



Customs - Business Partnership  
Parteneriat Douane - Entreprize



Communication

Consultation

Engagement

Partnership

# Customs-Business Partnership Guidance

Share Objective

Mutual Trust

Transparency

Collaboration

Continuous Improvement



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION



# Customs-Business Partnership Guidance



## World Customs Organization

June 2015



Copyright © 2015 World Customs Organization. All rights reserved. Requests and inquiries concerning translation, reproduction and adaptation rights should be addressed to [copyright@wcoomd.org](mailto:copyright@wcoomd.org).



# Contents

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>A. Executive Summary</b>	1
<b>B. PART I - Guiding Principles</b>	2
1. Introduction	2
2. Benefits	3
3. Desirable Factors for successful Customs to Business engagement/partnership	4
4. Challenges	5
5. Regional Partnership	5
6. The Role of Trade/Business Associations in Customs-Business Partnership	5
7. International References, Instruments and Tools	6
<b>C. PART II - Phased approach on how to develop a Customs- Business Partnership mechanism</b>	7
• Phase 1 – Strategic Overview and Planning	7
• Phase 2 - Developing Engagement Strategies	10
• Phase 3 – Implementation	12
• Phase 4 - Monitoring and Institutionalization	15
<b>D. PART III - Members' Customs-Business consultation/partnership/ engagement initiatives/best practices</b>	17
<b>E. PART IV – Advanced Pillar</b>	18
<b>Annexes</b>	
<b>Annex I</b> International References, Instruments and Tools	30
<b>Annex II</b> Customs- Business engagement/consultation/ partnership initiatives/best practices	34

## A. Executive Summary

Recognizing the need for, and significance of a sustained Customs-Business partnership, the WCO has developed a Customs-Business Partnership Guidance to assist Members with the development of a process for regular consultation and a robust partnership with business. This document seeks to provide guidelines to Customs administrations on how to establish of their Customs-Business partnership model and how they could commence the process and take it forward with continuous improvement. It is a living document, providing simple, flexible and diverse models that would fit into various scenarios and circumstances of Customs administrations and business.

The Guidance, therefore, is seeking to be general as to support all Customs administrations and be as non-selective as it possibly can be – acknowledging that there are those that already have a well-developed collaborative approach with business; those that are agnostic and/or indifferent about their relationship with business; and those that have a difficult and sometimes confrontational relationship with business.

The Guidance is divided into four parts-

- **Part I** describes the overarching philosophy of the Customs-Business partnership including guiding principles, various concepts of partnership/engagement and potential benefits. It also delineates the challenges in establishing a sustained and productive Customs-Business partnership and the means to overcome such challenges. Besides, it provides the international references, instruments and tools to support the establishment of such a mutually beneficial relationship between Customs and Business.
- **Part II** provides a detailed practical guide with a phased approach to assist Members to commence engagement and develop into a robust Customs-Business partnership, clearly acknowledging that no ‘one size fits all’. It encapsulates a set of guiding principles on how to establish the Customs - Business consultation mechanism to ensure it successfully leads to the development of partnership.
- **Part III** collates various best practices, case studies and practical examples implemented and provided by some Members, which could be a useful starting point for others.
- **Part IV** provides some advanced concepts for Members who already have well-developed partnership arrangements with Business but wish to advance the cooperation even further

Being “all things to all people” is not an easy position to achieve, but it is hoped that this Guidance can be of use in some form to all Member administrations and business entities, in helping Customs to build enhanced relationships with Business. It is, from inception to delivery, intended purely as guidance to help Customs administrations develop their own programme tailored to their unique situation.

\*\*\*

## B. PART I - Guiding Principles

### 1. Introduction

The exponential increase in global trade and the changing dynamics of the international supply chain have created new demands and perspectives on the role of Customs administrations. While businesses seek to move goods faster in the supply chain at reduced costs, Customs administrations are required to process increasing volumes of cargo with lesser reliance on physical intervention and with greater efficiency and speed, without compromising on its security, revenue collection and enforcement responsibilities. In order to accomplish this, there is an increasing need for Customs administrations and businesses to collaborate with each other and with other stakeholders to ensure regulations, policies and programs effectively respond to an ever changing environment. A dynamic partnership is essential to drive innovation and economic growth opportunities and, at the same time, create a more cost-effective, efficient and responsive Customs administration.

Customs administrations are taking a number of steps to modernize and simplify trade procedures, and discharge their mandate in an efficient manner. At the same time, Customs must learn as much as possible about business needs and expectations to respond to them effectively. As such, this process is a continuous one and requires ongoing involvement and feedback on identifying the changes and reforms required in the law, procedures and plans to implement that change. To ensure the success of the reform programmes requires constructive and sustained two-way communication and interaction between Customs and Business.

Customs-Business engagement is a core element of good governance that helps to ensure legislation, regulations and policies are informed by a diversity of viewpoints and respond, to the greatest extent possible, to the needs identified. Regular consultation and discussion between Customs and business will help reduce anxieties and apprehensions on both sides, and will afford traders and border officials an opportunity to discuss the most efficient and effective approaches to achieving regulatory objectives. The establishment of a regular engagement and consultation process is usually the first step, and a prerequisite to setting up a tangible partnership between Customs administrations and business.

There is a correlation between the level of stakeholder engagement in policy creation/development and the level of effectiveness of the policy. Implementation of new Customs policy or law may be impeded, if not completely thwarted, without the support of the affected business community. If Customs administrations and business collaborate on the development of policies and procedures to resolve their challenges together, they can be implemented with greater ease leading to greater voluntary compliance. A broader understanding and acceptance of each other's point of view will lead to an enhanced level of trust and ensure both parties become proactive partners in the longer term.

The development of Customs-Business partnerships through a formal mechanism of regular consultation and engagement will support consistency, harmonization, transparency, predictability, fairness, automation and efficiency in customs and business processes. It also provides accountability and an opportunity for both parties to hold an open exchange, collaboratively discuss ideas, provide feedback and work through challenges and pinpoint possible shortcomings. A formal collaborative mechanism will lead to active facilitation and appropriate border controls, helping to achieve shared goals of safe and compliant shipments that are processed in a consistent, predictable, fast, efficient and cost-effective manner. Such an outcome will have significant positive impact on global economic prosperity.

The overarching philosophy behind developing and sustaining a Customs-Business engagement/partnership for mutual cooperation hinges on the perceptible change in the business culture and mind set of Customs and business. A successful Customs-business relationship must have the following elements: trust, respect, open mind, mutual understanding, appreciation of each other’s requirements, two-way communication, co-operation, sharing of information, transparency, consistency and most importantly a commitment at all levels of both parties – from top management to the operational level. The idea is to move from any element of possible mistrust and potential misunderstanding, to a relationship of mutual trust and respect through a constructive, sustained and mutually beneficial mechanism. The relationship may start with an informal engagement and gradually move to a full-fledged partnership and beyond. The exact nature of this relationship needs to reflect and be tailored to the individual needs and circumstances of each country.

The cross-sectoral nature of trade facilitation calls for close coordination between and among business stakeholders, Customs administrations and various government regulatory agencies. Therefore, engagement and relationships should be developed with groups across the entire supply chain – “makers; movers; intermediaries and regulators”. The active involvement of other government agencies is also extremely crucial for moving towards a Single Window environment and for Coordinated Border Management. Inclusion of broadly representative trade bodies (e.g. chambers of commerce and business associations), small and medium enterprises (SME), academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is also important to provide the wide spectrum of viewpoints.

**2. Benefits**

Customs-Business regular consultation and partnership will lead to a mutually beneficial situation. It encourages a climate of shared responsibility and ownership towards developing sustainable goals, policies and programmes. It helps to develop consensus on reform priorities, to anticipate and manage emerging issues and to improve decision-making and operational performance by allowing Customs to align its management plan and actions with the expectations, needs and demands of business. As the relationship deepens, new opportunities for cooperation will emerge, leading to increased mutual benefits for all. This eventually helps international trade to flourish and compliant and legitimate trade can move faster in the global arena. Efforts to develop strong partnership can result in learning, innovation and enhanced performance that will not only benefit Customs and business but society and economy as a whole, in terms of economic wealth and competitiveness.

Some of the benefits include:

<b>Benefits to Customs</b>	<b>Benefits to Business</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framing and pilot testing of new policies and regulations – facilitates implementation and execution of such policies and regulations;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced transparency, predictability and integrity in Customs;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive, informed policy-making, thereby making regulations more effective and acceptable;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced facilitation and speedy clearances;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced voluntary compliance from business;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better and easier access to information;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer disputes and efficient dispute resolution;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer disputes and efficient dispute resolution;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced supply chain security;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced transaction costs;</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced fundamental understanding of the operations and requirements of business, and Customs leading to business centred policy development;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased role in policy consultation and formulation process and Customs reform and modernization programmes;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular feedback from business about changes in the supply chain, industry practices and trends, etc., for simplification, harmonization and modernization of Customs business processes and methods;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding and appreciation of Customs requirements, laws and procedures;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimal utilization of limited resources;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open communication channels with Customs;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced transactional costs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced reputation and visibility to Government and client as a trusted trader;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced quality and efficiency;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved environment for legitimate trade;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved revenue collections for the State;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of positive environment for investment;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved competitiveness of the economy;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved competitiveness;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce negative reactions to future, unforeseen incidents and or impacts because of better understanding and communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to identify impact areas about which business has concerns.</li> </ul>

### 3. Key Desirable Factors for successful Customs to Business engagement/partnership

- Political will and commitment is must, which could be demonstrated by integrating consultation with business as part of the policy making routine;
- Involvement of executive management from Customs administrations and businesses;
- Voluntary engagement based on shared interests and goals, mutual trust and respect;
- Transparent, open and receptive communications;
- Clarity on the role and expectations of each side;
- Both parties should work towards developing a shared vision and common agenda;
- Participants should have a working knowledge of Customs processes and have the ability to influence others to support engagement/consultation/partnership process. Creation of multi-level consultation mechanisms to address both policy and operational issues (central, field levels) according to the situation; Initial dialogue with private sector may start at central level, however, creation of a single body for trade facilitation may not be adequate, particularly for countries that are geographically large or have large diverse economies
- Multi-layered approach with diverse inputs from businesses of all sectors and sizes – a single overarching body may not be representative or have the necessary expertise to articulate the needs and concerns of all sectors. Sector-specific consultation/partnership mechanism such as Customs-Brokers, Customs-SME, etc., may be set up;
- Clearly defined goals and objectives, supported by time and resource commitments;

- Greater usage of Information Communication technology (ICT) for private sector engagement;
- Involvement of business at an early stage of policy initiation and making to ensure realistic policies;
- Training, sensitization and awareness building activities;
- Information exchange, including on follow-up action taken on the issues raised in the consultation meetings; and
- An institutionalized structure with a strategic plan with a team of professionals (human resources) – a long term objective.

#### 4. Challenges

- To create an atmosphere of constructive engagement;
- To change the cultural outlook of Customs administrations towards business and vice versa;
- To foster a sense of ownership and believing in the advantages to be gained from being proactive – the engagement mechanism should not be confined to meetings;
- To demonstrate on an ongoing basis the positive impact of the consultation outcomes.
- To ensure sustained positive response -lack of meaningful engagement by either party could lead, over a period of time, to apathy, cynicism and reduced participation;
- To develop a problem solving approach through a dynamic feedback from either side. The feedback should be continuous and offer possible solutions;
- To ensure diverse and effective representation, especially of SMEs;
- To ensure sufficient representative structures within the business, to obviate any skewed representation;
- To support the Customs-Business Partnership with adequate capacity, skills and resources.
- To develop metrics on how to measure progress and to ensure continuous improvement.

#### 5. Regional Partnership

A strong relationship between Customs administrations and business may provide an excellent foundation to work with counterparts regionally to address regional challenges, set regional goals, promote partnerships and facilitate regional trade through combined efforts and resources. Even if the relationship is an evolving one, there can be benefits to establishing a regional mechanism for Customs-business partnership in which all parties strengthen their commitments to consultation through shared regional goals.

#### 6. The Role of Trade/Business Associations in Customs-Business Partnership

Associations are the cornerstone of many successful Customs-business consultative processes. They can play a key role in the development and implementation of Customs policies and processes in both developed and developing economies.

Associations can deliver the following benefits to the consultative process:

- They can minimize the appearance or reality of undue influence on the part of a single economic interest. Even though associations can represent a single industry, trade or economic sector, the membership is often diverse. Most associations receive a broad range of input from members and are accountable to all, not just a few.

- They can enhance the transparency of the consultative process. Associations have a mandate that requires broad dissemination of information unless, there are non-disclosure agreements in place.
- Associations provide a voice for those who cannot afford direct interaction with their Customs administrations, particularly SMEs.
- They allow for the input of those without a direct financial interest in outcomes/decisions; if consultation is restricted to companies, this is less likely to be the case.
- They can leverage their established, effective mechanisms for communication with industry sectors, to raise awareness and constructively support the consultative process.
- National associations might have valuable linkages with or membership in international associations which might be helpful when there is discussion of issues and impacts relating to global policy, economic competitiveness or international movement of goods.
- Associations have the potential to mobilize private sector support and political will that may be needed by Customs administrations.

In developing a strategy for Customs-business partnership, WCO members should consider how their goals can be most effectively met by engaging and collaborating with both companies and associations in their countries.

## **7. International References, Instruments and Tools**

Various international references, instruments and tools for consultation and partnership/engagement between Customs and business are in Annex I.

◦

◦ ◦

**C. PART II - Phased approach on how to develop a Customs- Business Partnership mechanism**

This part provides a detailed framework to assist Customs administrations in developing, augmenting and enhancing a robust Customs-business partnership.

This Guidance does not endeavor to provide a singular model. The objective is purely to provide a reference or guideline to Customs administrations on how to address the establishment of their Customs-business model and how they could commence the process and develop their implementation plan, keeping in view their specific circumstances and peculiarities. This is also intended to provide concrete guidance to Customs administrations on how to continue improving their partnership programmes.

The consultation/engagement/partnership model template includes four phases:

1. Strategic Overview and Planning,
2. Developing Engagement Strategies,
3. Implementation, and
4. Monitoring and Institutionalization.

Phase 1 is largely Customs’ responsibility. While commitment on the part of individual DGs is essential to the successful development of a Customs-Business partnership mechanism, it is not all, that is required. Broad-based support throughout the organization is also required. Developing and presenting a business case that identifies the business partners, the key issues and the expected results will help to build that internal support.

Phase 2 is about developing engagement strategy and action plan. The elements of this phase will determine the nature of the partnership, establish its structural foundation and set the tone for an ongoing consultative process. This is the beginning of true dialogue and engagement with business. It addresses how the consultation be conducted; and the broad framework and rules of engagement.

Phase 3 encompasses the steps for actual engagement and consultation with a view to evolving the relationship into partnership. It is here that ideas and concrete steps are put into practice in terms of implementation and taking the process forward to build a structured and sustainable engagement mechanism.

Phase 4 provides ideas to ensure that the Customs-Business partnership does not become inefficient, stagnant or adversarial, but that it continues to be a priority for both Customs and business and delivers mutual benefits with an inbuilt mechanism for continuous improvement.

The engagement model below is meant for Members who have yet to initiate or are at different stages of developing a structured and regular consultative mechanism with business.

<b>Consultation/Engagement/Partnership Model</b>
<b>Phase 1 – Strategic Overview and Planning:</b>
Decision by Director General to develop a business relationship with the private sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up an internal working group to provide the DG with a strategic vision for supporting the administration’s trade facilitation and compliance priorities through</li> </ul>

engagement with business.

- Present a business case for engaging and partnering with business that identifies the reasons for engaging business, the objectives of the engagement are expected to achieve and how these relate to the broader strategic business objectives of the organization. To be effective, engagement and partnership with business must be relevant to and aligned with the Customs administration's own business strategy.
- The business case should provide a high-level overview of the way the Customs administration envisions engaging business, the key stakeholders, and provide an action plan with timelines for achieving the objectives, and the resources required for a multi-layered engagement/consultation/partnership process.
- Appoint a high profile coordinator who is proactive and reports directly to the DG. Apart from organizations skills, the coordinator must also be courteous and sensitive and have good communication, negotiation and collaborative abilities.
- Having a dedicated resource for the management of stakeholder relations will assist in providing oversight and functional guidance to other areas of the organization, and will help maintain consistency and coherence.

Developing the business case:

- Conduct a needs analysis to determine the reasons for engaging and partnering with business – for example:
  - To work together to achieve shared goals.
  - To understand each other's roles and responsibilities and learn from one another.
  - To strengthen and improve existing relationships, if any.
  - To optimize mutual benefits by working together.
- Carry out environmental scan:
  - What is the state of the current relationship with business, if there is one (i.e. contentious/hostile; not interested; working relationship; informal; formal)?
  - Are there any existing forums, mechanisms for Customs-to-Business engagement? How do they work? Have they been effective or not and why? How do they support Customs' objectives and goals?
  - If there is current engagement with business, what are results, conclusions, action items? Is Customs administration following-up on their action items? Is the private sector following-up on their action items?
  - Is there a follow-up mechanism?
  - What is current level of participation of business in trusted trader/Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programmes?
  - Whether there are any metrics and tools that are used to measure progress and identify weakness for improvements?
- How does lack of a Customs-Business relationship impact Customs, national revenue, compliance and facilitation measures?
- Identify the key stakeholders the Customs administration would consider engaging and partnering with to understand the commonalities and dissimilarities among them and to avoid potential conflict.
  - Customs (through associations) can jointly identify other business entities

that they dealt with in apposite manner to begin with.

- Identify respected and influential business leaders who could potentially be champions of the engagement process.
- Ensure proper representation of the small and medium-size enterprises (SME).
  - Considering the vital role of the SMEs in the economy and their relatively challenged position in terms of time, outreach and financial resources, special emphasis may be placed on SME sector for institutionalizing the proper involvement of SMEs in the regular consultative process.
  - Endeavour should be to promote clear and easily accessible consultation mechanisms to facilitate SMEs participation in the Customs policy framing and implementation process.
  - SMEs would look to immediate and tangible gains/benefits of such engagements, commensurate with time and money they would commit.
  - Recognizing that it may not be feasible for SMEs to be directly engaged or that they do not see engagement as beneficial to their core business, identify associations and industry sectors which understand and can articulate the needs of the SME sector.
- Determine the key issues for business, which are the most frequently expressed, how important are these issues, and what are the initiatives and issues of importance to the Customs administration that would benefit from business input - for example the development of new policies, compliance programs or AEO programme.
- Evaluate what can be learned from existing programmes from countries that were recently in similar situations:
  - See Part III for detailed information.
  - Compare with your current situation.
- Determine the benefits of the engagement.
  - Enumerate the benefits of such engagement of sitting and talking in a positive, solution-oriented manner.
- Determine the risks of not engaging/not developing partnerships - how does a lack of a business relationship impact Customs, national revenue, compliance and facilitation?
- Review of how a country's private sector works:
  - Develop understanding of the diversity/complexity of trade in the country and internationally.
  - Undertake study tours of multi-sector business operations to gain greater insight and knowledge.
  - Identify industry associations
- Review of current integrity/ethics programme:
  - Conduct assessment to see their effectiveness.
  - Analyse most common complaints and best ways to address them.
- Note: while planning, Customs administrations should be open to constructive ideas or suggestions that the private sector makes for the engagement programme (excepting those that go against laws or regulations)

Building internal support for the vision:

- Once the business case is endorsed by the DG, the decision to move forward should be communicated throughout the organization.
- Customs personnel need to fully understand the importance of the engagement activities and include them as part of their regular work in order to generate buy-in and nurture goodwill on the part of business.

## Phase 2 - Developing Engagement Strategies:

Determine the best way to engage business stakeholders:

- Draft a Terms of Reference (ToR) document to define the objectives, the roles and responsibilities, the processes by which the engagement will be conducted, and the key activities to be undertaken.
  - It is important to be clear with business about what is negotiable and what is not. The management of expectations is critical to the good functioning of the relationship.
  - Identify what Customs' expectations will be of business, in positive language. For example, include a statement to the effect that each party will be responsible to follow-through on their respective action items resulting from engagement activities.
- The first contact with identified associations and business leaders should be made by the head of the Customs administration. Ensure the tone is positive and, while official, it is an invitation to discuss the beginnings of a collaboration, not an order.
  - Identify the scope of the meeting.
  - Set the tone by making the letter sound positive and, while official, it is still an invitation, not an order.
- Call a meeting of identified associations and business leaders and explain the desire to work jointly with the private sector:
  - The DG's participation is a must, and if possible the Minister should be present
  - The DG should present the coordinator as his/her representative and the person that will keep the organization informed of all progress
  - Customs representatives should avoid paternalistic attitudes or treatment.
  - Reassure all participants that this is an opportunity for them to voice their concerns freely.
  - The first step requires active listening and not being offended or defensive.
- Before handing out the draft ToR, as a first joint exercise identify value proposition of the engagement that both sides will have:
  - Enumerate the benefits of such engagement of sitting and talking in a positive, solution-oriented manner.
  - Define the negatives of not developing such "partnership".
  - Determine some joint sessions that both sides can attend together, in order to improve (e.g. conflict resolution, effective communication, etc.).
  - If both sides agree that they need "help" or a neutral party to facilitate the first meetings, ask for such assistance.

- Review the draft ToR jointly, so that business understands Customs' thoughts and vice versa. Allow for a review period so that all concerned have an opportunity to make comments or provide ideas on how to improve.
- Modify the ToR based on the suggestions provided. (Remember the constraints of a private sector environment - comments or ideas may take time).
- Customs and business should agree on, and adopt, the most appropriate educational media/tools to support the mutual understanding and development of the ToR of the Customs to Business relationship and to provide insight into implementation and mutual expectations.
- Once Customs and business agree on the ToR, develop an action plan with clear timelines for achieving the defined objectives and key activities.
- Note: it is possible to initiate the process of engagement and consultation even without a formal ToR.
- Action plan could include a roadmap for some years to come such as short term (e.g. business forum), medium term (e.g. policy consultation and compliance programme) and long term (e.g. AEO).
- Identify and define the engagement strategy. Consider the following questions:
  - Who are we targeting?
  - What level of engagement do we wish to have?
  - What information must we communicate?
  - How should we engage business around this issue?
  - How can we link interested people and build networks and partnerships?
  - What issues can we address?
- It is important that instead of having a single body for engagement/consultation, a better proposition would be to have multiple groups deal with specific sectors/ issues. As an example there could be a single body that meets every six months or quarterly to oversee business involvement and then have a range of groups/sub-groups whose purpose, membership, meeting frequency can be determined by the specific focus areas.
- There could be various models of consultative/partnership mechanism from an informal one to more formal one (starting with simple communication leading to comprehensive collaboration) depending upon the stage and level of engagement.
- Define the main approaches for each engagement activity, based on the desired level of engagement - i.e. inform, consult, involve or collaborate with business - as this will influence the engagement approach.
- Some of the most common approaches include:
  - Bulletins or letters - for informing or educating and developing short or long-term relationships
  - Surveys, focus groups, one-on-one meetings, workshops, advisory forums – for consulting and developing short or long-term relationships
  - Advisory panels, multi-stakeholder forums – for involving and working directly with business and developing longer-term relationships
  - Joint consultative bodies, voluntary two party or multi-stakeholder initiatives – for collaborating and developing mutually agreed solutions, joint plans of action and long-terms partnerships



- Approaches should aim to promote open communication channels, generate willingness to collaborate and build trust.
- When selecting an approach, consider what resources will be required to support it, and whether the right people are available, especially on the Customs side.
- Include milestones and performance indicators.

### Phase 3 – Implementation

- Note: Prior to implementing the engagement strategy, Customs should host seminars in association with business, wherever practicable, to educate the personnel that will be involved or associated with the engagement activity. Eventually all personnel must be educated on the engagement process.
- The DG should also simultaneously promote the initiation of informal and indirect consultations.
- Reminder: Fiscal and human resource considerations will dictate how much can be done at a time.

#### Initiate informal consultation with private sector including SMEs

- Such informal consultations may be done via informal coffee meetings, social gatherings, visits to trade shows, or while enquiring about business in general.
- Contact can also be made by using web tools, help desk, call centre, emails, social media, contact points/liaison officers.

#### Begin the formal engagement activity with selected business partners

- Select an initiative or issue where you believe engagement and collaboration will yield concrete results. For example, one can choose to implement a specific programme with an identified stakeholder or specific sector.
- Meet those that are taking part in the engagement activity, listen in order to find out if there are problems, give the opportunity to submit ideas, suggestions and solutions, and address the problems.
- Ideas or solutions that improve the programme should be seriously considered and incorporated, wherever possible.
- Once the engagement/partnership gains momentum, it could be broadened to include more entities.
- Working with a restricted number of participants from business at the beginning may create apprehensions on the part of others. However, as part of the dialogue process it is important to ensure a balance among all business sectors while at the same time recognizing that not all partners have the same resources, interest or expertise in individual issues.
- As the Customs administration becomes more comfortable with its stakeholder

engagement activities, ensure engagement is open to all sectors of the trade community, including SMEs, and ensure that engagement takes place at all levels to cover the strategic, tactical and operational functions.

- Strategic level – Political level/Senior officials and business leaders to discuss broad policy issues, and develop strategic direction and plans
  - Tactical level – Middle management level to work on specific objectives in the context of an overall plan.
  - Operational level – Cutting edge level to discuss specific operational issues and provide collaborative solutions.
- To ensure effective engagement/consultation/partnership also at the operational level, Customs administration may appoint client managers (or client coordinators). Such a client manager needs to be aware of the regular business of the company concerned and acts as front line contact point for the company for practical questions or any Customs related problems encountered by the company. The client manager can jointly with the company look at ways to address such problems.

A special note about Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME):

- Build trust among wider business sectors especially SMEs so that they agree to work together through the regular holding of dialogue meetings, in a rotating way (1 time at the private sector level, 1 time at the public sector level). This will develop confidence in each other and also be cost effective.
  - Develop an outreach programme for SMEs. Remember they are more engaged in running their day to day business and have less time/flexibility to attend these types of meetings.
  - Participation from SMEs may also be encouraged through 'virtual' mode, if they are unable to attend physically due to various constraints (cost, time).
  - Engage the trade bodies/associations representing the interest of SMEs, as initially individual companies may not join due to various factors including resource constraints, lack of trust and lack of interest and initiative.
  - Develop of a sense of collective ownership and responsibility amongst SMEs while initiating the engagement process.
  - The focus should be on low hanging fruits, addressing the immediate challenges of SMEs, in order to make the process attractive and rewarding enough for them to join on a sustained basis.
- Make the process transparent, inclusive, interactive, cooperative, flexible, transparent, accountable, participatory and mutually beneficial with identified benefits. Working experiences and best practices in Part III may be referred.
  - Customs and the business sector need to learn about their respective roles, responsibilities, perspectives and mutual expectations from each other
    - Customs can provide seminars about their expectations.
    - The private sector can provide information about their working methods, expectations, suggestions and constructive criticism.
    - The private sector may be given an opportunity to participate in a structured and formal way in the training of Customs officers, in partnership with Customs. In this way private sector can better understand Customs officers' working environment and considerations, etc.

- Consider the possibility of carrying out joint business process mapping and sectoral analysis including the SME sector to understand their concerns, priorities and expectations from Customs.

Some considerations while engaging with business:

- Allow for evolution and/or improvement.
- Agree and outline requirements (if need be) for the business.
- Establishing co-chairs from Customs and trade for the formal meetings may be explored and introduced, as the relationship progresses. Right leadership is critical for an effective partnership.
- Engagement and meetings should neither be used for discussing specific individual grievances by the business nor should it be used by Customs to impose their decisions/conclusions or give any instructions. This may corrupt the whole atmosphere and may turn out to be counterproductive.
- The issues identified for initial discussions should be ambitious and should allow for a robust discussion that can lead to consensus decision - not be contentious ones, to avoid any potential conflict at the preliminary stages of building trust.
- The meeting agendas should be jointly developed, involving the coordinators of all participating business entities.
- Discussions should be interactive and result oriented in truly constructive and collaborative spirit, while respecting diverse views, if any.
- Both parties should indulge in active participation and bring forward creative solutions to the issue under discussion.
- It is important that participants do not prejudge or react without properly understanding the position and the context of other participant's point of view. They should be open minded and receptive to others' point of view.
- Any kind of criticism or value judgement during the discussions should be avoided. There is always time to ponder over it later and come up with positive solutions.
- There could also be conflicting positions and priorities among private sector representatives. Customs should be sensitive to this possibility and should not be seen favoring one over the other.
- Wherever possible, decisions through consensus rather than majority are preferable.
- Outstanding issues that require further reflections may be kept aside as 'parking lot'.
- Decisions taken or guidance provided to reflect further in meetings should be unambiguously made clear to the all participants, in order to avoid any potential confusion at later date.
- Minutes of all meeting should be prepared in consultation with the participants/coordinators, and shared as soon as possible, clearly highlighting the

actionable points and responsible parties.

- There should be clear timelines for follow up action on the points emerging out of the meetings.
- Encourage business participants to share information about the activities of the group within their respective organizations and all their members, in particular disseminating the decisions implemented.
- Positive outcomes should be published and widely disseminated through all forums. This will not only reinforce the interest of the participants but will also generate interest among others and may encourage their participation.
- Encourage constructive criticism from all participants.

#### **Phase 4 - Monitoring and Institutionalization**

Carry out a detailed critical evaluation of the engagement activity:

- List out lessons learned and critical aspects. Demonstrate these, as well as mutual benefits, on regular basis.
- Identify gaps, issues, and challenges which require focussed attention and identify possible ways to address them.
- Gauge participants' perception and come up with solutions to keep their interest alive.
- Has there been enough continuity in membership on both the Customs and business side to build trust and achieve results, while keeping the door open to new participants?
- Survey by a third party about the effectiveness and the value proposition of the partnership/engagement process may provide valuable inputs for future improvement.
- If possible, set up a mini-secretariat to support and provide continuity to the partnership. If that is not possible, make sure to clearly identify the key contact persons within Customs and business for effective and efficient coordination.
- Publish information about the Customs-business engagement process, including examples where business input has made a positive contribution.

Establish a mechanism for continuous monitoring:

- Ensure regular review and continuous improvement of the partnership mechanism.
- Develop an evaluation framework with performance indicators, specific criteria and goals to be achieved with timelines, wherever possible.
- To assess the impact and effectiveness of the partnership on a regular basis, Customs should analyze and take into account performance measurements like the client satisfaction surveys and Time Release Study (TRS).

- Evidence based and result oriented mechanism will have demonstrative effect on wider participation leading to a mature partnership.
- The DG should periodically monitor progress to ensure that complacency does not set in.
- Continuous evaluation and strategic adjustments may go hand in hand with the partnership/engagement process, to make it sustainable.

Institutionalize the engagement/consultation/partnership mechanism:

- While institutionalizing and maintaining the tested engagement/partnership process, new ideas and solutions should be adapted on a continual basis to keep the mechanism refreshed and relevant, keeping long term perspective in mind as well endeavouring to the next level of partnership .

#### D. PART III - Members' Customs-Business consultation/partnership/engagement initiatives/best practices

This part provides case studies and practical examples to demonstrate how the principles and procedures have successfully been put into practice by Members. It includes best practices, experiences of working together and various levels of Customs and business engagements from informal to institutionalised e.g. telephone calls, social gatherings, periodic meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences to working groups, consultative groups, joint consultative committees, dispute resolution committee and advisory council, etc.

The list of 31 working experiences/best practices as provided by the members is at Annex II.

## E. PART IV – Advanced Pillar

### **Model Template for Members who already have a well-established relationship with Business**

A well-established relationship between Customs and Business requires an on-going engagement to ensure that lines of communication are clear and such relationships are continuously evolved through a shared understanding. No partnership arrangement can remain static, it needs to be refreshed and reinvigorated and even advanced further to reflect and address new opportunities and challenges.

The key operational principles necessary to intensify and advance a Customs-Business relationship as well as foster businesses' continued buy-in, are:

- Communication: open and two way.
- Transparency: clear and mutually agreed information and feedback processes.
- Collaboration: work to seek mutually beneficial outcomes where feasible.
- Inclusiveness: recognize, understand and involve all stakeholders in the process.
- Innovative: anticipate changes and challenges in the evolving supply chain and develop potential solutions.
- Integrity: conduct engagement in a manner that fosters mutual understanding and trust.
- Accountability: an understanding that both parties have joint responsibilities.

Partnerships built on openness, transparency, dialogue and trust are more solid, long lasting and able to accomplish more. There is clearly a need for continued and progressive engagement/partnership. Even mature partnerships need to be reinforced, and commitments renewed from time to time. By working together to identify, articulate and implement joint priorities through the establishment of a shared cooperation agenda, Customs and private sector representatives will be able to effectively and efficiently implement change that benefits both Customs and Business alike. Communication throughout the relationship is key. Protocols for how any communication is to be managed need to be developed, implemented and monitored. These protocols may include the initiation of the relationship, conducting consultation and communicating the outcome of that consultation.

In countries with an established Customs-Business consultative mechanism, business representatives often expect different outcomes from their involvement. Some rely on consultative committees for information transfer, some seek a forum to which issues unresolved in other ways can be escalated and resolved, and others are looking for a multilateral fully transparent consultation forum. To add to this, often stakeholders do not want or need the same things from their relationship with Customs authorities and are therefore not able to make equal contributions to the consultative process. These differing requirements need to be considered and thought must be given as to how best to meet these very different needs.

To deepen existing partnerships between Customs and Business, a range of new opportunities should be explored. Following are some suggested methods/models/principles that could be used individually or in combination with others to advance the existing relationship:

#### **1. Co-creation of Policies and Programmes**

In a consultative process, Customs would usually develop certain policy initiatives/proposals and then seek Business and other stakeholders' views through a period of consultation. An

advanced level of relationship would entail Customs working together with Business to initiate and “co-create” policies and programmes. Customs and Business would, through this enhanced collaboration, jointly identify trade facilitation and compliance issues and develop policy proposals. Co-creation allows for synergy of different perspectives in initiating and defining policies and legislation that both implement government objectives and respect business realities.

Business perspectives at the initiating phases of policies and proposals will serve to help in describing the underlying business cases for certain measures or changes, their possible financial, technical, logistical, political, IT and other implications, as well as their appropriate application in practice. Co-creation would eventually lead to joint ownership, and thus commitment from both sides, and long term sustainability. It is an inherently inclusive approach for reaching a common understanding on how implementation can realistically be achieved, leading to better outcomes for all parties.

In order to “co-create” programmes there must be a greater level of trust on both sides that can only exist with a mature partnership. This may, in some jurisdictions, need some procedural and legislative adjustments to allow co-creation to take place, which may even include defining the actual role of Business in co-creation.

Keeping national concerns in mind, such an advanced engagement with Business may exclude policies related to some budgetary and enforcement sensitive issues.

#### **Box 1 - UK Joint Customs Consultative Committee**

- i. The purpose of the UK Joint Customs Consultative Committee (JCCC) is to:
  - discuss and advise on proposed strategic changes to Customs policies, procedures and business model
  - share information and act as a consultative group for EU, international and national Customs initiatives, and obtain industry views to ensure coherence and a common understanding in influencing negotiations
  - understand the industry and regulatory impacts
  - horizon scan
  - review progress against agreed aims and objectives, and to suggest remedial action for objectives that are not being achieved.
- ii. The JCCC meets three times a year and the secretariat function, accommodation and facilities are funded by the UK Customs authority. Other key government agencies involved in the movement of goods are members of the JCCC.
- iii. Industry JCCC members must have a process in place to disseminate information and obtain information from the industry sector that they represent to feed into the consultation process.
- iv. The JCCC has a Customs chairman and an industry chairman, who agree the strategic aims of the group and meeting agenda.
- v. The JCCC is supported by four sub-groups, which focus on operational issues and the detail of strategic change projects. The groups report to the JCCC to ensure strategic oversight and alignment is maintained.
- vi. As a result of this strategic customs to business relationship, UK Customs can ensure that day-to-day operations and change projects facilitate legitimate trade whilst protecting our borders and supporting economic growth.



### **Box 2 - South African Customs' Technical and Strategic Business Interaction with Stakeholders**

- i. The synergy between the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and Business is attained through collaborative interaction between primary stakeholders and their software service providers on issues relating to changes in Customs policy and systems technical enhancements. A monthly Business Strategy meeting is held, which is supported by technical sessions on a bi-monthly basis according to the need.
- ii. The concept of 'co-creation' is founded on a principle which suggests that stakeholders' participation may lead to their greater satisfaction. At the core of this collaboration, stakeholders not only synergise and standardise, but they actively pursue a mutually valued outcome.
- iii. SARS also publishes all legislative changes, enactments, Customs tariffs, policies and procedures on its website.
- iv. The above is supported by regular communication and where necessary publication of 'pocket guides' and posters to support the change process. On occasions where the nature of a policy change has significant trade impact, SARS has worked with its external partners in the development of training material including e-training.

## **2. Centres of Excellence and Expertise**

In order to promote consistency, uniformity, predictability and harmonization across various entry/exit points and other government agencies, one approach may be to create a centralized core competence on specific sectors and commodities, establishing a team of industry-focused Customs experts which could be located virtually. These centres could offer virtual "one stop processing" to sector specific commodities entering through any port, thus lowering the business cost. They can also provide tailored expertise support to business while improving compliance management in a consistent manner.

In this way, Customs could more effectively evaluate trusted businesses and provide more tangible benefits. The development of centres of excellence would require a well-developed IT system to carry out processing virtually, which would also enable a comprehensive 360° view of all the activities of an importer/exporter across the system.

Such centres of excellence and expertise could also be dedicated to assist specific industry such as large-size companies (at a national level) or small medium size companies (at a regional level) with designated/assigned Customs experts/relationship managers.

## **3. MoU with Specific Business Sectors**

Customs and Business could sign an instrument of co-operation/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on specific areas of cooperation in specific sectors, laying down a well defined framework for respective rights, obligations and performance measures. This would set up a platform for collaboration, with the aim of expediting and simplifying trade and making it more safe and secure. For example, Members have reported that they signed MoUs in the areas of Integrity, IPR enforcement; and data quality.

The WCO has signed a number of MoUs with stakeholders such as International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents (FONASBA), International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations (IFCBA), Association

of Professional Customs Brokers (ASAPRA) and Business Software Alliance (BSA). These types of arrangements could be proliferated at the national level with similar representative bodies.

### **Box 3 - Hong Kong Intellectual Property Rights Protection Alliance (IPRPA)**

- i. In an effort to further promote the partnership for better protection of IPR, the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) in collaboration with the IPR industry has initiated the establishment of the Intellectual Property Right Protection Alliance (IPRPA).
- ii. The objective is to provide a platform for parties from IPR industry and Hong Kong Customs to enhance strategic partnership and strengthen intelligence exchange.
- iii. The IPRPA organizes annual meeting to report Customs enforcement activities and recapitulate its IPR protection-related activities. A working committee has also been established to handle the ongoing activities of IPRPA, which would endeavour to upkeep the momentum of IPRPA and explore to come up with new initiatives for further protecting intellectual property in Hong Kong, including publicity and educational campaigns to raise social awareness of IPR protection.

#### **4. Leveraging Partnership for Trade Intelligence**

Businesses are key players in the global value chain and have specialized knowledge and understanding of their industry, often much wider than governments do. Trusted business partners could be approached on a voluntary basis to provide latest industry trends and emerging developments in several areas such as intellectual property rights, smuggling, illegal movements of hazardous waste and ozone depleting substances, commercial frauds and anti-dumping duty etc, (including actionable specific intelligence) for targeted risk profiling and compliance management.

This concept leverages industry knowledge and expertise to support Customs' compliance and enforcement strategies. Building advanced partnerships between Customs and Business can tap into business expertise and intelligence, making Customs' work more effective. Responsible and trusted businesses would recognize that their cooperation and efforts not only provides a valuable contribution to Customs, but mitigates risk that could have an adverse impact on the processing of their consignments, at the same time protecting their business from being undermined by unfair competition from illegal activities.

Customs could also consider sharing of intelligence, wherever possible, with trusted traders to support them in applying controls at their end, which would eventually in turn support Customs in its compliance and enforcement management.

#### **5. Expanding the Partnership Involving Other Government Agencies**

Customs-Business partnership should continuously be broadened to include other government agencies (OGAs) and stakeholders. Expanded partnership and collaboration among Customs, Business and other government agencies could potentially explore the possibility of mutual recognition of each agency's trusted trader programmes (e.g. Authorized Economic Operator, Regulated Agent/Known Consignor). Additionally, it may be possible to explore the integration of respective various trusted trader programmes or the joint development of a holistic and integrated programme to address the concerns, such as supply chain security, safety, facilitation and compliance, with increased efficiency, optimal

utilization of resources and enhanced information sharing among all stakeholders. This would also be helpful with regard to Single Window and Coordinated Border Management initiatives.

Negotiation of preferential (multilateral and bilateral) trade agreements by the government should also be supported by enhanced Customs-Business partnership. Customs together with business could provide valuable inputs to negotiators on the 'practical' business and operational impacts, from the supply chain side.

To expand the opportunities for the involvement of OGAs, Customs may organise broad-based trade symposiums as well as regular round-tables together with relevant OGAs and trade to discuss issues of mutual interest.

#### **Box 4 - The Netherlands Customs Cooperation with Other Government Agencies**

- i. The Netherlands Customs is expanding the partnership by working with other agencies at different levels.
- ii. Concerning the legal and policy part, the Customs Administration works together with other departments, who are responsible for legislation. It also coordinates with the European Union on a number of policy and legislative issues under the EU's exclusive competence. Next to that, Customs in the Netherlands have a legislative structure under its national cross border cooperation with other agencies that have inspections tasks regarding goods trafficking. The General Customs Law provides supervision powers to Dutch Customs on all legislation that applies on goods crossing the EU external border via NL. Next this law provides a legal fundament under the cooperation as any other Ministry, policy department or agency that is dealing with inspections of goods, has to make a kind of agreement with Customs on what they want to have selected, inspected and the way information is to be shared amongst agencies. This legal procedure is the basis for one-stop-shop inspections.
- iii. As for the operational part, the Netherlands has set up several joint ventures where Customs and other government agencies, for example, healthcare inspection, work closely together. Also in the IT-environment data sharing is introduced, Customs handling systems are connected to other agencies' processing systems and even some joint inspections teams are formed at the large air and seaports. These forms of cooperation can focus on a risk analysis, performing checks at the same time, meeting on a structural basis to exchange experiences and even align formalities and procedures for trade. Meeting on a regular basis and intensive communications and trust are keys to sharing ideas and gaining mutual respect for one another's work and exploring ways to improve the partnership.

## **6. Joint Development of IT Systems**

Businesses may be involved in the development and implementation of IT systems to manage border transactions more efficiently. To ensure that Customs and Business realize the benefits arising from Customs' IT systems, business could be involved in the development of the systems from an early stage. For example, business should be closely involved in the implementation of Single Window projects from the very beginning.

Thought could be also given to developing and running some Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions including development of software as an enabler through the use of Public Private Partnership (PPP) models where Customs and business

stakeholders jointly fund and operate the system. Such stakeholders not only share financial resources, technical know-how, project management skills, and other strengths but might also become “project champions” in driving the whole process forward. This is obviously not meant to outsource any of the core functions of Customs.

To this end, the WCO has been holding an annual IT Conference and Exhibition since 2002 to promote IT collaboration with private stakeholders.

**Box 5 - Japan - NACCS (Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System)**

- i. Since its launch in 1978, the NACCS has been serving as a core system in the operation of imports/exports and port and airport procedures in Japan. The NACCS has also been a central system for Single Window system in Japan since 2003, and all border agencies' systems had been integrated into the NACCS in 2013.
- ii. The NACCS was designed to deal with business between private companies as well as Customs procedures; therefore it has been operating as a joint public and private sector system. The NACCS Center which is responsible for managing the system was privatized in 2008. The main objectives of this privatization are to contribute to the improvement of corporate management and the provision of better service to business sectors in wide areas, which would increase the efficiency of international logistics and lead to the enhancement of competitiveness of Japan's sea/air ports.
- iii. Japan Customs and the NACCS Center together with other relevant government agencies, private enterprises and academics, have organized a number of consultation meetings for improving the Single Window system and advancing electronic customs procedures. It is believed that the privatization of the Center has facilitated these consultations in an effective and efficient manner.

**Box 6 - The “Delta X Export” IT teleservice project, bringing express courier operators and French Customs closer together**

- i. With a potential volume of express and ordinary freight amounting to nine million items a year for France, it has become essential for Customs clearance systems to adapt to the strong growth in this type of cargo. Such development is all the more necessary in that it fosters the competitiveness not only of e-commerce stakeholders themselves but also of exporters by helping to stimulate the French economy as a whole.
- ii. The Delta X Export project seeks to provide exporters with an IT teleservice to complete the mechanism now used in France for imports by express delivery. It also meets the public authorities’ objective of making 100% of Customs declarations paperless.
- iii. The approach adopted by Customs was to involve the express and postal operators - the main parties affected by this IT development - in each stage of the deliberations. The French Customs presented its project to the Union Française des Expressistes (UFEX) and La Poste [French postal service] in early April 2015 in line with this spirit of continuing development. The purpose of the meeting was to allow operators to study reporting and Customs clearance formalities, the datasets required and the schedule for putting this IT tool into operation.
- iv. In view of the challenges at the level of trade facilitation and security, this collaborative approach appeared to be essential if the needs of both operators and the Customs service were to be addressed.
- v. The future Delta X Export teleservice should thus help to rationalize data exchanges during Customs clearance, on the one hand, while ensuring optimum goods traceability on the other. Making this Customs clearance of express and ordinary freight for export paperless should therefore improve Customs control capacities while taking into account the technical limitations of supply chains to which express courier services and the French postal service are exposed.
- vi. In consultation with the operators concerned, the French Customs service will soon publish an interface contract setting out the functional and technical specifications of the future computerized Customs clearance system. Operators will therefore be able to upgrade their own IT systems accordingly. The construction of Delta X Export will be based as far as possible on incorporating the established characteristics of the import teleservice already used by these operators in order to facilitate their understanding and ownership of the system.
- vii. Delta X Export is scheduled to come into operation in mid-2016.

## **7. Joint Border Process Observatory**

Customs in collaboration with other border regulatory agencies (in particular transport authorities) and Business, may establish a joint border approach to identify opportunities for border process improvement. The is approach would see the parties conducting joint process mapping and analysis to identify and address gaps and obstacles in trade corridors and border clearance processes and recommend potential solutions.

This approach could supplement the monitoring and evaluation of trade facilitation measures in a trade corridor/border control point on a continual basis with a view to further improving it. It would jointly identify bottlenecks and other impediments to the smooth flow of goods, which would be useful in carrying out policy reforms as well as infrastructural and resource augmentation, wherever needed.

The WCO Time Release Study (TRS) is one such example of this approach, where Customs together with other government and private sector stakeholders seek to measuring and consequently improving clearance time.

## **8. Experts from the Private Sector in Customs**

Experts and professionals from various fields such as legal, IT and corporate sectors could be engaged from the private sector, or Customs staff policies could allow respective internship/secondment opportunities for the private sector. This will bring Customs and private sector expertise together to develop programmes and policies within government services. For Customs administrations, among others, the working experience, expertise and commercial insight from the private sector will be useful in:

- i. Understanding business perspectives at the conception stage of any policy;
- ii. Improving Customs services;
- iii. Making dispute resolution mechanisms more efficient;
- iv. Making Customs administrations more capable of plugging revenue leakages;
- v. Driving a digital transformation of Customs.

This would also help in equipping Customs with the right skills for further improving relationships with Business.

Customs administrations, however, need to be careful to avoid any potential conflict of interest and appearance of favouritism. Any such hiring process from the private sector should be open to all and be widely publicized. There should be very transparent and strict guidelines with suitable safeguards and a robust governance model.

## **9. Secondment of Customs Officials to the Private Sector**

Customs staff and Human Resource development policies allowing secondments (including loan, deputation, etc) of Customs officials to the private sector can help in building key skills in commercial, digital and project management and allow Customs staff to learn how skills are used and deployed in respective industries, with a view to transferring this knowledge to the government. This will also make them better understand and appreciate business processes and their requirements and expectations from government/Customs.

A secondment scheme would enrich the experience of Customs officers and promote enhanced understanding between Customs and Business. On return from secondment, the officers should have a debriefing session to share the knowledge and lessons learned and arrange a planning session with managers and/or colleagues on how new skills or experience could be incorporated into work practice.

Secondment of Customs officers to the private sector should be considered only with suitable safeguards (Dos and Don'ts) and clear terms of reference to avoid any potential conflict of interest and influence.

#### **Box 7 - The Netherlands Secondment Programme**

- i. The Customs Administration of the Netherlands carried out a pilot exchange programme for temporary secondment of Customs officers within the private sector and for business professionals into the Customs Administration.
- ii. The objective of the programme is to gain mutual respect, insight and understanding. The evaluation of the pilot showed the success in an increase of mutual understanding.
- iii. Following the success of the pilot, the Netherlands Customs has launched a permanent programme which would be open to Business as well as Customs.
- iv. Another way of improving the partnership between Customs and the private sector is by joint education from the very first source of Customs knowledge. For example, in the Netherlands Customs officials and employees from several (international) companies join the same classes for the master university study. A similar development is under process at the bachelor level.

### **10. Human Resource Development, Joint Training Opportunities and Bi-directional Education**

Human resource development trends over the recent years and even decades promote life-long training opportunities which are relevant for both Customs and the private sector. In the context of the WCO Capacity Building work, the Framework of Principles and Practices related to the development and maintenance competencies of Customs practitioners from both, Customs and the private sector has been developed with respective input from Members already. One of the insights gained during this work, especially based on respective contributions from the EU, was that the needed competencies of Customs and private sector staff do not differ too significantly from each other.

Based on these experiences, it becomes even more evident that joint training opportunities and bi-directional education are not only part of building mutual trust and understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities, but essential to develop the needed competencies of both partners.

Through bi-directional education, Customs would be able to learn from industry experts among others about new and growing trade trends as well as develop a better understanding of how business models work to be able to facilitate trade. Such bi-directional education concepts could be developed in close coordination and constant communication with the appropriate industry stakeholders to better adapt to the ever-changing global trade and economic environment.

Customs could utilize bi-directional education as an opportunity to explain and clarify its regulations and processes, to help the private sector better grasp and appreciate how Customs ensures security, safety, economic competitiveness and provides larger benefits to society and to ascertain how Business could assist in this domain.

For example, the SAFE Framework of Standards 2015 (Annex IV) provides that Customs could assist AEOs in understanding the risks involved in supply chains and in recognizing potential threats to security from a Customs perspective.

### **Box 8 - Canada's Customs-Business Awareness Building Sessions**

- i. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) conducted a joint awareness-building pilot session with a private-sector Customs brokerage firm.
- ii. The objective of the session was for participants to gain a better understanding of their respective roles and the impact of their decisions through exposure to each other's reality via job shadowing.
- iii. The CBSA and the brokerage firm each identified an equal number of participants to take part in a one-day session. In the morning, Customs brokers were given an overview of the CBSA's roles, responsibilities and commercial process. This included a tour of some of the CBSA's regional facilities. In the afternoon, Customs officers were given an overview of the brokerage company's activities and processes, followed by a job-shadowing session with expert brokers.
- iv. Overall participants were really satisfied with the activity and said that it contributed to an improved understanding.
- v. Following the success of this pilot, the CBSA is developing best practices and guiding principles to be shared at a national level to encourage region offices to organize more of these sessions with their local stakeholders and to aid in providing a consistent approach.
- vi. Next steps will include exploring the possibility of providing variations of this pilot and partnering with the private-sector to co-facilitate portions of the CBSA's commercial training curriculum.

## **11. Joint Integrity Observatory**

A joint Customs-Business structure involving trusted representatives from business could be created for safeguarding the integrity and fighting corruption. It could consolidate complaints from both the private sector and Customs officials encountering corrupt practices within Customs or the private sector. This body is in no way meant to deal with any complaints, but it could rather analyze problems in order to pinpoint areas of concern and find potential systemic solutions. The remit of such a body could even include an impact analysis of anti-corruption measures.

This body could also analyze Customs-Business relations from an integrity perspective. It may organize joint workshops/seminars to create awareness and promote a culture of integrity in respective Customs and business working environments. It could potentially study corruption trends, various modus operandi and suggest measures to counter them.

The WCO Arusha Declaration foresees the private sector's role in good governance and integrity management. It states -

"... Customs administrations should foster an open, transparent and productive relationship with the private sector. Client groups should be encouraged to accept an appropriate level of responsibility and accountability for the problem and the identification and implementation of



practical solutions. The establishment of a MoU between Customs and industry bodies can be useful in this regard. Likewise, the development of codes of conduct for the private sector, which clearly set out standards of professional behaviour, can be useful. Penalties associated with engaging in corrupt behaviour must be sufficient to deter client groups from paying bribes or facilitation fees to obtain preferential treatment ...”.

**12. Engagement with Business on Co-operation at the International level**

The collaboration between Customs and Business at the international level including bilateral/plurilateral/multilateral fora has become more important and directly related to the interests, rights and obligations of government and the private sector together. This can be seen from developments and discussions, including at the WCO, in the area of classification of export/import goods, valuation for Customs duty, examination of origins or in application of anti-dumping duty, safeguard duty and subsidies at international level. A number of proposals concerning the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System review frequently come from Business.

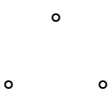
One approach towards such close collaboration consist of setting up a joint working group or task force to carry out research and detailed studies on these technical issues and adopt a coordinated approach to best address respective interests at international forums.

**13. Regional engagement**

Partnership with Business should not be limited to domestic stakeholders. It could even move beyond borders and address international stakeholders in terms of providing greater transparency and predictability, which are essential for international trade facilitation.

Customs administrations could work with regional counterparts and engage businesses including SMEs to address regional challenges, set regional goals, promote partnerships and facilitate trade through combined efforts and resources. Such engagements could be leveraged to develop a trusted pool of economic operators in the region through regional AEO/trusted partner programmes and Mutual Recognition Agreements/Arrangements (MRAs). MRAs could help in engaging and developing a trusted relationship with businesses across borders and providing AEOs with additional benefits while improving compliance overall.

The WCO Regional Vice-Chairs could play a more proactive role in developing regional engagement strategies with Business. They could also explore the possibility of having joint meetings with business representatives of the region during their annual meetings and develop a joint annual action plan for such engagement.





## International References, Instruments and Tools

### 1. World Customs Organization (WCO)

#### 1.1 Customs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The WCO “Customs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (C21) strategic policy has identified Customs-Business Partnerships as one of the ten building blocks to define a new strategic direction for Customs and the WCO. In particular, it states that:

*Customs in the 21st Century should enter into strategic pacts with trusted economic operators. Customs needs to understand the concerns of business, while business needs to know the requirements of Customs. Most importantly, there is a need to translate this relationship into a partnership that results in mutually beneficial outcomes.*

In realizing the other C21 building blocks, including Globally Networked Customs, Coordinated Border Management and Risk Management, it is indispensable to work with our business partners to achieve a more fruitful relationship. Acknowledging the importance and spirit of this partnership, the WCO dedicated the year 2010 to the ‘Customs-Business Partnership’.

#### 1.2 The WCO Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC)

The RKC General Annex (Standard 1.3) states - *“Customs shall institute and maintain formal consultative relationships with the trade to increase co-operation and facilitate participation in establishing the most effective methods of working commensurate with national provisions and international agreements.”*

The RKC, in its General Annex - Transitional Standard 3.32 (**Special procedures for authorized persons**), defines an ‘Authorized Person’ as a person (natural and legal) who meets criteria specified by the Customs administration, including having an appropriate record of compliance with Customs requirements and a satisfactory system for managing their commercial records. The ‘Authorized Person’ is entitled to several benefits, including simplified procedures for the release of the goods where Customs reduces the level of controls and relies more on internal controls applied by the trader to ensure compliance with all relevant laws and regulations, and clearance of the goods at the declarant's premises or another place authorized by the Customs administration.

Additionally, the RKC further provides for following provisions for co-operation and consultation with trade:

- Standard 6.8 (GA) – “The Customs shall seek to co-operate with the trade and seek to conclude Memoranda of Understanding to enhance Customs control.”
- Standard 7.3 (GA) – “The introduction of information technology shall be carried out in consultation with all relevant parties directly affected, to the greatest extent possible.”
- Standard 8.5 (GA) – “The Customs shall provide for third parties to participate in their formal consultations with the trade.”

## Annex I

- Standard 9.1 (GA) – “The Customs shall ensure that all relevant information of general application pertaining to Customs law is readily available to any interested person.”
- Standard 9.2 (GA) – “When information that has been made available must be amended due to changes in Customs law, administrative arrangements or requirements, the Customs shall make the revised information readily available sufficiently in advance of the entry into force of the changes to enable interested persons to take account of them, unless advance notice is precluded.”

### 1.3 The WCO SAFE Framework of Standards

The SAFE Framework of Standards (Para 1.2) sets out one of the core objectives and principles – to strengthen Customs/Business co-operation. Pillar 2 of the SAFE Framework of Standards specifically delves into the Customs-business partnership. It provides that *“Each Customs administration will establish a partnership with the private sector in order to involve it in ensuring the safety and security of the international trade supply chain. The main focus of this pillar is the creation of an international system for identifying private businesses that offer a high degree of security guarantees in respect of their role in the supply chain. These business partners should receive tangible benefits in such partnerships in the form of expedited processing and other measures.”*

Pillar II of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards provides global standards for launching an Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme. Standard 5 (Communication) in particular provides that the Customs administration will regularly update Customs-Business partnership programmes to promote minimum security standards and supply chain security best practices. Technical specification to Standard 5 elaborates that Customs should engage in regular consultation, at both the national and local level, with all parties involved in the international supply chain to discuss matters of mutual interest including Customs regulations, and procedures and requirements for premises and consignment security. Technical specifications to Standard 6 (Facilitation) further go on to stipulates that the Customs administration should establish mechanism to allow for business partners to comment on proposed amendments and modifications that significantly affect their role in securing the supply chain.

Eligibility criteria for an AEO include a demonstrated compliance record; satisfactory system for management of commercial records; financial viability and security (cargo, transport conveyance, premises, personnel and trade partner security). The AEO programme offers facilitation benefits to trade, which include quicker movement of low-risk cargo through Customs processes, improved security levels, optimized supply chain costs through security efficiencies, enhanced reputation for the organization, increased business opportunities, improved understanding of Customs requirements, and better communication between the AEO and the Customs administration. The SAFE Framework is supplemented by the SAFE Package, which, among other things, contains detailed guidelines for the development of an AEO programme as well as a detailed (and not exhaustive) list of benefits that should be granted to AEOs.

### 1.4 Other Conventions:

The Conventions on the Temporary admission of goods (ATA and Istanbul Conventions) encapsulate provisions for operation of the ATA Carnet Systems. While Customs ratify the Conventions, private sector organizations administer the international guarantee chains for the Carnet operation worldwide. At national level, Customs and business organizations cooperate to ensure the proper operation of the ATA Carnet System

### 1.5 The WCO Arusha Declaration

The Arusha Declaration of the Customs Co-operation Council concerning Good Governance and Integrity in Customs states - “Customs administrations should foster an open, transparent and productive relationship with the private sector. Client groups should be encouraged to accept an appropriate level of responsibility and accountability for the problem and the identification and implementation of practical solutions. The establishment of Memoranda of Understanding between Customs and industry bodies can be useful in this regard. Likewise, the development of codes of conduct for the private sector, which clearly set out standards of professional behaviour, can be useful. Penalties associated with engaging in corrupt behaviour must be sufficient to deter client groups from paying bribes or facilitation fees to obtain preferential treatment...”

### 1.6 The WCO Data Model

The WCO Data Model contains a collection of carefully selected items of information – referred to as data elements – that are standardized, based on globally accepted norms, and organized in order to minimize the effort and cost to trade. It facilitates the exchange of information between businesses and Customs, and also supports ‘Single Window Initiatives’. The WCO Data Model has been developed in consultation with the trade and transport community and other government agencies.

Quality of data is a key element from both the facilitation and enforcement perspectives. The use of coded data as opposed to non-coded data represents a big step towards improving data quality. The WCO Data Model provides information about the possible use of codes for every data element that can be codified. Constructive engagements with the private sector, coupled with greater adoption of international data standards, will certainly lead to improved data quality.

High-quality trade data in turn can benefit the whole society in general, as trade statistics are needed by various users for various uses, such as development of international trade policy, establishing general economic policy, market analysis to find supply sources or foreign markets, establishing supply balances to monitor commodity markets, infrastructure planning, input into system of national accounts and balance of payments statistics, etc.

### 1.7 The Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG)

The PSCG was established in 2006 for the purpose of advising the Policy Commission, the Secretary General, the SAFE Working Group and any other standing bodies within the WCO, as appropriate, on progress and issues relating to the implementation of the Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade. It may also raise other issues related to global trade, and advise on other matters as suggested by the Secretary General.

The PSCG has set an example of valuable and fruitful collaboration and partnership between Customs Members (through the WCO) and the private sector, on a global perspective.

As per the revised Terms of Reference of the PSCG adopted in June 2015, the purpose and scope of the PSCG has been expanded to inform and advise the WCO Secretary General, the Policy Commission and WCO Members on Customs and international trade matters from the perspective of the private sector, complementing the vital contributions made by private sector Observers to WCO Committee meetings. Its membership includes businesses/manufacturers, and associations, representing diverse regions and business sizes including small and medium sized enterprises.

## 2. The WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA)

**2.1** Article 2 of the TFA provides that Member States shall, to the extent possible, provide opportunities and an appropriate time to traders and other interested parties to comment on the proposed introduction or amendment of laws and regulations related to the movement, release and clearance of goods. Stakeholders shall also be informed in advance before such changes come into effect. It also provides for regular consultations between border agencies, traders and other stakeholders within its territory.

**2.2** Article 7.7 (Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators) provides for a concept of 'Authorized Operators' who meet specific criteria, which may include - appropriate record of compliance with customs and other related laws and regulations, system of managing records for necessary internal control, financial solvency and supply chain security. These 'Authorized Operators' will be provided at least three of the following trade facilitation measures: low documentary and data requirements as appropriate; low rate of physical inspections and examinations as appropriate; rapid release time, as appropriate; deferred payment of duties, taxes, fees and charges; use of comprehensive guarantees or reduced guarantees; a single customs declaration for all imports or exports in a given period; and clearance of goods at the premises of the authorized operator or another place authorized by Customs.

**2.3** Article 23.2 (National Committee on Trade Facilitation) provides for establishing and/or maintaining a national committee on trade facilitation or designating an existing mechanism to facilitate both domestic coordination and implementation of the provisions of the TFA. This Committee could be a very useful forum for engaging trade in driving the overall trade facilitation agenda.

## 3. UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and E-business (UN/CEFACT)

At its fifth session, in March 1999, UN/CEFACT adopted the following revised Recommendation, in order to encourage the establishment of national organizations, or other suitable means, for the implementation of recommendations on the facilitation of international trade procedures:

"The UN Centre for the Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/CEFACT) recommends that Governments establish and support national facilitation bodies with balanced private and public sector participation in order to:

- identify issues affecting the cost and efficiency of their country's international trade;
- develop measures to reduce the cost and improve the efficiency of international trade;
- assist in the implementation of those measures;
- provide a national focal point for the collection and dissemination of information on best practices in international trade facilitation; and,
- participate in international efforts to improve trade facilitation and efficiency."

\*\*\*

**Customs- Business engagement/consultation/partnership initiatives/best practices**

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Argentina	Corporate Social responsibility programme (RSC)	This initiative aims at promoting corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. RSC policy functions as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby a business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law including Customs and fiscal law, ethical standards, and international norms.	Importers/exporters  In order to participate to this initiative, enterprises <i>should have in place a process to integrate social and fiscal concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders</i>	- Meetings	.
Australia	Annual Industry Summit  Quarterly Industry Newsletter  Industry Engagement Strategy  Industry Advisory Groups	Engagement with the CEOs and senior executives of industry stakeholders to discuss future strategic collaboration.  to keep industry informed of new initiatives/projects/reviews and strategic developments in Customs.  To establish structural foundation and set the tone for an ongoing industry consultative process throughout the organisation. It sets out broad framework and rules of engagement.  To facilitate topic based discussion with business with specific terms of reference.	CEO and senior executives of Customs and CEOs and senior executives of industry/business.  Industry stakeholders  Senior executives in Customs  Specific business sectors	Annual forums and panel sessions to facilitation discussion.  Quarterly electronic newsletter  Strategy will be aligned with the organisation's strategic and operational priorities on a yearly basis.  Topic based discussion with business on specific topics during a defined period.	It is a one day event with keynote speakers and multiple panel sessions to facilitate discussion of relevant topics.  Electronic newsletters are sent to industry on a quarterly basis.  Specific Industry Advisory Groups are formed and meetings are convened to discuss and develop new policy and reform initiatives.

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Brazil	PROCOMEX	<p>-acceleration of competitiveness of Brazil and their participation in international trade</p> <p>-to promote the creation of a modern customs system to improve the efficiency of the supply chain of companies involved in international trade</p>	Currently 72 representatives of private and public entities which work towards the modernization of Brazilian foreign trade.	<p>-Building up modelling processes e.g. to overcome problems with exportation or temporary admission.</p> <p>-Creating working groups on a local level such as the Customs Performance Review Group (GAP- Aduaneira)to improve customs processes.</p>	



## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Canada	Stakeholder Engagement Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to increase stakeholder awareness of the role and priorities of the CBSA and how the CBSA delivers integrated border services</li> <li>- to improve stakeholder compliance with the programs and policies the CBSA is mandated to enforce</li> <li>- to improve the CBSA's understanding of external stakeholders' business practices and realities in order to enhance program and policy decision-making</li> <li>- to encourage thoughtful discussions regarding the Agency's vision of trade and traveller facilitation and to identify common interests between external stakeholders and CBSA officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- national associations representing Canada's commercial interests involved in trans border trade (importer, exporters, customs brokers, manufacturers, retailers, couriers, freight forwarders, rail, highway and marine mode associations, chambers of commerce, automotive industry, produce industry, transport lawyers, port operators, sufferance warehouses, international bridge and tunnel operators, border agencies, as well as private sector businesses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-formal committees, sub-committees and working groups</li> <li>- conferences, workshops, speaking engagements</li> <li>-technological solutions such as webinars, teleconferences and videoconferences</li> <li>- pilot projects</li> </ul>	<p>The CBSA, both through its headquarters and regional offices, engages with external stakeholders in many different ways, via different forums and at various management levels.</p> <p>Formal committee structures are used to share information, raise awareness of issues and discuss high-level, strategic and policy-oriented questions. For example, the CBSA's Border Commercial Consultative Committee (BCCC), which meets three times a year, was created in 2005 to provide CBSA officials and commercial stakeholders with a forum for dialogue on Canada's border operations, and projects like eManifest which is a transformational initiative that will require stakeholders (carriers, freight forwarders and importers) to transmit advance commercial information electronically to the CBSA in all modes of transportation within prescribed mode-specific timeframes.</p> <p>Working groups and sub-committees are typically used to seek feedback from stakeholders and to find solutions to technical or process-related problems.</p> <p>CBSA officials also engage stakeholders informally by participating in stakeholder events, such as conferences and workshops, as well as other types of outreach activities.</p>

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
China	Client Coordinator System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To collect more opinions and demands from business;</li> <li>- To better promote the compliance of business;</li> <li>- To reduce more operational costs of business;</li> <li>- To upgrade the quality of customs service.</li> </ul>	AEO enterprises and potential AEO candidates	Seminars and meetings  On-site visits  Online communication platform  Hotline of Customs Service "12360"	-Customs designates Client Coordinators who are responsible for coordinating with AEOs and potential AEO candidates.  Customs Client Coordinators are in charge of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing tailor-made service to AEO companies;</li> <li>2. Monitoring AEOs to ensure they meet the criteria consistently;</li> <li>3. Providing guidance and assistance to potential companies to become AEO.</li> </ol>

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
<b>Cameroon</b>	<p>Customs Business Forum (Forum Douane Entreprises)</p> <p>FAL Committee (facilitation on international Maritime Traffic)</p> <p>Single Window (Guichet unique)</p> <p>Appeal Committee (Comité d'appel)</p>	<p>Make Customs more responsive to business needs and difficulties</p> <p>Building trust with Customs</p> <p>Identifying ways of optimizing relationships and Customs procedures</p> <p>Preparing the implementation of the AEO programme</p> <p>Strengthening the rule of law</p>	Representatives from importers/exporters and Customs (head of operational units).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings (working groups and plenary sessions) and special events (soirée des partenaires)</li> <li>- meetings and setting up of a "Hot Line".</li> <li>- Right to appeal against Customs decisions in connection with referral to the Ethics Committee (prior to recourse to judicial proceedings).</li> </ul>	<p>Deliverables raising from this meetings are subject to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) publicity on the Website</li> <li>2) follow up, assessment and monitoring indicators set up in Customs automated information systems</li> </ol> <p>Contradictory procedures</p>
<b>Dubai, UAE</b>	Client ambassador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to retain existing clients and exceeding their service level expectation</li> <li>-return of the lost clients</li> <li>-acquisition of new clients</li> <li>=&gt; increased business generation</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-data monitoring and analysis</li> <li>-suggestions of new offering/ service aligned with clients requirements and needs</li> <li>-introducing "tailor made" customized" services according to top clients need</li> <li>-generating specified MIS monthly reports</li> <li>-exploration of client relationship management best practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A single point of contact is dedicated to serve clients with priority in regards to their queries and requirements by visits on the clients' premises.</li> <li>-proactively seek to identify customers need</li> <li>-insight into our client expectations and trade trend</li> <li>-competitor analysis</li> <li>Clients business behaviour with DC</li> <li>-identify potential new clients and the lost ones</li> <li>-get to know the client</li> <li>-identity and initiate cross selling services bases on clients' needs.</li> </ul>

## Annex II

<p><b>EU</b></p>	<p>EU Trade Contact Group</p>	<p>Regular consultation with representatives from industry is very important for developments in the area of customs matters which have a direct impact on the international logistical processes. Consultation with trade is an integral and growing part of EU Customs policy making. The EU Trade Contact Group provides a platform for such regular consultations at EU level on the development of customs policy and implementation of customs related issues . The benefits of customs to business partnership are especially important in ensuring supply chain security, competitiveness and trade facilitation by making customs compliance and control easier faster and cheaper. Good partnerships with the business sector are essential for achieving objectives in compliance with customs legislation. Customs needs to understand the concerns of business and business needs to understand customs requirements. It is vital to translate that relationship into a genuine partnership that results in beneficial outcomes for both parties. The EU Trade Contact Group is in addition to working group level trade consultation and similar customs to business groups held at EU Member State national level.</p>	<p>The members of the EU Trade Contact Group are the main international associations (European and worldwide) involved in customs related activities at the European level.</p>	<p>The meetings of the EU Trade Contact Group are hosted by the European Commission's Taxation and Customs Union Directorate-General and are chaired by the Director of Customs Policy. The structured dialogue between Commission and trade occurs on a regular basis in Brussels. When considered necessary additional ad-hoc meetings can also be organized. In addition to the regular EU Trade Contact Group meetings, thematic meetings may be organized for discussions on a specific subject.</p>	<p>The EU Trade Contact Group provides the main forum for an exchange of views with Commission's services on all customs related issues, particularly in respect of: Developments of customs policy, the Union Customs Code and the Electronic Customs Initiative.</p>
------------------	-------------------------------	---	---	---	--

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative (s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
France	<p>Forum douane entreprises (Customs business Forum)</p> <p>Douane entreprises meetings "Gagnez à l'international"</p>	<p>Encourage dialogue between French Customs and private sector. Improve partnership, communication and information exchange. Improve trade facilitation and security</p> <p>Better answer to business needs and difficulties Communication to improve enterprises competitiveness</p>	<p>32 permanent members : Business federation (general and sectorial, customs representatives, customs lawiers, leading exporters and importers...)</p> <p>Enterprises, business federations, administration</p>	<p>A plenary session meets, at least, once a year under the chairmanship of the French Customs Director general. Working groups meet all along the year on specific topics.</p> <p>National and regional meetings</p>	<p>This permanent forum for consultation is intended to be a place for discussion, reflection and information on all matters related to the customs component of international trade. The administration may include informing its partners on regulatory developments or technological choices and involve them in ongoing discussions. A person is partly dedicated to this program. His role is to be in permanent contact with business federation, collect questions and propositions from private sector, and organise formal workshops and meetings. Usually, there is a general meeting on one main topic, followed , in the afternoon by one-to-one meetings between an SME and customs. It allows to customize the information given to the company.</p>

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative (s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Georgia	Meetings with business sector	Providing information about new regulations; receiving feedback initiatives and ideas for improvement from business sector	Georgian business sector (economic operators)	Meetings	Meetings take place several times during a year (in different cities of Georgia). Business sector receives information about novelties in procedures and legislation; at the same time they are more than welcome to share their ideas about service and procedures improvement and simplification.
	Meetings with foreign investors	Providing comprehensive information to foreign investors about rules and procedures	Foreign investors	Meetings/visits	In order to provide precise information about customs clearance procedures, investors have possibility to visit Customs Clearance Zones. During visits, investors get familiar with clearance procedures, information about customs duties and services both theoretically and practically during the site visit.
	Cooperation with Georgian International Road Carriers Association (GIRCA)	Ensure the implementation of TIR Convection in Georgia. Awareness rising of new TIR related projects	GIRCA, IRU, local and international carriers using TIR carnets	Regular meetings with GIRCA	
	Media Project	Increase participation of society in GRS's activities; create a group of journalists having the basic knowledge in customs, tax and SPS; Improve reliance of society	Journalists, GRS management	Training for the GRS employees in relation to media communication and effective communication skills; Joint trainings for the GRS employees and journalists; Training for journalists in order to raise awareness about the role, functions and importance of the GRS;	



**Annex II**

Country	Name(s) of the initiative (s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
	Dispute resolution council	Consideration of taxpayer's interests, liberalization	Business sector	Board meetings	<p>activities.</p> <p>If taxpayer does not agree the decision of the Customs Department, he/she has possibility to complain. Case will be discussed within the Department and then sent to the Department of Dispute Resolution. Afterwards, board meeting takes places with participation of all the relevant parties (including GRS departments). In case of a desire, taxpayer is authorized to present the board meeting and participate in discussion.</p>



## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Haiti	<p>Private Sector Consultative Group (Formal sector)</p> <p>Consultation process of informal sector (Association des commercants informels- Informal Trader Association)</p>	<p>This initiative aims at combating fraud by associating business. It take the form of MoUs with main Trade associations :</p> <p>This initiative aims at assisting informal sector operators to become regular companies.</p>	<p>Duly registered Importers/exporters (trade associations) from Haiti:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ADIH (Association des Industries d'Haïti)</li> <li>2. CCIH (Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haïti)</li> <li>3. FESP (Forum Economique du Secteur Prive)</li> <li>4. AAMAR (Association des Agences Maritimes)</li> <li>5. ACDA (Association des Commissionnaires en Douane Agréés)</li> </ol> <p>Importers/exporters (informal sector)</p>	<p>Regular Meetings (every 90 days) of any kind of topics including consultation in the rule making</p> <p>Assistance programmes, dedicated officers, training sessions</p>	.
Hong Kong, P R China	Customer liaison Group	<p>-to improve the customer service</p> <p>-to foster communication and information exchange</p> <p>-to strengthen cooperation and partnership between Hong Kong Customs (HKC) and the trade</p>	-key players and major trade associations of the air freight, sea freight, cross-boundary transport and dutiable commodities trades.	- meetings, distribution of consultation papers, questionnaires and letters.	<p>-through regular meetings, HKC will collect views from industries on the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) existing Customs services (e.g. passenger and cargo clearance) and Customs measures (e.g. excise control);</li> <li>(ii) new Customs initiatives; and</li> <li>(iii) their ideas and expectations conducive to</li> </ol>

## Annex II

	<p>Road Cargo System (ROCARS) User's Liaison's Group</p> <p>Intellectual Property Rights Protection Alliance (IPRPA)</p>	<p>-provide a seamless system for the movement and customs clearance of road cargoes with risk profiling in advance -facilitate trade</p> <p>-provide a platform for parties from IPR industry and Hong Kong Customs to enhance strategic partnership and strengthen intelligence exchange.</p>	<p>-Shippers/agents representatives, trade associations, logistics associations, and express companies.</p>	<p>- meetings</p> <p>- Seminars - Meetings - publicity and educational campaigns to raise social awareness of IPR protection</p>	<p>business improvement and trade facilitation.</p> <p>- To maintain a close and effective liaison with the stakeholders for the on-going development of the system, a consultation forum, namely ROCARS.RULG aims to provide an effective communication platform for ROCARS users and Customs to exchange views and further improve the system. The member of RULG is appointed by Commissioner of Customs and Excise with tenure of 2 years. Biannual consultation meeting will be arranged.</p> <p>- IPRPA organized annual meeting to report Customs enforcement activities and recapitulate its IPR protection-related activities. A working committee was also established to handle the ongoing activities of IPRPA, which would endeavour to upkeep the momentum of IPRPA and explore to come up with new initiatives for further protecting intellectual property in Hong Kong.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>Customs Consultative Committee</p>	<p>-to provide a forum for Revenue and representative Organizations to exchange views on issues affecting the Customs treatment of imports and exports</p> <p>-to review developments and proposals in the Customs area, especially at EU level</p> <p>-to support Ireland's competitiveness by advising on the design of Customs regimes</p>	<p>-Membership of the Committee shall consist of Revenue staff who have a direct involvement in customs work and Organisations whose members have regular and direct dealings with Customs.</p>	<p>-revenue (Customs Division) will provide secretarial services to the Committee</p> <p>-meetings (usually four times a year)</p> <p>-establishment of working groups possible for specific issues (e.g. technical issues concerning software developments).</p>	<p>-methods of communication routinely used by Irish Customs are as follows;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Customs Consultative Committee</li> <li>2) Bi-lateral or sectorial meetings</li> <li>3) Communications Programmes on specific projects</li> </ol> <p>-participation in the work of the Committee shall be strictly in a representative capacity, with members of the Committee acting as a conduit between Revenue and the members of their representative Organisations involved in importation and exportation.</p>

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Israel	Consultation process through the implementation of the AEO programme	-to tighten relations between Israel Customs and the business sector to achieve the goals of the AEO program	-the pilot project included 8 of the leading companies of Israel. Up to now 10 more companies obtained AEO certificates and 40 additional requests are in the process of approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional AEO seminar once a year with AEO related lectures held by experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the company seeking AEO certificate maintains close connection with the customs officials handling the request through work meetings, telephone conversations and emails. AEO aims to improve the required processes inside the company so that it properly meets the criteria for its approval. More than once a company was asked to improve a certain aspect of its conduct before it could be certified. After a while, the required aspect was re-examined and found to have met the criteria.</li> <li>- improvement of the company's conduct + strengthening of the company's supply chain.</li> <li>- professional tours of various customs units (non- AEO) are held in the AEO certified company sites, so as to familiarize the customs units with the modus operandi and processes in the companies as well as their specific issues with customs.</li> </ul>

Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Japan	Consultation processes	To Strengthen partnership between Customs and Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Export-oriented companies including SMEs</li> <li>- AEOs and other private enterprise</li> <li>-Other relevant government agencies</li> <li>-Academics</li> </ul>	Seminar, Workshop, Study Group, etc.	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seminar for promoting the use of Economic Partnership Agreement ( EPA), with the participation of export-oriented companies including but not limited to SMEs, providing the knowledge of Customs procedure regarding EPA</li> <li>- Seminar for promoting better understanding of AEO program, sharing experiences and benefits of acquiring the AEO certification, with the participation of AEOs and other private enterprises concerned</li> <li>- Consultation for promoting Single Window and further facilitating electronic filing of trade-related procedures, with the participation of other relevant government agencies, private enterprises and academics</li> </ul>

Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Jordan	<p>Customs Partnership Council</p> <p>Golden list program</p> <p>Intellectual Property Rights E-connectivity with Public and private sector</p>	<p>-enhance the Customs Business relationship -facilitate and secure international trade -increase national economic growth -create an attractive investment environment -joint business customs partnership -supply chain security</p> <p>-</p> <p>to combat counterfeiting and piracy to protect the local community and economy -increase electronic connectivity with various constitutions, to facilitate data exchange and processing of transactions connected with multiple entities</p>	<p>-45 companies are already enrolled in this programme</p> <p>-</p> <p>local regional and international bodies are involved. -several Memoranda of understand have been signed eg. with the Arab Federation, Beiersdorf AG.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular council meetings with the private sector to enable the private sector to participate in the decision making process</li> <li>- periodic meetings held by Jordan customs with business representatives</li> <li>- trainings and workshops for customs officers and representatives from the private sector</li> <li>- draw policies and design mechanisms for implementation.</li> </ul>	<p>-all supply chain companies are encouraged to voluntarily implement state of the art customs due diligence and supply chain standards. By doing so the companies can qualify for the Golden List Programme status and benefit from the facilities offered by Jordan Customs</p>

## Annex II


Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Malawi	National Business forum	<p>-to ensure a partnership and dialogue structure of key players in the trading chain that contributes to trade facilitation</p> <p>-improvements in customs operations</p> <p>-greater compliance with the trading community</p>	49.	<p>-conducting a preliminary meeting with heads of several departments e.g. tariffs, origin etc. from customs side, from the business side representatives from various associations and major importers, industry and trade as well as representatives from the Reserve Bank of Malawi and Ministry of Finance</p> <p>-establishment of a core team committed to building the NCBF</p> <p>-a draft action plan will be set up that clearly shows implementation of agreed priority areas, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Terms of reference (ToR) and/or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Terms of reference that clearly define Customs expectations, issues on which other government departments will act on, and who participants are accountable to and how that accountability is maintained, are beneficial for all participatory processes. This clarity would indicate Customs and/or public sector expectations and help prospective private sector participants to decide whether it is in their best interests to participate.</li> <li>• Development of strategic framework, consisting of vision, mission, goals and objectives.</li> </ul>	



## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
		<p>facilitation and security requirements as referred to in the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards.</p> <p>This programme enables eligible, reliable and compliant companies to benefit from a range of Customs facilitations in order to help them foster their competitiveness.</p> <p>This programme sets out two kinds of status :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The <b>AEO Customs simplifications which can be of class A or B.</b></li> <li>- The <b>AEO Security and Safety open to companies benefiting from the AEO Customs simplifications status of class A</b></li> </ul>	<p>either at import and export or both is eligible to this programme.</p> <p>For the time being <b>342 companies</b> have been granted the authorization out of which 180 are in class <b>A</b> and <b>162</b> in class <b>B.</b></p> <p>Close to <b>800</b> companies have expressed interest for this accreditation programme.</p>	<p>authorized operators;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated webpage on the accreditation programme has been created on the Customs website. It describes the procedure to follow, the terms of references of the diagnostic audit and the benefits granted.</li> </ul>	<p>time, of his/her status with regard to Customs legislation, particularly in case of Customs suspensive procedures;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Customs office responsible for the operator's local clearance procedure is designated for granting simplifications and assisting the accredited company for any Customs legislation related issues.</li> </ul>




Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Netherlands	<p><b>CUSTOMS-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP operational level</b></p> <p>Customs Business Consultation-forum (CBC)</p> <p><b>CUSTOMS-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP policy / legislative level</b></p> <p>Committee on Customs legislation</p>	<p>To maintain a dynamic consultative platform for the execution and implementation of customs (related) legislation working reciprocal.</p> <p>To share the position of trade and customs on new initiatives of customs and related legislation on national level and on the level of the European Commission (DG TAXUD).</p>	<p>Trade associations that represent the majority of economic operators that have a relationship with Customs like industry, importers, exporters, customs agents, carriers, brokers, agents and forwarders.</p> <p>The Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (known as VNO-NCW)</p>	<p>The CBC has three pillars: Legal Affairs, Information Technology and Enforcement &amp; Supervision. These three pillars meet regularly for which the agenda is being decided collectively. Where appropriate all kind of activities can be organized like seminars, workshops and joint publicity campaigns.</p> <p>Regular meetings (at least 4 times a year) to discuss new legislative proposals.</p>	<p>The cooperation takes place through consultation and cooperation back and forth between business and Customs on legislation, IT and enforcement &amp; supervision developments with the limitation to the operational level.</p> <p> CBC-protocol 12-2012 NL.pdf</p> <p>To discuss in an early stage the proposals of national and EU legislation on customs and related matters. Usually in regular meetings but if necessary in the form of seminars or workshops.</p>
Peru	Board of Overseers of the Private Sector and government	-to establish guidelines to follow for the registration and participation of private sector providers and government in the physical examination of goods for the import regime for consumption	-it applies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration of Inspection and Customs Revenue Management (IFGRA),</li> <li>• the municipalities of the Republic of customs,</li> <li>• customs warehouses,</li> <li>• the private sector providers</li> <li>• government agencies</li> </ul>		-the supplier upon request can be registered as observer at SUNAT -the requirements are: Knowledge and experience in trade or production and no criminal record -the observations carried out by the supplier contribute to the work of customs control, but are not binding upon evaluations conducted by SUNAT officials

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings</b> , <b>formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
			<p>registered with the National Customs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax Administration (SUNAT)</li> </ul>		
<b>Poland</b>	Advisory Council of the Polish Customs Service	<p>-Facilitation of legitimate business activity -removal of bureaucratic barriers and -improvement of cooperation with economic operators</p>	<p>- Ministry of Finance, Customs Service of Poland - the Advisory Council of Polish Customs Service</p>	- conferences	<p>-the members of the Advisory Council are people proposed by the chambers of commerce and the business community, educational institutions and experts on customs matters -the tasks of the Council include, among others analysis of customs legislation, the preparation of opinions and proposals of solutions</p>
<b>Portugal</b>	<p>Periodic consultation with business</p> <p>Protocols with specific operators</p>			-Consultations are conducted on the basis of particular needs, eg. the protocols celebrated in 2009 between PT customs and the express couriers that describe the customs clearance procedures used by these types of economic operators given the specificity of their traffic	

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
<b>Sénégal</b>	<p>Customs Business Partnership Committee (Comité de Partenariat Douane- Entreprises)</p> <p>Joint Customs Private Sector Committee (Comité paritaire Douane secteur privé)</p>	<p>- watch the implementation of the recommendations adopted during the 2 Customs-Business fora and the Enterprise Day ;</p> <p>- Define the attributions of the specialized Committees (Commissions) and watch their smooth running ;</p> <p>- Examine any question within the framework of the partnership and not having found solution with the competent Customs departments.</p> <p>- reach a participative and consensual approach within the framework of the reform of the Customs Code.</p>	<p>-Customs, -Chambers of Commerce, -Private sector, -other relevant public administrations, -Port Autonome de Dakar, -Senegal shippers Council (Conseil sénégalais des chargeurs)</p> <p>- Customs - Employers' organizations and Trade unions -Authorized Customs Brokers (commissionnaires en douane agrees),</p>	<p>-Set of up of a Customs-Business forum (colloque Douane-Entreprise), -Creation of an Enterprise Day (journée de l'Entreprise) on an annual basis, -Elaboration of The Privileged Partnership programme (Programme de Partenariat Privilégié -PPP), -Tailor-made procédures (procédures personnalisées)</p> <p>-Organization of Seminars during the elaboration of the Senegal Customs Code</p>	<p>- Since the last decade, some formal consultation processes have been set up with the Private Sector (Authorized Customs Brokers, industrials etc.);</p> <p>- in 2007, a Customs-Business forum was set up;</p> <p>- institutional approach with the set up in 2009 of a Facilitation and Business Partnership Directorate (Direction de la Facilitation et du Partenariat avec l'Entreprise) and a Business Advisory Office (Bureau de Conseils en Entreprises) within the Customs administration;</p> <p>- Holding of a National Seminar on 4, 5 and 6 June 2013, on the reform of the Customs Code ;</p> <p>- Holding of the Joint Customs Private Sector Committee on 5 and 6 September 2013.</p>

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Spain	Large Business Forum	<p>The Large Business Forum was launched in 2008, in order to establish a cooperative relation with a reduced number of Large Businesses, within two phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create a discussion forum to discuss, through joint or economic sector meetings, the main problems of the relations between the large businesses and the tax administration.</li> <li>2. In a second phase, to study the feasibility of a special framework in order to provide, by the tax administration, a criteria on the tax consequences companies operations might have, which would require a total transparency of such operations.</li> </ol>	<p>A group of companies belonging to the Central Delegation of Large Taxpayers, with a certain turnover level, volume of paid taxes, volume of information provided to the tax administration, number of employees, activity sector and geographical distribution, which are considered representative of the whole group.</p> <p>The initial participation of a reduced number of companies is not to be considered as a privilege for them, as the agreements which are reached in the Forum, are applicable to all tax payers concerned.</p>	<p>The rules of procedure of the Forum are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Forum has an informal character, flexible, cooperative and with no bureaucracy.</li> <li>- The Forum works at Plenary and at Working Groups. The Plenary identify the problems and adopt the agreements, while the Working Groups analyze the problems and propose solutions.</li> <li>- High level participation in the Plenary: the State Secretariat of Finance and Budget and Board of Directors of the Tax Agency together with members of the Boards of Directors of the companies.</li> <li>- Technical level participation in the Working Groups.</li> </ul> <p>Working Groups:</p> <p>Four Working Groups have been created, with the participation of different companies and different Departments of the Tax Agency, depending on the subjects to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperative relations Working Group.</li> <li>- Analysis and rationalization of indirect taxes Working Group.</li> <li>- Transfer prices Working Group.</li> <li>- Excise Working Group.</li> </ul> <p>The Customs and Excise Department has participated in the four Working Groups.</p>	<p>One of the outcomes of the Forum is the Best Tax Practices Code. 75 companies have adhered to the Code so far. 15 of them are Authorized Economic Operators. A Note on the Code is attached, for your information.</p> <div data-bbox="1704 592 1771 655" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Code of Best Tax Practices.pdf</p> <p>Additional information can be found in our web site: <a href="http://www.agenciatributaria.es">www.agenciatributaria.es</a> (businesses and professionals).</p>

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Consultation process through the Compliant Traders Facilitation programme (CTFP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to enforce the capacity building side</li> <li>-to create training programmes for Customs brokers acting as declarants who lack the required knowledge in HS classifications, valuation rules, rules of origin etc to prepare goods declarations</li> </ul>	-the first 100 importers of goods into Sri Lanka were selected after an audit which was conducted by the National Chamber of Commerce	-regular meetings and seminars	-the meetings and seminars served for feedback on the implementation of this programme from stakeholders from the business community and to enable the CTFP to review and modify it according to the needs
<b>Thailand</b>	<p>Consultation process through the implementation AEO programme</p> <p>Joint Committee between Customs and Private sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to enhance the international commercial capacity</li> <li>-to facilitate the customs clearance process for the private sector by applying the standard of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO)</li> <li>-To avoid any conflicts between Thai Customs and the private sector, Thai Customs has maintained a formal consultative mechanism with stakeholders</li> </ul>	-there are 250 entrepreneurs (importer, exporter and Customs Broker) in compliance with the standard of AEO in Thailand		-discussion and approval of projected changes in Customs services, monitoring and evaluating Customs performance, and providing advice on the streamlining of Customs services

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Turkey	<p>Consultation process before and through the implementation of the AEO programme</p> <p>Customs Debt Settlement Commission (27 August, 2011)</p> <p>Customs and Trade Council (22 June, 2012)</p>	<p>-easier and safer commercial activities</p> <p>-</p> <p>aims to resolve disputes stemming from customs duty and related penalties between traders and Customs without taking the matter to court.</p> <p>- delivers opinions for the development of Customs and trade policies and practices.</p>	<p>Traders</p> <p>Non-governmental organizations, public and private sector members</p>	<p>-after the launch of the AEO Concept, Authorised Consignor and Local Clearance Procedures for Export, Turkish Customs Administration published: A booklet covering 111 Questions and Answers, a booklet for the AEO certificate application procedure, a booklet for the pre-evaluation stage by the Regional Directorates regarding the concept of "Authorized Economic Operators" which are also available on the web site of Ministry of Customs and Trade that is updated regularly</p> <p>-a training programme by the Turkish Ministry of Customs and Trade throughout the country is planned, as it has already been conducted in the past Dispute resolution through consultation.</p> <p>-an advisory body</p>	<p>-the personnel of Department of Trade Facilitation is always ready to receive any inquiries regarding Trade Facilitation/ Supply Chain Security through phone, e-mail or appointment</p> <p>-</p> <p>the advisory body meets to work together, cooperate and strengthen the dialogue between parties.</p>

**Annex II**

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. <b>joint events</b> (Seminars Workshops), <b>regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s)</b> (in the Customs rule making), <b>others</b> (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
	Business Consulting Unit	- to resolve problems faced by traders and other stakeholders through an institutionalized consultative mechanism.	Big enterprises, AEOs and leading non-governmental organizations	Consultations through contact points both in the headquarters and in the local Customs administrations	It receives the demands and complaints of the traders and other stakeholders relating to Customs and trade legislations and takes initiatives for the resolution of the problems and provides information on completeness of the Customs procedures and about trade's rights according to Customs code.

## Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Uruguay	Consultation process before and through the implementation of the AEO programme	-modernization process -increase the level of integrity	-Signed Memoranda (9): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Association of Customs Brokers of Uruguay (ADAU), -the Association of Cargo Agents (AUDACA),</li> <li>• the Uruguayan Association of Express Service Businesses (AUDESE),</li> <li>• the Uruguayan Chamber of Logistics (CALOG),</li> <li>• the Chamber of International Automotive Land Transport of Uruguay (CATIDU),</li> <li>• the Free Trade Zone Chamber of Uruguay (CZFU),</li> <li>• the Union of Exporters, the Navigation Centre (CENNAVE)</li> <li>• the Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>		- Once signed, the Memoranda are given effect by setting up a Joint Commission comprising two representatives of the Customs Administration, who are always the same, and two representatives of the association concerned. A one-year or six-month Action Plan, as appropriate, is drawn up, and meetings are scheduled to monitor and exchange views as to how the implementation process is progressing. Each plan of action includes a short, medium and long-term commitment.  - At the end of 2012, the results of each Memorandum will be assessed.  -The Customs Administration is also preparing a new survey to measure the various impacts of these and other policies it has carried out.




Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
United States	Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (COAC)	<p>Established through Public Law, the COAC operates by charter and may consider issues such as: global supply chain security and facilitation, CBP modernization and automation, exports, trusted trader, revenue modernization, air cargo security, customs broker regulations, trade enforcement, One U.S. Government approach to trade and safety of imports, agricultural inspection, and protection of intellectual property rights.</p> <p>To increase stakeholder awareness of the role and priorities of CBP.</p> <p>To improve stakeholder compliance with programs, regulations and policies CBP is mandated to enforce.</p> <p>To support the United States' competitiveness on the design of Customs regulatory, policy, information technology and communications.</p> <p>It encourages dialogue Between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and Private sector.</p> <p>To improve CBP's understanding of external stakeholders' business practices and realities in order to enhance program</p>	<p>Consists of 20 industry members appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and the Secretary of the Department of Treasury.</p> <p>Membership is representative of the individuals and firms affected by the commercial operations of the United States Customs and Border Protection.</p> <p>Candidates are selected from the entirety of the international supply chain processes, which includes importers and exporters, their agents, and those associated with the carriage of international freight.</p>	<p>Formal public committee meetings held quarterly (8 meetings per two year term). Outcome is to provide formal recommendations to U.S. CBP, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Treasury.</p> <p>Comprised of six subcommittees (on average 12 monthly meetings per year). The subcommittees exist for the duration of the charter and may continue for additional terms. The membership is comprised of only COAC members and government representatives. The outcome is to provide recommendations to the parent committee.</p> <p>The COAC subcommittees establish working groups to address specific issues. These working groups usually have a sunset date and membership includes non-COAC members who are subject matter experts. The outcome of the working groups is to provide findings and recommendations to the COAC subcommittees.</p> <p>Consultation for promoting Single Window and streamlining the export/import process for America's businesses with the participation of other relevant U.S. government agencies and the private sector.</p>	<p>CBP identifies key priorities for the COAC term, and collaborates with the committee's leadership, to confirm that key topics are relevant to the supply chain. There is an understanding of confidentiality and trust to discuss items and present information.</p> <p>Before the committee makes recommendations, the agency provides briefings and addresses questions presented by industry. We also invite subject matter experts from industry or other government agencies to provide insight.</p> <p>The 13<sup>th</sup> Term COAC (2013-2015) to date has produced 54 formal recommendations in areas related to exports, trade efficiency, trade modernization, a One U.S. Government approach, trade enforcement and revenue collection, trusted trade initiatives, air cargo advance screening and the global supply chain.</p>

Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
	Executive Order – Streamlining the Export/ Import Process for America’s Businesses (February 19, 2014 / E.O. 13659)	<p>To improve CBP’s understanding of external stakeholders’ business practices and realities in order to enhance program and policy decision making.</p> <p>The U.S. Presidential Executive Order #13659 requires that by December 31, 2016 that participating Federal agencies shall have capabilities, agreements, and other requirements in place to utilize the International Trade Data System (ITDS/U.S. Single Window) and supporting systems, such as the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE), as the primary means of receiving from users the standard set of data and other relevant documentation (exclusive of applications for permits, licenses, or certifications) required for the release of imported cargo and clearance of cargo for export.</p>	Establishment of the Border Interagency Executive Council (BIEC), an interagency working group which shall develop policies and processes to enhance coordination across customs, transport security, health and safety, sanitary, conservation, trade, and phytosanitary agencies with border management authorities and responsibilities to measurably improve supply chain processes and improve identification of illicit shipments.	The BIEC is comprised of 47 U.S. Federal Departments and Agencies with a role in international trade. The BIEC meets on a quarterly basis. The BIEC is comprised of three subcommittees focusing on Risk Management, Process Coordination and External Engagement.	Regarding collaboration within the BIEC, the BIEC has developed a webpage for public information, hosts meetings with associations representing the supply chain process and is scheduling webinars to have access to a larger audience.

Annex II

Country	Name(s) of the initiative(s)	Objective (s) of the initiative(s)	Participants (Public entities, trade associations and/or industry sectors involved)	Format(s) of consultation /co-operation, e.g. joint events (Seminars Workshops), regular meetings, formal consultation paper (s) (in the Customs rule making), others (letters, questionnaires on specific projects)	Brief description of the consultation/co-operation process
Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MOUs with Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and Vietnam Business Forum (VBF)</li> </ul>	<p>Through the MOUs, the partners are aiming at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting and creating favorable conditions for legitimate trades as well as to ensure a fair and transparent environment for import-export activities.</li> <li>- Guiding and supporting Enterprises to understand, then be compliant with the laws related to customs, preventing commercial frauds and violations of customs laws.</li> <li>- Enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of customs activities.</li> <li>- Encouraging the transparency and improving the quality of the new customs policies.</li> </ul>	<p>Domestic and foreign businesses represented by VCCI and VBF respectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MoUs</li> <li>- Regular meetings</li> <li>- Seminars</li> </ul>	<p>MoU is attached-</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Adobe Acrobat Document</p> </div>