



ROCB
Asia/Pacific

World Customs Organization

E-newsletter No.76



In this issue;

- Hong Kong Customs College Continually Enhances Training Professionalism
- International conference on Customs and Tax Cooperation by Indonesia
- What can we learn from Guide to Managing Customs' Human Capital through Crises and Beyond
- Let's promote Customs Integrity in Asia Pacific region
- How does Customs support Environmental issues

FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

Greetings from Bangkok ROCB A/P.



It's been two years since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared and I strongly believe that Asia-Pacific members continue to make best efforts to respond to the *New Normal* by ensuring Customs administrations are fully functioning to deliver international trade for global economic prosperity.

With the easing of restrictions globally, the current COVID-19 situation is improving for the WCO and our members, and with it face-to-face activities are gradually being resumed around the world, especially in-person or hybrid conferences and meetings. We too, hope to be able to soon return to our ordinary face-to-face style in our gathering events, while ensuring the safety of participating officials in these activities.

For capacity building activities in 2022, ROCB A/P will seek to deliver as many workshops as possible. We're pleased to announce the WCO and ROCB A/P recently restarted delivering in-person and hybrid workshops. Of course, I sincerely hope that the COVID-19 situation will improve further, and we can resume full face-to-face workshops and we are allowed to meet with you all in person in the near future.

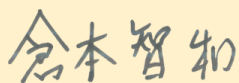
This No. 76 E-Newsletter features our activities undertaken with Asia-Pacific members in the third quarter of WCO Fiscal Year 2021/22 (January through March 2022). In this E-Newsletter, we present special articles from RTC Hong Kong, namely "Hong Kong Customs College Continually Enhances Training Professionalism". I greatly appreciate RTC Hong Kong sharing this article with us.

We also would like to present ROCB A/P's special essays: which explain WCO tools and current hot topics in a user-friendly and easy-to-understand manner. There are three special

essays written by Program Managers of ROCB A/P in this E- Newsletter, namely (1) Let 's promote Customs Integrity in Asia Pacific region!! by Ms. Grace YE, (2) What can we learn from Guide to Managing Customs Human Capital through Crises and Beyond? by Ms. Sherman YU and (3) How does Customs support Environmental issues? by Ms. Pavida Tarapoom. We sincerely hope you enjoy ROCB A/P's special essays and use them as reference reading materials for policy officials and field officers.

The ROCB A/P is always keen to hear any of your constructive comments and suggestions/input to our activities, including our communication and public relations activities, with a view to better servicing regional member Customs administrations. I would like to continue to convey not only ROCB A/P's activities but also members' interesting activities through our E-Newsletters.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norikazu Kuramoto' in a stylized, cursive script.

Norikazu Kuramoto (Mr.)
Head of the ROCB A/P

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Hong Kong Customs College Continually Enhances Training Professionalism

Hong Kong Customs College (the College) is committed to cultivating Customs professionals with high-standard training programmes. Recently, the College took forward the mission with the accreditation of two on-the-job training programmes under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework and the launch of a one-year part-time certificate course for serving Service members to facilitate their pursuance of further studies.

Accreditation of On-the-job Training Programmes

To ensure high-quality training for new talents and the continual development of the Customs profession, the College successfully passed the professional assessment by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) to include two new on-the-job training programmes, namely the Passenger Processing Course and Cargo Processing Course, in the Qualifications Register.

The newly accredited programmes, aiming to strengthen Customs officers' capabilities in discharging passenger and cargo clearance duties and tackling diversified challenges arising from the frontline work environment, were pitched at the same level as a local Associate Degree or Higher Diploma. Starting from January 2022, the course graduates will be awarded the "Professional Certificate in Customs Control and Enforcement (Passenger Clearance)" or "Professional Certificate in Customs Control and Enforcement (Cargo Clearance)".

The two induction courses of the College, i.e. Inspector Induction Course and Customs Officer Induction Course, were at the same time successfully re-accredited. All four programmes were granted an extended validity period of four years, which showed that the College was highly recognized by HKCAAVQ in terms of training management, delivery standards and quality assurance.

Offering Part-time Certificate Course to Encourage Lifelong Learning

To enhance serving Service members' enforcement knowledge and provide them with articulation pathways for bachelor's degree programmes, Hong Kong Customs facilitated Hong Kong Metropolitan University (HKMU) to launch a one-year part-time certificate course in September 2021.

The course covered various specialized areas of social sciences and law enforcement ranging from sociology and criminology to psychological skills, conflict management and media relations, etc. The course graduates will be awarded the "Certificate in Law Enforcement and Customs Management" by HKMU and entitled to credit exemption for articulation to HKMU's "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Law Enforcement and Security Management" (or with Honours).



The Chairman of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, Mr Rock Chen (left), presents Statements of Accreditation Approval of four training programmes to the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho (right) on 29 December 2021.

International Conference on Customs and Tax Cooperation

8-9 February 2022, Online Seminar hosted by RTC Indonesia



From 8th to 9th February 2022, the Indonesian Customs and Excise Education and Training Center (ICEETC) held the International Conference on Customs and Tax Cooperation. This is the first international event held in 2022 by ICEETC as the WCO Regional Training Centre for the Asia Pacific. For two days, there were more than 1,000 participants joined the conference from the Zoom meeting and ICEETC YouTube channel. The participants originating from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia's employees; other Indonesian government agencies; customs and tax administrations from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Singapore, India, Australia, Iran, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Vietnam, and Timor Leste; and general public.

The conference was opened by the Chairman of the Financial Education and Training Agency, Mr Andin Hadiyanto. Mr Andin opened the conference by stating the fact that the cooperation between customs and tax in Indonesia had grown significantly stronger involving other department agencies such as budgeting institutions. However, because of some issues such

as commitment from related parties and data exchange, he hoped that today's conference could help provide a better strategy to heighten the cooperation between customs and tax authorities. Next, Mr Sudarto, Assistant of the Minister of Finance provided keynote remarks on the first day. In his speech, he highlighted that the joint initiatives between customs and tax have contributed to the increase of state revenues and reinforce risk assessment and compliance management. Hence, he believed that the strong working cooperation and effective exchange of information between customs and tax authorities were the keys to facing difficulty due to pandemic and technological development.

On the second day, Mr Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of ROCB AP provided the keynote speech. He emphasized the importance of environmental screening and brainstorming to gain basic knowledge on each other operations in dealing with cooperation between customs and tax. WCO guideline and their in-house training were one of the tools in facilitating smooth cooperation in the future. He ended his speech by hoping that today's discussion would bring ideas on effective cooperation strategy.

Accordingly, this two-day conference would highlight the importance of cooperation between customs and tax authorities in optimizing state revenues and improving user compliance. On the first day, there were invited speakers from Indonesian government officials, OECD officials, and WCO accredited experts discussing the topic of **"Strengthening Cooperation Between Customs and Tax Authorities to Optimize State Revenue."**

The first expert, Ms Melinda Brown, Senior Advisor at Centre for Tax Policy and Tax Policy and Administration OECD explained the importance of understanding transfer pricing and customs valuation to strengthen the cooperation between customs and tax. She provided several recommendations for tax and customs authorities to learn about each other requirements using training or staff-exchange opportunities, provide instruments such as MoU to enable the exchange of information with customs, and form large business teams that focus on MNEs.

The next presenter, Mr Sudarto from the Central Transformation Office of the Ministry of Finance of Indonesia told the reasons why Indonesian governments put the importance of the synergy between each government agency, notably customs and tax administrations. He explained the new joint initiatives formed in 2021 in the forms of joint analysis, joint audit, joint

collection, joint investigation, joint business process and IT, joint intelligence, and secondment.

The last presentation from the expert was delivered by Mr Hao Wu, Technical Officer Facilitation Sub Directorate of WCO. He presented the guidelines from WCO to strengthen the cooperation and exchange the information between customs and tax authorities. He stated several areas in which the customs and tax could cooperate, such as data sharing to examine transaction authenticity and detect irregularity, synergy in the fields of customs valuation and transfer pricing, joint efforts to monitor cross-border illicit financial flows and cooperation on direct and indirect taxation. He then emphasizes that in enabling such cooperation to happen, they need political will and executive commitment, legal framework, government processes and resources, data confidentiality and protection, information technology, data analytics, and so on.



On the second day, discussing the topic of “**Enhancing the Exchanging of Information Between Customs and Tax Authority to Improve Compliance**” were two expert speakers from Indonesian customs and tax authorities, as well as two customs officials from Malaysia and Russia.



The first presentation from the speaker was delivered by Mr Decy Arifinsjah, Director of Customs and Excise Audit of Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DGCE) of the Republic of Indonesia. He shared one of the joint programs called a joint audit, in which tax examiners and customs' auditors team up to perform tax examination or customs and excise audit. He also introduced other initiatives called data analyzing tools that produced some outputs such as confirmation on taxpayers' status before they were given some customs or excise facilitation and auto-blocking system that enables problematic taxpayers to be blocked by customs authorities. Those joint initiatives produced astonishing results such as an increase in revenue, improvement of compliance, single profile compliance risk management and enhance controls on high-risk imports, exports, and excise.

Next, the second presenter, Mr Imam Arifin, Director of Business Process Transformation from the Indonesian Directorate General of Tax (DGT) explained that joint program between customs and tax in the form of joint business processes and TI produced significant improvement on data quality, reduction of service time, enhancement of the system preventive supervision, and securing tax facilities. The utilization of data exchange in facilitating VAT (Value-Added-Tax) return, for example, enable tax officer to fill the data of export declaration (PEB), excise documents (CK-1), and import declaration (PIB) in the VAT return form. Mr Imam hoped that this synergy could enhance the convenience of entrepreneur taxpayers in reporting their VAT return, minimized filling errors, and reduced the number of unreported documents. Hence, it could

increase the compliance of taxpayers.



In the next session, there were two customs representatives from Malaysia and Russia to share their experience in cooperating with tax authorities. Mr Chew Han Aun from Royal Customs Malaysian Department shared that the joint audit programme enabled some information such as company information, company's accounting information, audit tools usage, audit process, risk analysis, as well as verification and profiling to be shared between customs and revenue department. It resulted in the reduction of repetitive on-site visits and audits by the customs and revenue department and improvement of taxpayer's compliance and audit effectiveness. He also shared that the joint audit was proved to be successful in raising taxpayers' awareness of tax enforcement and inspiring self-compliance. In addition, it also helped the government to identify the actual revenue and expenditure of taxpayers as well as enabling the exchange of auditing skills between customs and revenue authorities.

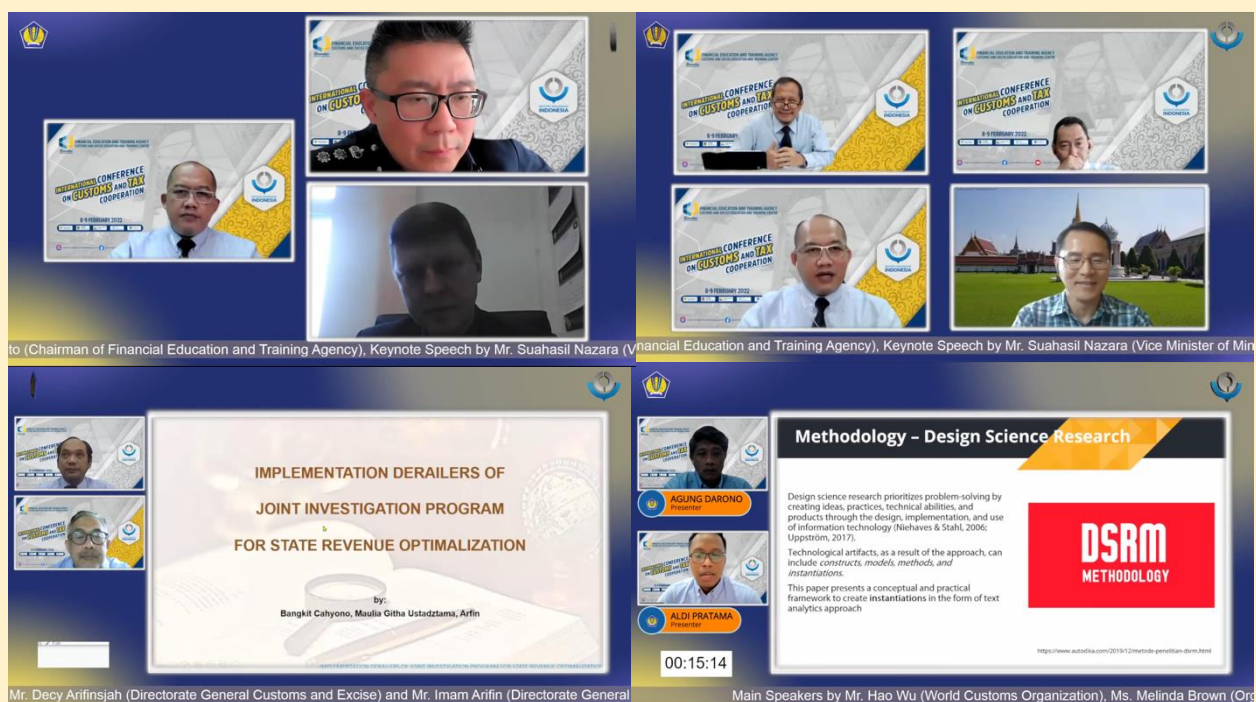
Later, Mr Gryazin Denis from Federal Customs Service Russia presented their experience in cooperating with Russian tax authorities within customs control activities and the creation of goods traceability system. He stated that the use of regulation, MoU, and a coordination council between customs and tax authorities produced a higher amount of payment from claims. Furthermore, some of the joint operations such as the coordinated control activities were able to detect schemes of illegal capital withdrawal, criminal, and administrative cases. Focusing on goods

traceability, Russian customs and tax authorities pursued the full transparency of goods flow within Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) by unifying the electronic document of movement of goods and integrating the information system and traceability mechanism. Mr Denis then shared that in the middle of 2021, Russian customs and tax authorities had developed a national system of goods traceability aims to detect and preventing schemes of nonpayment of taxes and customs duties.

During the two-day conference, there was also a presentation from eight papers selected by the committee from a call for paper. The papers from academics and government employees were presented to provide an empirical perspective on the customs and tax cooperation topics.

After the presentation and discussion session had finished, the conference was closed by Mr Harry Mulya, Director of Indonesian Customs and Excise Training Agency. In his closing remarks, he conveyed his appreciation for all the committees, expert speakers, paper presenters, and audience for their effort to participate in conducting a successful and fruitful discussion. He believed that the two-day discussions were able to provide insight and knowledge to strengthen the coordination between customs and tax authorities.

To conclude, the conference enabled the participant to learn from best practices on the strategy used in customs and tax cooperation. Understanding the basic knowledge of each other operations and ensuring the leader's commitment is important to ensure that cooperation will lead to state revenue optimalization and compliance improvement (*RTC Indonesia Team*).





Let's promote Customs Integrity in Asia Pacific region!!



Ms. Grace Ye

Program Manager, ROCB A/P

Introduction

In my view without doubt, COVID-19 has and will continue to influence the global trading environment including Customs operations for a while as 'New Normal'. While Customs' priority remains unchanged, which is to ensure the efficient cross-border movement of goods especially medical supplies at this time, Customs administrations also face significant challenges. In particular, we need to ensure the health and safety of frontline officers, while continuing to ensure Customs functions. For example, work-from-home systems in Customs have been introduced in many Customs administrations around the world; nevertheless, it is difficult for managers and supervisors to monitor staff output. At the same time, the number of field officers has also decreased and the burden on these officers is increasing. In addition to that, trade stakeholders have similarly introduced work-from-home systems and reduced the number of people physically working on site, leading to decreased efficiency and logistical delays. In this situation, there are people trying to speed up Customs clearance through bribes. The COVID-19 outbreak has increased opportunities and risks for corruption, so it is essential to ensure more appropriate and efficient work through professionalism, values and motivation. The key to supporting this situation will be Customs Integrity.

Due to the importance of international trade and Customs functions, Customs administrations and Customs officials need to continue to be trusted by the citizens of your countries, which further necessitates a healthy organizational culture and environment by maintaining official's discipline especially through COVID-19. In these times as previously

mentioned, Customs integrity is of vital importance to global trade. In other words, the lack of integrity will bring adverse consequences to the international supply chain as well as the society. It is clear that the pandemic has brought seismic changes throughout the world; Customs Integrity needs to be maintained as we tailor procedures and operations to adapt to the 'New Normal'.

In my essay, I will elaborate on efforts made by the WCO, ROCB A/P as well as Member administrations, which will hopefully resonate and offer some insights and encouragement for our AP Members.

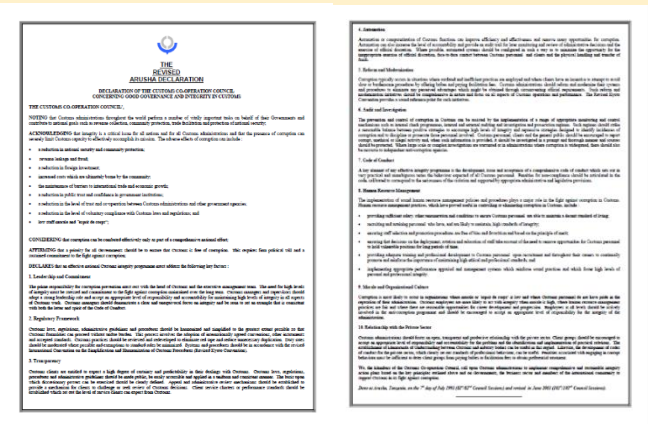
Do you know WCO Integrity Efforts?

As the only international organization focused on Customs affairs, the WCO plays a leading role in fighting corruption in the Customs Community. Referring to WCO's 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities and Emerging Initiatives "Integrity: Enhance the integrity and professionalism of Customs officers in cooperation with external stakeholders", WCO's emphasis on maintaining Customs Integrity is highlighted.

In my essay, I would like to share some key instruments, tools, activities and information on Integrity at the WCO, and of course, WCO's information on Integrity is not limited to this, so if you would like to learn more, please visit the WCO website.

1) WCO Instruments and Tools

This is a must see! Revised Arusha Declaration (RAD) is WCO's fundamental instrument to prevent corruption and increase the level of integrity in Customs. There are ten key factors mentioned in Declaration, which provides guidance for setting up an effective national Customs Integrity Programme. In addition to the RDA, WCO also provides other Tools and Guidelines, such as the Compilation of WCO Members Integrity practices on Internal control, Integrity Development Guide,



The Revised Arusha Declaration

Compilation of Integrity Practices from WCO Members, the Guide to Corruption Risk Mapping, the Guide to Prevent Procurement Corruption in Customs, the Model Code of Ethics and Conduct, the Why and How of Performance Measurement Contracts and the Transparency and Predictability Guidelines. All of these documents are located on the WCO website.

With the changing world, WCO is also keeping its instruments and tools updated and upgraded. At the 21st session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC), the WCO Secretariat highlighted the efforts made by the WCO related to the draft supplement of the WCO Guide to Corruption Risk Mapping. With the purpose of bridging the gap between policy and practice in the management of anti-corruption in Customs, WCO intends to prepare a draft supplement of the WCO Guide to Corruption Risk Mapping. The intention of this draft is to supplement current procedures and provide practical examples; this will help Member Administrations target corruption risks in Customs processes.



Cover page of the WCO
Guide to Corruption Risk

2) CLiKC!

Most of us here already know about CLiKC!, the key E-learning tool of WCO. The Integrity e-learning module is now online in English and other languages on CLiKC!. The WCO Anti-Corruption & Integrity Promotion (A-CIP) Programme team developed this course with the financial support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). Through this module, learners will understand the importance of integrity and improve their knowledge of WCO Instruments and Tools. These include the Revised Arusha Declaration (RAD) and the more importantly how to apply RAD to target the potential risks and maintain integrity in their Administrations.



Fortunately, I had the opportunity to undertake this module and was impressed by the design and ease of use. It is divided in 6 parts: Understanding Corruption and Integrity in Customs, Institutional Response to Corruption, Individual and Managerial Response to Corruption, Tools Assisting the Implementation of the WCO Revised Arusha Declaration, Put your Learning into Practice and a Glossary. After finishing all these sessions, I took the quiz to evaluate how well I

understood the previous 6 sessions. After passing the test, I received a WCO certificate. It was a wonderful opportunity to improve my knowledge and increase motivation in relation to Customs Integrity at an individual level. Please enjoy this member benefit of the WCO.

3) WCO Integrity Programme

In 2019, with the financial support from Norway and Canada, WCO launched the Anti-Corruption and Integrity Promotion (A-CIP) Programme. This Programme has developed new materials, educational resources, and expert working groups to assist Members to address corruption.

The A-CIP Programme has conducted a Customs Integrity Perceptions Survey (CIPS). CIPS applied a hybrid approach including a qualitative assessment aligned with the Integrity development Guide and the WCO Revised Arusha Declaration. In addition, a quantitative analysis that included 10 key factors listed in the WCO Revised



Arusha Declaration. The result of the CIPS are helpful to understand the gap between the existing situation and future perspectives on Customs Integrity. Furthermore, it can offer insights for the Heads of Customs Administrations to make decisions or action plans in this regard.

So far, over 20 countries have joined the A-CIP Programme including several Asia Pacific Members. CIPS was delivered successfully in 25 countries and more than 8000 customs officials and over 6000 private sector representatives were surveyed resulting in nearly 600,000 data points.

Another effort made by the WCO A-CIP Programme is Internal Affairs Virtual training. This training was based on the WCO Revised Arusha Declaration. Several examples of key internal affairs-related Competencies such as Customs Core Values, Professional Competencies, Operational Competencies and Management Competencies were highlighted.

4) WCO Integrity Newsletter

With the target of conveying updates on WCO Members' national integrity related activities, WCO publishes its Integrity Newsletter twice a year. The Newsletter connects domain experts from different countries, providing them with the opportunity to share views, techniques and best practices with a wider audience.

The latest edition, No.20 was issued in December 2021. Many Members such as Australian Border Force (ABF), Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS), France's Direction Générale des Douanes et Droits Indirects (DGDDI), Jordan Customs and others have shared latest practices in promoting integrity.



Cover page of 20th WCO Integrity Newsletter

We can appreciate Members' experiences and good practice through the WCO Integrity Newsletters. Meanwhile, ROCB A/P also encourages AP Members to submit articles for publication on introducing new approaches or projects aimed at fighting corruption in the Customs Community.

5) Integrity Sub-Committee

One of the most important events on Customs Integrity is the annual WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC). ROCB A/P, as a leading regional Capacity Building Office, also actively joined the dialogue to explore ways for the sustainable development of Customs Integrity.

With the objective of sharing experiences, elaborating on difficulties faced and discussing recent developments, experts from Customs administrations, academia and international organizations were invited to deliver insightful presentations on addressing corruption.



Screenshot of the 21st ISC

The ISC is a forum to exchange views and best practices, and to further coordinate with the private sector and other international organizations. Moreover, all the experts offered their input on how to design, develop, implement and evaluate the WCO Integrity Action Plan. Good suggestions were also made on how to promote integrity and to ensure the effective implementation of the RAD within Members' national Integrity Programme.

At the latest session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC), topics such as the key drivers to maintain Customs integrity, a collaborative approach to strengthen integrity and the application of internal controls and data analytics to curb corruption were discussed. Updates on the WCO Integrity Programme were also shared. During the Conference, ROCB A/P appreciated the great effort made by the WCO Secretariat A-CIP Project team with the support of Norway and Canada as donors. ROCB A/P were also glad to see AP Members actively involved in such a programme. Moreover, ROCB A/P contributed to the Guide on Corruption Risk Mapping and will continuously encourage regional Members' active participation in such an important event.

Member Administration Integrity Initiatives

In this part, I would like to share WCO Members' good practices. We may have many opportunities to learn about AP Members' National Practice. However, we have limited access to the information out of our region. The 21st session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) provided a valuable opportunity to reach to our 'far away' members and to learn about their new initiatives in Customs Integrity. At the meeting, customs officials from Mauritius and Saudi Arabia shared their national practices related to collaborative approach to strengthen integrity as below.

Mauritius

Mauritius Customs highlighted their staff exchange policy. This policy has greatly fostered inter-agency cooperation and enhanced cross-fertilization of experiences in dealing with corruption. Furthermore, the importance of exchanging of information, cooperating on cross cutting agency investigations, sharing the expertise with other agencies were emphasized. To maintain Customs integrity, amendments to legislation on information exchange where there are regulatory restrictions have been made. More efforts such as signing Memorandum of Understandings among agencies to encourage and provide tools for inter-agency knowledge sharing, establishment of a coordinating committee to oversee, promote and develop inter-

agency cooperation and taking advantage of data sharing via technological means were made.

Saudi Arabia

Customs attached great emphasis on the digitization, which was one of the most effective ways to address corruption in Saudi Arabia Customs. It has developed a portal that offers services related to Customs operations, which has tremendously enhanced the integrity through overcoming vulnerabilities of manual systems and elimination of face-to-face contact between Customs and clients. In addition, an automated Customs Clearance System has been set up and a 'Continuous Auditing' initiative is underway in the internal audit department. Meanwhile, Customs has established sound collaboration with the anti-corruption authority and the general court of audit. All these measures can greatly improve the level of Customs Integrity.

During the conference, both Customs officials stressed that due to the limited resource of the Customs in many countries, cooperation with other agencies and information sharing are critical.

What can we learn from *Guide to Managing Customs' Human Capital through Crises and Beyond?*



Ms. Sherman YU

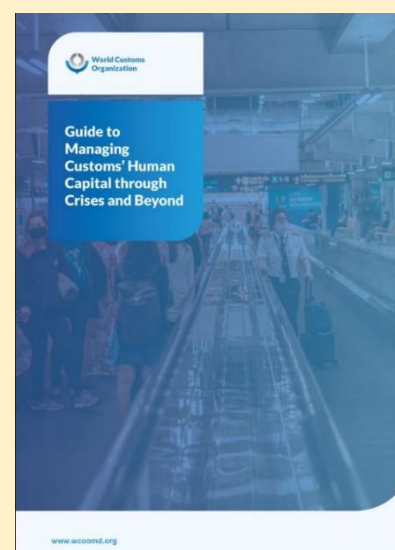
Program Manager for the Southeast Asia of ROCB A/P



Introduction: Impact of Covid-19 on Human Capital Management in Customs administrations

Modernization of human resource management and development (HRMD) is always on the top of WCO's agenda and WCO aims to support its Members in optimizing their performance through their human capital.

In times of the pandemic, HRMD becomes more important and vital in building the organizational resilience to cope with the unprecedented challenges under these difficult times. Under the new norms, Customs administrations have to adopt social distancing, promote work from home arrangements, provide hygienic workplaces as well as personal protection equipment (PPE), so as to reduce the risk of infection and safeguard the well-being and health of their staff. Thus, under the new circumstances, digitalization of the operational mode has to be further sped up as there is an imminent need to reduce to face-to-face contact between stakeholders and staff. Covid-19 posted challenges to Customs administrations not only



in downsizing manpower, which has an adverse impact on daily operations, but also on how to maintain the stability and security of supply chain management.

After completing relevant studies, consulting with stakeholders and compiling previous publications, WCO published Guide to Managing Customs' Human Capital through Crises and Beyond (hereafter referred as the Guide) in 2021 with an aim to facilitate its members to redesign and remodel their HRMD strategies and devise feasible plans for the future. In my essay, I would like to focus on the future point of this guide.



Summary of the Guide

WCO developed the Guide with the financial support from UK (Trade Facilitation in Middle Income Countries Programme). Inputs and contributions from Members and Technical & Development Partners of WCO were collected and consolidated.

The overall objective of the Guide is 'to contribute to strengthening the organizational resilience and agility of WCO Members to better respond and manage emergencies/crises', whereas a more specific objective is stated, i.e. 'to provide WCO Members and relevant partners with innovative HR guidance and solutions to effectively respond to crises and ease into the post-crisis environment'.

The Guide has been divided into five main sections below:

Section I – Introduction,

Section II – Research and Data Analysis,

Section III – Seven Focus Areas for HR Effectiveness in Time of Crisis,

Section IV – Conclusions

Section V – Annexes

Among the five sections, you can find the main findings in Research and Data Analysis in Section II, and readers should pay attention to the '19 guiding principles and recommended practices under 7 HR focus areas' in Section III, as this provides practical and useful references for formulating and designing the HRMD plan.

Throughout the Guide, WCO reiterated that Customs administrations have to constantly modernize with regular updates and upgrades to their operating models and working methods. WCO advocated that Customs administrations need to shift away from inflexible and standardized approaches and to adopt a personalized or 'human-centric' approach as staff are considered to be valuable as well as indispensable capital in the organization.



Research and Data Analysis: Main findings

To understand how the Covid-19 impacted HRMD, WCO conducted a survey to collect views and feedbacks from its member administrations about the performance of the HR department or their organization in response to the pandemic. The following are the salient points of the findings:

- 53% respondents considered Covid-19 has severe impact in their Customs Administrations
- Over 40% respondents dissatisfied with their organizations' response to Covid crisis
- Over 50% respondents considered 'poor or very poor' in assessing HR performance
- In terms of assessing the performance of leadership and measures taken by HR to reorganize the work during Covid, ensuring staff well-being/ safety, the result is around 40 to 50% of respondent replied 'slightly satisfactory' or 'satisfactory'



As concluded from the findings, respondents felt that HR departments or management were unable to develop and implement business continuity plans to handle a crisis (i.e. Covid-19). Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a call for change in HRMD. In summary, respondents would have the below expectations so that their organization will be more resilient to tackle crisis:

- leadership and organizational culture,
- competency and talent development (including upskilling and reskilling),
- staff resilience and well being at work, and
- organizational/work design and change management

From the outset, WCO affirmed that HRMD should adopt a multi-layered and cyclical approach in organizational development and staff management. Customs administrations should plan, implement, review the key elements and update their HRMD when deemed necessary.



Figure 1: Seven focus areas for HR Effectiveness
(Source: *Guide to Managing Customs' Human Capital through Crises and Beyond*, page 19)



19 guiding principles and recommended practices under 7 HR focus areas:

Apart from conducting survey and literature review on WCO publications, member countries and technical experts in HR field were invited to share their best practices and experiences. Based on the analysis, the WCO identified main guiding principles under seven HR focus areas:

1. Leading and communicating in times of crisis
2. HR business continuity in times of crisis
3. Work design in times of crisis
4. Staff safety, well-being and resilience
5. Learning and development in times of crisis
6. Managing individuals, teams and performance in times of crisis
7. Preparing for the post-COVID 19 world, embracing HR 4.0.

Under each main guiding principles, it was further illustrated into 2 to 4 sub-principles. For easy reference, the content was tabulated in the Guide and extracted as below:

Guiding principles

HR: Acting as a leader in times of crisis (leading and communicating)

1.1	Ensure that a humanistic-based, people-centered, leadership culture is established within the organization
1.2	Ensure that HR embraces its strategic partner role by providing timely and effective solutions to complex problems/crises
1.3	Ensure that HR is communicating effectively with staff and relevant stakeholders during a crisis

HR: Business continuity in times of crisis

2.1	Ensure that HR is a key actor/influencer within the organizational structure in charge of emergency management and business continuity, to guarantee that disaster recovery and business continuity plans also include the human aspect of crises
2.2	Ensure that the HR service also manages its own continuity and has a business continuity plan

HR: Work design in times of crisis

3.1	Ensure the optimization of the organizational structure in times of crisis to facilitate the delivery of operations/services, including the establishment of core competencies teams/structures benefiting from more autonomy and decision-making authority
3.2	Ensure an effective transition to remote working modalities and facilities
3.3	Ensure that the workplace adapts to the 'new normal' and that the workforce transitions to the new nature of work

HR: Keeping staff and clients safe and healthy in times of crisis and building staff resilience

4.1	Ensure that the workplace has been adapted to respond effectively to the crisis at hand and to protect the safety of staff, clients and partners
4.2	Ensure that support, including psychological support, is provided to staff in times of crisis
4.3	Protect the safety of employees and clients at all times through the development and implementation of occupational health and safety standards
4.4	Ensure that staff well-being is a core principle of the organization and that a staff well-being culture is effectively embedded to support employees in their performance at all times

HR: Learning and development in times of crisis

5.1	Ensure the continuity of learning and development services
5.2	Prioritize reskilling and upskilling activities to equip staff with the necessary skills to ensure the organization's service continuity
HR: Managing teams, individuals and performance in times of crisis	
6.1	Ensure that teams and individuals are managed effectively during a crisis
6.2	Ensure that managers are equipped to manage teams and individuals during a crisis
HR: Preparing for the post-crisis environment and embracing HR 4.0	
7.1	Ensure that the full impact of the crisis on the organization's operations is assessed and that future work trends are considered
7.2	Ensure that the HR strategy is agile and adapts seamlessly to the post-crisis environment
7.3	Ensure that HR policies, processes and systems meet the (new) demands of the post-crisis environment

Table 1: The guiding principles under the seven HR focus areas

(Source: *Guide to Managing Customs' Human Capital through Crises and Beyond*, page 11)

In order to let readers to easily grasp the ideas about each principle, case studies and real examples were cited so that readers will know the concrete information or understand how the principle was put into practice by institutes. As a footnote, under each case study, 'key takeaways' will be derived to reinforce readers' understanding. The selfless and unreserved sharing of information by contributors can provide practical and useful reference to the customs administrations.



Way forward

A successful HRMD cannot be implemented in the blink of an eye. It requires long-term planning with concerted effort from different parties and has to put the well-being and welfare of staff as the priority. In essence, the HRMD has to have a human-centered based approach, which is innovative and adaptive to changes. The emergence of Covid is a catalyst on HRMD paradigm that leads us to rethink and review our current plan and strategies. The Guide provides theoretical underpinning to HRMD new initiatives and at the same time concluded the lessons we learnt in the Covid crisis. It is hoped that members can peruse the Guide, identify the gaps

by comparing their existing HRMD to the guiding principles and then incrementally improve their HRMD processes.

ROCB A/P will continue to support the work of WCO and acting as a bridge between the AP members and WCO. We will promote the tools, conventions, instruments and hot topics of WCO to the members.

For further enquiries on the article, please contact me at shermanyu@rocbap.org

How does Customs support Environmental issues?



Pavida TARAPOOM (Ms.)

Assistant Program Manager, ROCB A/P

Introduction

The world is aware of environmental concerns these days 'Global Warming', 'Toxic Gases', 'Wildlife Trafficking', and 'Hazardous Waste' for example. They have become hot topics for world populations and related agencies in all countries as they interrupt global trade flows and effect economic development in many aspects.

One of keys to protect our planet from those issues is to enhance effective Customs control at borders. As promoted by WCO and agreed by its members, Customs serve communities as frontline officers to protect societies and their citizens, including to control cross border flows of goods and facilitate legitimate trade. In response to that, international communities have developed several Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to combat illegal environmental trade. In 2004, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in cooperation

***GREEN CUSTOMS INITIATIVE**

"A PARTNERSHIP TO ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF CUSTOMS AND OTHER RELEVANT BORDER CONTROL OFFICERS TO MONITOR AND FACILITATE THE LEGAL TRADE AND TO DETECT AND PREVENT ILEGAL TRADE IN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE COMMODITIES COVERED BY TRADE REALTED CONVENTIONS AND MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (MEAS)"

**SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.GREENCUSTOMS.ORG](http://WWW.GREENCUSTOMS.ORG)*

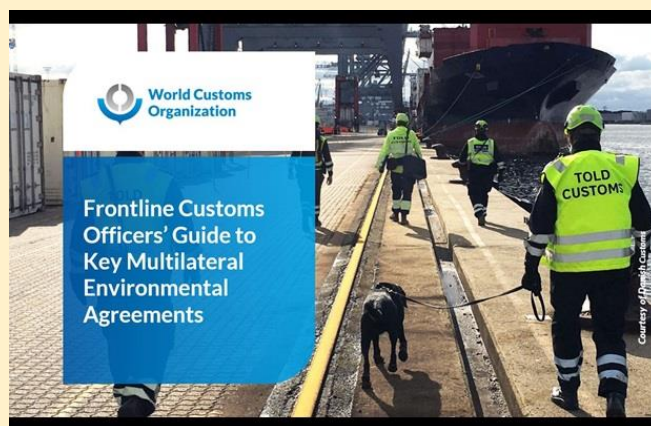
with the World Customs Organization (WCO) launched the *Green Customs Initiative to raise awareness of Customs officers on international regulations that contribute to achieving the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

What is the challenge for Customs?

In my view from my international airport experience as a Customs inspector, necessary knowledge and information is essential for front-line Customs officials to monitor and/ or enforce the illicit trade in these environmental goods. In particular, it is very important to know what treaties exist and what goods they cover. To assist with these points, a useful guidance document is provided by the WCO!

WCO Frontline Customs Officers' Guide to Key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

The WCO frontline Customs Officers' Guide to Key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) was developed in conjunction with environmental partners, and released in December 2021. The guidelines aim to simplify some aspects of the MEAs and offer practical advice to frontline officers when dealing with different MEAs.



To enforce each MEA, frontline Customs officers must identify the nature of trade not only to facilitate legal trade using techniques and technologies to improve the quality of control, but also to remove illegal trade from supply chain by cooperating with relevant MEA national partners for the specific processing required.

However, since there is not one approach for every scenario, officers need to be aware of their health and safety while dealing with environmental goods at the frontline. Frontline officers need to be mindful to only inspect environmental goods in a designated area with required equipment and protective gear, while sometimes; expert support and secure storage areas are also needed. Moreover, it is necessary to ensure all governance requirements are met.

In this regard, WCO Frontline Customs Officers' Guide to Key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are divided into 5 specific areas as follow.

- BASEL conventions
- Cartagena Protocol
- CITES

- Chemical Weapons Convention
- Montreal Protocol

The guides provide information, overviews and key points in each convention/protocol including its foundations, what to focus on, the role of frontline officers, and other reading resources. It is also recommended to be read in conjunction with the Green Customs Guide on MEAs which can be accessed at <http://www.greencustoms.org>.

Basel Convention

The Basel Convention controls the movement of hazardous and other waste cross border while ensuring environmentally sound management (ESM). It entered into force in 1992 with 188 parties, administered by the UNEP and secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland.



The Basel Convention is based on three pillars:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. minimization of the generation 2. environmentally sound management 3. Control of Transboundary movements | } | of hazardous and other wastes |
|---|---|-------------------------------|

In this regard, the Basel Convention established a control system to achieve these objectives by the Conference of the Parties (CoP). The CoP continuously review and evaluate the effective implementation of the Convention including amendments to the convention when required. They also promote policy, adopt the program of work and budget for the Convention each biennium. However, some traders still attempt to ship hazardous and other waste illegally without complying the Basel Convention to reduce costs, using various ways to hide shipments of waste such as E-waste declared as second-hand goods, mixed household residues declared as paper or plastic waste, etc. For more information of the Basel Convention, please visit its website at <http://www.basel.int/>

Cartagena Protocol

The Cartagena Protocol regulates the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs), with a specific focus on transboundary movements, which aim to protect biodiversity from potential adverse effects of LMOs. It entered into force in 2003 with 170 parties, administered by the UNEP and secretariat based in Montreal, Canada.



The protocol itself does not prohibit transboundary movements of LMOs and does not apply to the LMOs which are pharmaceuticals for humans and addressed by other relevant international agreements or organizations. However, to implement the protocol, each party must take the necessary legal and administrative requirements, including other measures to be considered legal. Therefore, frontline customs officers should be familiar with the applicable national legislation and consult the Competent National Authorities when needed for more information. Also, inform the Competent National Authorities when they find a shipment of LMOs that may cause an illegal transboundary movement.

For more information of the Cartagena Protocol, please visit its website at bch.cbd.int/protocol/

CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) regulates international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora with the objectives of ensuring that does not threaten their survival. It covers a broad range from live animals and plants to wildlife products including food products, leather goods, timber, furniture, wooden musical instruments, tourist souvenirs, cosmetics, food supplements, and medicines. It entered into force on 1st July 1975 with 183 parties currently, administered by the UNEP and secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland.



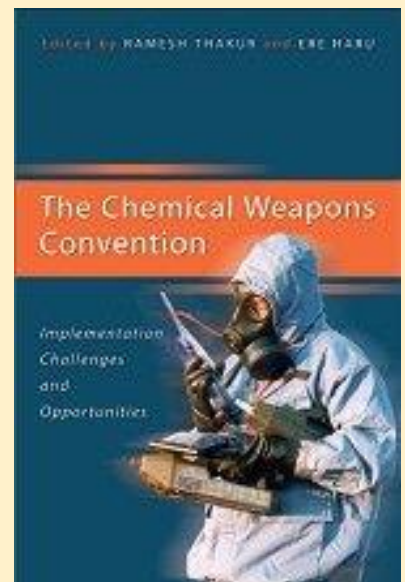
The Convention provides a framework to signatory countries to adopt legislation at national level. It does not prohibit legal trade in Wildlife and flora, but regulates the import, export, and re-export of endangered species of wild flora and fauna via a licensing system. Signatory members are also obliged to implement measures to ensure compliance with the CITES Agreement.

Therefore, frontline customs officers need to monitor and facilitate legal trade with the support of other relevant national agencies, facilitate and controls CITES trade on transshipment, meanwhile Customs authorities also needed to identify and address illegal trade.

For more information of CITES, please visit its website at <http://cites.org/eng>

Chemical Weapons Convention

The Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC) aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer of use of chemical weapons by state parties. It entered into force in 1997 with 193 parties currently and secretariat based in Hague, Netherlands.



As trade in chemical munitions, toxic chemicals, and their precursors is permitted only under exceptional circumstances and is strictly regulated, customs officers should work and cooperate with relevant Ministries. The guide also recommends frontline customs officers enhance their ability to identify substances using only the information provided and other necessary 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' while checking those chemical shipments to secure their health and safety. The guide also introduces several instruments to be used to detect chemicals weapons and industrial chemicals. Furthermore, cooperation with other government department laboratories are needed to help officers with the identification of chemicals.

For more information of the Chemical Weapons Convention, please visit its website at <http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention>

Montreal Protocol

The Montreal Protocol regulates the production and consumption of ozone depleting substances (ODS) and some other controlled substances worldwide with the objective of reducing and eliminating them. The protocol entered into force in 1989 with 198 UN member states.

As there is a full list of the 113 substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol, the guide recommends frontline customs officers be aware of exemptions. Unlike some other conventions, there is no standard licensing system for substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol. Therefore, each member state must design and implement the licensing and quota systems by themselves, and each government issues its own import-export licenses as mandated by its local regulations. Frontline customs officers are also recommended to ask their National Ozone Unit (NOU) to provide more information on the specific laws and penalties in their country.

For more information of the Montreal Protocol, please visit its website at <http://ozone.unep.org/treaties/montreal-protocol>



Way Forward

In conclusion, the guide provides an overview on some of the main conventions and is meant specifically for frontline Customs officers to assist in detection and prevention of the illegal trade in environmentally sensitive goods since they play a crucial role in the implementation of those agreements. Therefore, it is important to make WCO Members aware that illegal trade such as hazardous waste, wildlife, living modified organisms, chemical weapons and ozone-depleting substances pose a huge threat to the environment and the WCO trusts that the guide will be a key element to add value to Customs' environmental operations. ROCB A/P will continually pay attention on this matter in close cooperation with WCO secretariat and Asia pacific members.

For more information, please contact maypavida@rocbap.org

Workshop and Meeting

APPU visit to the ROCB A/P

19 January 2022, Bangkok Thailand



Mr. Norikazu KURAMOTO, the Head of ROCB A/P received the courtesy visit of Mr. LIN Hongliang, the Secretary General of the Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) on 19 January 2022.

During this visit, Mr. Lin expressed his congratulations on the completion of office renovations. Mr. Kuramoto thanked Mr. Lin and appreciated the APPU for its continuous efforts in enhancing collaboration with the ROCB A/P.

Taking this opportunity, Mr. Kuramoto outlined the current major initiatives of the WCO followed by the introduction on the ROCB A/P and the upcoming events in the next fiscal year. After the introduction, Mr. Lin congratulated the achievements the ROCB A/P had made in the last fiscal year and discussed a wide range of topics of common interests, including cross-border E-Commerce and the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

(RCEP). Mr. Lin explained the Member's priorities and emphasized the importance of future mutual cooperation.

Mr. Kuramoto welcomed opportunities to continue to explore future cooperation in Customs-related areas and expressed his commitment to support the APPU as much as possible.

ROCB A/P attended the International Conference on Customs and Tax Cooperation

8 – 9 February 2022, Bangkok, Thailand

event **INDONESIAN CUSTOMS AND EXCISE EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTER** **RTC Asia/Pacific World Customs Organization** **Indonesia**

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CUSTOMS AND TAX COOPERATION

DAY 1
"Strengthening Cooperation between Customs and Tax Authorities to Optimize Social Revenue"

DAY 2
"Enhancing The Exchange of Information between Customs and Tax Authority to Improve Compliance"

Speakers:

- Opening Remarks:** ANDINI HADIVANTO, Chairman of Finance Education and Training Agency
- Keynote Remarks:** SUHARSI NAZARA, Vice Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia
- Keynote Remarks:** NORIKAZU KURAMOTO, Head of the WTO ROCB A/P
- Closing Remarks:** HARRY MULYA, Director of Indonesian Customs and Excise Training Center
- DAY 1 Speakers:** HAAS WU (WTO Customs Organization), MELINDA BROWN (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), SUGARTO (Central Transfer Station Office), YUWEN DIANNA NABLY (Moderator)
- DAY 2 Speakers:** DEY ANSILJANI (Directorate General of Customs and Excise), R. DASITO LIOYANTO (Directorate General of Taxes), CHEW HAN KIM (Royal Malaysian Customs Department), GUYATIN DENIS (Federal Customs Service of Russia), HERU HARJANTO AP (Moderator)

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At the invitation of RTC Indonesia, Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, the Head of the ROCB A/P participated the 'International Conference on Customs and Tax Cooperation' held virtually on 8 – 9 February 2022. Program Manager of the ROCB A/P, Ms. Sherman Yu also joined the meeting to provide support.

Mr. Kuramoto delivered his keynote remarks at this event. In his speech, he highlighted that environmental scanning and brainstorming are key to moving forward cooperation with tax

authorities. He explained that the cooperation between tax authorities and Customs could be very beneficial and meaningful, resulting in a synergy effect in tax collection for mutually related goods in the cross-border movement as importations and exportations. Mr. Kuramoto also affirmed that different administrations or countries have their own unique taxation rules and systems between Customs and tax authorities, highlighting there is no common template how to proceed. Member Customs administrations need to consider tailor-made approaches and solutions that fit their own situation by actively brainstorming and having a solution focused mindset. To conclude his speech, Mr. Kuramoto encouraged Customs administrations to provide specialized a training program on cooperation with tax authorities and how to utilize in-house WCO tools and guidelines to better equip themselves to become specialists in cooperation with tax authorities.



This conference was initiated and hosted by Indonesia Customs and Excise Education and Training Center as RTC Indonesia. On the first day of the Conference, the theme was 'Strengthening Cooperation Between Customs and Tax Authorities to Optimize State Revenue'. The theme for second day of the Conference was 'Enhancing The Exchanging of Information between Customs and Tax Authority to Improve Compliance'.

The conference was opened with remarks delivered by Mr. Andin Hadiyanto, Head of Financial Education and Training Agency, Republic of Indonesia followed by the keynote remarks given by Mr. Sudarto, Assistant of Minister for Organization, Bureaucracy, and Information Technology, Republic of Indonesia. Speakers from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Central Transformation Office (CTO) and WCO were invited to deliver presentations respectively. They shared their perspectives and the insights about Customs valuation and transfer pricing. The participants showed strong interest and raised quite a number of questions during the subsequent plenary session.

ROCB A/P attends 21st Session of the Integrity Sub-Committee

10-11 February 2022, Bangkok Thailand



The 21st session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) was organized and hosted by the WCO from 10 to 11 February 2022, in a hybrid format. More than 220 representatives from over 110 Member administrations participated in the web-conference. ROCB A/P, as a leading regional Capacity Building Office, also actively joined the dialogue to explore ways for a sustainable development on Customs Integrity.

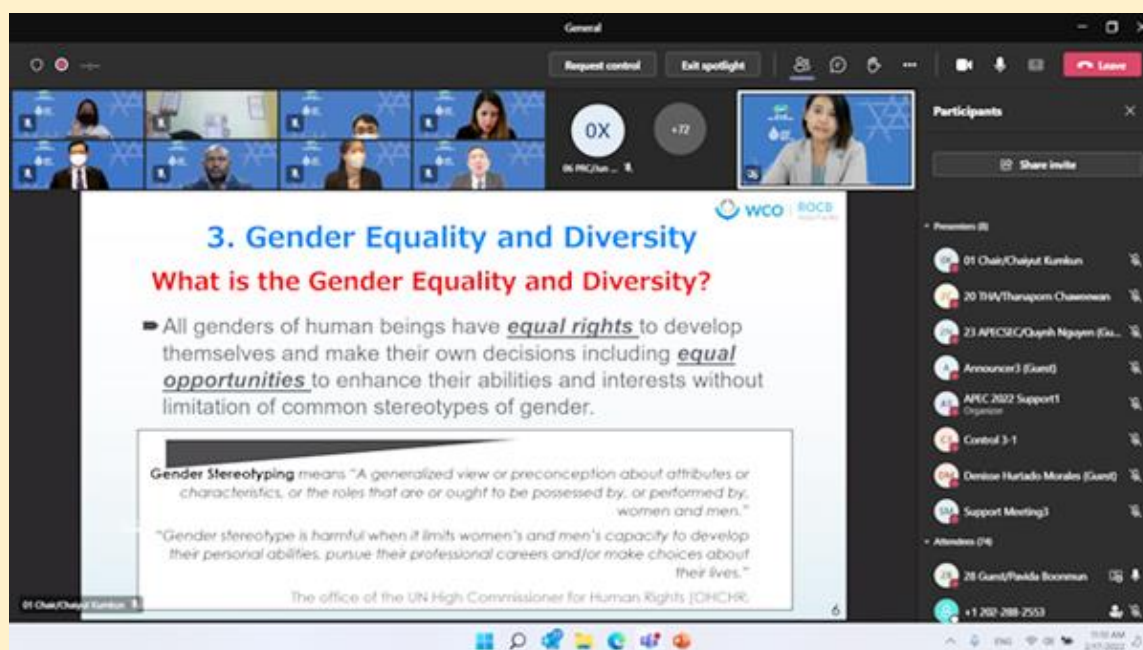
The 21st session of the ISC is focused on updating the integrity efforts of the WCO, especially Anti-Corruption and Integrity Promotion (A-CIP) and includes a relevant drafting document.

During the Conference, ROCB A/P appreciated the great efforts made by the WCO Secretariat A-CIP Project team and Norway and Canada as donors. ROCB A/P was updated by the great contribution made by A-CIP Programme and CIPS in promoting Integrity and was glad to see some AP Members actively involved in such a programme. Meanwhile, ROCB A/P reaffirmed the importance to collaborate with other intergovernmental organizations to fight against corruption, such as the UNODC. Moreover, ROCB A/P contributed its input to the draft of Supplement to the Guide to Corruption Risk Mapping that one table on “Corruption risk related to operators’ compliance” could be considered to add to this supplement. In addition to that,

ROCB A/P noted the ROCB A/P will organize a regional workshop on integrity this Financial Year to promote the latest WCO instruments and tools to AP Members and continuously encourage Customs community to better implement them.

ROCB A/P join APEC Customs discussion

15th – 17th February 2022, Bangkok Thailand



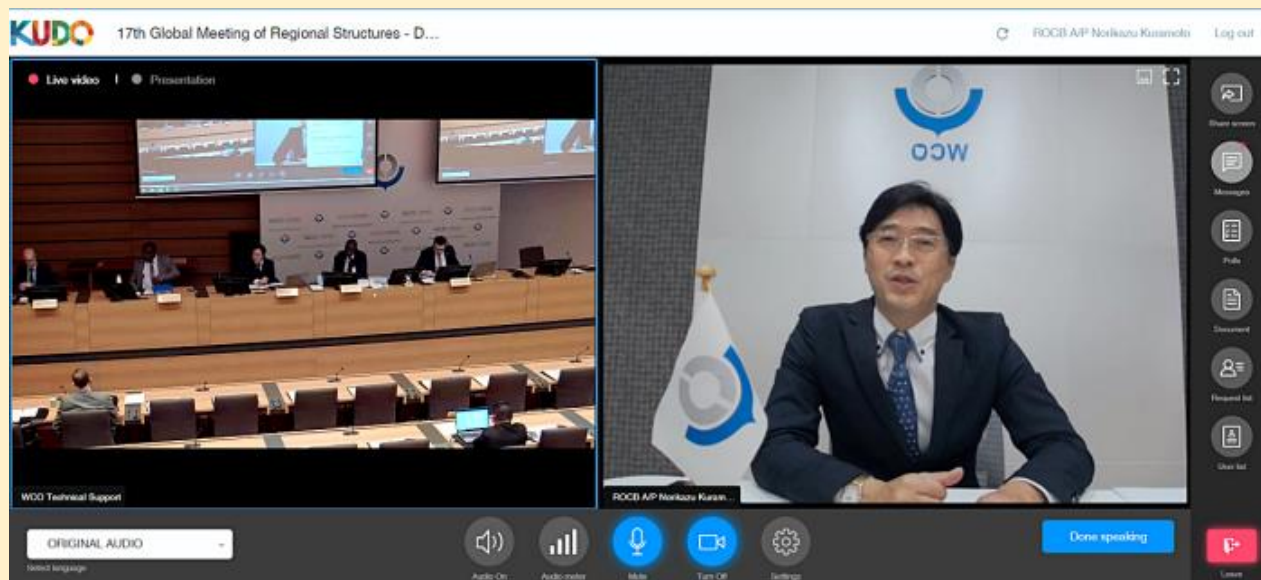
Ms. Pavida Boonmun, Assistant Program Manager, on the behalf of ROCB A/P, joined the APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP1) plenary meeting which was organized and hosted online by APEC SCCP team during 15 to 17 February 2022.

Ms. Pavida Boonmun introduced the recent developments in the AP region's capacity building activities and highlighted the topic of Gender Equality and Diversity as recent and common interested topic of APEC Economies Customs in capacity building area. ROCB A/P reaffirmed the importance of Gender Equality and Diversity in the AP region by committing to the Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) 2020-2022, which related to Gender Equality and Diversity.

ROCB A/P also expressed our commitment to encourage not only AP Members, but also APEC Economies Customs administrations to raise awareness on Gender Equality and Diversity and to cooperate closely with APEC Economies Customs administrations to deliver workshops as much as possible.

ROCB A/P attended 17th The Global Meeting of the Regional Entities established by the WCO Members and the Council Vice-Chairs' Officers

17-18 February 2022



The 17th Global Meeting of the WCO Regional Entities was held on 18-19 February 2022 at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium by hybrid format. Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of ROCB A/P, and Ms. Sherman Yu, Program Manager and Ms. Pavida Boonmun, Assistant Program Manager represented the ROCB A/P at the meeting.

Delegates from the Vice Chair's Office, Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO), Regional Training Centre (RTC), Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL) and Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTC) in the six WCO regions attended the meeting. A welcome change since the last meeting, which was conducted virtually, the 17th session was convened in hybrid mode, which meant participants who cannot travel to Brussels and attend in person at WCO subject to the Covid situation, were able to attend the meeting virtually.

The aim of convening the Global Meeting is to guide and coordinate the work of Regional Entities and Council Vice-Chairs' Offices in the area of capacity building, to enhance co-operation among them, to promote the application of common standards in order to ensure a harmonized approach and performance and provide advice to the WCO Capacity Building Committee.

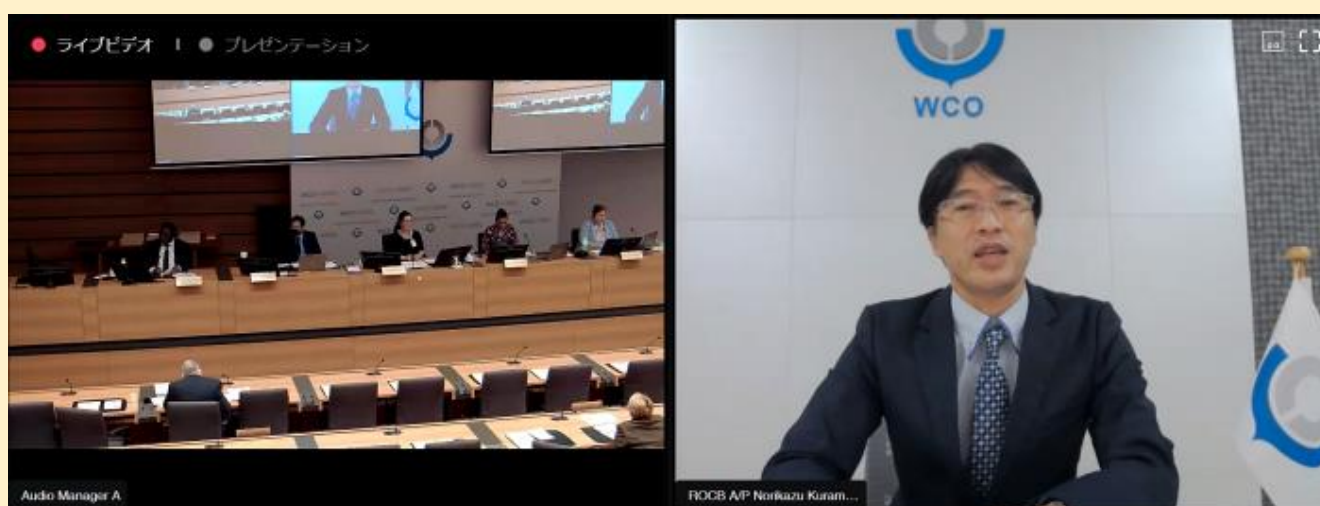
At the meeting, Mr. Kuramoto contributed ROCB A/P's input to the discussion of drafting documents relating to training matters of WCO. In addition to that, he presented the regional

activity report on behalf of the Asia-Pacific (AP) region including planned capacity building activities and summarized the Vice Chair's work in this fiscal year, as well as its ongoing cooperation frameworks with regional entities in AP region, namely RTC heads meeting and RCL heads meeting. He also took the opportunity to share ROCB A/P's publication materials. Last but not the least, Mr. Kuramoto affirmed that ROCB A/P will seek to resume face-to-face workshop and meetings as the situation allows.

During the meeting, delegates also shared the latest progress and best practices of different regional entities and tools and initiatives from each WCO Directorates.

ROCB A/P attends the 13th Capacity Building Committee

21-23 February 2022, Brussels, Belgium



The 13th Capacity Building Committee was held from 21 to 23 February 2022 in a hybrid format. Approximately 390 delegates from Member administrations and stakeholders attended in person or virtually. Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of the ROCB A/P, and Ms. Yuko Mamiya, Program Manager, also attended virtually.

Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General, welcomed delegates to the Committee. In his opening remarks, he outlined the important topics to be discussed such as business models in Customs administrations under New Normal, the optimal way to deliver future WCO capacity building activities, expert mobilization, data strategy and gender equality. He concluded his remarks by encouraging delegates to actively provide their inputs during the Committee.

In the course of discussions, Mr. Kuramoto provided insights and shared AP Members' requests concerning WCO's capacity building activities as well as ROCB A/P's recent activities to build the capacity of AP Members and promote WCO tools.

During the Committee, delegates actively contributed to discussions on the ongoing WCO's activities including capacity building in the development of the effective data ecosystem, development of WCO Learning and Development Evaluation tools, automation of the Accredited Customs Expert database, etc.

ROCB A/P Joined WCO Asia Pacific Plastic Waste Border (APPW) Management Conference

24th -25th February 2022



Ms. Pavida Boonmun, Assistant Program Manager, on the behalf of ROCB A/P, joined the panel discussion on regional cooperation at the WCO Asia-Pacific Plastic Waste (APPW) Border Management Conference which was organized and hosted online during 24 - 25 February 2022.

Ms. Pavida Boonmun discussed with other panelists from the ASEAN Secretariat, APEC SCCP, UNESCAP, and RILO A/P on regional cooperation issues to prevent illegal trafficking of plastic waste. During the panel discussion, ROCB A/P highlighted the importance of educating frontline officers about illegal plastic waste issues and relevant trends through in-house training at Member Customs administrations. ROCB A/P reaffirmed to enhance data analytics and risk assessment capabilities for Customs administrations concerning the waste trade. ROCB A/P also introduced WCO Click! Platform which offers a course on data analytics. ROCB A/P also plans to hold a regional workshop on data analytics in AP region to support enforcement activities against the illegal trade in plastic waste.

This Conference was within the framework of the APPW Project on the topic of plastic waste control and the implementation of the Basel Convention in the Asia-Pacific region funded by the government of Japan.

KCS visits ROCB A/P to enhance collaboration

28 February 2022, Bangkok



Mr. Younghan YOU, Director General of Korea Customs Service (KCS), accompanied by Ms. Jieun JUNG, Customs Attachés in Korean Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, courtesy visited the ROCB A/P on 28 February 2022.

Mr. Norikazu KURAMOTO, Head of the ROCB A/P and his colleagues warmly welcomed the delegates. At the beginning, he expressed his appreciation for KCS for its long-standing support and contribution to the ROCB A/P and its activities through seconded officials, financial funding and collaboration by regional entities of Korea in delivering capacity building. Mr. Younghan YOU complimented the achievement of the ROCB A/P in WCO capacity building activities and encouraged ROCB staff to support the WCO Members with their continuous development. During the meeting, Mr. Kuramoto introduced the staff of ROCB A/P and outline

of WCO followed by the activities of ROCB A/P. In addition, Mr. YOU shared the outline of his one year-research plan with Thai Customs Department.

Both parties confirmed their good relationship and found this visit to strengthen the bond of cooperation between the ROCB A/P and KCS.

ROCB A/P Joined Global Conference of the Network for Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs

8th March 2022



The World Customs Organization (WCO) organized the Network for Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs and held the virtual global launch conference of the Network on the International Women's Day, March 8, 2022. It aims to support and strengthen the WCO's ongoing work on this agenda.

In this occasion, Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of ROCB A/P, and Ms. Pavida Boonmun, Assistant Program Manager, on the behalf of ROCB A/P, joined the conference as new members of the network to enhance the importance of the Gender Equality and Diversity issue in AP region.

The conference divided into 2 panels to discuss, which were 'Enhancing Organizations Through Gender Equality and Inclusion' and 'Advancing Gender Equality and Inclusion through Effective Stakeholder Collaboration'. The conference also served as an opportunity to inform members the second edition of the Compendium of Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs is planning to launch in 2023.

Meeting provided impetus to cooperation between the ROCB A/P and World Wild Fund for Nature

9 March 2022, Bangkok, Thailand



On 9 March 2022, Mr. Brian V. Gonzales, Head of Protection of Endangered Species, the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF)-Hong Kong visited the ROCB A/P. Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of ROCB A/P and Program Managers warmly welcomed Mr. Brian and discussed future collaboration between ROCB A/P and WWF to combat illegal wildlife trade (IWT) with him.

The meeting started with welcoming remarks from Mr. Kuramoto. He expressed his wishes for this meeting to strengthen cooperation with WWF.

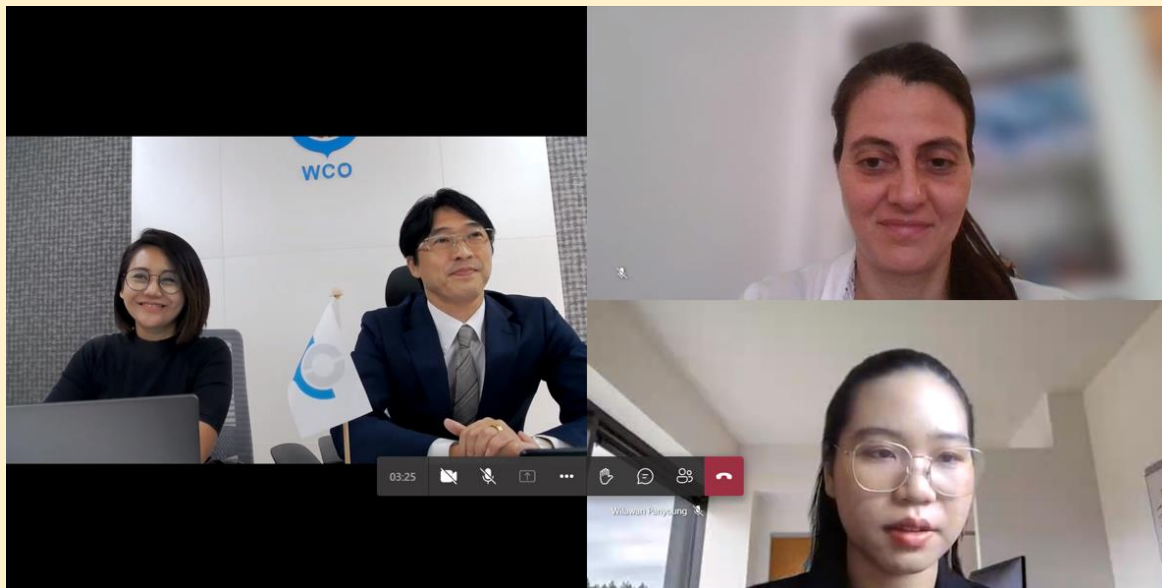
Mr. Brian updated WWF activities such as developing tools and capacity building. He highlighted the activities for combating IWT in maritime supply chains and money laundering from IWT. Furthermore, he introduced the details of various tools developed by WWF in close cooperation with other international organization such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Program Managers and Mr. Brian actively exchanged their insights on how to collaborate on enhancing knowledge and skills of Customs administrations, while promoting various useful

tools developed by the WCO, WWF and other international organizations. As the result of the discussion, the ROCB A/P and WWF-Hong Kong have agreed to continue to work together to build capacity for Asia/Pacific Members to combat IWT.

Online Meeting with UNODC on regional cooperation of the Unwasted Project

10 March 2022, Bangkok



UNODC and ROCB A/P exchanged views on the illegal waste trade at the Southeast Asia region and shared the importance of the roles of Customs administrations to address this issue. Both sides agreed to continue the mutual cooperation on capacity building activities to raise awareness on the issue to combat illegal trade in waste of the region.

The Unwasted Project of UNODC aims to better understand waste flows, to promote cooperation to combat illicit movements of waste, and to promote partnership between EU and Southeast Asia Nations.

Study Visit of Korean University Students to ROCB A/P

18 March 2022, Bangkok, Thailand



ROCB A/P proudly received the internship university students from Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS) who are current exchanging students at Thammasat University in Thailand on 18 March 2022.

Mr. Norikazu KURAMOTO, Head of the ROCB A/P and his colleagues warmly welcomed the 4 students accompanied by Mr. Jinho PARK, Collaboration Professor of Hanyang University and Vice President of the CIC Group in Thailand. At the beginning, he expressed his welcoming for visiting the ROCB A/P and his idea on the continuous support for this kind of program for university students due to the importance of international trade. Mr. PARK extended thanks for giving them the opportunity to learn about the ROCB A/P and highlighted the important role of Customs in international trade, even in the COVID-19 situation.

During the meeting, Mr. Kuramoto introduced the staff of ROCB A/P and outline of WCO and roles of Customs administrations, followed by the activities of ROCB A/P and Thai Customs Department as its host administration.

The visitors expressed their thanks, as this visit was a good opportunity for receiving an overview of the WCO and in-depth knowledge of ROCB A/P as the key international organization for international trade, as well as influences for their future careers.

ROCB and RILO confirm its strong cooperation in AP region

23 March 2022, Online Meeting hosted by ROCB A/P



On 23 March 2022, Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, Head of ROCB A/P, and the staff of ROCB A/P met by online with Mr. Cheon-Jeong PARK, Head of RILO AP and his colleagues at the second ROCB-RILO meeting for FY21/22, moderated by Mr. Ilkwon HAN, Program Manager of ROCB A/P.

Mr. Kuramoto welcomed the opportunity to discuss continued collaboration as the same WCO regional body in the AP region. He introduced the outline of ROCB A/P and key events organized by ROCB A/P including workshops in this fiscal year. He also underlined that collaboration between the ROCB A/P and RILO AP is critical to host upcoming events, such as RCL heads meeting in May.

Mr. Cheon-Jeong PARK, Head of RILO AP highlighted the importance of cooperation against the threat of illicit trade and expressed his hope to visit Thailand to have a meaningful

discussion about our common interests such as the Golden Triangle in his opening remarks. Ms. Hae-Yeong PAIK, Deputy head of RILO AP explained the activities of RILO AP including current joint enforcement projects, such as Operation GOALS, MEKONG DRAGON, DEMETER. In addition, she presented the work plan of RILO AP in this fiscal year.

During the meeting, future opportunities for collaboration and next steps were actively discussed. The ROCB A/P and RILO AP have agreed on further strengthening ROCB A/P – RILO AP cooperation in assisting the capacity building programs in compliance and enforcement matters for AP Members.

The WCO National Workshop on combating counterfeiting and piracy for Thai Customs Department

28 March - 1 April 2022, Bangkok, Thailand



The WCO National Workshop on combating counterfeiting and piracy for the Thai Customs Department was held from 28 March to 1 April 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand, under the sponsorship

of the Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF/Japan). The Workshop was organized by the WCO in cooperation with the ROCB A/P as well as with the generous support of the Thai Customs Department. Together with the resource persons on IPR from the WCO Secretariat and Japan Customs, Ms. Yuko Mamiya, Program Manager of the ROCB A/P, also attended the workshop as a resource person. In addition, Ms. Vareemon Chairungsrilert, Program Coordinator, and Ms.



Kanyawarat Sitthikunpanit, Program Coordinator of ROCB A/P, attended the Workshop as coordinators. 18 on-site participants and over 30 online observers from the Thai Customs Department benefited from the detailed and practical presentations and discussions on risk management, techniques of document examination and physical inspection.

The workshop kicked off with the opening addresses of Mr. Norikazu Kuramoto, the WCO expert and the representative of the Thai Customs Department. In the course of the Workshop, the WCO introduce its tools, which help Members effectively fight against counterfeit and pirated goods at the border. The WCO also discussed the outcome of Operation STOP II, which aims to crack down on the illicit trade in medicines, vaccines and medical devices related to COVID-19. Ms. Yuko Mamiya introduced the WCO tool, which assists WCO Members in recognizing counterfeit and pirated goods as well as case studies of trademark infringement incidences. Furthermore, the representatives of right holders were also invited to the workshop and shared important information such as methods to distinguish genuine products from counterfeit ones, supply chains of genuine vaccines and counterfeit products indicators.

During the Workshop, the participants actively discussed the challenges that the Thai Customs Department faces, as well as the possible measures to address these challenges. The active participation and contribution of the participants resulted in a successful workshop and this workshop supported enriching participants' knowledge as well as enhancing cooperation between Customs Administration and Right holders. The participants expressed their appreciation to CCF/Japan, the WCO, the expert from Japan Customs and the ROCB A/P.

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