



WCO WORKING GROUP
ON THE WTO
TRADE FACILITATION
AGREEMENT

PT0096E1a

INCLUDING THE JOINT
SESSION WITH THE
223rd/224th MEETING OF
THE PERMANENT
TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE

-
11th Meeting

-
4-5 March 2019

Brussels, 16 April 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE 11TH MEETING OF THE WCO WORKING GROUP ON THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT INCLUDING THE JOINT SESSION WITH THE 223RD/224TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Item I – Opening and adoption of the Agenda

- a) **Opening of the Meeting by Ms. Ana Hinojosa, Director Compliance and Facilitation;**
 - b) **Adoption of the Draft Agenda and the Summary Document.**
1. The Chairperson of the TFAWG Mr. L Satya Srinivas (India) opened the 11th Meeting of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Working Group on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFAWG). He invited the Director of Compliance and Facilitation Ms. Ana Hinojosa to address the TFAWG.
 2. Ms. Ana Hinojosa welcomed all delegates from Customs, other government agencies, Permanent Representations in Brussels and Geneva, trade ministries, International Organizations, private sector and academia. The Director expressed her appreciation for the cooperation with International Organizations in this context, especially with the World Trade Organization (WTO). Ms. Sheri Rosenow's valuable contributions in the past have enriched the debate in the TFAWG.

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3. On the basis of the discussions of the December 2018 Policy Commission, she informed the delegates that in 2019 only this one TFAWG meeting was to be held, including a joint session with the Permanent Technical Committee to cover a number of cross-cutting issues, while the future meetings of the TFAWG would be organized, once a year, back to back with the Capacity Building Committee.
4. Ms. Hinojosa then briefly touched upon the several topics that were on the Agenda and the relationship between them.
5. The list of participants is set out at **Annex I** hereto.
6. In conclusion, the TFAWG:
 - took note of Ms. Hinojosa's opening address; and
 - adopted the draft Agenda (PT0088E1c) and the Summary Document (PT0089E1b).

Item II – WTO TFA Developments

a) WTO Secretariat – state of play of the TFA;

7. The WTO Secretariat, Ms. Sheri Rosenow, provided an update regarding the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee (TFC) and the WTO TFA state of play including the latest data on ratifications and notifications. She informed the meeting that the TFC was now focusing on three different areas: experience sharing; urging members to ratify the Agreement; and looking into the notifications, including the requirements, deadlines and overdue notifications.
8. Regarding the TFA state of play, she informed the meeting that 141 WTO members (86 %) had ratified the TFA to date. As far as categorization of commitments was concerned, the WTO had received 114 notifications for category A, 76 for category B and 65 for category C commitments; 11 members had not yet notified any designation. She added that the current overall implementation rate of the TFA was 61.8% and that the measures notified so far are expected to be implemented by 2038. According to the notifications, the highest implementation rate is connected to articles 9, 10.5, 10.6, 5.2 and 10.9, while the lowest implementation rate is connected to articles 7.6, 3, 5.3, 7.7 and 10.4.
9. Ms. Rosenow also shared information on the notifications which are overdue and stressed that, for example, donor arrangements for category C commitments for developing countries (due 22 February 2018) have not yet come in. She continued to explain that this might be due to the unavailability of any concrete example. She further explained that this notification should include information, article by article, on the donor/organization with which the member is working and the relevant projects, in as much detail as appropriate.
10. She also presented a new document developed by the TFA Facility called the “Matrix of notifications presented under the Trade Facilitation Agreement” and the situation regarding transparency notifications: for Article 1.4, 63 members have notified; for Article 10.4.3, 55 members; for Article 10.6.2, 62 members; and for 12.2.2, 58 members. It was pointed out that there were no deadlines for transparency notifications; nevertheless, if one of the four transparency measures was notified as a category A commitment, it is expected that the transparency notification would be due, as well.

11. The two TFA-related WTO web sites (www.tfafacility.org and www.database.org) were also referred to as the reference point for all the information provided.
12. The next meeting of the TFC will be held in the second half of June, with the new Chairperson still to be elected, and the dates still to be determined. In early October, another meeting of the TFC will be held, back-to-back with a dedicated session on technical assistance and capacity building. For the latter meeting, the TFA Facility (TFAF) will fund one delegate per developing/LDC member.
13. In the discussion that followed, the Meeting expressed appreciation for the detailed and informative presentation, as well as for the very useful web sites developed by the TFAF, providing a wealth of valuable information. A Member was interested in the details of how the availability of trade-related information could best be notified to the WTO, while another wanted to know whether there were any corrective measures in place for late notifications.
14. An Observer raised the question of private sector observer status in the TFC. The WTO explained that the matter had not been raised so far and that, for the time being, the discussions on the Rules of Procedure of the TFC were focusing on the participation and status of international organizations, five of which (IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WCO and World Bank) were, for the time being, invited to the TFC meetings on an *ad hoc* basis.
15. A Member stressed that the WCO's important role should focus on ensuring effective implementation of the TFA, using international standards, as well as ensuring mechanisms for monitoring implementation with the use of maturity models. A survey could be sent out on a yearly basis.
16. In conclusion, the TFAWG:
 - took note of Ms. Rosenow's presentation about the state of play regarding the TFA;

b) WCO Secretariat - feedback from the December 2018 WCO Policy Commission and other updates;

17. Ms. Ana Hinojosa, gave the delegates feedback on trade facilitation related discussions held at the December 2018 Policy Commission (PC), focusing on the outcomes of the 10th Meeting of the TFAWG. She had informed the PC that in terms of the monitoring the progress of TFA implementation, for which the PC had at its meeting in June 2018 expressed that the TFAWG should have a pivotal role, the 10th TFAWG Meeting had felt that it was not appropriate to monitor implementation of the WTO TFA, but it had nevertheless agreed to amend its Terms of Reference (ToR) to provide for monitoring progress of implementation of WCO instruments and tools that supported Members in applying the TFA. The Director provided other updates that were shared at the meeting, including ones related to the updated TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan, WTO notifications and ratifications, participation in the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee and WCO's participation in the back-to-back meetings and workshops together with the WTO and Annex D organizations, as well as with donor Members.
18. Regarding the future of the TFAWG, she explained to the PTC that after the TFA had entered into force and Members had begun the process of implementation, a decrease in the number of delegates participating in the TFAWG had been noted over time. Much of the work was being done under the auspices of the PTC, with regard to technical guidance

and tools, and the Capacity Building Committee (CBC), with regard to capacity building under the Mercator Programme. With that in mind, she had invited PC delegates to consider and decide whether it was necessary to retain the TFAWG as a dedicated group, or whether its work could be blended into the existing WCO working bodies, specifically the PTC and CBC, particularly bearing in mind the overall priorities of the Organization, as well as resource constraints and the need to avoid duplication.

19. She explained that, in the lengthily discussion that followed, it was emphasized that the WCO needed to send a clear message of ongoing commitment towards TFA implementation by retaining the TFAWG. However, the PC also took note of the suggestions made by Members to improve the efficiency of the TFAWG, which included reducing the frequency of meetings and organizing future meetings together with the Capacity Building Committee.

20. The TFAWG delegates welcomed the idea of continuing the work of the TFAWG. However, it was emphasized that, apart from the capacity building support, the WCO's added value was the practical knowledge it can bring to the table. The WCO can also play an important role in the discussions on international standards and Single Window implementation. Another Member raised the fact that performance measurement was an important part of the TFAWG and enquired whether there were plans to combine it with the Working Group on Performance Measurement, to be established.

21. The Director explained that much of the technical work, including development of tools and guidelines, is something that takes place under the PTC, and the next step for the TFAWG would be to determine what would be the future direction that will differentiate it from other bodies. As regards performance measurement, she explained that it was a cross-cutting matter that went across many different areas, and suggested that the matter be further looked into under the performance measurement agenda item.

22. In conclusion, the TFAWG:

- took note of the WCO Secretariat's activities in the context of implementing the TFA.

c) Members – opportunity for Members to share their national experiences regarding ratification, categorization, implementation including establishing/maintaining National Committees on Trade Facilitation (NCTFs) and capacity building activities

23. The Delegate of Serbia provided an update on its state-of-play regarding TFA implementation. She explained that Serbia is not yet a Member of the WTO, but is committed to implementing the provisions of the TFA, as part of the overall work towards complying with the WTO rules in its accession process. Serbia established its National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) in 2017, which includes higher representatives of different ministries, Customs, inspection agencies, the private sector, and has four technical sub-groups focusing on different areas (SPS measures, TBT measures, Customs, and international commitments). All of the sub-groups also include representatives of various private sector associations. In January, a dedicated web site for the NCTF was launched.

24. She also drew attention to some of the challenges, such as: administrative capacities; different implementation approaches of different stakeholders; overlap of activities. TFA self-assessments were conducted in 2014 and 2017 and Serbia has benefitted from support provided by various donors (USAID, IFC, WBG, GIZ). The

delegate was interested in whether it was, as a WTO Observer, eligible for support from the TFAF.

25. The Delegate of Kenya stressed that it was a WTO Member since 2015 and that it had notified its category A, B and C commitments. The NCTF brings together the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), other partner administrations and the private sector. There are a number of technical committees in place, in which Customs plays an important role. The Customs activities are based on RKC standards, with much focus on Risk Management, Post-Clearance Audit, pre-arrival processing and One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs). Capacity building and training are the on-going challenge for the authorities.
26. The Delegate of Turkey shared information on its NCTF, which was established in 2016. They are in the process of changing the structure as a result of the restructuring of the Government. The Ministry of Trade will be the NCTF Chair and a lot of applications from the private sector to become members will be considered.
27. Regarding the question of Serbia on the eligibility for support for WTO Observers, the WTO stressed that this would be explained in more detail under the presentation on the TFAF Grant Programme (item IV.B.f)). She, however, clarified that regarding support with national workshops, the WTO would most probably try and get other organizations provide it.
28. In conclusion, the TFAWG:
 - took note of Members' national experiences regarding TFA implementation.

Item III- TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan

29. The Secretariat introduced the working document PT0090 and its Annex containing the Work Programme.
30. According to its Terms of Reference, one of the key deliverables of the TFAWG is to establish and maintain an Annual Work Plan for TFA-related activities.
31. At the previous meeting of the TFAWG in October 2018, the TFAWG discussed and approved the TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan 2018/2019. At the same time, the TFAWG agreed to carry out a more comprehensive review of the Work Programme and Annual Work Plan 2019/2020, which will better address the expectations from the TFAWG deliverables. The work is expected to be carried out both intersessionally and at the 11th meeting of the TFAWG. The Meeting also agreed to have the Annual Work Plan in the future discussed and endorsed prior to the start of a Financial Year.
32. During the intersession the Secretariat had shared with the Members, the first draft of the Work Programme and Annual Work Plan for Financial Year 2019/2020, PSCG members, observers and participants of the 10th TFAWG meeting for their comments and inputs. Canada, European Union and its Members, Mauritius, India and South Africa have provided their comments and also UNCTAD shared its comments and appreciation for this work. Belarus and Uruguay have indicated their agreement with the draft.
33. The Work Plan is directly linked to the WCO's current Strategic Plan and aligned with the Customs in the 21st Century document. It is also aligned with the current ToR of the TFAWG which now includes four key deliverables. As a living document, the TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan will be aligned with the new WCO's Strategic

Plan 2019/2022 to be endorsed by the Council in June 2019, and presented to the next TFAWG for endorsement.

34. The Draft of the new TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan was attached as an Annex to the working document number PT0090.
35. The Secretariat also updated the TFAWG on the progress of the Work Programme (WP) and Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2018/2019. The TFAWG AWP for Financial Year 2018/2019 consists of 18 concrete actions to implement the TFAWG WP. Every action was categorized within one of the TFAWG's Key Deliverables. The responsibilities for the actions contained in the AWP 2018/2019 were divided between the TFAWG, the Chairperson of the TFAWG, the Members, the Beneficiaries and the WCO Secretariat. There was a number of actions completed under the four Key Deliverables of the TFAWG
36. Members were invited to inform the TFAWG about the results they achieved concerning these activities.
37. A Member underlined the key role of the WP as a tool for defining the work of the TFAWG and making it more effective. By identifying the important strategic areas of work being undertaken by the TFA WG, it would help us to prioritize the particular actions and to develop the AWP. He also appreciated the efforts that had been made to improve the WP and AWP for Financial Year 2019/2020. He has the opinion that the addresses of the actions are broader than the TFAWG, so it may be called as the WP and AWP for the TFA instead of the TFAWG. As regard to the indicators, he proposed to include also qualitative indicators for the actions.
38. The Members were asked to send their proposals for qualitative indicators for the actions of the AWP to the Secretariat before the draft Executive Summary is finalized and sent to the participants for their comments and inputs.
39. Referring to the suggestion of a Member, the TFAWG also decided to ask all Members, not only to the participants of this meeting, to provide their proposals for qualitative indicators for the actions of the AWP.
40. In conclusion, the TFAWG:
 - took note of the progress under the current Work Programme and Annual Work Plan for Financial Year 2018/2019;
 - discussed and endorsed the Work Programme and Annual Work Plan for Financial Year 2019/2020 subject to the inclusion of the qualitative indicators to be provided by all Members for the actions in the Annual Work Plan, attached in Annex II to this document.

Item IV- The Mercator Programme

- A. **Update on the Mercator Programme**
 - a) **Overall track**
 - b) **Tailor made track**
 - c) **Mercator Programme Annual Report**

B. Donors and beneficiary countries - to report progress in TFA implementation

d) Donor presentation

e) Beneficiary country presentation

f) TFAF Grant Programme (WTO Secretariat)

g) Opportunity for donors and beneficiary countries to report on the progress

- **WCO-SECO Programme (Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs)**
- **WCO-SECO signing ceremony**

41. The Secretariat presented document PT0091 by firstly providing a summary of the developments under the overall track of the Mercator Programme. The latest instruments and tools were announced, as well as those that are planned to be developed in 2019 and 2020 under the Action Plan for Phase IV of the Economic Competitiveness Package. Furthermore, participation in the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee and in different global and regional TFA-related events with the WTO and other international organizations and development partners were shared. The Secretariat informed the TFAWG about the holding of formal and informal sessions with Geneva-based attaches for the purpose of updating them on the WCO developments in the area of TFA support and implementation. It was also stressed that the Secretariat was in the process of updating the TFA-related web page on the WCO web site, with the objective of making the relevant information readily available and user-friendly.
42. The Secretariat then proceeded to present the latest developments on the tailor-made track of the Mercator Programme, emphasizing scoping and implementation planning as the common foundation for the tailor-made support. Delegates were informed of the tailor-made tracks' blended approach, incorporating the WCO's long-standing diagnostic framework and the specific provisions of the TFA as a vehicle for incorporating foundational organizational development perspectives into multi-year TFA implementation plans. Delegates were informed of the Secretariat's plans to launch an annual report for the Mercator Programme, which would serve as a vehicle to inform Members and other development partners of the WCO's engagement in TFA implementation.
43. Under part B of the agenda, the representative of USAID noted the United States' extensive engagements, being delivered through USAID's global mission network. To this end, the United States' multi-pronged approach supports programmes delivered by the World Bank, the Global Alliance on Trade Facilitation, ITC and country-specific bilateral engagements, including a substantial engagement in Bangladesh. USAID highlighted the importance of aligning its support to established WCO standards, with examples of USAID-funded deployments of CBP and Department of Commerce officers on WCO-mediated missions playing a supporting role to this end. The importance of notifications under TFA articles 16.1 (developing countries) and 16.2 (least developed countries) were underscored as an important transparency and coordination measure, given the multiplicity of development partners engaged in developing and least developed countries.
44. The representative of Bangladesh presented the latest developments in his government's TFA implementation, including the launch of advance rulings, an authorized operator pilot and the signing of MOUs with some 38 different government agencies in support of Single Window implementation. Bangladesh was presented as the first country that presented its notification of technical assistance and capacity building in keeping with article 16.2 of the TFA. The representative highlighted the importance of the Mercator Programme in increasing Bangladesh's understanding of WCO standards that are relevant

to the successful implementation of large-scale programmes by other development partners.

45. The WTO Secretariat presented an update on the TFA Facility Grant Programme, which was launched in October 2018. Its objective is to fill in the gaps which might appear in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building, and is considered to be a last resort solution for Members. She then described the process of requesting project preparation grants (maximum 30.000 USD) and project implementation grants (maximum 200.000 USD). Members may request grants to address those technical measures determined as category C commitments, and for which the application had been endorsed by the NCTF. In relation to the question raised by Serbia, the WTO explained that the mentioned grants are only intended for WTO Members that have ratified the TFA, but that the TFAF can assist in the matchmaking process. Rules and Guidelines for applying for the Grant Programme are available on the TFAF web site.
46. The representative of the World Bank complemented Bangladesh on its progress and highlighted the Bank's extensive TFA support portfolio, covering some 45 countries, while pointing to specific examples of WCO-World Bank collaboration and joint delivery, including the interest to partner on matters related to the Time Release Study. The representative of UNCTAD followed by highlighting engagements with some 40 NCTFs, where modules on WCO standards, such as RKC are fully integrated.
47. During the discussion that followed, delegates highlighted the importance of importance of leveraging existing technical analysis as a means of ensuring more harmonized implementation of the TFA, along with the need for greater transparency from development partners on existing and planned TFA support. Delegates also emphasized the need to promote and monitor the use of WCO instruments and tools, while also making note of the importance of supporting other supply chain partners, including other government agencies, who may be less conversant on TFA-related matters and related WCO standards.
48. The Deputy Secretary General welcomed Switzerland's delegation consisting Diplomats of the country's mission to the EU in Brussels and of SECO's Headquarter in Bern. He briefly informed the meeting about the new partnership between SECO and the WCO and the Global Trade Facilitation Programme (GTFP) that was concluded between both parties in December 2018. He thanked the Swiss delegation for the newly established collaboration and expressed the WCO's wish to further develop it. Finally he invited SECO to present the initiative in more details.
49. SECO, represented by its Economic Cooperation and Development Division, Trade Promotion, presented its overall organization and explained that it belongs to the Federal Department of Economic Affairs. Their Competence Center for (Foreign) Economic Policy Economic Cooperation and Development has an annual budget of approx. 380 million Euro, employs 110 persons and has at present over 300 programmes and projects underway. SECO highlighted that its mandate at the highest level was to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and that it focuses on advanced developing and transition countries in the South and in the East. These countries are the home of 70% of people who worldwide are affected by poverty.
50. Furthermore SECO explained that its target outcomes for the collaboration with the WCO was enhanced trade and competitiveness, i.e. better integration of partner countries into the world economy through more competitiveness, export-oriented value chains and sustainable trade

51. SECO then clarified that it provides technical assistance and supports capacity building projects; it partners basically with IFI's (Worldbank, regional development banks), International Organizations (ITC, ILO, UNIDO, UNCTAD, UNWTO, UNDP, WCO etc.), Swiss institutions and Administration and that it has other strategic partnerships. It supports global, regional, multilateral and also bilateral initiatives.
52. With regard to the GTFP SECO explained that, it is an initiative that supports beneficiary countries in the area of organizational development (leadership and management development, strategic management, HR-management, partnership development and project management) and also more technical assistance to implement trade facilitation measures. Furthermore, the programme supports the WCO in the development of its comprehensive performance measurement approach and tool.
53. The GTFP is a 4-years programme implemented by the WCO; its budget is 5 million Euro and its initial beneficiary countries are Bolivia, Columbia, Peru and Uzbekistan. However, the the programme also to provide opportunities to provide comprehensive support to other countries and to respond to their ad-hoc support requests
54. Finally, SECO thanked the WCO for the new partnership and for the opportunity to present itself and the GTFP.
55. WCO and SECO took the opportunity to celebrate the new partnership and the signing of the GTFP contract in December 2018.
56. In conclusion, the TFAWG:
- took note of the progress under the Mercator Programme; and
 - made further suggestions and recommendations.

Item V (Agenda Item I of the PTC) – Opening address by Deputy Secretary General

57. The Chairperson of the TFAWG Mr. L Satya Srinivas (India) opened the Joint Session of the 11th Meeting of the TFAWG and the 223rd/224th Sessions of the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) and introduced the WCO Deputy Secretary General Mr. Ricardo Treviño Chapa for his opening remarks.
58. The Deputy Secretary General welcomed the delegates and described the main particulars of both the agendas of the Joint TFAWG/PTC Session and of the meeting of the PTC proper. He highlighted the importance of the delegates' feedback on a number of topics, including performance measurement and the Time Release Study (at the Joint Session) and the Future of Customs items (at the PTC proper meeting).
59. He also stressed the importance of a number of cross-cutting topics to be discussed, such as the review of the Harmonized System and Integrity. Finally, he invited the delegates to provide their valuable contributions and participate actively in the meeting.
60. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of Deputy Secretary General's opening remarks.

Item VI (Agenda Item II of the PTC) – Adoption of the Agenda and the Summary Document

61. The Chairperson of the PTC Mr. Ian Saunders (US) invited the delegates to share any comments or suggest amendments to the Draft Agenda and Summary Document, after introducing some of the latest changes to the Agenda.
62. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
 - adopted the Draft Agenda (PC0537) and the Summary Document (PC0538).

Item VIIa (Agenda Item IIIa of the PTC) - Break Out Session – Time Release Study

Item VIIb (Agenda Item IIIb of the PTC) - Plenary session (report from the break-out groups) – Time Release Study

63. The Chairperson gave the floor to the Secretariat to introduce document PT0092. The Secretariat presented the document, highlighting that the Time Release Study (TRS) was known as a strategic tool used by WCO Members to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Customs, other government agencies (OGAs) and private sector stakeholders in relation to international movements of cargo. In addition, this tool was increasingly being used by WCO Members for strategic planning and proper sequencing of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) measures, in accordance with each Member's National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF).
64. The Secretariat also indicated that the tool enabled Customs administrations working in close collaboration with OGAs to conduct self-assessment, measure the impact of implementation of specific trade facilitation measures, and provide data-based evidence of progress made. It recalled that, last year, the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) had approved a new version of the TRS Guide, known as the TRS version 3. That version comprised a number of important features, including an additional monitoring and evaluation phase allowing countries to evaluate the implementation of TRS outcomes from a previous cycle up to the next one.
65. The Secretariat went on to inform the meeting that sharing TRS information, including TRS reports, was very much welcomed by the WCO. In this regard, it underscored that, for the WCO, sharing TRS information was considered very useful for Customs administrations and stakeholders in order to better understand the challenges, lesson learned and innovative solutions employed, especially for those administrations which were either planning to conduct a TRS or were at very early stages of this exercise.
66. In addition, the Secretariat stated that two WCO Members, Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso, had been invited to present their respective national TRS experiences and outcomes to the meeting. After the presentations, the meeting would be divided into two groups to discuss and answer the following questions related to TRS : (1) Going beyond national TRS, what are the key principles and processes for conducting a TRS in international trade corridors with respect to the end-to-end cross-border movement/transit of consignments involving partner countries?; (2) How can TRS data be widely used and promoted as a global tool for measuring WTO TFA implementation and associated challenges?; (3) What could serve as a sustainable mechanism for the periodic sharing of Members' TRS experiences and outcomes with the WCO, to permit a detailed analysis at the sub-regional, regional and global levels?; and (4) What additional instruments, tools or approach could the WCO and its Members use to supplement and enhance TRS activities?

67. The delegate of Sri Lanka, Mr. Achala Chandrasekare, gave a presentation sharing his country's most recent TRS experience. Outlining some of the activities carried out by Sri Lanka Customs in collaboration with the key trade stakeholders, Mr. Chandrasekare noted that the WCO had provided technical support to his country by training a number of officers during a workshop. He then pointed out some of the challenges which his country had faced during the TRS, such as ensuring that no Customs officers would be assigned to the TRS Group if they were due to be transferred in response to the department's transfer policy. That policy was expected to apply to some TRS Group members working for Sri Lanka Customs.
68. Additionally, the delegate listed the key recommendations which had emerged from the TRS findings, including the need to encourage importers to make use of the pre-declaration option, the need to start exploiting unutilized routes for containers, and the need to eliminate redundancy along the clearance process.
69. The delegate of Burkina Faso, Mr. Patrick Yameogo, gave a presentation on his country's TRS experience. During his presentation, he explained the background against which the TRS had been conducted, highlighting that this was the first time that a TRS had been carried out in his country. He indicated that the preparations and other subsequent activities had taken place during 2018 and, that same year, the country had welcomed the first TRS technical assistance mission by the WCO (delivered in the framework of the WCO West African Customs Administrations Modernization (WACAM) Project). The assistance had been delivered in the form of a national workshop bringing together participants from different trade stakeholders, including the private sector and representatives of OGAs involved in cross-border trade.
70. Mr. Yameogo also mentioned that for the purpose of the TRS, a Head of Project had been appointed and a Working Group formed. He told delegates that a TRS Business Process had been completed, covering the entire flow process of cargo from arrival until physical release. The TRS had revealed a number of bottlenecks, including Customs-related ones such as long delays during the Customs verification process. The need for dematerialization of supporting documents in relation to the flow process of cargo was another of the findings reached during the TRS. Mr. Yameogo also highlighted some of the recommendations put forward in the context of the TRS, including but not limited to the need for the country to introduce a Single Window system. He brought his presentation to a close by thanking the WCO for the support given to his country in order to conduct the TRS.
71. During the ensuing discussion, delegates thanked Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso for sharing their experience in the area of TRS and made comments on the issue of TRS. They also asked questions, including an enquiry about the number of days set aside for the TRS study in both countries. The two presenters replied by indicating the number of days set aside for the study period, stressing that their countries had adhered to the recommendation outlined in the TRS Guide.
72. Following the presentations by Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso and the comments by some delegates, the joint session of the TFAWG and the PTC split into two groups and each group was assigned its own rapporteur. After discussions in the breakout sessions, Mr. Alfa Ibrahim, the rapporteur of one of the groups, shared that group's answers to the four questions with the plenary session.
73. In response to the first question, he said that bilateral relations between countries and certain principles, such as those relating to Authorized Economic Operator (AEO)

programmes, performance measurement, coordinated border management (CBM) and exchange of information, could be useful when carrying out a TRS in an international trade corridor involving partner countries. Awareness and political will were also important in this respect. In relation to the second question, he noted that the TFA itself was quite fundamental to address the question. Turning to the third question, Mr. Alfa said that WCO regional meetings as well as the PTC and Policy Commission were ideal mechanisms for WCO Members to share their TRS experiences. Finally, with respect to the fourth question, Mr. Alfa indicated that the TFA, Single Window, CBM and performance management were important instruments, tools and approaches for supplementing and enhancing TRS activities.

74. The position of the other group with respect to the four questions was presented by Mr. Theodorus Hesselink, the group's rapporteur. Mr. Hesselink informed the plenary session that in response to question one, his group regarded TRS as a technical tool and agreed that, before countries conducted a TRS jointly at bilateral, regional or international level it was important to draw up an agreement. He added that countries might first wish to start by conducting a TRS with neighbouring countries. The group also stressed that political will on both sides was important. Referring to question two, Mr. Hesselink said the group was of the opinion that the TFA itself could be utilized in the context of a TRS, with members of the group emphasizing that before a country implemented the TFA measures it should conduct a TRS to set a baseline for comparison once those measures were implemented. With respect to question three, the group suggested that WCO Members share their TRS reports with the WCO Secretariat so that all reports could be amassed and compiled into a single global publication which ought to have even higher visibility than the World Bank "Doing Business" report. Finally, in response to question four, and subject to modifications to the TRS, the group agreed that principles such as Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) applicable to AEOs could be used and that Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) could be explored to see if there were standards supporting the rollout of a TRS beyond national borders.
75. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of TRS experiences and outcomes shared by Member Customs Administrations; and
 - examined and provided guidance on the questions set out in paragraph 9 of the working document for carrying out future work in the area of TRS that can further support Member Customs Administrations, partner government agencies and private sector stakeholders in terms of enhanced implementation of TFA measures.

Item VIII (Agenda Item IV of the PTC) - Performance Measurement

- **WCO Comprehensive performance measurement tools**
- **Collection and analysis of data**
- **Cooperation with World Bank Group (update)**

76. The Deputy Director, Capacity Building, presented document PT0093 reporting the ongoing work in the area of performance measurement. She informed that following the Policy Commission and the Council's guidance, the Secretariat elaborated a concept paper (document SP0660) to identify some options that could be considered for the development of a potential WCO tool for performance measurement and for monitoring the implementation of WCO instruments/ tools.

77. The Deputy Director summarized the discussions at the 80th Session of the Policy Commission, namely on the draft Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Performance Measurement (ToR). She noted that, while broadly agreeing with the draft ToR, the delegates provided some suggestions for further consideration and finalization. The comments have since been compiled and would be submitted to the June 2019 Policy Commission for endorsement.
78. The Deputy Director then moved on to outline that the Business Case for the establishment of the Working Group on Performance Measurement, including the financial and human resource implications, which had been prepared for consideration by the relevant WCO working bodies, before being submitted to the 81st Sessions of the Policy Commission and the Council in June 2019, for approval.
79. The delegates expressed appreciation for the work conducted by the WCO Secretariat and expressed their commitment to actively participate in the work of the new Working Group on Performance Measurement. Several delegates raised their concerns and provided respective proposals.
80. As to the concerns, understanding the importance of performance measurement for accountability of Customs administrations, a delegate expressed that it was necessary to deliberate it efficiently and in a systematic manner within a certain time frame; because human resources in the Secretariat were limited, it should be avoided to increase working groups that had no limitation on duration; therefore, the duration of the Working Group on Performance Measurement should be limited; then it could be extended or continued in other body if necessary. Besides, he raised question on the adequacy of proposed new two full-time staff, since a Technical Officer was hired last year for the performance measurement.
81. A delegate suggested to limit the reference to World Bank Group's (WBG) Doing Business in document PT0093, in order to avoid its influence to WCO's work, as the new Working Group should avoid reference to other organizations which have different aims and targets. He recommended to address the challenges related to the establishment of the new Working Group at the PTC before going to the Policy Commission.
82. A Member informed that they have already developed their own performance measurement system to identify trends in the Customs area, helping to further identify bottlenecks in border-related procedures. A delegate highlighted the importance of avoiding duplication with other performance measurement tools, while another strongly opposed the WCO tool to include a ranking element. He expressed his interest to be part of the new Working Group on Performance Measurement.
83. Recalling that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the WCO and the IMF on "Collection of Customs Data using the Revenue Administration Fiscal Information Tool (RA-FIT)" had been signed, the delegate of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stressed that RA-FIT represented a platform for a harmonized approach to the collection of Customs data from WCO Members through the International Survey on Customs Administrations (ISOCA), which would be a good mechanism to collect data for this purposes.
84. Stressing the importance of the financial and human resource implications, several delegates suggested the business case to be presented to the Finance Committee for consideration. A delegate considered it unnecessary to have additional Secretariat staff recruited, as one staff member had already been employed for dealing with the

performance measurement topic. He also considered it essential to limit the duration of the new Working Group. Another delegate considered it important to have a clear picture of the scope of work to be conducted by the Working Group with the initial estimated costs, including the costs for rolling out the new tool. One delegate proposed to consider the possibility of outsourcing qualified experts on a contractual basis to support the work of the Working Group.

85. Observing that elaboration of the key performance indicators of all the competences was a challenge, even at national level, a delegate proposed a possible reduction of the areas of Customs competences for the new tool. Lastly, one Member supported the decision to have a comprehensive performance measurement tool that goes beyond the Time Release Study.
86. Thanking the delegates for their valuable contributions, the Deputy Director informed the delegates that the concerns and suggestions raised, will be presented to the 81st Session of the Policy Commission for consideration.
87. Further acknowledging the comments on the Business Case, she informed the delegates that the proposed new Working Group will be mandated to assess the resource implications in relation to the development and management of the WCO performance measurement tool and provide feedback with the estimated costs to the Finance Committee and the Policy Commission.
88. Introducing another topic, the Director, Tariff and Trade Affairs, Mr. Ping Liu reported that the Secretariat had issued a Research Paper on “Doing Business and its Customs-related issues: a Study on the Trading Across Borders indicators”, addressing several facets of the “Doing Business” survey in relation to Customs. Referring to the “Doing Business 2019” survey published in November 2018, the Director observed that the World Bank Group (WBG) had feedback from 111 Customs administrations, signifying a high level of engagement. Additionally, 33 Customs reforms had been captured in WBG’s “Trading Across Borders” and some Customs administrations had actually moved up the ranking, as a result of reforms in “Trading Across Borders”.
89. Then the Director provided a summary of the discussion in the Policy Commission in December 2018. In a presentation during the Policy Commission, Dr. Rita Ramalho, from the World Bank’s Global Indicators Group, explained the “Trading Across Borders” indicators, commented on the concerns to Customs, including the choice of products, the route and mode of transport, what counts as a reform, the use of TRS for DB, as well as source of data used. Welcoming the WCO’s efforts in initiating the dialogue with the WBG and the WBG’s presentation, Members shared their concerns as well as some suggestions to improve the quality of the survey, including: widening of sample size, grouping of similar economies, publishing underlying survey data, segregating Customs’ and other agencies’ roles in “Trading Across Borders”, inclusion of air mode and transit, and obtaining field validation of survey responses. In conclusion, the Policy Commission agreed to continue the dialogue with the WBG and to ask the Secretariat to clarify Members’ needs with regard to the “Doing Business” survey, with a view to seeking enhancement of the survey process.
90. The Director went on to update the follow-up actions after the Policy Commission in December 2018: the Secretariat had sent a letter in December 2018 to invite Members to provide comments with regard to the “Doing Business” survey as well as a letter in January 2019 to invite Members to share with the WBG contact information on potential respondents from the private sector for the Doing Business 2020 survey. Furthermore, he

added that being asked by the WBG to distribute the link among WCO Members to encourage their participation in Doing Business 2020, the Secretariat would send a letter to all Members encouraging them to participate in the “Doing Business 2020” survey.

91. To end his presentation, the Director expressed his view that the WCO should continue to actively engage with WBG while developing comprehensive WCO Performance Management tools.
92. Welcoming the update on cooperation with WBG, delegates underlined the importance of providing comments on the methodology of the Doing Business Survey with a view to seeking its enhancement. A delegate expressed the legal concerns on possible confidentiality issues of providing a list of companies as possible respondents to the Doing Business survey to the WBG, similar to that regarding the provision of contact information of his administration to the WBG for the Doing Business Survey 2019. Another delegate enquired whether the comments on methodologies raised by Members would be reflected in the coming Doing Business survey 2020.
93. In response to the concerns about confidentiality, the Director clarified that the WBG had an interest in increasing the sample size and sought to have more respondents to the survey. However, the decision on whether to provide the contact information of potential respondents from the private sector lies with each Member administration as the Secretariat invited them to do so directly to the WBG if they so wish. This was different from the situation where consent from each Member administration had been sought before the Secretariat provided the contact information of Member administrations to the WBG for the Doing Business Survey 2019.
94. Regarding the prospect for acceptance by the WBG of comments on methodologies provided by Members, the Director went on to explain that there are challenges to change the methodologies of the Doing Business Survey due to the WBG’s strong interest in keeping them stable. He did not believe that comments by Customs community on methodologies would already be reflected in Doing Business survey 2020 but hoped that, through continued engagement with the WBG, such comments on methodologies would hopefully be gradually considered in their next periodical review cycle.
95. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of document SP0660 on Monitoring/Evaluation of WCO Instruments and Tools;
 - took note of the draft Terms of Reference of the proposed Working Group on Performance Measurement, and offered points for consideration prior to its presentation to the Policy Commission at its June 2019 session for finalization and approval;
 - acknowledged concerns raised pertaining to scope, staffing, duration, and funding;
 - provided feedback on the draft Business Case for establishment of the new Working Group on Performance Measurement, which will be presented to the Policy Commission at its June 2019 session, for review and approval;
 - took note and provided feedback on the oral report regarding the WCO’s engagement with the World Bank on the Doing Business Survey; and
 - noted comments by the International Monetary Fund regarding the International Survey of Customs Administrations as a potential support for data collection.

Item IX (Agenda Item V of the PTC) - Coordinated Border Management

○ **eCITES - end-to-end regulatory control of international trade in endangered species**

96. A representative of the CITES Secretariat gave a presentation on the simplification and automation of the CITES permit processes through the implementation of eCITES. He explained that the vast majority (97%) of the more than 36,000 CITES regulated species are allowed to be commercially traded and that more than 1 million CITES permits are issued per year. On the other hand, the illegal trade in wildlife would be ranked on the fourth place in transnational crime with an estimated volume of 5 – 20 billion USD. Taking these facts into account, he stressed the strong need to fully take advantage of the electronic Customs control systems to strengthen control of CITES trade.
97. Furthermore, the CITES representative emphasized the vision of an end-to-end transparency and control in the CITES supply chain based on eCITES which foresees the stepwise implementation of ePermit (Automated, simplified and transparent processes in Management Authorities), eControl (Electronic information exchange and collaboration with Customs for electronic CITES Risk Management) and eExchange (Electronic exchange of permits between government agencies along the supply chain).
98. Emphasizing the appreciation and strong willingness for further enhanced cooperation between the WCO and the CITES Secretariat, the CITES representative referred to the recommendation of the CITES Standing Committee to the upcoming CITES Conference of Parties to start a work programme on the integration of CITES into paperless Customs clearance processes and risk management procedures and to work with relevant partners, such as WCO, on the development of standards and solutions for electronic permit information exchange and validation as well as on the implementation of efficient risk based procedures for controls in CITES listed species using information technologies and modern trade control procedures.
99. During the discussion of the agenda item, delegates expressed their support for the collaborative work of the WCO and the CITES Secretariat aiming to achieve enhanced electronic information exchange as well as efficient risk management procedures between Customs and CITES authorities.
100. Some delegates shared their experiences and projects with regard to the inclusion of CITES permits in a Single Window environment and in the area of combating illegal trade of CITES listed species through the use of electronic data to enhance risk management procedures. The delegates underscored the need for electronic information exchange between Customs and CITES Management Authorities and expressed their willingness to contribute to the cooperative work of the WCO and the CITES Secretariat.
101. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of the CITES Standing Committee's initiative; and
 - provided further guidance on WCO's possible contribution to this work.

Item X (Agenda Item VI of the PTC) - Availability of Trade Information on the Internet (Art. 1.2 TFA) and Enquiry points (Art. 1.3)

- a) **Global Trade Helpdesk (GTH), presentation by ITC**
- b) **Integrated enquiry points, Member's experience**
- **Presentation by Malaysia**
 - **Presentation by Rwanda**

102. The Secretariat presented document PT0094, providing a brief overview of Articles 1.2 and 1.3 of WTO TFA. It was underlined that Article 1.2 of the TFA introduces, for the first time, an actual obligation to use information technologies for disseminating trade-related information under the WTO framework. Before the TFA, the only available instrument was a WCO recommendation concerning the use of worldwide websites by Customs Administrations. It was noted that the aim of this trade facilitation measure is for relevant stakeholders to obtain a comprehensive understanding on how to import to, export from, or transit through the territory of the concerned WTO Member. Apart from the aforesaid, Article 1.3 states that each Member shall, within its available resources, establish or maintain one or more enquiry points to answer “reasonable” enquiries of governments, traders, and other interested parties on matters covered under paragraph 1.1 of Article 1 and to provide the required forms and documents referred to in subparagraph 1.1(a) of Article 1.
103. The Secretariat also referred to the WCO instruments and tools (WCO Transparency and Predictability Guidelines, the Guidelines to Chapter 9 of the General Annex of the RKC), which provide sufficient guidance on enquiry points/offices. Use of information technologies clearly adds to the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of this important service.
104. In conclusion the Secretariat updated the TFAWG and PTC on how many WTO Members have notified both measures under A, B and C categories.
105. Based on the request from the Chairperson of the TFAWG, two Members’ experiences on the functioning of an Integrated Enquiry Point were presented, with the aim of showing a national example on how the different agencies work together in providing the necessary support on cross-border procedures to stakeholders. Moreover, the International Trade Centre (ITC) shared detailed information about Global Trade Helpdesk’s (GTH) latest achievements.
106. The representative of ITC, started his presentation highlighting that governments do not always have the capacities, nor the resources, to provide detailed and up-to-date information to the private sector, struggling to comply with WTO TFA. In this regard, the ITC has been a lead agency in collecting and disseminating trade-related information, as well as providing easy and free-to-use market analysis tools. The next step will be the creation of a one-stop-shop for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Through the GTH policy makers, MSMEs and trade support institutions would be able to make actionable decisions. Ultimately, evolution of this initiative supposed to reach two more stages: “data integration and collection” and “capacity building and dissemination”. In conclusion, Mr. Mimouni demonstrated Beta version of the GTH, emphasizing following features:
- website provides information on goods and services for export and import procedures;
 - website contains pre-selected queries based on popular searches in country;
 - user dashboard based on interests;
 - website has links to different sources, tools and databases.
107. The delegate of Malaysia then began her presentation by giving the overview of Malaysian experience as a WTO member and she provided WTO TFA ratification details. She further provided information on three government agencies responsible for establishing enquiry points for trade-related data. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) is the focal point in consolidating and streamlining Malaysia's active

participation at the WTO. The Ministry of Finance (MOF) introduced the myTRADELINK system, which connects trading communities with the relevant government agencies and businesses involved in global trade and logistics. The Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) collects revenue and provides trade facilitation through enforcement and compliance with applicable law to spur economic growth, maintain national security and public welfare. She pointed out that RMCD provides the enquiry point contact information via a Customs Call Center (CCC) to assist clients and stakeholders in their enquiries related to Customs matters. There are 30 officers located in CCC that operate every day from Monday to Friday (from 8.30 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.), and Saturdays and Sundays (from 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.). They are closed on public holidays, whereas emails received would be handled within 2-5 working days. RMCD intends to continue further development of easy access to data on Customs procedures, description of import, export and transit procedures, advance rulings and compliance matters in both Malay and English languages.

108. The delegate of Rwanda dedicated the first part of his presentation to the key priorities of his administration in light of WTO TFA ratification. He mentioned that, due to the continuous reforms, Rwanda had improved its global ranking in Doing Business rating from 41 in 2017 to 29 in 2018. Then, the delegate provided details of Rwanda's Trade Portal initiative, which was developed in line with article 1.2 of the TFA. The objective of this project is to generate and disseminate transparent information on strategic import, export and transit procedures through an on-line Trade Information Portal. Furthermore, this initiative is intended to increase compliance and predictability by making the regulatory requirements available to the public. It was emphasized that their NCTF developed an action plan for the implementation of the Trade Portal. Moreover in this regard, the NCTF requested assistance from UNCTAD in developing the Trade Portal. In conclusion, the delegate shared major benefits of this important service, such as access to trade databases - Customs tariff, non-tariff measures including import and export licenses, trade related national laws, international and bilateral trade agreements; possibility to send complaints, report incorrect information and propose simplification measures through the system; compliance with the requirements of article 1.2 of the TFA and ability for Customs to monitor the extent to which the measures implemented to facilitate trade actually reduce the regulatory burden faced by firms engaged in, or wishing to trade.
109. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of the provided presentations.

Item XII (Agenda Item VIII of the PTC) - Any Other Business

110. The Chairperson invited delegates to suggest Agenda item(s) for the next TFAWG meeting. Since there were no suggestions, the Chairperson proposed to Members to provide comments in the following couple of weeks.
111. In conclusion, the TFAWG and PTC:
- took note of the opportunity for Members to provide suggestions for the next meeting agenda in the following couple of weeks.

Item XIII (Agenda Item IX of the PTC) - Closing

112. The Director, Compliance and Facilitation, thanked all the delegates and international organizations for their engagement throughout the meeting. She further underscored extremely valuable contributions provided by participants in the past two days.
113. The Chairperson thanked the WCO Secretariat, the Members and WTO for their valuable inputs during the meeting. In addition, he encouraged the Secretariat to continue working on improving the WCO website.
114. The Chairperson then closed the meeting.

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Please note that the presentations given in the context of some of the agenda items and that were accompanied by Powerpoint slides or other supporting material can be found on the WCO Members' Website at the following link: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/meetings/procedures-and-facilitation/wto-atf-working-group/11.aspx>

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Public Version

Part 1: WCO Work Programme for the Implementation of the TFA

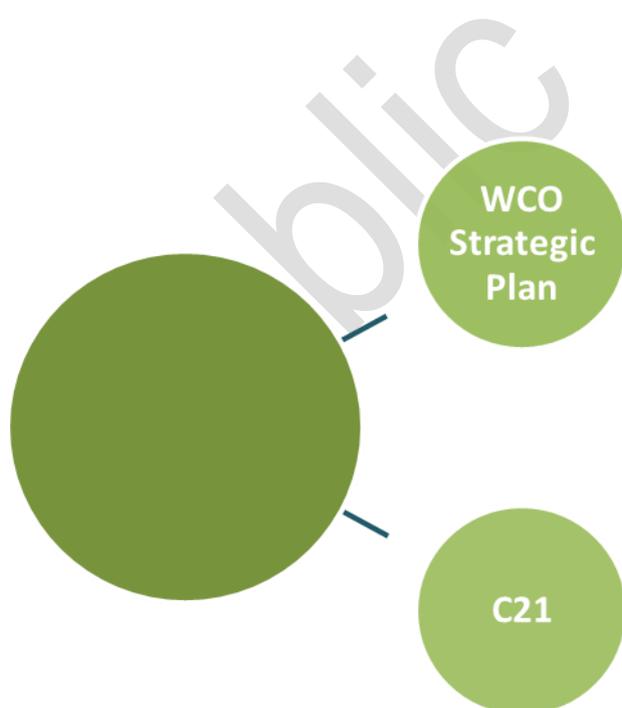
INTRODUCTION

Part 1 of the WCO Work Programme for the Implementation of the TFA contains per key deliverable of the TFAWG's Terms of Reference, the tasks and sub tasks that need to be carried out in the context of the implementation of the TFA. The description of the tasks and sub-tasks are at a general level, the concrete actions that need to be taken to fulfil the tasks and sub-tasks are laid down in the second part of the Work Programme, the Annual Work Plan (see part 2).

Part 1 will be subject to a yearly review by the TFAWG in order to keep it up to date. In the course of time, certain tasks or sub-tasks may have been completed or are in need of refinement. It may also be possible that in due course there will be a need for additional tasks or sub-tasks which need to be reflected in part 1 of the Work Programme.

The TFAWG shall review the Work Programme with a view to endorse the Annual Work Plan in its spring session for the Policy Commission and Council in June of any given year to give its approval for the next Financial Year.

ALIGNMENT WITH WCO STRATEGIC PLAN 2016/2017-2018/2019 AND C21



- **Strategic Goal 1** - Promote the security and facilitation of international trade, including simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures
- **Strategic Goal 2** - Promote fair, efficient and effective Revenue collection
- **Strategic Goal 3** - Protect society, public health and safety, and contribute to combating crime and terrorism
- **Strategic Goal 4** - Strengthen Capacity Building
- **Strategic Goal 5** - Promote Digital Customs to support, in particular, Coordinated Border Management and information exchange between all stakeholders
- **Strategic Goal 6** - Raise the performance and profile of Customs

- **Building Block a** - Globally networked Customs
- **Building Block b** - Better coordinated border management
- **Building Block c** - Intelligence-driven risk management
- **Building Block d** - Customs-Trade partnership
- **Building Block e** - Implementation of modern working methods, procedures and techniques
- **Building Block f** - Enabling technology and tools
- **Building Block g** - Enabling powers
- **Building Block h** - A professional, knowledge-based service culture
- **Building Block i** - Capacity building
- **Building Block j** - Integrity

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The work conducted by the TFAWG is firstly categorized within the four Key Deliverables of the TFAWG.

For each Key Deliverable of the TFAWG, specific Tasks and Sub-Tasks have been defined, according to the following example:

- Key Deliverable 1
 - Task 1.1
 - Sub-Task 1.1.1
 - Action (in the Annual Work Plan) 1.1.1.1

It is important to note that for each Financial Year, the Working Group will define at the level of Sub-Task, the priorities to be incorporated within the Annual Work Plan in order to submit it for the Policy Commission for its approval. The Annual Work Plan for each Financial Year shall identify concrete actions to be taken for each Sub-Task. Each action shall identify the responsible actor, an indicator and the timeframe.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

For each Financial Year, the WCO Secretariat shall develop a Progress Report based on the corresponding Annual Work Plan and present it for approval to the Working Group. Based on such Progress Report, the TFAWG will report to the competent WCO bodies in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

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TFAWG Key Deliverable 1: Analyse, prepare and evaluate relevant actions and measures in relation to practical aspects of meeting expectations arising from the WTO TFA								
Task 1.1: Strategic positioning of WCO and its Members with regard to the implementation of the WTO TFA								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.1.1	Conduct high-level meetings	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure influence and impact, including in WTO Trade Facilitation Committee (TFC)	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Mostly at SG/DSG level, including with Trade Ministers.
1.1.2	Encourage Members (Customs) in playing an active role in National Committees on Trade Facilitation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure impact of WCO/Customs tools and experience and share national practices	As soon as these Committees are set up	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Crucial Members' responsibility. Letter sent by SG to Members in 2/2014. Research carried out by UNCTAD on TF Committees will be helpful. 12/2014, the WCO Secretariat sent out an NCTF survey. The Secretariat also developed an NCTF Guidance. Members to encourage key stakeholders like Government agencies (OGA's) and Traders to be fully involved.
Task 1.2: Internal and External Communication and Outreach								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.2.1	Develop a communication and outreach strategy	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure constant and timely communication between the WCO/ Customs and the WTO and external partners	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Strategy has been developed. Communication is ongoing.
1.2.2	Keep information	1, 2, 3, 4,	a, b, c, d,	Make relevant	12/2013	Ongoing	Ongoing	Updates have been performed

	on the WCO Website up to date	5, 6	e, f, g, h, i, j	information easily accessible to all stakeholders		activity		as necessary and this will continue.
1.2.3	Raise awareness and launch debate at the Regional DG meetings (SG)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Raise awareness, encourage Members to attend National Committees on Trade Facilitation and work on positioning Customs well	01/2014	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Subject has been raised prominently by the Secretary General at all six regional meetings in the first part of 2014. Supplemented by Attachés' and Ambassadors' briefings in Brussels with detailed explanations on intent of the WTO TFA provisions/negotiators. Preparation for implementation of TFA also raised by SG at the 2015 Regional DGs Meetings
1.2.4	Outreach to regional structures RILO/RTC/ROCB	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Identify and disseminate knowledge and raise awareness of getting involved in National Committees on Trade Facilitation	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	
Task 1.3: Coordination with Members and Private Sector/Institutional Partners								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.3.1	Conduct TFAWG meetings	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Prepare for discussions at WTO; Coordinate donors and implementation	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	11 meetings held
1.3.2	Coordinate with other stakeholders	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Seek continuous cooperation and enhance coordination	10/2017	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	

Task 1.4: Liaison with the WTO Preparatory TF Committee (PrepCom) and after TFA entry into force with WTO TFC								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.4.1	Interact with the TFC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Represent the Customs position	22/02/2017		Ongoing activity	In 2018 the WCO has been invited and participated to the 3 WTO TFC meetings. The Ambassador of the Lithuania to the WTO, H.E. Ambassador Dalia Kadisiene, in her capacity as Chair of the WTO TFC, spoke at the WCO TFAWG 10 th meeting in Brussels on 22 October 2018.
Task 1.5: Technical Assistance/Capacity Building								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.5.1	Refining TFA Implementation Guidance Performance Indicators	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Help WCO Members self-assess their national situation regarding the TFA implementation more accurately	09/2014		Ongoing activity	Ongoing Part of a broader Performance Measurement exercise.
1.5.2	Develop and provide TF specific assistance based on Diagnostic Missions and follow-up missions to enable beneficiaries to implement trade	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Assess needs and provide tailor-made assistance as agreed in Dublin and assist in categorization.	12/2013		Ongoing activity, depending on Members' requests	Ongoing on annual basis Capacity Building Directorate sends out requests for needs assessment. Needs to be coordinated as a great deal of technical assistance is already provided, under RKC/SW/AEO, etc. At the June 2014 Council Sessions, the Mercator Programme to Support Trade

	facilitation (Mercator Programme)							Facilitation was endorsed.
1.5.3	Match needs with resources/donor coordination whilst making use of existing tools such as the Project Map Database (PMD) to ensure results and maximize resources	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Provide necessary assistance whilst ensuring donor and project coordination	12/2013	Ongoing activity, depending on needs and donors' offers	Ongoing	Coordination with CBC and other activities needed. Includes regional and national donor meetings and meetings with ROCBs. Sweden, UK, Germany, Korea, Japan and China have committed to supporting the Mercator Programme. More and more donors ask to avoid duplication of efforts. PMD to expand beyond Americas region.
1.5.4	Screen accredited experts list to determine the need for accreditation of additional experts, including in additional areas	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure availability of a sufficient number of experts to respond to Members' requests	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Refresher courses for RKC experts, CMAs, TOAs to be planned during suitable events. WCO to plan TFA expert accreditation and refresher workshops with the help of donors
Task 1.6: Analysis of WTO TFA and assessment of impact on WCO instruments								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
1.6.1	Identify challenges faced by Members in meeting the TFA requirements	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Prioritize the TFAWG work on those areas where Members face greater challenges to implement the TFA	12/2013	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Based on Members' needs, the Annual Work Plan shall remain objective and action driven, identifying concrete areas of work to help

								Members meet such challenges. Sharing experiences and outcomes resulting from TFA implementation is encouraged for other Members to learn from such experiences.
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TFAWG Key Deliverable 2: Submit timely reports to the Policy Commission, Permanent Technical Committee and Capacity Building Committee as appropriate, that shall: a. provide recommendations of the TFAWG based on an analysis of the needs assessments which includes technical assistance, and b. describe the WCO's activities for the technical assistance and capacity building effort to support implementation of the WTO TFA								
Task 2.1:								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
2.1.1	Report to the appropriate working bodies (PTC, CBC as well as PC) for guidance and advice	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure proper coordination and also working on instructions	03/2014	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	Reports to appropriate WCO working bodies have taken place according to the TFAWG TORs.

TFAWG Key Deliverable 3: Monitor the progress of the implementation of WCO instruments and tools that support Members in applying the TFA including through comprehensive reporting of WCO Mercator Programme missions								
Task 3.1:								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
3.1.1	Encourage Members to monitor the implementation of WCO instruments and tools that support them in applying the TFA and share their experiences in the TFAWG	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure effective implementation of WCO tools and instruments	10/2018	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	WCO Regional structures like ROCB RTC to be used to support the implementation of WCO tool and instruments.
3.1.2	Encourage Members to share their experiences in using TRS	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Ensure effective implementation of TRS	03/2014	Ongoing activity	Ongoing	More TRS required and the WCO Secretariat support is key.
3.1.3	Comprehensive reporting of WCO Mercator Programme missions to the TFAWG	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Monitor the progress of implementation	01/2019	Ongoing activity	To commence	

TFAWG Key Deliverable 4: Establish and maintain an Annual Work Plan, including timelines and key deliverables, for TFA-related activities								
Task 4.1:								
No	Sub-Task	WCO Strategic Goal	C21 Building Block	Objective	Start	Deadline	Status	Comments
4.1.1	Produce Annual Work Plan	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j	Set the objectives for the TFAWG and Members	12/2013	Ongoing activity for each Financial Year	Ongoing	

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Public Version

Part 2: ANNUAL WORK PLAN FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/2020

Part 2 of the WCO Work Programme for the Implementation of the TFA, the Annual Work Plan, contains per sub-task the concrete actions that need to be taken to fulfil the tasks and sub-tasks that are laid down in the first part of the Work Programme.

The Annual Work Plan will be subject to an annual endorsement by the TFAWG in order to clarify which concrete actions need to be taken by which responsible party and the related timeframe or deadline. It also contains an indicator to see if the action has been met.

Based on the outcomes of the concrete actions listed in the Annual Work Plan, a report will be drafted to inform the Policy Commission, Permanent Technical Committee and Capacity Building Committee.

Sub-Tasks for Key Deliverable 1

Analyse, prepare and evaluate relevant actions and measures in relation to practical aspects of meeting expectations arising from the WTO TFA

Sub-Task 1.1.1 Conduct high-level meetings					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
1.1.1.1	Customs administrations should coordinate with permanent missions to the WTO to address any technical issue related to implementation and encourage WCO participation in the	Members	Nature of contacts between Customs administration and permanent missions to the WTO	FY2019/2020	

	TFC				
Sub-Task 1.1.2 Encourage Members (Customs) in playing an active role in National Committees on Trade Facilitation					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
1.1.2.1	Customs administrations shall work in the context of their NCTFs to promote the importance of CBM, Public-Private Sector dialogue and provide information on relevant WCO tools in that respect	Members	Categories of actions to promote and substantiate the work NCTF meetings	FY2019/2020	
1.1.2.2	Customs administrations shall offer assistance in the context of their NCTFs to other government agencies to establish CBM and Public-Private Sector Dialogue where feasible when requested	Members	Nature of assistance	FY2019/2020	
1.1.2.3	At the request of Members, the WCO Secretariat will offer technical assistance to Members in the area of CBM where	Members and WCO Secretariat	Number of requests received	FY2019/2020	

	possible				
Sub-Task 1.2.1 Develop a communication and outreach strategy					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
1.2.1.1	Members of the TFAWG will coordinate with the Secretariat to present proposals for improving the communication strategy of the WCO and making it more effective	Members	Nature and scope of proposals submitted	FY2019/2020	
Sub-Task 1.3.1 Conduct TFAWG meetings					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
1.3.1.1	Continue conducting break-out sessions	WCO Secretariat	At least one break out session in the 12th TFAWG	FY2019/2020	
1.3.1.2	Members to submit national experiences to the TFAWG for inclusion in the TFA Implementation Guidance	Members	Nature and scope of submissions	FY2019/2020	
Sub-Task 1.3.2 Coordinate with other stakeholders					
No	Action	Responsible	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments

		body			
1.3.2.1	Seek for continuous participation of other international organizations such as sanitary in the TFAWG	WCO Secretariat	Identification of relevant International Organizations	FY2019/2020	
1.3.2.2	Members shall seek for enhanced coordination with other governmental agencies such as sanitary authorities for the purpose of implementation of the TFA and coordinating for prioritizing TA/CB	Members	Nature of coordination activities	FY2019/2020	
1.3.2.3	Continue with WCO high-level political engagement and transmitting the importance of coordination with other border agencies	Members and WCO Secretariat	Nature of instances of high level political engagement	FY2019/2020	
1.3.2.4	Promote TRS as a TFA implementation measurement tool	Members Secretariat	Identification of relevant events where the TRS can be promoted	FY2019/2020	

Sub-Tasks for Key Deliverable 2

Submit timely reports to the Policy Commission, Permanent Technical Committee and Capacity Building Committee as appropriate, that shall:

a. provide recommendations of the TFAWG based on an analysis of the needs assessments which includes technical assistance, and

b. describe the WCO's activities for the technical assistance and capacity building effort to support implementation of the WTO TFA

Sub-Task 2.1.1 Report to the appropriate working bodies (PTC,CBC as well as PC) for guidance and advice

No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
2.1.1.1	Provide report to PTC, CBC and PC in FY	Chair TFAWG	Reports provided	FY 2019/2020	

Sub-Tasks for Key Deliverable 3

Monitor the progress of the implementation of WCO instruments and tools that support Members in applying the TFA including through comprehensive reporting of WCO Mercator Programme missions

Sub-Task 3.1.1 Encourage Members to monitor the implementation of WCO instruments and tools that support them in applying the TFA and share their experiences in the TFAWG

No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
3.1.1.1	Members shall indicate during the TFAWG meetings which WCO instruments and tools they implement in order to apply the TFA	Members	Scope and characteristics of Members submissions.	2019/2020	

Sub-Task 3.1.2 Encourage Members to share their experiences in using TRS

No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
3.1.2.1	Sharing national/regional TRS practices in TFAWG	Members	Scope and characteristics Members/Regional Organizations	2019/2020	

	meetings		TRS practices		
Sub-Task 3.1.3 Comprehensive reporting of WCO Mercator Programme missions to the TFAWG					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
3.1.3.1	Sharing national/regional achievements and experiences in receiving Mercator Programme assistance in TFAWG meetings	Beneficiaries	Scope and characteristics of shared experiences	2019/2020	

Sub-Tasks for Key Deliverable 4

Establish and maintain an Annual Work Plan, including timelines and key deliverables, for TFA-related activities

Sub-Task 4.1.1 Produce Annual Work Plan					
No	Action	Responsible body	Indicator	Timeframe/deadline	Comments
4.1.1.1	Review and approve TFAWG Annual Work Plan for FY 2020/2021	TFAWG	Approved TFAWG Annual Work Plan	12 th TFAWG	