Foreword

As new Director of the WCO Capacity Building Directorate it provides me great pleasure to share with you the 2nd edition of our newsletter to Capacity Builders. Having just taken up my position in January for a 5 year mandate I can assure you already now of the significant and continued Member demands for Customs Capacity Building.

A well-functioning Customs administration is a national asset: It protects the interests of the state and society at the border. This mission is becoming more complex as a result of the globalization of trade and the immense pressures faced by states in the 21st century to reduce poverty, create jobs and provide security that translate into the need to perform existing and undertake new responsibilities both effectively and efficiently. The reality is that many Customs administrations face capacity challenges and require support. Capacity Building is therefore a strategic priority for the WCO.

Over the past 5 years multiple Capacity Building initiatives have been undertaken. These initiatives are making a real difference. This was only possible thanks to coordinated efforts with our Members and Member experts to assist us in implementation of these programmes. I wish to thank all Capacity Builders for your tremendous efforts. I am a passionate believer and supporter of Capacity Building partnerships and the WCO Member to Member philosophy. Whilst we acknowledge that progress has been made, we are still far from where we collectively would like to be. This acknowledgment motivates us to continue rising to the challenge of answering the increasing demand for capacity building delivery assistance.

A critical enabler for delivering assistance is partnerships. The WCO’s Capacity Building Programme has created a true partnership between Customs administrations. We now need to build on this partnership with renewed energy. I look forward to this journey with you and express my deep appreciation for your commitment to work with other administrations in a spirit of solidarity.

The 2nd session of the WCO Capacity Building Committee from 3 to 5 May 2011 will steer the strategies of the Capacity Building Directorate and it will shape the design of some of our most prominent Capacity Building portfolios. I am looking forward to share the results of this important Committee with you and to make these an operational Capacity Building reality together with our like minded partners, change agents and qualified Customs experts such as you are.

Erick Kieck
Director, Capacity Building
Introduction

Dear Capacity Builders,

The feedback received to our first edition in December 2010 was very encouraging, we thank you very much for this motivating acknowledgement and hope that this edition will meet your expectations alike.

This newsletter addresses our Capacity Builders, more specifically our Accredited Customs Experts including those, who so far have successfully finalized the first step of the accreditation procedure, and experts, who are contributing to areas of WCO assistance, where an accreditation process is not provided for.

We take the opportunity to welcome the new Capacity Builders who have successfully participated to some of the recent accreditation workshops and who are now looking forward to finalization of their accreditation process. Further we congratulate those experts who have had the opportunity to contribute to an in-field mission during the recent months and to hence finalize their accreditation process.

With this newsletter we share with you the highlights of some of the recent WCO Committees, Conferences and Meetings and information on recent accreditation workshops and news from our experts in action.

Whilst this newsletter can only provide a snapshot of key developments, it may raise your awareness and encourage you to address for more detailed publications or to contact us.

Some Capacity builders` feedback on the first edition:

- It gives me great pleasure to access to the CLICK site and gone through the 1st CB news letter. It would be extremely useful for me to keep update in the WCO CB and other relating areas.
- I would like to recall your session and training to us and assure you to be actively engaged in the WCO initiatives in Customs Reform and Modernization.
- Dear Colleagues,

  It is very nice to have such initiative to share knowledge and views on capacity building efforts. As WCO experts, we are interested in being informed on what is going in the WCO and in the member Customs administrations.

  Thank you very much my WCO Capacity Building colleagues for this

- Thank you for this notification. It is most welcome and I look forward to becoming more engaged in WCO efforts in capacity building.

- Congratulations with this milestone. The first Newsletter looks very promising! “

- Many thanks for this excellent Capacity Building information pack. What a great idea!

- Congratulations to WCO Capacity Building for this necessary and interesting initiative.
The WCO Accredited Customs Experts Database - ACE - an update

Through the outstanding support provided by WCO Members administrations, the WCO has been able to build a pool of qualified accredited experts in some key areas of Customs Capacity Building.

If our experts meet pre-defined standards as assessed in a workshop environment and a follow up in-field mission, the WCO grants these experts an accredited status and includes them in the WCO Accredited Customs Experts Database (ACE).

ACE is constantly growing and the IT component is getting shape which will allow for soon publication on the Members website.

The public component of the ACE Database will present basic information on fully accredited WCO experts, by type of expert, area of expertise and country of origin— and only for those experts, where prior consent for publication has been received by the respective Member administrations. Some Member administrations have asked that we do not publish the list of their experts, and we will respect this request when we publish the database.

Currently the pool of accredited experts in ACE covers 185 Diagnostics Facilitators / 75 Customs Modernization Advisors / 4 Technical and Operational Advisors on RKC / 79 Training Experts on either IPR, HS, Valuation or Origin.

The accreditation concept enables the WCO to better prepare its Capacity Builders for their WCO missions where these initiatives need to be accurately targeted to current and to future assistance needs. The WCO Capacity Building Committee from 3 to 5 May 2011 will enable our Members to look into the traditional accreditation concepts to discuss accreditation options for new expertise areas and have a dialogue on the comprehensive concept of WCO experts’ acquisition beyond accreditation.

The WCO Integrity Newsletter

This is to inform you that a new periodical – the WCO Integrity Newsletter – has been launched by the WCO Secretariat with a view to updating WCO Member administrations on current activities and best practices in the integrity area. It is available on the WCO Members’ Website and on the new WCO Learning Platform: Clikc (http://moodle.wcoomd.org/).

The WCO Integrity Newsletter is aimed at presenting measures used by Customs administrations to fight corruption and improve integrity as well as at connecting experts from different countries, providing them with the opportunity to share their views on a particular technique or best practice described in this new periodical. This publication will also be used to inform Members about the latest WCO integrity developments.

This Newsletter is intended not just to notify the relevant parties about certain activities, but also to initiate discussions and generate feedback, thus making it possible to identify new methods aimed at enhancing integrity within Customs.

Should you wish to share some of the measures employed by your administration to combat corruption, please contact the WCO Secretariat at integrity@wcoomd.org.”
Recent awareness and accreditation activities

In the 1st quarter of 2011 the WCO conducted four accreditation workshops with the aim to widen its pool of strategic Customs Modernization Advisors and Customs Valuation Training Experts.

With a growing demand of strategic planning missions in countries with French or Russian language background two of these events addressed this specific need of greater language diversity.

Two further events met the requirement of building the expertise in the WCO regions, and reached out to the ESA region with the development of Customs Modernization Advisors and Customs Valuation Training Experts from within the region as follows:

- ESA - Regional Accreditation Workshop for Expert Trainers in Customs Valuation, Harare, Zimbabwe 10-14 January 2011;
- ESA - Regional Accreditation workshop for Customs Modernization Advisors, Mombasa, Kenya in period 31 January – 04 February 2011;
- Europe: Sub-regional accreditation workshop for Russian speaking Customs Modernization Advisors Brussels, Belgium in period 14-18 February 2011;
- Europe: Sub-regional accreditation workshop for French speaking Customs Modernization Advisors, Brussels, Belgium in period 4-8 April 2011.

Further, the WCO implemented in period 28 February – 7 March 2011 upon invitation of UK an awareness workshop back to back with a Customs Modernization Advisors accreditation workshop.

The UK has been a longstanding and active partner to the WCO in delivering Customs capacity building in all regions of the World, and Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs and the UK Border Agency made a number of experts available to attend these events.

The awareness workshop aimed at refreshing and updating experienced experts on prevailing WCO Capacity Building trends while at the same time acquainting new experts with the WCO Capacity Building approach. Ideally this will nurture their interest for potential future contribution as technical and operational advisors with expertise in a broad range of topics that are of priority to developing WCO members.

We express our gratitude to all Members who committed to our Capacity Building efforts through the release of their experts to attend these workshops. We wish to share special thanks with those administrations and colleagues who contributed through their hospitality and strong logistical support to the successful outcomes.

As a result of these events we are happy to advise on five experts who qualified as Expert Trainers in Customs Valuation, 24 experts who qualified as Customs Modernization Advisors and several experts who expressed their interest in further contribution to other areas of expertise.

**Forecast: Planned Accreditation events for the 2nd quarter 2011:**

WCA region - Regional Accreditation Workshop for HS Expert Trainers, Lomé, Togo, 16-20 May 2011;
Accreditation Workshop for IPR Expert Trainers, Brussels, Belgium, 6-10 June 2011;
A/P region - Regional Accreditation Workshop for HS Expert Trainers, Shanghai, PR China, 13-17 June 2011.
Capacity Builders’ Feedback:

Feedback on the accreditation workshop for WCO Customs Modernization Advisors in the WCO East and Southern Africa –ESA- region

Fifteen Senior Customs Officers of the WCO ESA Region, namely from Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe had the opportunity to participate in an event aimed at accrediting Customs Modernization Advisors—CMAs.

The event was held from 31 January to 4 February 2011 at the WCO Regional Training Centre which is hosted at the Kenya Revenue Authority Training Institute in Mombasa, Kenya.

The overall objective of the workshop was to initiate a two-phased approach to accredit CMAs who would join the competitive WCO list of Accredited Customs Experts from all over the world. These Advisors are to be the frontline experts to help implementing one of the WCO biggest Customs project ever: the Columbus Programme. As you may know, the Columbus Programme, in place since 2006, was devised to enable easier implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards, as a response to the ever dynamically changing trading environment from which Customs cannot stay apart.

Since the beginning, the workshop was well organized with the co-operation of the WCO Regional Office for Capacity Building. In their interventions, the two WCO facilitators presented some elements and techniques on how to conduct presentations successfully and the essence of the whole programme.

Participants were asked to do group presentations, always bearing in mind the scenario of a real mission dealing directly with Directors or Commissioners Customs and taking into account the country’s reality and particular needs of Customs administrations.

Participants were also tasked to individually present one of the WCO Instruments or Best Practices to promote them, showing their knowledge and skills to influence Customs decision making. The idea was to deal with a variety of Customs subjects, including the appropriate use and management of the WCO instruments and best practices, in order to overcome some of the eventual challenges Customs could be facing.

This included the SAFE Framework of Standards, Customs in the 21st Century, Revised Kyoto Convention, Authorised Economic Operator, Customs Guidelines on Integrated Supply Chain Management, etc, always presented as the catalysts for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs services.

I was very anxious to participate in this workshop, not only because we all know the complexity of Customs work, but also because it appeared to be a new challenge for the year ahead. The strong and natural interactivity between the facilitators and the participants gave the event the appropriate climate to enhance and discover the personal skills of the participants. I truly recommend your attendance at this workshop!

Mr. Mario A. Caetano Joao, Angola

NEW

Awareness workshops - a new offer to Capacity Builders

In addition to this Newsletter and the Guidelines on our WCO public website the WCO promotes closer cooperation with our Member administrations and their experts. Upon request by our Members we create opportunities for Capacity Building experts to deepen their knowledge of WCO tools and instruments, to refresh their understanding of the WCO Capacity Building concepts and to link their efforts with the modernization aspirations as set out in the Customs in the 21st Century document (C21). This may translates in visits to the WCO in Brussels and/or events in WCO Member countries or regions that allow for 2 day awareness workshops along the needs of the respective Members.
.... Capacity Builders’ Feedback

Feedback on a strategic planning mission in Macau

During November 8 to 12, 2011, I was honored to join with Mr. Patrick Rijsdijk, team leader from the Netherlands, a Columbus Program Phase II mission to Macau Customs Service (MCS).

With well-coordinated preparation among the WCO secretariat, MCS and facilitators, the workshop ran smoothly and resulted fruitfully. A draft plan has been in form.

Personally, I am impressed with this mission. First, Leadership of MCS, especially Mr. Choi Lai Hang, DG of MCS, demonstrated their high commitment to this mission and MCS future development. Security and facilitation as dual role of Customs are well recognized by MCS. The WCO Columbus Program does help member administrations to look strategically but act concretely. Second, the tools embodied in the WCO Capacity Building Compendium serve as valid tools for members for their strategic management.

Certainly, adaptation and adjustment is necessary to fit local context and priorities. Third, cooperation and coordination among facilitators are also critical. Mutual support and complimentary roles will ensure successful mission.

Embarking on the mission as an Accredited Customs Modernization Advisor will be exciting but challenging. With the strong support of the WCO Secretariat, I will keep updated with expertise and capacity to meet the needs for better capacity building activities.

Mr. Shujie ZHANG, Technical Attaché at the WCO ROCB AP

WCO News No. 64, February 2011

What do lilies, sweetened dried cranberries, water pipe tobacco and wood pellets have in common? They belong to the group of products which are increasingly traded around the world and where new subheadings have been included into the 2012 HS. You will find more information on the new HS rules from January 2012 in the latest edition of the WCO News.

The WCO NEWS is a freely accessible periodical that can be downloaded from the WCO bookshop under http://wcoomdpublications.org/downloadable-publications/wco-news/wco-news-65.html

Among other topics, such as latest trends and developments with our Members and Business partners, the 64th edition provides a reflection on air cargo security, information on the pilot of the nCEN implementation in Mauritius and a Special Dossier on Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence, where information on the new WCO Customs Learning and Knowledge Community platform CliKc, the Club de la Réforme and a review of 25 years of the WCO Fellowship Programme is presented.
5th WCO PICARD Conference

Abu Dhabi, 23-25 November 2010

The WCO PICARD programme was launched in 2006 as a framework for cooperation between Customs and the academic world. The 5th PICARD Conference was hosted in Abu Dhabi and built on the success of the previous conferences. Around 200 participants from Customs, the academic world and the private sector gathered to share their research outcomes relevant to the WCO agenda as well as developments and experience in Customs professional education. Announcing the 2011 WCO theme for the International Customs Day, “Knowledge, a catalyst for excellence in Customs”, WCO Secretary General Mikuriya explained the link between the WCO working agenda and the topics of the PICARD Conference: revenue collection, the Customs-business partnership, the protection of the environment, and performance measurement.

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

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 WCO Professional Standards.

To view all presentations of the PICARD Conference in Abu Dhabi – in most cases English, French, Spanish and Arabic versions, please visit: http://www.wcoomd.org/event.htm.

Further information can be downloaded from the 8th edition of the World Customs Journal, it represents a rich vein of research in the field of Customs, published by the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU): http://www.worldcustomsjournal.org/

9th Meeting of the Revised Kyoto Convention Management Committee

Brussels, 1-2 December 2010

At its 9th Meeting, the Revised Kyoto Convention Management Committee-MC/RKC- discussed a range of technical issues. It agreed to incorporate a Member contribution on the issue of Non-Intrusive Inspection to the Guidelines to Chapter 6 -Customs Control- of General Annex. Some Members provided the MC/RKC with their national practices on Standard 1.3 (Cooperation with the Trade), Transitional Standard 3.45 (Abandonment or destruction of goods) and Standard 10.5 (Further appeal to an authority independent of the Customs) in the General Annex.

The MC/RKC agreed to include these national practices to the Guidelines with a view to assisting Non-Contracting Parties. The MC/RKC stressed that a large majority of the Contracting Parties to the RKC were only bound by the General Annex and had consequently not, to date, accepted any Specific Annex. Participants discussed on how to raise the level of acceptance of Specific Annexes. Based on the conclusion of the Meeting, it was agreed to further encourage acceptance of these Annexes.

A full report of the meeting is available on the Members’ website (PO0054).
... Some News From Recent WCO Meetings and Committees

Meeting of the Ad hoc working group on Globally Networked Customs

The Ad hoc working group on Globally Networked Customs –GNC– analyzed propositions for the establishment of GNC. Discussions covered the demand of a value proposition for Customs and Trade, the definition of GNC as an interface between countries for exchange purpose and the establishment of utility blocks as the basis of the GNC business model.

The essential outcome of this analysis is that in its first implementation GNC will be a repository or library of protocols, standards and guidelines maintained on the web by the WCO for Members to access and utilize when considering information exchange with each other. In the longer term, other more visionary considerations will be taken into account, but for now the focus will be on the business process, governance, legal and other essential requirements to enable the development of the proposed repository.

The Ad hoc working group further discussed common trader and transactional data references to support GNC and the upgrading of the already existing CEN system for the benefit of enforcement exchanges.

An interim feasibility study will be presented to the June 2011 Policy Commission where it has been agreed to define utility blocks on AEO, valuation fraud, origin fraud and IPR in implementation scenarios. Future meetings of this working group will incorporate discussion on the business and data needs for a Single window environment and the dematerialization of supporting commercial documents.

191st/192nd Sessions of the Permanent Technical Committee

The Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) during its recent sessions debated a number of technical issues covered through ad hoc committees and working groups. Some of the topics included discussion on the implementation stage of the RKC provisions specifically the Specific Annexes and acknowledgement of the progress made in updating the existing Time Release Study guideline, in review of the WCO Risk Management Compendium and the draft Compendium on “How to build a Single Window Environment”. The PTC further adopted a Draft Resolution of the Customs Co-operation Council on the role of Customs in natural disaster relief to be presented to the June 2011 Policy Commission. A full report of the meeting is available on the Members’ website.

8th Meeting of the SAFE Working Group

During its most recent session, the SAFE Working Group met to assess the review process of the SAFE Framework of Standards (FoS). Participants analyzed the work of several sub-groups and the Private Sector Consultative Group on the Globally Harmonized AEO Application and Self Assessment Criteria (AEO Template), Guidelines on Mutual Recognition Arrangements, Time Limits for Advance Reporting of Export Data, Trade Recovery, CSD/E-seals and Capacity Building pilot projects. The amended SAFE FoS will be presented to the Policy Commission and Council for adoption in June 2011. Further the SAFE Working Group examined the state of play of the Integrated Supply Chain Management Guidelines and some participating Members shared their experience or views on topics such as the global supply chain security, Trade Recovery, and Mutual Recognition Arrangements.

A full report of the meeting is available on the Members’ website.

In Our Next Issue of the Newsletter

The next issue of the newsletter will be published in September 2011.

We plan to share with you the highlights from the forthcoming Capacity Building Committee, the Integrity Sub Committee, progress in the Data Model Project Team meeting, information on forthcoming accreditation workshops and news from our experts in action.

Further, you will receive some greater insight into the new WCO e-learning portal and the WCO Management and Leadership Development programme.
Editorial Note

The Newsletter to WCO Capacity Builders is distributed free of charge in French and in English to WCO accredited Customs experts, and is accessible on the WCO e-learning platform and the public WCO Capacity Building website.

The WCO Capacity Building Directorate wishes to express its sincere thanks to all who contributed to this publication. Contributions in English and French are welcome. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the World Customs Organization.

The WCO reserves the right to publish, not to publish or edit articles to ensure their conformity with the newsletters’ editorial policy.