



Brussels, 19 September 2014.

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS PACKAGE

REVISED ECP ACTION PLAN

(Item III. (b) on the Agenda)

I. Background

1. The Economic Competitiveness Package (ECP) was adopted at the 119th/120th Sessions of the Council in June 2012. It comprises existing WCO instruments and tools which contribute to economic growth. First and foremost, the principles laid down in the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) are recognized as forming the core of the ECP and as the foundation for modern and efficient Customs procedures.
2. The ECP also comprises all other instruments, tools and standards relating to supply chain facilitation and security, such as the SAFE Framework of Standards, the Risk Management and Single Window Compendiums and the Data Model, to name but a few. The ECP Toolkit has been developed to strengthen the existing ECP tools and instruments and show how they may contribute to the enhancement of economic competitiveness (see Doc. PC0380). The RKC and other WCO instruments and tools within the ECP cover all Customs-related measures in the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA). In this respect, the ECP may provide practical guidance for implementing the TFA which was concluded at the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013.
3. With the objective of implementing and developing the Package, the ECP Action Plan was endorsed at the Policy Commission's 68th Session in December 2012. The Action Plan sets out 21 Actions, indicating deadlines where appropriate, and the bodies responsible for the specific Actions.
4. At the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) sessions in March 2014, Members agreed to revise the ECP Action Plan. The Secretariat was asked to draft a revised Action Plan and submit it to the next sessions of the PTC. At its meeting in June 2014, the Policy Commission also took note of the schedule to revise the Action Plan.

II. Progress under the current ECP Action Plan

5. The current ECP Action Plan requires the Secretariat to present a progress report to the PTC. The latest progress report (Doc. PC0378) describes the progress made from January 2013 to 20 September 2014. During this phase, ECP regional workshops were organized in all the WCO regions and many awareness-raising activities, including the development of useful materials, were conducted. Innovative practices relating to trade facilitation and economic competitiveness were also collected from Members.
6. Under the current ECP Action Plan, the following tools and instruments will be developed and form part of the ECP by the end of the year :
 - Compendium on Coordinated Border Management
 - Transit Handbook
 - Customs-Business Partnership Guidance
 - Model Small Business Lens Checklist for SMEs

III. Revised Action Plan – Phase II of the ECP

7. Based on the progress made by the WCO to date on the ECP, the Secretariat has drafted an ECP Action Plan for Phase II covering the period from January 2015 to December 2016 (see Annex hereto). The main components of the draft ECP Action Plan for Phase II are as follows :
 - (1) Continuation of awareness-raising activities, including publication of useful materials and effective use of the WCO Web site.
 - (2) Capacity building delivery, including donor coordination.
 - (3) Further development or elaboration of tools and instruments.
 - (4) Organization of high-level or regional events on regional integration.

IV. Action required

8. Members are invited to examine the draft ECP Action Plan for Phase II and to make any relevant comments with a view to improving it.

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Draft ECP Action Plan for Phase II (January 2015 to December 2016)

The Economic Competitiveness Package (ECP) was endorsed at the 119th/120th Sessions of the WCO Council in 2012. With the objective of implementing and developing the Package, the ECP Action Plan was approved at the Policy Commission's 68th Session in December 2012. The Action Plan sets out 21 Actions, indicating deadlines where appropriate, and the bodies responsible for the specific Actions.

Based on the first ECP Action Plan, regional workshops on the ECP were organized in the WCO's six regions and many awareness-raising activities, including the development of useful materials, were conducted. The following tools and instruments are expected to be developed and form part of the ECP by the end of 2014 :

- Compendium on Coordinated Border Management
- Transit Handbook
- Customs-Business Partnership Guidance
- Model Small Business Lens Checklist for SMEs

The ECP Action Plan for Phase II envisages concrete actions from January 2015 to December 2016. It consists of 19 actions, divided into (1) awareness-raising, (2) capacity building delivery, (3) development and elaboration of the ECP and (4) regional integration.

1. AWARENESS-RAISING

The WCO has already developed a range of instruments and tools relevant to the growth of economic competitiveness, and the ECP lists them. The Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) is recognized as the core of the ECP and other WCO instruments and tools, such as the Time Release Study (TRS) Guide, the SAFE Framework of Standards, the Risk Management Compendium and the Single Window Compendium, provide WCO Members with guidelines for further trade facilitation. In this regard, raising the awareness of existing and newly developed WCO tools and activities contributes to enhancing the economic competitiveness of WCO Members.

	Action	Responsible body	Timeframe/Deadline
1	Use of meetings held in the regions to raise awareness and collect Members' needs	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
2	Organization of regional or national workshops/seminars	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
3	Publication of useful materials for awareness-raising	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
4	Effective use of the WCO Web site to promote existing WCO tools	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity

2. CAPACITY BUILDING DELIVERY

The WCO has an active and professional capacity building portfolio. The WCO offers comprehensive tailor-made operational and technical support to implement ECP tools and instruments, based on WCO Members' needs. Coordination with donor institutions as well as networks of accredited experts in the areas of trade facilitation and economic competitiveness will be strengthened in the interests of effective capacity building and technical assistance.

	Action	Responsible body	Timeframe/Deadline
5	Capacity building to support implementation of the WCO's existing instruments and tools	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
6	Accreditation of more experts to enhance capacity building activities	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
7	Holding of regional donor coordination meetings	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
8	Organization of regional or national seminars and workshops to encourage more Members to accede to the RKC	WCO Secretariat and accredited experts	Continuous activity
9	Further development of e-learning modules, based on needs expressed by Members	WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity

3. DEVELOPMENT AND ELABORATION OF THE ECP

Bearing in mind the ever-changing trade and business environment, regular updates of existing WCO tools and instruments and further development of new tools are to be expected. In order to develop practical and useful instruments and tools for Members, innovative practices among Members will be collected and disseminated on a continuous basis.

	Action	Responsible body	Timeframe/Deadline
10	Collection and dissemination of innovative practices	Interested WCO Members, WCO Secretariat	Continuous activity
11	Development of new WCO instruments and tools for the ECP, based on the collection of innovative practices and gap analysis	WCO Working Group on the TFA, Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) and other related WCO committees or working groups	December 2016
12	Refinement of existing WCO instruments and tools, based on needs expressed by Members	Relevant WCO committees or working groups	Continuous activity
13	Development and modification of the RKC Guidelines	RKC Management Committee	Continuous activity

	Action	Responsible body	Timeframe/Deadline
14	Development of GNC Utility Blocks	Interested WCO Members	Continuous activity
15	Development and modification of performance indicators	Relevant WCO committees or working groups	December 2016
16	Regular reporting to the PTC	WCO Secretariat	PTC sessions

4. REGIONAL INTEGRATION

A number of initiatives on trade facilitation and economic integration have been undertaken at regional and bilateral level. In response to this trend, high-level events on regional integration will be organized and Members' priorities on this topic will be monitored and researched.

	Action	Responsible body	Timeframe/Deadline
17	Monitoring of and research into regional integration priorities identified by Members	PTC and other related WCO committees or working groups	Continuous activity
18	Organization of a high-level conference on regional integration	WCO Secretariat	December 2016
19	Organization of regional workshops or seminars for effective transit regimes	WCO Secretariat	December 2016