MANAGING TRANSITION TO A SINGLE WINDOW
Managing Transition to a Single Window

This part focuses on people issues inherent to the implementation of the Single Window. There will be human resource and change management implications for all participating organizations, but particularly for the lead agencies. Implementation processes may differ, but the challenges are mostly similar. The major ones are changes to organizational structure and reorientation of human resource competencies.
## Contents

1. **INTRODUCTION** ...................................................................................................................................................... 3

2. **THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF CUSTOMS** ...................................................................................................................... 3

   2.1 **LEAD AGENCY ROLE** ................................................................................................................................................... 4

   2.2 **STRATEGIC POSITIONING** ........................................................................................................................................... 6

   2.3 **IMPACT OF PROJECT STRUCTURE** ............................................................................................................................. 6

3. **IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE** ............................................................................................ 7

   3.1 **DRivers FOR REORGANIZATION** .................................................................................................................................... 9

   3.2 **Restructuring: Powerful Tool, Rare Opportunity** ........................................................................................................ 9

4. **HUMAN RESOURCES** ............................................................................................................................................. 10

   4.1 **COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT – PREREQUISITES** ........................................................................................................ 10

   4.2 **SOME COMPETENCIES NEEDED TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A SINGLE WINDOW** ........................................... 11

   4.3 **INTERPRETING THE RESULTS OF THE COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT AND TAKING INFORMED HR DECISIONS** ............ 12

5. **CHANGE MANAGEMENT** ...................................................................................................................................... 13

   5.1 **WHAT IS CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN THE CONTEXT OF SINGLE WINDOW IMPLEMENTATION?** .... 13

   5.2 **CHANGE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES** ..................................................................................................................... 13

   5.3 **THE 10STEP CHANGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING A SINGLE WINDOW** ........................................ 15

   5.4 **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT** .................................................................................................................................. 16

   5.5 **COMMUNICATION: LIFEBLOOD OF CHANGE** .............................................................................................................. 17

      5.5.1 **INTERNAL COMMUNICATION** ..................................................................................................................................... 17

      5.5.2 **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION** ..................................................................................................................................... 17

6. **CONCLUSION** ........................................................................................................................................................ 18
1. Introduction

Due to the strategic role of Customs, the development of a Single Window environment may lead to changes in the organizational structure of the participating cross-border regulatory agencies (CBRAs). The design of new services and the development of new types of interface between trade and regulatory authorities also have implications for organizational design, which needs to be pursued methodically. The establishment of the lead agency and the project organization for Single Window development is a strategic issue, with implications for organizational roles and structure. Changes to the organizational structure will result in the creation of new roles and the modification of existing ones. These are issues on which Customs is required to take a long-term view and create a roadmap.

Part II of Volume 1 illustrates the cross-cutting responsibilities of all border agencies, with particular focus on Customs, and underlines the implications for the organizational structure. From both policy and operational perspectives, this poses challenges to a traditional civil service, organized into specialized verticals, and to the hierarchy-bound government set-up. For the Single Window to be efficient, enhanced co-ordination and integration between CBRAs are necessary, and the actions of the participating CBRAs cannot be permitted to become disjointed. The solution lies in the strategic management process, which enables the alignment of goals, processes, and organizational culture. It helps ensure that all critical activities are appropriately located within and across organizational boundaries.

This Part considers human resource and change management issues, beginning with a systematic examination of strategic choices facing border agencies, including Customs. Each border agency must review its respective role in the context of a Single Window. The unique and core competencies that Customs and other border agency personnel possess will ensure that they continue to remain valuable in any reconfiguration of the workspace under a Single Window. The Part concludes with guidance on the change management process.

2. The Strategic Role of Customs

In discussing the strategic role of Customs, several questions need to be answered:

✓ What does it mean to be the ‘lead agency’ in a Single Window Environment?
✓ What are the human resource implications of being the lead agency?
✓ In what ways, could the Single Window environment impact the organizational structure of a CBRA?
✓ What human resource challenges does a Single Window present and what are the key aspects of meeting these difficulties?
✓ How does the executive management handle transition and change that emerge from implementation of the Single Window?
Part VI of Volume 1 explains the process of designing Single Window services. While the question of the establishment of lead agency is a political process, it is also a strategic issue, which needs to be examined very early on as part of the Single Window initiative.

2.1 Lead Agency Role

The term ‘lead agency’ signifies a leadership role involving the performance of strategic functions regarding the Single Window environment. All participating agencies need to analyse and decide as to their precise role in the future arrangement. The template provided below facilitates this analysis. It is evident from the WCO 2011 and 2016 Surveys on Single Windows that most business processes covered by a Single Window relate to cargo clearance procedures involving Customs. In any case, Customs will be heavily involved as a user and stakeholder in any Single Window initiative. Each of the interested agencies must determine their respective position in the ‘RACIN’ matrix (Responsibility, Accountability, Consultation, Information Not concerned/Not involved).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Area</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Strategic Role (Example)</th>
<th>Change from Current Role (Customs)</th>
<th>Competency Profile and Impact on HR (Customs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>Trade Ministry</td>
<td>Transport Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Support policy oversight on Single Window</td>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>Accountable</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish the strategic business case</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Accountable</td>
<td>Consulted</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain policy momentum and ongoing support</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Accountable</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
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<td>Programme Management</td>
<td>Accountable</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Business case for the preferred project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Project procurement and implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Project monitoring, evaluation, review and sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Harmonization of laws and procedures, including development of new legislation and regulations to support exchange of information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Data harmonization and business process alignment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Development of functional and normative structures of data interchange</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational – Business</td>
<td>Trader account management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing licences, permits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Management of business operations - release decisions</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post-release accounting/post-release enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk management in the integrated environment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational – IT</td>
<td>Ownership of IT assets: data centre, hardware, software and data networks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ownership of information assets: data management and data life-cycle policies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of IT-enabled operations – operations management, change management, configuration management, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Example of applied RACI matrix.
A competency-based approach is the cornerstone on which each new role will be defined. Policy and technical areas require particular knowledge-oriented competencies, whereas project management and operations need more process-oriented competencies.

2.2 Strategic Positioning

There are several aspects to being a ‘lead agency’. Some functions, such as responsibility for project procurement, or control of IT resources, are often misunderstood as the primary roles of any relevance or substance. As important as these tasks are, they are also very demanding in terms of human resources and managerial attention. Each participating agency needs to assess its strategic role in the process of development of the Single Window environment. Each organization has to perform a ‘SWOT’ analysis based on its current internal strengths and weaknesses, and on external opportunities and threats. The opportunities presented by the Single Window initiative must be weighed against possible losses.

Historically, in many countries, Customs has delivered data and procedural simplification in international trade. Its track record of delivering projects is well appreciated. These projects also have substantial ICT components. Additionally, Customs initiatives on promoting and managing trade facilitation make it a favourite for the ‘lead agency’ role. In countries where Customs has established a reputation for technical and managerial excellence, it can expect to be given responsibility for project management, business and IT operations, and co-ordination of technical and legal aspects. On the other hand, if Customs is not seen in some countries as an efficient deliverer of technology, it might lose its claim to the lead agency role.

In all these considerations, the track record of Customs and other participating CBRAs will be a major factor in determining who plays the role of lead agency.

2.3 Impact of Project Structure

Innovation is possible in designing the project. A public-private partnership will require different governance structures from those where projects are entirely handled by the government. Establishment of cross-departmental, empowered structures for executive decision-making will add another aspect to governance. Likewise, the creation of independent units for contract management, project administration and programme evaluation will impact the human resource configurations for Customs.

Regardless of government’s decision on the lead agency, Customs cannot shy away from key responsibilities in any Single Window initiatives. Its traditional role as the indispensable agency at the border will be a dominant factor. Its strategic positioning, as defined in its mission, vision and strategic goals, will determine the limits of its engagement. Its current performance on critical government programmes concerning external trade and border management will help establish the case for its chosen role.
3. Implications for Organizational Structure

A question that is often discussed in the course of the development of Single Window projects is that of the emerging organizational structure. Experts (namely, Chandler) have defined organizational structure as the outcome of the process whereby organizational strategy is administered. When there is a change in organizational strategy, it will lead to administrative problems which need to be tackled by making appropriate changes in the organization.

VUCE – Peru Single Window for Foreign Trade (VUCE) in Peru was established as a result of an important political process that implied extensive consultations between the different agencies, government departments and ministries.

In the beginning, Customs took the initiative for developing the interconnection between the Customs and other agencies of the foreign customs community. At the same time in 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism conducted a study to determine VUCE’s implementation and, later on, in June 2006 VUCE was created as a joint initiative between Customs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, which gradually involved other agencies. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism leads the initiative and has the responsibility for the overall policy. Additionally, Customs has the role of Technical Coordinator in the Restricted Goods Component of VUCE.

Likewise, to provide a formal structure for VUCE’s implementation, it was necessary to establish a Special Commission responsible for all policy and operational matters. This Commission was created in accordance to the "Law of Foreign Trade Facilitation" published on February 2007.

In this context, VUCE was launched for its operation in 2010. It began with the Restricted Goods Component, which allows the issuance of permits, certificates, and licenses of 15 Other Governmental Agencies (OGA) by electronic means to exporters and importers. Additionally, in 2013 was launched the Origin Component and Port Component. The Origin Component of VUCE allows users to simplify administrative procedures related to eligibility and issuance of certificates of origin; the Port Component of VUCE includes all the formalities required for the arrival, stay and clearance of ships.

Another important fact to mention is the implementation of the interoperability at national level between VUCE and the Peruvian Customs Clearance System, which began in 2015 and started its operations in December 2016. This interoperability allows data validation related to import declarations. Also, at international level, within the framework of the Pacific Alliance Agreement, Colombia, Chile, Mexico and Peru started a project in 2015 to interoperate electronic documents through VUCE of each member countries. Therefore, VUCE’s International Interoperability has started in 2016 with the Phytosanitary Certificate, and in the near future it will be interchanged the Certificate of Origin and Customs Declaration.

Update provided by Customs Administration of Peru

![Figure 1: Functional requirements and policy priorities should determine organizational structure. Source: WCO Capacity Building Compendium, 2010](image)
The design of the organization for running the Single Window is an important responsibility of executive management, which needs to remain alert to the administrative difficulties that strategic changes may cause. These changes invariably lead to new organizational roles and put pressure on different parts of the functional portfolios. For example, implementation of cargo clearance based on risk management requires the creation of new positions at all levels of the organization. The centralized structures that determine risk rules, and the system-driven approach to risk determination, will take over from personalized, distributed and transactional models, causing power shifts within the organization. This clearly calls for organizational changes.

Emphasis on post-clearance audit and AEO programmes will not only require new competencies, but create several new organizational roles. Typically, Customs organizations will have to move away from, or drastically limit, detailed documentary examination in real-time to the post-clearance phase.

Likewise, new structures will be necessitated through having to co-ordinate the examination and release process at the border. The presence of numerous agencies at physical borders gives rise to enormous co-ordination problems, leading to administrative difficulties, disunity of command and finger-pointing. Different countries have developed different strategies to deal with the question of reorganization.

---

**Single Window: Azerbaijan**

Upon the implementation of a Single Window environment, Azerbaijan Customs adopted changes to its organizational structure. It recruited a team of qualified specialists in agriculture and veterinary sciences. In addition, functions of Ministry of Health, Transportation, Agriculture and Veterinary Services related to border controls were transferred the State Customs Committee as a leading agency for single window implementation.

Customs on its own was able to provide all services at the border. This change was carried out in accordance with the appropriate executive authority and in consultation with the relevant ministries and departments.

[An update to be provided by Azerbaijan Customs]

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**Reorganization – the formation of US Customs & Border Protection**

There are several mission-critical roles that employees play within CBP. Many of these roles have cross-cutting responsibilities of agriculture, health, maritime security, aviation security, immigration, border policing and traditional Customs functions. All these diverse border-related functions have been brought under one agency in order to achieve improved co-ordination and effectiveness.

Over 20,000 Border Patrol Agents protect 1,900 miles of the US border with Mexico and 5,000 miles of US border with Canada.

More than 20,000 CBP Officers ensure the nation’s safety by screening passengers and cargo at over 300 ports of entry. Nearly 1,000 Air and Marine Interdiction Agents use their specialized training and high-tech equipment to prevent people, weapons, narcotics and conveyances from illegal entry by air and water. Over 2,200 CBP Agriculture Specialists work to curtail the spread of harmful pests and plant and animal diseases that may harm America’s farms and food supply, and to avert bio- and agro-terrorism. Nearly 2,500 employees in CBP revenue positions collect over $30 billion annually in entry duties and taxes through the enforcement of trade and tariff laws. These collections provide the second largest revenue for the U.S. Government. In addition, they fulfil the agency’s trade mission by appraising and classifying imported merchandise. These employees serve in positions such as import specialist, auditor, international trade specialist, and textile analyst.

Source: United States Customs & Border Protection website
3.1 Drivers for Reorganization

Part VI dealt with the problems of service design. These issues concern trade’s access to Single Window services, the interaction between business and CBRA frontline staff, and the complementary role played by electronic access channels, such as web portals and voice-based service desks.

Changes to workflow arising from operational co-ordination between CBRAs in front and back-offices were also discussed. Essentially, implementation of a Single Window will lead to variations in the constitution of work packages and the way in which work is completed, as outlined below:

- Sharing the workplace with agencies belonging to other CBRAs’ federated control units, integrated risk management units, inter-agency targeting centres, traditional contact centres and front-offices.
- Routing of work between staff and involvement of officials from different agencies in joint activities.
- Empowering frontline staff through cross-designation: Staff from one CBRA to receive and deal with some of trade queries concerning another CBRA.
- Empowering frontline staff through better delegation of authority so that they do more with fewer handovers, also leading to job enrichment.
- Co-ordinated and combined inspections.
- Co-ordinated interventions and release of cargo.

Because of these changes, accountabilities for service delivery will be redefined, and reporting relationships will be redrawn.

3.2 Restructuring: Powerful Tool, Rare Opportunity

Reorganization is a corollary to the redesign of services. It is a powerful instrument in the hands of executive management, but also a unique opportunity, which must be used with care. The announcement of impending organizational restructuring should be used carefully and after preparing fully. On the one hand, it helps executive management to take concrete steps to gather resources and to launch internal and external communication. On the other, however, staff get the sense change is in the air, and trade and other key stakeholders also get the message that significant changes are under way.
There is always the expectation that IT-driven efficiency will free up human resources, and produce better results through improved co-ordination between units. This, however, is not necessarily the case and should be verified, especially with respect to the actual configuration of work performed by staff. The reorganized structure should match closely the needs, priorities and expectations of the target organizational structure. The job description for each post needs to be reviewed in the Single Window environment.

### 4. Human Resources

#### 4.1 Competency Assessment – Prerequisites

People are the key enablers of any organization. It is therefore essential that Customs administrations and their stakeholders invest in their people as a fundamental element of their organizational development and modernization agenda. This is particularly true when a country embarks on the establishment of a Single Window.

In order to effectively implement a Single Window and to institutionalize its use, it is critical to carry out a thorough competency assessment (or knowledge, skills and aptitude mapping) across all the stakeholders involved in the project, in order to ensure that they are adequately equipped to handle the tasks that come with establishment of such a new working environment.

A competency-based approach to human resource management (HRM) ensures that employees’ performance is aligned with the organization’s vision, mission, goals and values. A competency is the combination of knowledge and skills that individuals apply to perform the tasks they have been assigned. A competency can be defined, observed, measured and evaluated.
Competencies can be categorized into three main clusters:
- Managerial and behavioural competencies;
- Business-operational competencies;
- Support competencies.

The competency assessment exercise is particularly critical at the inception/planning stage of the Single Window project as it will inform key human resource management processes/activities during the life-time of the project for each party involved, including:
- Job creation (updates of job descriptions or actual creation of new jobs, depending on each agency’s set-up);
- Staff planning (including staff rotation);
- Competency development (training/staff development);
- Competency acquisition (recruitment);
- Competency retention.

In order to carry out a thorough competency assessment, it is important to first list all competencies needed to establish, operationalize and maintain a Single Window. The competency assessment should include mapping out the existing in-house competencies against the competencies needed to establish and maintain a Single Window. It is therefore imperative that all parties involved have a job catalogue, as well as a competency framework, which clearly define each competency and the different levels of proficiency associated with it.

### 4.2 Some Competencies Needed to Establish and Maintain a Single Window

The table below provides a non-exhaustive list of competencies needed to establish and maintain a Single Window.

**Table 2: Competencies to manage a Single Window**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managerial and behavioural competencies</th>
<th>Business-operational competencies</th>
<th>Support competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Strategic planning</td>
<td>- Customs declaration processing</td>
<td>- Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Project management</td>
<td>- Customs legislation and procedures</td>
<td>management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Change management</td>
<td>- Intelligence and data processing</td>
<td>- Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conflict management</td>
<td>- Co-ordinated border management</td>
<td>- Data warehousing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Integrated risk management</td>
<td>- Human resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Information system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Business process mapping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Interpreting the Results of the Competency Assessment and Taking Informed HR Decisions

The result of the competency assessment exercise will inform the orientation of HR processes to address the competency gaps identified within each agency/stakeholder.

The partners involved partners will have multiple options for addressing these gaps:

− **Rotate staff** to ensure that the most competent staff (in terms of the Single Window who are available in-house are allocated to the establishment/operationalization/maintenance of the Single Window.

− If there is a total absence of critical competencies, the agency/stakeholder may have to:
  
  ● *Create jobs* that did not exist before;
  
  ● *recruit new officers* on fixed or short-term contracts, depending on the need(s) to be addressed.

− As the number of managers and users of the Single Window will grow exponentially, the different partners will have to devise *competency development (training) strategies and plans* (see –Azerbaijan’s experience in Section 3) to ensure that each agency/partner, depending on its role, has a critical mass of staff at all times that can effectively manage and/or use the Single Window. For the end users of the system, such as Customs brokers/clearing agents, these training sessions will need to be provided regularly during the pilot phase and prior to the ‘go-live’ launch of the SW system. They may also need to be coordinated at the national level by their institutional partners (e.g. Customs, Chambers of Commerce) to ensure consistency of the training delivered and efficient use of resources. Training sessions may be carried out through e-learning.

− As the global trading environment is becoming more digitalized, some key competencies, such as information system security, will be in high demand. This will require partners to devise adapted *competency retention strategies* for key competencies.

− Furthermore, the responsibility of government agencies to be equal opportunity employers notwithstanding, staff asked to use the SW will need to have a certain proficiency in information technology. As a result, these agencies may have to either *transition some employees* out of tasks related to the handling of declarations of goods, or ensure that these employees’ competencies in the field of IT are *upgraded*. In any case, for the recruitment of new staff, basic IT fundamentals will need to become a requirement.
5. Change Management

5.1 What is Change Management and Why is it Important in the Context of Single Window Implementation?

Like many reform and modernization initiatives, the establishment of a Single Window will lead to a new business/operational environment for both cross-border regulatory agencies and end users in the private sector. As a result, it will be important to define and implement an effective change management plan that will facilitate the transition from one working environment to another.

Before embarking on the venture of establishing a Single Window, all relevant stakeholders must answer some fundamental questions concerning the value proposition of a Single Window:

- What new value is the Single Window bringing to the clients/end users of the system (importers/exporters/carriers/brokers) and how will/can this new value be measured?
- How will the establishment of a Single Window benefit public administrations and how will/can the benefits be realized and measured?
- What kind of change must be brought about to achieve this new value?

The foregoing questions emphasize that change management is critical in securing the buy-in of the stakeholders, the adoption of the new working/business environment and the use of new tools/processes/technologies so that the initiative can deliver good results and outcomes. It is important to move from an ‘activity-output’ mindset to an ‘outcome and benefits realization’ approach. Having a robust change management strategy is also a buffer against resistance to change; it ensures that the results/products/solution provided meet the expectations of all stakeholders, and that the benefits of the change are enjoyed by all stakeholders. Therefore, investing in change management activities from the start of the initiative will not only facilitate its implementation but also limit the risks of failure and of increasing implementation costs.

5.2 Change Management Approaches

There are several well-documented and recognized change management approaches, including the three-step Lewin model (Unfreeze-Change-Refreeze); the eight-step Kotter change model (see Section 5.2.1 below); the five-step ADKAR model (see Section 5.2.2 below) and the 10-step approach, described in Section 5.3 and taken from the June 2017 edition of the WCO Capacity Building Compendium. The approach is specifically adapted to the initiative to establish a Single Window.
5.2.1 – Kotter Change Model: Eight Steps

Figure 2: The Kotter Change Model, involving eight steps.

5.2.2 – ADKAR Change Model: Five Steps

Figure 3: The ADKAR Change Model, involving five steps
5.3 The 10step Change Management Approach to Establishing a Single Window

The 10 steps in this Section follow the change management approach described in the June 2017 edition of the WCO Capacity Building Compendium.

**Step One:** *Focus on the business process and not on the function* – Processes are the way the CBRAs interact with clients and with each other.

**Step Two:** *Development of a process profile* – Most processes within CBRAs may not be documented before the implementation of a Single Window. Only documented procedures provide improvement opportunities. Apply the 80/20 rule.

- 20% of the processes consume 80% of the resources;
- 20% of the activities within a process generate 80% of the results; and
- 20% of the problems within a process represent 80% of the opportunities for improvement.

**Step Three:** *Process mapping* – Only documented processes can be subject to controlled change. In most CBRAs, processes may have evolved.

**Step Four:** *Measure the processes* – What cannot be measured can seldom be controlled. Process measurements allow CBRAs to determine current performance levels and establish quantifiable improvement targets.

**Step Five:** *Study other Single Window implementations* – Ideas or proven processes in other Customs administrations can provide invaluable information, save time and possibly avoid mistakes.

**Step Six:** *Process Redesign* – Using the information gathered from the previous five steps, Customs can now map out the new processes, eliminating redundancies and duplication of work activities.

**Step Seven:** *Balance processes and technology* – Optimize use of technology through interaction design.

**Step Eight:** *Manage process change* – CBRAs should proactively manage the change by identifying and assessing the risks before the change is made.

**Step Nine:** *Prepare people (staff and clients) for process change* – Follow the ‘head, heart and feet’ model for successful change.

- Head – People intellectually understand the need to change based on supporting data. As much involvement as possible will help in understanding.
- Heart – People are emotionally engaged in change because they see the performance possibilities.
- Feet – People take personal action as a participant, not an observer.

**Step Ten:** *Continue Process Improvement* – CBRAs should constantly be on the path towards improvement with day-to-day challenges and opportunities. (See Survey feedback and total quality management frameworks for continuous improvement.)
5.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement is part of project and change management activities and helps:
- Ensure stakeholder buy-in and support (political support);
- Ensure mutual understanding and minimize confusion;
- Ensure that needs of stakeholders are incorporated and their fears assuaged;
- Ensure ownership of the new processes, products and solutions delivered by the initiative;
- Minimize time spent on crisis management and conflict resolution.

When embarking on a Single Window, one of the first tasks will be to identify all the stakeholders that can impact or be impacted by the initiative. Once this is done, it is advisable to create a comprehensive stakeholder register, and to cluster these stakeholders according to relevant criteria (e.g. public sector or private sector).

Depending on the interests and level of influence of each stakeholder, the most appropriate mode of engagement will need to be selected between:
- Informing (one way communication)
- Consulting
- Involving
- Collaborating
- Empowering

Once stakeholders are identified and mapped, and the mode of engagement selected, the project team will have to move on to the stage of developing targeted and tailored communication plans.

Below is an example of a stakeholder matrix for a Single Window project from the perspective of Customs administrations.
5.5 Communication: Lifeblood of Change

Managing the change resulting from Single Window implementation requires a formally developed communication plan that defines:

− the goals of the communication plan;
− target groups – communication will need to be tailored to the audience;
− key messages to be delivered to each target group;
− the best channel/methodology/tools to deliver key messages to each target group;
− the timetable of communication activities;
− resources (financial, human, technological) needed; and
− indicators to measure the impact and success of the communication plan.

Consideration of the best channel to use to reach target groups will need to take on board whether to use:

− Non-media communication: fairs, open door events, sensitization sessions…
− Media communication: social networks, television, brochures, newspapers...

It will also be useful to distinguish between communication aimed at an internal and at an external audience, as explained below.

5.5.1 Internal Communication

The dominance of informal communication channels and grapevines is rarely helpful in managing change. Employees need to be informed formally, promptly and correctly about the impending changes. There should not be any scope for ‘hidden agendas’ and rumours. Messages have to be regular and uniform, with a clear purpose and in keeping with their context. When formal opportunities are provided to employees and a free flow of information is permitted in formal settings, this promotes a consistent focus on problem areas.

5.5.2 External Communication

A formal approach to external communication involves creating stakeholder classes, describing the value proposition of the Single Window project for each class, and creating target groups for communication. Following stakeholder analysis, management attention should shift to brand-building. Building an image for the Single Window, and creating a logo and a set of slogans that instinctively convey the value proposition of the Single Window, is a part of this exercise.
Short and comprehensive slogans that convey the main benefits can be used as mantras to support dialogue and discussions, and help the entire management team consistently ‘sell’ the project. Different types of communication material should be built for various classes of stakeholder. For instance, it may be useful to develop different flyers for the political executive, senior management, and trade. Short infomercials can also help promote the concept effectively. For example, Colombia promoted its Single Window with the theme ‘No more square windows and square faces’, which became an instant hit. The audiovisual material provided by Peru and the Republic of Korea are also examples to illustrate this point.

6. Conclusion

Customs administrations have a historical role at borders. As a border agency, Customs is indispensable. Its reputation for delivery will determine the kind of responsibilities assigned to it. The desire to take on a role must be matched with current business capabilities and the ability to put in place the required competencies.

This Part takes up the question of organizational restructuring to support the Single Window environment. Restructuring is shaped by the organization’s overall strategy. Inter-agency structures may be necessary to carry out co-ordinated actions with other agencies at the border. They provide the executive management with both challenges and opportunities. The chance to restructure is the most powerful one for the organization, and must be used carefully and systematically.

Human resources are the key to successful delivery in a Single Window environment. Frontline employees and management must be the change they wish the Single Window to represent. The competencies of frontline staff must meet the expectations of the designers who develop the service interactions for the Single Window solution.

Customs administrations cannot afford to follow a casual approach to change management. The WCO Capacity Building Compendium provides the ‘ten-step’ approach to change management. Communication is the primary task in managing change. Executive management is advised to adopt and implement a professionally produced communication plan.