1. Introduction of Korea RCL (Regional Customs Laboratory)

Korea Central Customs Laboratory (KCCL), established in 1961 as Appraisal & Analysis office under the Ministry of Finance, has implemented various tasks of Customs such as scientific and technical assistance, tariff classification, and analysis of the importing and exporting goods over 60 years.

KCCL has participated in HSC (Harmonized System Committee), RSC (HS Review Sub Committee), and SSC (Scientific Sub—Committee) under World Customs Organization (WCO) and has constantly cooperated with other countries’ customs and WCO international workshops. In particular, KCCL held the international workshop of WCO in March, 2018 along from the support of Information Management and International Affairs Bureau in Korea Customs Service. We have reached a Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) on the establishment of a World Customs Organization Regional Customs Laboratory for the Asia/Pacific Region in the WCO council in June, 2018, Korea RCL was finally opened in August, 2018.

Three main activities were undertaken for developing analysis on Customs as WCO RCL in the Asia/Pacific region.

First of all, ‘WCO Regional Customs Laboratory Professional Programme’ was launched to provide an opportunity for technical officers in developing countries. Moreover, this programme’s aim is to expand and update attendees’ knowledge and skills on the chemical analysis of samples for Harmonized System (HS) classification.

Second, the KCCL offers consulting services on the establishment and operation of the laboratory. In this light, KCCL has conducted various consulting services on our system to WCO’s members in developing countries who need more knowledge and skills. Moreover, we have introduced new equipment and facilities at the cutting—edge technology through a tour program.

Third is the information sharing. The KCCL has exchanged information on operating programs in cooperation with other RCLs and has actively involved in international conference on hands—on science, led by WCO. In addition, the English version of website was opened in May, 2019 for the information exchange.

Furthermore, KCCL would have various activities for playing a central role as WCO A/P RCL. Therefore, the Korea RCL sincerely ask for you affection and attention.

OPEN KOREA RCL(August 2018)

KOREA RCL WEBSITE
2. WCO RCL Professionals Programme

- Three officers from Azerbaijan, Nepal, and Thailand completed WCO RCL Programme for 6 weeks –

The WCO RCL Professionals Programme in Korea was run from Oct. 14 to Nov. 21, 2019 (six weeks) for customs chemists and classification officers from Azerbaijan, Nepal, and Thailand following the one-week workshop at WCO Headquarters in Brussels.

This Programme, launched in 2018 by the WCO/Korea RCL, provides an opportunity for customs chemists to expand and update their knowledge and skills. The main subjects are the chemical analysis for their capacity building and standardization of chemical analysis work.

The KCCL has provided various programs by competent experts of Ministry of Economy and Finance and Korea Customs Service. This program is about chemical analysis methods, proper tariff classification, and practical training that focused on the use of equipments at the cutting-edge technologies. Moreover, the participants experienced Korea Customs administration at the two main Customs’ Incheon Customs and Busan Customs. They also had a chance to look around import and export companies in the Republic of Korea.

For providing more valuable training, the KCCL will plan new programs of 2020 such as learning the use of new equipment, UPLC-MS/MS (Ultra-Performance Liquid Chromatography Quadrupole Mass Spectrometry), learning basic Korean language, and experiencing Korean culture.

1. Preparations for RCL

Korea RCL made all efforts to hold the first WCO RCL programme. First, trainees were provided enough rooms for relaxing and praying. In addition, the lecture rooms and laboratories were perfectly catered for their convenience. Some professionals who are WCO accredited experts, analysis experts, and highly educated analysis officers were also invited in order to make more effective curriculum and manuscripts. The KCCL also managed their visa condition, accommodations, and meals for their stay,
We are all ready for WCO/Korea RCL Programme! Welcome to Korea RCL!

2. Programs

1) Orientation

Three experienced Customs chemists from Azerbaijan, Nepal, and Thailand started the 6-week Programme in KCCL from Oct. 14 following the one-week workshop at WCO Headquarters in Brussels. The program was delayed due to bad weather conditions, but it proceeded as planned.

Their unnatural facial expressions tell us that this is the first meeting.

2) Training

Korea RCL has conducted capacity building activities on new technologies and techniques, as well as the use of sophisticated analytical equipment. In particular, all passionate trainees were highly interested in the analysis of narcotics and its equipment, KCCL officials also endeavored to communicate with them.
**Episode 1 — WCO RCL Professionals Programme was on air**

MBC, one of the leading South Korean television and radio network companies, had an interview with participants and filmed the first WCO RCL Programme in Korea. KUMAR DIPAK HITAN, Nepalese Customs official, shared why he joined this programme and how he felt.

![Unfortunately, the interview was on air after finishing the program.](image)

**Episode 2 — Taking a part in the seminar on the analysis of Customs with national officials**

The attendees took a part in the seminar on the analysis of Customs from Oct. 24 to Oct. 25. They shared their opinions about the agendas, and visited a few historic sites of Baekje (18 BC–660 AD) which was a kingdom located in southwestern Korea.

**Episode 3 — Customs Tour**

The participants visited the laboratory and Express Clearance Center of Incheon Customs, the biggest Customs in South Korea, for experiencing Korean Customs administration. In this light, they looked around the laboratory and the museum of Customs History at Busan which is the second biggest city in Korea.
3) Completion Ceremony

The completion ceremony was held in November 21 after all training for six weeks. The trainees had a short remark about how the program was. Then we had time to watch a short video about the program. Lastly, they received a photo book and took a picture together to celebrate the moment. They seem to have mixed feelings about the moment when they are going back to their countries after finishing the program.
3. Improvement on International Cooperation and Networking

1. Opening a new English version of Korea RCL Website to Communicate the World!
   www.customs.go.kr/rcld/main.do

Korea RCL opened new English version of website to have channels of communication among WCO’s members. You can learn the latest news about RCL and what we do at the laboratory. Moreover, visitors can use different services such as consulting and training. When you join our member, you would explore more advanced information about diverse seminars, new equipments, and analysis methods.

▶ If you want to join us, please email kcscc@korea.kr.

▶ History of Consulting

- ‘Feb, 2019,’ Vietnam
  - laws and regulations of analysis, the operation of laboratory, and reagent control.
- ‘Mar, 2019,’ Mexico
  - sharing how to run the RCL.
- ‘Apr, 2019,’ Kazakhstan
  - legal grounds of the establishment of Customs laboratory, purpose, and activities
- ‘Sep, 2019,’ Indonesia
  - the procedure of the appointment of Customs laboratory as WOC RCL.
- ‘Jan, 2020,’ Guatemala
  - good examples of laboratory and international cooperation activities from laboratories
2. OUARET Mohamed, the Commissioner of Customs in Algeria, Visited KCCL

OUARET Mohamed, the commissioner of Customs in Algeria, and related officers visited Korea RCL in July 10, 2019. KCCL gave them a short brief of KCCL, the future plan, and the backgrounds of the appointment of WCO/AP Korea RCL. In addition, we had a Q&A section on chemical analysis work. In this context, the main subjects were legal grounds of analysis work, the recruitment process, and the current analysis equipment in KCCL. After taking time to look around KCCL, both sides also agreed to exchange information and cooperate for mutual interest.

3. Networking Between RCLs (Russia and Japan)

Korea RCL took a part in international conference on hands-on science in July 2019. This conference provided a good opportunity to share research findings in food and illicit drug and ensure the cooperation between RCLs in Russia and Japan.

KCCL visited Japan RCL to learn more about their activities and the procedure of ‘WCO RCL Professionals Programme’ in December 2019. Related matters of 2020 program were also discussed.
4. Supporting ‘CBCTI Experts Workshop on HS for AP Customs Officials’ and Inviting Experts

The CBCTI Experts Workshop was held with 18 Customs officials from 14 Asia Pacific countries at Customs Border Control Training Institute (WCO RTC) in May, 2019. In particular, there was a discussion on matters of the Harmonized System for decision.

Customs officials were invited to have a tour in Korea RCL. They have learned the organization and functions of Korea RCL, examples of analysis, and the use of the latest chemical equipment.

5. Participating in WCO Regional Joint Workshop

Korea RCL joined in ‘WCO Regional Joint Workshop’ led by Multilateral Cooperation Division with Customs Border Control Training Center (RTC) and Detector Dog Training Division. There were talks about the further direction of capacity building project, the latest updates, and information for RCL activities.
4. Support and Management of Analysis Work in WCO

Korea RCL has participated in many conferences related to the HS system. In this light, Korea RCL has proactively presented the opinions on ‘matters for decision and amendments of HS 2022’. In addition, the laboratory in Korea has sought to standardize analysis techniques and tariff classification by presenting RCL’s role and examples of analysis.

▶ Harmonized System Committee [HSC]
- the 63th session (Mar, 2019) : Total 37 cases; “Classification if ephedrine’s derivatives and possible amendment to heading 29.39”
- the 64th session (Sep, 2019) : Total 46 cases; “Possible amendment of the HS Explanatory Notes to heading 72.04—waste and scrap”

▶ HS Review Sub Committee [RSC]
- the 55th session (May, 2019) : Shared views under the agenda “WCO CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE HARMONIZED SYSTEM”
- the 56th session (Nov, 2019) : Total 39 cases; “Possible amendment to the Nomenclature in respect of food supplements (possible new heading 21.07”

▶ Scientific Sub-Committee [SSC]
- the 34th session (Jan, 2019) : Total 18 cases; “Classification of ephedrine’s derivatives and possible amendment to heading”
  Presented “Introduction of Korea RCL and further activity plan”
- the 35th session (Jan, 2020) : Presented “Introduction on Korea RCL and Examples about the illegal drugs detected by Korea Customs Service”
  Total 7 cases (549 items); “Possible amendment of the Explanatory Notes to Chapter 29 in respect of the list of narcotics drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor”

▶ HS Conference (May, 2019)
- Shared views under “WCO CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE HARMONIZED SYSTEM”/ Promoted Korea RCL
5. Future Plans

The Korea RCL will host ‘WCO Regional Customs Laboratory Professional Programme’ from October 19, 2020 to December 4, 2020. This program will include the introduction of new equipment and new training to make it more effectively than the 2019 program.

Moreover, ‘WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Workshop On Capacity Building of Customs Laboratories’ will take place in the coming year.

For this, the KCCL will discuss the schedule of the new workshop and agendas with WCO. Beside that, the KCCL will strive to vitalize its own training on analysis and consulting services.