



Legal Watch

DTI AND BOC CONVENE 1ST TRADE FACILITATION FORUM ON FTA UTILIZATION AND TRANSSHIPMENT CONTROLS



Photo Credit:
PNA GenSan file photo

* Agency Name

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

* Issuance Title

DTI and BOC convene 1st Trade Facilitation Forum on FTA utilization and transshipment controls

* Issuance Date

13 April 2026

* Link

<https://www.dti.gov.ph/dti-archives/dti-news-archived/dti-boc-convene-1st-trade-facilitation-forum-fta-utilization-transshipment-controls>

SUMMARY

The Department of Trade and Industry–Bureau of International Trade Relations (DTI-BITR), in coordination with the Bureau of Customs (BOC), held its inaugural Trade Facilitation and Rules of Origin (ROO) Forum to help exporters better utilize the Philippines’ free trade agreements (FTAs). The forum brought together over 120 participants from government, exporters, and partner organizations to discuss compliance requirements, export procedures, and available digital tools.

Key discussions emphasized that access to FTA benefits is not automatic and requires strict adherence to rules of origin, export clearance processes, and transshipment controls. The BOC highlighted ongoing reforms under the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA), including digitalization efforts to streamline compliance. The forum also introduced the DTI-Origin Management System (OMS), which automates origin determination and simplifies documentation processes, particularly for MSMEs.

The initiative forms part of broader efforts to enhance transparency and efficiency in trade, supporting the Philippines’ ongoing FTA negotiations and participation in international trade engagements.

ACTIONABLE ADVICE

Exporters should ensure full compliance with rules of origin and maintain accurate, complete documentation to qualify for FTA tariff benefits. Businesses are encouraged to adopt digital tools such as the OMS to streamline processes and reduce compliance risks.

Companies should also review internal export procedures, including transshipment and customs clearance practices, to align with regulatory requirements. Banks and trade financiers may support clients by facilitating compliance-ready trade documentation and financing structures aligned with FTA-driven trade flows.

