



Note Number: A065/18

Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all diplomatic missions and international organisations in London and has the honour to refer to the withdrawal of duty free goods by diplomatic missions and international organisations from bonded warehouses for both official and personal use.

Protocol Directorate wishes to report that some changes to the existing quota system will be introduced this year; the system has not been reviewed since 2012. From 1 April 2018, annual duty free quotas for rolling tobacco and perfume will be reduced. The quota for rolling tobacco will be 3kgs per head of mission or diplomatic agent and the quota for perfume will be 18 bottles per head of mission or diplomatic agent. Other quotas remain unchanged.

Annual quotas applicable from 1 April 2018 will therefore be

*Cigarettes: 15,000 sticks per head of mission or diplomatic agent;*

*Rolling tobacco: 3kgs per head of mission or diplomatic agent;*

*Cigars: 1,000 sticks per head of mission or diplomatic agent;*

*Perfume: 18 bottles per head of mission or diplomatic agent;*

*Spirits: 365 litres for a head of mission, 104 litres for a diplomatic agent;*

*Wine: 2,500 litres for a head of mission, 365 litres for a diplomatic agent;*

*Beer: 3,000 litres for a head of mission, 730 litres for a diplomatic agent.*

Please note that the head of mission's alcohol quotas are initial allocations. If a head of mission requires enhancement of the stated quotas for official entertaining (e.g. national day receptions), a mission will be able to make a supplementary request which the Directorate will consider on a case by case basis.

The procedure for seeking authorisation from Protocol Directorate to withdraw quantities of these duty free goods, whether from a bonded warehouse in the UK or the EU, remains the same. For withdrawals from a UK warehouse a C426 form should be submitted to Protocol Directorate. For withdrawals from a tax warehouse in another EU Member State an exemption certificate (template attached) should be submitted to the Directorate.

Protocol Directorate wishes to remind diplomatic missions that, in accordance with Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, exemption from customs duty and taxes on such goods is restricted to articles for the official use of the mission or for the personal use

of a diplomatic agent or their household. All requests for withdrawals should be signed by the Head of Mission or, in their absence, by the duly notified Chargé d’Affaires.

The Directorate will write to diplomatic missions and international organisations separately in the coming weeks, informing them of their individual quotas for 2018/19.

Protocol Directorate avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all diplomatic missions and international organisations the assurances of its highest consideration.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE  
LONDON

26 February 2018

