BSA OWNERS' CLUB

Imported Bikes and NOVA Notes

First a few words of caution – These notes are intended as a guide based on information available at the time. Processes and procedures do change, so you should confirm current details with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Personal Transport Unit.

Importing a BSA

When any vehicle is imported into the country, it should be recorded on the HMRC Notification of Vehicle Arrival (NOVA) system using an online process. This shows that the appropriate import duties and taxes (VAT) have been paid. It is a requirement that, for new imports, the NOVA should be completed within 14 days. This is normally done by the importer or their shipping agent. Please see guidance for Importing Vehicles into the UK: https://www.gov.uk/importing-vehicles-into-the-uk/telling-hmrc .

In view of the large number of BSAs originally exported, especially to the USA, we frequently get requests for Age Related registration Vehicle Reports which show the bike was an export model. In such cases, we include a statement on the Vehicle Report and the DVLA will not progress the registration unless they have confirmation on the HMRC NOVA system that the appropriate import duties and taxes (VAT) have been paid.

So - Golden Rule – If you buy an imported BSA, check that you have a NOVA reference from the seller AND check that the frame number matches that on the NOVA.

However, many bikes were imported some time ago (some prior to the NOVA system in 2013), may have passed through several hands, paperwork is lost and their NOVA status is not known. This is not usually a problem as there are options to follow to achieve the NOVA record.

Step 1 – Contact HMRC

The first thing to do is to contact the HMRC Personal Transport Unit (PTU) to check if there is a NOVA reference for the vehicle. This can be done with an email to ptu.support@hmrc.gov.uk.

Make sure you provide the following:

- Make and model (e.g. make as “BSA” and model such as “A65 Spitfire”, etc.)
- Frame number (check it is correct!)
- A brief description of why you are asking the PTU to check. (such as that you’ve purchased the vehicle without import documents and are looking to register it with DVLA, that it has been identified as an export model by BSAOC and that you wish to confirm if it is on the NOVA system).

Vehicles on NOVA

The PTU will check the NOVA system and, if there is a record, they will confirm the vehicle details, that it is on NOVA and that all duties have been paid.

NOTE: The PTU are unable to give the NOVA reference to you if you are not the original importer but DVLA can access the database directly to allow the registration process to continue.

Vehicles Not on NOVA

Where the vehicle is in the UK and has been for many years then HMRC will ask you to complete a VAT NOVA 1 Acquisitions form.

They will send you a paper copy of the form which you must print, complete and return to the PTU by post. The PTU cannot accept emailed copies.

SPECIAL NOTE: DO NOT use any other version of this form as this form is not available online. It is known that you can download it from other websites but these may not be up to date or have the correct address to send to.

Filling in the NOVA1 Form

The following information is required to be completed:

Part 1A – Notifier details – complete ONLY if you are completing on behalf of the owner of the vehicle – include a telephone number and email address

Part 1B – Purchaser details - the purchaser or owner of the vehicle details – include a telephone number and email address

Part 2 – Supplier details – provide of the name/address of who you or the owner bought the vehicle from

Part 4 – Vehicle information – include the following:

- VIN/chassis/frame number – please print and make clear between number and letter (0 and O, 5 and S, 1 and I)
- The date vehicle was made available to you – this is the date you picked it up
- Date the vehicle arrived into the UK - if this is not known then please provide a covering letter giving any known history of the vehicle
- Country and date of first registration – if this is not known then provide HMRC with the date of manufacture and a copy of the BSAOC dating certificate (DO NOT send the original).
- Odometer reading at time of purchase – if no odometer, then please write “no odometer fitted”.
- Date first made available – this is the date you got the vehicle
- Date purchased & price paid. If you do not have an invoice please give reason - for example private purchase or paid in cash

Part 5 – Vehicle type and specification – please tick Motorcycle and then provide complete Q.40E?

- Make - BSA
- Model – e.g. A65 / A7 / B33 / B50 / etc.
- Derivative – e.g. L / SS / MX / etc. – leave blank if no derivative type
- Version – e.g. Lightning / Shooting Star / Thunderbolt / etc.
- Type – Road (unless competition)
- Style – Classic Motorcycle
- Engine Size – engine capacity in cc
- Engine Fuel – Petrol
- Transmission Type - Manual

Part 7A & 7B Declaration – sign and date. 7A to be completed by person who completed the form. 7B only to be completed by purchaser/owner if a notifier used.

The complete form should be sent by post to:

Personal Transport Unit

HM Revenue and Customs

BX9 1GD

Once received, the PTU can process the form usually within 10 working days from the date they receive it in the office. They will then either email you for more information or confirm that the form is processed and you may now apply to DVLA to register the vehicle.

Isle of Man Imports

If the vehicle is registered in the Isle of Man, you do not need to make a NOVA application. You just need to send a completed form V55 and the Isle of Man registration document for the vehicle to the DVLA.

If the vehicle is not registered in the Isle of Man, or if it still has UK licence plates, contact HMRC PTU for form NOVA1. Send this form and a covering letter explaining the situation to the Personal Transport Unit (as above).

Note that the Channel Islands and other overseas territories follow the normal import rules.

Updated 10/2026