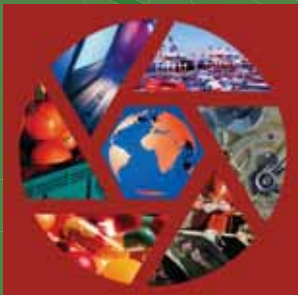




Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence



A reflection on air cargo security



HS 2012, the countdown has begun





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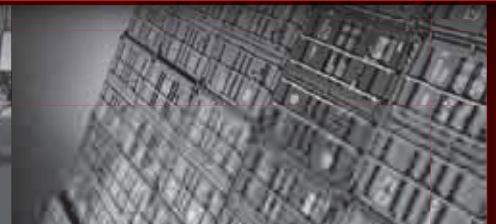
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Editorial note

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Calendar of Events

It should be noted that WCO meetings are mentioned for information purposes and are not all open to the public. Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings are held in Brussels. Please note that these dates are indicative only and may be subject to change. The WCO meetings schedule is regularly updated on the WCO Members' website, under the "Information for delegates" section, and on the WCO public website – www.wcoomd.org – under the "Events" section.

March

3 - 4	Harmonized System Committee Working Party
7 - 16	Harmonized System Committee, 47 th Session
8 - 10	World Cargo Symposium 2011, Istanbul (Turkey)
21	Ad Hoc Working Group for Natural Disaster Relief, 3 rd Meeting
21 - 25	Permanent Technical Committee, 191 st /192 nd Sessions
21 - 25	Enforcement Committee, 30 th Session
24	Permanent Technical Committee with Enforcement Committee
28 - 29	Private Sector Consultative Group, 16 th Meeting
29	SAFE Members-Only Meeting
30 - 31	SAFE Working Group
30 - 31	UNCTAD Expert Meeting on Trade Facilitation in Regional Trade Arrangements, Geneva (Switzerland)

April

4 - 7	Finance Committee, 90 th Session
7 - 8	Globally Networked Customs
11 - 15	Technical Committee on Customs Valuation, 32 nd Session
18 - 19	WCO Counterfeiting and Piracy Group, 4 th Meeting
27 - 29	World Economic Forum on Latin America 2011, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

May

3 - 5	Capacity Building Committee, 2 nd Session
4 - 6	World Economic Forum on Africa, Cape Town (South Africa)
6	Integrity Sub-Committee, 10 th Session
9	Regional Offices for Capacity Building/Regional Training Centres
11 - 13	IT Conference and Exhibition, Seattle (USA)
12 - 13	WCO/UPU Contact Committee, 31 st Meeting
23 - 27	Harmonized System Review Sub-Committee, 42 nd Session
30 - 31	WCO/UPU Contact Committee, 31 st Meeting, Berne (Switzerland)
30 May - 1 June	Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics 2011, Paris (France)
30 May - 3 June	Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul (Turkey)
31 May - 1 June	OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, Bermuda

June

6 - 8	Data Model Project Team
9 - 10	Information Management Sub-Committee, 61 st Session
19-20	Private Sector Consultative Group, 17 th Meeting
20 - 22	Policy Commission, 65 th Session
23 - 25	Council Sessions, 117 th /118 th Sessions
27 - 28	Open Day for Trade



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Dematerialization of Customs documents receives trade support

TIACA has welcomed the WCO's decision to work towards reducing the profuse paper-based documentation that accompanies international air cargo shipments as a 'significant step forward'.

The WCO's Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) not only accepted the facilitation case for reform but will bring its own extensive professional skills to the phased, long-term task of comprehensive revision and reform.

PTC delegates approved proposals to:

- undertake a survey of WCO Members and partner organizations with a view to listing the top priority documents to be dematerialized;
- discuss measures to promote digital signatures as a means to maintain authenticity and integrity of documents;
- initiate discussions on the end-to-end management of electronic documents



with other international organizations (CITES Secretariat, trade and transport federations, etc.); and

More information
www.wcoomd.org

- Work on a WCO recommendation based on the proposed Guidelines on Supporting Documents.



World's Great Apes under threat

All the great ape species – the bonobo, chimpanzee and gorilla in Africa and the orangutan in South-East Asia – are in steep decline!

Conserving viable wild populations of each species, necessary to prevent their extinction, represents the ultimate challenge. Among the factors that pose the main threats to their survival in their natural habitat is the capture and sale of live specimens.

The WCO remains committed to wildlife protection and calls for Customs vigilance to prevent the illicit trafficking of great apes and other endangered species.

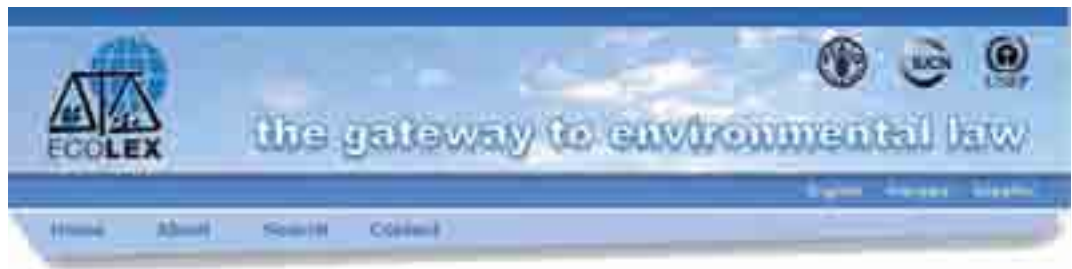
More information
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Poster produced in the Framework of the Great Apes and Integrity Project financed by the Swedish Government

Largest information resource on environmental law

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have developed the largest information resource available on environmental law globally under the name ECOLEX.

Over the past thirty years there has been significant growth in the field of Environmental law whether in multilateral and bilateral agreements, national legislation, international "soft law" and other non-binding policy and technical guidance documents, legal and policy literature, or related jurisprudence and court decisions.



By combining the information on environmental law held by the three organizations, ECOLEX aims to make this wealth of information easy to access, especially for professionals involved in the development and implementation of national legal mechanisms in the field. Users have direct access to the abstracts and indexing information about each document, as well as to the full text of most of the information provided.

What is now available online owes much to a project funded by the Dutch government which ascertained the feasibility of a joint service and set the stage for the implementation of the resulting partnership between FAO, IUCN and UNEP. This joint service is now being further refined and developed by the three partners to best meet the needs of users.

More information
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Janet Napolitano addresses security issues in Brussels

"Screening all cargo shipments for suspicious packages is not the best way to prevent terrorist attacks," stated US Secretary for Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, during a Policy Briefing on securing the global supply chain organized by the European Policy Centre in Brussels in early January, instead, addressing senior international trade and security stakeholders, she called for "...an intelligence-risk-based approach."

Napolitano was speaking at the end of an international trip that took her to Afghanistan, Israel and Qatar in which air cargo security was on the agenda. During her final stop in Brussels she visited the WCO and met top European Union officials. Prior to her remarks at the event, Secretary Napolitano held talks with Secretary General Mikuriya to discuss and coordinate the continued collaboration between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the WCO to further secure the global trade supply chain.

Air cargo security shot to prominence in October 2010 after British authorities found a print cartridge loaded with explosive on a US-bound aeroplane that had originated in Yemen and which had stopped over in Germany. The US Congress has proposed a bill to introduce 100% screening of all cargo planes, however, industry representatives and several experts have dismissed the 100% option as too expensive and cumbersome to implement.

Napolitano said the US would focus on capacity building in the countries most vulnerable to threats such as Afghanistan and Yemen. In 2011, DHS will work with its international partners to strengthen cargo screening standards across the globe; deploy state-of-the-art technologies to better track and detect precursors; and expand and coordinate technical assistance and training to partner countries to ensure that well-developed, well-equipped Customs agencies are able to do their jobs everywhere along the global supply chain.



She said that this approach was preferable to setting up 'black lists' of airports that cannot meet international security standards. "The minute you start establishing categories, the terrorists figure out a way around them," Napolitano said.

One of the main concerns for the US administration is the trade in improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and their precursors. Secretary Napolitano highlighted DHS' commitment to working with Customs agencies and shipping companies from around the world to keep precursor chemicals that can be used to produce IEDs from being trafficked by terrorists.

A special enforcement project called 'Global Shield' targeting precursor chemicals such as ammonium nitrate is currently underway. Under the project launched in 2010 by DHS, the WCO, INTERPOL, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 60 countries are sharing information with each other to ensure that chemicals entering their territories are being used in safe and legal ways, and that suspect trading activities are actively investigated.

Secretary Napolitano also emphasized DHS' domestic efforts to address this issue, including creating a first of its kind centre to coordinate all US government efforts on export enforcement, and working with institutions across America where these chemicals are common – such as hospitals, laboratories and beauty supply companies – to prevent their diversion for use in IEDs.

More information
www.dhs.gov

New HS rules from 1 January 2012

1 January 2012 marks an important date on the international Customs and trade calendar: from then onwards the HS Nomenclature 2012 edition will be in effect.

The Recommendation of the Customs Cooperation Council of 26 June 2009 concerning the HS 2012 amendments is the fifth to amend the Harmonized System Nomenclature since the WCO Council approved its adoption in 1983, though it is only the fourth to make major amendments.

HS 2012 includes 220 sets of accepted amendments, divided as follows:

- 98 relate to the agricultural sector;
- 27 to the chemical sector;
- 9 to the paper sector;
- 14 to the textile sector;
- 5 to the base metal sector;
- 30 to the machinery sector; and
- an additional 37 that apply to a variety of other sectors.

Environmental and social issues of global concern are the major feature of these amendments, particularly the use of the HS as the standard for classifying and coding goods of specific importance to food security and the early warning data system of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The volume of amendments within, for instance, Chapter 3, for the separate identification of certain species of fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates, is substantial. In the same vein, new subheadings have been created for the separate identification of certain edible vegetables, roots and tubers, fruit and nuts, as well as cereals.

HS 2012 amendments also feature new subheadings for specific chemicals controlled under the Rotterdam Convention and ozone-depleting substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol.

Changing trade patterns also played a role in the current amendments resulting in 43 subheadings being deleted on account of low trade while the structured nomenclature (the subheadings) of certain HS headings had to be modified. On the other hand, new subheadings were created for products which are now being increasingly traded around the world, such as lilies (*Lillium* spp.), sweetened dried cranberries and cranberry juice, water pipe tobacco and wood pellets, to name a few.

With a view to simplifying the HS, the amendments include for instance a new provision grouping sanitary towels (pads) and tampons, napkins and napkin liners for babies and similar articles, of any material, in one single heading (heading 96.19).

Given that the HS is used extensively for statistical purposes too, both nationally and internationally, the HS 2012 edition will impact on this area of activity as certain code numbers have been added, deleted or renumbered as a result of the amendments.

With the date of entry into force only months away, the WCO is expending an enormous amount of energy to encourage full and speedy implementation of the new version of the HS around the world.

The 2012 edition was approved in June 2009 and since November 2010, the tables correlating the 2007 and 2012 versions have been available on the WCO website. Additionally, in January 2011 the brochure "Amendments to the Harmonized System Nomenclature effective from 1 January 2012" was published. This brochure presents all the new amendments that have been accepted as a result of the Recommendation of 26 June 2009. It also includes the so-called corrigendum amendments which were adopted later.



What else will be done before 1 January 2012?

The WCO Secretariat is working as fast as possible to update existing HS publications. Publication of the Explanatory Notes and the amendments to the Compendium of Classification Opinions will take place in mid 2011, after their adoption by the HS Committee (47th Session scheduled for March 2011) and their subsequent approval by the WCO Council (June 2011 Sessions). The amendments to the Alphabetical Index will follow.

To round off the smooth implementation of the 2012 edition of the HS Nomenclature, the WCO Secretariat, in the first half of 2011, will organize seminars on HS 2012 implementation in all WCO regions.

All these efforts and tools are geared by the WCO Secretariat at ensuring the speedy and timely implementation of HS 2012 by WCO Members and the trade community because...

HS 2017 is coming up next!

[More information
hs@wcoomd.org](mailto:hs@wcoomd.org)

New Zealand Customs celebrates its 170th anniversary

New Zealand's oldest government department, the New Zealand Customs Service, celebrated 170 years of operation in November 2010. Commencing as a one man operation in the Bay of Islands in 1840, when George Cooper was established as the first Collector of Customs in Kororareka (now Russell), the Service now has 1200 officers working across 16 air and sea ports throughout the country.

"While Customs began as a pure revenue collection agency, its role has now

broadened to protect New Zealand from organized crime, illicit drugs, prohibited goods, intellectual property infringement and people smuggling," said Minister of Customs, Maurice Williamson. "Customs' shift in focus continues to match the government's own priorities, and successes in the recent interception of methamphetamine precursors are evidence of Custom's vital role in protecting New Zealand from modern threats," added the Minister.

While New Zealand Customs continues its important role as a collector of revenue, it also has the critical role of protecting the country's border and supporting its trade and tourism. The Service's Statement of Intent sets out how it expects to continue the proud tradition of contributing effectively to New Zealand's longer-term prosperity and security over the next three years.



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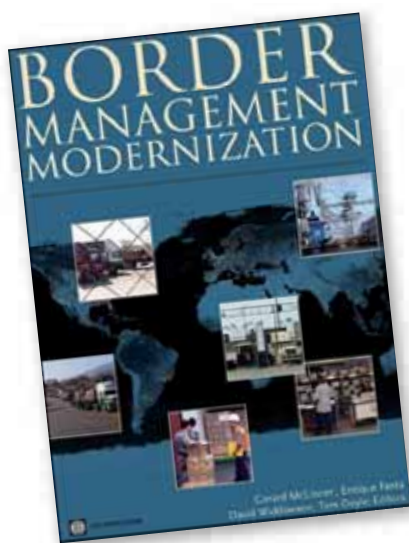
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New book: Border Management Modernization



The World Bank Border Management Modernization book has been available since November 2010. It is designed to shed new light on problems related to border clearance processes by Customs and other agencies, processes which are among the most important, and problematic links in the global supply chain.

In spite of widespread recognition of the need to improve the efficiency of border management regimes, Customs and other border management agencies in many countries frequently pay lip service to the trade facilitation agenda according to the authors.

The book aims to identify a range of strategies that will help officials meet their

traditional control responsibilities while facilitating legitimate trade at the same time. It also provides advice to development professionals and key policy makers about what works, what does not and why.

Gerard McLinden, Enrique Fanta, David Widdowson and Tom Doyle edited the new book and the WCO Secretariat contributed chapter 11 on Reform instruments, tools, and best practice approaches.

More information

<http://publications.worldbank.org>

WCO co-chairs UN working group

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Working Group on Border Management Related to Counter-Terrorism held its first meeting in January 2011 at WCO headquarters. It is chaired by the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and co-chaired by the WCO and INTERPOL.

The Working Group is leading the way in compiling a compendium of the efforts of specialized international organizations and UN entities to help Member States strengthen their border management and border control systems as part of the UN General Assembly's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

"International organizations and UN entities dealing with border security issues have made key contributions, which include international instruments, standards, guidelines and recommended practices," said Hassan Baage, a representative of the CTED to the CTITF. "However, these contributions have not been centralized and, in a few instances, not well known," he added.

The compendium will provide an additional source of guidance to UN Member States in their efforts to deal with border threats. It will contain information on-

- systems and processes for controlling the movement of people (including refugees),
- the integrity of identity and travel documents and their issuance processes,
- the illicit movement of cash and other bearer negotiable instruments,
- cargo reporting and security,
- security of facilities and modes of transportation,
- early-warning and alert systems,
- prevention, detection, response, investigation and prosecution of border-related offences,
- technologies supporting border control; cooperation, coordination and information exchange,
- anti-corruption programmes and best practices.

The Working Group will also consider available reports on new and emerging trends, as well as relevant assessments and studies that could be accessible to Member States. It will also participate in missions, regional meetings and other events, with a view to promoting good practices. The Group may also work to address States' specific border management and border control needs.

A host of UN and other international bodies are members of the Working Group including ICAO, IMO, IOM, UNHCR, UNICRI and UNODC among others.

More information

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World trade logistics improves

According to a new study on trade logistics carried out by the World Bank Group, countries are improving their ability to efficiently transport goods and to set up links between manufacturers and consumers in the global marketplace. Nevertheless, there is still progress to be made in stimulating economic growth to help companies take full advantage of world trade.

The study, entitled "Connecting to Compete 2010: Trade Logistics in the Global Economy", places Germany at the top of the list of 155 countries assessed on logistics performance.

The LPI is a benchmarking tool that summarizes the performance of countries in six areas that capture the most important aspects of the current logistics environment:

- Efficiency of the Customs clearance process;
- Quality of trade and transport-related infrastructure;
- Ease of arranging competitively priced shipments;
- Competence and quality of logistics services;
- Ability to track and trace consignments;
- Frequency with which shipments reach the receiver within the scheduled or expected time.

These areas range from traditional issues (Customs procedures and infrastructure quality) to new concerns (tracking and tracing shipments, timeliness in reaching a destination, and the competence of the domestic logistics industry).

Created to help countries identify the challenges and opportunities they face in trade logistics performance, the LPI survey consists of two major parts offering two different perspectives: international (evaluations of a country by its trading partners – logistics professionals

working outside the country) and domestic (assessments by logistics professionals working inside the country).

According to the study, countries with high-income economies figure highly in logistics ranking and the majority of these countries have an important role in both regional and global supply chain networking. In contrast, the ten least efficient countries have been grouped as having low or very low income.

Although the study finds a 'logistic gap' between rich countries and the majority of developing countries, it notes a positive evolution in certain crucial areas in logistics performance and trade, in particular the modernization of Customs, the use of information technology and the development of private sector logistics services.

Countries whose performance has vastly improved between the previous 2007 and latest 2010 study are often those who have undertaken new reforms fast within their logistics and trade facilitation systems, such as Brazil, Tunisia and Colombia.

If we take stock of the performance of developing countries by region, those who show the best results are South Africa (32nd place) in Africa, China (27th) in East Asia, Poland (30th) in Central and Western Europe, Brazil (41st) in Latin America, Libya (33rd) in the Middle East and India (47th) in South Asia.

As indicated by the study, logistics performance is strongly dependent on the quality of public authorities and on efficient coordination of Customs control measures in different border control services. In this respect, Customs services are more efficient than many other administrations, highlighting the need to reform border



control procedures. In lower performing countries, half of all containers are subject to physical inspection and one in seven containers is inspected at least twice.

The World Bank Group supports several projects aimed at strengthening trade logistics in developing countries. A 250 million US dollar trade facilitation and transport project in East Africa aims to improve the trade transit corridors between Uganda and Kenya, and to modernize the main border area in Malabar, located between these two countries. It is expected to reduce transit time from three days to three hours. A 250 million operation is also planned to help Tunisia to strengthen its competitiveness by reducing the exchange costs and by simplifying procedures at border controls. Also, a 31.2 million project targeted at modernizing and computerizing four main border sites in Afghanistan has allowed the country to bring in more than 399 million in Customs takings in 2008, compared to 50 million when the project kicked off in 2004.

More information
www.worldbank.org

Special Dossier

The power of knowledge

As the global Customs community enters the Year of Knowledge it is only fitting that we have dedicated this edition's Special Dossier to knowledge with a selection of articles covering just some of its many elements and angles.

Knowledge is now a definitive part of today's political and business environment. Terms such as a 'knowledge-based society', the 'knowledge economy' and 'knowledge management' are now in everyday use and it stands to reason that knowledge has become equally important for Customs.

Chairperson of the WCO Council, Martyn Dunne, talks about how we can foster knowledge by creating learning organizations whilst another contribution acknowledges the importance of a continuous approach to learning as the solution for an ever-changing professional environment.

Another article speaks about the rationalization of knowledge through networks and information sharing and how it can provide a recognized competitive advantage, complemented by other equally interesting contributions that emphasize the value of research based on empiricism, and

the need for more linkages and partnerships between Customs and the research and academic communities.

We also touch on the virtual environment and how online communities can play a valuable role in providing a place for sharing knowledge with articles on Club de la Réforme, the WCO's online "think-tank" for Customs officials and Customs researchers to share information, and CLiKC – Customs Learning and Knowledge Community – the WCO's new learning platform.

It is just as important for WCO Members and Customs' stakeholders to develop an enquiring mind and explore other areas of knowledge that could impact positively on their daily work such as new technology covered in another of the contributions to this Special Dossier.

Harnessing knowledge and using its power to become visionary, relevant and indispensable is vital to Customs' success and we hope that the variety of knowledge articles in our Special Dossier will help in some small way to drive the knowledge theme throughout 2011.

Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence



Knowledge
Connaissance



Fostering knowledge: creating learning organizations

...by Martyn Dunne, Chairperson of the WCO Council



The Chairperson of the WCO Council sets the tone of this edition's Special Dossier on Knowledge, the 2011 focal point for the global Customs community.

The global economic situation has reinforced the need for Customs administrations to be adaptable. Many of us are being asked to re-look at how we function and to do more with less. During my time as Council Chair I have been promoting three key themes for the WCO – the need for the organization

to be visionary, relevant, and indispensable. To achieve this, Customs services in the 21st century need to be receptive to new ideas, to new ways of working, and to embrace change.

On 26 January we celebrated International Customs Day with the theme: "Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence". This day allowed us to reflect on the need to create "learning organizations".

What I mean by this is an organization that:

- Is agile and adaptable.
- Focuses on its 'customers' and ensures there is strategic alignment between their needs, organisational goals, and the allocation of resources.
- Applies creative solutions developed through the knowledge and skills within an organization.
- Promotes a learning culture and empowers its staff to be responsible for their own learning.
- Ensures that there is a free flow of information between staff at all levels of the organization.
- Effectively uses technology for knowledge transfer.

During the meeting of the WCO Policy Commission in December 2010 we discussed the issue of air cargo security and were informed of the human resource challenges faced by some administrations. The rapid nature of the air cargo and passenger supply chain means that when a gap is identified, those connected with that supply chain need to respond quickly. This led us to a discussion on the need for capacity building through training, information sharing and systems improvement.

The Commission also discussed the role the WCO could play in increasing its influence with other international organizations

that work on air cargo security. The Communiqué we later released gained the attention of organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organisation, who agreed to invite the WCO to take part in a joint study on air cargo security.

Of course cross-organisational discussions also need to occur at a national level. In New Zealand, for example, I have had discussions with my equivalent in the Ministry of Transport, and I know that many other countries have had similar discussions.

An important aspect of any learning organization is self reflection and in this respect I have been pleased at the constructive feedback I have received from WCO Members. This feedback has included suggestions on management development, under-invoicing in the context of smarter revenue collection, organizational design, and the better use of research capacity and e-learning tools.

The feedback which I have mentioned has been raised with the WCO Secretariat and we will be looking to implement any suggestions we can or add the suggestions to the agenda of the annual Council Sessions in June. Looking forward to these Sessions, I am working to ensure we create an environment for knowledge sharing at the highest level.

I believe there is much value in involving Customs Ministers and Senior Executives from the private sector that can help us re-affirm the WCO vision and ensure we are seen as being relevant and indispensable to their needs. Having these high level participants at the Council Sessions will motivate and energise delegates to drive our work programme forward and reinforce the key role that Customs plays in the global trading environment.

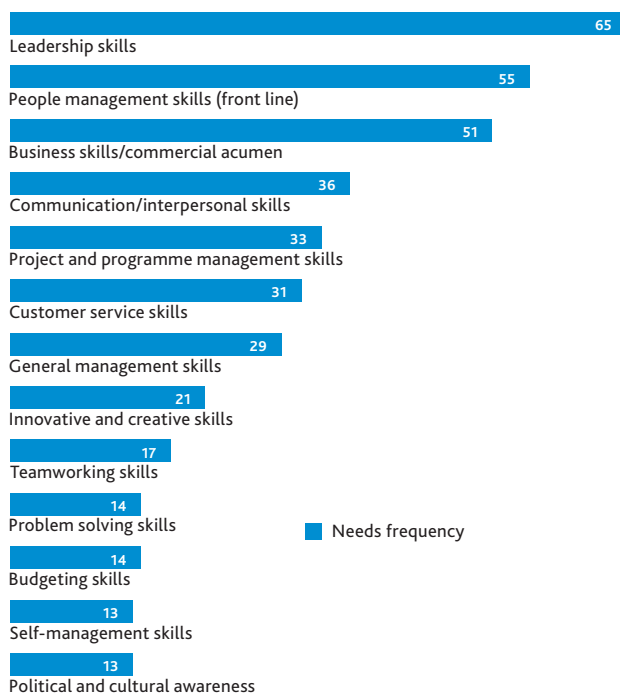
Learnism: a continuous learning approach, the solution for an ever-changing professional environment

Administrations, just like private enterprises, are faced with an ever-changing, rapidly evolving environment. Change is right at the heart of an administration and the success of the Columbus Programme demonstrates that Customs administrations are not lagging behind and are undertaking vast reform and modernization projects. The integration of new technologies, the internationalization of professions or the priority given to service are but a few examples of this new state of affairs.

The success and continuity of these changes is only possible if the men and women who have to put them into practice are provided with the necessary support. Training of Customs officials is therefore a major strategic issue in the attainment of fixed objectives. It must also be adapted to comply with these new requirements.

Technology, techniques and legislation evolve rapidly and basic traditional training, even good training, will no longer suffice to ensure that the officer remains effective throughout his or her career.

A recent survey (Source: CIPD, Annual Survey Report 2010 - <http://www.cipd.co.uk/>) relating to more than 700 public and private organizations in the United Kingdom revealed that the overwhelming majority of training needs related to management and leadership (see diagram below).



Technical skills are volatile as they evolve rapidly and the strength of an officer lies in his ability to manage change and remain on the mark. Rather than teaching specific technical subjects, the tendency is therefore to develop individual capacities and to make employees responsible for their own training needs, in other words teach themselves to learn. In the light of these new trends in training strategies, new tools and methods have emerged to assist administrations in achieving these objectives.

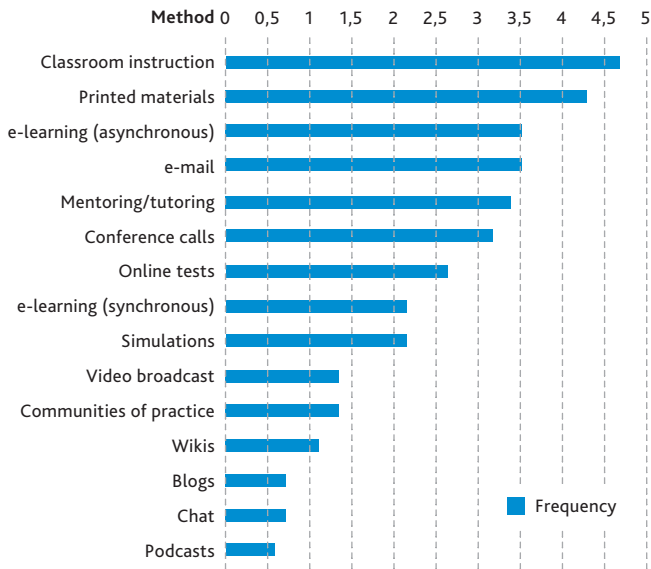
New training methods

Traditional classroom training is still the main method (Source: eLearningGuild – 2008) used for disseminating knowledge (see diagram p.19), followed by distance learning such as e-learning. However, new tools are playing an ever-increasing role in the setting up of complete training strategies. Most stress the importance of the social and participative aspects of the learning process and are therefore consistent with the desire to more directly involve officers in their own training. These tools can be very effective when correctly used however, gadgetry must be avoided and it must be kept in mind that whatever method is used, training must be based on measurable objectives relating to concrete needs.

Ownership and the use of societal training methods are made possible by the development of students themselves and their almost daily use of social networks. This participative culture reinforces the feeling of empowerment and provides access to knowledge through familiar processes. Work, entertainment and training tools come together to create a propitious environment for continuous learning throughout active life. With the rapid development of mobile equipment (smart-phones, tablets, etc.) providing internet access, training more readily becomes a part of everyday life.

Coaching and mentoring are some of the more traditional methods of training which do not necessarily rely on new technologies. The officer is supported in his training process by someone who guides and advises him on his development by encouraging him to acquire skills by himself. A coach is independent and an expert in personal development whereas a mentor is often a person who has been in the organization for some time and who is further up in the hierarchy. These activities can also be conducted from a distance and thus become part of the other training methods using new technologies.

In the virtual world, social networks and tools (Facebook and Twitter are the best known) have exploded via the Internet over the last five years and have provided trainers with many ideas.



The most used tools are inter alia:

- Communities of practice, which are specialized social networks for exchange of information and experience sharing between participants;
- Wikis, which enable participants to collectively structure skills and acquired knowledge and also 'manage' the knowledge of the organization; and
- Blogs, where participants can exchange their impressions, improvements and shortcomings.

The WCO is testing these new methods and offers its Members the possibility of using these social functions via its new training portal (see page 25).

Traditional methods are also changing with the increase in the participative element (group exercises, role play, simulations, etc) even in classical training structures. E-learning tends to borrow from the leisure industry with the use for example of "serious games" or the 3D immersive universe. The aim is to involve the trainee more and more and to make it possible for him to build knowledge rather than just absorbing it.

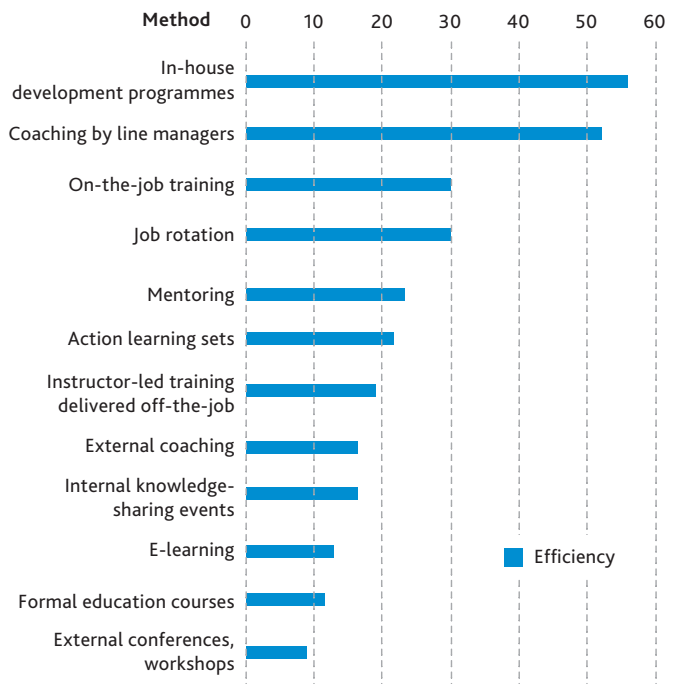
Conclusion

All these training methods whether they are new or updated via internet, must not make us forget the initial objectives. None of them are good or bad as such but they must be adapted to the training objectives. The more defined they are, the easier it becomes to quickly create accessible modules when the need arises.

For each objective it is necessary to choose the most appropriate method on the basis of constraints relating to availability, effectiveness and cost in order to come up with made-to-measure training using a blend of the different means available. Even if these new trends are attractive and offer potential their impact

on the administration must be evaluated and they must be adjusted where required. Social methods are also considered by trainers more effective than traditional methods (see diagram below).

The most significant development is that an officer now designs a personal training menu and does not just follow a pre-defined programme provided by management; putting together the ingredients provided for his or her own recipe for success.



More information capacity.building@wcoomd.org



Using knowledge: a must for Customs' competence and inter-connectivity

Knowledge management is right at the heart of problems relating both to organizational performance and the technical dimension of Customs in the 21st century.

This concept which has entered into common jargon within the business world aims at standardizing, organizing and sharing knowledge and skills within a group or organization. It introduces an innovative conception of resources whereby the rationalization of knowledge, through networks and information sharing, provides a recognized competitive advantage and where knowledge is considered to be an organization's intangible good.

Knowledge management is one of the major concerns of a modern Customs administration which must implement new organizational methods while making the best use of its human resources. One of the building blocks of the WCO's Customs in the 21st Century vision calls for the development and adoption of 'a professional knowledge-based service culture'.

The implementation of this concept is however closely linked to other issues covered in this article, namely, the pooling of information, networking, secure IT systems, and modern and ethical working methods and procedures.

The WCO Capacity Building Strategy also has an important role to play in furthering knowledge management. In this respect the Organization has developed a series of instruments relating to the development of knowledge-sharing and capitalization of Customs knowledge and skills. They stress two major concepts, namely, modern standards and stronger networks.

Adoption of standards prior to pooling knowledge

The implementation of standardized procedures has reinforced the huge steps taken over the last few years to make Customs more professional.

This body of Customs standards has meant that administrations have been able to more readily develop and share best practices since they are structured on similar models. It has also led to the internationalization of the Customs profession through standardization of knowledge and individual specific skills.

The WCO PICARD professional standards and increased cooperation with the academic world has made it possible for Customs officers to participate in academic debates and become a major focal point in the development of international trade-related knowledge. This is confirmed by the success of the 5th PICARD Conference held in Abu Dhabi from 23 to 25 November 2010 while still underlining future challenges.

More and more pressing answers are needed given current trends: how can we maintain the knowledge within each organization and held by each officer while taking maximum advantage of the dynamics of Customs Unions and the mobility of personnel?

Networking and knowledge-sharing

Within the framework of assistance to its Members, the WCO has created a series of reliable networks between Customs administrations.

By adopting a regionalized capacity building strategy, it has encouraged the creation and distribution of Customs knowledge at regional level. The Regional Offices for Capacity Building (ROCB's) and the Regional Training Centres (RTC's) have over the last few years made major advances in pooling information which can then be used to the benefit of regional communities.

The RTC's are turning progressively into centres of excellence. In the Asia Pacific region, the RTC's coordinate and progressively rationalize the development and management of regional knowledge by concentrating on priority Customs issues. They benefit from the WCO Secretariat's expert accreditation programme whose accredited experts strengthen the steps taken by the RTC's to become centres of excellence.

The programme envisaged by donors in the Americas and Caribbean region illustrates the concrete advantages of data exchange and coordinated management. A unique platform covers all Customs modernization projects benefiting from stakeholder support. It makes it possible to optimize relationships between the different players and the distribution of resources within the region, to avoid overlaps and provide transparency, equity and regional emulation.

Customs, including Customs communities, in the East and Southern Africa region are also innovative and progressive in sharing their various education programmes. The Secretariat is putting together a project to establish a common portal where Customs training strategies, teaching programmes and course material will

be available. It is aimed at the future alignment of programmes and the enhancement and progressive recognition of regional Customs training programmes.

This is an ambitious project but by using the tools and technologies available it should be possible to achieve effective results.

New modes of communication

New technologies have an impact on the methods of sharing professional knowledge and the Secretariat began helping WCO Members to review their training strategies, both at the regional and national level, by providing innovative technological solutions.

The latest version of the e-learning platform – baptised CLiKC (Customs Learning and Knowledge Community) – provides a wide range of knowledge management tools which correspond to changes in training techniques: access to e-learning, management and tutoring of e-learning and classroom courses at regional and national level, communication and multi-exchange between participants, a collaborative platform (wiki), a collective documentary database, course development, and so on (see page 25).

New technologies give a participative dimension to training, transforming the old pyramidal structure of training and putting in place

new forms of management where stress is laid on innovation and collective cooperation

Customs managers are confronted on a daily basis with the standardization of data and procedures, networks, secure and rapid data exchange, and new communication methods. In utilizing all the possibilities offered by technology, the information, training and communication aspects of knowledge must be taken into consideration.

Visionary, relevant and indispensable

As the centre of Customs expertise, knowledge and skills, the WCO continues to provide assistance to its Members in implementing innovative projects and supports the emergence of a new vision of Customs cooperation, mutual gains, novel managerial techniques and optimized management of human capital.

More information

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Making training operational: designing more technical and effective training mechanisms

A changing environment and innovative career possibilities have given rise to new training requirements both in quantity and in quality. The search for efficiency, the major aim when developing skills, is based on ensuring a parallel between teaching methods and the professional context and working methods. The design and implementation of training actions, mechanisms, programmes or systems must therefore be visionary and provide an environment where both sequential training concepts and technical skills can be applied.

In order to support the development of skills it is absolutely essential that training is carried out in a dynamic cycle where implementation, evaluation and adaptation are continually linked. Not only the technical skills but also the know-how acquired and the subsequent changes in behaviour make it possible to evaluate the results of this approach. Various methods need to be provided according to the culture and management processes of the organization: self assessment, co-assessment in groups, evaluation through coaching or mentoring, vertical and

Strategic Stage

- Decision to change
- Training Policy
- Definition of operational needs and targeting of objectives

Operational stage of learning

- Training mechanism (content, peripheral tools, teaching methods and support)

Operational stage of the training action

- Evaluation of results
- Reactivity
- Optimisation
- Organisational Impact

The design of a training mechanism must therefore be considered as a whole, from the definition of operational objectives through to support measures and evaluation, in order to adjust the content, material and resources required to closely align with performance and development needs and objectives.

Specialised content and a variety of training activities are the basic components required to build and develop an operational teaching mechanism which should not be based solely on the alternation of theoretical classes and practical learning. Content and teaching methods must be made more professional, operational decision processes must proceed beyond the stilted application of theoretical skills in order to match complex and changing situations at all levels within an organization.

Training activities are thus more focused on interaction, whatever the format. Traditional training activities are structured as workshops or exchange of practices, case studies, simulations and role-play and are right at the centre of the learning process. E-learning modules highlight the multimedia approach to concepts: individual training paths requiring active participation for virtual operational implementation.

hierarchical evaluation. All of these relate to performance criteria which will be all the more effective if they take account of individual involvement and organizational impact. This must be obtained by putting observation measurement mechanisms focused on training-sensitive issues in place (organisation, motivation, working conditions, staff changes, etc.).

More information
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Transferring knowledge in a more innovative way

...by Peter van Tienhoven, Dutch Customs

International technical assistance (TA) programmes and study visits organized by the Tax and Customs Administration of the Netherlands are coordinated by the Centre for Professional Development and Communication.

Last year the Centre organized a workshop for trainers and experts who are involved in TA programmes and study visits to discuss how knowledge could be transferred in a more innovative way to inspire trainees and ensure successful outcomes.

Trainers, experts and educationalists from the Fiscal Investigation Department of the Tax and Customs administration and the training centre discussed the following topics relating to training programmes: preparation of the programme; expectations of recipients; inhibiting factors; stimulating factors; best practices; and methods of knowledge transfer.

The following success factors for a training programme were identified:

Preparation and communication

- Good programme preparation by experts/trainers is important.
- Communication between trainer and trainee during the preparatory phase enables the programme to be fine tuned.
- Recipients should send their expectations and exact goals in advance of the session as this enables the most suitable experts to be selected and facilitates the preparation of a programme that meets the needs of the trainees.

Classifying your own shoes is one of the exercises that officers attending a harmonized system training session had to undertake



- Trainees should be invited to prepare presentations for delivery during the training session as this enables the trainer to gain a better view of the trainee's situation, in addition to furthering understanding and enhancing discussions.

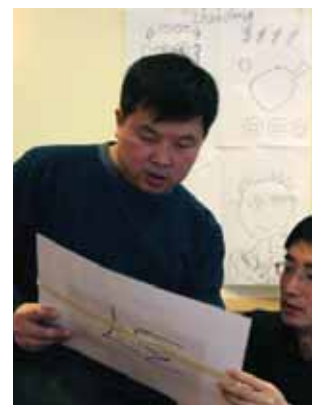
Logistics, facilitation and interpretation

- The provision of meals and accommodation, and a mixture between training and cultural activities, is important.
- A training venue should create a convenient environment for the trainees to flourish easily.
- Inviting trainees' local Embassy to make a speech during the opening and/or host an event in its honour helps to raise the profile of the training among recipients.
- Informal introductory sessions that are creative and interesting help to inspire participants.
- The provision of professional interpretation, if needed, ensures that transfer of knowledge is not lost due to language problems.

During the workshop, an in-depth discussion took place on the best knowledge transfer methods. The use of PowerPoint was discussed and while it was accepted that this method could be used to assist the trainer in presenting the lecture, it could also result in a passive situation and take away attention. PowerPoint presentations should therefore be brief and to the point.

Workshop participants were challenged to come up with other methods of knowledge transfer and they produced a list with 17 different methods. For example: case studies, role-play, subgroups, discussions, lectures presented in a more relaxed way, story-telling, practical training, and training on location.

As a result of the workshop, many suggestions were given by the participants for organizing training sessions in a more innovative and inspiring way. Some of these suggestions have been implemented already and some of them are still in progress.



In a novel introductory acquaintance exercise, trainees provide drawn answers to questions about themselves, how others perceive them in the work place, their training expectations, and the main goals they wish to achieve by undergoing the training

To sum up, much more time should be spent on the preparation of the training programme, all information including training topics should be shared between trainers and trainees in advance, training evaluation should not only include the filling out of a form but also a discussion at the end of the session. While it is nice to know that a training session was successful, it is just as important to know whether any improvements or changes need to be made.

Peter van Tienhoven works as a Programme Manager at the Dutch Centre for Professional Development and Communication and is responsible for coordinating TA programmes with Customs administrations in China, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Mongolia among others.

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A trainer stands on his desk to explain risk analysis methods by showing that it is all about looking at something from a different perspective



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A new Customs learning and education platform for the 21st century

Over the past few years, the WCO Secretariat has been developing innovative ways to efficiently enhance the capacity building initiatives and reform policies of its Members.

Modern tools and methods were introduced by the Secretariat which enabled better management of resources, met the needs of a fast-changing environment, and took account of the cultural shift within Customs towards professionalisation – leading to the promotion of continuous learning structures rather than traditional training activities and policies.

In order to offer limitless training, in June 2003 the WCO launched a groundbreaking e-learning program. Today the Organization is launching a new platform which will continue to offer access to online courses but will now also open a new world of possibilities for training actors.

More than 15.000 Customs officers from 115 countries use the WCO platform for virtual training, allowing them to train directly at the work place in every Customs office and at every border post. 250 hours of e-training is available on almost all major global Customs standards and WCO tools, including the Harmonized System (HS), valuation, enforcement, IPR, integrity, and the Istanbul Convention.

This entirely free program was conceived around two simple concepts: standardization and adaptation. WCO self-learning courses raise knowledge on standardized Customs techniques and, although they are based on WCO expertise, they do reflect the experience of Members and allow local assessment and evaluation. Over and above the 115 countries using the system, 28 administrations have rolled out the WCO platform on their own national server and intranet, and now administer their own version of the e-learning program.



In order to dramatically increase the Secretariat's e-training offer and taking into account the lightning-speed with which IT is evolving, the Secretariat has decided to migrate the e-learning program to a new open-source system and is now launching CLiKC, the Customs Learning and Knowledge Community. This new platform will enhance the possibilities for Members to use and develop it further for their own purposes.

The new web-based portal will become a single-access point for all Customs training matters – not only to conduct training but also to produce, store and share all training-related material and documents. These communication features will enable a Members training network to be developed and provide an ideal platform for views to be shared and expertise in technical and managerial matters to be built. It is the Secretariat's aim to offer greater assistance in human capital development in Customs and in the harmonization of Customs language around the world.

In addition to the launch of this new secure training portal, the WCO is offering richer access modes. With Sweden's concrete support the whole e-learning package has been translated into Arabic and Portuguese too which brings the modules closer to the field, enabling officials from these language groups to benefit from the same training on WCO standards. The Customs community now

has access to the same courses in five different languages: Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

The WCO e-learning program has moreover received invaluable support from the World Bank to strengthen the offer to Members and to sustain the implementation of this package in sub-Saharan Africa. These fruitful partnerships with international organizations such as the World Bank and others like UNEP and the OECD support the WCO Secretariat's efforts to constantly upgrade and develop more courses to strengthen Customs' knowledge in all key Customs topics.

As with most WCO tools, this portal is entirely owned by Members and its successful implementation is a core component of their Customs modernization initiatives, more particularly because capacity building is about exchanging and benefiting from each other's expertise. This new WCO tool offers a concrete platform for each and every Member to share knowledge, to continuously improve Customs professionalism, and to embrace consolidated knowledge management at the global level.

More information
capacity.building@wcoomd.org

A think tank for sharing knowledge: Club de la Réforme puts Customs online

During the last Council Sessions, the WCO unveiled the "Club de la Réforme" to promote exchange of information and experiences on Customs reforms between administrations, international organizations and the academic world. Since October 2010, the Club has been fully operational and already has 130 participants from over 40 different countries and organizations.

The Club is a "community website" with features that enable a network to be built and to keep in touch with it through an email alert system whenever new contributions are posted by members of a network. Everyone whose activities lead them beyond their borders or their administration knows how difficult it can be to sustain networks.

Besides being an online community where members can maintain contact, the Club is primarily a place for members to upload quality content which they can share with others. They can also create public or private focus groups in which they can exchange all types of documents, write

articles, report events, and launch surveys to gather comprehensive experiences on specific areas. Access to the Club is on request and granted on an individual basis.

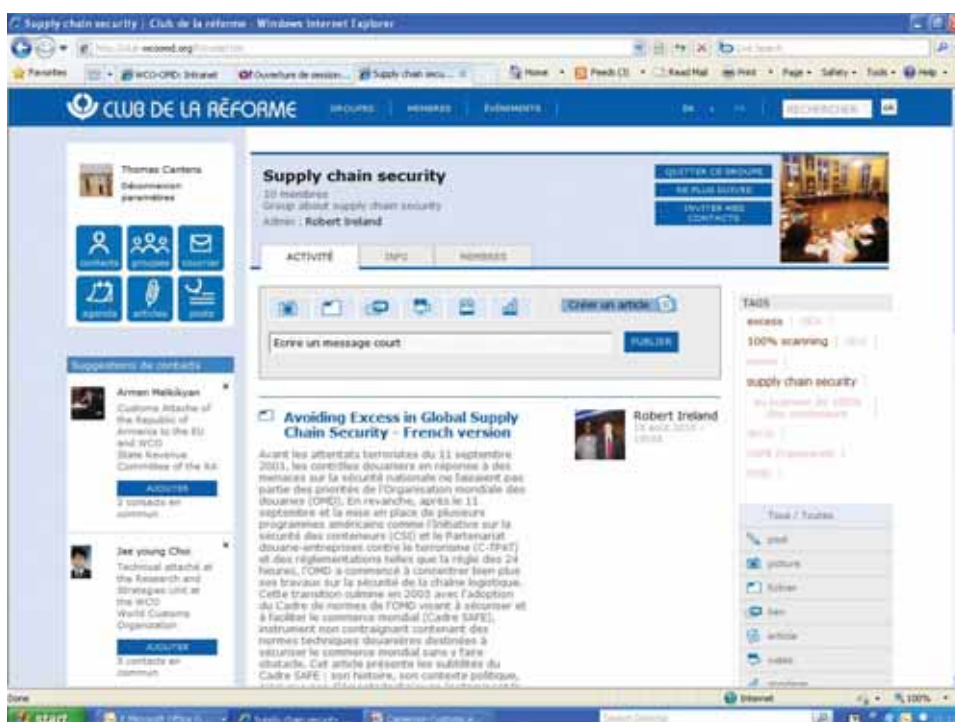
Since its launch two months ago, the Club now hosts a dozen small groups covering various topics: anti-corruption, risk management, the revised Kyoto Convention, supply chain security, and the role of international organizations in Customs reform. Customs attachés in Brussels have created their own group. All participants are encouraged to form groups, especially on technical subjects. One does not have to be an expert in a particular topic to contribute to or create a group. On the contrary, the issues of most novices are often those that enable everyone to think outside the box.

Because reforms are becoming more complex and now incorporate numerous parameters, Customs authorities must respond innovatively to political or commercial constraints. The circulation of knowledge within and beyond the Customs community has become more crucial and necessary than ever. Club de la Réforme through its online think-tank format is helping to meet this challenge.

More information

<http://club.wcoomd.org>

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WCO Fellowship Programme: twenty-five years of successful knowledge transfer

The Fellowship Programme is an integral part of the WCO's range of activities to provide its Members with concrete and sustainable capacity building. Established in 1985 and having held 53 sessions to date, the Fellowship contributes to leveraging change toward a more efficient and better networked Customs management.

Aligned with the WCO Columbus Programme, it aims to assist Customs administrations with their organizational development by endowing selected managers, demonstrating high development potential, with the technical knowledge and management capacities needed to help drive their Customs administration's reform activities. In this respect, during the Fellowship they are specifically tasked to develop concrete proposals that will contribute to modernization processes.

" Indeed, some Fellows have gone on to reach higher positions in their administrations and governments, including assuming the mantle of Director General and even ministerial posts. Quite a credit for the WCO Fellowship Programme!"

The first Spanish-speaking fellows with the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General

Nearly 600 candidates from 130 developing countries have benefited from this Programme and become change agents and actors in the sustainable reform and modernization of their home administrations.

The Programme is a clear indication of the WCO's long-standing commitment to raise the performance of Customs globally, and owes a large part of its success to unfailing support from donors over the years be they other WCO Members or Customs' partners. In this regard particular mention must be made of the contributions by Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the European Union and more recently Spain.

Until late last year Fellowships were conducted exclusively in English or French. However, in an effort to expand the Programme, the WCO Secretariat took a step further to enhance its global approach to Customs reform by organizing the first Fellowship Programme in Spanish. This ground-breaking initiative has opened up the WCO's leadership and management development programmes to a wider audience and is indicative of the Secretariat's will to ensure the efficient dissemination and implementation of WCO standards.

The Spanish-speaking session also enabled the Secretariat to forge closer links with the business world as well as with some of the Organization's private sector partners who graciously agreed to support WCO efforts to foster enhanced management capacity in Customs administrations.

This Fellowship was made possible due to financial support from private sector donors such as the Association of Professional



Customs Brokers (ASAPRA), the Conference of Express Companies of America and the Caribbean (CLADEC), and the Business Alliance for Secure Commerce (World BASC), in addition to support from the Secretariat, the Customs Cooperation Fund of the EU and the Customs administrations of Angola, Argentina and Uruguay.

Ten selected Fellows coming from nine different countries – Angola, Argentina, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Uruguay – participated in the pilot from 8 November to 17 December 2010. They spent their first four weeks at WCO headquarters in Brussels and then benefited from a two-week study trip hosted by Spain's Customs administration.

Fellows who participated in the WCO Fellowship Programme have been provided with a new dimension while the network of Customs professionals brought about by the Programme has been enriched.

More information
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My time as a fellow: a wonderful experience for many years to come

...by Enkeleda Hitaj, Albanian Customs

The 52nd WCO Fellowship Programme was indeed a wonderful experience for me and 14 other Customs colleagues from around the world. It gives Customs managers who are halfway in their career the chance to get acquainted with all that the WCO has to offer, to enhance their leadership and management capabilities and to gain know-how on the way Customs administrations operate in other parts of the world.

I had been looking forward to meeting new colleagues from different countries, and I was not disappointed, what a diversity! The real getting to know each other began during the seven-day Leadership and Management Course, thanks to the facilitators who really built up a group out of us, 15 individuals, and made us realize that "We must become the change we want to see".

After this, another period started. With the support of my personal WCO mentor, I worked on and wrote a report on a research project, including recommendations to be submitted to my home administration. My mentor challenged me to come up with interesting new insights that could be accomplished once back in my administration. And I now realize that my report is a big achievement and an important step towards implementation.

I also enjoyed the time spent with the other fellows, our visits to cities abroad during weekends, and our dinners with the WCO team. We all promised each other very whole-heart that we belong to the big "Customs family".

During the final two weeks, I went to Japan for a field study trip, together with nine others fellows. It was my first time in Asia and I was very impressed at the professionalism of our Japanese colleagues at the Ministry of Finance and the Custom and Tariff Bureau. The diversity of places we visited enriched my views on Customs and on the world!

Nevertheless I was more than happy to come home after six fantastic weeks. The Fellowship will stay in my memory, as well as in my way of handling things at the office, as a wonderful experience for many years to come.



Enkeleda receives her Certificate from Secretary General Mikuriya

Raising the academic standing of the Customs profession

...by Professor David Widdowson

The recent WCO PICARD (Partnership in Customs Academic Research and Development) Conference in Abu Dhabi marked a significant milestone in the development of the partnership between the WCO and the academic world. From the inception of the PICARD Programme, our collective aim has been to raise the academic standing of the Customs profession – but it was not always clear how this would be achieved. I remember sitting at a table in Brussels in early 2006 with a small group of WCO officials and fellow academics, discussing possible ways forward.

At that time, there were:

- no established standards for the Customs profession
- no recognised areas of legitimate academic pursuit in Customs-related areas
- no internationally recognised Customs university programmes
- no academic journals dedicated to Customs matters
- no international conferences at which the Customs and academic communities could exchange ideas and research findings

So, how have we achieved all this in such a short period of time? Allow me to provide a short history.

Following the 2006 meeting in Brussels, the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) was founded and at that time, its membership comprised only four universities. The idea behind INCU's establishment was to promote academic excellence in Customs management and administration and in doing so, to provide the WCO and other organizations with a single point of contact with universities and research institutes that are active in the fields of Customs research, education and training. It was also designed to generate greater public awareness of Customs matters, to promote and facilitate research in the field of Customs and related areas, and to provide a global resource for governments, the private sector, and students wishing to further their knowledge in the field of Customs and international trade.

Later that year, the PICARD initiative was launched and the first PICARD Conference was held in Brussels. There was plenty of lively debate, and one thing in particular that I remember clearly was a message we received from a number of delegates that the development of an international academic journal dedicated to Customs matters was simply too hard to achieve and excessively ambitious. Interestingly, I did not see any of those delegates at PICARD 2010 in Abu Dhabi. Undeterred, at the 2007 conference which was again held in Brussels, we launched the World Customs Journal – so much for the critics!

At the time of the Journal's launch, Kunio Mikuriya, who was then Deputy Secretary General of the WCO, announced that, in his view, the Journal would serve as a valuable source of reference for Customs to meet the requirements of its new strategic environment, and would also serve as the flagship for cooperation between the WCO and the academic world. You can see that Kunio, who is now Secretary General of the WCO, has been a strong supporter from the early days of the partnership – and we thank him for his ongoing commitment and support.



Moving ever forward, work commenced in 2008 on the development of Professional Standards, which were debated at some length during the PICARD Conference in Shanghai. The Professional Standards were formally endorsed by the WCO at its 2009 Council Sessions and this paved the way to address the application guidelines and related matters at the PICARD Conference that was held in Costa Rica later that year. Then, on 26 January 2010 – celebrated annually as International Customs Day – the WCO formally recognized the academic programmes of three universities: Riga Technical University, the University of Münster, and the University of Canberra.

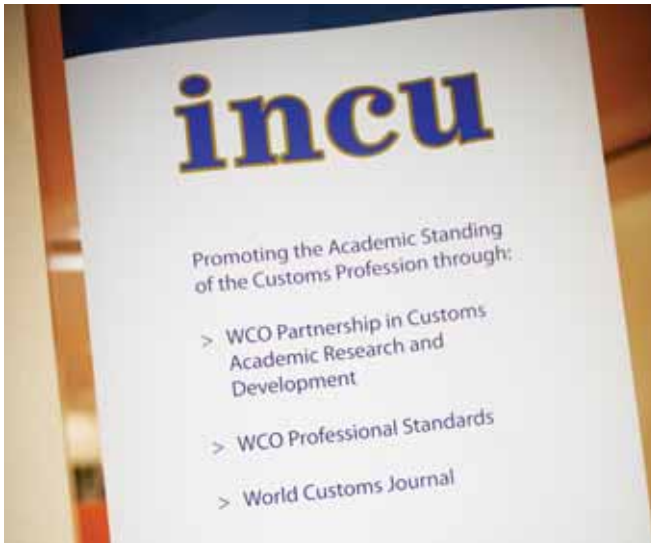
So, here we are today: standards for the Customs profession are in place; several internationally recognized academic programmes are well established and many more are being developed; the ninth edition of the World Customs Journal is soon to be published; and the planning process for the sixth annual PICARD Conference is underway.

We have indeed reached a significant milestone. Having achieved much of what we originally set out to achieve, the implementation phase is well and truly over and it is now time to take things forward. And like any relationship, the partnership between the WCO and the academic world is evolving.

I am very pleased to see the WCO's theme for 2011 is "Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence". This is certainly an area in which the academic community can assist. INCU, through the PICARD initiative, has been increasingly focusing its research efforts on areas of specific relevance to the WCO, its Members and its stakeholders. In this way it is able to provide empirical evidence to help inform

decision making. The themes of the World Customs Journal and PICARD Conferences over the past few years are testament to this.

In the above regard, research topics have included the changing Customs environment, capacity building, trade facilitation, supply chain security, the impact of the global financial crisis on world trade and Customs, coordinated border management, the use of ICT in the cross-border environment, Customs-Business partnerships, revenue collection, the impact of climate change, and performance measurement.



The WCO's focus on knowledge in 2011 therefore neatly paves the way for PICARD to build on its significant achievements to date. For its part, INCU is committed to continuing its work with the WCO in further developing the body of knowledge upon which informed decision making relies. It is equally committed to facilitating a free exchange of ideas and best practice that serve to build closer links between government and the private sector in their efforts to facilitate legitimate trade and to secure the international supply chain.

According to the eminent author, Stephen Covey, "An empowered organization is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective organizational success". I wish the WCO and its Members every success in 2011 as they seek empowerment through knowledge.

David Widdowson is CEO of the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies at the University of Canberra, Editor-in-Chief of the World Customs Journal, and President of the International Network of Customs Universities.

More information

www.incu.org

www.worldcustomsjournal.org

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Customs professional development:

a key enabler for management excellence

...by the University of Canberra

The Centre for Customs and Excise Studies at the University of Canberra (CCES) is a world leader in Customs and excise education, training, consulting and research.

CCES offers three separate streams of education and training – postgraduate, vocational, and management/leadership programmes – all of which are designed to meet the demands of a complex and constantly changing international trade and border management environment. The following courses have been certified by the WCO as meeting the requirements of its international standards for the Customs profession:

- Graduate Certificate in International Customs Law and Administration
- Graduate Diploma in International Customs Law and Administration
- Masters in International Customs Law and Administration
- Masters in Customs Administration (delivered in Sri Lanka in partnership with the University of Sri Jayewardenepura)
- Graduate Certificate in Excise Studies
- Graduate Diploma in Excise Studies

CCES postgraduate courses may be studied on campus or online, either full-time or part-time, and provide a logical pathway from Graduate Certificate, through Graduate Diploma, to Masters Degree. This allows students to access postgraduate study at a level and pace commensurate with their experience, qualifications and work commitments. In addition, prospective students who have considerable and relevant experience but have not obtained an undergraduate degree may be able to enrol at Graduate Certificate level on the basis of their experience and, if successful in their studies, may proceed to Graduate Diploma or Masters level.

All courses have been developed on the basis of international best practice and utilize case studies from all over the world to demonstrate the application of principle and process, and address both theory and its practical application.

CCES postgraduate courses are suitable for a broad range of students: those who wish to pursue a government career in Customs and border management; current and future managers within government agencies with Customs and border responsibilities; and international trade professionals within the private sector who wish to expand their knowledge of international trade and its regulation. The suitability and relevance of CCES postgraduate courses in this respect has been



and continues to be reflected in the CCES student demographic which is almost equally divided between public and private sector participants. For example, recent Masters Graduates who received the CCES Award for Excellence for their postgraduate studies include:

- Dr. Cheaseth Seng (graduated June 2009) from Cambodia, who is now an Australian citizen currently teaching at the University of Ballarat in Australia.
- Mr. Theo Colesky (graduated December 2009) from South Africa, currently employed as a Customs Manager for Kuehne and Nagle (Pty) Ltd.
- Mr. David Hesketh (graduated June 2010) from the United Kingdom, currently a Manager with HM Revenue and Customs.

More information

www.customscentre.canberra.edu.au

Five Universities offer academic programmes recognized by the WCO

- The University of Münster, Germany
- The Centre for Customs & Excise Studies, University of Canberra, Australia
- The University of Costa Rica
- The Riga Technical University, Latvia
- The National Research University ITMO, International Business and Law Institute, Saint-Petersburg, Russia

European Customs training community benefits from new knowledge sharing tool

...by Annette Poro, TACTIC Project Manager, European Commission



Keeping informed about ongoing developments at both national and international level as they occur is critical to Customs' success. Not only are they involved in managing and detecting risk but also in facilitating legitimate trade. However, risks are constantly evolving throughout the world and administrations are continuously devising solutions to emerging Customs challenges. To meet Customs' needs, legislation and procedures in the European Union are evolving and developing all the time.

Training of Customs officials therefore, requires an approach that takes account of the continuous evolution of information at many levels and across many locations. It is in this context that the European Commission's Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD) developed its Taxation and Customs Training Interactive Campus (TACTIC) platform; an online user-driven knowledge environment for the European Customs training community launched in Bled, Slovenia in March 2010 under the EU funded Customs 2013 Programme.

TACTIC has some features in common with popular social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Members of the community are virtually linked via the platform. Users may communicate with other users at all times. Knowledge in this Web 2.0 environment – commonly associated with web applications that facilitate interactivity, interoperability and collaboration in a social media dialogue – is never static but is constantly being shaped by community members to meet daily business challenges. While TAXUD is a key contributor to the site, all users determine what appears in TACTIC. Members of the TACTIC community can use the platform in different ways. They can participate regularly in a collaborative project with European colleagues, or they can use TACTIC occasionally when they wish to discuss an issue or access information.

Unlike LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, TACTIC is not a public website. Rather, it is a highly secure site accessible only by people working in the Customs and tax training environment in Europe who have been given authorised access by

appropriate decision makers at national level. Each administration has complete authority to decide which officials are granted access and how TACTIC will be used by that administration.

Users include a wide variety of professionals and topic experts including the heads of training institutes, training managers, and trainers. Membership currently stands at just over 1000 members. New members are approved by national administrations every day as national TACTIC "rollout" plans are implemented. TAXUD hopes that the number of users will double or even treble during 2011/2012 and that soon thousands of officials will support each other by joining this European knowledge community.

A "country training profile" outlining the specific approach to training in each administration has been created by national institutes. This means that they can learn from one another as well as work together and share resources.

Uploading and downloading training material is a key element of TAXUD's activity and it provides e-learning courses in several EU languages on Customs topics. The platform also contains many training courses shared by national institutes that are available in various EU languages.

All users can contribute "News and Views" and can comment on a variety of topics. The "Discussion" area is becoming increasingly active as users gradually adapt to the culture change involved in directly asking and answering questions, sharing information on national programmes and projects and putting ideas forward for feedback. Discussion topics can range from the technical aspects of e-learning to training needs and methods. A database of useful training web links, contributed by members, is also continuously expanding and the Poll feature is used to get inputs from users on specific issues.

Workspaces are available on TACTIC where people with a common interest or role can work together in small or larger groups using a variety of online editing, communication and information sharing

tools, including "wikis", for common editing of documents. These spaces can be open to the entire TACTIC community or may be restricted to specific project group members, depending on the goal.

The result of all these collaborative developments is that users from a variety of backgrounds are building an extensive shared knowledge resource together to support Customs training activities across Europe.

Some TACTIC content – for example EU e-learning course material provided by the European Commission – is available in a variety of EU languages, however the main working language is English entirely for practical reasons. TAXUD is nonetheless very conscious of the need for measures to support non-English speakers. With this in mind, some administrations ensure that English speaking officials support others in the use of TACTIC and pass on information and contacts, and TAXUD is considering what options may exist with regard to language support.

TACTIC is in the process of becoming part of a wider online platform – the Programmes Information and Collaboration Space (PICS). Several online communities under the Customs 2013 Programme are in an early stage of development on PICS; wider networking across Customs communities is therefore becoming possible. TAXUD believes that this is just the first phase of using the powerful potential of online collaboration and that many further developments can be expected.

The reaction from all administrations without exception has been positive. Officials find TACTIC easy to use and beneficial in their daily work. A few people say, "I'm busy... I don't have any time to spend on TACTIC", however, most people are gradually realising that TACTIC is not a new work burden, but rather a helpful working tool.

TAXUD hopes that the tool will be fully harnessed by all European Customs training administrations and used to address Customs business priorities. Soon everyone will probably look back and wonder how they coped in the days when they did not have a direct link at all times to thousands of European colleagues and to their extensive evolving knowledge resources.

More information

<http://tactic-learning.eu>



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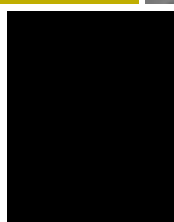
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Creating a WCO knowledge-based centre of excellence

As part of the Secretary General's efforts to create a knowledge-based centre of excellence at the WCO, in April 2009 a Research and Strategies Unit (RSU) located within the Office of the Secretary General was set up by the Secretariat. The "Knowledge" activities of the RSU include sharing objective information on a wide range of international trade and Customs topics through varying deliverables.

Since its creation, the RSU has developed a WCO AEO Compendium, which is the first global collection of information on existing AEO programmes and AEO mutual recognition agreements/arrangements. It has been well received by both WCO Members and the private sector, and is particularly beneficial to Customs administrations interested in establishing their own AEO programmes. The RSU is currently developing a study on organizational arrangements with a focus on case studies relating to coordinated border management (CBM), and is researching information exchange mechanisms for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Globally Networked Customs by developing a survey and conducting case studies.

Research is frequently measured by the number of papers published in peer-reviewed journals. This is a rigorous and time-consuming process as the knowledge contained in such papers must reach a high-level of quality and accuracy, and must be vetted by discerning reviewers.

To date the RSU has published three papers in two renowned journals – the World Customs Journal and the Global Trade and Customs Journal. Two of the papers, one on performance measurement and the other on the implications for Customs of climate change policies, were presented at the 2010 WCO Picard Conference in Abu Dhabi. While not subject to external peer review, the RSU has also published an additional seven research papers (Visit www.wcoomd.org/home_research_researchseries.htm).

Imparting knowledge is not just about writing research papers, it is also about bringing experts and novices together to discuss and debate ideas.

To that end, the RSU organized the first Revenue Management Conference at WCO headquarters where academics, practitioners, and other experts shared their experiences on methods for promoting effective, efficient, and fair revenue collection. Because the vast majority of WCO Members are focused on revenue collection, the Conference helped to fuel the next step – the development of the WCO Revenue Package. The RSU also helped to organize the first and second annual WCO Technology and Innovation Forums, which provide a platform for policy makers and technology providers to debate the costs and benefits of technologies and their best use according to the needs of the Customs community.

In this era of the internet and globalization, online communities now exist where people can share information and expertise on a range of issues. To take full advantage of this growing networking trend, the WCO recently launched Club de la Réforme, an online community specifically for Customs officers and Customs researchers to share knowledge on any topic related to Customs. (See page 26 for more information on Club de la Réforme).

Knowledge should be about empiricism. Without objective data, there is no way that progress can be benchmarked and measured. This is particularly true in the realm of capacity building assistance for reform and modernization.

In a textbook example of using empirical evidence to assist in the modernization of a Customs administration, the RSU along with the World Bank and French Customs has supported Cameroon Customs in its reform programme; ASYCUDA data com-

bined with performance measurement contracts between frontline officers and the Director General were used to measure a number of tangible outcomes.

Documented preliminary results, which are very positive, show that Cameroon has reduced corruption, increased revenue collection, and lowered clearance times. Rather than just stating an opinion on progress, the use of empirical evidence actually proves the progress made by Cameroon Customs. Knowledge is useless if it remains hidden in a dark corner. It must be communicated to consumers of information. This is why the RSU is publishing its work in internal and external mediums, managing the Club de la Réforme information sharing network, and interacting with the research community. Moreover, it is sharing the WCO's views with crucial global policymakers; conveying the WCO's position on trade facilitation, capacity building and revenue to the G20 at their recent meeting in Seoul for example.

Clearly the work of the RSU will play a bigger and bigger role as the WCO's research programme, aimed at creating a knowledge-based centre of excellence, continues to grow and support the Organization's activities in key areas that influence the Customs and trade domain.

To share research or interact with the WCO research team, the Secretariat invites interested WCO Members and the Organization's stakeholders to take up contact with the Research and Strategies Unit.

More information
research@wcoomd.org



...by Sébastien Jeannard

Customs research: a new approach is possible

There has long been a complex interrelationship between Customs administrations and academic researchers. Throughout the 19th century, Customs rules were an important field of study for authors. This is illustrated, in particular, by the publication in Great Britain of various works by O. Dowd and J. Klyne in 1853. In France, the situation was very much the same. In a letter written in 1859, the Director General of French Customs, Th. Gréterin, acknowledged that his "administration had never contemplated presenting (...) laws, regulations and measures that introduce new powers" and had left it "to the annotators personally (...) to produce whatever works they wanted that would supplement (...) these publications".

However, as soon as countries gave up their protectionist systems and their Customs duties began to make less of a contribution to their budgets, Customs rules ceased to be regarded as a relevant subject for discussion. Accordingly, during the course of the 20th century the relations between Customs administrations and academic researchers grew more tenuous. Undergraduate courses in Customs law became increasingly infrequent and there was also a sharp decline in the number of works devoted to Customs topics. At the same time, national Customs schools made fewer and fewer calls on academic researchers.

There is no longer any justification for this situation, although it still tends to persist. In fact, this is one of the main lessons to be drawn from International Customs Day 2011.

In France, as in every other country, Customs is an administration that is undergoing far-reaching changes to which researchers cannot remain indifferent. After the substantial reduction in Customs duties following the adoption of the GATT and the definition of numerous standards, international organizations urged Customs to redefine its mission by making itself an authority responsible for the security of international trade. In addition to this, the desire of Customs services to place economic operators at the heart of their concerns and promote the emergence of new means of repressing fraud. Admittedly, not all countries are carrying out their reforms in the same way and, in particular, not at the same speed. Nevertheless, we are now witnessing a process of wide-ranging reform. Customs services are engaged in reforms, with little or no equivalent on the administrative scene, that correspond to a veritable "big bang".

All this explains why, in 2005, the WCO set up a series of meetings with research centres. These meetings foreshadowed the creation of the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU), which provides a forum for meetings and discussions on Customs topics. The network is also an important pedagogical resource for students wishing to learn more about the administration of Customs and the management of merchandise flows. It is

worth noting the considerable importance that this network has assumed. Indeed, more and more protocols designed to promote cooperation between the WCO and universities are being signed.

However, in our view, with the globalization of trade, the liberalization of markets and the opening up of borders, Customs research is again ripe for expansion. In parallel with the establishment of this international network, Members of the WCO should promote a new relationship between national administrations, universities and all those interested in Customs matters. Accordingly, researchers should take a different approach to Customs rules, together with the authorities that implement them. In particular, they should pay attention to the decisions of the courts and involve representatives of the judicial authority more closely in their work.

Moreover, researchers, whether jurists, economists, sociologists or historians, should all work together and no longer remain content to examine Customs regulations from the sole standpoint of international law, European law, tax law or criminal law. For their part, national administrations should not hesitate to participate, in partnership with universities, in discussions concerning their inventory of resources and the reforms to be undertaken. Although they obviously need theoretical and practical instruction from Customs officials able to share their own experience, future officers should have the opportunity to discuss developments in Customs administration with researchers, lawyers, business representatives, judges and law officials.

It should also be noted that this new approach to Customs research is proving quite successful when implemented, as shown by the experiment carried out at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and at FONDAFIP, a "think tank" whose aim is to support research in the domain of public finance in France and abroad.

In 2008, a research group on new Customs governance was set up in a quite original and unprecedented way. This group, which brought together Customs officials, academics, lawyers, judges and law officers, set itself the task of deciphering the many changes affecting Customs all over the world. Its work ended in 2009 with the publication of a first 30-page report analysing the process which is leading French Customs to portray itself as an administration at the service of business and to acquire ever more effective enforcement techniques.

This study gave rise to an important seminar organized last year at the Sorbonne, whose proceedings will be published in Number 113 of the *Revue Française de Finances Publiques*. Following this initial experiment, in 2011 the research group

on new Customs governance decided to continue its work and to examine developments in the missions of Customs services throughout the world. Accordingly, the group is now hearing Customs officials, economic operators, judges and law officers from a number of different countries. Its next report will be published in the course of 2011.

To conclude, even though it has been a major concern for the last ten years or so, improving relations between Customs and academic researchers still remains an issue for the future.

More information
www.fondafip.org

Doctor in Public Law at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Sébastien Jeannard is the author of a doctoral thesis on changes in French Customs law and responsible for Customs matters within FONDAFIP.



FONDAFIP is a centre for dialogue and expertise that brings together academics, practitioners and political decision-makers to examine the conditions of the emergence of new governance for financial, tax and Customs systems. It includes various research groups working in different fields: local finance, management of human resources, accounting, European finance, control and regulation, Customs, etc. Their work appears in the 'Revue Française de Finances Publiques' and in various collections published by Lextenso-LGDJ and can also be viewed on their website.

WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

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Cloud Computing, --- unravelling the "Cloud" for eCustoms and eTrade

...by Ludo De Bock

Cloud Computing is in the news everywhere, and for good reason. It offers the potential for efficiency, cost savings and innovation gains to governments, businesses and individual users alike. And because the cloud transcends national boundaries, cloud computing also offers a unique opportunity to bring Customs administrations and businesses a big step closer to achieving truly integrated and seamless digital Customs and trade facilitation.

Businesses, particularly SMEs, are already taking advantage of this combination of client and Cloud to innovate, to reach wider markets, and to become more competitive while complying with international standards and Customs formalities, simply through an internet connection. Cloud Computing helps organizations to increase how quickly they can respond to changes in their business environment and how effectively they can manage resources. At the same time, it can help reduce management complexity and cost. In today's post-economic downturn, the added benefit of improving IT infrastructure while minimizing overhead is very compelling for many trade technology professionals and organizations.

The Cloud is a highly effective way to develop Customs and trade applications and to publish large amounts of related data quickly and inexpensively without having to invest in additional server infrastructure. Nowhere are the benefits of Cloud Computing technology more visible than for Customs and trade organizations. In Customs applications, like single border posts and single windows and other cross border data exchange, Cloud Computing helps solve issues of sharing "transactional data" between agencies or countries. It also allows for more flexible implementation with the ability to deploy deeply integrated solutions on-premises, in the cloud, or in combination.

At Microsoft we see the Cloud as the future of IT hosting and have been working with partners in the public and private sectors, including international organizations and government agencies, to develop innovative cloud-based solutions.

What is Cloud Computing?

Cloud Computing is the virtualization of resources, software, hardware and data. Thanks to this virtualization of resources it is making computing much more a commodity and is being hailed as the ultimate outsourcing tool for users. This new concept takes the form of web-based tools or applications allowing users to access a 'bank' of resources in the 'cloud' via their web browser. Unlike before when applications were stored on the user's own computer, the Cloud hosts these utilities by means of several servers on a high-quality bandwidth. This internet-based storage utility also allows the user to use a pay-as-you-go style system with the cloud provider to upgrade its storage and tools as the company grows and faces new IT challenges. Other advantages such as instant availability, speediness and savings on onsite hardware, maintenance and staffing are making Cloud Computing an increasingly more popular prospect in the business world. Nevertheless, some obstacles such as privacy and confidentiality issues need to be addressed in more depth.

The huge economic, social and environmental impact of cloud technology, and its ability to revolutionize the way we think about IT, is now revolutionizing the way that Customs technology is used by SMEs, large corporations and government agencies. To know more about this revolutionary technology, think about attending the next WCO IT Conference and Exhibition which focuses on the Cloud Computing theme. The Conference will take place in Seattle, USA from 11-13 May 2011.

More information
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Ludo De Bock is a Senior Director in Microsoft's Global Strategic Accounts team, and is responsible for the company's worldwide business relationships with the EU and NATO. He has nearly 30 years of experience in the ICT industry, leading teams developing very large international enterprise computer data networks. Having joined Microsoft in 1991, Ludo has extensive experience in eGovernment initiatives, eCustoms and eTrade solutions, and Single Window initiatives across the world. He resides in Belgium, holds a Degree in Industrial Engineering (University of Ghent), and speaks 4 languages fluently.

Focus on air cargo security

"Customs administrations are well positioned to support air cargo security"

Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the WCO, shares some pertinent thoughts on air cargo security and the WCO's speedy response to this latest attack on international trade.



Recent detection of explosives in air cargo packages in October 2010 was the latest reminder of terrorist threats to the global trade supply chain which is vulnerable to disruption. Fortunately the plot was thwarted due to specific intelligence information and the collaboration of various public and private agencies, including Customs.

Conscious of remaining responsive to world events, the international Customs community earnestly considered the role of Customs in air cargo security at the WCO's Policy Commission Session that was held in Shanghai in December 2010. As an outcome of these deliberations, the WCO issued a Communiqué on air cargo security advocating a partnership approach between the international transport and trade community to deter such plots in the future in order to protect the vitality of the global trading system.

National Customs administrations are well positioned to support air cargo security, drawing on their vast experience in maritime transport security. While transport ministries, intelligence services and the military generally have the lead in identifying and stopping plots, Customs' extensive knowledge and experience is of great use and benefit to reduce the risk of supply chain disruption.

For example, Customs has access to an immense stock of data, especially manifest and declaration data, which could be analyzed by Customs for managing security risks. Moreover, upon receipt of initial intelligence reports, Customs might be able to produce useful information for the wider intelligence and transport community. With its legal powers to inspect and seize goods, and its cooperation with business, Customs could enhance the security of premises and human resources at airports.

To guide Customs' efforts, the WCO has the SAFE Framework which recommends an intelligence-based risk management approach, supported by international cooperation. In addition

there is the Customs Enforcement Network (CEN), the Data Model and other WCO programmes that support and connect the global intelligence and information network. Since an attack on a weak link of the supply chain could disrupt the entire chain, it is necessary for the entire international Customs community to implement WCO security standards and thereby avoid the security divide. This is why the WCO provides capacity building assistance for SAFE Framework implementation under its Columbus Programme.

Air cargo security requires a partnership approach and the WCO is now working closer with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) and IATA (International Air Transport Association) in seeking ways in which air cargo can be further secured from future threats. The three organizations are collectively examining whether existing international standards require re-alignment to better respond to air cargo threats. This review includes data requirements and consistency between the WCO's Authorized Economic Operator and ICAO's Known Shipper and Regulated Agency programmes.

Needless to say, this collaboration is in line with the WCO Communiqué issued in December 2010. Furthermore, the US Department of Homeland Security Secretary, Janet Napolitano, visited the WCO at the beginning of this year to support Customs' efforts to promote air cargo security through WCO standards and international cooperation.

Of course we have to think ahead and address the vulnerability of all transport modes beyond air cargo. We also have to think about how best to mobilize a combination of measures including enhanced risk management, strengthened cooperation, wider intelligence and information sharing, and supportive capacity building activities. It is important that we turn this challenge into an opportunity for all stakeholders to work together to ensure a more secure environment in which legitimate international trade can flourish.

“A successful response would enhance air cargo security without disrupting commerce”

Michael Steen, Global Air Cargo Advisory Committee



The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA) and the Global Shippers Forum (GSF) recently created the Global Air Cargo Advisory Committee (GACAG) to address global issues affecting the air cargo supply chain.

Michael Steen, Chairman of TIACA, speaking on behalf of GACAG, shares the industry's views, concerns and aims with WCO News readers on recent incidents involving air cargo security.

WCO News (WN): What are the industry's views on the incidents in which authorities intercepted concealed explosives shipped from Yemen, for example what happened?

Michael Steen: The information we have about what happened is what has been widely reported in the press: terrorists attempted to conceal explosives in printers and printer cartridges, and to ship them as air cargo from Yemen to the United States (US). The shipments transited through certain European airports. Due to an intelligence lead, authorities were able to intercept the packages before they reached their addressed destination in the US. We have several views on this:

First, we are grateful that the intelligence lead was accurate and that, working together, the authorities and air cargo officials were able to intercept the packages and pull them from the delivery stream.

Second, we believe the events underscore the importance of intelligence as part of a multilayered approach to supply chain security. Supply chain controls and screening are certainly important, but intelligence will always play a critical role in ensuring the security of the supply chain.

Third, we are of course concerned that terrorists targeted air cargo and want to work with authorities to develop a meaningful response – one that is calibrated to the realities of both the threat and the air cargo environment. In this regard, we are in agreement with the recent WCO statement on the Yemen

incident emphasizing the importance of Customs-trade partnerships, the use of WCO instruments and tools such as the SAFE Framework of Standards, and the enhanced urgency of capacity building.

WN: What has the industry learnt from these incidents?

MS: We have learned that terrorists will continue to seek vulnerabilities and that we must remain ever vigilant to these efforts. As a consequence, we need to be willing to reassess existing practices and work with government authorities to evolve our practices in accordance with existing threat vectors. For example, the advance electronic information timelines, process and data will be reassessed to make sure that the necessary information is provided at the right time to allow regulators to perform threat-based risk assessment and inform the industry if a risk is identified.

This event also reaffirmed that a multi-layered approach to supply chain security, based on threat-based risk assessment and supported by continuous intelligence efforts, is the best approach for addressing these threats as opposed to 100% scanning. We know it is essential to maintain a dialogue with government authorities and to work together, and it is particularly important to find ways to share intelligence in an effective manner. We all share the same goal: enhancing security while minimizing disruption to vital commercial flows, and it is important to work together to achieve it.

WN: What are the security measures already in place and what potential regulatory and procedural changes are expected?

MS: Of course, we can only speak generally about the security measures already in place. There are a wide range of them throughout the air cargo supply chain, and they vary based on country, shipper, forwarder, airline operator, etc. Overall, we believe the best security regime is one based on a supply chain approach and built around a multi-layered set of actions guided by the risk-based concept.

We also believe it is important to recognize that there are many types of air cargo, and that security regimes need to reflect this, rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, business-to-business shipments present a different set of challenges from business-to-consumer or consumer-to-consumer shipments. Shipments may be made through established forwarders, through express operators, through the mail, etc. Security requirements should be tailored to the specific risk factors of each type of air cargo shipment.

As to potential regulatory and procedural changes, we expect such efforts to focus on improving the supply chain's multi-layered, risk-based approach, particularly with respect to providing electronic data earlier in the supply chain. In fact, we have been discussing this possibility with US authorities, and may develop a pilot to test whether this can be done given current realities in the air cargo supply chain.

The industry is also discussing with the WCO, ICAO and national administrations some potential amendments to the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards that define the standard for advance electronic information i.e. process, timelines and data. In addition, the industry is working with ICAO to amend ICAO Annex 17 and continues to enhance the secure supply chain concept with, for example, a clear definition of high risk cargo. Finally, we are developing a standard cargo security declaration providing regulators with an audit trail of who has screened what, when and how.



WN: What would be a successful response to the threat and what are the main concerns of the air cargo industry?

MS: A successful response is relatively easy to define in concept but perhaps a bit more difficult to describe and implement in reality. Simply put, a successful response would enhance security without disrupting commerce. However, the critical question is how to achieve this – and that is why a pilot would be so important, as it would allow us to test just what is feasible and to iron out the inevitable implementation issues.

Our concerns and aims are summed up in the following set of principles, which GACAG members have endorsed as the basis for future actions:

- Government-industry cooperation should be a fundamental principle of cargo security decision-making and lines of communication must remain open at all times.
- Supply chain security should be at the heart of any regulatory approach.
- Governments should establish mechanisms to mutually recognize comparable supply chain security regimes by their trading partners.
- ICAO should be the global focal point for collaboration on cargo screening requirements and both governments and industry should be part of the ongoing dialogue.
- ICAO should set global definitions and standards for air cargo security, including the definition of what constitutes "higher risk cargo," and must do so on an expedited basis.
- National and regional regulators should adopt ICAO definitions and standards on an urgent timetable.
- Protocols for transferred cargo should take into account screening that was performed prior to the original flight.
- Industry and government should follow the international standard set by the WCO on advance cargo information to facilitate risk assessment.
- Industry and government should jointly develop and endorse a standard electronic cargo security declaration process and its associated paper layout.

More information
www.tiaca.org

Knowledge of safety risks protects container inspection staff

...by Wil Grullemans

The WCO Technology and Innovation Forum which took place in Cairo, Egypt in November 2010 provided a platform for considering new technologies, some of which addressed safety risks not previously well understood. A number of presentations during the Forum focused on the problem of toxic gases inside shipping containers and alternative solutions.

One area of knowledge where Customs authorities are gaining insight at a fast pace, is in relation to the presence of toxic gases inside shipping containers presented for inspection. Often these gases can be odourless and colourless, but nevertheless dangerous to human health. The health effects can be acute – immediately apparent – or cumulative exposure can occur through low doses, with unquantifiable but possibly insidious long term effects. Some gases such as formaldehyde are designated carcinogens, still others like methyl bromide are being researched to determine their linkage to motor neurone disease in later life.

The prevalence and type of toxic gases present, depends upon many factors. Sometimes the gases arise from fumigation (for example, phosphine or methyl bromide), while other times they can occur spontaneously in transit, due to off-gassing from cargo itself (for example, benzene or toluene). In Europe, where container gases are tested most frequently, unusual gases such as dichloroethane are surprisingly common, even though the gas inside containers is not always apparent.

Studies completed in Australia, Germany and the Netherlands, on literally thousands of containers, have shown that between 10% and 30% of imported containers contain unsafe levels of toxic gases, some with extremely high levels that are immediately dangerous to life. Unfortunately, there have been many incidents reported around the world of workers, including those in private industry, being overcome by exposure to gases in this way.

Customs authorities in certain countries have taken this risk on directly, and established rigorous protocols to protect the health and safety of container inspection staff. This can include

the use of special gas monitoring equipment and ventilation systems to degas unsafe containers. The number of countries adopting solutions is growing each year and now includes Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, New Zealand and the Netherlands among others.

It has become clear that to just open and inspect an imported container is no longer a safe prospect, and organizations that allow this approach, may be playing 'Russian Roulette' with staff health and safety. Countries that are aware of the problem and try to naturally ventilate containers have faced large backlogs in inspections – not a good result from the viewpoint of facilitating global trade. An efficient monitoring and ventilation solution, provided by experienced suppliers, can improve throughput and efficiency of inspections, whilst protecting Customs' most important asset: loyal and experienced staff.

Knowledge about the problem of toxic gases in shipping containers and available solutions continues to grow. Achieving excellence in the area of container inspections includes awareness of this problem and the development of practical solutions, thereby enhancing the efficiency and safety of Customs operations.

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Two new WCO Directors share their views

Gaozhang Zhu (China) and Erich Kieck (South Africa) were elected Directors of Compliance and Facilitation and Capacity Building respectively during the June 2010 Sessions of the WCO Council.

Mr. Zhu replaces Michael Schmitz who returned to the United States and Mr. Kieck fills the shoes of Lars Karlsson who is now back in Sweden. The two Directors will spend the next five years at the WCO Secretariat.

Having just taken up their positions at the Secretariat in January, they agreed to answer a few questions posed by the WCO News team.



WCO News: How would you describe the significance of Customs compliance and facilitation?

Gaozhang Zhu: In my personal view compliance and facilitation are two pillars of customs work. They are of equal importance and are two sides of the same coin. We cannot afford to overstress one side of the coin at the expense of the other. Therefore, it is our responsibility to help WCO Members strike a balance between the two which is of critical signifi-

cance because balancing the two results in maximum facilitation of international trade and supply chain security while an imbalance has the opposite effect.

WN: How will your professional experience assist you in running the Compliance and Facilitation Directorate?

GZ: I have been working with Customs for more than 20 years, which gives me an intense understanding of Customs issues, both operations and management. In the past 10 years, as Director General of the International Cooperation Department,

I led and promoted many historic events in China Customs' modernization and internationalization drive such as China's adoption and implementation of the Revised Kyoto Convention and the SAFE Framework, China-EC cooperation on Smart and Secure Trade Lanes, and delivery of Customs' capacity building programmes.

My experience was further enriched by chairing various international conferences, seminars and negotiations, and working as the Customs Counsellor at the Chinese Mission to the EU from 1996 to 2000. In addition, I have been a council member, advisor or director of a number of associations such as the Port Society of China, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and the China Customs Research Centre. I also spent time as a farmer, a worker, a university lecturer, an army man and a visiting scholar.

I feel confident that all these experiences will assist me in creating a coherent and harmonious working environment for my team and contribute to the successful management of the Directorate. I will endeavour, together with my team and on the success of my predecessor, to make the Directorate a more forward-looking, more responsive, more creative, more productive and more deliverable Directorate.



"I will endeavour, together with my team and on the success of my predecessor, to make the Directorate a more forwarding-looking, more responsive, more creative, more productive and more deliverable Directorate."

WN: Do you have a message for the WCO's Members and its partners?

GZ: Yes, first of all I would like to thank all Members for their trust and support. I am an ordinary person with a strong background in Chinese philosophy and culture. But I love different cultures and traditions of different countries. So I feel lucky that I am now immersed in these cultures and traditions. I love life as much as work. I love thinking and planning, sports and literature, as well as history and eastern and western antiques. I also love cooking and can cook dishes of different Chinese cuisines and I love music and can play music with a piece of leaf. In fact I love a lot more. But above all, as the Director of Compliance and Facilitation I love my job and I assure you that whatever Members want, need, expect and require of my Directorate is my responsibility.

The WCO is a great organization which has established itself as an increasingly important global institution, playing a pivotal and indispensable role in safeguarding international trade and societies. I am proud to be a part of it and will contribute by working hard and closely with Members and other related international organizations including the private sector to provide Members with as many practical and useful tools and solutions as possible.



WCO News: How would you describe the significance of Customs capacity building?

Erich Kieck: The state in the 21st century is expected amongst other things to deal with global issues such as economic recovery, pandemic threats and climate change. Customs is clearly part of the state machinery, implementing solutions to achieve

economic and social development, be it through enhanced trade facilitation, security or revenue realisation. The reality though is that many Customs administrations still face capacity challenges and cannot always respond to the demands of their states and societies.

The Secretariat is committed to serving and making a difference for WCO Members. Our Capacity Building Directorate's mission is to contribute to the building of strong and effective Customs administrations and this is being done by designing effective capacity building policies and strategies as well as mobilizing the Secretariat and Member experts to assist in implementing these plans.

The foresight and vision of Members to implement the Columbus Programme just over five years ago set in motion a course of events destined to strengthen the capacity of Customs worldwide. Since then, the Capacity Building Directorate has been established and capacity building priorities agreed and delivered. More recently, at its first meeting the Committee focused on the themes, "People, Partnerships and Political Will".

WN: How will your professional experience assist you in running the Capacity Building Directorate?

EK: As a proud Customs officer from a developing country, I have been closely involved with Customs reform initiatives in my own country and those of other countries. I bring strategic awareness, technical competence and a commitment towards getting things done. I have worked very closely with the WCO over the past 10 years and with other international and regional organizations and have a good understanding of how they function, and the need for partnerships and collaboration. Finally, I bring a passion

for developing people and institutions, and repositioning Customs administrations to take up their rightful role in supporting the states and societies they serve.

WN: Do you have a message for the WCO's Members and its partners?

EK: We have made significant progress and now need to build on this which will require real and meaningful partnerships and the need to re-commit ourselves to our common goal of building strong and effective Customs administrations around the world so that international trade can be leveraged as a force for socio-economic development and growth.

Over the past five years multiple capacity building initiatives have been undertaken and they have made a real difference.

Whilst we acknowledge the progress, we are still far from where we collectively would like to be. It was Nelson Mandela who said, "After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb." This acknowledgement motivates us to continue rising to the challenge of answering the increasing demand for capacity building delivery assistance.

"As a proud Customs officer from a developing country, I have been closely involved with Customs reform initiatives in my own country and those of other countries. I bring strategic awareness, technical competence and a commitment towards getting things done."

We will do this by coordinating efforts with like-minded partners including Members, other international organizations, donors, the private sector and academia. We intend retaining the principled approach whereby we will listen carefully to the needs of Members, develop responses cooperatively, tailor responses to country-specific needs, and implement the responses in partnership with them.

We will do this humbly, effectively, efficiently and with integrity. I commit to keep climbing this proverbial "hill" with each Member, in the knowledge and comfort that the WCO has created a solid base from which to launch the next phase.

Serbian Customs Service

Vision

The vision of the Serbian Customs Service for the 21st Century is in line with the development vision and position of Customs administrations across the globe. Serbian Customs is continuously developing and shaping itself by looking at the most modern Customs systems in the world, and striving to accomplish the highest level of professionalism, efficiency and security through its reform activities.

"Besides being a key link in the chain of support to legal trade, Customs has an extremely important role in the security system of each country, transforming gradually into a key player in the fight against the biggest global problems and security challenges – international terrorism and transnational organized crime. In that sense, the Customs Service of the Republic of Serbia is playing a prominent role in the overall safety system of citizens and the environment," stated Predrag Petronijević, Director General of Serbian Customs.

Integrated Border Management Strategy

Serbian Customs' Integrated Border Management (IBM) Strategy provides facilitated movement of people, goods, services and capital. An important part of this integrated approach is the prevention of illegal imports, smuggled drugs, weapons, arms, radioactive material and contagious goods, as well as the prevention of illegal exports of cultural property and goods of historical heritage.

This year alone, Serbian Customs has seized more than 236 kg of different drugs, 24 million cigarettes, huge amounts of cash, gold, rare birds and antiquities. The Customs Service has also had good results in the area of IPR protection; in the past three years, almost three million pieces of different types of goods have been temporarily seized under the suspicion they were violating intellectual property rights.

Customs reform programme

By insisting on enhancing its partnership with business, introducing simplified procedures, modernizing Customs operational systems, and strengthening cooperation with other governmental institutions and agencies, Serbian Customs contributes to increased public revenue, easier operation of the domestic economy, efficient international trade, and the safety and security of the country's citizens. Special attention is given to administrative capacity building through a permanent employees education programme, and with the support of the WCO, a modern system of distance training – eLearning – has been introduced too.

Modernization also includes the adoption of internationally recognized WCO standards. Serbia has acceded to key Customs conventions such as the Harmonized System, the Revised Kyoto Convention, and the Istanbul Convention. It has also signed the Letter of Intent to implement the Framework of Standards, currently implemented by many Customs administrations around the world.

This year's Progress Report of the European Commission recognizes the adoption of a new Customs Law in Serbia which is largely harmonized with the EU acquis (the accumulated legislation, legal acts and court decisions which constitute the body of EU law). Serbian Customs has been commended for strengthening its administrative capacities primarily in the areas of post-clearance audit and risk analysis.

The EU Report also states that progress was made through intensified international cooperation, improved information sharing with other national institutions, and the continued implementation of the IBM Strategy and Action Plan. It also recognized that the fight against corruption in Customs has been stepped up which resulted in a higher number of disciplinary procedures based on internal controls.

Organizational facts

The Customs Service is an organ within the Ministry of Finance. It employs 2,539 officers based at 14 Customs Houses, 71 Customs Posts, 52 Customs Clearance Units, 72 Border Crossing Points and 6 Customs Control Points.



General Information

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Mauritius, the first country to implement nCEN

Since 25 August 2010, the Mauritius Revenue Authority's Customs administration has had a centralized database enabling it to manage and store information on seizures and Customs offences and, more importantly, trained officers to manage and use it.

The decision to develop nCEN with Mauritius as a pilot country goes back to 2008 when the WCO Secretariat first met with Mauritian Customs officials. It was a match: the Secretariat had for some time been mulling over a project to design a centralized database for WCO Members that would enable them to gather and store enforcement data, and was looking for funding to implement the project, while Mauritius on the other hand had expressed the need for just such a tool to improve its risk management.

In preparation for the official launch of the tool in Mauritius, it was decided to host the database provisionally on the WCO server from 25 August and to organise a train-the-trainers session ahead of this date. During early August, 18 Customs officers from Mauritius Customs' IT and enforcement departments were trained on the setup and administrative functions of the nCEN system as well as on the use of the application and its functionalities. The training was highly interactive and feedback from participants is being used to further enhance the application so that it fully



meets end-user needs.

Thanks to German Customs who funded the development of the application and to Japan Customs who funded the training, the setup of the hardware installation in Mauritius is currently underway and nCEN will be officially launched in the country once the system is up and running from Mauritius' own national server.

[More information
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An advertisement for Webb Fontaine software. The background is a beach scene with sand dunes and a blue sky. In the foreground, two dark blue software boxes stand on the sand. The left box is labeled 'TRADEWORLDMANAGER' and the right box is labeled 'GOVERNMENTEXECUTIVEVISION'. A butterfly is perched on top of the left box. The Webb Fontaine logo, consisting of the text 'WEBB FONTAINE' and a stylized orange and blue butterfly icon, is in the top left corner. Below the logo, the text reads 'THE ABSOLUTE SINGLE WINDOW PLATFORM FOR TRADE' and 'WWW.WEBBFONTAINE.COM'. The Webb Fontaine logo is also visible at the bottom of each software box.

UK offers anti-smuggling training to border agencies

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) is responsible for securing the border and controlling migration in the UK. In protecting the border, it aims to detect and prevent the smuggling of prohibited and restricted goods and to provide identity and immigration controls to ensure that only those with a legitimate right are allowed to enter the UK. The Agency's international trade procedures are aimed at facilitating trade which improves the country's efforts to be an attractive and competitive place to do business.

UKBA's National Freight Training Centre in south east England is a unique frontline tuition facility that offers anti-smuggling training to border agencies focusing on detecting irregularities and concealments in heavy-goods vehicles, their trailers and cargo that could be used to smuggle illicit goods. It has been successfully used to train UK and foreign Customs officials, including immigration and police officers, over the past 10 years.



Experienced operational trainers at the Centre offer a wide variety of anti-smuggling courses to students, using both classroom and practical sessions. In addition, 'bespoke specialist events' can be designed and offered according to business needs.

The standard course is three days long – which is mandatory for any UKBA officer working with commercial vehicles, followed by a one-day refresher course every three years. The course is structured to provide officers with the essential knowledge of vehicle construction and how vehicles operate. This allows



officers to identify any structural adaptations or purpose built concealments that may contain goods or people.

For the practical sessions, there are more than 50 truck and trailer units together with differing cargo's containing adaptations for students to detect. All of the vehicles on the site have varying levels of concealments from false floors and bulkheads to ingenious hidden compartments operated by hydraulic systems, both inside and outside of the vehicles. The vehicles or cargo units are confiscated from seizures made by frontline operational officers around the UK.

The National Freight Training Centre is available for law enforcement colleagues around the world for training purposes. Interested Customs services should contact the Centre for further details.

The UK Border Agency was created in 2008 following the amalgamation of the detection and investigation functions of HM Revenue & Customs, the Border and Immigration Agency and UK Visas.

More information

UK Border Agency

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Hong Kong Customs welcomes the 2010 IP crime conference



“Working Together to Break Organised Crime”

was the theme of the 2010 International Law Enforcement Intellectual Property Crime Conference co-hosted by Hong Kong Customs and INTERPOL in partnership with Underwriters Laboratories, a not-for-profit product safety testing and certification organization.

Organized by INTERPOL since 2007, the three-day conference from 19-21 October was the first to be held in Asia. By co-hosting the conference, Hong Kong Customs wished to demonstrate its efforts in combating counterfeiting and piracy and its commitment to fighting IP crimes. According to INTERPOL, of their 188 member countries, 145 or 77% are currently affected by organized IP crime, with 48% of cases being transnational and 12% linked to other areas of organized crime.

The WCO Secretariat was invited to participate in the conference and took the opportunity to present

WCO IPR enforcement activities as well as its training tools including the Organization's latest online training and information sharing tool. Known as the Interface Public-Members (IPM), it essentially allows rights holders to input information on their products thereby enabling Customs officials to distinguish fakes from genuine products.

A series of operational workshops were included in the conference programme to enable subject matter experts to discuss how all those affected by counterfeiting and piracy can better work together to break up organized criminal gangs which manufacture and distribute fake goods on a regional and increasingly global scale. The leadership role of Customs and police, the benefits of bringing together the collective efforts of the public and private sectors, the importance of cooperation among jurisdictions and timely intelligence exchange were emphasized.

A Key feature of the event was the three hands-on and interactive training sessions provided by Hong Kong Customs. Simulating an Internet crime scene, the training focused on basic techniques in investigating internet crime. At the end of the conference, several enforcement authorities approached Hong Kong Customs requesting its assistance in organizing similar in-depth training on the techniques of tackling internet infringements in their home countries. Moreover, the opportunities for mounting joint operations against cross-border IP crimes were explored.

Participants were also provided with online access to the International IP Crime Investigator's College (IIPCIC), an interactive IP crime training facility developed by INTERPOL and Underwriters Laboratories' UL University. This enabled them to try the introductory level training module. The IIPCIC will eventually offer three levels – introductory, intermediate and advanced.

More information
www.customs.gov.hk



500 participants from 48 countries attend the conference

Liberia enhances knowledge on HS classification, a core Customs business

Liberia is emerging slowly from the aftermath of a major civil war which resulted in a near-total collapse of its education, health, and judicial systems as well as its physical infrastructure. This is the difficult background against which the government and the Revenue Department of the Ministry of Finance embarked on a major reform project which involves a wide-scale modernization plan for Liberia Customs.

Given that classification is a core Customs business, Liberia Customs has made the improvement of its tariff classification work (provision of classification aids, etc) and infrastructure (organization of a classification unit, etc) a top priority.

Liberia's interest in this field came to the fore during the 2009 Sessions of the Council when the newly-appointed Liberian Commissioner of Customs, Ms. Decontee T. King-Sackie, expressed her administration's willingness in implementing the 2007 version of the HS and in receiving WCO assistance to better understand the implications of this change.

In order to put this project into perspective from the very outset, Liberia Customs and the WCO Secretariat started by developing a modernization plan, which is a succession of concrete steps and measures that are now being put in place.

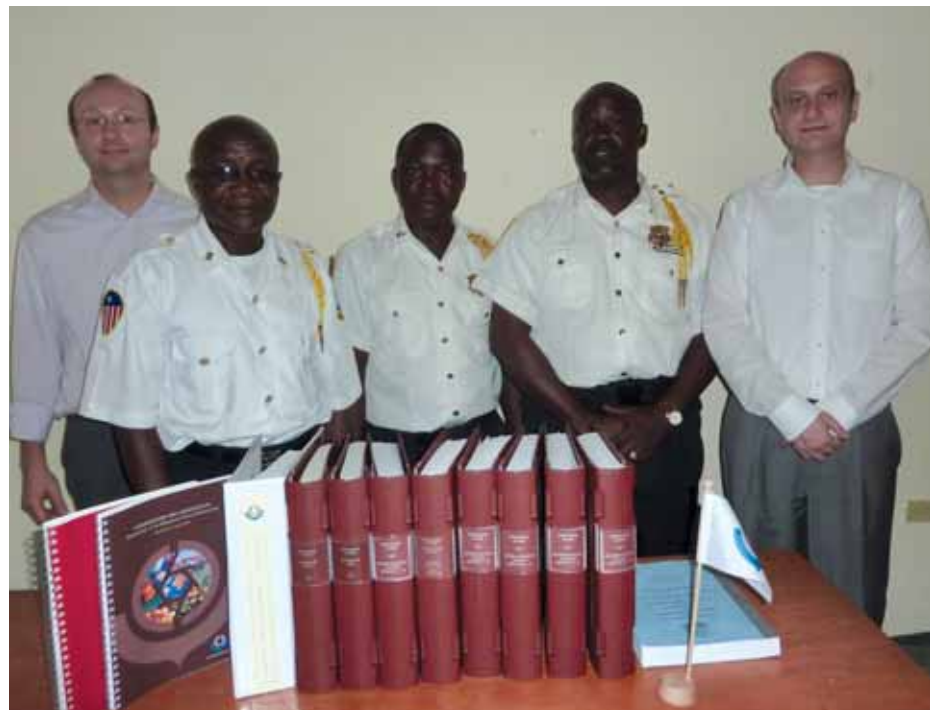
Over a span of only a few months, Liberia has become a Contracting Party to the HS Convention and has established a unit that deals with tariff classification. It has also been actively working towards implementation of the HS 2007 Nomenclature and has put in place other measures too.

One recent concrete step towards modernizing its tariff classification work was the organization of a national tariff classification workshop that was conducted in Monrovia in December 2010 and which brought together Customs officers and trade representatives to discuss the most essential questions on tariff classification.

The workshop was not limited to legal aspects or the theoretical foundation of HS classification but provided plenty of room for practice and case studies. Participants classified a wide range of products, examined examples of the application of the General Interpretative Rules, and discussed the organization of tariff classification infrastructure. This hands-on training was focused on helping them to develop practical classification knowledge and skills and to ensure that efforts to build overall capacity yield sustainable results.

Progress does not happen overnight: it is the result of long-term commitment and hard work. It is also about concrete steps and improvements. This workshop was another concrete step on the way to modernization and increased efficiency of Customs in Liberia.

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Reaching out to the Caribbean to encourage trade facilitation

Customs and ministerial officials from twelve Caribbean countries participated recently in a Regional Workshop on the Trade Facilitation Negotiations in San Juan, Puerto Rico hosted by the WTO and the US government, in particular the Office of the US Trade Representative and US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

A representative from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and officials from Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago attended the workshop.

CBP staff provided guidance and lessons learned from US activities related to the negotiations and their input into the draft negotiating text, through the publication of information on the internet, the use of risk management, the separation of release from payment, and post-clearance audits, among others.

Participants also visited the Port of San Juan, where CBP's San Juan Field Office provided

insight into the methodologies and infrastructure available to control and expedite merchandise flows in busy ports.

In his closing remarks at the workshop, CBP Assistant Commissioner Dan Baldwin said, "At CBP we need to understand the overall impact of our mission on the economic and commercial environment by finding alternatives on how to do our work, how to cut costs to traders, and how to take work away from the physical border."

He also stressed that the trade community is looking for transparency, predictability and certainty. "Advance rulings and advance information fit in here by streamlining the entry process as much as possible, keeping our country safe from unhealthy products and, at the same time, making trade facilitation a reality," Baldwin added.

The workshop is part of the WTO's technical assistance and support programme aimed at building capacity for the negotiations on trade facilitation, which seeks to assist Customs administrations and other appropriate authorities in the area of trade facilitation and Customs compliance, to enable WTO Member States to participate more effectively in all rounds of the negotiations.

Following the establishment of the WTO Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation, negotiations started in 2004 with the aim of clarifying and improving relevant aspects of Articles V, VIII and X of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1994.

The WCO is committed to the facilitation and security of international trade. Developments on the negotiations at the WTO are closely monitored by the WCO and the Organization regularly engages with the WTO on trade facilitation issues.

Of particular significance is the fact that the revised WCO Kyoto Convention on the simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures that entered into force in 2006 is recognized by WTO trade facilitation negotiators as a valuable source of reference.

The revised Kyoto Convention is bolstered by numerous other WCO instruments and tools that contribute to trade facilitation by providing global standards and best practices for the Organization's 177 Member Customs administrations.

More information

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Montenegro has success in combating cigarette smuggling

The Customs administration of Montenegro is committed to combating illegal trade and smuggling of goods, particularly narcotics and cigarettes. Their actions have resulted in the successful seizure of large quantities of cigarettes.

On 22 September 2010, Montenegro Customs destroyed 10,423,800 cigarettes at Podgorica KAP in the presence of Vojislav Marković, the Assistant Director General for Customs Enforcement. The cigarettes had been seized over the past few years during attempts to import them illegally into the country.

To assist their enforcement activities, Montenegrin Customs officers used technical equipment to conduct detailed examinations and applied risk analysis techniques to determine high-risk consignments.

More information

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Royal Thai Customs, committed to an open knowledge world

Since 2006 Royal Thai Customs has fervently supported the crucial role that knowledge can play in Customs. Their commitment was clearly demonstrated when they held their first exhibition at Customs headquarters that year with the theme: "Customs: Towards an Open Knowledge World".

Knowledge Management is now a key policy in managing human resources at Royal Thai Customs. Officers and staff have been introduced to a range of specific processes and practices for identifying and capturing knowledge, know-how, and expertise. Making these knowledge assets available for transfer and reuse across the organisation is an important approach to improving organisational outcomes and organisational learning.

The key objective behind the introduction of the Knowledge Management Programme was to leverage the expertise of Customs officers and staff in selected areas across the organisation. Royal Thai Customs' programme also facilitates the management of a proliferation of data and information; thereby creating an ideal environment for Customs officers and Customs' clients to rapidly access useful and relevant knowledge resources and best practice guidelines.

More information

www.customs.go.th



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Risk assessment works, just ask the ivory smugglers!

Two recent ivory product seizures demonstrate that risk assessment works.

The seizures took place in Belgium and Hong Kong where Customs enforcement teams were able to outsmart smugglers and their concealment methods.

On 1 December 2010, Belgian Customs' anti-drugs team (GAD) based at Brussels International Airport seized 180 ivory statues in luggage carried by a male passenger arriving from Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Alerted by the weight of the luggage that was declared as containing wooden craft, the team stopped the passenger and started checking his luggage. The wooden statue appeared to be of very crude craftsmanship and it was decided to x-ray it. The x-ray revealed that the statue contained hundreds of small ivory statues dyed in different colours.

The passenger declared that he was not aware of the deception and that he was transporting the wooden statue for a friend that lived in Belgium. Whilst checking the name of the alleged recipient, the team discovered that this person used the same method in an attempt to smuggle ivory products in the past. In fact he was currently being prosecuted for smuggling ivory products using the same concealment method in an air cargo shipment from Kinshasa in March 2010.

Following the seizure, a search was organized and conducted at the suspect's home where another 20 statues were found.

Another continent, another successful risk assessment story, this time in the Port of Hong Kong.

On 9 September 2010, Hong Kong Customs officers seized a total of 384 pieces (1,550 kg) of ivory tusks, which were concealed inside a consignment of "dried anchovies" in two containers arriving from Malaysia. The ivory tusks were estimated to be worth about 1.38 million US dollars. This was the largest seizure of ivory tusks made by Hong Kong Customs in 2010.

The consignment description first aroused the suspicion of Customs officers since the consumption of dried anchovies was considered rare

in Hong Kong, China. After tracing the records, Customs was able to ascertain that the two containers originated in Tanzania. Upon checking the manifests of the shipping liner, Customs found that the suspected consignment was the only shipment of dried anchovies shipped from Tanzania on that voyage. This led the officers to select the two containers for inspection, resulting in the seizure of the ivory tusks.

Two persons believed to be connected to the import of the ivory tusks were arrested. They are still under investigation. The investigation has also revealed that the seized ivory tusks were to be transhipped to neighbouring regions.

In 2010, Hong Kong Customs dealt with three ivory tusk smuggling cases. The total value of the contraband seized was estimated to be around 1.64 million US dollars. Under Hong Kong law, any person found guilty of trading endangered species, including ivory tusks, for commercial purposes is liable to a maximum fine of five million Hong Kong dollars (approximately 642,000 US dollars) and imprisonment for two years.

More information

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WCO Capacity Building Committee produces a powerhouse of ideas

Establishing a Capacity Building Committee is the final and most important building block of the WCO's capacity building infrastructure. The historical 1st Session which took place from 27-29 September 2010 produced a powerhouse of ideas. Not surprising when one considers that some 300 participants from more than 120 countries travelled to Brussels for the event.

The meeting saw Ministers, Ambassadors, Directors General of Customs and other high level participants from around the world gather to discuss the future agenda of WCO capacity building. In addition, observers to the meeting included more than 40 partner and stakeholder organizations representing academia, the private sector and the donor community.

A highlight of the meeting was the appearance of Helen Clark, Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Chair of the UN Development Group. Ms. Clark arrived at the meeting directly from the successful 2010 Millennium Development Review Summit that had been held in New York the week before.

In her keynote speech she said, "I was delighted to learn some months ago that the World Customs Organization was looking at how its work could help the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In my view, it can help a great deal. For the MDGs to be met countries' economies will need to grow sustainably and revenue will need to be collected for investment in services and infrastructure. A modern Customs service can play a key role in both trade facilitation, which is conducive to growth, and revenue collection, generated by this growth."

Ms. Clark also told the Committee that there was scope for further strengthening linkages between the WCO and the UNDP. She commended the WCO and Committee delegates "for taking its capacity building work seriously and for developing a number of instruments, programmes and tools to enhance Customs operations".

Further key note speeches were delivered by Jordan's Minister of Transport, Alaa Batayneh, and the Ambassador of Cote d'Ivoire to Belgium and the European Union, H.E. Mrs. Marie Gosset.

Several tripartite capacity building agreements between African countries were also signed during the meeting. A tripartite agreement is a simple but very effective model for capacity building support between two or more WCO Members and the WCO. The agreement specifies cooperation with concrete deliverables and expected outcomes, within a period of time. It is a significant step forward when developing countries, having received support in the first stages of the WCO Columbus Programme,

then transfer their own experience to other countries within their region.

The WCO also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on further intensified co-operation with the Southern African Customs Union whose members include Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. Three new WCO initiatives were also launched during the meeting: the WCO Management Programme, the new e-Learning platform, and the first WCO Fellowship Programme for Spanish speakers.

Three major themes emerged from Capacity Building Committee discussions – the importance of people, partnerships and political will. Delegates stressed the need for leadership, strategic planning, and coordination and evaluation at all levels as vital for the successful delivery of capacity building on the ground.

Feedback and evaluation surveys from participants showed that the meeting was a great success. The Capacity Building Committee will be a cornerstone for continuing promotion of capacity building as a priority area within the WCO. All 177 Members of the Organization will benefit from the work of the Secretariat and the new Capacity Building Committee.

The 9th Session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee immediately followed the Capacity Building Committee Session. As part of a week of capacity building meetings, representatives of WCO Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres also discussed how to maximize delivery of Members' regional capacity building programmes.

More information
capacity.building@wcoomd.org



Helen Clark addressing the Committee



Secretary General Mikuriya poses with the dog teams after having awarded them Certificates of Merit

International Customs Day 2011

...Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence

The global Customs community and its partners met on 26 January 2011 at WCO Headquarters to celebrate International Customs Day dedicated to "Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence" this year.

"Excellence is what we should be aiming at as a Customs community and I firmly believe that knowledge is indeed a catalyst, a critical tool that will help us to excel in what we do best: protect society, secure the supply chain, facilitate trade, and ensure the integrity of borders", said Secretary General of the WCO, Kunio Mikuriya in his official message.

Guest speaker Jacques Bourgeois, a lawyer by profession and a renowned expert in international trade as well as a professor at the College of Europe, was invited to share his thoughts on this year's theme. The professor tackled several aspects of knowledge including the knowledge acquisition process, the importance of specialized knowledge, the value of empirical knowledge and the need to verify data.

It is not only trade that is globalised, explained the professor, knowledge is globalised too and this phenomenon presents some challenges. How does one select and filter relevant knowledge from the mass of available information? How can one justify ignorance today when information is publicly out there? Just two of the insightful questions posed in his presentation.

An investment in knowledge is an investment in our future and the Secretariat hopes that the focus on knowledge in 2011 will galvanize the Customs community to give more thought to human capital development, management development, knowledge management and the better use of research capacity and learning tools.

Check out the next edition of the magazine for a round-up of International Customs Day activities that took place in other parts of the globe.

[More information
www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org)



Guest speaker Jacques Bourgeois with the Secretary General



An exhibition with several stands promoting knowledge activities complemented the event



Invited guests watch sniffer dog teams from around the world in action



WCO PICARD Programme goes from strength to strength



The WCO Partnership in Customs Academic Research and Development (PICARD) was launched in 2006 to provide a framework for cooperation between Customs and the academic world. In parallel with the coming into being of PICARD, a number of academic institutions decided to create the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU), paving the way for a rich vein of research in the field of Customs showcased in INCU's flagship publication – the World Customs Journal.

Working together, the WCO and INCU have advanced a range of initiatives covering educational programmes, strategic management development, professional standards, and academic research and development – all key areas that contribute to growth in Customs and which propel its pursuit of excellence in service delivery.

In relation to standards, the WCO in partnership with INCU has developed a set of Professional Standards necessary for Customs managers to meet the requirements of today's operating environment and its strategic drivers. In addition, the WCO has established a process for assessing university curricula against these Standards.

To provide a platform for closer interaction and knowledge sharing between Customs and the academic world, conferences have been held around the world on an annual basis. Built on the success of previous conferences in Brussels (2006 and 2007), Shanghai (2008), and Costa Rica (2009), the 5th PICARD Conference took place in Abu Dhabi from 23-25 November 2010.

Around 200 participants from Customs, the academic world and the private sector attended to share research outcomes relevant to the WCO agenda as well as developments and experiences in Customs professional education.

During the opening session, the Director General of the UAE Federal Customs, Mr. Khalid Ali Al Bustani, welcomed participants and stressed the importance of capacity building and its linkage to the PICARD Conference. In turn, the WCO Secretary General explained the link between the current WCO working agenda and the topics of the 2010 PICARD Conference, namely, revenue collection, the Customs-business partnership, protection of the environment, and performance measurement.



Secretary General Mikuriya also took the opportunity to announce that the international Customs community would celebrate 2011 as the Year of Knowledge with the theme: "Knowledge, a catalyst for excellence in Customs" – a theme that clearly dovetailed with the work of the conference and the future growth of the partnership between Customs and the academic community.

The conference was co-chaired by Professors David Widdowson (Canberra University) and Hans-Michael Wolfgang (Münster University) and included a range of top-notch speakers from Customs, academia, the World Bank and the business world.

In the course of the conference, two additional universities – the University of Costa Rica and the National Research University (International Business and Law Institute) of Saint Petersburg – were certified as meeting the Professional Standards established under the WCO PICARD Programme.

Meanwhile, the 8th edition of the World Customs Journal – www.worldcustomsjournal.org – has been released by INCU and includes a number of research papers that were presented and lively discussed in Abu Dhabi.

More information

<http://www.wcoomd.org/fr/eventsfr.htm>

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looking for the needle in a haystack

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