



TRADE BEAT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL
LIAISON UNIT

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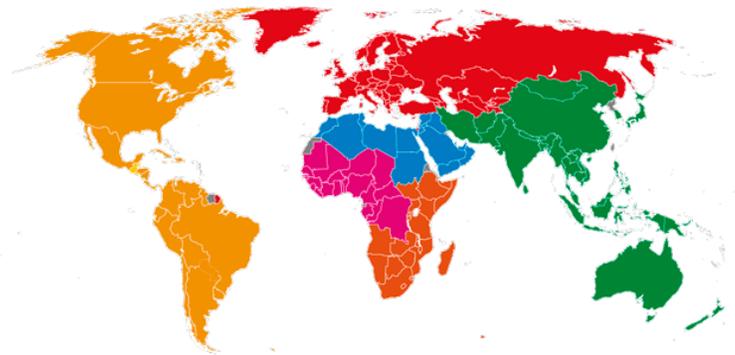
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The Role of the WCO



The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an independent intergovernmental body representing 179 countries across the globe. Three quarters of the WCO's Membership comprises of developing countries, responsible for managing more than 98% of world trade. As the global center for expertise in Customs matters, the WCO represents the international Customs community and has long supported the efforts of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in concluding its Trade facilitation Agreement (TFA) which was signed in Bali, December 2013 .

The WCO has committed to supporting the efficient implementation of the TFA by adopting the Dublin Resolution which came out of the meeting of the WCO Policy Commission in December 2013. Members of the WCO will be provided with technical assistance to identify their needs and priorities as it relates to the implementation of the TFA, in order to build capacity in collaboration with other international organizations and donors.

As the principal government agency charged with the implementation of the TFA, Customs administrations worldwide will require significant collaboration and cooperation with other trade-related agencies to ensure an effective implementation process. The core provisions of the TFA primarily relate to matters administered by Customs, and defines the obligation of each Member as it relates to each provision. The WCO provides a wealth of expertise and has developed and implemented several international standards relating to Customs processes. Through the application of its recommended standards and the delivery of technical assistance in key areas, the WCO supports the global and uniform implementation of the TFA.



Technical Assistance/Capacity Building for Trade Facilitation

WCO's technical assistance and capacity building tools provides strategic, technical and implementation support to Member administrations of Customs for their respective reform and modernization initiatives. The WCO has adopted a broad approach to organizational development, and offers assistance using the implementation of its various tools, international standards, as well as best practices in the area of Customs administration.

Support to WCO Members is delivered in three (3) stages:

- **Diagnosis/Needs Assessment**
- **Strategic Planning and Implementation**
- **Monitoring with Performance Measurement**





WCO's Tools and Instruments

In response to the trade facilitation needs of its Members, the WCO has developed many trade facilitation instruments and tools which fully support the Customs related provisions of the WTO TFA. According to the WCO, Members have expressed concerns regarding the implementation of the

TFA, citing that the risk exists that a non-standardized approach will be taken resulting in divergent implementation practices. In order to mitigate these risks the use of the WCO instruments and Tools can be an effective means of standardizing the implementation of the WTO TFA Articles. This process would enable harmonized implementation among Members of the WCO and the WTO, using globally accepted standards required for increased trade facilitation.



Existing Tools and Instruments of the WCO

The Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC)

The WCO RKC is an international agreement that provides a set of comprehensive Customs procedures to facilitate legitimate international trade while effecting Customs controls including the protection of Customs revenue and society. It deals with key principles of simplified and harmonized Customs procedures, such as predictability, transparency, due process, maximum use of information technology, and modern Customs techniques (e.g. risk management, pre-arrival information, and post-clearance audit).



The SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (Safe Framework)

The Safe framework is an international instrument of the WCO that seeks to achieve a safer world trade regime. It represents a new approach to the end-to-end management of goods moving across borders while recognizing the significance of a closer partnership between Customs and their business partners. The inclusion of the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) provisions, inter alia, enables a more comprehensive approach

The Single Window Compendium

The 'Single Window' approach describes a facility where citizens and businesses can access government services through a single interface to the government. To support capacity building efforts, the WCO has developed a Compendium on "How to Build a Single Window Environment". The Compendium comprises Volume 1 – The Executive Guide, and Volume 2- The Professional Practice Guide. Volume 1 introduces the Single Window concept and discusses it in the context of Border Management and Customs Modernization. It provides a practical section on policy planning, designing structures and services and addresses legal and human resource issues. Volume 2 is a collection of tools and techniques to support technical experts working on projects to establish a Single Window.

Time Release Study (TRS)

The WCO Time Release Study (TRS) is a unique tool and method for measuring the actual performance of Customs activities as they directly relate to trade facilitation at the border. The TRS thereby measures relevant aspects of the effectiveness of operational procedures that are carried out by Customs and other regulatory actors in the standard processing of imports, exports and intransit movements. It seeks to accurately measure these elements of trade flows so that related decisions to improve such performance can be well conceived and thereby carried out.

WCO Data Model (DM)

The WCO DM is a set of simplified and harmonized data requirements that are mutually supportive, and will be updated at regular intervals, to meet the procedural and legal needs of cross-border regulatory agencies. These Agencies, such as Customs, are responsible for controlling export, import and transit transactions occurring across borders. The WCO DM is consistent with other international standards such as the United Nations Trade Data Elements Directory (UNTDDED), and is based on the RKC. Under the RKC, Customs administrations are required to use minimal data to ensure compliance with customs laws, which should be listed for each customs procedure in the respective data sets. These self-imposed limits discourage future increases in data requirements, and ensure that any new data requirement for cross-border regulatory procedures follows a thorough analysis of the need and decision taken in line with international standards.

The Jamaica Customs' use of the WCO's Tools and Instruments

The WCO continues to refine existing tools and develop new ones to help Customs administrations all over the world to implement the TFA. Several existing WCO tools and instruments have been revised to reflect the requirements of the TFA, as well as several new tools have been developed to contribute to the it's effective and uniformed implementation. The Jamaica Customs Agency has benefited from technical assistance and capacity building from the WCO, in its quest to implement the recommended tools and instruments that will ultimately facilitate the use of the TFA.

The JCA continues to display its commitment to enhanced Trade Facilitation. This is evidenced through its recent launch of a SAFE compliant AEO programme and through the implementation of a One Stop Shop at the Kingston Container Terminal (KCT). There are also plans underway to develop a mechanism for monitoring Customer Charter Standards, in which the WCO TRS will play a key role. Once implemented, the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) World will allow the JCA to fulfill a significant number of commitments required by the RKC. Although not fully compliant with all the stipulated Annexes of the RKC, according to its capacity, the JCA practices a number of elements of the provisions outlined in the Convention. To a large extent, the JCA complies with the General Annex of the RKC which mandates contracting parties to implement standard and simplified procedures; continuously develop and improve Customs control techniques, use risk management, audit techniques and pre-arrival processing; maximize use of information technology; and establish a partnership approach between customs and trade.



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