



WCO and Customs' roles in implementing the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation

WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (ATF)

- Agreed in 2013: Multilateral rules for trade facilitation mostly related to Customs procedures
e.g. pre-arrival processing, risk management, single window, advance rulings, post-clearance audit, expedited shipments, border agency cooperation
- 2014 onwards: Implementation phase
- Developing and least developed countries: implementation subject to their capacity

World Customs Organization (WCO)

The sole intergovernmental organization on Customs matters, whose 179 Member Customs collectively process 98% of world trade, particularly specialized in:

- Setting of global standards and practical guides
e.g. Revised Kyoto Convention on Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (RKC), guidance tools for advance rulings, post-clearance audit, risk management, single window, etc.
- Network of 400+ accredited Customs experts from Members
- 250+ delivery of Capacity Building activities per year
- Good governance with 20+ donors fund and project management
- Regular consultation with other international organizations and business associations

Roles of the WCO and Customs

- Crucial roles in ATF implementation (as referred to in ATF)
- Stakeholder engagements
 - ✚ Private sector: Customs-to-Business partnership
 - ✚ Other agencies: Coordinated Border Management, single window, etc.
 - ✚ Donor institutions: Project Map Database
- Performance measurement: Time Release Study, Performance indicators
- Mobilization of accredited Customs experts
- Implementation Guidance: a new tool
 - ✚ A web tool with practical assistance for ATF implementation
 - ✚ Available to Trade Ministers, Donors, and other stakeholders
- WCO Working Group on WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WGATF)
 - ✚ Sharing of Customs' experiences on implementation
 - ✚ ATF implementation-related needs identification from WCO Members
 - ✚ Sharing capacity building information among donors and WCO Members

Contact: Susanne Aigner, Head of WCO Trade Facilitation Team

Tel. +32 (0)2 209 9303 - Susanne.Aigner@wcoomd.org - www.wcoomd.org

WCO and Customs' roles in implementing the ATF

The WCO

The WCO represents 179 Customs administrations around the world. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only inter-governmental organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community. The WCO has long supported the conclusion of a WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (ATF). In response to the decision of the WTO Bali Ministerial Meeting, the WCO Policy Commission in December 2013 issued the Dublin Resolution which states that the WCO will engage immediately with the WTO in respect of the governance and future implementation of the ATF.

The WCO response for ATF implementation

The WCO has supported Customs modernization and trade facilitation through standard setting, developing a pool of experts, providing capacity building and enhancing a Customs network, which can support the implementation of the ATF;

1) Standard Setting

The WCO has developed many tools and instruments for trade facilitation, such as the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC), Single Window Compendium and Time Release Study (TRS), in order to respond to Members' needs. Such WCO tools and instruments fully cover the customs-related provisions and articles in the WTO ATF.

2) Experts

The WCO has a pool of more than 400 WCO-accredited experts from various Customs administrations, which can support implementation of the ATF. The WCO and its Members can provide experts in all relevant areas such as IT and Single Window, Post Clearance Audit, Advance Ruling, Authorized Trader/Operator, RKC, TRS, Risk Management and Customs Modernization.

3) Capacity Building

The WCO has an active and professional Capacity Building portfolio which offers comprehensive tailor-made operational and technical support. The WCO deals with assistance requirements in a corporate way, involving its Members and regional entities, and engages donors, development partners and donor Member administrations to secure the corresponding financial resources and expertise.

4) Customs Network

Customs is the key border agency responsible for all international trade transactions and is the central government administration responsible for implementing the ATF. Through the newly established WCO Working Group on WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WGATF) the WCO can share experience on implementation of the ATF among its 179 Members as well as the donor community. The WGATF is supported by and will advise well-established WCO working bodies.