



REGULATORY

Furniture QCO Update 2026: Government Provides 180-Day Transitional Relief for Pre-Implementation Imports

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In a measured yet commercially significant move, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), has notified the **Furniture (Quality Control) Second Amendment Order, 2026** vide S.O. 1125(E) dated 2nd March 2026, refining the compliance architecture governing furniture imports into India. Issued under Section 16 of the **Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016**, the amendment does not dilute quality norms; rather, it introduces a calibrated transitional framework to address supply-chain realities arising from the enforcement of mandatory standards.

While India's quality control regime has progressively tightened across sectors, the furniture industry characterised by long procurement cycles, international sourcing, and advance contracting faced operational friction where consignments were already in transit or contractually locked in prior to the Order's implementation. The 2026 amendment responds to this gap by carving out a narrowly tailored exemption window, balancing regulatory certainty with commercial fairness.

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Background: The Regulatory Framework

The regulatory journey began with the notification of the **Furniture (Quality Control) Order, 2025**, which made compliance with specified Indian Standards mandatory for notified furniture products. The Order required manufacturers and importers to obtain BIS certification and affix the Standard Mark under a valid licence from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) before placing covered goods in the Indian market.

The policy objective behind the 2025 QCO was threefold:

- To curb the influx of substandard and non-compliant imports;
- To ensure consumer safety and product reliability; and
- To promote domestic manufacturing aligned with Indian Standards.

Subsequently, the Order was amended in February 2026 to fine-tune its operational contours. However, stakeholders continued to raise concerns regarding consignments that had been shipped or ordered prior to the enforcement date but were yet to be cleared through customs. In the absence of transitional provisions, such goods risked being rendered non-compliant despite having been legitimately procured under the pre-QCO regime.

The Second Amendment Order, 2026 addresses precisely this regulatory inflection point. By inserting additional provisos into paragraph 2 of the principal Order, it creates a defined 180-day window for certain pre-implementation consignments, subject to strict documentary safeguards and post-clearance reporting to BIS.

In doing so, the Government reinforces an important principle in regulatory governance: while standards enforcement must be firm, it must also be predictable and commercially workable.

Furniture Products Covered Under the QCO

The Order applies to the following categories of furniture:

Furniture Product

Indian Standard

Work Chairs	IS 17631:2022
General Purpose Chairs & Stools	IS 17632:2022
Tables & Desks	IS 17633:2022
Storage Units	IS 17634:2022
Beds	IS 17635:2022
Bunk Beds	IS 17636:2022

Key Amendments Introduced

The Second Amendment Order inserts two additional provisos in paragraph 2 of the principal Order, creating exemptions for specific import consignments.

Exemption Based on Bill of Lading

The Order shall **not apply** to imported goods where:

- The **Bill of Lading** evidences shipment prior to the date of implementation of the QCO; and
- The **Bill of Entry** is filed on or before 180 days from the date of implementation.

This provision protects consignments already shipped before enforcement but cleared within a six-month window.

Exemption Based on Pre-Implementation Purchase Orders

A second category of exemption applies where:

- The **Purchase Order** was placed before the implementation date;
- The **Bill of Lading** and **Bill of Entry** are dated on or before 180 days from the date of enforcement; and
- The importer submits documentation to BIS within **seven days of clearance**.

Mandatory Compliance Step

Importers availing this exemption must provide to BIS:

- Copy of Purchase Order
- Bill of Lading
- Bill of Entry
- Supporting documents
- Covering letter on company letterhead
- Signed by authorised signatory

Failure to comply with this procedural requirement may result in denial of exemption.

Legal and Commercial Significance

Transitional Equity

The amendment recognises commercial realities where supply chains operate on advance procurement cycles. Without such relief, importers would face:

- Contractual disputes;
- Financial losses;
- Port-level delays; and
- Retrospective compliance burdens.

Defined 180-Day Sunset Window

The 180-day limitation provides regulatory certainty. It prevents indefinite exemptions while allowing reasonable clearance of pipeline consignments.

Strengthened Documentation Oversight

By requiring post-clearance submission to BIS within seven days, the Government ensures:

- Traceability of exempted consignments;
- Prevention of misuse;
- Administrative audit trail.

This reflects a calibrated compliance model rather than blanket relaxation.

Policy Perspective

This amendment reflects a broader trend in India's standards enforcement regime:

- Gradual tightening of quality control through QCOs;
- Increased alignment with BIS certification frameworks;
- Balancing domestic industry protection with transitional fairness.

The approach signals that while regulatory compliance under the BIS framework is non-negotiable, transitional commercial equities will be accommodated where justified.

Conclusion

The Furniture (Quality Control) Second Amendment Order, 2026 introduces a well-defined transitional carve-out for importers caught in the regulatory shift triggered by the 2025 QCO. By combining temporal limits with strict documentary safeguards, the Government has struck a balance between enforcement integrity and commercial pragmatism. Stakeholders in the furniture import ecosystem must act swiftly to assess eligibility and ensure procedural compliance within the prescribed timelines.

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