods involves several stages and requires the preparation of various export documents to comply with international trade laws. The following is a detailed outline of the standard procedure for exporting goods and the necessary export documentation. It is crucial to conduct thorough market research and planning before exporting goods, which includes identifying potential markets, analyzing market demand, understanding competition, and complying with regulatory requirements in the target country. Companies may need to modify their products to meet specific market requirements, obtain an export license, negotiate sales terms, ensure proper packing and labelling, and prepare necessary export documents. The freight forwarding and shipping expedition service company processed the documents needed. Once all documents are ready, goods are transported to the departure port and loaded onto the carrier for shipment. Meanwhile, payment may be through various methods. Following this, The basic flow of the role of freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition in export activities, bridging between exporters and consignees.



Figure 1: The role of freight forwarding/Marine Cargo Expedition in the Export Process

Figure 1 visually represents the flow of activities and the roles of different parties involved in the export journey, highlighting the coordination and steps necessary for successful export operations. The process begins with the exporter sending the goods to a freight forwarder or marine cargo expedition, who then handles the shipment to the consignee. The freight forwarder may provide additional services such as packing, labelling, and customs clearance to ensure the goods reach the

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intended recipient smoothly. Ultimately, the consignee is the individual or company who receives the goods at the end of the export process.

Certificate of Origin

The Certificate of Origin (SKA) is commonly known as COO. It is a document that certifies the origin of goods, confirming that the exported goods/commodities originate from the exporting region/country. This certification is based on bilateral, regional, multilateral, or unilateral agreements or due to unilateral provisions of an importing/destination country, necessitating the inclusion of COO for Indonesian export goods. The COO indicates that the goods are produced, processed, and originate in Indonesia. COO comes in 2 (two) types - SKA preference and SKA non-preference. SKA Preference is a requirement for certain export goods to receive exemptions from all or part of import duties from the destination country/group of countries. Non-preferential SKA serves as a supervisory or accompanying document for the origin of export goods to enter a specific country's territory. The handling of customs-related documentation across international borders has been streamlined through the automation of Certificate of Origin management (Rehal et al., 2023).

The Process of Making a Certificate of Origin

As the exporter's agent, marine cargo expeditions or freight forwarding must understand the proper procedures for obtaining and completing this certificate to ensure compliance with international trade regulations and facilitate the smooth flow of goods across borders. Different countries may have varying standards and documentation requirements. The agent works closely with the exporter to gather all the relevant information required for the certificate, such as the product description, HS (Harmonized System) code, quantity, and shipment value. Additionally, the agent may need to obtain supporting documentation, such as invoices, packing lists, or other records that can verify the origin of the goods. Once the necessary information has been collected, the agent can complete the certificate of origin form. The initial step in obtaining a certificate of origin for sea-shipped goods involves multiple stages. To begin, the exporter must gather the necessary documentation to verify the origin of the goods, such as commercial invoices, packing lists, and supporting papers (Maulinasari, 2022). These freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition companies can advise the exporter on the required paperwork, ensure compliance with relevant regulations, and communicate with the appropriate authorities to obtain the certificate. This treatment aligns with previous research (Jeevan et al., 2021) (Nugroho & Larasati, 2021). Subsequently, this information is presented to a freight forwarding company or Marine Cargo Expedition (EMKL), which reviews the paperwork and prepares the application for the certificate of origin (Liang et al., 2019).

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Figure 2: eSKa management process

Each step in the flowchart represents a crucial stage in the export journey, from preparation by the exporter to the final possession of the goods by the consignee. Figure 2 presents a systematic flowchart outlining the sequential stages of the export process in international trade. It initiates access to the ESKA electronic platform for export documentation, proceeds with official export registration with the government, and involves subsequent actions such as gathering essential paperwork like the invoice, packing list, and bill of lading. Further steps encompass completing export documentation, obtaining and processing the export license, downloading the permit, and dispatching the goods. This structured illustration underscores the importance of following a stepby-step approach for practical export activities within global trade. Users are required to fill out the collected documents. The ESKA system might provide templates or forms to capture all necessary information accurately. The company then logs in with a username and password generated from the customer's account. The process continues by selecting a certificate of origin (COO), completing the COO form, specifying the export destination country based on the PEB, applying for the E-SKA, selecting the IPSKA office, providing basic information, exporter data, and consignee details. The transportation route on the bill of lading (BL) is then filled out, with the file type set as a PDF with a maximum size of 1.5 MB, and all required fields marked with a red asterisk are completed.

Additionally, supporting documents such as the PEB notification, packing list, goods information, and invoice documents are attached. Finally, item data, including the written HS Code, is filled in. The system processes the application and, upon verification, grants the necessary approvals. After approval, users can download the approved documents. These documents are essential for the physical movement of goods and compliance with various regulations. After approval, users can download the approved documents are necessary for the physical movement

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of goods and compliance with multiple regulations. This step ensures that all regulatory and compliance requirements are met before shipment.

Information	Description Required documents
Basic information	AJU number, form type, form type, IPSKA office.
Exporter	NIB, NPWP, Company name, SKA document signing, country,
	Address, and on behalf of.
Consignee	Company Name, Address, Beneficiary Name, Country, Consignee
	Print
Supporting	Transportation type, shipper, Port of loading, Port of unloading,
Documents	shipment date, transport document (B/L)
Invoice	Number, date, and total invoice EWP (USD)
Goods	
Cost Structure	Components from Indonesia (HS Code, description, supplier name,
	USD), Production Cost, Profit, FOB transport fees, Total origin
	criterion, and recommending origin criterion.

Table 1. Information and Description Required Documents

The freight-forwarding company or marine cargo expedition's role in this export process is to obtain certificates of origin from the destination country. Given the process's length, implementing digital supply chain management is necessary in this digital era. This digital supply chain management aligns with the study's results (Rustina et al., 2024), correlating partnership models, logistics leadership, and digital supply chains. Logistics activities need to speed up businesses and customers.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Managing COOs Using Marine Cargo Expedition

Using freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition services offers many advantages and benefits to businesses engaged in international trade. One of the primary advantages is streamlining the export process, as freight forwarders and marine cargo expedition companies possess the expertise and resources to navigate the complex regulatory landscape, ensuring compliance with customs regulations, tariff codes, and documentation requirements. Furthermore, these specialized service providers can leverage their extensive networks and relationships with various government agencies, port authorities, and transportation providers to expedite the clearance of goods, minimizing delays and bottlenecks that can hinder the timely delivery of exports.

Another significant benefit is the cost-effectiveness of freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition services. These companies often have negotiated favourable rates with shipping carriers, customs brokers, and other service providers, allowing them to offer their clients more competitive pricing than managing the export process independently. Additionally, by outsourcing the administrative tasks associated with export documentation, businesses can focus resources on core operational activities, improving efficiency and productivity.

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Precision and accuracy are critical in managing export documentation, and freight forwarders and marine cargo expedition companies excel in this area. These service providers are well-versed in the intricacies of export documentation, including the Certificates of Origin. The service providers also can ensure the accurate and timely completion of all required forms, minimizing the risk of errors that can lead to delays or even the rejection of shipments. Moreover, the expertise and knowledge of these service providers can be invaluable in navigating the ever-evolving regulatory landscape of international trade. Freight forwarders and marine cargo expedition companies stay abreast of changes in trade agreements, tariff rates, and customs procedures, allowing them to advise their clients on the most efficient and compliant strategies for their export operations.

In addition to the operational and financial benefits, using freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition services can also contribute to the overall competitiveness of businesses in the global marketplace. By leveraging the expertise and resources of these service providers, companies can enhance their ability to meet delivery deadlines, respond to market demands, and maintain strong relationships with their international customers, all of which are critical factors in maintaining a competitive edge in today's dynamic global trade environment.

While managing export documentation through freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition services offers numerous advantages, there are also a few potential drawbacks. One potential disadvantage is the possible loss of control over the export process, as businesses may feel they have relinquished some autonomy by outsourcing these critical tasks. Additionally, there may be a perceived lack of transparency in the pricing and invoicing practices of some freight forwarders or marine cargo expedition companies, which can be a concern for businesses seeking to maintain tight control over their operational costs. Despite these potential drawbacks, the benefits of utilizing freight forwarding or marine cargo expedition services for managing export documentation, including the Certificates of Origin, far outweigh the disadvantages, making it a precious strategy for businesses engaged in international trade.

CONCLUSION

Export documents are essential for international trade as they guarantee the legal compliance of goods and facilitate their smooth passage across borders. The freight forwarding company or marine cargo expedition plays a vital role in the export process by guiding the exporter regarding necessary paperwork, ensuring adherence to relevant regulations, and liaising with the appropriate authorities to secure the required certificate. The company is responsible for managing COO documents, which involve accurately completing essential information about exporters, consignees, routes, and transportation and supporting documents such as the export declaration, packing list, invoice, goods, and cost structure. Effectively managing these documents is necessary for ensuring the prompt and accurate delivery of goods to the recipient. Although not all can be processed online in some regions, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, these activities are hoped to be processed digitally. This management has positive implications for exporters, allowing exporters to focus on production, enhance product quality, and increase their market presence.

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Freight forwarding and marine cargo expedition services benefit businesses in international trade by streamlining the export process, ensuring compliance with regulations, offering costeffectiveness through negotiated rates, maintaining accuracy in documentation, providing regulatory expertise, and enhancing competitiveness in the global market. While these services offer significant advantages, drawbacks include potential loss of control over the export process, concerns about pricing transparency, and impacts on operational cost control. However, the benefits of utilizing these services in export documentation management outweigh the disadvantages, making them valuable for international trade businesses.

However, the favourable result of this study indicates that managing export paperwork, specifically Certificates of Origin (COO) through the eSKA system by maritime cargo shipments, improves time efficiency for exporters and effectively ensures the legal compliance of COO document management. Additionally, COOs can have positive impacts through preferential tariffs, enhancing the competitive edge of exported goods in the global market. Given the limitations of this study, which only focuses on COO management for general cargo, the following research can compare the differences between COO management for different types of products and forms.

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