

Asia/Pacific

CUSTOMS NEWS



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IN FOCUS

129TH/130TH WCO COUNCIL SESSIONS

Heads of Customs administrations representing the Members of the World Customs Organization (WCO) met in Brussels, Belgium from 6 to 8 July 2017 for the 129th/130th Sessions of the WCO Council, led by Ruslan Davydov, the Chairperson of the Council and First Deputy Head of the Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation, with the support of Kunio Mikuriya, the WCO Secretary General.

Discussions focused on a number of key issues: trade facilitation, including the WCO Mercator Programme that was designed to assist WCO Members in implementing the Customs related measures contained in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) - a communiqué was issued highlighting the support of the Customs Community to the entry into force of the WTO TFA -; security initiatives; combating illicit financial flows; and customs-tax-cooperation, in particular the challenges and opportunities from a Customs perspective.

Members of the Council also recognized the critical role played by capacity building, research and the sharing of intelligence and information, as well as the necessity for enhanced international collaboration with businesses and all relevant agencies, and the importance of using data analysis and other technology-related trade management tools that would ensure better coordinated border management.

“Directors General of Customs have agreed on the road ahead,” said the WCO Secretary General, adding that, “their clear and helpful decisions will guide the Secretariat’s activities and work programmes, enabling it to deliver positive results and meet the expectations of the WCO’s worldwide membership, including Customs’ global partners.”

This year’s keynote speakers included Pierre Moscovici, the European Union’s Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, invited in the context of the 10th anniversary of EU’s accession to the WCO, and Inna Kuznetsova, President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of INTTRA, the ocean shipping industry’s largest electronic transaction platform, software and information provider, both of whom acknowledged Customs’ leading role in the international trade arena.

The EU Commissioner spoke about the future of the EU Customs Union, touching on governance, the Union Customs Code (UCC), digital Customs and security, including ongoing and upcoming initiatives to fight terrorism, as well as the state of play with respect to the TFA, and better cooperation between Customs and tax authorities, including around the issue of e-commerce, while INTTRA’s President and COO, drawing on her experience in digitization of Ocean Shipping Industry, focused on the benefits that Customs can derive by enhancing and expanding its use of data analysis, the WCO’s theme for 2017, to digitize, analyze and plan.

Following the election of Mr. Enrique Canon, the Director General of Uruguay Customs, as Chairperson of the Council, the WCO Secretary General said, “I am convinced that we will benefit greatly from the new Chairperson’s experience, balanced approach and ability to lead strategic change, which is of immense value to the Members and Secretariat of the WCO.”

The WCO Secretary General also signed the following MoUs in the presence of delegates: one with Mexico Customs on the establishment of a WCO Regional Customs Laboratory in Mexico; another with Turkey

Customs on the establishment of a WCO Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTTC) in Ankara; and a final one with US Customs and Border Protection on the establishment of a WCO RDTTC in the United States.

In addition, on the sidelines of the Council Sessions, the WCO Secretary General and China Customs signed a revised MoU regarding the WCO Regional Training Centre (RTC), expanding the RTC in Shanghai to also cover the Customs Training Centre in Xiamen, which is another example of the value attached to regional WCO bodies.

Delegates witnessed Burkina Faso deposit its instrument of accession to the revised International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures, known as the Revised Kyoto Convention; a global WCO standard for Customs modernization, which is recognized internationally as a key trade facilitation tool. Burkina Faso is the 111th Contracting Party.

The WCO also celebrated its 65th anniversary at a special reception; here it should be noted that the Organization had grown from 17 Members who attended the inaugural session in 1953 to over 180 Members in 2017, making the WCO the global centre of Customs excellence and expertise, and an important player in the international trade landscape. On this occasion, an alumni reunion of the WCO-Japan Career Development Programme was organized. The projects submitted by former Professional Associates as a precondition for participation at the reunion were evaluated by the WCO Senior Management and the Donor. The WCO Secretary General and the Director General of Japan Customs handed the awards to the winners during this anniversary event.

On a lighter note, the annual WCO Photo Competition was won by Kyrgyzstan Customs for a photo depicting a Customs officer checking the shipping documents of a truck at Torugart, the Kyrgyz-Chinese road border at 3,550 metres above sea level; the photos submitted by WCO Members will be displayed at WCO Headquarters and on the WCO Web site to mark the wide and varied contribution of Customs to society across the globe.

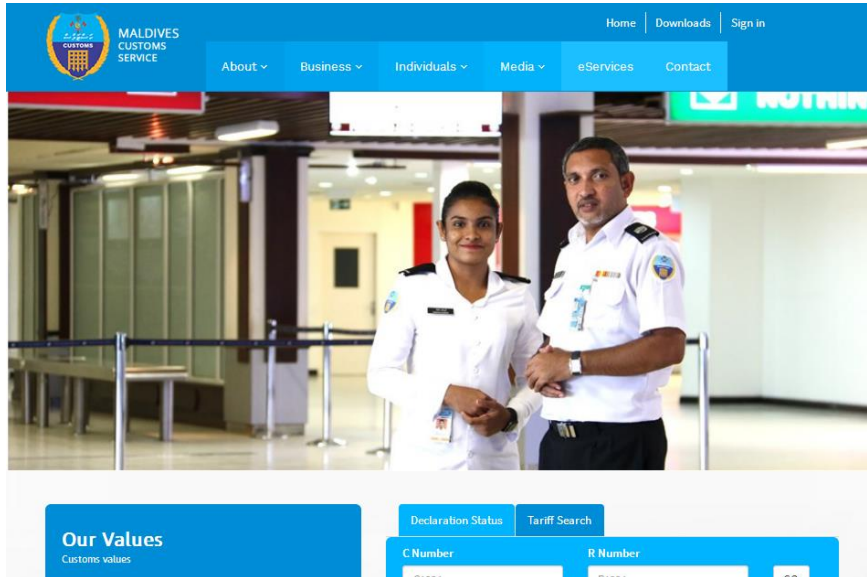
Source: WCO



IN FOCUS

MALDIVES CUSTOMS NEW WEBSITE AND E-CUSTOMS LAUNCH

In a Ceremony held on 20th August 2017, to mark the 127th Anniversary the website with new features and design and e-Customs was launched by the Commissioner General of Customs Ibrahim Shareef Mohamed.



The new Website includes various e-service that are offered in relation to cargo and vessel clearance, while newly developed e-Customs provides comprehensive IT solution for internal clearance process including vessel, procurement, inventory management, document processing etc.

The newly developed website has features to check declaration status and tariff code and import duty rates

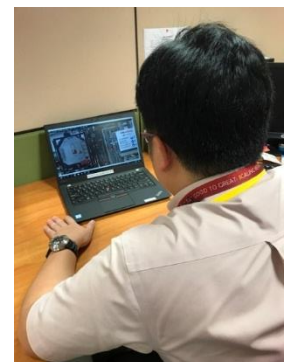
online. It also includes added services like status on international vessel arrivals, currency converter, online payment, Customs Portal etc.

LIVE STREAMING OF DENATURING OPERATIONS IN SINGAPORE CUSTOMS

As a measure to safeguard revenue, Customs' supervision is required for denaturing operations involving liquors at customs licensed premises. Faced with increasing volume of such denaturing operations and the challenge of limited manpower, Singapore Customs needs to innovate and do more with less.

To achieve a balance of effective regulation with minimal compliance costs for business as well as to better manage the increasing volume of denaturing operations, Singapore Customs decided to explore the use of technology to streamline the supervision process. Working with Oiltanking Odfjell Terminal Singapore Pte Ltd ("OOTS"), the idea of Customs performing remote supervision for denaturing operations through live streaming was mooted and subsequently implemented. With this implementation, Singapore Customs no longer has to deploy physical manpower at the premises of OOTS to supervise denaturing operations. This has brought about manpower and cost savings for both Singapore Customs and OOTS, allowing Singapore Customs to continue to facilitate business operations without compromising on regulatory requirements.

The initiative was awarded the Public Sector Pro-Enterprise Initiative Award in recognition of Singapore Customs' innovative and pro-enterprise mindset to serve our businesses better.



IN FOCUS

CUSTOMS@SG MOBILE APP – PAYING TAXES MADE EASY PEASY!

The Customs@SG mobile app is an innovation by Singapore Customs to provide travellers with an easy-to-use self-service facility to transact with Customs anywhere, anytime.

Officially launched by Singapore Customs in April 2016, travellers and traders who need to make duty and Goods and Services Tax payments for their overseas purchases or imported commercial goods can do so via the Customs@SG mobile app. The app also offers other features, such as Tip-Off and Feedback module, which allows members of the public to provide tip-offs on suspected illegal cigarette peddling activities instantaneously, and to provide feedback or enquiries to Singapore Customs. Customs-related information for travellers is also made available in the app, making it a one stop-comprehensive kit.

The use of Customs@SG challenged the conventional way of transacting over Customs tax payment counters, bringing about improvements and efficiency to work processes at the checkpoints. Travellers and traders enjoy greater convenience as they no longer need to make a detour to the Customs tax payment counter to pay their taxes. The new process also presents efficiency gains for Singapore Customs and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) as fewer travellers are approaching ICA officers at Red Channel or Customs officers manning Customs Tax Payment Office to declare and make tax payment.

Customs@SG had won several innovation awards, with the most recent one in May 2017 - Excellence in Public Service Award (ExPSA) 2017: Best Practice Award (Regulation). The Best Practice Awards recognise agencies that have implemented innovative and effective practices or programmes in area that are important to the Public Service, and support the identification and sharing of best practices among the Public Service.

Customs@SG is available for download on Apple Store and Google Play Store. An internet version of the application is also available for users. For more information, please visit bit.ly/customsapp or scan the QR code below.



SRI LANKA CUSTOMS LAUNCHES ONLINE PAYMENT PLATFORM FOR CUSTOMS DECLARATIONS

Established more than 200 years ago in 1809, Sri Lanka Customs is one of the oldest Customs administrations in the world. In their quest to be a leading promoter of advanced technology driven Customs operations in the region, Sri Lanka Customs created history by implementing a state-of-the-art online payment platform for Customs payments in partnership with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. This landmark initiative was ceremonially inaugurated by Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, State Minister of Finance

and Mass Media and Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy, Governor of the Central Bank at a historic event held at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel on the 20th July, 2017.

Prior to launching this revolutionary platform, only the importers/exporters who maintained their bank accounts at the two state banks, Bank of Ceylon and Peoples Bank, were able to make direct Customs payments online. Other importers/exporters who maintained their accounts at other banks had to go through a tedious process of having to obtain a pay order at a cost of Rs. 250/- from their bank, take it physically to a branch of the two state banks and get another pay order from the State Bank with Sri Lanka Customs as the beneficiary. In the new initiative, importers/exporters receive a cost benefit as their bank would only charge a nominal fee of Rs. 50/- to make the Customs payments, irrespective of the value of



the transaction. This is the fee currently levied by any bank to make a real-time fund transfer to another bank based on a directive issued by the Central Bank to cap the maximum customer fee to the above amount. The new system would totally eliminate the previous inefficient payment process that resulted in unnecessary delays and impacted the businesses of the importers/exporters.

In order to address a long-felt need of the importers/exporters, Sri Lanka Customs embarked on an ambitious project with the approval of the monetary board and support of the Central Bank who is the authority in approving and regulating any payment system in Sri Lanka. With this ground breaking initiative by the Sri Lanka Customs, the importers/exporters who maintain their bank accounts at any bank can now make Customs payments via their banks' online banking facility.

This initiative was taken as a result of Sri Lanka Customs requesting the support of the Central Bank to facilitate the importers/exporters to make online Customs payments on a real-time basis from any bank in the country. Subsequently, based on a directive from the Central Bank and with the approval of the monetary board, LankaClear (Pvt) Ltd. implemented LankaPay Online Payment Platform (LPOPP). This online payment platform will facilitate online Customs payments from all commercial banks. LPOPP has been designed to communicate with SL Custom's ASYCUDA system on one side while the same Payment Platform will also be the front end for the participating Banks of LankaClear's Common Electronic Fund Transfer Switch (CEFTS) to liaise with SL Customs.

The customers can now directly connect to their respective bank via any channel connected to CEFTS (Internet, Mobile, ATM or Over the Counter) to make the required payment to Customs. Further, these payments will be credited on a real-time and 24 X 7 basis using CEFTS to the designated SL Custom's bank accounts at Bank of Ceylon or Peoples Bank. LankaClear system provides SL Customs with the required payment confirmation details on a real-time basis while the relevant reports and other information to be provided had also been agreed upon mutually for reconciliation purposes. The settlement of the payment between the two state banks and other commercial banks would be via Central banks Real Time Gross Settlement System (RTGS) and will be under the direct regulation and supervision of the Central Bank. LankaClear payment systems are Payment Card Industry – Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) Version 3.2 and ISO 27001:2013 certified to ensure the highest level of security compliance. These standards are internationally recognized and widely accepted set of policies and procedures intended to ensure the security of payment transactions. The initial system went live with the participation of Bank of Ceylon, Sampath bank and Commercial Bank while the seven other banks who have already been certified with the new system would also go live shortly.

Commenting on this ground breaking initiative, Mr. Chulananda Perera, Director General of Sri Lanka Customs stated “I am really proud of this achievement by the Information Communication Technology division of Sri Lanka Customs who spearheaded this national initiative and worked tirelessly with the Central Bank, LankaClear and the commercial banks to ensure that a robust and a reliable system was implemented. This was one of our key initiatives and fulfills a long awaited requirement of all our traders. Sri Lanka Customs have strived to improve efficiency in all our processes to provide an enhanced service to importers/exporters and general public and reaching this milestone was yet another positive step in this direction.”

NEWS FROM THE REGION

REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF AFGHAN CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT



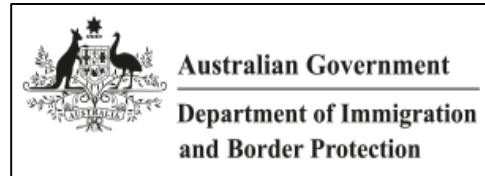
It is an irrefutable fact that the development of statehood in Afghanistan, the accomplishments we have made in the inner and outer policy, economic and social fields are linked with distinguished neighboring countries.

In addition, Afghan Customs Department (ACD) has signed Customs to Customs Mutual Administrative Assistance Agreement with Republic of Tajikistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Turkey and People's Republic of China in order to facilitate the trade and transit. ACD has also started negotiations for signing the Customs mutual cooperation agreements (CMAAs) with the Government of the India, Government of the United Arab Emirate (U.A.E), Republic of Uzbekistan, Republic of Turkmenistan, Republic of Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, and Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Afghanistan recognizes the importance of regional integration and bilateral trade which will enable Customs administration to improve Customs operational efficiency, facilitate trade flow, improve revenue collection, reduce cross border smuggling, fight corruption and illegal trade.

AUSTRALIA'S PARTICIPATION IN OPERATION IRENE II

From 17 July – 4 August 2017, the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection participated in the World Customs Organisation Operation IRENE II which targeted small arms and light weapons illegally traded and transported through the air cargo, sea cargo, aviation and international mail streams.



During the operation, there were six detections of small arms and light weapons at the Australian border. Details of these detections will be forwarded to the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office Asia/Pacific to share with member countries.

Sharing these details with member countries aims to improve knowledge gaps of the small arms and light weapons market in the Asia/Pacific region. Australia remains committed to combatting illegal trade in our region.

GOLD SEIZURES BY BANGLADESH CUSTOMS

Some 570 kilograms of gold ornaments confiscated from Apan Jewellers have been deposited into the Bangladesh Bank. Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID) chief Moinul Khan said their detectives officially confiscated the gold and 7,369 diamond ornaments worth around Tk 2.7 billion earlier in August.

Tk 6.74 million in cash, which was also confiscated in the five outlets of the Apan Jewellers, was submitted to the central bank. The CIID said in a statement around 500kg of gold and diamond ornaments were seized and kept under Apan Jewellers' custody after raiding the five showrooms on May 14 and 15 following initial investigations into specific allegations of smuggling against the jewellers.

The ornaments were apparently smuggled goods because the owners could not show valid documents of the procurement of those gold neither could they give any logical and acceptable explanation, CIID chief Moinul said. He stated that 70kg more gold ornaments, including 21kg hidden in a secret chamber in its locker in the Gulshan outlet, were found along with the previously seized ones in the shops on Sunday.



"These will be kept in the Bangladesh Bank's vault and could be seized by the state once the case is disposed of. Measures will also be taken against the owners for dodging duty and related offences," Moinul added.

Representatives of Bangladesh Jewellers Samity or Bajus, along with police and RAB, helped the customs seize and transport the gold and gems. Customs detectives interrogated the three owners of Apan Jewellers, Dildar Ahmed and his brothers Gulzar Ahmed and Azad Ahmed, twice following the raids. Khan had said earlier the owners came up with some photocopied documents showing that they 'procured' the gold - 200g each from 200 people who had brought it in under the baggage rule.

"But they failed to produce any documents or receipts that show they had bought the gold from them."

"Also, gold brought in under baggage rule is for personal consumption; it cannot be used for commercial purpose. They somehow collected these documents in an attempt to hide their misdeeds."

The owners were first interrogated on May 17 when they sought 15 days to produce the valid documents. They failed to meet the deadline and sought more time to gather papers. They were given the new deadline of May 30 to appear before the customs intelligence directorate, but they failed again to produce valid documents.

ONE WINDOW SERVICE FOR TAX, CUSTOMS



The Ministry of Economy and Finance has officially launched a single window service to streamline work across several departments.

The service is intended to benefit government agencies, private sector firms and the public on issues including tax collection and customs duties. Anthony Galliano, founder and CEO of Cambodian Investment Management, said the single window service will support trade policies and initiatives in accordance with international agreements with ASEAN and the World Trade Organization.

"Given their crucial function in tax collection and regulation and customs and excise, it is pragmatic that the Ministry of Economy and Finance takes leadership in realisation of this policy ambition by the

government,” he said. According to Mr. Galliano, Cambodia has made steady progress in reforming international trade processes by modernising information management systems and streamlining processes and procedures. However, the country’s international trade procedures, still involve manual tasks requiring submission of documents in multiple copies at the various regulatory government agencies involved in international trade.

“This creates a layer of complexity and delay to border clearance procedures and act as a costly impediment to the private sector, negatively influencing the trade and investment environment.

“A single window service would facilitate faster and more transparent international trade procedures reduce costs and provide consistency and certainty to the total process,” he said.

“Moving processes from manual to digital, eliminating human interaction, and standardising data and procedures will increase productivity, lessen the opportunity for corruption and improve the country’s international image and standing.

“Linking the various functions in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and in end multiple ministries, will be a vast improvement and competitive advantage.” Preap Kol, executive director for Transparency International Cambodia, said the move heralds a more transparent way of working and reducing corruption.

“We welcome this initiative,” he said, adding that the Ministry of Interior’s existing single window service had already proven a success.

A Ministry of Economy and Finance statement said the public will be able to check the cost of services online before coming to the single window.

“The Ministry of Economy and Finance firmly hope the official launch of the single window service will play a critical role in enhancing work procedures, making it easier for the public to access services in a smooth and efficient way,” the statement said.

“People will also be able to submit recommendations on the service and give feedback to us.”

There will be three single window offices within the ministry and three outside. Those inside will be located in the procurement department, the financial industry department and the national accounting council. The external services will be at the General Department of Taxation, the General Department of Customs and Excise, and the National Treasury General Department.

MINISTER YU GUANGZHOU SIGNS ACTION PLAN ON STRATEGIC COOPERATION WITH SWEDISH CUSTOMS GENERAL DIRECTOR

On June 27, Minister Yu Guangzhou attended the opening ceremony of the 2017 Summer Davos, the China-Sweden heads of government meeting, and signed the *Action Plan On Strategic Cooperation between the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China and Swedish Customs of the Kingdom of Sweden for the Years of 2018-2020* with Therese Mattson, General Director of Swedish Customs, in the witness of Premier Li Keqiang and Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven in Dalian.



The action plan identifies priorities for cooperation in the coming three years including digitalization and innovation of the customs environment, customs to business cooperation, customs oversight on and services to cross-border e-commerce, risk management, capacity building and commercial fraud crackdown, which will play a positive role in promoting substantive cooperation between the two customs administrations.

RAPISCAN MACHINE FOR FIJI

The Government of the State of Israel donated a Rapiscan machine to the Fijian Government on the 25th of July, 2017. The machine will be used by the Bio Security Authority of Fiji and the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) at the borders.

“Transnational security issues are emerging as key security challenges for the Asia-Pacific states and are also emerging as the dark and violent side of globalization. Rapid economic, technological and social changes have brought an unprecedented era of beneficent international trade, migration, and communication throughout the world. But such changes have also produced a much more sinister by-product in the form of international crime, terrorism, human smuggling, arms trafficking, environmental degradation and infectious disease,” said FRCS Chief Executive Officer Mr. Visvanath Das.



Mr. Das, who is also the Vice-Chair for the World Customs Organization’s Asia-Pacific Region further stressed that the Asia-Pacific region is a major crossroads for transnational crime activities and international criminal syndicates.

“Each day, millions of bags and parcels across the globe are inspected—in airports, at country borders, at post offices and other government buildings and even at sporting and other events. Inspection at these locations occurs in the public eye, which means that it has to be effective and it has to be efficient.”

“Rapiscan products deliver high quality results; their baggage and parcel scanning solutions are versatile to adapt to different screening scenarios and alert upon the presence of explosives and narcotics. For a number of years, Fiji has been termed as the hub of the Pacific and at the same time has also been used as transit point for delivery of illegal and dangerous drugs, as well as other banned items. With the installation of a Rapiscan machine, we hope that our detection rate will also increase.”

Israel Ambassador to Fiji, Mr. Tibor Schlosser stressed that the Government of the State of Israel is happy to assist Fiji with the Rapiscan machine which has become a necessary tool in this globalized world.

“Unfortunately the security challenges are rising in the world. In our globalized world it is not only technology that is accessible to everyone but unfortunately terrorism also is a global issue. The threat is there and its imminent.

The machine will also assist Fiji in terms of its Tourism industry which is the backbone of the country. They will feel safe to travel to Fiji.”

The Rapiscan machine will be used at the Nadi International Airport by the Bio-Security Authority of Fiji and the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service.



HONG KONG CUSTOMS MARKS THE NEW WORLD RECORD OF IVORY SEIZURE

On 4 July 2017, Hong Kong Customs made a successful crack on illegal ivory trade by seizing 7,031 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks valued at over HK\$70M from a sea container arriving into Hong Kong from Malaysia declaring to contain frozen fish. Customs officers inspected the suspicious container and discovered the massive seizure of raw ivory tusks were buried underneath piles of frozen fish. The mega seizure effected by Hong Kong Customs also makes the new world record in the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) database in terms of raw ivory tusks seized from a single case.

The successful interception of subject container was attributed to the effective application of risk profiling techniques of Customs officers. By identifying the most crucial risk indicators, Customs officers picked out the subject container for inspection among a myriad of containers coming from around the world to Hong Kong. Among other risk indicators, the container was a refrigerated container coming from Port Klang, Malaysia, a relatively high risk transshipment hub for illicit wildlife products. As smuggling through refrigerated containers has become a prevailing smuggling trend recently, our experienced Customs officers were further alerted by the declared weight of the refrigerated container which told us that the container was only half-loaded. Given the handling cost of a refrigerated container was much higher than

a general container, it was not a common trade practice for traders to ship a half-loaded refrigerated container with low-valued frozen fish. As all the risk indicators pointed towards a highly suspicious smuggling activity, the container was therefore detained for customs inspection by Hong Kong Customs. As a result of customs inspection, a total of 7,031 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks valued at over HK\$70M were detected.



On 6 July 2017, a press conference was held by Hong Kong Customs about the seizure of 7,031 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks from a sea container arriving from Malaysia.

Hong Kong Customs has long been taking vigorous enforcement actions in combating transnational ivory and other wildlife trafficking activities. During the period from 2010 to 2013, a total of 17,683 kilogrammes of ivory seizure was detected by Hong Kong Customs from sea cargo. One of the significant cases took place on 18 July 2013 where Customs officers found 2,183 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks being covered up as wood planks in a sea container arriving Hong Kong from Togo.



On 18 July 2013, Hong Kong Customs seized 2,183 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks with an estimated market value of about HK\$17.5M from a sea container arriving Hong Kong from Togo.

Since 2014, “piecemeal smuggling tactics” have been observed in Hong Kong, i.e. smuggling small quantity of ivory at a time through air passenger baggage, air

cargoes or postal parcels. From 2014 to June 2017, Hong Kong Customs crashed 261 ivory smuggling cases with total seizure of 4,263 kilogrammes of ivory tusks and ivory products from air passage baggage, air cargoes and postal parcels.



On 10 June 2014, Hong Kong Customs found 790 kilogrammes of ivory tusks and ivory products with an estimated market value of HK\$7.9M from a passenger’s baggage arriving from Angola at the Hong Kong International Airport.

As always, Hong Kong Customs would continue taking robust enforcement actions to combat and deter transnational wildlife trafficking activities by adopting the risk management approach, mounting joint operations and exchanging of intelligence with local and overseas enforcement counterparts.

HONG KONG CUSTOMS OFFICERS GIVE TESTIMONY IN TRIAL OF DRUG CASE AT U.S. COURT UNDER THE AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

Under the Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (the “Agreement”) between Hong Kong and the U.S., eight Hong Kong Customs officers gave testimony in the trial of a transnational drug trafficking case at the U.S. District Court, Charlottesville, Virginia between 23 and 29 June 2017.

In early to mid-2015, Hong Kong Customs seized a total of 2.1 kg of dibutylone and alpha-PVP (both are stimulant drugs of cathinone class) from two transshipment consignments destined for the U.S. The case information was shared with the US authorities, which facilitated their investigation into a U.S. based drug syndicate. As a result, the U.S. authorities detected the syndicate’s involvement in smuggling more than 100 kg of drugs from 2011 to 2015 and arrested a total of eight syndicate members, including the mastermind, for the offences of drug trafficking conspiracy, importing controlled substances and money laundering. All exhibits of the two Hong Kong cases were produced under the Agreement to the U.S. for

court prosecution. In addition, eight Hong Kong Customs officers and two chemists of the Government Laboratory gave direct evidence on the drugs seized in Hong Kong in the trial in the U.S. between 23 and 29 June 2017. Finally, the eight arrestees were convicted, pending sentence.



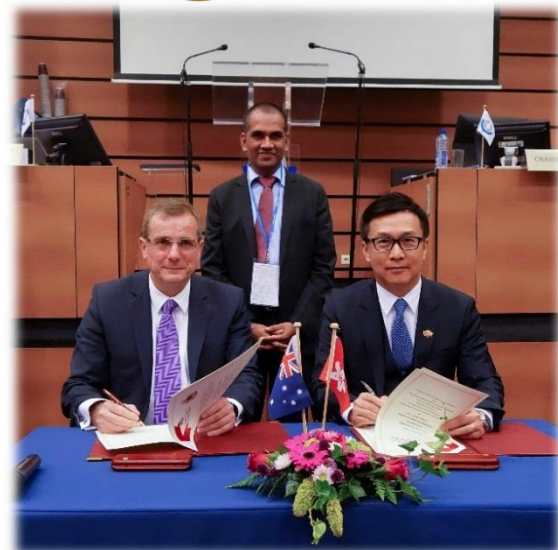
The success of the investigation and prosecution in this case strongly demonstrates the effectiveness of the cooperation between the two jurisdictions in combating transnational drug trade.

HONG KONG - AUSTRALIA AEO MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT CONNECTING A SECURE GATEWAY IN OCEANIA

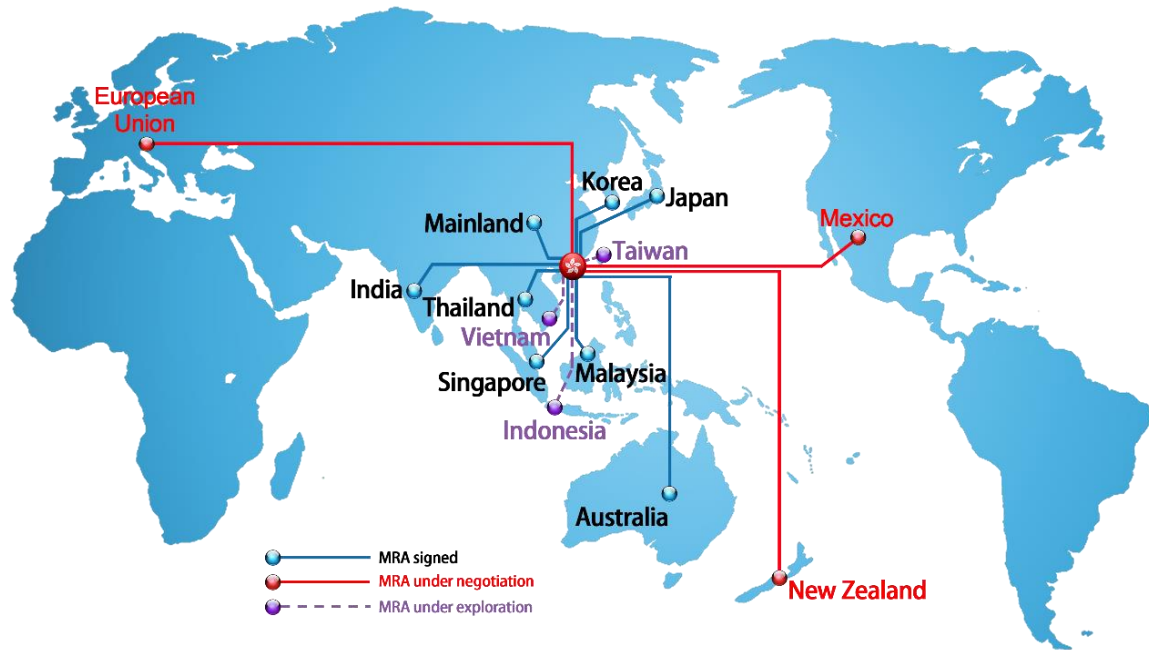
Hong Kong Customs has been endeavouring to foster trade relationships with our major trading partners by developing AEO Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) to cement our shared interests and values.

On 6 July, 2017, the Commissioner of Hong Kong Customs, Mr. Hermes Tang, signed an MRA with the Acting Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, Mr. Michael Outram, to mutually recognize and provide reciprocal clearance facilitation to trusted traders in Hong Kong and Australia. This is the first MRA with our Oceanic counterparts and the eighth MRA with other Customs administrations after the ones signed with the Mainland, India, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Japan.

These MRAs demonstrate Hong Kong Customs' commitment to stepping up international cargo security whilst strive for more overseas



clearance facilitation to our trusted traders for strengthening Hong Kong's role as an international trade and logistics hub.



Riding on the opportunities under the “Belt and Road” Initiative, Hong Kong Customs has also been exploring the possibility of developing MRAs with the “Belt and Road” economies to help our HKAEOs gaining access to the new markets and enhancing their overseas competitiveness. Besides, our MRA discussion with Mexico, the European Union and New Zealand are in good progress. We look forward to concluding more MRAs with our major trading partners in the near future.

COOPERATION WITH EXPRESS COURIERS

ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL INFRINGING GOODS

The Hong Kong Customs is the sole agency responsible for the suppression of infringing crimes, i.e. trade mark counterfeiting and copyright piracy. We exert endeavours to explore various methods to cope with the challenge of soaring volume of express parcel arising from the flourishing of e-commerce business. We would like to share one of our best practices by partnering with the express courier industry to curb transnational infringing goods. In gist, major cross-national express couriers all have their own security check process. Why don't we engage their security process to give an extra watch-out for contrabands violating customs laws, including counterfeit goods and pirated goods?

Hong Kong is one of the leading logistics hub in Asia. Its highly efficient logistics services may be exploited to smuggle counterfeit products such as leather goods, apparels, electronic goods, pharmaceutical products and footwear, etc. mainly in the form of express parcels from neighbouring places of Hong Kong to overseas destinations such as the Europe countries and the US.

To foster a closer partnership with the industry in the fight against cross boundary contrabands, Hong Kong Customs signed memos of understanding (MOU) with five major express courier operators¹ in March

¹ DHL, FedEx, SF Express, TNT & UPS

2015. Officers dedicated to IPR enforcement did lots of outreaching to these express couriers in a bid to enhance their profiling techniques for detecting and intercepting contraband goods. For instance, counterfeit medicines may appear in the X-ray image as regularly oriented plastic beads, or tens of mobile phones stuck together in a single plastic bag may be suggestive of counterfeit phones.



The proactive referral of suspicious parcels by express couriers, coordinated with Customs officers' selection of consignments with risk profiling, resulted in the detection of 71 cases with total seizure quantity of 48,422 numbers from June to mid-August 2017, which represented an increase of 163% in the number of cases but a drop of 43% in seizure

quantity respectively when compared to those of the preceding three months (March to May). This reflected a change of modus operandi adopted by the IPR criminals upon the strike of the joint operations. Infringers now tend to smuggle a relatively small quantity of counterfeit goods via courier traffic so as to reduce the substantial loss of large parcels by our vigorous enforcement action. Hong Kong Customs will keep a close watch on the trend and continue to reach out to our partners to deliver a substantial blow to the IPR criminals.

JAPAN AND MEXICO SIGN MUTUAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT

On 10 August 2017, the Mexican Tax Administration Service signed an Agreement with Japan on Mutual Assistance and Cooperation in Customs Matters to strengthen existing information exchange schemes and cooperation mechanisms.

Under this Agreement, both countries commit to help each other in combating illegal foreign trade practices, such as undervaluation, by corroborating the authenticity of documents and exchanging information on foreign trade operations, seizures of goods, detection and concealment methods for illicit goods, etc.



The WCO welcomes the signature of this Agreement and encourages all its Members, having regard to the special features of their geographical position and their national legislation, to examine the possibility of entering into bilateral, regional or international agreements with a view to further developing mutual administrative assistance in Customs matters.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF GST ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN INDIA

Vijay Singh Chauhan
Commissioner of Customs
Nhava Sheva, Mumbai

Ganesh Dutt Lohani
Commissioner
Tax Planning and Research Unit, New Delhi

GST and Trade

The roll out of Goods and Services Tax (GST) with effect from July 1, 2017 is a landmark reform in the area of indirect taxation in the country. Covering most of the indirect taxes levied on the domestic supply of goods and services by the Central and State Governments, it seeks to establish “One Tax One Nation One Market”. The impact of the introduction of GST in India, however, extends to export and import trade as well. Therefore, the impact of introduction of GST was felt at Jawahar Lal Nehru Custom House (JNCH) right at the dawn of July 1, 2017 with the first Bill of Entry filed under the new regime. It has been a month since then and the initial apprehensions of the trade and teething trouble of the Customs IT systems are behind us. Therefore, it is the appropriate time to look at the prospects of GST and assess its impact and implications on trans-border movement of goods, viewed from the JNCH perspective, which is the largest container port and biggest customs revenue earner in the country.

It has always been recognised that an efficient tax collection system should minimise the compliance cost and maximise the prospect of voluntary compliance. Looked at from this point of view, two recent developments are noteworthy. The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), to which India is also a signatory, came into force on February 22, 2017, the other being rollout of GST. The broad objective of TFA and GST is to facilitate trade and minimise the compliance burden, without adversely impacting revenue collection.

The Background of Taxation

There are two basic principles of taxation relating to export-import trade: first, there should be Countervailing Duty (CVD) on all imports, besides basic customs duty, to ensure level playing field to the domestic manufacturers/traders; and second, the exports should be free of domestic levies, i.e. they should be zero rated. Both the principles are based on sound economic logic and universally accepted. The Indian indirect taxation regime prior to the GST regime recognised both the principles, but fell significantly short in actual design. The new GST regime reflects a quantum jump in both these directions. Under the earlier regime, Additional duties of Customs, normally called as CVD (equal to the excise duty for the time being leviable on a like article if produced or manufactured in India) and Special Additional Duty (SAD) (additional duty as would counter-balance the sales tax, value added tax, local tax or any other charges for the time being leviable on a like article on its sale, purchase or transportation in India) were levied as duties of Customs on imported goods in terms of the provisions of section 3 of the Customs Tariff Act, 1975.

In view of the fact that central excise duty was levied only on manufactured goods and the rate of SAD was capped at 4 percent, the benefit of Countervailing Duty available to the domestic trade was not complete. This had the effect of putting some of the sectors of the domestic industry at a relative disadvantage vis-à-vis foreign suppliers.

Changes in the New Regime

The said section 3 of the Customs Tariff Act has been amended vide the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act, 2017 to provide for the levy of integrated tax at such rate, not exceeding 40 percent, as leviable under section 5 of the Integrated Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017 on a like article on its supply in India. Section 7(2) of the IGST Act, 2017 provides that supply of goods imported into the territory of India, till they cross customs frontiers of India, shall be treated as supply of goods in the course of inter-state trade or commerce. Similar provision for service is contained in section 7(4). The Central Government has notified different rates of IGST on supply of different goods and services, with the standard rate being 18 percent. This arrangement ensures complete countervailing of the domestic indirect taxes on all commodities under the GST regime, which is expected to provide a boost to domestic industry and trade. It would also give a boost to “Make in India” campaign as the relative disadvantage to the domestic industry stands removed under GST and the export procedure becomes significantly simpler.

It is also expected that collection of IGST at the point of import and integration of the Customs IT system with the Goods & Service Tax Network will facilitate trade in terms of smooth passage of Input Tax Credit (ITC) and will also result in improved compliance and tax collections.

Implications for Imports

The imposition of IGST on imports is expected to result in significant increase in collection of duties in comparison to the revenues collected under CVD plus SAD regime on account of three factors: firstly, the standard IGST rate of 18 percent is slightly higher than the standard central excise rate plus 4 percent SAD; secondly, IGST at different rates are leviable on non-manufactured goods, which did not attract CVD earlier; and thirdly, the base assessable value for the purpose of calculation of amount of IGST is wider than that under CVD. Therefore, it is expected that the revenue collection under IGST head on imports would exceed the “CVD plus SAD” under the earlier regime.

This expectation is borne out by the revenue trend witnessed at JNCH during the month of July, 2017. The total Customs revenue during July, 2017 was higher by 48.2 percent over the corresponding period of previous year (COPPY). However, this substantial increase in customs revenue after roll out of GST should be seen in the light of slowdown in imports and customs revenue during the month of June, 2017. It is seen that the customs revenue at JNCH during June, 2017 was 0.2 percent lower than COPPY. Therefore, part of the increase in revenue during July, 2017 could be on account of bounce back of trade after smooth rollout of GST.

In view of the reliance on robust IT based system under GST and consequent improvement in voluntary compliance, there is a strong expectation regarding diminution in cases of undervaluation. While there is anecdotal evidence to support this expectation at JNCH, as seen in the case of certain select items of readymade garments, electronic goods and food items, it requires a more detailed analysis of the trade data for a longer period of time to reach definitive conclusions regarding the impact of GST on Customs revenues and improvement in voluntary compliance.

The IGST revenues from imports collected at JNCH would be available as ITC during subsequent supply of goods, be it inter-state or intra-state. Therefore, the net impact of increase in revenue collections on imports on the fiscal position of the Central and State governments cannot be quantified at this juncture, even though it is safe to conclude that imposition of IGST on imports has imparted buoyancy to overall

indirect taxes collection in the country. Further, it is also certain that restricting drawback claims to “Basic Customs duty” only will also improve the indirect tax collection.

Implications for Exports

The introduction of GST is expected to provide significant benefits to the exporter community as well. One of the important benefits is that under the GST regime, exports are truly and effectively zero rated. This wasn't the case earlier for various reasons, for instance, merchant exports were not in the ITC chain, certain taxes post removal services used to get embedded for technical reasons, and taxes like Central Sales Tax (CST), luxury taxes, octroi etc., constituted a significant cost in the supply chain.

The GST facility of “one state one registration” as against earlier factory wise registration brings in enormous simplicity for exporters, as it smoothenes the ITC chain a great deal. Further, in large number of cases, exporters may not even be required to formally claim refunds of accumulated ITC as they would have avenues to utilise it even without having to claim refund.

In addition, there is a major simplification of export process in so far as clearances from domestic tariff area is concerned. Earlier, different and complex procedures were to be followed by exporters. In Central Excise, exporters were to file ARE1 (Application for Removal of Excisable Goods), furnish bond etc. and in states there were Form H or Form I etc. Obtaining these forms and subsequent reconciliation process imposed significant compliance burden. Now there is uniform simplified procedure all across the country and this is further facilitated as any procedure that is prescribed by Central Board of Excise and Customs is sufficient.

Refund of Duties

The process of obtaining refund of duties paid on exported goods or claiming any other export incentives has also become a lot easier. Implementation of a near real time electronic interface between GST portal and ICES (Indian Customs EDS System) ensures that exporters do not have to file any further documents to claim these benefits. This is in contrast to the earlier procedure for rebate claims, documentation required for refunds and separate filing of refund claims with state VAT authorities. These facilities, coupled with single interface for exporters, ensure that all incentives and refunds of central and state taxes flow to the exporter from a centralised agency.

On the process part, getting the “job work” done has become much simpler in GST as there is minimal procedure, except for the requirement of filing a quarterly statement. Further, the earlier disputes relating to manpower supply services vs manufacture are no longer germane.

In a similar way, service exports have been simplified a great deal in so far as claiming refunds are concerned. Earlier, service exporters had to face cumbersome processes while claiming such refunds, which entailed furnishing various documents.

Concluding Remarks

Therefore, the experience of one month at JNCH shows that the roll out of GST has been rather smooth and the trade has welcomed it overwhelmingly. The Customs department has acted proactively and handheld the trade to tide over the initial circumspection. The growth in revenues has been expectedly buoyant and there are early signs of improved voluntary tax compliance.

The digital platform of the GST regime coupled with the Customs EDI System would generate immense amount of granular data relating to an array of economic activities and transactions that would provide a huge opportunity to statisticians, economists and policy makers to work towards an evidence based economic policy.

SEIZURES BY INDIAN CUSTOMS

JUNE – JULY 2017

Cases for the month of June, 2017:

Gold

- 1. Seizure of Gold Bars concealed inside the hollow metallic frame:** On 13.05.2017, DRI in a rare case of gold being smuggled in containerized cargo through sea-route, intercepted a truck coming from Mundra Port in Chander Vihar, Delhi and recovered 44 gold bars of 1 Kg each having foreign marking which were concealed inside hollow metallic frame used for packing a Poultry Egg Incubator. The recovered 44 pieces of Gold bars of foreign origin totally weighing 44 Kg valued at Rs 12.34 Crore was seized and one person was arrested.
- 2. Seizure of Gold Bars concealed inside the hollow iron frame:** On 21.5.2017, consequent to seizure of 44 Kgs gold of foreign origin smuggled by the same importer. DRI kept surveillance on other import consignment of by the same importer. On examination of one such container of the said importer on 21.05.2017, it was found that the said container contained Automatic Poultry Egg Incubator machine packed with wooden planks. On opening the wooden box, an iron frame was found supporting the automatic egg incubator machine. On cutting the hollow iron frame, total of 52 Kgs gold bars of 1 Kg each was recovered. In total 96 Kgs of gold valued at Rs 27.29 Crore was seized.
- 3. Seizure of Gold jewellery concealed inside the central axle of the pedal portion of the bicycle and handle portion of Auto Socket Wrench:** On 29.05.2017, DRI recovered crude gold in various forms including crude gold jewellery totally weighing 5.905 Kgs valued at Rs. 1.72 Crore including cover goods from a gold smuggling syndicate which was using gullible passengers, flying to India from Singapore and Dubai, to smuggle gold by concealment in various household articles, and they were receiving the articles from the passengers outside the respective airports and then retrieving the gold by dismantling the goods at certain premises. DRI officers also intercepted three passengers at Chennai International and Domestic Airports. Examination of the said persons and their baggage resulted into recovery of 753.9 gms of gold valued at Rs 0.22 crores which were concealed inside the central axle of the pedal portion of the bicycle and handle portion of Auto Socket Wrench. The recovered Gold totally weighing 6.658 Kgs equivalent to Rs 1.94 Crore was seized and three persons were arrested.
- 4. Seizure of Gold Bars concealed under the floor mats and front passengers seat of the car:** On 29.05.2017, officers of DRI intercepted three persons in a car at the parking area of the Trichy International Airport and recovered three small pouches and two small packets concealed under the floor mats and front passengers seat of the car along with Indian currency. The said three persons had received gold bars brought by certain passengers/carriers who arrived from Singapore by Tiger Air Flight No. 2664 at International Airport, Trichy and were waiting for the next flight from Singapore to receive the smuggled gold from other passengers/carriers. Based on the further input, the DRI officers

subsequently intercepted four more passengers who arrived by subsequent Tiger Air flight No. 2668 and recovered four small pouches in the hand baggage, one carried by each passenger. On examination of the pouches and packets recovered from the car and the passengers, DRI recovered foreign marked gold bars and cut pieces of foreign marked gold bars totally weighing 6.59 Kgs valued at Rs 1.93 crores and Indian currency amounting to Rs 1 lakh. The recovered gold, Indian currency and the car was seized and six persons were arrested.

5. **Seizure of Gold ornaments:** On 23.06.2017, the officers of CISF intercepted a lady passenger at Security Hall area of Agartala Airport. Personal search of the said lady passenger resulted in recovery of 18 pieces of gold bangles collectively weighing 1034.28 gms valued at Rs 0.29 crores. Subsequently, the officers of Customs Division, Agartala seized the gold ornaments and the lady passenger was arrested.
6. **Seizure of Gold bar and cut pieces of gold concealed in the shoes:** On 28.06.2017, the officers of DRI and the officers of Air Intelligence Unit intercepted one passenger on his arrival at NSCBI Airport, Kolkata by Air India Express Flight No. IX 921. In person examination of passenger resulted into recovery of gold bar and cut pieces of gold of foreign origin collectively weighing 3.29 kgs valued at Rs. 0.97 crores concealed in his shoes. The recovered foreign origin gold was seized and one person was arrested.
7. **Seizure of Gold biscuit:** On 29.06.2017, the officers of Air Intelligence Unit intercepted the Assistant Immigration officer of Trichy Airport and recovered 15 gold biscuit of foreign origin totally weighing 1.499 kgs valued at Rs 0.44 crores. The said gold was handed over to him by a passenger who arrived at Trichy airport from Kuala Lumpur by Air Asia flight No. AK29. The recovered gold was seized and both the immigration officer and passenger were arrested.

Foreign Currency

8. **Seizure of Foreign Currency from hand baggage:** On 16.05.2017, the officers of DRI intercepted one Bangkok bound passenger, at departure hall, who was about to travel to Bangkok by Thai Air Asia flight FD 123 from Bangalore International Airport and recovered Foreign Currency equivalent to Rs. 1.14 Crore from his hand baggage. The recovered Foreign Currency equivalent to Rs 1.14 Crore was seized and three persons were arrested.
9. **Seizure of Foreign Currency concealed in Books/Periodicals:** On 31.05.2017, the officers of DRI intercepted two passengers at Chennai International Airport, when they were about to board for Singapore by Indigo Airlines Flight No. 6E51. Examination of their personal baggage resulted in recovery of assorted Foreign Currency equivalent to Rs 0.50 crores concealed in books, periodicals etc.
10. **Seizure of Foreign Currency:** On 05.06.2017, the officers of Air Intelligence Unit intercepted three passengers at Trichy International Airport and recovered and seized foreign currency equivalent to Rs 0.37 Crores.

Narcotics (Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances)

11. **Seizure of Pseudoephedrine, a Psychotropic substance:** On 09.06.2017, the officers of Air Intelligence Unit intercepted a passenger, holder of South African Passport who was bound for Johannesburg via Abu Dhabi by Ethihad Airlines flight. Examination of his hand-baggage resulted in recovery of total 15 Kg Pseudoephedrine, a Psychotropic substance, valued at Rs 0.12 crores. The case was handed over to Narcotics Control Bureau, Chennai.

12. Seizure of Methamphetamine tablets: On 23.06.2017, on the basis of specific information, the officers of the Customs intercepted two persons at Lakhimi Path, Beltola Tinali, Guwahati and recovered 20000 Nos. of Methamphetamine tablets, a Psychotropic substance valued at Rs 2 crores from their possession. Subsequently, the recovered drugs were seized and both the person were arrested.

13. Seizure of Methamphetamine and Pseudoephedrine: On 15.06.2017, DRI conducted simultaneous searches at a factory premises at Budhur, Red Hills, Chennai and godown premises at Mangadu, Chennai and busted about illegal manufacturing of Narcotic drugs. Search of the factory premises resulted in recovery of 3.065 Kgs of Methamphetamine and 1.305 Kgs of Pseudoephedrine. Simultaneous searches at godown premises, resulted in recovery of 11.01 Kgs of Methamphetamine, 55.505 Kgs of Pseudoephedrine and 90.825 Kgs of brown substances believed to be Heroin. In this case, ten persons were arrested.

Misc.

14. Seizure of Cigarettes, Protein Supplements, Steroids, Hormone Supplements, Branded Shoes, Mobile Phones in SKD condition, Watches etc.: On 05.06.2017, DRI examined 3 courier consignments and 4 general import consignments at Air Cargo Complex, NSCBI Airport, Kolkata. In the said consignments, the goods declared were low-valued items like footwear, stickers for garments, diapers etc. However, on examination of the said consignments, DRI recovered Cigarettes, Protein Supplements, Steroids, Hormone Supplements, Branded Shoes, Mobile Phones in SKD condition, Watches etc. and subsequently seized the same. The total value of the seized goods was around Rs 6.50 Crores.

IMPORT FRAUD CASES

15. UNDEREVALUATION / MISDECLARATION: DRI booked a case against a firm in Delhi who along with its associates firms, are importing PVC Resin Suspension Grade and Melamine from China by mis-declaring the same as Ammonium Sulphate and Ammonium Chloride to avoid payment of Anti-Dumping Duty of USD 147.96 per MT and USD 331 per MT, respectively. The total duty evasion estimated in the case is Rs 30 Crore and the importer has paid an amount of Rs 4.19 crore so far.

Cases for the month of July, 2017:

Gold:

1. Seizure of Gold concealed inside computerized embroidery machines: On 08.06.2017, DRI examined two imported computerized embroidery machines with the help of Videoscope "icapture" machine and recovered and seized concealed 19.6 Kg. of gold of foreign origin valued at ` 5.77 Crore along with two computerized embroidery machines in which the said gold was concealed. Two persons were arrested.

2. Seizure of Gold: On 28.06.2017, DRI recovered and seized 7.987 Kg. of gold valued at ` 2.32 Crore from two persons at C.I.T. Road of Kakuragachi area, Kolkata which was smuggled from Myanmar and was given to the said persons for delivery at Kolkata. The above said two persons were arrested.

3. Seizure of Gold Ingots concealed inside the mixer grinder: On 04.07.2017, Air Intelligence Unit recovered and seized 2 gold Ingots concealed inside the mixer grinder totally weighing 1.284kgs and valued at ` 0.37 Crore from a lady passenger at exit point of Customs arrival hall of Anna International

Airport, Chennai who had arrived from Sharjah by Air India flight No. AI 968. The recovered gold was seized and the lady passenger was arrested.

4. **Seizure of Gold Bars concealed in the baggage:** On 05.07.2017, Air Intelligence Unit at NSCBI Airport, Kolkata intercepted a passenger, who had arrived from Imphal by Indigo flight No. 6E-875, and recovered and seized 15 gold bars totally weighing 2.490 Kgs, valued at Rs. 0.71 Crores, concealed in his baggage. The said person was arrested.
5. **Seizure of Gold foil:** On 06.07.2017, the officers of Air Intelligence Unit intercepted two passengers at Trichy International Airport, Trichy who had arrived by Air India Express flight No. IX 612 and recovered & seized gold foil totally weighing 1.140 kgs valued at ` 0.32 Crore. Both the persons were arrested.
6. **Seizure of Gold Bars:** On 11.07.2017, DRI on rummaging Jet Airways Flight No. 9W-15, which arrived from Singapore at Chennai International Airport, recovered and seized unclaimed 2 kg. gold bars valued at ` 0.57 Crore kept pasted with the help of double sided adhesive tape inside a hollow chamber behind the tissue rolls at the side of the commode of the aircraft rear toilet.
7. **Seizure of Gold Bars concealed in motor of mixer:** On 13.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized 2 gold bars weighing 1.291 kgs valued at ` 0.38 Crore from one lady passenger who arrived from Abu Dhabi at RGI Airport, Shamshabad. The gold was concealed in motor of mixer and was recovered from checked in baggage. The lady passenger was arrested.
8. **Seizure of the smuggled Gold:** On 13.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized 25.792 Kgs gold valued at ` 7.29 Crore from an Indian National on his arrival at New Delhi Railway Station from Katihar, Bihar. During investigation, the accused confessed that he had received the smuggled gold at Birtanagar in Nepal and after receiving the consignment he crossed over into India through the Biratnagar-Jogbani border for handing over the same to others at New Delhi. The person was arrested.
9. **Seizure of Gold concealed inside the electric plate:** On 15.07.2017, Air Intelligence Unit recovered and seized 1.150 kgs of gold valued at ` 0.32 Crore from one passenger who had arrived from Riyadh by Saudi Arabia at Anna International Airport, Chennai. The said gold was concealed inside the electric plate. The passenger was arrested along with other two persons, who were waiting outside the airport, to receive the smuggled gold.
10. **Seizure of Gold:** On 16.07.2017 DRI recovered and seized 1.661 kgs. gold valued at ` 0.48 Crore from a passenger at Kamakhya Railway Station, Howrah. The said person was arrested.
11. **Seizure of Gold in solid cylindrical shape:** On 17.07.2017, Air Intelligence Unit recovered and seized 1.165 kgs of gold, in solid cylindrical shape, valued at ` 0.30 Crore, from a passenger at CSI, Airport, Mumbai who had arrived from Dubai. The said person was arrested.
12. **Seizure of the smuggled Gold Bars:** On 19.07.2017, DRI intercepted one person at Champhai, Mizoram and recovered and seized 30 pcs. of gold bars of foreign origin collectively weighing 4.98 Kg. valued at ` 1.28 Crore from his possession. The said gold was being smuggled into India from Myanmar. The person was arrested.
13. **Seizure of Gold:** On 22.07.2017, DRI examined a car at Sayalkudi town, District Ramnad and recovered and seized 10 Kg. foreign origin gold valued at ` 2.97 Crores alongwith the vehicle. The said gold was being smuggled from Sri Lanka through Ervadi coastal area of Ramnad district. From the investigation,



it was revealed that the said gold was collected from the mid-sea based on the GPS location and time provided by one Sri Lankan national. Four persons were arrested.

- 14. Seizure of Gold Bars:** On 22.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized foreign origin gold bars from a person weighing 3.599 Kg. valued at ` 1.03 Crores who was riding on a two-wheeler near Ramanathapuram Rameswaram. The said gold was being smuggled from Sri Lanka through Rameswaram Coast. The person was arrested.
- 15. Seizure of Gold:** On 22.07.2017, DRI recovered foreign origin gold, from a car near Sulur Air Force Station, Coimbatore, weighing 10 kg valued at ` 2.95 Crore. During the follow-up operations, additional 4 Kg of gold valued at ` 1.18 Crore along with Indian Currency of ` 6,09,700/- being sale proceeds of the smuggled gold were also recovered. The recovered gold collectively weighing 14 Kg valued at ` 4.23 Crore along with Indian Currency of ` 6,09,700/-were seized. Three persons were arrested.
- 16. Seizure of Gold concealed in the Aircraft's toilet:** On 25.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized unclaimed 3 Kgs. of gold valued at ` 0.89 Crore meticulously concealed in the Aircraft's toilet at Chennai International Airport.
- 17. Seizure of Gold Bars concealed in pocket of passenger's pant:** On 28.07.2017, Air Customs recovered and seized 04 gold bars totally weighing 4.0 Kg valued at ` 1.14 Crore from an Indian passenger at the exit gate of the arrival hall of Anna International Airport who had arrived by Singapore Airline Flight No. SQ 528 from Singapore. The said gold was concealed in his pant pocket. The person was arrested.

Fake Indian Currency Notes

- 18. Seizure of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN):** On 08.07.2017, DRI intercepted one person at Station Chowk, Bettiah and recovered 39 pieces of high quality Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) of ` 2000/- denomination having face value of ` 78,000/-. Investigation Conducted revealed that Fake Indian Currency Notes were smuggled from Bangladesh. The recovered 39 pieces of Fake Indian Currency Notes having face value of ` 78,000/- were seized and person was arrested.

Foreign Currency

- 19. Seizure of Foreign Currency:** On 23.06.2017, DRI recovered and seized assorted foreign currency equivalent to ` 0.68 Crore from one person at Anna International Airport, Chennai. The said currency was concealed in the fold of sarees. The said person was arrested.
- 20. Seizure of Foreign Currency:** On 15/16.07.2017, Air Intelligence Unit at NSCBI Airport, Kolkata recovered and seized US Dollar 50,000 equivalent to ` 0.32 Crores from the checked in baggage of a passenger, when he was about to Board the Spice Jet Flight No. SG-83 bound for Bangkok. The passenger was arrested.
- 21. Seizure of Foreign Currency:** On 23.06.2017, Air Intelligence Unit recovered and seized foreign currency of 76000 US Dollars valued at ` 0.48 Crore from a lady passenger at CSI, Airport, Mumbai who was about to board a Dubai bound flight. The said lady passenger was arrested.

Narcotics (Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances)

- 22. Seizure of Ganja (Cannabis herb):** On 06.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized 2629 Kgs. of Ganja (Cannabis herb) contained in 77 bags concealed underneath the concrete chips in a tipper lorry at Kandipudi Village, Anakapalle, Visakhapatnam. Four persons were arrested.



23. Seizure of Ganja (Cannabis herb): On 09.07.2017, DRI recovered and seized 579 Kg of Ganja (Cannabis herb) contained in 278 packets concealed in a cavity at the bottom of the mini lorry (vehicle) near L.B. Nagar cross roads, Hyderabad. Two persons were arrested.

24. Seizure of Ganja (Cannabis herb) concealed in secret chamber built along the floor of the truck: On 01.07.2017, Customs (Preventive) recovered and seized 93 packets of Ganja totally weighing 1514.22 Kg. concealed in secret chamber built along the floor of the truck at Shillong Bypass, NH-44 near Diengpasoh Toll Hate, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya. One person was arrested.

Misc.

25. Seizure of Betel Nuts: On 24.06.2017, on the basis of specific intelligence, the officers of DRI, Regional Unit, Siliguri intercepted two trucks at Fulbari, near Siliguri and recovered 39.00 MT foreign origin Betel Nuts valued at ` 0.78 crore from the said two vehicles which were illegally smuggled into India from Indonesia via Indo-Myanmar border at Champai-Zowkhatar in Mizoram. The recovered Betel Nuts along with the vehicles were seized and four persons were arrested under the provisions of Customs Act, 1962. Further investigation is in progress.

26. Seizure of branded Shoes, Watches, Cameras, Camera parts, Android Mobile Phones, Mobile Phones in SKD condition, RAM, Pen Drives, Memory cards: The officers of DRI examined 9 import consignments of 7 importers at ACC, Kolkata and found gross mis-declaration in description and value. On examination, the goods were found to be branded Shoes, Watches, Cameras, Camera parts, Android Mobile Phones, Mobile Phones in SKD condition, RAM, Pen Drives, Memory cards collectively valued at ` 178 crore as against declared goods as Mobile accessories etc. with total declared value of ` 0.35 crores only. The recovered goods



valued at ` 178 Crore was seized. With this, the total seizure value of the 16 consignments examined so far comes to ` 184.5 Crore and two persons were arrested.

IMPORT FRAUD CASES

27. UNDEREVALUATION / MISDECLARATION: DRI booked cases against Ahmedabad based importers, who are importing the **Technical Grade of insecticides/pesticides/ herbicides/plant growth regulators such as Abamectin, Emamectin, Chlorantraniliprole, Azoxystrobin etc.** by mis-declaring as **organic chemicals, fertilizers such as Polyelectrolyte anionic, polyacrylamide, tea saponin powder, anionic polyacrylamide, xanthan gum, calcium stearate, pigment yellow super absorbent polymer, sodium alginate etc.** These goods had been imported without obtaining mandatory Registration Certificate from the Registration Committee as required under Section 9 of the insecticide Act, 1968. During the search, **143.77 kgs of Abamectin technical** was seized from the factory premises of their buyer. The estimated duty evasion on account of such mis-declaration is around ` 4 crores.

COOPERATION BETWEEN MINISTRY OF FINANCE, INDONESIA NATIONAL POLICE, CORRUPTION ERADICATION COMMISSION, ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE, AND INDONESIA FINANCIAL TRANSACTION REPORTS AND ANALYSIS CENTER ON VERY HIGH RISK IMPORTER



Jakarta (07/12/2017) – Indonesia’s government is concerned on how to regulate equal and transparent business environment. With the ideal business environment, it could support good investment and Indonesia competitiveness to enhance future economy of Indonesia. One of Indonesia’s government efforts in realizing the vision is through the launching of Very High Risk Importer (VHRI) regulation. In order to support the program, Ministry of Finance c.q. Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DGCE) cooperate with Coordinating Ministry of Economy Affairs, The Office of President Staff, Corruption Eradication Commission, Indonesia National Police, Indonesia Military Force, Attorney General Office, and Indonesia Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center held a coordination meeting on VHRI regulation.

The coordination meeting took place in DGCE headquarters (on Wednesday, July 12, 2017) with the purpose was to promote fair trade practices that create fair business environment. VHRI has the higher chance of fraud that leads to smuggling and creates unfair trade as well as disrupt revenue collection. Minister of Finance, Sri Mulyani Indrawati, said that the coordination meeting discussed the treatment for VHRI with related Ministry/Institution. Hopefully, VHRI regulation will minimize the volume of illegal goods distribution that the supply gap can be fulfilled with domestic production. This condition will lead optimal revenue collection and elevate the national economy in the future.

VHRI is a part of Customs Reformation Program that has been launched since December 2016. Director General of Customs and Excise, Heru Pambudi, said that VHRI regulation is an effort of DGCE, responding challenges from stakeholders, to eradicate illegal trade. Heru Pambudi also explained in the short term there will be tactical operation in form of internal monitoring, cooperation with law enforcement agency and related Ministry/Institution, also cooperation with business association. In the long term, DGCE will build compliance system for importer through the revitalization of practical risk management.

In line with Heru Pambudi explanation, Minister of Finance, Sri Mulyani Indrawati, hopes that DGCE could enhance cooperation with related Ministry/Institution and also law enforcement agency. Those matters

are important to revitalize importer compliance, acceleration and simplification of import permits, and also eradicate smuggling, customs violations, and other illegal trade practices.



Ministry of Finance has established VHRI Task Force as a form of tactical operation. VHRI Task Force leads by Minister of Finance and involves Coordinating Ministry of Economy Affairs, The Office of President Staff, Corruption Eradication Commission, Indonesia National Police, Indonesia Military Force, Attorney General Office, and Indonesia Financial Transaction

Reports and Analysis Center. Therefore, synergy between stakeholders become vital part for the success of VHRI regulation. Sri Mulyani realize that this responsibility will be much easier with the support from various stakeholders.

The participation of said Institutions during the VHRI coordination meeting showed a strong commitment to support VHRI regulation. For that reason, Sri Mulyani appreciated DGCE efforts to collaborate with related parties. Furthermore, Sri Mulyani also appreciates the stakeholders for their positive response regarding VHRI regulation. She hopes that their support will be continued, reminding them that the VHRI program is a sustainable program.

WANDERLUST SHIP PURSUIT : COLLABORATION OF DGCE, INDONESIA NATIONAL POLICE AND INDONESIA MILITARY FORCES RESULT IN SEIZURE OF 1 TON OF METHAMPHETAMINE

Jakarta (07/20/2017) – The vastness of Indonesia territorial sea becomes a challenge for the law



enforcement agency to oversee and to eradicate smuggling, for example the prohibited and restricted goods. In order to overcome this challenge, the law

enforcement agencies have to focus on cooperation effort. By this cooperation effort, Ministry of Finance c.q. Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DGCE), Indonesia National Police, and Indonesia Military Forces successfully apprehended the Wanderlust Ship, on Saturday, July 15th, which was carrying 1 ton of methamphetamine. Wanderlust ship M.O. has been exposed by the law enforcement agencies on Thursday, July 13th, in Serang, Banten.



The Wanderlust Ship pursuit began from the intelligence information that said the ship with its crew planned to escape from Taiwan. Indonesia National Police then coordinated with DGCE to search and detain the Wanderlust. The DGCE then received another piece of intelligence information said that the Wanderlust was on Bangka Belitung waters.

Minister of Finance, Sri Mulyani Indrawati, explained that to follow up on this information DGCE Marine Patrol Team, Indonesia Sea Military Force, and Indonesia Air and Sea Police, executed the coordinated marine patrols to search and to apprehend the Wanderlust. The DGCE deployed their BC7005 and BC8006 ships for the coordinated marine patrols around Tanjung Berikat waters. Finally, the DGCE Marine Patrol Team successfully apprehended the Wanderlust along with its crew.

Sri Mulyani Indrawati conveyed appreciation for the DGCE, Indonesia National Police, and Indonesia Military Forces collaboration during this pursuit as the result of a presidential order given by the President of Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, to the Chief of National Police and the Commander of Military Forces to apprehend the Wanderlust that has been targeted by 4 countries for the past two months.

MALDIVES CUSTOMS SERVICE CELEBRATES ITS 127TH ANNIVERSARY

Maldives Customs Service celebrated its 127th Anniversary on the 18th of July, 2017. The celebration began with a special flag hoisting ceremony held this morning in front of Customs Building. The Chief Guest of the Ceremony Minister of Home Affairs Honorable Azleen Ahmed hoisted the National Flag, while Commissioner General of Customs Mr. Ibrahim Shareef Mohamed hoisted the Customs Flag. Speaking at the ceremony Minister Azleen Ahmed highlighted that Customs is an institution with a long history and that as gatekeepers of the nation customs provide a very important service to the nation in terms of border protection and trade facilitation. He also highlighted that the success and strength of key institutions such as these lies in the commitment and loyalty of its employees. In this regard he thanked the officers of the past and present for their commendable service in bringing the organization to where it is today. He extended his heartfelt greetings and felicitations of the occasion to the President of the Maldives Honorable Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, Customs staff of the past, present and their families, and to every member of the public who receives the services of Customs.



Addressing the staff, Commissioner General highlighted on the milestones the organisation has achieved over the years and appreciated the work ethics, honesty and integrity of the staff which has led to this day.

A special prayer for the occasion was also said in the ceremony. The prayer was led by ah' Shaikh Yoosuf Hussain. Apart from the Head Office, the Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held at Customs offices

established at various parts of the country.

SEMINAR HELD TO PROMOTE MONGOLIA-RUSSIA-CHINA ECONOMIC CORRIDOR AND STRENGTHEN TRILATERAL COOPERATION



The Seminar was attended by the representatives from customs administrations of Mongolia, China and Russia, train operators, China Post and business entities. Leaders of the three customs administrations and Heilongjiang province gave opening speeches. Mr. Bat-Erdene.Yo, Deputy Director mentioned the importance of “Trilateral agreement between the General Authority for Customs and Taxation of Mongolia, Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation and the Customs General Administration of the People’s Republic of China on the Mutual recognition of the customs control on certain commodities” in improving trade circulation, increasing the competitiveness of products, widening the economic cooperation by facilitating the flow of goods and vehicles crossing the border and promoting the economic corridor.

A total of 15 presentations were offered during the seminar within the following main topics: “Customs control for Transit goods”, “Actions taken to facilitate international trade”, “Joint Customs Control”. Mr. Munkhuu E., Director, Customs Control and Clearance department, Ms. Otgonpurev C., Senior Customs Officer, Customs Control and Clearance department and Ms. Unurtsetseg N., Senior Customs Officer, International Cooperation Division gave presentations under the above mentioned main topics.

The second Working Group meeting of trilateral cooperation of Customs administrations of Mongolia-Russia-China was held on July 14, 2017. Managements of units in charge of international cooperation conducted the meeting and reviewed all the works done since the first meeting. Participating Parties have finalized “The Provision on Trilateral working group” and the procedures to sign the document. And discussed the future works that needs to be done in order to successfully implement the “Trilateral agreement between the General Authority for Customs and Taxation of Mongolia, Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation and the Customs General Administration of the People’s Republic of China on the Mutual recognition of the customs control on certain commodities”.



A bilateral meeting between Mr. Bat-Erdene.Yo, Deputy Director of MCGA during the seminar and Mr. Zhou Zhiwu, Deputy Director General of China Customs was held. And discussion on implementation of the “Economic corridor program”, Joint Customs Control, organizing the following working group meeting and the possibility to continue improve capacity building of officials of Mongolian customs with the help of China Customs was conducted.

WCO SUPPORTS MONGOLIA'S MODERNIZATION OF ITS CUSTOMS LABORATORY

With sponsorship of CCF China and cooperation of the Chinese and the Spanish Customs Administrations, a WCO National Workshop on the modernization of the Customs Laboratory of Mongolia was held at the Ulaanbaatar Customs House, in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), from 31 July to 3 August 2017. The Workshop was attended by 25 Customs Officers from Mongolia Customs involved in Customs Laboratory and Harmonized System classification matters.

During the opening of the Workshop, the Director of the Public Administration and Management Department of Mongolia Customs, Mr. Tseyenregzen Ochirsuren, thanked the representatives from the Chinese and the Spanish Customs Administrations and from the WCO Secretariat for facilitating the discussions on the modernization of Mongolia's Customs Laboratory. In his remarks, he referred to the importance of a Customs Laboratory for the correct collection of Customs duties and for the uniform classification of commodities in the national Customs tariff. Also present at the opening ceremony, Mr. Yunge Wang, Director of the Customs Laboratory of Shanghai (China) referred to the benefits of the

cooperation between Customs Laboratories and also to the importance of the "test procedures" in the context of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The Central Customs Laboratory of Mongolia is a well-equipped medium size laboratory that was established in 1996. Several topics related to the WCO strategy on Customs Laboratories were addressed and the participants were also thoroughly informed about several databases and documentation specifically designed for the day to day routine in a Customs Laboratory, in particular, in the context of the analysis of sensitive commodities for Mongolia's Customs such as pharmaceuticals, vitamins, textiles and polymers.



During the Workshop, a wide range of chemical analysis matters was addressed and the participants attending the Workshop were also thoroughly informed about the instruments and tools specifically produced by the WCO to facilitate the routine of the Customs Laboratories.

Present at the closing ceremony, Mr. Juan Moreno Peceño, from the Customs Laboratory of Madrid (Spain), emphasized the importance of the cooperation and networking between the Customs Laboratories all over the world and referred to the possibilities offered by the WCO Regional Customs Laboratories initiative.

CUSTOMS WINS AT PUBLIC SECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2017

The New Zealand Customs Service is delighted to be named as the winner of the Excellence in Regulatory Systems category of the Deloitte IPANZ Public Sector Excellence Awards 2017.

Customs was recognised for its Joint Electronic Verification System (JEVS) which provides further assurance over the origin of New Zealand goods exported to China.



The Awards judges said, “This was a really strong case study – across jurisdictions; technologically innovative; with tangible results.”

Customs Chief Information Officer Murray Young said it was an honour to receive the award on behalf of Customs and the organisation is very proud of JEVS.

“The ability to verify and validate the origin of shipments immediately is saving customs officials, at both ends, time and effort, allowing them to focus more attention on other border risks. For importers and exporters alike, there is now more certainty around clearance times and assurance that legitimate goods receive tariff preference under the 2008 New Zealand–China Free Trade Agreement.

“Customs can also bring other trading partners on to this system, which will further increase assurance over exports to other markets. New Zealand is only the second country in the world to introduce such a system with China”.

The annual Public Sector Excellence Awards recognise and reward outstanding performances and achievements in the New Zealand public sector.

This year’s awards attracted 70 entries from a range of organisations across New Zealand. Customs was also a finalist in the in the Improving Public Value through Business Transformation category.



The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and The Treasury Award for Excellence in Regulatory Systems
Joint Electronic Verification System
New Zealand Customs Service

Deloitte.



URUMQI CUSTOMS OF CHINA & PAKISTAN CUSTOMS OF NORTH REAFFIRM TO MAKE CPEC MORE EFFECTIVE



Chief Collector North Sarwat Tahira Habib’s brief visit regarding the border customs meeting between the Urumqi Customs of China and Pakistan Customs (North Region) was held in Urumqi, China, from 25th to 26th of July 2017.



Both sides reiterated that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) agreement would be made more effective through mutual trade facilitation. The two sides agreed on the need for timely communication of changes in their respective import and export policies. The visit to Urumqi Customs was fruitful and the

parleys will yield positive results for the benefit of Pakistani importers, exporters, brokers, and other stakeholders in the bilateral trade between Pakistan and China. According to details given by Chief Collector North that a delegation of Pakistan Customs, headed by the Chief Collector of Customs (North), visited Custom House, Urumqi, Peoples Republic of China, from 24th to 26th July, 2017. She added that the delegation discussed issues of common interest with Urumqi Customs within the framework of 'Agreement on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters, April 2005', and the Joint Statement dated May 24th, 2016 between Urumqi Customs of People's Republic of China and Pakistan Customs (North Region), Federal Board of Revenue. She said that in the perspective of the China-Pakistan Border Customs meeting in Islamabad in May 2016 the two delegations acknowledged the importance of long-term cooperation and improved trade facilitation in the wake of operation of China-Pakistan Trade Corridor (CPEC). Both sides reiterated that the CPEC Agreement would be made more effective through mutual trade facilitation. Chief Collector told CT that the Chinese side emphasized the operation of "Green Corridor" for speedy clearance of agricultural products being perishable goods. Similar arrangements are already in place between Urumqi Customs administration with its counterparts in Tajikistan, Kirghizstan and Kazakhstan. Since the dividends of such an arrangement as a trade facilitation measure are self-evident, both sides agreed on the need to establish in future "Green Corridor" for speedy clearance of agricultural goods on both sides. The facility is also expected to help redress issues faced by Pakistani exporters of agricultural produce.

She further told CT that in order to promote cooperation between the two customs administrations, it was agreed to establish a Working Group with the counsel of Urumqi Customs and Chief Collector of Customs (North) envisaged to be effective by the end of August 2017 subject to an approval of the general administration of China Customs (GACC) of China, and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) of Pakistan, respectively.

The Chinese Customs provided a draft implementation plan on Green Corridor and a draft list of agricultural products for the proposed Green Corridor to be studied by Pakistan Customs for providing feedback and communication of its own list of agricultural products for export to China under the Green Corridor arrangement.

Sarwat Tahira Habib said that on the basis of the 2005 agreement on Mutual Assistance between the two Customs administrations, the two sides shared their common view of establishing a mutual cooperation mechanism between their border anti-smuggling organizations within the jurisdiction of Customs. It was agreed to designate two anti-smuggling liaison officers at operational level in the respective border Customs administrations.

She was further said that in pursuant to the Agreement of 2005 and the Joint Statement of 2016, both sides agreed to seek approval from their respective authorities for devising a mechanism of strengthening cooperation between the Urumqi Airport Customs and Benazir Bhutto International Airport Islamabad Customs for information-sharing, intelligence exchange, combating smuggling and other areas of common interest.

During the meeting, Pakistani side stressed the need for establishing and implementing a mutually transmutable Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for effective exchange of data on trade facilitation, valuation, HS classification, verification of certificate of origin and other allied matters. Both sides agreed on establishing the EDI for electronic data exchange. There was also an agreement on reducing delays and

eliminating redundancies in Customs procedures on both sides. Telling the details of visit to China, she said both sides also agreed on exchanging customs personnel to conduct study and research as well as impart knowledge and skills to each other in customs functions. It was also agreed by the two sides that training will be imparted to Pakistani Border Customs officials on recognition of Chinese characters relating to Customs and trade. In order to strengthen communication and cooperation between border customs ports in the wake of CPEC operation, the suggestion of the Chinese Customs for establishing a regular meeting mechanism to hold meetings between the border Customs stations of Sost (Pakistan) and Khunjarab (China) was agreed by both sides. It was further decided that venue of the next meeting between the Chief Collector of Customs (North), Islamabad and the Director General of Urumqi Customs District will be Islamabad, Pakistan, tentatively in the second quarter of 2018, Chief collector concluded.

PHILIPPINES BUREAU OF CUSTOMS INITIATES MODERNISATION FOR MANILA PORT DEVELOPMENT



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

On request of the Commissioner of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) of the Philippines, the WCO conducted a Mercator Programme mission to Manila from 10 to 14 July 2017.

The objective of the mission was to analyse the situation at Manila Port and to provide advice for future steps. Discussions covered Customs inspection requirements, future technologies and operational needs. A priority for the BOC is more efficient trade facilitation and revenue collection under the auspices of the Manila Maritime Trading District Development Project (MMTDDP).

The MMTDDP is a proposed mixed-use development project across an area of approximately 474 hectares. The MMTDDP aims to transform certain portions of the Manila Port area, specifically those covering the South Harbor, Manila International Container Port and the North Harbor, into a world-class maritime trading district equivalent to major international ports in the Asia-Pacific Region.

During the visit the WCO advisors studied relevant documents, interviewed officers of BOC and made some site visits to Customs and Port facilities. Topics discussed during the interviews included the scope of the MMTDDP, a BOC operating model that takes into account both enforcement and facilitation obligations, BOC policy and infrastructure needs, and stakeholder engagement responsibilities.

A range of related issues surfaced during the week. The WCO advisors and BOC officials also discussed organizational structure developments within BOC, the implementation of the TFA, Time Release Study strategy, anticipated recruitment of new staff, design of a proposed new Customs Academy, among other issues.

At the end of the mission, the WCO-advisors presented their analyses of the situation including recommendation for the next steps to senior management of BOC. The proposed steps forward which included a redirection of the Operating Model of BOC were well received and would be considered.

THAI CUSTOMS HOSTS THE 2017 CUSTOMS – BUSINESS CONFERENCE



On the morning of 22 August 2017, the Thai Customs Department hosted the 2017 Customs - Business Conference at Siam Kempinski Hotel, Bangkok.

The Customs - Business Conference is the initiative of the Thai Customs Department with its first Conference being held last year. The key objective of this event was to publicize the revision of Customs laws and regulations to stakeholders, as well as Special Economic Zone (SEZ), focusing on foreign agencies in Thailand. The participants of the Conference included the representatives from foreign embassies, foreign business operators, foreign business Councils, and foreign Chambers of Commerce, a total of approximately one hundred participants.



“The new Customs laws could have an impact on business operators, and the updated information can be useful for their business plans and international trade transactions,” said Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Director-General of Thai Customs.

Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Director-General of Thai Customs, also briefed the Conference on the key changes in the new Custom laws, the Customs Act B.E. 2560 (2017), which will enter into force on 13 November 2017. This new Act consolidates and repeals the outdated provisions, at the same time, amends and develops the new provisions to enhance trade facilitation, transparency and Customs procedure to meet with international Customs standards. The significant changes includes provisions

prescribing time frame for Customs duty assessment, and time frame for the Appeal Committee to render its decision, provision on penalties, rate of reward payment and transit.

Furthermore, the key modernization initiatives to reform Customs procedures were also shared with the participants. The “Customs Alliance” provides a direct communication channel between Customs and member companies registered with Thai Customs so as to provide quick suggestions and resolve uncertainties prior to the importation/exportation relating to Customs matters. The “Customs Intelligence Centre” (CIC) is the centre for coordination on Customs compliance and law enforcement-related matters to provide integrated database to streamline and modernize Customs work processes. The “HS Check” mobile application allows application users to search for Customs tariff, classification decisions and advance rulings. The application is downloadable from App Store and Google Play.



Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Director-General of Thai Customs, was confident that this event was beneficial to foreign business operators as it provided them with accurate and reliable information useful for their business planning, helping to reduce their time and cost while contributing to international trade as a whole.

USAID/TIMOR-LESTE SIGNS AGREEMENT TO ASSIST WITH REFORMS OF TIMOR-LESTE’S CUSTOMS OPERATIONS

Customs operations in Timor-Leste will be reformed and streamlined to promote economic development, greater business transparency and security and adoption of world trade standards under a new \$5-million project announced today by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Timor-Leste Ministry of Finance.

USAID Timor-Leste has signed an agreement with International Business Initiatives Corp. (IBI) to begin work immediately on the three-year project, which is expected to be completed in May 2020. The project will result in a more efficient and effective customs operation that meets world standards and increases government revenue.

“USAID’s new customs project is designed to ensure that the Government of Timor-Leste meets global standards for customs operations, one of the pre-conditions for World Trade Organization and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) accession,” said USAID Timor-Leste Mission Director Diana Putman.

The project will strengthen the governance of the new Customs Authority, a key government institution, which will contribute to meeting the goals of the Government of Timor-Leste Fiscal Reform Plan. The plan will enhance revenue through improved systems, procedures and personnel.

“A professional and transparent Customs Authority is the gateway to prosperity for Timor-Leste, and the Government thanks USAID for their commitment to helping us reform customs,” said Vice Minister of Finance Helder Lopes. “This three-year project will help increase our domestic revenues, facilitate trade and strengthen our institutional capacity to attract investment and diversify our economy.”

The customs project – USAID/Timor-Leste Revenue Enhancement for Good Governance Activity (REGGA) -- is being undertaken to help Timor-Leste strengthen democracy and governance. Under the project design, IBI will strengthen the institutional and human capacity of the Customs Authority so it can follow global and regional best practices in trade, specifically the 2005 World Customs Organization Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (SAFE), the 2003 Revised Arusha Declaration concerning good governance and integrity in customs and the trade component of the ASEAN Agreement on Trade in Goods. Improved customs operations also will help spur economic growth and investment by reducing trade costs and shortening customs clearance times.

USAID works closely with the government and people of Timor-Leste to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth, especially in the agriculture sector; encourage private-sector competitiveness; tackle serious health challenges, particularly those affecting women and children; strengthen sub-national democratic institutions and the foundations of good governance; protect the environment; and help at risk populations adapt to climate change.

Source: [USAID](#)

THE HEILALA TAX SYSTEM



The Ministry of Revenue and Customs is pleased to announce its newest compliance initiative, the **TONGA HEILALA TAX SYSTEM**. This is a reward system whereby the Ministry dedicates high

standard and prioritized services to its deserving selected members.

Selected members are taxpayers that have not only maintained a high level of compliance with Taxation and Customs laws, but each have respectively made significant contributions to government revenue in the past years.

Ten such taxpayers selected by the Ministry to pioneer this system, in alphabetical order are –

1. A Cowley & Sons Limited;
2. Bank of South Pacific Tonga Limited

(BSP);

3. Fexco (Tonga) Limited;
4. MBF Bank Limited;
5. Pacific Energy (South West Pacific) Limited;
6. PTH Limited;
7. The Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints;
8. Tonga Airports Limited;
9. Tonga Development Bank Limited; and
10. Tonga Water Board.

Dedicated services and benefits offered to the members, include but are not limited to, a private reception area with refreshments, TV and internet access at both Tax and Customs offices; prioritized processing of tax and customs requests (refund, assessment, payment, import entries, etc); blanket tax clearance; and to permit the access by members’ CEOs and senior

managers to the VIP lounge upon arrival at the Fua'amotu International Airport.

Membership will depend on the ability of the taxpayer to maintain high levels of compliance and any additions to its membership will depend on the Ministry's annual review processes.

The Ministry as part of its medium to long terms goals for the system is looking to extend the

benefits offered to the Tonga Heilala Tax System members in the near future and will be working closely with line ministries to realize this.

The underlying aim of this initiative is to encourage and foster a culture of voluntary compliance with Tax and Customs laws that will enable Government to continue to collect revenue to build a prosperous Tonga.

SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF JOINT WCO OPERATION TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND PIRACY IN THE ASIA/PACIFIC REGION

The World Customs Organization (WCO), in cooperation with the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) for the Asia/Pacific region, successfully concluded an enforcement operation aimed at combating counterfeiting and piracy in the region.

Code-named "Action against Counterfeiting and Piracy in the Asia/Pacific region" (Action IPR A/P 2), the WCO operation, which took place in February 2017, was the second one in this region focusing on IPR, health and safety, the first of which was held in 2015.

Under the direction of the WCO Secretariat and RILO A/P, the 19-day operation yielded spectacular results, with the interception of a large quantity of illicit products, totaling 1,453,429 pieces, 153,099 kg and 75 litres across 245 cases.

The largest number of cases (40) involved foodstuff, making it the most frequently intercepted counterfeit product, followed by pharmaceutical products (38) and spare parts

(22), all of which could have devastating health and safety consequences for the region's citizens.



In terms of the actual volume of products, foodstuff (415,358 pieces + 42,718 kg + 68 litres), mobile phones and accessories (319,857 pieces) and pharmaceutical products (181,415 pieces + 28 kg) were the major categories intercepted during Action IPR A/P 2.

In addition to the above-mentioned intercepted goods, a variety of other products that could endanger the public's health and safety were intercepted by Customs authorities, including contact lenses, face packs, perfume, soaps and thermos bottles.

The operation greatly benefited from the use of the WCO's secure Customs enforcement communication tool, known as CENcomm, to exchange operational messages and share critical information provided by right holders.

A “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop and a “Follow-up” Workshop for Action IPR A/P 2 were organized prior to and after the operation, where a number of right holders provided participating Customs authorities with product identification training to familiarize them with their key characteristics.

Operation Action IPR A/P 2 provided Customs authorities with the opportunity to boost the level of IPR enforcement in the Asia/Pacific region, while shedding light on the specific challenges they faced in combating counterfeiting and piracy.

CAPACITY BUILDING

AUSTRALIA HOSTS SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS WORKSHOP FOR THE ASIA/PACIFIC REGION

In July, Australia hosted a Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) workshop in Melbourne, Victoria. The workshop was jointly organised by the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building, and funded by Japan Customs. Mr. Terry Wall, Project Manager of the Asia/Pacific Security Project, facilitated the proceedings.



Delegates attended from across the Asia/Pacific region including: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

Each country made a presentation outlining their current approach to addressing the illicit trade in SALW. Many administrations in the region are attempting to balance excise collection priorities with combatting illegal trade activities. Some smaller administrations identified they have little or no data on small weapons seizures at the border.

The presentations were useful as an information-sharing exercise for all workshop participants. They also served to identify capability gaps in Asia/Pacific Member administrations. The information from these presentations will help the WCO to coordinate regional training and technical assistance, and enhance specific WCO tools that support intelligence analysis and risk management at the sub-regional and national level.

The workshop also included presentations from subject matter experts, including the Australian Border Force, New Zealand Customs Service, and China Customs on topics including collaboration between customs and law enforcement, detection and seizure of SALW, and the importance of preservation of evidence.

Workshop delegates visited Australian Border Force facilities in Melbourne where they observed firsthand incoming mail operations and procedures, including x-ray detection and the protocols around the seizure of SALW and their precursors.



BANGLADESH CUSTOMS STEPS UP ITS EFFORTS ON AIR CARGO CONTROL



**1-10 August 2017
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

From 1 to 10 August 2017 Bangladesh hosted a Practical Training on Air Cargo Control in the framework of the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP) at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. The training was conducted by WCO training experts and was intended to support the future Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) at Dhaka Airport.

This training built up on the Theoretical Training which had been delivered and sought to deepen the knowledge of officials on modern risk-profiling techniques, security of the airside environment and other relevant aspects for Air Cargo Control as well as trade facilitation considerations.

Both the Bangladesh participants and the training experts were satisfied with the outcomes of the training and motivated to continue with the staged training concept applied by the CCP.

Currently, Airport Control Units established in the framework of the CCP are operational in 4 countries; funding for 11 countries in total has been granted by the donors of this joint UNODC-WCO programme.

The implementation of the Container Control Programme in Bangladesh is funded by the Government of Japan.

DETAILS OF THE TRAINING COURSES/WORKSHOP CONDUCTED BY NACIN, FARIDABAD INDIA DURING THE PERIOD JUNE-AUGUST, 2017.

(A) 5-day Customized Training Programme for Bhutan Narcotics and Drug Law Enforcement Officers

(i) NACIN, Faridabad conducted training of **Bhutan Narcotics and Drug Law Enforcement Officers** from 29th May -02nd June, 2017 extending requisite logistics support and engaging renowned and learned faculties for the course. In all, 15 participants participated in this training.



(ii) The workshop commenced with presentations on UN Conventions in Narcotics, Drugs & Psychoactive Substances, Emerging challenges: NPS and Drugs & Internet and Global & Regional Trends of Drug Trafficking.

Later on presentations and discussions were held on the following topics:

- (a) Pharmaceutical Drugs & Trafficking,
- (b) Crypto-currency: New Dimensions in Drug Trafficking, and

(c) Intelligence Collection & Investigation Techniques.

(iii) Since the course was designed to address “Drug Misuse and Trafficking”, topics like Abuse of Pharmaceutical drugs, Special Investigation Techniques, Undercover operations and Controlled delivery related Case Studies were also discussed at length. For imparting practical experience of the related topics, a visit to CRCL Lab was also organized for the participants.

(B) 2 day Supervisory Officers Workshop to combat illegal trade in HCFCs at NACIN, Vadodara

(i) NACIN Faridabad in collaboration with Ozone Cell, MoEF&CC organized a Supervisory Officers 2 days’ Workshop to combat illegal trade in HCFC for Customs, State Police & BSF was at ZTI, NACIN, Vadodara on 07-08th August, 2017.



(ii) This training programme focused on implementing the policy and enforcement component of India’s HCFCs Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) Stage-II.

(iii) On the first day in introduction session participants were made aware about expected outcome of the training programme and then basic concepts about environmental and human health consequences of ozone layer depletion were discussed. Further Sessions included the international response, Montreal protocol and National obligations and response with National Production/import/export licensing system, structure, enforcement rules, penalties and logistics and data management were also discussed

(iv) Role of customs officers in monitoring the import/export of ODS goods including case studies, identification of ODS based products, safe handling, transport and storage, identification of refrigerants were also explained. During the Second day, practical demonstration for ODS identification exercise to individual group of 4-5 participants were conducted so that a better understanding regarding handling and operation of the machine Ultima Id for testing of refrigerants could be obtained by them.

Break out session for effective operation of ODS import/export licensing system and enforcement of ODS regulations, and certificate distribution marked the end of workshop. Participants appreciated the workshop as it was very productive and helpful for them.

THE 2nd JOINT CUSTOMS MIDDLE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (JCMMP)

Bogor and Jakarta, Indonesia

Evolving Customs: Challenges and Strategies



The Directorate General of Customs and Excise of Indonesia had the honor of hosting the 2nd Joint Customs Middle Management Program (JCMMP) from 31st of July to 3rd on August 2017 in Bogor and Jakarta.

The JCMMP is an annual training program jointly organized by the customs administrations of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore to enhance competency of customs middle managers and networking among customs official in ASEAN member countries. The 2nd JCMMP was attended by 25 middle manager officials of Customs from said 4 countries.

On the first day, under the theme “Evolving Customs: Challenges and Strategies”, the participants presented and discussed eight topics during the sharing sessions on Data Analysis, Customs Procedure and Tariff Facilitaion Initiative on Rules of Origin, Customs Competency Based Human Resources Management, Trans-National Crime, Effective Border Security, Collaborated Border Management, Implementation on TFA, E-Commerce and Revised of Revised Kyoto Convention. The program has also gained insight on topic of Effective Border Management and Combating illicit trade, through the sharing of knowledge and best practices by officers from each country.

An outdoor activity took place on the second day. There was an excursion program where the participants visited Indonesia Presidential Museum Balai Kirti and Taman Safari Indonesia for capacity building program which intentionally designed to promote networking and teamwork as it is one of the objectives of the program.

At Indonesia Customs Headquarters, the participants had opportunity to join monthly coffee morning program with Indonesia Director General and staffs at WCO poolside, also to visit and learn about Indonesia Customs K9 Center, Indonesia Customs Contact Center and Museum, Indonesia Customs Radio and TV Studio, Indonesia Customs Training Center, also Indonesia Customs and Excise Prime Office and Indonesia Customs Laboratory at Tanjung Priok port.



The participants also had the opportunity to engage in a fireside chat with leadership panel comprising the Director-General of Customs of Singapore and Indonesia, the Deputy Director-General of Customs of Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia. The JCMMP brought customs middle managers from

Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore together and enabled better understanding of one another’s customs processes and the challenges we faced. The program provided a platform for participants from the four member states to engage fruitful discussions, exchange of ideas and ways of doing our work better.

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS PRESENTED AT THE APEC SINGLE WINDOW WORKSHOP HELD ON 17 AUG 2017 IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIET NAM

The US, as project overseer of the “APEC Single Window Workshop” invited Singapore to make a presentation at the workshop which was held on 17 Aug 2017 in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam on the sidelines of the Third APEC Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM3) and related Meetings. Singapore Customs’ Senior Trainer Mr Desmond Chia (1st from right) made a presentation on “Data Quality in a Single Window System” at Session 2 on Data Integrity and Security of the APEC Single Window Workshop. He shared Singapore’s experience in managing her National Single Window System, “TradeNet” and how Singapore



addressed the issue on ensuring data quality and security in the Single Window system. Mr. Chia, a World Customs Organization (WCO) Accredited Customs Technical and Operational Adviser in the field of Single Window also participated in a panel discussion with three other WCO Single Window experts at the workshop.

VIETNAM AND WCO CLOSE A CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT, LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR TFA IMPLEMENTATION

For the past four years, the WCO-Norad Project on Customs Capacity Building in Vietnam has been focusing on capacity building in the area of Stakeholder Engagement. This has included working with Customs Brokers, Consultations, Client Services, and also linked with support to the development of a risk-based Compliance Management strategy.



The final technical assistance mission to Vietnam under the current WCO-Norad Project took place in Hanoi 10-14 July 2017. It entailed three events (two with external stakeholders, and a Project closing event with internal stakeholders). The project's outcomes were reviewed and fed into an initial diagnostic under the framework of the Mercator Programme, conducted by regional Mercator Programme Advisors (MPAs) which will help place Vietnam on track to implement its commitments under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The TFA itself contains important provisions to which the Stakeholder Engagement, Compliance Management and other changes implemented under the auspices of the WCO-Norad Customs Capacity Building Project naturally contribute. Therefore, linking WCO-Norad Project close with Mercator Programme activities will help ensure sustainability of these changes.

The WCO-Norad Customs Capacity Building Project 2012-17 aims at delivering technical assistance to seven countries: Timor-Leste, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Tanzania and Vietnam. For more information, please contact the Project Manager, Ms. Andrea Hampton (Andrea.Hampton@wcoomd.org)

ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE LIAISON OFFICE (RILO A/P)

WCO RILO AP invited member administrations for in-house capacity building programs regarding CEN (Customs Enforcement Network) system. The programs were not only to enhance field officers' skill to deal with CEN system but also to take the role of Operation Coordination Units (OCUs) for RILO AP's enforcement operations.

From 24th to 28th of July, RILO AP invited China Customs officers and the participants, in cooperation with RILO AP staffs, operated OCU regarding operation IRENE II, which focuses on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) especially through air parcels. There were 29 Members and 6 RILOs participated in the operation. The operation resulted in 79 seizure cases, including 10 hand guns (4 cases), 73 air gun, 139 gun parts and more than 4000 restricted items.



In addition, RILO AP invited Vietnam Customs officers from 21st to 25th of August. The participants cooperated with RILO AP and Korea Customs in collating data which had been input into CEN and made analysis and final report for operation Savannah. Savannah's main interest is in trafficking of endangered species including CITES. During operational period, 14 participants made 48 seizures and 9 warning messages. The operation successfully resulted into 23 metric ton of seizures including 7,290kg of elephant

tusks (ivory carvings), 11kg of Rhino horn, 600kg of Pangolin Scales, 317kg and 56 cubic meters of timber.



ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING (ROCB A/P)

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING JUNE - AUGUST 2017

1. ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan for 2017/18

In accordance with the ROCB A/P's Terms of Reference, the ROCB A/P is supposed to develop its Strategic Action Plan for a 2-year term and Annual Work Plan for the purpose of assuring its work accountability and governance to the regional Directors General. The Plans are to be worked out in close consultation with the Regional Vice-Chair with the intent of assuring effective use of limited resources and making the region's capacity building more focused and relevant to the needs of the regional Member Customs Administrations. It is therefore the ROCB A/P's Strategic Action Plan is closely linked with the current A/P Regional Strategic Plan. In the course of devising the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan, Regional Training Coordinator (i.e. Japan Customs) and the ROCB A/P jointly conduct Annual Technical Assistance Needs Survey each year. The ROCB A/P's Annual Plan for 2017/18 was subsequently approved by the WCO Capacity Building Directorate in mid-July 2017 to make it open to the Member administrations in the A/P region. The approved Annual Work Plan was made public as the annex to the ROCB A/P's E-Newsletter No. 57 of July 2017. Annual Work Plan 2017/18 has been uploaded onto the ROCB A/P's homepage (www.rocb-ap.org/service/69/) under the "Resources" column as well.

The Annual Work Plan for 2017/18 accommodates quite a good number of the regional/sub-regional and national workshops, both newly funded and carried forward from the previous years. These workshops are categorized into the improvement in the following 6 core Customs functions, namely: (1) implementation of trade facilitation; (2) counter-terrorism; (3) economic competitiveness and revenue collection; (4) intelligence and risk management; (5) health and safety protection; and (6) organizational and human resource development. The ROCB A/P hopes that the regional Member administrations make best use of these capacity building assistance programs for complementing their on-going commitment to Customs reform and modernization to meet the needs of the day.

2. ROCB A/P E-Newsletter No. 57

In July 2017, the ROCB A/P published 57th edition of its E-Newsletter, which features the Office's activities in the period from April through June 2017. In addition to the summaries of the regional and national workshops organized during this quarter, this E-Newsletter carries a special contribution from Ms. Tsendsuren Davaa, a WCO Professional Associate from Mongolia, on her experiences within the WCO Human Resource Development Program. Her essay is full of insights and provides the readers with a plenty of valuable clues for further pursuing professional career in Customs. The ROCB A/P extends its sincere appreciation to Ms. Davaa for her contribution. Furthermore, given that this edition is the first publication in the fiscal year 2017/18, it contains explanations on the notions of the regional capacity building assistance



programs to be delivered in the next 12 months in the A/P region. A copy of the latest E-Newsletter as well as the previous publications are retrieved from our homepage at www.rocb-ap.org/service/41/.

3. Collaboration with Development Partner organizations



One of the ROCB A/P's cornerstones for its working strategy is to collaborate with other development partners so that our capacity building assistance activities may be complemented with their professional expertise as well as their strength in social and economic status while avoiding undue duplication. During the period from June to August 2017, the ROCB had excellent opportunities to work with our development partners in the A/P region. For example, the ROCB A/P joined the ADB at their SASEC (South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation) Customs sub-group meeting and its learning session

in June 2017 in Thimphu, Bhutan, focusing on trade facilitation and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. ROCB A/P also collaborated with the World Bank Group and APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) members for their professional training programs in the fields of leadership and management course and IPR border enforcement. More information can be found on our homepage at www.rocb-ap.org.

4. ROCB A/P staff changes



At the end of June 2017, two fellow ROCB A/P colleagues successfully completed their respective secondment terms and returned to their home administrations.

Mr. Cho Kang-sik (third from the right in the photo), who was seconded from the Korea Customs Service, completed his 2-year term as CCF/Korea Operation Manager and Program Manager for East, Central and West Asia. He took good care of the communication with the Member

administration in his responsible sub-region, namely East, Central and West Asia. He organized several regional workshops and arranged couples of national workshops. Mr. Cho also represented the ROCB A/P and contributed to several national training sessions for the WCO/UNODC Container Control Program. His successor arrived Bangkok early September 2017.

Mr. Takayuki Miyoshi from Japan Customs (third from the left in the photo) in fact extended his secondment term by 1 year and completed his 4-year service at the ROCB A/P. During his service at the ROCB A/P, he exercised his professionalism as CCF/Japan Operation Manager and Program Manager for South Asia. Given his extensive knowledge on Customs techniques and WCO, he obtained a couple of

WCO accredited expert status. One of the most prominent his dedication was successful completion of the SASEC Multi-Year Project, which was a joint project between the WCO and the ADB for a 3-year term.

More stories on their contribution and dedication can be found on our homepage at www.rocb-ap.org. The ROCB A/P wishes them continued success and high performance at their respective home administrations.

At the end of June 2017, Ms. Saori Nojima arrived Bangkok to succeed Mr. Miyoshi's assignment as CCF/Japan Operation Manger and Program Manager for South Asia for a 3-year term. Prior to being assigned to the ROCB A/P, she was an instructor at the Japan Customs Training Institute, one of the WCO A/P Regional Training Centers, and also served as an Adjunct Professor on a subject regarding strategic action planning in two WCO scholarship master's degree programs at Aoyama Gakuin University and National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, in Tokyo Japan. She has vast experiences in international training delivery, especially in IPR border enforcement with her Patent Attorney's qualification in Japan. The ROCB A/P believes that her professional knowledge and expertise be of our asset.



EVENTS (October to December 2017)

EVENT	DATE	VENUE
Working Group on E-Commerce 2nd Meeting	10-13 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO National Workshop on Customs Valuation for Indonesia	9-13 Oct. 2017 (tbc)	Indonesia
WCO A/P 27th Regional Contact Point Meeting	11-13 Oct. 2017	Cairns, Australia
Agreement on Trade Facilitation Working Group 8th Meeting	16 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
Joint Session on Agreement on Trade Facilitation Working Group and Permanent Technical Committee	17 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
Permanent Technical Committee 217th/218th Sessions	18-20 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
Private Sector Consultative Group	23-24 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
Technical Committee on Customs Valuation 45th Session	23-27 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
SAFE Working Group 18th Meeting	25-27 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO/IATA/ICAO API/PNR Contact Committee 11th Meeting	30-31 Oct. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO Technology and Innovation Forum	31 Oct.-2 Nov. 2017	Tokyo, Japan
WCO Regional Workshop on TFA	6-10 Nov. 2017	Kashiwa, Japan
Working Group on Revenue Compliance and Fraud 4th Meeting	8-10 Nov. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
Revised Kyoto Convention Management Committee 17th Meeting	13-14 Nov. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO Counterfeiting and Piracy (CAP) Group 14th Meeting	15-17 Nov. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO National Workshop on AEO for Sri Lanka	20-24 Nov. 2017	Sri Lanka
Policy Commission	4-6 Dec. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
WCO Regional Workshop on Risk Management and Post Seizure Analysis	4-8 Dec. 2017	Kashiwa, Japan
WCO Sub-regional Workshop on IPR for the Pacific	4-8 Dec. 2017	Suva, Fiji
WCO Council Session	14-15 Dec. 2017	Brussels, Belgium