



64th Session of the WCO Policy Commission

Shanghai, 6-8 December 2010

Communiqué from the International Customs Community

AIR CARGO SECURITY

Introduction

1. The Policy Commission of the World Customs Organization (WCO) held its 64th Session in Shanghai, China from 6-8 December 2010. An important subject on the agenda was the recent threats to air cargo security.

Air Cargo Security Threats

2. The international trade supply chain is a complex system of interconnected parties, places and exchanges of information that is of critical importance to global prosperity and well-being, but is vulnerable to disruption.
3. Recently, an attempt was made to use air cargo as a delivery mechanism for explosive devices. The plot was prevented by the co-ordinated actions of several agencies, including Customs, responding to specific intelligence information.
4. The successful response to the threat shows the need for the contribution of, and close co-operation between, all public and private sector stakeholders.

The Contribution and Role of Customs in Air Cargo Security

5. Working with our partners in both the public and private sectors, the WCO and Customs administrations have an important role to play in air cargo security.
6. Based on the WCO's extensive experience in maritime security, many of the lessons learned are relevant to all other modes of transport (air, rail and road).
7. Customs is aware of every cross-border transaction, legitimate and presented as legitimate, and has the means to identify and stop illegitimate cross-border transactions.
8. Customs possesses information on supply chains as well as powers to inspect, in principle, every cross-border movement of goods, passengers and conveyances.
9. Customs identifies patterns emerging from its vast stock of movement data that can lead to actionable intelligence.
10. This range of knowledge and authority places Customs in a unique position to specify data requirements, analyse transaction data, monitor cargo movements, identify high-

risk cargo, and apply various control techniques including knowledge of traders, risk analysis, scanning and physical examination.

11. Customs works with its partners to impart its knowledge and experience to enhance trade security.

WCO Instruments and Tools that Contribute to Air Cargo Security

12. The WCO has a series of instruments and tools that contribute to the protection of the air cargo system.
13. In 2005 the WCO adopted the *SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade*, to strengthen end-to-end supply chain security through enhanced Customs-to-Customs networking and formal partnerships with trade. The SAFE Framework places emphasis on risk analysis and export control, preferably based on advance cargo data.
14. The SAFE Framework also encourages use of non-intrusive technology (NII) as a component of a risk-based processing system.
15. The SAFE Framework contains the Customs/Business innovation of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programmes, which provides benefits to administrations and our security partners in the private sector.
16. WCO Members use the Harmonized System (HS) Code as the global standard to identify goods in international trade.
17. The WCO promotes usage of the WCO Data Model as the global standard that links goods, related parties, and means of transport together for risk assessment and compliance verification.
18. The WCO advocates use of its Customs Enforcement Network (CEN), its communication tool CENcomm and the national application nCEN.
19. All of these WCO instruments and tools can be used to track goods and to share information with other government agencies in order to deter future air cargo security incidents.

Partnerships with Civil Aviation and Air Transport Organizations

20. WCO partnerships with other international organizations contribute to air cargo security. In the air cargo context, the WCO has formal co-operation with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) across the range of shared policy and business interests. The WCO and these partners seek to promote synergies with the other's instruments, tools and programmes. In particular, this extends to strategic elements such as standardized data, known trader programmes, risk mitigation through risk management, intelligence and threat information sharing, and better use of technology.

The Way Forward

21. To further contribute to efforts to protect air cargo, the WCO endeavours to achieve :
 - Further strengthening of co-operation with ICAO, IATA, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other relevant international organizations.
 - Increased security focus on all modes of transport (i.e. air, rail, road and maritime), for outbound, transit and inbound movements.

- Co-operation at national and international level with a view to ensuring that Customs plays a more active role in airport/port security. The development of a globally interconnected Customs network (Globally Networked Customs) could be instrumental.
 - Enhanced co-ordinated border management which entails co-ordination and co-operation among all the relevant authorities and agencies involved in border security and regulatory requirements that apply to passengers, goods and conveyances that move across borders.
 - Strengthened intelligence-driven risk management and threat information sharing because today's challenges and resources scarcity require application at the high end of the risk continuum.
 - Strengthened use of secure communications systems (e.g. CEN and CENcomm) for the rapid dissemination and exchange of strategic and operational information and intelligence (including risk-related information) at national, regional and international level.
 - Enabling technology and tools since Customs must take advantage of new and emerging technologies to enhance processing, risk management, intelligence and non-intrusive detection.
 - Further strengthening of existing Customs/Business partnerships that are mutually beneficial.
 - A review of current tools, especially the SAFE Framework and its basic principles and core elements, to keep them up to date and relevant.
 - Development of models/best practice on post-incident recovery for ports and airports.
 - Continued delivery of outstanding capacity building, as all Customs administrations must have the capacity and skills across every dimension of the operating model to perform efficiently and effectively.
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