



# ASIA/PACIFIC <sup>Volume</sup> #72 CUSTOMS NEWS



**Volume #72**  
Customs News  
MAY/JUNE 2024  
**ASIA/PACIFIC**  
Regional Customs



## **2022-2024 IN REVIEW**

Growth | Security | Unity | Prosperity





# ASIA/PACIFIC CUSTOMS NEWS

Volume #72 May / June 2024

## 2022-2024 IN REVIEW

### EDITORIAL

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## Outgoing Message from the Secretariat of the 2022-2024 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair

**Ms Kimberlee Clydesdale**

**Assistant Secretary, Customs & Trade Policy Branch, Strategy & Policy Division Australian Border Force (ABF)**

Dear WCO Asia/Pacific Colleagues,



*Kimberlee Clydesdale,  
Assistant Secretary,  
Customs and Trade Policy ABF  
**WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair  
Secretariat for 2022-2024***

Welcome to issue #72 of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific (A/P) Customs News. This issue will focus on and highlight the work of our Region over the last two years. This will also be the final issue from Australia and will serve as our belated farewell to all of you – our Asia/Pacific family.

Australia, through the ABF and Comptroller General of Customs, Mr Michael Outram APM commenced in the role as your Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC) in July 2022. I started as your APVC Secretariat at the same time and together, we worked to foster the growth, security, unity and prosperity of the Asia/Pacific Region. We travelled to four capital cities in Australia: starting in Brisbane with the 32nd Regional Contact Points (RCP); then the 24th Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) in Perth; followed by the 33rd RCP in Melbourne and finally we finished off with the 25th RHCA in Sydney. This issue will take you back to our key events and achievements – and I hope that you will remember each of them fondly, as much as my team and I do.

The next few pages will show that in addition to incredible achievements and success, we also strengthened our customs family bond through relaxation, dining together and even meeting some of the local wildlife here in Australia. We lay in the sun with kangaroos in Brisbane and got up close and personal with koalas in Perth. We all got to choose our own adventures in Melbourne, whether it was the street art tour, a trip to the Melbourne Museum, a ride to Myuna Farm or a walk around Melbourne Zoo. We dined together on the banks of Brisbane River, we gathered 300 metres above sea level in Melbourne, and finally we said our farewells to each other overlooking the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House.

In this issue, we have also dedicated a few pages to the APVC Secretariat Office. I know most of you know them by now, and if you attended the meetings in-person, you would have had the chance to talk to them in person. They are my small and mighty team and they worked tirelessly over the last two years to ensure that they engaged with each of you and were always ready to assist whenever you needed it. I recognise them and all their outstanding efforts, and personally, it was a joy to witness them grow as individuals and as a team and I am very proud of them all. I also would like to acknowledge the support we received from our ABF colleagues across Australia who through their professionalism and enthusiasm contributed to our success in this role. I am so lucky to have worked with such an amazing and talented group of people and I want to thank them for everything they did during Commissioner Outram's tenure as the APVC.

I also want to say thank you to all of you. I know we have said this many times, but it really has been a pleasure to have worked and advocated for all of you – all 35 countries of our beautiful Region. I also want to thank Hong Kong, China; for their patience and for publishing this last issue from Australia. On behalf of my team (Nadine, Adriana, Marivi, Simon and Emma) we wish you all well and we are excited to continue to work with all of you as a Member of the Asia/Pacific Region.

I hope to see you all again in Hong Kong, China for RCP in October.



# Outgoing Message from the 2022-2024 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair

**Mr Michael Outram APM**

**Australian Border Force (ABF) Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs**

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to issue #72 of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific (A/P) Customs News, highlighting key events and achievements across the region from July 2022 to June 2024. It has been a very busy two years for us all and it is with great pleasure that we bring you a collection of articles that showcase the outstanding achievements of our Region.

This is the final issue from Australia, and it is with immense pride that I look back and reflect on all that we have accomplished in the A/P Region in the last two years. It has been my privilege to represent you as your Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC) and I feel immense satisfaction as I look back at our successes as a Region. The articles featured in this issue are testament to our cooperation and collaborative effort to promote the growth, security, unity and prosperity of our Region. In the last two years we worked together to secure and facilitate legitimate trade and travel, ensure compliance with enforcement of Customs laws, and strengthen our Region's Customs capability and support the modernisation of the WCO.

This issue highlights some of the key achievement of our Region, such as the WCO endorsement of the Resolution on Strengthening Customs-Industry Resilience, our first bi-Regional workshop on Gender Equality and Diversity and a showcase of the depth and breadth of our capacity building efforts. We also have updates from our colleagues from the Asia/Pacific Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO A/P), the Asia/Pacific Regional Office of Capacity Building (ROCB A/P) and the Asia/Pacific Regional Private Sector Group.

It has been a joy to read your articles from our first issue, Volume #67 – 'Women in Customs', all the way to issue 71 – 'Detector Dogs'. I wish to extend my thanks to all of you for your valuable contributions that have enabled us to share the Region's successes, and inspire and motivate Customs officers throughout the Asia/Pacific, and beyond.

I also would like to once again thank the APVC Secretariat, Ms Kimberlee Clydesdale, and the APVC Secretariat Office for their incredible support and tireless work that saw a number of successful events and achievement of key deliverables. Similarly, I acknowledge the broader ABF cohort for the support they provided my Secretariat team across Australia.

I warmly welcome Hong Kong, China to the Vice-Chair role and wish Commissioner Louise Ho and her APVC Secretariat Office a successful tenure.

Finally, thank you to all of you, my Asia/Pacific Customs family, as I have shared with you all previously, "the success of our dynamism as a Region is only possible through our active efforts to foster collaboration and celebrate diversity, and our commitment to our Mission as Customs, which, ultimately, is what defines us." Upon finalising my APVC tenure, I will also soon retire in my role as the ABF Commissioner and Comptroller General of Customs. So, as I depart this wonderful Customs family within Australia and across the globe I extend my best wishes to all of you in your endeavours to continue to connect and address these important customs matters to keep our communities safe and prosperous.



*ABF Commissioner and  
Comptroller-General Customs,  
Michael Outram APM,  
**WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair  
for 2022-2024***

## An Inside Perspective on the team of the 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office

Director WCO & Customs Partnerships (ABF), Ms Nadine Menzel takes us on a behind the scenes look at the Team of the Secretariat Office who were tasked with supporting the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair for 2022-2024



*Written by Ms Nadine Menzel  
Director, Australian Border Force  
WCO & Customs Partnerships  
APVC Secretariat Office  
2022-2024*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Image: Behind the scenes  
photos of the staff of the  
WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair  
Secretariat Office at the annual  
Regional Heads of Customs  
Administrations (RHCA)  
Conferences and Regional  
Contact Points (RCP) Meetings  
during the 2022-2024 tenure*

It is hard to believe that Australia's tenure as the World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC) has concluded after two years of hard work and dedication to the growth, security, unity and prosperity of the Asia/Pacific Region. Australian Border Force (ABF) Commissioner and Comptroller General of Customs, Mr Michael Outram APM, was well supported by a small but very hard working and dedicated team of ABF Officers during his APVC tenure, which included the APVC Secretariat and APVC Secretariat Office. The support was not limited to this group, there were, of course, many individuals and teams within the ABF that assisted the ABF Commissioner's APVC tenure and us in our role as the APVC Secretariat Office. The support we received across Australia enabled us to progress many initiatives on behalf of all Members of the Asia/Pacific Region.

The 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office managed all aspects of the day-to-day

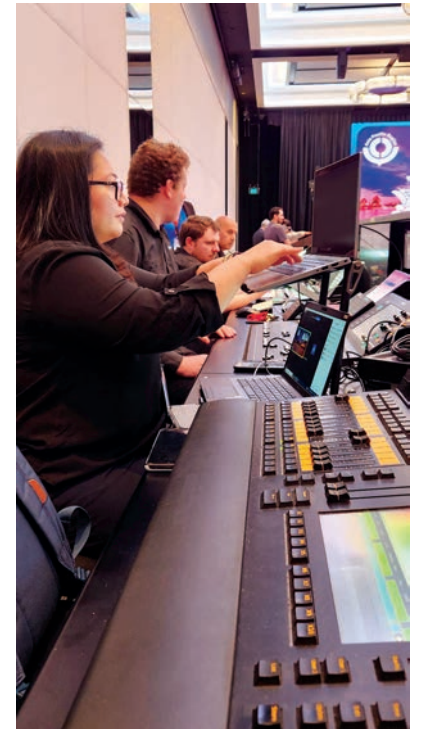
operations of the responsibilities that came with the Vice-Chair role, including Member engagements, policy and strategic planning. I am very proud of my team who coordinated all facets of the events in Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne and Sydney. They worked tirelessly to prepare effective agendas that reflected the needs of the Region, coordinated logistics, dreamed up interesting cultural events, developed eye catching artwork unique to each event all while also preparing internal briefing materials and ensuring your ideas were well represented in every interaction.

My incredible team was also heavily involved in developing key governance and strategic policy initiatives. Adriana, who in addition to developing together the agenda for each event and lead for briefing materials, prepared and undertook the groundwork to develop the WCO Concept Note on 'Strengthening Customs and Industry Resilience'. This Concept Note has been endorsed as the WCO Resolution





*Images: Behind the scenes photos of the staff of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair Secretariat Office at the annual Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conferences and Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meetings during the 2022-2024 tenure*



*Inside Perspective on the team of the  
2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office  
(Continued from page 6 & 7)*



*Image:  
Behind the scenes photos of  
the staff of the WCO Asia/  
Pacific Vice-Chair Secretariat  
Office at the annual  
Regional Heads of Customs  
Administrations (RHCA)  
Conferences and Regional  
Contact Points (RCP) Meetings  
during the 2022-2024 tenure*

on Strengthening Customs and Industry Resilience. Marivi led all logistics during our tenure also led the Region's participation with the 'Asia/Pacific Communique for Gender Equality and Diversity'. Marivi along with Emma, worked together with the Americas and Caribbean Region to deliver the first Bi-Regional Workshop on Gender Equality and Diversity. Simon developed the many options that were refined for our Region's new Asia/Pacific Regional Identity. Simon developed these concepts through to final design and also researched, helped draft large portions of and managed the development of the Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) and the RSP Terms of Reference, in close consultation with Member Customs administrations and RSP Focus Area Co-ordinators of the RSP Working Group. Finally, Emma ensured Members' facilitation and logistical details were in place, including internal liaison with supporting ABF areas so that Members attendance went smoothly and without a hitch.

Each of the team members brought with them very special skills in addition to their interest and expertise in multilateral fora. Over the course of the two years there were naturally both highs and lows, laughter and tears but most importantly, we came through the other side together better for the experience, having grown, learnt and developed new skills that we will all take with us throughout our careers. I personally feel very grateful to have been part of the APVC Secretariat Office team and involved in such a prosperous two years for our Asia/Pacific Region.

The friendships we have made, within industry, across organisations and with you, our Asia/Pacific family will always be cherished. Thank you to each and every one of you for your part in the last two years – a period of time and memories that I will draw on and remember fondly in the years to come.



# Development of the WCO Asia/Pacific 2022-2024 Regional Strategic Plan (RSP)

The RSP is designed to support the uplift of Members capacity and compliance with WCO objectives and help guide the Asia/Pacific Customs Region and its Members' priorities, needs and interests to meet future challenges

Endorsed at the 25th Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference in Sydney Australia on 18 April 2024, the 2024-2026 Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) sets out the Asia/Pacific Region's direction over the next two years. This clear articulation of strategy, objectives and key performance indicators is critically important to help guide the Region's common efforts, maintain clarity of purpose, and enable measurement of performance in a transparent manner.

## VISION

*"To be the leading WCO Region for Customs, through enhancing mutual growth, security, unity and prosperity by working collaboratively and effectively together."*

## MISSION

*"To work collaboratively and cooperatively to continue to promote secure and facilitated trade, ensure compliance with and enforcement of Customs laws, and strengthen Customs capability and modernization."*

The development of the RSP involved extensive collaboration and rigorous consultation across the Asia/Pacific Region, primarily through the establishment of an RSP Working Group of Members and Focus Area Co-coordinators, including: Australia; Bangladesh; the People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; the Republic of Korea; New Zealand; the Philippines; Thailand; and Vietnam. The RSP Working Group met virtually four times and frequently undertook intersessional consultation and collaboration to develop a robust product reflective of the Region and its Members' priorities, needs and interests.

Some of the key updates to the RSP include a new Focus Area on 'Resilience and Transformation', an updated reflection of the WCO Environmental Scan (July 2021 Update) that reflects the post-pandemic environment and settings, greater alignment with the WCO Strategic Plan, and the ongoing efforts towards the Organization's modernisation and reform.

## RSP FOCUS AREAS

**FA1: Trade Facilitation & Security –**  
Co-coordinators China and Korea

**FA2: Compliance & Enforcement –**  
Co-coordinators Hong Kong, China and RILO A/P

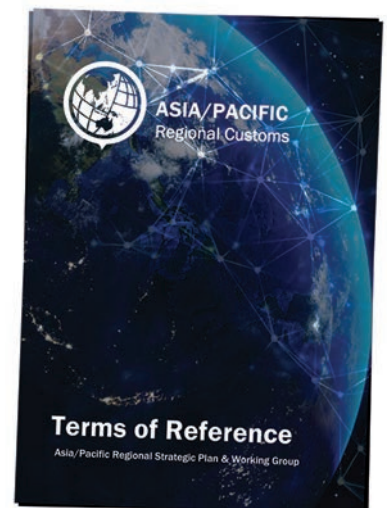
**FA3: Capacity Building –**  
Co-coordinators Japan and ROCB A/P

**FA4: Resilience & Transformation –**  
Co-coordinators, Australia and Vietnam

The corresponding RSP Terms of Reference (ToRs), which were also endorsed at the 25th RHCA, provide the Region, the incumbent Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair and Asia/Pacific WCO Members guidance and recommendations on the responsibilities, processes, timelines and other considerations for the development of the biannual Asia/Pacific RSP and establishment of the RSP Working Group that help support its development.

Members were advised at the annual Asia/Pacific Regional Consultations at WCO Council in June 2024 that the 2024-26 RSP and the RSP Terms of Reference – that were recently endorsed at the 25th RHCA – were published and available online.

Members can access both the current Asia/Pacific RSP for 2024-2026 and the RSP ToRs on the WCO Asia/Pacific website via the Members-only login access portal at [wcoasiapacific.org](https://wcoasiapacific.org)



Submitted by the 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office

/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director

Images: The Asia/Pacific 2024-2026 Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) and Asia/Pacific RSP Terms of Reference



*Submitted by the 2022-2024  
APVC Secretariat Office*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Images:*

*Heads of WCO Member  
Customs administrations of the  
Asia/Pacific join the outgoing  
2022-2024 Asia/Pacific  
Vice-Chair, ABF Commissioner  
and Comptroller-General of  
Customs, Mr Michael Outram  
APM and incoming  
2024-2026 Asia/Pacific  
Vice-Chair, Commissioner of  
Hong Kong Customs,  
Ms Louise Ho CDSM CMSM  
during the Official Handover  
Ceremony of Responsibilities  
following Asia/Pacific Regional  
Consultations at June 2024  
sessions of WCO Council*

The annual Regional Consultation for the Asia/Pacific, held in Brussels in June 2024, provided Members an opportunity to discuss issues of significance to the Region on the agenda for WCO Council. It also gave time to de-brief on key outcomes of the 90th Policy Commission, recap key moments from the 25th Regional Heads of Customs Administrations Conference, and reflect on the contributions the Asia/Pacific has made over the past two years. Members also focused on the key issues of WCO Modernization and considerations for organizational arrangements, process for appointment of Directors, and the WCO Modernization Implementation Plan.

Outgoing WCO APVC Michael Outram APM, Australian Border Force Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs, expressed his appreciation and thanks for Members' support and engagement during his tenure. He reflected on some of the many achievements of the Region during that time, including: the Resolution on Customs-Industry Resilience; the Regional Communique on Gender Equality and Diversity; the establishment of a number of new Regional Training Centres; emerging efforts on illicit tobacco, Smart Customs, supply chain integrity; and, continued capacity building activities. Commissioner Outram said it was an honour to have served as APVC, which he noted was both a high point and the culmination of his Customs career.

Members also welcomed Commissioner Ho of Hong Kong Customs as the next WCO APVC and confirmed the regional representatives on WCO Committee positions, while those concluding in their tenures were thanked for their commitment and dedication. Of note, the additional seat afforded to the Asia/Pacific on WCO Committees with the Region's increase in Membership is significant as it allows the Asia/Pacific a greater voice to influence and further represent the diversity of the Region, and that reflected within the WCO. It provides for greater consideration of the Region's perspectives, from small island economies and the unique Customs priorities and needs of their administrations to those developed and developing economies with some of the largest administrations within the WCO and their proactive efforts and initiatives at the forefront of Customs.

In a short ceremony, Commissioner Outram handed over responsibilities to the incoming APVC, Commissioner Hong Kong Customs, Ms Louise Ho, wishing her, her Office, the Region and Members the best for the years ahead. Commissioner Outram noted he had every confidence in Commissioner Ho maintaining the Region's engagement and efforts going forward and to further support the *growth, security, unity and prosperity* of the Asia/Pacific Region.





### The WCO Resolution on Strengthening Customs-Industry Resilience

Members reflected on the passage of the Resolution at the annual Regional Consultations at WCO Council in June 2024 and the significant work undertaken by the Asia/Pacific Region, by Customs and Industry, to develop and drive the initiative.

In June 2024, the WCO Council endorsed the Resolution on **Strengthening Customs-Industry Resilience**, which was developed as a collaborative initiative stewarded by Australia as the WCO APVC. The Resolution embeds the permanency of resilience at the core of the Customs-Industry partnership, committing all 186 WCO Members and inviting Industry partners, namely the Private Sector Consultative Group, to achieving the aims and objectives of the Resolution. The Resolution was developed from the foundation laid by the Asia/Pacific-led Concept Note on 'Strengthening Customs-Industry Resilience', which stemmed from a bilateral engagement in March 2023 between ABF Commissioner Outram as the APVC for 2022-2024 and Mr Kit Hickey, Chair of the Asia/Pacific Regional Private Sector Group. The Concept Note was well received by the Region, along with the then

WCO Secretary General Dr Kunio Mikuriya and the broader WCO Membership, who supported the evolution of the Concept Note into the Resolution.

The Resolution recognises that Customs-Industry resilience is a pillar of global security and prosperity, which cannot be achieved in isolation, in an age of transformation and unprecedented global challenges. Customs' innovative 'engagement with traditional and new partners with purpose' is critical to achieving a connected border system that is not only seamless in trade facilitation but also secure, resilient and impervious to new and emerging threats. Noting Customs' critical role during periods of global disruption, the Resolution also encourages Members to review and develop robust business continuity plans, enhance digitalisation through the adoption of secure paperless trade practices, and look to the future through strengthening relationships with Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) and identifying the benefits of AEO programs. The Resolution is a response to the growing need to continue and strengthen the collaboration between Customs and Industry as trusted partners, integral to achieving resilience.

#### Image:

*Outgoing 2022-2024 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair, ABF Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs, Mr Michael Outram APM and incoming 2024-2026 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair, Commissioner of Hong Kong Customs, Ms Louise Ho CDSM CMSM during the Official Handover Ceremony of Responsibilities following Asia/Pacific Regional Consultations at June 2024 sessions of WCO Council*



# **WCO ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL ENTITIES**





## IN FOCUS

# The RILO A/P Tokyo Office Now Open

In February 2024, The Regional Intelligence Liaison Office - Asia/Pacific celebrated its Official Opening in Tokyo



In January this year, host Member of the Regional Intelligence and Liaison Office – Asia/Pacific (RILO A/P) transferred from South Korea to Japan, with a new Office opened in Tokyo. In February, the RILO A/P Tokyo Office held its opening ceremony, followed by a two-day Regional High-Level Roundtable organized by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The event was attended by high-level participants of Customs administrations from the Region, WCO Secretary General Ian Saunders, former Secretary

General Dr Kunio Mikuriya, and many other representatives from relevant international organisations and law enforcement agencies. From Japan, State Minister of Finance Katsuo Yakura attended, and a video message from Prime Minister Kishida was shown at the beginning of the ceremony, expressing strong support from the Government of Japan for the RILO A/P and its regional efforts. The event was a great success and a significant boost for RILO A/P's future endeavors from its Tokyo Office.

Written by Mr Toshihiko Osawa  
Head of the RILO A/P

/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director

*Image: WCO Secretary General Mr Ian Saunders, former WCO Secretary General Dr Kunio Mikuriya and Head of RILO A/P, Mr Toshihiko Osawa lead celebrations during the Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo Main Office and kagami biraki*



**The RILO A/P Tokyo Office is Now Open**  
(Continued from page 13)



*Image: Participants to the RILO A/P Tokyo Office Opening Ceremony and accompanying roundtable discussions take a moment during the Tour of the Tokyo Main Office to mark their congratulations and best wishes on the ceremonial Daruma – which personifies the hopes in achieving an important goal and following, when the blank eye is filled in, to signify the accomplishment of achieving the goal.*

There are 12 RILO Offices around the world, but the RILO A/P has the largest membership, with 35 Asia/Pacific Members. RILO A/P also has the largest number of dedicated staff seconded from the Region with: six from Japan Customs; two from Korea Customs Service; and one from Hong Kong Customs. Two additional Customs officers from China will also join soon. The RILO A/P is planning to establish several technical assistance programs to allow many Customs officers from the Region to work in the Tokyo office, with the hope these programs will attract more staff to rotate through the RILO A/P Office over its time in Tokyo.

Although the RILO A/P is already one of the largest of the WCO's regional entities, it continues to grow with the support of its Members and the interest

and value they place on its products and services. Like other RILO Offices, the basic function of RILO A/P is to help its Members to strengthen their efforts to control smuggling and combat criminal groups by collecting, analyzing, and sharing information on smuggling. This information may be shared immediately or with accompanying analysis, depending on what is most useful for Members. In recent years, criminal groups attempting to smuggle goods have increased and expanded their networks. To combat this effectively, it is imperative that Customs administrations also develop a broad and effective network with each other.

The RILO A/P's Mission is to connect people from different backgrounds. The RILO A/P is working to ensure that Customs, law enforcement agencies,



international organisations, and private bodies are all well-connected.

The RILO A/P is steadily performing these core tasks while also taking on new projects. For example, we are working on more efficient ways to collect data on Customs seizure cases at the regional level, streamlining procedures to eliminate unnecessary duplication and increase efficiency of regional operations, and establishing specific cooperation with private sector and relevant international organisations. Accepting staff from developing Member Customs administrations is another new initiative the RILO A/P is now planning, in order to help uplift the capability of the Region. The RILO A/P is able to tackle these unprecedented projects thanks to the strong support of Japan Customs and Members of the Asia/Pacific Region.

The RILO A/P is an organisation committed to supporting the Asia/Pacific Region. We carefully consider the information and the analysis we share, as well as the new projects we undertake, to ensure they align with the needs of our Members and the challenges they face. We greatly appreciate receiving Members' requests and the continued support provided to advance the work and relevance of the RILO A/P.

Finally, the RILO A/P wishes to highlight and welcome new staff, whether for short term placement or for longer secondments. Individuals may join as staff for various reasons such as to enhance regional smuggling intelligence efforts; train young professionals, or implement a specific project using the RILO Tokyo office.

If you are interested in contributing to the work of the RILO A/P, please contact our office or find us through our website at: [riloap.org](http://riloap.org).



*Image above: Head of RILO A/P, Mr Toshihiko Osawa discusses Customs issues at the Intelligence Roundtable Discussion accompanying the opening of the Tokyo Main Office, in Japan February 2024*

*Image below: Members of one of the Roundtable Discussion Panels pose as part of proceedings for the RILO A/P Tokyo Main Office Opening Event, in Japan February 2024*

## IN FOCUS

### **The Regional Office of Capacity Building (ROCB-A/P)**

The WCO Regional Office of Capacity Building for the Asia/Pacific (ROCB A/P) was established in 2004, and will soon be celebrating the 20th anniversary of our foundation during this year, later in 2024



*Submitted by the WCO Regional  
Office of Capacity Building –  
Asia/Pacific (ROCB A/P)*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Image: Staff of the ROCB A/P,  
Headed by Mr Jun Tajima, pose  
for a photo at the Main Office,  
hosted by Thai Customs in  
Bangkok, Thailand*

#### **Dear Members, together, we advance!**

Throughout its 20 years to date, the ROCB A/P has been committed to supporting Members' modernisation efforts by organising WCO Workshops, raising the standard of Training Management across the Region, supporting Members to establish Regional Training Centres and organising regional engagements to ensure our strategic relevance.

However, firstly, we at the ROCB A/P must take this opportunity to express our sincerest gratitude to the Thai Customs Department for their exceptional ongoing hospitality and commitment by hosting the ROCB A/P, as well as to Member Customs administrations for their contribution of very capable attachés in support of our efforts, including : China; Hong Kong, China; Japan; and Korea.

The 2024-2026 Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) for the Asia/Pacific Region, adopted at the 25th Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference in Sydney, Australia in April, 2024, tasked the ROCB A/P to implement specific actions in its Work Plan, in close cooperation with the Office of

the Vice-Chair and Members of the Region. These specific actions emphasise capacity building activities in the Region and seek to maximise our collective efforts on focused and results-oriented activities, while also ensuring the effective use of limited resources. These actions include further efforts to improve the quality of capacity building activities by reflecting on Members' needs and priorities and providing a good value proposition. This remains the focus of the new leadership of the ROCB A/P.

In Financial Year (FY) 2023-2024, the WCO successfully conducted over 50 capacity-building activities in the Asia/Pacific Region, including at the Regional, Sub-Regional, and National level. The ROCB A/P has supported a number of these activities, in a Region where we are fortunate to enjoy a wealth of resources, thanks to the financial support of Member funding, primarily from China, India, Japan and Korea.

In order to ensure more effective programme delivery, the ROCB A/P is orienting its efforts to design workshops tailored to Members' specific-needs. In order to achieve this, the ROCB A/P tries to better understand Members by collecting information on their policy priorities and current situation, such as during returns of the Annual Needs Survey, which is undertaken in cooperation with fellow RSP Co-coordinator Japan Customs for Focus Area 3 on Capacity Building. This allows the WCO and the ROCB A/P to identify a targeted agenda and the means to address current challenges. In addition, the ROCB A/P conducts post-workshop engagements, summaries and reports to help participants and beneficiaries to better understand the content covered while also collecting post-event Action Surveys for participants to encourage feedback on follow-up actions.

ROCB A/P activities have mainly supported training and workshops to respond to Members' collective needs. However, the



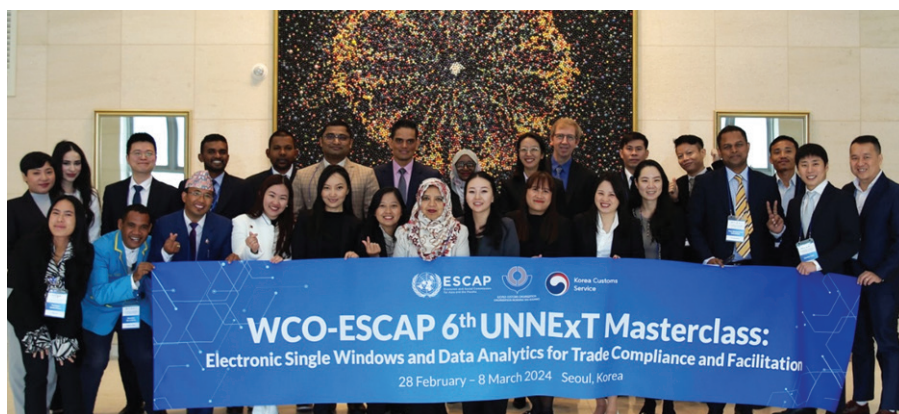
ROCB A/P also supports project-based activities, which are becoming increasingly popular. Projects are conducted by specialised teams, and are designed to cover specific needs of a select cohort of Members over a multi-year timeframe. Recently, the ROCB A/P initiated a Project on Training Management Project over a two-year period, based on Regional needs and funded by Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF/Japan) and in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, conducting several Workshops throughout the Region. The result of these activities were then compiled in the Training Management Compendium, scheduled for release in 2025.

The ROCB A/P also supports the multi-year activities of the WCO Master Trainer Programme, in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), on Customs Valuation and Harmonized System (HS) Classification. This Programme supported a select number of participants with training to become 'Master Trainers'. This Programme has recently concluded with many participants having completed their training and already playing a pivotal role in their home Customs administrations in the Pacific Sub-Region. Moreover, many of them have also successfully completed Pre-Accreditation Workshops focused on their respective areas of expertise.

The ROCB A/P also made significant contributions to a joint-effort of respective donor organizations. The WCO-UNESCAP UNNExT Master Class was organised by the WCO, the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Network of Experts on Paperless Trade and Transport (NExT), in March 2024 and funded by Korea Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF/Korea) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Korea. The programme offered unique opportunities to develop comprehensive knowledge and capacities for the implementation of effective trade compliance and facilitation measures.

Despite these accomplishments and a busy calendar of capacity building, further improvements toward delivery of higher quality capacity building activities are always kept in mind when designing training programmes, and always based on consideration and reflection of Members' needs and priorities.

As part of its commitment to contributing to the Region, the ROCB A/P will strive to



learn about the actual situations of the diverse cohort of Asia/Pacific Members. This includes establishing an ongoing close dialogue and better communications with Members so that the ROCB A/P can effectively support Members' work towards the WCO strategic objectives, which in turn help to support better targeted WCO activities. Moreover, in this era of scarce financial and human resources, it is important to also seek opportunities to cooperate and collaborate to deliver capacity building, including through joint-efforts. This is important not only to avoid duplication but to also create synergies and remain relevant to Members' needs.

The ROCB A/P continues to play a crucial role in every stage of the WCO's Capacity Building Activities and sets an example for other regions to follow, whether from initial planning to management of the events on a daily basis and beyond, with post-event reviews and feedback.

All staff at the ROCB A/P work side-by-side with Members to achieve each respective Customs administrative goals. For that purpose, we humbly ask for and encourage Members' continued cooperation and collaboration. With our new leadership, we will work together, for a better future.

Together, we advance!

*Image above: Participants at the WCO-UNESCAP UNNExT Master Class in Seoul, Korea over 28 February - 8 March 2024 pose for the Official Photo*

*Image below: Participants at the WCO Sub-regional Workshop on Training Management for ASEAN in Bangkok, Thailand over 15-19 January 2024 pose for the Official Photo*

## IN FOCUS

### **The Regional Private Sector Group – Asia/Pacific (RPSG A/P)**

The WCO RPSG A/P works to o improve understanding between Customs and the private sector



*Written by Mr Kit Hickey,  
Regional Private Sector Group –  
Asia/Pacific, (RPSG A/) Chair*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Image: Chair of the RPSG A/P  
Mr Kit Hickey, and Vice-Chair  
Ms Wendy Stanton at the 25th  
(Asia/Pacific) Regional Heads  
of Customs Administrations  
Conference in Sydney, Australia  
on 15 April 2024*

The WCO Regional Private Sector Group – Asia/Pacific (RPSG A/P) consists of 30 private sector companies drawn from across the Region who provide the Asia/Pacific Customs Region with business sector advice and input on matters related to trade, supply chains and border management.

The purpose of the Group is to improve understanding between Customs and the private sector, and to support the work program and priorities of the WCO, the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair and the WCO Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG).

A key deliverable of the RPSG A/P is the ability to contribute knowledge and experience at the policy level, while at the same time providing practical advice on the operational impacts of policies on supply chains, border processes and business methodologies.

Members include companies from various industries and specialisations including manufacturers, exporters, importers, carriers, associations, customs brokers, logistics providers, etc.

With current geopolitical events including challenges to the global supply chain, cooperation between Customs, other border agencies and the private sector is more important than ever. Long-accepted business models and priorities based on efficiencies are being rebalanced to reprioritise resilience and to better manage uncertainty.

At the same time, the WCO is undergoing change with new leadership including a strong focus on organisational modernisation and reform to meet the future challenges that current trends foreshadow.





Regionally, the role of WCO Vice-Chair has shifted from Australia to Hong Kong, China and a new Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) for 2024-2026 has been developed.

In reflection of these changes and period of transition within the WCO and Region, the RPSG A/P has also undergone a period of refresh with a membership review and rotation of 14 new Members, including from four new Members from the Asia/Pacific not previously represented.

The Group's current priorities remain of ongoing relevance to the Region, including: Voluntary Disclosure, Free Trade Agreement; Rules of Origin/Certification, Digitalisation; E-Commerce; and, AEO/SAFE. However, current, and emerging challenges will compete, and in some cases are likely to take precedence in how the Group's interests are prioritised and evolve over time.

The RPSG A/P fully supports the Focus Areas of the new Asia/Pacific 2024-2026 RSP, including: Trade Facilitation and Security; Compliance and Enforcement; Capacity Building; and, Resilience and Transformation.

The Group views these as core Customs functions essential to enable a robust, secure, and efficient global supply-chain. Key elements for us within these Focus Areas include: Digitalisation; E-Commerce; Standardisation/Harmonization; and, improving the engagement of SMEs.

Two other areas of importance include:

**Capacity Building** – The RPSG-AP believes that joint capacity building provides an excellent opportunity for Customs and the business sector to better understand each other's operations and strategies – it is also where misunderstandings that make the supply chain less efficient can

be resolved. Currently, most WCO capacity building is Customs-to-Customs, and when considering that Customs biggest stakeholder is the trading sector, including ports, carriers, manufacturers, forwarders/brokers, banks, exporters and importers, etc., participation from the private sector is a valuable opportunity. It is the view of the RPSG A/P that both Customs and the business sector would benefit from a more inclusive WCO capacity building approach.

#### **Cooperation with Other Government Agencies**

– Cooperation is necessary to manage total government risk and to realise the potential of government trade policy, including the smooth facilitation of legitimate goods. Improving cooperation between Customs, the private sector and other border and law enforcement agencies is necessary if the aforementioned objectives are to be achieved.

In addition to its engagement within the Region through the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair and WCO Members through the Asia/Pacific Customs Region, the RPSG A/P also engages directly within the WCO through its affiliation with the WCO Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG) and participates in various meetings and working groups in Brussels in order to advance these objectives.

*Image: Industry Members of the RPSG A/P along with representatives of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair and the Regional Office of Capacity Building – Asia/Pacific (ROCB A/P) at the RPSG A/P Annual General Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand in August 2023*

# SPOTLIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

## Embedding Economic Resilience in the Pacific

Customs has an important role as the collectors of the revenue governments use to pay for public services



Submitted by New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS)

/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director

*Image:* NZCS Officer  
Colin Brown at a Cook Islands  
Customs Service workshop for  
stakeholders.

Tariff revenue from imported goods represents a significant proportion of government revenue in Pacific countries. In Samoa for example, over half the government revenue is collected by Samoa Customs in the form of tariff and excise duties, and Value Added Goods and Services Tax. This makes effective revenue collection functions crucial to the health of Pacific Island economies. Without it, governments could miss out on vital funds.

This is where the New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) can offer support. The agency is providing advice and technical assistance to Pacific Customs partners to assist them on their pathway to modernisation and longer-term economic resilience, through the Customs Sector Development Programme.

This Programme aims to increase Pacific Island economic prosperity, as well as leadership development and border security, through building capability across the Region's Customs administrations. It is funded and supported by New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

### Revenue collection in Vanuatu

NZCS Senior Policy Analyst, Colin Brown, has been working with the Vanuatu Department of Customs and Inland Revenue since 2019.

*"We have been providing revenue support to Vanuatu Customs through targeted audit work. Vanuatu Customs officers were trained on how to use data analysis to identify systemic undervaluation and revenue fraud, which presented opportunities to significantly increase revenue."*

*"This work has had clear results, with a number of instances of fraud and undervaluation detected as a direct result of the training, as well as a notable increase in the revenue that's been collected."*

In December 2023, Vanuatu Customs announced a record revenue collection of 2 billion Vt (approx. USD \$16.9 million). Of this, five percent (approx. USD \$850,000) was identified as additional revenue collected by Vanuatu Customs' compliance audit team.





*“Vanuatu Customs acknowledged this was a direct result of the support provided by New Zealand Customs,” Mr Brown said.*

Other areas of work with Vanuatu have included assistance towards improved border targeting, post-clearance audits, and the correct classification of goods by Customs officials and Industry stakeholders. Currently both agencies are developing a strategy to share information to improve importer compliance levels in Vanuatu.

*“By helping to upskill Pacific partners in revenue collection, we can support greater economic security and stability in our region,”* noted Mr Brown.

### **Sugary drinks in the Cook Islands**

The Cook Islands Customs Service (CICS) has identified cases where the excise tax on sugary drinks was being evaded.

Importers were identified as falsely declaring fruit drinks – which typically contain only 25 percent fruit juice, in addition to water, sugar, and additives, such as flavourings – as pure fruit juice, which is not subject to excise.

It wasn't possible to determine from the submitted data the quantity of fruit drinks being falsely declared as fruit juice. Unless the importer includes the full brand and product description on the declaration, which is not mandatory, CICS could not distinguish whether the goods imported were pure fruit juice or a fruit drink subject to excise.

To address this, NZCS is working with CICS to educate importers on the correct excise duty classification and to notify them that Customs will be monitoring imports of fruit juice to ensure compliance.

NZCS is providing continuing support to the CICS as they work to collect the correct amount of revenue on imported fruit drinks.

Mr Brown added, *“Effective revenue collection is essential for economic development and strengthening public services. By collaborating with Pacific partners in this area, we can support greater economic security and stability in our region”.*

*Image above: NZCS Officer Mr Colin Brown (front row, second left) with staff from Vanuatu Department of Customs and Inland Revenue*

*Image below: Staff from Vanuatu Department of Customs and Inland Revenue*

# ***ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL CUSTOMS ANNUAL VICE-CHAIR EVENTS GALLERIES***

*Submitted by the 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office*





## The 32nd Session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting in Brisbane, Australia, 14 - 18 November 2022

The 32nd session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting was hosted in Australia by the Office of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair in the city of Brisbane from 14 - 18 November 2022



**Images:** Australian Border Force (ABF) Deputy Commissioner Ms Vanessa Holben Chaired the 32nd RCP for the Office of the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC), welcoming attendees and guests to Brisbane on behalf of the Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs, Michael Outram APM, in his capacity as the APVC.

Ms Holben was joined by ABF Assistant Secretary and Secretariat for the APVC, Ms Kimberlee Clydesdale and Honoured Guests, including Regional Development Manager for the Asia/Pacific (CFF/Japan Assistant Fund Manager), Ms Akiko Kojima, representing the World Customs Organization. You can read more about the 32nd RCP and its outcomes online at [wcoasiapacific.org](https://wcoasiapacific.org).

*Image on Preceding Page:*  
Australia Border Force (ABF) Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs, Michael Outram APM during the Official Photo at the 24th Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference in Perth, 2023



## **The 24th Session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference in Perth, Australia, 28-31 May 2023**

The 24th session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administration (RHCA) Conference was hosted in Australia by the Office of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair in the city of Perth from 28 - 31 May 2023



**Images:** WCO Asia/Pacific Member Heads of Customs Administrations gathered in Perth, Australia for the 24th Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference, which was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel from 28 - 31 May 2023. The Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair welcomed more than 80 delegates from 22 Asia/Pacific WCO Member Customs administrations, along with then WCO Secretary General Dr Kunio Mikuriya, respective Heads of the RILO A/P, ROCB A/P and RPSG A/P and their delegations. You can read more about the 24th RHCA Conference and its outcomes online at [wcoasiapacific.org](https://wcoasiapacific.org).



## The 33rd Session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting in Melbourne, Australia, 30 October - 3 November 2023

The 33rd session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting was hosted in Australia by the Office of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair in the city of Melbourne from 31 October - 3 November 2023



**Images:** The World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC), Mr Michael Outram APM welcomed more than 73 delegates and representatives from 26 Asia/Pacific WCO Member Customs administrations, with the respective Heads of the Asia/Pacific Regional Intelligence Liaison Office, the Regional Office of Capacity Building

and the Regional Private Sector Group, along with the WCO as represented by the Regional Development Manager, Mr Tetsuo Mizunuma, and their respective delegations to the 33rd session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in the city of Melbourne, Australia over 30 October - 3 November 2023. You can read more about the 33rd RCP and its outcomes online at [wcoasiapacific.org](https://wcoasiapacific.org).



## **The 25th Session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference in Sydney, Australia, 14-18 April 2024**

The 25th session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administration (RHCA) Conference was hosted in Australia by the Office of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair in the city of Sydney from 14 - 18 April 2024



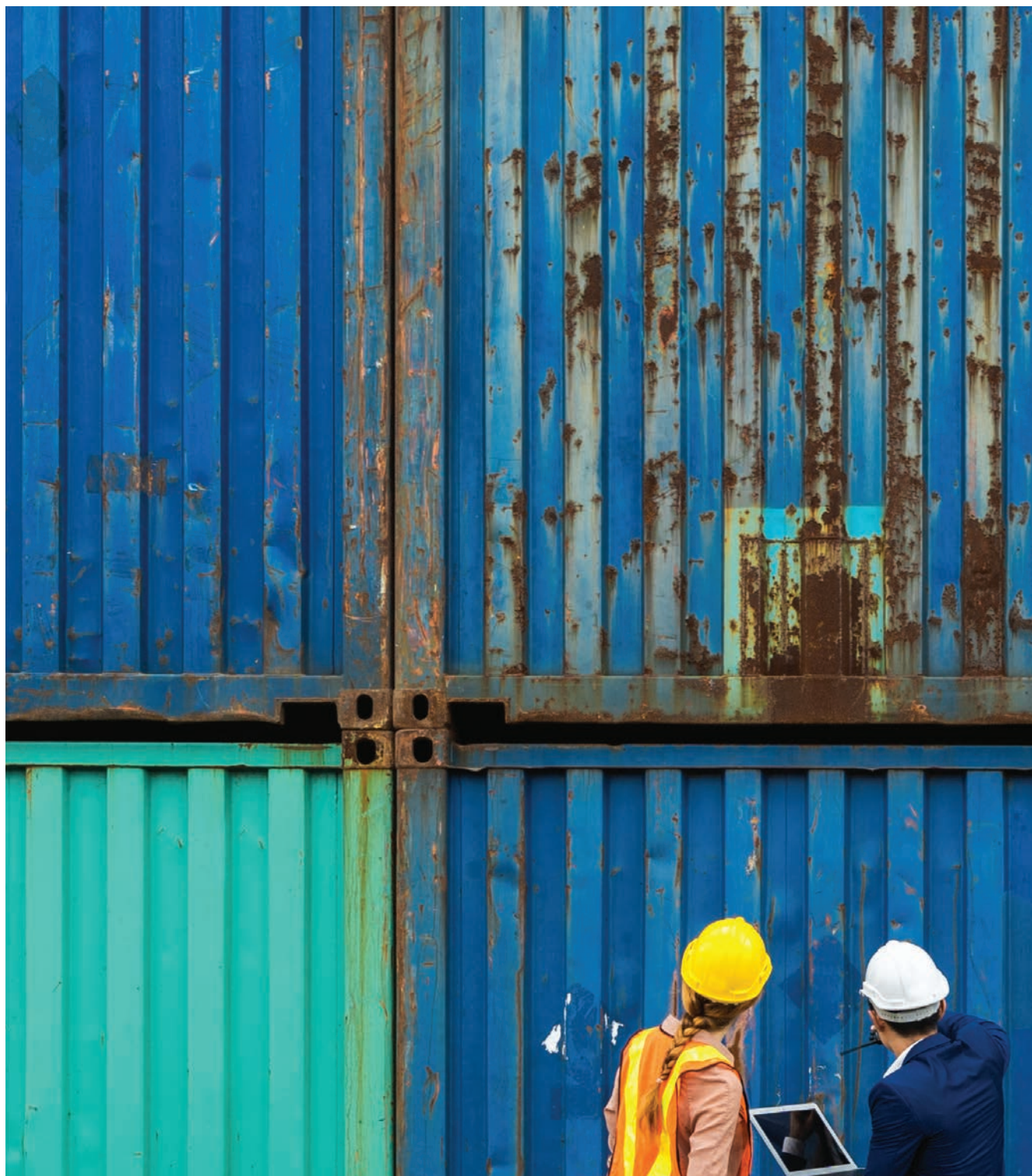
**Images:** The World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC), Mr Michael Outram APM welcomed more than 100 delegates and Member representatives from 31 Asia/Pacific WCO Member Customs Administrations, along with the respective Heads of the Asia/Pacific Regional Intelligence Liaison Office, the Regional Office of Capacity Building and the Regional Private Sector Group, the WCO as represented by the WCO Secretary General, Mr Ian Saunders,

and their delegates to the 25th session of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference at the Four Seasons Hotel in the city of Sydney, Australia over 14-18 April 2024.

You can read more about the 25th RHCA and its outcomes along with the ability to view a larger collection of images capturing the event online at the [wcoasiapacific.org](https://wcoasiapacific.org) website.



# ***ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL CUSTOMS CAPACITY BUILDING EVENTS***



# The 2022 WCO Asia/Pacific Digital Forensics Workshop

With increasing modernisation and digitisation of global trade and travel, Digital Forensics is fast becoming an important technological capability for the collection of evidence for investigations by Customs administrations



*Republished:* Submitted by the Australian Border Force

/ Edited by Adriana Rajic, ABF Assistant Director

*Image:* ABF Commander Ms Lauren Richardson, Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair Secretariat Ms Kimberlee Clydesdale, Head of the ROCB A/P Mr Norikazu Kuramoto and Mr Dan Yamaguchi from Japan Customs, join Participants at the 2022 Digital Forensics Workshop for the official photo

The Australian Border Force (ABF), in its capacity as the World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair (APVC), in cooperation with WCO Customs Operational Practices for Enforcement and Seizures (COPES), the Asia/Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB A/P) and with sponsorship by Japan Customs, hosted the WCO Asia/Pacific Region Digital Forensics Workshop in Perth, Australia, from 17-21 October 2022.

Digital Forensics is an important technological capability for the collection of evidence and resources for investigations by Customs administrations.

With a focus on cyber investigation techniques, extraction of data on IT tools and digital evidence management, the workshop also provided an opportunity for experts and participants to share experiences and to discuss current developments and future trends as well as raise awareness and provide a platform to share regional best practices.

The Office of the APVC hosted, supported and co-sponsored a number of capacity building events over the 2022-2024 period, in addition to the annual Regional Contact Points and Regional Heads of Customs Administrations Conferences.

*\*Originally published in the APCN Vol. #68*



# The 2023 WCO Asia/Pacific Operation TENTACLE AML/CTF Workshop

***“Customs agencies are indispensable in the whole-of-government effort to tackle the scourge of money laundering”***  
ABF Commissioner Outram said during his opening address at the WCO AML/CTF Workshop in Brisbane



The 2023 World Customs Organization (WCO) Operation TENTACLE Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter Terrorism Financing (CTF) Workshop was hosted by the Australian Border Force (ABF) in collaboration with the WCO AML/CTF Programme and staff from Operation TENTACLE in Brisbane from 27 February to 3 March 2023. It was attended by 62 representatives from 23 countries from the Asia/Pacific alongside Australia's money laundering regulator AUSTRAC, and global authorities INTERPOL and the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units.

The Workshop raised awareness of the prolific threat of money laundering and terrorism financing and reinforced the critical role of Customs in anti-money laundering efforts. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity for Customs and partner agencies to deepen understanding of the complex challenges posed by money laundering and terrorism financing.

In an opening address in his capacity as the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair, ABF Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs Mr Michael Outram APM emphasised the importance of the role of Customs

in the fight against transnational serious organised crime.

*Criminals “infiltrate every aspect of our Supply Chains, using methods that include trade-based money laundering and bulk cash smuggling, to move hidden value across our borders. Working alongside key partners, Customs agencies are able to reduce the influence of crime and ultimately protect our communities from harm.”*

*“Improving the capacity for Customs agencies to deliver anti-money laundering enforcement will lead to a commensurate strengthening of national, regional and international security. Our collective role, both nationally and regionally, underpins our overall responsibility to safeguard our communities from the effects of illicit value transfer.”*

Commissioner Outram expressed his gratitude to the US Department of State – Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for their exceptional leadership and financial support initiatives of WCO Operation TENTACLE, including for the Workshop.

*\*Originally published in the APCN Vol. #69*

*Republished: Written by  
Mr Daniel Strack  
ABF Superintendent*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Image below: Participants of  
the 2023 AML/CTF Workshop  
observe a demonstration  
of border inspection  
methodologies to combat  
money laundering and  
terrorism financing*

# The 2023 WCO Asia/Pacific Plastic Waste Project Workshop

The WCO Asia/Pacific Plastic Waste (APPW) Project was a regional initiative to support implementation of the *Basel Convention on Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal*



*Submitted by the 2022-2024  
APVC Secretariat Office*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Image: Participants at the final  
WCO Asia/Pacific Plastic Waste  
(APPW) Project High-Level  
Workshop in Perth, Australia  
on 31 May 2023 discuss the  
Project's main outcomes and  
recommendations*

The World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia/Pacific Plastic Waste (APPW) Project was a regional initiative held between the WCO and WCO Member Customs administrations in the Asia/Pacific between April 2020 to June 2023.

The Project was funded by the Government of Japan and was attended by Customs administrations from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam to strengthen their capacity to prevent the illegal or unregulated cross-border trade in plastic waste and to promote sustainable waste management practices. The Australian Border Force also participated as an observer.

The Project culminated in the concluding High-Level Workshop held in conjunction with the 24th Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference held in Perth, Australia over 28-31 April 2024, where the WCO and participants of the APPW Project presented on the outcomes of the multi-year effort and a number of recommendations to help ensure the Region maintains its attention and leadership on this increasingly important global and regional challenge. At the 24th RHCA, WCO Members of the Asia/Pacific Customs Region moved to incorporate the focus of the APPW Project as a standing meeting agenda item in the annual RHCA, with participants to update Members on their continuing efforts.



# The 2024 AmeriCaribe-Asia/Pacific WCO Bi-Regional Workshop on Gender Equality & Diversity

The 2024 WCO Bi-Regional Workshop of Gender Quality and Diversity was a joint-initiative between WCO Member Customs administrations and WCO Regional Vice-Chairs of the Americas and Caribbean and Asia/Pacific Regions



The 2024 WCO Bi-Regional Workshop of Gender Quality and Diversity was a joint-initiative between WCO Member Customs administrations and WCO Regional Vice-Chairs of the Americas and Caribbean and Asia/Pacific Regions on the 10 April 2024.

The event, which included over 100 participants from the Americas and Caribbean and Asia/Pacific Regions, aimed to break down barriers and inspire each other to achieve equality and inclusivity in our own Customs administrations.

Notwithstanding the challenges that persist in modern societies, both the Americas and Caribbean and Asia/Pacific Regions have made significant strides in promoting gender equality and diversity over recent years through a number of initiatives across the leadership, recruitment and workforce policy spectrums. These efforts have helped to increase the representation of women in

Customs roles from the frontline to senior executive positions.

Members from the two Regions shared their experiences, best practices and lessons learned through a number of presentations and group discussions. Presenters from Chile and Colombia on the one hand and from Cambodia's General Department of Customs and Excise and the New Zealand Customs Service on the other, each shared their updates on developments, efforts and successes on behalf of their respective Regions.

The Workshop inspired the participants to continue to look for ways to advance gender equality and diversity in their own Customs administrations, noting that by creating a diverse workforce, Customs can drive greater innovation, effectiveness, and resilience in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities.

*Submitted by the 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office*

*/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director*

*Images: Participants of the 2024 AmeriCaribe-Asia/Pacific Cross-Regional Joint-Workshop on Gender Equality & Diversity pose for a virtual group photo along with the WCO Regional Vice-Chairs for the Americas and Caribbean, National Customs Superintendent of the Superintendencia Nacional de Administración Tributaria Mr Fernando Núñez Jáuregui and the Asia/Pacific, Australian Border Force Commissioner and Comptroller-General of Customs Mr Michael Outram APM*

# RECENT AND UPCOMING WCO EVENTS

**June 2024** **90th Policy Commission (Brussels, Belgium 24-25 June)**

**143rd/144th Sessions of WCO COUNCIL (Brussels, Belgium 27-29 June)**

*Handover Ceremony of the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Vice-Chair  
(Brussels, Belgium 27 June)*

**July 2024** -

**August 2024** -

**September 2024** **74th Harmonized System Committee (Brussels, Belgium 16-27 September)**

**October 2024** **34th Revised Kyoto Convention Management Committee (Hybrid, 2-4 October)**

**58th Technical Committee on Customs Valuation (Brussels, Belgium 14-18 October)**

**245th/246th Permanent Technical Committee (Brussels, Belgium 23-25 October)**



# **MESSAGE FROM THE 2022-2024 SECRETARIAT OFFICE: Thank You, Farewell and Best Wishes**

We hope you have enjoyed reading Volume #72 of the Asia/Pacific Customs News on '[2022-2024 In Review](#)' and we look forward to the next series of issues produced under the 2024-2026 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair



Thank you to all the many contributors from Asia/Pacific Customs Region who submitted articles for the May/June 2024 issue of the Asia/Pacific Customs News, including:

**The Australian Border Force (ABF)**

**The Regional Office of Capacity Building for the Asia/Pacific (ROCB A/P)**

**The Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for the Asia/Pacific (RILO A/P)**

**The Regional Private Sector Consultative Group for the Asia/Pacific (RPSG A/P)**

**New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS)**

**The Australian Border Force (ABF)**

**Fiji Revenue & Customs Service (FRCS)**

**Hong Kong Customs & Excise (HKCE)**

**India's Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)**

**Indonesia's Directorate General of Customs & Excise (DGCE)**

**Japan Customs**

**New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS)**

**Royal Malaysian Customs Depart. (RMCD)**

**Philippines Bureau of Customs (BOC)**

**Singapore Customs**

**Sri Lanka Customs (SLC)**

**Thai Customs**

**WCO Secretariat & Regional Entities**

*Image: The Team of the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair Secretariat Office, along with Members of the Australian delegation, at the Official Closing Dinner of the 25th Asia/Pacific Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference in Sydney, Australia, on the 17 April 2024, overlooking the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House*

The WCO APVC Secretariat Office was again very grateful to all contributors. We would also like to extend special thanks to all Members of the WCO Secretariat, WCO Member Customs administrations of the Asia/Pacific and Regional entities that contributed articles for the six issues over the last two years during the 2022-2024 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair, including:

Finally, we encourage Members to maintain their active engagement through the submission of Customs articles for future issues over the next two years.

# ***NOTES***



# 2022-2024 BACK CATALOGUE

## Asia/Pacific Customs News

Back catalogue of the Asia/Pacific Customs News during the tenure of the 2022-2024 Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair

As part of responsibilities during respective tenures, the Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair is expected to produce and publish the Asia/Pacific Customs News (APCN). The APCN, now going into its 19th year of publication, features and highlights the efforts and good works of WCO Member Customs administrations of the Asia/Pacific and promotes and champions the Region. The APCN is shared both within the Region among Members and WCO regional entities and further afield within the WCO's broad global and regional networks, through physically printed and online releases.

Submitted by the 2022-2024 APVC Secretariat Office

/ Edited by Marivi Martin  
ABF Assistant Director

Images (in order from left to right from above): Asia/Pacific Customs News (APCN) 2022-2024 back catalogue:

- November 2022 Issue of the APCN Vol. #67 on 'Women in Customs';
- March/April 2023 Issue of the APCN Vol. #68 on 'Supply Chain Integrity';
- August/September 2023 Issue of the APCN Vol. #69 on 'Nurturing the Next Generation';
- January/February 2024 Issue of the APCN Vol. #70 on 'Green Customs'; and
- March/April 2024 Issue of the APCN Vol. #71 on 'Detector Dogs'





# ASIA/**PACIFIC** CUSTOMS NEWS

Volume #72 May / June 2024

## **2022-2024 IN REVIEW**

Growth | Security | Unity | Prosperity