



Good Practices Guidance
For the Regional Offices for Capacity Building
and
The Regional Training Centres

Update – November 2023

This version of the Guide contains all the self-assessments and updates received up to September 2023:

- **ROCB:** AMS, A/P, Europe, MENA, ESA and WCA
- **RTC:** Azerbaijan, Dominican Republic, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Qatar and Ukraine.

Background

1. The Regional Offices for Capacity Building (ROCBs) and the Regional Training Centres (RTCs) have been playing pivotal roles in designing, managing, delivering and monitoring WCO capacity building activities for its Members, in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, Vice-Chair's Offices and development partners, and supported by Members in the respective regions and their host administrations. Currently, 6 ROCBs and 32 RTCs operate in 6 WCO regions, forming a network of regional entities together with others such as 12 Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILO), 18 Regional Dog Training Centres (RDTC) and 10 Regional Customs Laboratories (RCL).
2. The principles and guidance set out by Members for ROCBs and RTCs in the Capacity Building Operational Strategy, which was adopted at the 111th/112th Sessions of the Council in June 2008, remain valid to this day. Complementing the WCO capacity building model that was agreed by the Council in June 2003, the Capacity Building Operational Strategy in 2008 provided key principles for successful capacity building. It highlighted the roles to be played by the ROCBs and RTCs to ensure that they are working for the benefit of the regions within the policy and governance of the WCO. These key roles to be performed by the ROCBs and the RTCs, and other elements to be taken into account, as provided for in the Capacity Building Operational Strategy, are summarized in **Annex I** to this Guidance.
3. While the principles and guidance in the Strategy continue to provide baseline for the performance of ROCBs and RTCs, these may evolve over a period of time in a manner that better suits the needs and environment of their respective regions, in conjunction with the defined responsibilities, operating procedures and resource aspects of regional entities, Members, the Vice-Chair's Offices and other stakeholders. In order to accommodate the diversity of the operational framework, the WCO Secretariat has been providing a series of fora to assist ROCBs and RTCs to exchange good practices and challenges so that regional entities are able to obtain inspiration from practices elsewhere. Such fora include the annual Global Meeting of the Regional Entities established by the WCO Members and the Council Vice-Chairs' Offices (Global Meeting) that is convened prior to the annual Capacity Building Committee sessions, and other ad-hoc assistance to bring regional entities closer with each other.
4. By way of example, 'Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres –' was adopted as an outcome of the 9th Global Meeting of ROCBs, RTCs and Vice-Chairs' Offices in March 2014. Based on the feedback to a questionnaire that was addressed to all ROCBs, RTCs and Vice Chairs' Offices, the Good Practice and Challenges document was developed and discussed at that meeting as a response to the 119th/120th Sessions of the WCO Council in June 2012, which recommended that the WCO Secretariat identify the organizational best practices of the WCO regional entities and disseminate the outcomes in order to allow for an exchange of experience and potentially allow them to benefit from each other's practices (Doc. SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions, paragraphs 166 and 399). The document provides good practices and sets out common challenges experiences by regional entities, such as the legal status, size and composition of the entities, financial arrangements, guiding strategic and action plans, reporting mechanisms, and website and visibility.
5. With the experiences of ROCBs and RTCs enriched, and with heightened expectations on the part of Members with respect to regional entities as indispensable entities for capacity building delivery, in the discussions at the 125th/126th Sessions of the WCO Council in July 2015 on the implementation of the WCO Strategic Plan the Members asked for the development of an instrument to assess the compliance and development needs of ROCBs and RTCs by June 2016. Similarly, the 74th session of the Policy Commission in December 2015 tasked the

WCO with enhancing the abilities of regional structures to manage the process of delivering capacity building support in the draft WCO Strategic Plan for the next generation.

6. In light of the above, the first version of the Best Practices Guidance for the WCO Regional Entities - Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres – was developed to assist ROCBs and RTCs to reassess the respective framework in which they operate, in comparison with the principles and guidance of the Capacity Building Operational Strategy and other guiding documents, being inspired by practices elsewhere, with a set of self-assessment questions to further enhance their functions so as to meet the expected requirements.
7. In considering the different roles and operational arrangement of ROCBs and RTCs, the following chapters are divided into two components: ROCBs and RTCs.
8. The 11th Global Meeting, which was held on 7th and 8th April 2016 in Brussels, discussed the draft Best Practices Guidance and concluded by: (1) confirming the relevance of the draft document which would support re-assessment of the respective framework in which ROCBs and RTCs operate; (2) confirming the relevance of the proposed structure and components of the draft document, with some adjustment in the order of components, to allow a logical flow, and in some expressions, for better understanding; (3) confirming the relevance of the practices described and the challenges for the respective ROCBs and RTCs in the draft, with some comments to better reflect their actual situation; (4) offering a further submission of practices, challenges and additional comments to the WCO Secretariat by 22 April 2016 to finalize the document; and (5) expressing willingness to use this document, once finalized, to self-assess the environment and to take suggested actions in respective items.
9. An updated version of the Best Practices Guidance containing a few additional self-assessments was presented at the 12th Global Meeting of the Heads of ROCBs, RTCs and Vice-Chairs' Offices held on 2nd and 3rd March 2017 in Brussels. The Secretariat decided that the feedback received was insufficient and urged the other regional structures to perform their self-assessments and provide their results as soon as possible. The Meeting concluded, inter alia, that it was necessary to keep the Best Practices Guidance document up-to-date and committed to take greater ownership of it.
10. The 14th Global Meeting took note of the Secretariat's update on the consolidation of the **Best Practice Guidance for ROCBs and RTCs**. For that version, five (5) of the six (6) ROCBs and 17 of the 26 RTCs had provided the Secretariat with their self-assessments and updates on current practices and challenges. The Secretariat reminded the ROCBs and RTCs of their commitment to provide annual inputs and invited those not having fulfilled this commitment to do so. For its part, the Secretariat made a commitment to start developing best practices once it had received a sufficient number of responses.
11. Not all ROCBs and RTCs have provided self-assessments and updates, but the Secretariat has incorporated the new and updated self-assessments into the current version of the Good Practices Guidance for ROCBs and RTCs.
12. The current update of the Good Practices Guidance for ROCBs and RTCs includes feedback received from all the six (6) ROCBs and 12 of the 32 RTCs. Not all regional structures have provided self-assessments since the 12th Global Meeting of the Heads of ROCBs, RTCs and Vice-Chairs' Offices. The Secretariat has incorporated the new and updated self-assessments into the current version of the Good Practices Guidance for ROCBs and RTCs.

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1. ROCBs

A. Status of the ROCB

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th Policy Commission (PC) Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to Council Sessions (CS) SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **ROCB Europe:** Registered by the tax authority of Azerbaijan as a local legal entity. The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan grants diplomatic privileges and immunities to the staff of the ROCB.
- **ROCB MENA:** Comes under the Abu Dhabi Customs training department.
- **ROCB ESA:** The ROCB has now been gazetted by the Government of Kenya through a legislative supplement under the country's Privileges and Immunities Act and has the legal capacity of a corporate body, as well as privileges and immunities in accordance with host country laws.
- **ROCB WCA:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed a Headquarters Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of the Regional Office for capacity building for West and Central Africa in Côte d'Ivoire. On June 16, 2022, a Headquarters Agreement was signed on behalf of the WCO by the Vice-Chair of the WCA region and the Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and the Diaspora for the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB Europe:** Since there is no direct legal recognition by the WCO, the Office does not have an international diplomatic status.

Self-checklist

1. Does your ROCB have a specific document on status?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment, or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. There is a MOU signed between the WCO and the Uruguay National Customs Directorate.
- **ROCB A/P:** There is no MOU between the Secretariat and Thai Customs on the hosting of ROCB A/P. Regional Directors General adopted the Terms of Reference for ROCB A/P in April 2014. These stipulate the principles and procedures relating to hosting issues.

- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes. There is a MoU signed between the WCO and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, there is a UAE Cabinet of Ministers Decree to host the ROCB in 2006. An Agreement was signed on 24 June 2023 between the UAE and the WCO to give the Office legal status as a regional office in the UAE and define the role of the host country.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The Office has a Host Country Agreement signed between the Government of Kenya and the region through its Vice-Chair. The government also published a Legal Notice affirming the legal status granted to the Office via a Legislative Supplement under the country's Privileges and Immunities Act.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. There is a Headquarters Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and the WCO for the establishment of the ROCB for West Africa and Central in Côte d'Ivoire.

2. Does the host administration unilaterally provide any privileges to the Office? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. The host administration provides the necessary equipment and facilities.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. Provision of office space, equipment, janitorial and cleaning service, and support staff.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes. The host administration provides the initial equipment, facilities, and service staff.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, provides staff, office space, administrative support, and necessary resources.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. Provision of office space, office equipment and staff to work at the ROCB. Upon request, may support the seconded staff from the host country to participate in various Missions.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The host administration provides premises to the ROCB, equipment, essential means of communication, facilities, offers necessary administrative support to the ROCB and possibly personnel.

3. Does your ROCB have an independent bank account? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment, or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** No, but following the signing of the UAE-WCO Agreement in 2023 it may be able to open an account.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** No. Work in progress.

4. Is there a regional decision on the ROCB status? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment, or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. The establishment of the ROCB in Uruguay was decided and agreed at the 2015 Regional Conference of Customs Directors General.

- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The establishment of the regional focal point for coordination of capacity building activities was discussed and decided at the A/P Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference held in April 2004 in New Zealand. The regional decision was endorsed at the WCO Council Sessions in June 2004. At the A/P RHCA Conference in May 2018, the Directors General adopted the revised Terms of Reference for the ROCB A/P with slight modifications. The Terms of Reference are subject to revision every 4 years.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, at the Conference of Heads of Customs Services of the European Region held in Bergen (Norway), in May 2009, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan proposed the creation of the European Regional Office for Capacity Building, based in Baku (Azerbaijan). The meeting supported the initiative.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, at the 24th Meeting of the Heads of Customs held in Brussels, Belgium in June 2006, and the WCO endorsed this decision at the 107th/108th Council Sessions held in Brussels, Belgium in June 2006.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The ESA Governing Council adopted the recommendation of the 77th Policy Commission to recognize the ROCB as an autonomous institution.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The extraordinary meeting of the Directors General of Customs of the WCA Region which was held by videoconference on June 15, 2021 recommended to the Vice-Chair's Office to advocate to customs administrations housing regional structures for the signing of headquarters agreements. This advocacy resulted in the signing of a Headquarters Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and the WCO.

5. Does your ROCB staff enjoy some privileges/immunities in the host country? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No. The ROCB staff consists of officials from the host administration, therefore they are not granted any privileges/immunities.
- **ROCB A/P:** Income tax is not levied on salary for foreign secondees (i.e. Technical Attachés).
- **ROCB EUROPE:** The ROCB staff is given a technical service and diplomatic ID card (releasing them from immigration registration requirements).
- **ROCB MENA:** No.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The Legal Notice published by the Government of Kenya grants the officials of the ROCB performing duties of the Office privileges and immunities as outlined in the Privileges and Immunities Act.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Article 8 of the Headquarters Agreement and Article 5 of the Memorandum of Understanding provide for provisions relating to privileges and immunities in the host country for foreign officials. Officials of the host administration do not benefit from privileges and immunities.

6. Does your ROCB staff enjoy WCO Technical Attaché (TA) status? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Only nominal status.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Only nominal status.

- **ROCB MENA:** No, but due to the signing of the UAE-WCO Agreement in 2023 the region will work on seconding officers from the region; but not deemed as WCO staff.
- **ROCB ESA:** No.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. ROCB staff members have the status of technical attaché.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Having a regional decision regarding ROCB status.
 - **ROCB AMS:** No.
 - **ROCB A/P:** No. Pertinent regional decisions on forthcoming needs have been put in place under the ToR.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** With the signing of the UAE-WCO Agreement in 2023, will await decision by Members regarding the secondment of staff to the ROCB.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. All staff obtaining WCO TA status, provided no diplomatic status is given in the host country.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Generally speaking, seconding administrations do not consider TAs as diplomats or provide them with official/service passports. This may entail discussions with their respective Foreign Ministries.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, they are not considered as diplomats by their seconding administrations.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Staff members are not considered as WCO staff, and do not have diplomatic status. They are assigned by their respective administration.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Having an agreement with the host country to allow for an ROCB bank account to be opened in a local bank.
 - **ROCB AMS:** No.
 - **ROCB A/P:** There is no formal agreement with the host administration, but the host administration and the Secretariat provided administrative support and proof of the ROCB A/P's residential status. Accordingly, the ROCB A/P has its own bank accounts in Belgium and Thailand.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** No, but due to the signing of the UAE-WCO Agreement in 2023 it may be able to open an account.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The existence of the establishment agreement allows the ROCB to fully enjoy its management autonomy through the creation of a bank account.

B. ROCB team – size and status

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th PC Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to CS; SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Discussion paper for the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (Breakout session I, ROCBs) (2015).

<Practices>

➤ Head of ROCB

- **ROCB AMS:** Nominated by the ROCB host administration.
- **ROCB A/P:** Endorsed by the Regional Directors General for a five-year tenure (consensus or voting). No two consecutive terms. The Head of the ROCB is dedicated solely to the work of the ROCB, with no other responsibilities to any other organization such as his/her home administration.
- **ROCB Europe:** Selected by a panel composed of volunteering regional Members and confirmed by regional DG meeting for a three-year term with a possible one-year extension. The Head of the ROCB is dedicated solely to the work of the ROCB, with no other responsibilities to any other organization such as his/her home administration.
- **ROCB MENA:** The Head of the ROCB is appointed by the host administration and endorsed by the Regional DG meeting.
- **ROCB ESA:** Nominated by Members and competitively selected by a Management Committee comprising representatives of the regional Vice-Chair, Deputy Vice-Chair and members of the Policy Commission. The appointed Head of the ROCB, referred to as the Director, is formally sworn in at the next Governing Council Meeting.
- **ROCB WCA:** The head of the ROCB is proposed by Member Administrations of the region and elected at the Directors Generals' Conference of the region by direct suffrage for a mandate of three years.

➤ ROCB staff members

- ***The total number and ratio of staff (including the Head) coming from the host administration of the ROCB and those coming from other administrations:***
 - **ROCB AMS** - total of 3 (3 non-exclusive staff from the host administration and occasional support from collaborators from other areas, and 0 from the other administrations).
 - **ROCB A/P** - total of 9 (4 from the host administration and 5 from the other administrations).
 - **ROCB ESA** - total of 6 (6 from the host administration and 0 from the other administrations).

- **ROCB Europe** - total of 3 (2 from the host administration and 1 from the other administrations).
 - **ROCB MENA** - total of 2 (2 from the host administration and 0 from the other administrations).
 - **ROCB WCA** – total of 9, 7 technical attachés (3 technical attachés from the host administration and 4 technical attachés from other Administrations - a technical attaché from Mali, a technical attaché from Gabon and two technical attachés from the Republic of Congo) and 2 administrative agents made available by the host country.
- **Seconded by Members as WCO Technical Attachés:**
- **ROCB AMS** – 0 out of 3
 - **ROCB A/P** – 5 out of 9
 - **ROCB Europe** – 1 out of 3
 - **ROCB ESA** – 0 out of 6
 - **ROCB MENA** – 0 out of 2
 - **ROCB WCA** – 7 out of 9.
- **Various practices to enhance staff members' capability to assess needs and/or deliver capacity building missions:**
- Participation in regional/national workshops
 - Assignment of responsibility over sub-regions/Members
 - Archiving strategic plans, Customs reform and modernization plans, key information, mission/workshop materials and outcome documents per Member, for analysis and planning
 - Going through the process of WCO expert accreditation
 - Facilitation of capacity building missions
 - Use of e-learning on CLiKC!
 - Participation in in-house training
 - Staff appraisal based on job descriptions
 - Active involvement in the development, monitoring and promotion of the regional strategic reform plan.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB AMS:** Enhance the level of support from the rest of the Members of the region. For the ROCB to play its role effectively, the staff should be trained and fully dedicated to the work of the Office.
- **ROCB Europe:** Assuring wider Member support by seconding staff, allowing for better representation of all sub-regions.
- **ROCB MENA:** Lack of staff and secondments from Members to the Office.

- **ROCB ESA:** Lack of bilingual staff; the Office has no French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking staff, thus requiring more staff to be seconded by Members. Member Countries sometimes are called upon to translate or verify translations of key documents. Members are also reluctant to second staff to the ROCB due to the increased costs arising from expatriate staff.
- **ROCB WCA:** Lack of bilingual staff (French-English). Only one staff member is bilingual and the office's capacity to serve the region's English-speaking members remains limited.

Self-checklist

1. Does the ROCB have an established process in selecting its Head? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment, or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. The ROCB Head is selected by the host administration.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The selection process is clearly stated in its Terms of Reference, which were adopted by the regional Directors General.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes. A decision is taken by an ad hoc selection panel.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes. The ROCB Head is selected by the host administration and is endorsed by the Regional Meeting of Customs Directors General.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. A vigorous interview/recruitment process is handled by the Management Committee on behalf of the Governing Council.
- **ROCB WCA:** The procedure for designating the head of the ROCB is the responsibility of the Directors Generals' Conference of the Region.

2. Is this process documented? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** The designation is documented.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The process is clearly set out in the Terms of Reference.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No, new ToR developed by the ROCB; awaiting decision from the Region.
- **ROCB MENA:** Agreed on in the Regional Meeting of Customs Directors General.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. This procedure is documented under the Staff Rules of the ROCB.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The WCO Regional Strategy Paper (Annex 1 doc. 0273F1a).

3. Is this process agreed by regional Members? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, Members have been consulted.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The Terms of Reference were adopted with slight amendments at the A/P Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference held in May 2018.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Regional Members were informed about the procedure by the Vice-Chair.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, as several appointments have been made since inception of the ROCB.

- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. This is the procedure currently in place.

4. Are ROCB staff members composed of a diverse membership from the region? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No. The ROCB staff consists of officials from the host administration.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The ROCB A/P consists of staff seconded from Japan, China, Hong Kong (China), Korea and Thailand.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** No, the ROCB currently only consists of staff from the host administration.
- **ROCB ESA:** No. The ROCB staff currently consists of officials from the host administration. With the recent granting of Legal Status by the host government, Members may now second staff to the regional office without encumbrances.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

5. Do the ROCB Head and staff dedicate their time to ROCB work (vis-à-vis spending some time on concurrent tasks from seconding administration or other entities)? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No, the Head and staff also have other tasks related to the host administration.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The ROCB A/P Head and staff work full time at the Office in Bangkok and are fully aware of the need to dedicate their work solely to the ROCB A/P in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, the staff work full time.
- **ROCB MENA:** No, the ROCB Head has responsibilities in the host administration. There are no other staff in the ROCB currently.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The staff works strictly for the ROCB on a full-time basis. Members also provide virtual staff for specific tasks upon request by the ROCB.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. ROCB staff work only for the ROCB.

6. Does the ROCB combine various approaches to enhance staff members' capability to assess needs and/or deliver capacity building missions? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. The ROCB combines various approaches.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The ROCB A/P Head assigns various tasks relating to representation and the organization of regional workshops to staff with a view to providing them with opportunities to acquire pertinent technical knowledge as well as international coordination experiences, and also to encourage them to apply for WCO Expert accreditation. The ROCB also encourages staff to make use of CliKC! for self-learning, as well as to keep up to date with the latest WCO developments or hot topics.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, the staff is given the opportunity to represent the ROCB at regional/subregional workshops.

- **ROCB MENA:** N/A.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. Various officers are assigned different duties according to their respective job descriptions; sometimes officers work jointly on tasks and are also offered training opportunities so as to enhance their skills.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The head of the ROCB gives his staff the opportunity to participate in certain meetings, seminars, workshops to represent the office. Office staff strengthen their capacities during internal training. The head of the ROCB encouraged a member of his staff to apply for training in Brussels with a view to get accreditation.

7. Does the ROCB have job descriptions for all staff?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes, but it merely describes principles and key tasks based on the qualifications and/or personal interests, and it is applied in a flexible manner as appropriate.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Only the Head of the ROCB has a job description, as per the WCO guidelines (there are no other staff).
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes, ROCB has job descriptions. These are based on an organization chart, a job repository, skills repository, and a skills dictionary, approved by the DGs Conference (Competency Based HRM approach).

8. Does the ROCB have a transparent staff recruitment/selection process based on identified needs?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Officials are selected according to requirements.
- **ROCB A/P:** No. ROCB A/P respects the selection of the seconding administrations, including the host administrations.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No, ROCB accepts the selection/decision of the seconding administration.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, for staff selected by the host administration as per the HR department. Awaiting decisions from member administrations regarding secondment to the ROCB.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Now with Competency Based HRM tools, staff recruitment is done on the basis of job descriptions which are transmitted to the various member administrations and accompanied by the expression of human resource needs.

9. Is the ROCB recruitment/selection process based on competencies?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, it is carried out according to the area involved.
- **ROCB A/P:** No.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, as per the National Administration HR department.

- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The new ROCB recruitment policy is based on competences.

10. Does the ROCB have a transparent staff appraisal process?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No, there is no evaluation process.
- **ROCB A/P:** No.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, as per the National Administration HR appraisal process.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. With job descriptions which list the functions, responsibilities, and tasks, as well as the skills required for the position.

11. Does the ROCB have a staff development plan?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No. The ROCB does not currently have a staff development plan.
- **ROCB A/P:** No.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, as per the National Administration HR plan.
- **ROCB ESA:** No.
- **ROCB WCA:** No.
 - lack of staff retraining
 - absence of continuing training (internship, retraining, training seminars)

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the establishment of a process to select the ROCB Head, if such a process does not already exist.

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
- **ROCB A/P:** Exists already.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** Exists but could be documented.
- **ROCB ESA:** Exists already.
- **ROCB WCA:** Already exists.

2. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal composition of ROCB staff members and the contribution from regional Members to this end.

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, it would be highly beneficial.
- **ROCB A/P:** A couple of Members have expressed their interests in seconding officers to the ROCB A/P.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Taking various approaches to enhance staff members' capability, including those listed above.
- **AMS:** Yes, ROCB AMS thinks this is a very good initiative.
 - **A/P:** Yes. ROCB A/P is going to take various approaches to this end.
 - **EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **MENA:** Yes.
 - **ESA:** Yes.
 - **WCA:** Yes.

C. Strategic Plan and Action Plan as guidance for regional entities

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Non paper on regional plans, arising from the informal discussion per region at the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (2015)

<Practices>

- **Strategic Plans which apply to respective ROCBs**
 - Strategic plans and/or Action Plans are in place, being applied to ROCBs directly or indirectly, offering strategic visions for two or three years.
- **Modality of development and consultation of Strategic Plans which apply to ROCBs directly or indirectly.**
 - **ROCB AMS:** The Vice-Chair implemented the Strategic Plan (2022-2024) which included activities to be developed with the ROCB, approved during the virtual meeting of directors general held on 3 October 2022.
 - **ROCB A/P:** The ROCB Strategic Action Plan and its Annual Work Plan is developed in consultation with the Vice-Chair of the region and other stakeholders in line with updates to the Regional Strategic Plan adopted by the Regional Heads of Customs Administrations Meeting.
 - **ROCB MENA:** A regional Strategic Plan is developed yearly by the ROCB in coordination with the Members of the Regional Capacity Building Contact Group and presented to the Regional DGs Meeting. The ROCB coordinates with the Regional Development Manager in the WCO to finalize it in line with the budget and availability of technical experts'.
 - **ROCB ESA:** The Regional Development Plan is developed by Regional Steering Group members, RTCs and Regional Economic Communities for endorsement at the Regional Governing Council, and the Regional Implementation Plan is then developed by Regional Steering Group members, the ROCB and RTCs for endorsement at the Regional Governing Council.
 - **ROCB WCA:** On the basis of regional consultations, the ROCB develops the draft regional strategic plan (five-year) and annual roadmaps, specific to each administration according to its evolution. Strategic Plans are submitted to the Directors General Conference for approval.

The ROCB WCA annually evaluates the levels of implementation and impact of the Strategic Plan and makes the necessary adjustments. This evaluation is carried out on the basis of a dedicated web application, the MIRRORI, through which the collection and analysis of data on the implementation of the Strategic plan are carried out.

○ ***Publication of guidance for ROCBs***

- **ROCB A/P:** The ROCB Strategic Action Plan and the ROCB Annual Work Plan are published as part of the Annual Report and made public on its website.
- **ROCB Europe:** The annual work plan is a part of the Annual Report and is also reported to the WCO/Regional Development Manager (RDM).
- **ROCB MENA:** The ROCB Strategic Action Plan is adopted within the minutes of the Regional DG Meetings and shared with the Regional VC and members of the Capacity Building Contact Group.
- **ROCB ESA:** The Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan (RSIP) is published and made available to all Members and stakeholders.
- **ROCB WCA:** The regional strategic plan, annual roadmaps and evaluation reports are submitted to administrations, to the WCO Secretariat and published on the ROCB website.

○ ***Monitoring mechanism for implementation***

- **ROCB AMS:** The Vice-Chair approved the Strategic Plan 2022-2024 for the region and involved ROCB AMS in it.
- **ROCB A/P:** The ROCB makes a progress report to the Regional Heads of Customs Administration Conference and Regional Contact Points Meeting. It also presents the Annual Report to the regional Members and other stakeholders. A quarterly report is also produced for the Vice-Chair and the WCO Secretariat.
- **ROCB Europe:** The ROCB makes a progress report to the annual Heads of Customs Conference.
- **ROCB MENA:** The ROCB makes a progress report to the Regional DGs meetings.
- **ROCB ESA:** The ROCB makes monthly and annual reports to the Management Committee, the Regional Steering Committee and the Governing Council. However, the Strategy that just ended did not have a specific M&E which can be integrated into the new Strategy (2022-2025).
- **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB evaluates the annual roadmaps of Member Administrations each year and makes an annual report on the progress of the structure and administrations to the Conference of Directors General of Customs.

○ ***Performance measurement***

- **ROCB A/P:** Key Performance Indicators and the timeframe are set for performance measurement of the ROCB.
- **ROCB Europe:** Key performance indicators and the timeframe are set in the activity plan.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB AMS:** Carry out activities related to the themes in the Strategic Plan with the challenge of involving the largest number of administrations in the region.
- **ROCB ESA:** The ROCB is struggling to develop an M&E framework to particularly monitor the effect of regional activities. In addition, the ROCB staff is not well equipped in terms of M&E skills.
- **ROCB WCA:** Absence of mechanism for evaluating ROCB activities.

Self-checklist

1. Does the region set out a Regional Strategic Plan over a certain period of years? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, the Vice-Chair approved the Strategic Plan 2022-2024 with the collaboration of the ROCB.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. A/P region sets out its Regional Strategic Plan for a two-year term and it is renewed every two years.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** It is set out in line with the WCO fiscal year.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The Regional Strategy runs for three years (currently 2022-25).
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The ROCB WCA develops five-year strategic plans. The latest one covers the period 2023-2027.

2. Is this Regional Strategic Plan converted into a roadmap and/or annual work plan of the ROCB, so that the ROCB has a defined work plan? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** N/A.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The Strategy is accompanied by an Implementation Plan.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Are the ROCB roadmap and/or annual work plan published in the public domain, or at least in the regional Members' domain? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. It is published as part of the e-newsletter issued at the beginning of the WCO fiscal year, i.e. every July. It is also made public on the ROCB A/P's web page.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Officially delivered to the DGs at the DGs meeting and published on the ROCB's website.

- **ROCB MENA:** No, it is currently only shared with the regional Members. But with the help of the host country, a website has been developed which will include an e-newsletter.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The strategy is shared with all members and stakeholders and published on the Region's website.

4. Does the ROCB make a progress report to the region on the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan/roadmap/annual work plan? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The implementation status is reported to both the Regional Contact Point Meeting and the Regional Head of Customs Administrations Conference every year; in addition, quarterly reports are submitted to the WCO Secretariat (Capacity Building Directorate) and Regional Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, with the Regional Capacity Building Coordination Group (meetings) as well as the Regional DGs meetings.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. Both monthly and annual Reports are submitted to the Regional Vice-Chair, Management Committee, Regional Steering Group and Governing Council.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the challenges relating to, or shortcomings in, the strategic planning and/or annual planning of ROCB work, and how to turn the strategic directions of the region into specific activities of the ROCB.
 - **ROCB AMS:** This could be evaluated, yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Regional mechanism is already in place.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Ensuring that this annual work plan of the ROCB is published, enabling Members in the region and other stakeholders to revisit it at appropriate times.
 - **ROCB AMS:** This could be evaluated, yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** It will be continuously publicized through appropriate means.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Currently working with the host administration to have this as part of the ROCB website with access to Members.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to monitor progress on the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan/roadmap/annual work plan by the ROCB and to receive further guidance, as appropriate.
 - **ROCB AMS:** This could be evaluated, yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Monitoring process and opportunities are provided already.

- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Mechanism in place via the Regional Capacity Building Coordination Group and the Regional DGs meetings.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.
4. Setting appropriate Key Performance Indicators and the timeframe to monitor progress made by the ROCB in a quantitative manner, complemented by a qualitative manner.
- **ROCB AMS:** No.
 - **ROCB A/P:** The Regional Strategic Plan sets out Key Performance Indicators and the ROCB A/P reports its implementation accordingly. In addition, the revised Terms of Reference for the ROCB A/P, which were adopted in May 2018, task the ROCB A/P to set key performance indicators in line with those of the Regional Strategic Plan. Accordingly, the ROCB A/P's quarterly report is prepared to present the progress towards the fulfilment of these key performance indicators.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

D. Financial arrangements

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th PC Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to CS; SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **Salaries of ROCB staff members**
 - The salaries of ROCB staff members are paid by the administrations seconding their officials.
- **Operating and administrative cost of the ROCB**
 - The host administrations of the ROCBs pay the rent of / provide office space and hardware (e.g. office equipment, PCs, telephones); with some exceptions:
 - **ROCB A/P:** staff PCs are provided by the administrations of the respective staff members.
 - **ROCB AMS:** The host administration covers some administrative costs (building/space, telephone and internet bills). The Head and staff do not receive compensation for working in the Office.

- **ROCB ESA:** The host administration covers some administrative costs (building/space, telephone and internet bills). All other costs are supported by Member subscriptions sent annually to the ROCB, while others may be covered through donor support.
- **ROCB Europe:** Website costs are borne by the ROCB budget, funded by Members' contributions, as well as software, new hardware, daily consumables (toner, cartridges, paper and infrastructure equipment), etc.
- **ROCB MENA:** The office space, equipment, consumables, website, and other requirements are covered by the United Arab Emirates (host administration) as per the UAE-WCO Agreement signed in 2023.
- **ROCB WCA:** The Côte d'Ivoire Customs Administration provides the ROCB with office equipment, computers, telephones, internet, etc. It provides the Office with adequate personnel for the development of the regional website, regional mail address, and the development of applications for professional use. The costs of maintaining the regional website and the strategic management, evaluation and decision support tool are taken into account in the regional budget.

➤ ***Mission costs for ROCB staff (e.g. travel and subsistence allowance to participate in regional/national missions as facilitator(s))***

- **ROCB AMS:** Due to the current context, it has not been evaluated.
- **ROCB A/P:** Mission costs are paid either out of the donor funding for the particular mission, or by the seconding administration of the ROCB staff.
- **ROCB ESA:** Mission costs are borne by Members through the ROCB budget which is funded by Member subscriptions and approved by the Governing Council annually. Other costs may be borne by donors/WCO funds, while a seconding administration may be asked to cover certain mission costs for its members of staff.
- **ROCB Europe:** Mission costs are borne by Members through the ROCB budget.
- **ROCB MENA:** Mission costs for ROCB staff are borne by the seconding administration, unless there are donor funds which have been allocated.
- **ROCB WCA:** The cost of missions is covered by contributions from Members of the region (if this has been budgeted and authorized by the Vice-Chair) or by donors for some of them.

➤ ***Governing structure***

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** The region utilizes a third-party auditor.
- **ROCB ESA:** The region has a Finance and Governance Committee (comprising four Members) which oversees the management of finances, appoints the external auditors, and reports to the Governing Council. The ROCB Director is the accounting officer of the ROCB, and reports to the Governing Council on finance matters through the Finance and Governance Committee.
- **ROCB Europe:** The WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference is the main body.
- **ROCB WCA:** The Directors General Conference of the region created a Finance Committee and an Audit Committee. All WCO regional structures must present their annual work plan and budget to the Committees. Cash outflows must be authorized by the Vice Chair for the WCA region. The account is managed by Nigerian Customs where the account is domiciled.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB AMS:** There is no funding arrangement with the Members; all costs are borne by the ROCB host administration.
- **ROCB Europe:** For the time being funding is covered by Members' contributions on a yearly basis; this will remain the main source of funding in future.
- **ROCB ESA:** The region has relied heavily on the host administration, Kenya, which has contributed a great deal to the ROCB in terms of equipment, space, and the majority of its staff, as well as supporting missions for its staff. Nevertheless, the Office is run through Member subscriptions, the level of which is considered insufficient, while some Members have outstanding subscriptions.
- **ROCB MENA:** Though the host administration is funding all matters pertaining to the hosting of the ROCB, there are no Member contributions in terms of seconding staff or support in the management of the Office.
- **ROCB WCA:** Members of the region expressed their expectations regarding the services provided by the ROCB. This is why Côte d'Ivoire has made significant investments to provide modern and well-equipped infrastructure to the ROCB. No other member country has made contributions in support of the host country. And there are no plans to share with other Members in the region the costs relating to the infrastructure, equipment and maintenance and operation of the ROCB. Technical attachés do not receive any other compensation / bonus linked to the workload at the ROCB. Each technical attaché is supported by his administration.

Self-checklist

1. Is the current funding arrangement for ROCB infrastructure, equipment and maintenance accepted by the host administration and can it bear such costs on a longer term? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. It was established in the MOU and accepted by Uruguay.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Mostly.
- **ROCB ESA:** No. The region intends to ease the burden on the host country by exploring other funding options including the possibility of acquiring ROCB office spaces in future.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, it is part of the Agreement signed between the WCO and the host country (UAE).
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Is the current funding arrangement for other ROCB running costs working well under the joint efforts of the host administration, regional Members and the administrations whose personnel are seconded to ROCB? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No. N/A. There is no funding arrangement with the Members.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Mostly, yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** There are no secondments made from regional Members.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Is the current funding arrangement for ROCB mission costs working well under the joint efforts of the host administration, regional Members and the administrations whose personnel are seconded to ROCB? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** This is the same as question 2 above.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. Customs Cooperation Funds (CCFs) provided by Japan, China and Korea are the primary funding sources for the regional and national workshops arranged by the ROCB A/P.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Mostly, yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** No. Funding for missions depends on the availability of funds based on the approved budget, and therefore some key missions are missed where there is no funding. However, Kenya has endeavoured to support its seconded staff to go on some missions upon request, based on the availability of funds.
- **ROCB MENA:** Only currently applicable to the Head of the ROCB, who is covered by the host administration.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

4. Is the current funding arrangement for ROCB staff salaries viable on a longer term? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** N/A There is no special funding agreement for salaries; they are covered by the host administration, since the staff consists of officials from this administration.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Salaries are covered by the seconding administration (problem of inequality with some TAs doing the same work but being paid different salaries).
- **ROCB ESA:** No. Members are reluctant to second staff to the ROCB because they will have to pay them as expatriates, and this is considered too expensive by Member administrations.
- **ROCB MENA:** Only staff seconded by the host administration are covered, no secondments have been made by regional Members yet.
- **ROCB WCA:** No. Each technical attaché is supported by his/her Administration.

5. Does the region (regional Members and/or donors) have a proper mechanism to agree on the budget allocation, at least on a yearly basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** No. The budget allocation for the regional capacity building activities is consulted and agreed between the Secretariat and donor administrations, referring to the CB activities proposals submitted by the ROCB A/P.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** For regional Members yes (the ROCB does not have any donors).
- **ROCB MENA:** No.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The budget is approved during the Governing Council meeting in April/May annually.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

6. Does the region (regional Members and/or donors) have a proper mechanism to examine the proper use of financial contributions, at least on a yearly basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Not as regards the use by the regional Members or donor administrations. But the ROCB A/P's accounting for the CCF/Japan and Management budget is subject to annual audit by third-party professionals on a yearly basis.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Once a year at the DG's conference; the ROCB suggested that it should undergo a financial audit every two years initiated by the WCO or a dedicated regional finance/audit committee.
- **ROCB MENA:** There are no financial contributions made other than the one from the host administration; though there are missions/workshops that are self-funded or hosted by a Member for the region.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. There is independent auditing and presentation of the financial statements of the ROCB. The process is managed by the region's Finance and Governance committee, comprising four Members.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Implementation of an audit program for regional structures.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the challenges relating to, or shortcomings in, the funding arrangements, if any, to gain the full support of the region.
- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, the ROCB thinks it is a very good initiative.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Not necessary for the moment.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to agree on budget allocation.
 - **ROCB AMS:** The ROCB agrees on this point as well.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Not necessary for the moment.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes, noting that there are no budgets managed by the region or from donors to the region other than that allocated via the WCO. Note that some workshops for the Region are hosted by Members and are managed independently by that Member.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes. For two years, disbursement procedures characterized by a certain administrative burden have meant that the ROCB prefinances its activities.

3. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to examine the proper use of financial contributions.
 - **ROCB AMS:** The ROCB also agrees on this point.
 - **A/P:** A regional mechanism for this purpose is not necessary for the moment. Instead, the ROCB A/P understands that the Secretariat does this through its reporting to the Finance Committee.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes, noting the reply to question (2) above.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

E. National contact points

<Guiding documents>

- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Discussion paper for the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (Breakout session I, ROCBs) (2015)

<Practices>

- Established National Contact Points (NCPs)
 - All ROCBs: By the nature of their activities, all ROCBs have their network of NCPs, through the communication channels of emails, telephone calls, newsletters and meetings.

- Enhanced network with NCPs
 - **ROCB A/P:** Four ROCB staff members take care of each of the designated sub-regions for enhanced communication with, and analysis of, the capacity building situation of the respective Members.
 - **ROCB Europe:** An annual meeting is organized jointly by the ROCB and the WCO Secretariat.
 - **ROCB MENA:** An annual NCP meeting is organized by the ROCB.

- **ROCB ESA:** The ROCB keeps in constant touch with all of the NCPs, as their first point of communication to the Members, through the Directors General. Any changes in NCPs are communicated to the ROCB.
- ROCB WCA:** NCP meetings are organized on an annual basis. The meeting is chaired by the ROCB and attended also by all regional structures, the Vice Chair for WCA, the WCO Secretariat and some development partners.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB AMS:** To find a mechanism to obtain information from the Members whenever the NCPs change so as to update information.
- **ROCB Europe:** The ROCB regularly asks Members to update their NCP information.
- **ROCB ESA:** The ROCB has an updated list of NCPs, although sometimes changes are not communicated. The ROCB, however, keeps in constant touch by email and telephone to update its NCP listing. Some Members who do not regularly participate in ESA activities do not have functional NCPs.
- **ROCB WCA:** Overall, the NCP network works very well and has enabled the region to collaborate and communicate effectively. However, some NCPs still do not play their roles and should be replaced.

Self-checklist

1. Does the ROCB have a list of NCPs? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes, the ROCB developed a list of NCPs as soon as the Office was established.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. It is updated occasionally.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Is there a mechanism to maintain the validity of the list of NCPs, by reflecting changes in NCP contact details on a regular basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes. NCPs are contacted on a regular basis to check if there are any changes.
- **ROCB A/P:** No formal mechanism, but Members notify the changes to the ROCB spontaneously.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, the ROCB regularly asks Members to update their NCP information.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, this is done annually by the ROCB.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The NCP list is updated in real time/continuously.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The list is updated each time a Member designates a new NCP.

3. Are the ROCB staff contact details per Member/sub-region/theme made available for Members and/or NCPs (e.g. table of ROCB staff contact details on the regional website) Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** These can be shared with relevant parties upon request.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes; on the ROCB website (closed user group only).
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

4. Are there any other means to enhance communication between the ROCB and the NCPs?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** The ROCB is currently evaluating options for other means of contacting NCPs, such as an annual NCP meeting.
- **ROCB A/P:** Under the initiative of the Regional Vice-Chair, the region's collective efforts towards better communication and survey mechanisms are being discussed.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes; e-mails, web contact form, updated news on website, ROCB staff contact details.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, emails, meetings, and currently finalizing ROCB website.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes, a Regional Communication Policy has been developed and implemented.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. The National Development Coordinators (NDCs) of all regional Member countries (in the same manner as the Regional Development Coordinators in the WCO Secretariat).

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Regularly approaching regional Members to have them check NCP information that is registered with the ROCB, to ensure that NCP details are kept up to date.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Establishing a primary point of contact within the ROCB per Member/sub-region/theme of enquiry, so that Members and/or NCPs can reach out to the ROCB, without having to try to identify who to contact.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes. Current contact point arrangement will be maintained.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

F. Website and visibility

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

➤ **ROCB website**

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Has its own websites in place.
- **ROCB Europe:** A so-called content management system (CMS) is in place. CMS allows the ROCB to create and manage its digital content itself.
- **ROCB MENA:** Currently finalizing a new ROCB website.
- **ROCB ESA:** Has a regularly updated website with a private Member component used particularly to share sensitive information.
- **ROCB WCA:** Has a website.

➤ **ROCB newsletters**

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Issues newsletters on a quarterly basis.
- **ROCB Europe:** The Office publishes e-newsletters quarterly.
- **ROCB MENA:** Current finalization of new ROCB website will include an e-newsletter.
ROCB ESA: The Office publishes newsletters quarterly. Articles are received from Members, Regional Economic Communities (REC) and other interested stakeholders. Newsletters include up-to-date information on ROCB activities including regional capacity building activities, meeting reports and related topical issues, Member case studies, and contributions from WCO accredited experts.
- **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB periodically publishes the Regional Information Bulletin (RIB), and updated information is available on the regional website.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB A/P:** The ROCB needs to obtain extra funding or resources to maintain and upscale the website layout and functions so as to make its website more user-friendly and more accessible for sharing documents.
- **ROCB ESA:** The website is in English only, while articles are translated into other languages through the Google Translate platform. All related costs are borne by the ROCB budget.
- **ROCB WCA:** For two years, disbursement procedures characterized by administrative bottlenecks have prevented the regular distribution of the regional information bulletin, the maintenance of the regional website, the “MIRROR” and the updating of the regional messaging system.

Self-checklist

1. Is the ROCB website maintained and updated on a regular basis (more than once a month)?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, the website is frequently updated by the ROCB.
- **ROCB MENA:** The website that is being developed will be updated by the ROCB and will include an option for Members to share content (with ROCB management).
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** No, for the same reasons (reasons linked to disbursement procedures).

2. If the ROCB website has the function to track the number of visits, does it indicate increased access/visitors?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, will be included.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** No.

3. Are there any mechanisms to receive feedback on website contents and to improve them?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. Comments and feedback are always sought in any form, even without the creation of a specific feedback template.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes (a feedback form is installed)
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, will be included.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** No.

4. Does the ROCB issue newsletters to regional Members and/or other stakeholders? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The ROCB publishes a quarterly newsletter.

- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, will be included.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes, quarterly.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Through the Regional Information Bulletin (RIB).

5. Are there any mechanisms to receive feedback on newsletter contents and to improve them?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. Comments and feedback are always sought in any form, even without the creation of a specific feedback template.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Could be included.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. Members and all stakeholders are regularly encouraged to do this.
- **ROCB WCA:** No.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Revisiting the ROCB's communication strategy, if any, to verify whether it meets the expectations of regional Members and other stakeholders.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** –
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Regularly updating the website contents to disseminate up-to-date information to Members and other stakeholders.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Establishing a mechanism to verify the effectiveness of the website contents, reflecting feedback from visitors, and improving the contents.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes and no. It is better to have such a mechanism, but the ROCB hardly receives any feedback and/or suggestions.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** This mechanism does not yet exist.

4. Establishing a mechanism to verify the effectiveness of the newsletter contents, reflecting feedback from readers, and improving the contents.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.

- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** This mechanism does not yet exist.

5. Looking for sustainable solutions to deal with language requirements in the region, ensuring translation of key information on the means of communication (e.g. ROCB website, newsletter) and key documents of the WCO.

- **A/P:** Not necessary as English, which is one of the WCO's official languages, is widely used as the common working language in the A/P region.
- **EUROPE:** Yes.
- **MENA:** Website will be in Arabic (regional language) and English.
- **ESA:** Yes.
- **WCA:** Yes. Both versions exist (English and French) but it would be interesting if it had an automatic translation system

G. Effective needs assessment, 'think-tank' function of ROCBs

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Discussion paper for the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (Breakout session I, ROCBs) (2015)

<Practices>

- **Effective linkage between Strategic Plan of respective Members and individual requests for capacity building support**
 - **ROCB AMS:** Develops an action plan which is later circulated to other regional entities including the WCO.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Development of ROCB Annual Work Plan which corresponds with regional focuses as defined in the Regional Strategic Plan.
 - **ROCB Europe:** The Office is integrated into the WCO Needs Assessment Process.
 - **ROCB MENA:** The National and Regional Action Plan is developed as per discussions and requests made in coordination with NCPs and in line with WCO strategy.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Consolidates the Strategic Plans of the Members which it studies to sift out what is needed. The ROCB also undertakes the WCO annual needs assessment exercise and develops a consolidated report on the region's needs.
 - **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB has developed the regional strategic plan and annual roadmaps for each Member. This enables focused and consistent monitoring and support to ensure that support to each Member contributes to the implementation of strategic goals.
- **Achievement over several years, rather than consolidating single-shot activities**
 - **ROCB A/P:** By carrying out projects such as the WCO-Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) joint project on MTP, HS Code and Customs Valuation for Pacific Members, continuous and tangible achievements were observed over the terms of the project.

- **ROCB Europe:** Strategic Plan covers 3 years.
- **ROCB MENA:** In line with WCO strategy.
- **ROCB ESA:** Under WCO projects, the level of commitment of Members towards tangible achievement is always examined.
- **ROCB WCA:** A Needs Identification Matrix was developed by the ROCB to collect the specific needs of each Administration in all customs matters. This matrix makes it possible to adapt capacity building initiatives to the specific needs of each member. A concordance table associated with the needs identification matrix allows each capacity building activity to be adapted to the actual needs of the administrations in view of the analyzes obtained from the MIRROR application on the implementation of the annual roadmap of the SP by the administration.

➤ **Other means:**

- **ROCB AMS:** Annual needs are collected and analysed to share with other regional entities before sending or requesting assistance.
- **ROCB A/P:** Organizes RCL Heads meeting and other outreach programmes so as to provide guidance or an advisory platform on which Members can exchange views and share their best practices. Feedback on actions taken by Members in the 6 months after regional workshops, as it appears on the post-workshop survey, is consolidated and shared among regional Members, to showcase the best practices on how the knowledge gained through the regional activities is utilized by the respective Members in specific actions for benchmarking purposes.
- **ROCB Europe:** Annual needs are collected and analysed and shared with the WCO/Regional Development Manager (RDM).
- **ROCB MENA:** The annual needs are collected and analysed with a view to being incorporated into the annual Regional Action Plan during the annual meeting of the NCPs which includes National Training Centres (NCTs).

ROCB WCA: The ROCB has developed so called 'Regional Coaching Programme'. Ideally speaking, this tool enables the ROCB to link Members in need of support with Members offering support in the relevant domain. Checks are performed to ensure that assistance contributes to the implementation of the administration's reform strategy.

<Challenges>

- **ROCB AMS:** Lack of response from the Members due to weak communication and other priorities within the Customs administration and between regional entities and Members. Lack of greater involvement of experts, resources.
- **ROCB Europe:** More sub-regional missions for implementing the process (in relation to the Member country's needs, which are not supported by the WCO Secretariat).
- **ROCB MENA:** Funding from the Regional and National Action plan is mainly available from WCO donor funds. Some workshops are hosted by regional Members for the region, and some Members cover their own National Action Plan.
- **ROCB ESA:** Members feel that their needs are not fully met, as they are repeatedly indicated during the annual needs assessment exercise.
- **ROCB WCA:** Some Members still do not have (up to date) national strategic plans and keep on requesting assistance that does not really contribute to building long term capacities. A typical example is that Members request the ROCB / the WCO to organize technical training for a large number of front-line officers instead of building themselves (or eventually with the support of the

WCO) sustainable training systems and develop their own trainers first. Even though the WCO encourages Members to address their assistance requests to the ROCB, many keep sending them directly to the WCO Secretariat.

Self-checklist

1. What approach does the ROCB take in assessing the capacity building needs of Members in the region? What source does it refer to, what is the level of interactions with the Members concerned to better understand the background/strategy/progress made? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** The ROCB relies on NCPs to gather information (e.g. through surveys) and to submit it to the Office.
- **ROCB A/P:** ROCB A/P and Japan Customs conduct an annual technical assistance needs survey in accordance with the tasks set out in the Regional Strategic Plan. In addition, the Office accepts official ad hoc assistance requests in writing.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** The basis for this is the yearly needs assessment cycle. The ROCB collects and analyses the Members input and adapts the activity plan accordingly before submitting it to the WCO/Regional Development Manager.
- **ROCB MENA:** Relies on NCP feedback and requests made as per the annual survey, while ensuring that these are aligned with the needs and WCO strategy.
- **ROCB ESA:** The WCO annual cycle for Capacity Building planning and delivery relies on Members' identification of external assistance needs for individual administrations, as well as for the region as a whole. The ROCB assesses and consolidates all the needs of Members before submitting them to the WCO. The ROCB also consolidates the Strategic Plans of Members. The ROCB also obtains country reports from Members.
- **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB developed a regional strategic plan and annual roadmaps for each Member. This allows targeted and coherent monitoring and support that ensures that support to each member contributes to the achievement of strategic objectives. In addition, a needs identification matrix had been developed to collect the specific needs of each administration in all Customs domains. This matrix makes it possible to adapt capacity building initiatives to the specific needs of each member. A concordance table associated with the needs identification matrix allows each capacity building activity to be adapted to the actual needs of the Administrations.

2. Does such analysis take into account the respective Member's reform and modernization strategies over a specific number of years? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The above-mentioned survey template asks Members to indicate the relevance to their current reform and modernization strategies, where appropriate.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, it is related to the outcome of the early regional progress report.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, as per the input provided by the national Member administrations.

- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The country reporting template has a section on Reform and Modernization strategies.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Does such analysis take into account the respective Member's progress made to date?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, it is reviewed based on past action plans. Though there are some challenges at times pertaining to "repeat" requests.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

4. Does the ROCB proposal for capacity building activities as the outcome of such assessment address the effective link between the regional focus/common interest of the region and individual capacity building planning?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes and no. Members' technical assistance needs do not necessarily correspond with the region's common focus or interests.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, but with some challenges, such as those identified in question 3 above.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The ROCB prepares a report to the WCO outlining regional, sub-regional and national needs.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

5. Does the ROCB proposal for capacity building activities take into account achievement over several years, rather than merely consolidating single-shot activities?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes, the ROCB is working to ensure that the activities are in line with the Members' reform plans.
- **ROCB MENA:** As indicated in questions 3 and 4, there are some challenges based on "repeat" requests. This is based on the outcome of delivery as per the request, or on the unavailability of funding.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes –capacity building activities are aligned to Members' reform and modernization plans.
- **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB ensures that capacity building activities are in line with members' reform and modernization plans.

6. How does the ROCB try to enhance its 'think-tank' function for effective analysis, planning, delivery, monitoring and proposals for subsequent activities? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** ROCB AMS is working closely with its NCPs.
- **ROCB A/P:** ROCB A/P discusses the possible theme of the 'think-tank' research with RTC Heads periodically and collects pertinent information and good practices on certain topics from the RTCs and, where possible, from the regional Members.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** The annual Work Plan is tailored according to the assessment by the ROCB and feedback from the Region.
- **ROCB MENA:** This is done in the NCP meetings, but missing deliverable or post-mission outcomes.
- **ROCB ESA:** The work of the ROCB is mainly pegged on the Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan (RSIP) through which it bases its reporting on activities. There is no particular or effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the impact of capacity building activities. However, in the new RSIP, the Region plans to develop a strong M&E framework to address this challenge.
- **ROCB WCA:** The regional strategy for capacity building based on the Public Service Self-Assessment Framework developed by the European Institute of Public Administrations. The needs identification matrix and the concordance table are used to refine the results of the self-assessment. The NDCs are responsible for providing specific assistance to the administrations under their responsibility in order to improve their performance. Each year, the ROCB organizes technical assistance missions to members to evaluate the modernization process through the regional strategic plan and carry out the necessary reframing. Also, the ROCB begins each regional planning cycle with an environmental analysis and observes strategic monitoring throughout the cycle to propose necessary adjustments to the regional strategic plan (e.g. the COVID-19 crisis, the implementation of the AfCFTA).

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Enriching sources of information that form a basis for the capacity building needs analysis of the ROCB.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.
2. Forming a matrix, for instance, of individual Members in the region describing the Member's focuses under its reform and modernization strategy, the need for external assistance, information on donors that are assisting the Member, relevance of WCO assistance, WCO assistance in the past, and achievements made by the Member over a certain number of years.
 - **ROCB AMS:** This could be considered.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes. A matrix has been drawn up for the purpose of devising annual technical assistance programmes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Pursuing an effective mixture of multi-year projects and single-shot activities to ensure achievement over a certain period of time while meeting emerging needs in a flexible manner.
- **ROCB AMS:** It could be considered.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

H. Coordination with RTCs

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **Effective coordination of the RTCs in the region**
 - **ROCB A/P:** At the beginning of every fiscal year, the ROCB approaches all of the RTCs in the region to seek the hosting of regional workshops for which funding has already been pledged, to match the interest and physical availability of RTCs with the proposed regional workshops and to develop regional workshop plans.
 - **ROCB Europe:** Annual regional meetings are held with RTCs as well as the Vice-Chair and WCO Secretariat. The ROCB tries to maintain constant contact with the RTCs in the region in order to coordinate the activities of RTCs.
 - **ROCB MENA:** The RTCs are part of the NCP Group which meets annually.
 - **ROCB ESA:** The Governing Council approves and recognizes RTCs as Centres of Excellence for the WCO packages as follows; RTC Kenya – Economic Competitiveness Package, RTC Mauritius – Compliance and Enforcement Package, RTC South Africa – Organizational Development Package, and RTC Zimbabwe – Revenue Package. Under the leadership of the ROCB, the RTCs, in conjunction with the WCO Secretariat and Regional Economic Communities (COMESA, EAC and SADC), have developed training modules. The programme framework envisions that each Member nominates candidates involved in training in their administrations. The initial Train-the-Trainer workshop will involve training on standards, techniques and methodology in the delivery of training, and will later focus on empowering the trainers with knowledge and training materials on technical subjects.
 - **ROCB WCA:** RTCs are invited (funded by the regional fund) to participate in all periodic meetings of the region: annual Conference of DG, bi-annual Committee of experts, annual meeting of National Capacity Building Contact Points and annual meeting of HR and training managers. All of them are also attended by the ROCB and create opportunities for coordination.
- **Sharing a common idea of capacity building requirements**

- **ROCB A/P and ROCB Europe:** Organize an annual meeting of all RTCs with the ROCB, to provide RTCs with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with topics of common interest in the region, listening to the strengths of the respective RTCs which may lead to better coordination of regional activities.
- **ROCB A/P:** Develop good practice reports based on the practices in implementing the subjects to be featured (e.g. coaching and mentoring).
- **ROCB MENA:** The RTCs are part of the NCP Group which discusses the National and Regional Action Plan. They contribute to the Regional Action Plan by hosting events as well as sharing their Training Action Plan for the benefit of the regional Members.
- **ROCB ESA:** There is a minimum of two meetings between RTCS, the WCO, and the ROCB to report on progress made by the RTCs, deliberate on topical issues and further the implementation of the Strategy.
- **ROCB WCA:** At the annual meeting of Training and Human Resources Managers, according to the needs expressed by members and the evolution of international trade, the ROCB and the RTSs draw up the regional annual training plan according to the specialization of each RTC. At the request of the RTCs, the ROCB conducts evaluation missions.

<Challenges>

ROCB ESA: Some RTCs miss regional meetings for a variety of reasons or send different representatives to follow-up meetings without first apprising the meeting.

Self-checklist

1. Are there any mechanisms for the ROCB to effectively coordinate RTCs in designing, delivering and assessing regional activities? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No. It would be important to strengthen the relationship and look for the mechanisms to do this.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. In accordance with the ROCB A/P's Terms of reference, the ROCB A/P coordinates the delivery of the regional workshops. Furthermore, as an outcome of the RTC Heads Meeting held in October 2021, the ROCB A/P consults the draft workshop programmes for their inputs into it.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Currently, the ROCB asks the RTCs to inform it of planned activities in order to achieve effective coordination.
- **ROCB MENA:** The RTCs are part of the NCP Group which discusses the National and Regional Action Plan. They contribute to the Regional Action Plan by hosting regional events as laid down in the Action Plan.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes, The ROCB coordinates the RTCs and involves them directly in the delivery of capacity building activities. Regular meetings are also held between the ROCB, RTCs and the WCO.
- **ROCB WCA:** No.

2. Does the coordination take into account the strengths and/or interests of the respective RTCs? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Please see the response to question 1 in this section.
- **ROCB A/P:** To a certain extent, yes. But, the availability of the WCO resource person in charge and that of the RTC hardly corresponds.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, they share their Training Action Plan for the benefit of the regional Members. Via the NCP Group and RTC members, work is being done to enhance the concept of centres of excellence.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The RTCs act as centres of excellence for the WCO packages, i.e. RTC Kenya – ECP, RTC Mauritius – CEP; RTC South Africa – OD, RTC Zimbabwe RP.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. RTC Burkina Faso: Customs techniques; RTC Nigeria: Strategic Management; RTC Republic of the Congo: Procedures and Trade facilitation.

3. Does the region provide a mechanism for the RTCs to familiarize themselves with the topics of common interest in the region, so that they can prepare for informed discussions with the ROCB? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes. They have access to the A/P Regional Strategic Plan and receive a copy of the summary of Members' replies to the annual technical assistance needs survey. They are informed of the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan at the beginning of the respective fiscal year.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes, the RTCs are part of the NCP Group that lays down the Regional and National Action Plan.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes. The RTCs propose topics of interest in conjunction with the ROCB and the WCO.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Participation of the RTCs in the meetings of the capacity building contact points and the meeting of training and HR managers.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Establishing a mechanism to effectively coordinate RTCs in designing, delivering and assessing regional activities.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Potentially.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Enhancing dialogue between the ROCB and the RTCs to better understand the strengths and/or interests of the respective RTCs.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Enhanced dialogue between the ROCB A/P and A/P RTCs is ensured by convening the RTC Heads Meeting every year.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

3. Organizing a physical/virtual meeting between the ROCB and the RTCs and/or regional dialogue including the RTCs to discuss topics of common interest in the region for a better understanding of capacity building requirements and expectations.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes. The A/P RTC Heads Meeting is convened every year.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

I. Staff training opportunities

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Discussion paper for the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (Breakout session I, ROCBs) (2015)

<Practices>

- **Expertise and capabilities of ROCB staff members**
 - **All ROCBs:** Take into account the enhancement of the expertise and capabilities of their staff members to ensure a well-functioning ROCB. Irrespective of whether they are seconded by the ROCB host administration or by regional Members, their expertise is being enhanced through various learning environments, such as regular consultation with the latest WCO tools and instruments, the WCO website, CLiKC! and e-learning programmes, and participation in capacity building activities in the form of missions, seminars and workshops.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Applications for online WCO courses as well as leadership programmes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Encourage staff members to undertake missions to represent the WCO on various topics with a view to familiarizing them with the latest WCO initiatives and information on WCO tools, instruments and activities. The presentations from these WCO representation missions are shared between staff members, thus communicating up-to-date information. Staff members are encouraged to access CLiKC! for self-learning and to update themselves on the WCO's hot topics and latest trends.
 - **ROCB A/P and ROCB Europe:** Encourage staff to apply for WCO expert accreditation to ensure a qualified level of knowledge and delivery.

- **ROCB MENA:** N/A (since there is no actual staff other than the Head of the ROCB).
- **ROCB ESA:** The Governing Council approves a budget that allows staff training based on their needs.
- **Participation in regional/national missions**
 - **ROCB AMS:** Staff participate in workshops delivered in the ROCB's host administration only.
 - **ROCB A/P, ROCB ESA, and ROCB Europe:** Staff members take part in some of the workshops or training events either as facilitators or for support.
 - **ROCB MENA:** N/A (since there are no actual staff other than the Head of the ROCB).
 - **ROCB ESA:** Staff members miss out on most workshops as the invitations are mainly targeted at Members.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Participates especially in those held at the WCO headquarters and in the regular meetings organized by the region (Conference of DG, Experts, National Contact Points, HR and Training Managers).
 - **ROCB WCA:** Current annual work plan contains missions that the ROCB plans to carry out itself, in particular to promote the regional strategic plan and assist the Members in the follow-up and evaluation of reform progress.
 - **ROCB WCA:** The director of the ROCB has facilitated or participated in several WCO missions, in particular those related to the Columbus Programme. The other ROCB staff participated in a few WCO events and has often facilitated events organized at regional level.

<Challenges>

- While many ROCB staff members have access to CliKC!, not many use it.
- Not all ROCB staff members are familiar with the latest WCO initiatives, instruments and tools.
- While participation in workshops and training is encouraged with a view to ensuring the quality of the workshops, consistent observations on developments made, increased visibility of the ROCBs, and the enhanced capacity of staff members themselves, this relates to a question of the funding to enable it.
- **ROCB Europe:** WCO accreditation processes should be communicated to ROCBs in an effort to secure staff expertise.
- **ROCB MENA:** There are no "staff" in the ROCB other than the Head of the ROCB.
- **ROCB ESA:** ROCB staff miss out on most missions as support is only targeted at Members, ignoring the fact that ROCB staff members are also Customs officials and need continuous development. Members naturally tend to nominate officials presently working for them for such training and expect the ROCB and donors to meet the costs for their staff seconded to the ROCB.
- **ROCB WCA:** Most of the staff at the disposal of the ROCB have fairly good knowledge and experience at the international level. They also have a fairly good knowledge of WCO standards and tools. A job description exists and assignments are clearly defined for each officer (National Development Coordinator and Project Manager). New staff members undergo intensive theoretical training and then practice with the elders (tutoring) before being operational.
- **ROCB WCA:** The Director is the only staff member who is an expert accredited by the WCO in certain areas. Other ROCB staff members are not accredited in any field and therefore cannot lead WCO missions.
- **ROCB WCA:** ROCB staff do not benefit from any relevant training programmes, neither from the host administration nor the region nor the WCO. The ROCB organizes periodic in-house

training sessions on the modernization process of Customs administrations as well as strategic management instruments and tools.

Self-checklist

1. What specific roles do ROCB staff members play in capacity building activities? Analysis of the needs? Coordination with the WCO Secretariat/experts/RTCs/Members? Logistical support? Delivery of missions? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** ROCB staff collaborate on activities, depending on the type of support needed.
- **ROCB A/P:** ROCB A/P staff undertake the leading roles in coordination with the Secretariat and RTC as regards logistical arrangements and workshop facilitation. Where appropriate, they contribute to the workshops and meetings as a speaker or moderator/facilitator.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Depends on the requirements (as host, supporter or facilitator). Also, an analysis of needs is carried out.
- **ROCB MENA:** N/A
- **ROCB ESA:** Developing and implementing the East and Southern Africa (ESA) Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan for sustainable capacity building initiatives. Research, planning, support and coordinating WCO capacity building activities in the 24 Member countries of the WCO East and Southern Africa region. Programme management and coordination in East and Southern Africa. Representing the Office's programmes to external constituencies such as the WCO ESA region, funding agencies, UN agencies, governments, and stakeholders. Coordination with all Commissioners General of the ESA region, ROCB activities, Governing Council, Regional Steering Group (RSG) and other missions. Organizing joint workshops and seminars to develop common operating programmes and innovations. Development and maintenance of the ROCB website, preparation and distribution of the regional newsletter, and promotional material such as brochures and documentaries. Liaison with Customs administrations, the RSG, the WCO, regional groupings, the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), UN agencies, donor community and other bodies on all areas of common interest.
- **ROCB WCA:** The ROCB staff assists Customs Administrations in the Region in their modernization process. It collects the needs of member administrations and coordinates with the WCO Secretariat. It provides useful information to members on activities in the Region, good practices, WCO tools and instruments, developments in international trade, development partners, etc. It carries out technical assistance missions to member administrations.

2. What approach does the ROCB take to fostering staff capability? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** The ROCB aims to promote staff training.
- **ROCB A/P:** Sharing the other staffs' presentation slides and copies of other presentations made at the workshops.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Promoting capacity building tools and methodology, informing staff about them and encouraging participation in accreditation workshops.
- **ROCB MENA:** N/A.
- **ROCB ESA:** The Strategic Plan factors in the training of staff; a budget was approved by the Governing Council to train staff. In other instances, the ROCB asks the seconding administrations to provide continuous training for staff. Some training opportunities have also been provided by the WCO.
- **ROCB WCA:** In-house training; Tutoring between old and new staff; participation in missions; management of specific projects and access to e-learning.

3. Does the ROCB encourage its staff members to consult the WCO website and CLiKC! to familiarize them with the latest WCO tools and instruments? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** N/A.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

4. Does the ROCB have WCO accredited experts as its staff members? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **ROCB AMS:** No.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** No.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes (the Head of the ROCB is the only "Staff" member).
- **ROCB ESA:** No.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes. Only the Director.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Revisiting the ROCB's staff fostering strategy, if any, to seize various opportunities and to best serve its Members.

- **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
- **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
- **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
- **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
- **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
- **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

2. Encouraging its staff to apply for WCO expert accreditation to ensure a qualified level of knowledge and delivery.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes, the ROCB thinks it would be highly beneficial for the region.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Yes.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.

 3. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the challenges on funding constraints of staff travelling for regional/national workshop participation and asking for due consideration to be given to incorporating staff training as an integral part of regional capacity building activities.
 - **ROCB AMS:** Yes.
 - **ROCB A/P:** Not necessary. For the moment, ROCB A/P staffs receive favourable consideration by their respective home administrations.
 - **ROCB EUROPE:** Yes.
 - **ROCB MENA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB ESA:** Yes.
 - **ROCB WCA:** Yes.
-

2. RTCs

J. Status of the RTC

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th PC Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to CS; SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions).
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- None of the 32 RTCs has a specific legal status associated with the WCO. While most are one of the host administration's training institutes, some have a status independent of the host administration.
- **RTC Kenya:** RTC Kenya is hosted by KESRA (Kenya School of Revenue Administration), which is a department in the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA).
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Based on the MoU signed in 2002 between the WCO and the State Customs Committee (SCC) of Azerbaijan, the latter owns and runs (Article 3) the RTC, which uses the Customs Training Centre in Baku (Article 2). The RTC is currently hosted by the Academy of the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan (ASCCA). The RTC has been a primary training centre in Azerbaijan for almost 2 decades.

<Challenges>

- **RTC Lebanon:** As the Institute of Finance, the RTC was not directly linked with the Customs administration, and some coordination issues arose as a result. With financial support from donors, Lebanese Customs successfully negotiated the construction of its own purpose-built training centre, in which WCO and national training activities have been organized. During their meeting in June 2015, the Customs DGs in the MENA region decided to suspend the use of the Institute of Finance as the RTC, and replaced it with the, at that point, newly established RTC Jordan.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** After the establishment of the ASCCA in 2012, there was no change in the status of the RTC, which still came under the State Customs Committee (SCC) and, nominally, still used the SCC's former "Customs Training Centre" (CTC). However, the CTC no longer exists. The ASCCA, as a new entity, functions as the training institution under the SCC, but also as a public higher education institution. Theoretically, therefore, the RTC is now automatically hosted by the ASCCA, but there is no legal basis for this. The legal basis therefore needs to be secured and the 2002 MoU updated. The ASCCA is now fully in charge of the arrangement, coordination, and evaluation of all capacity building measures for SCC personnel, based on an SCC Decree from 2019. This also gives rise to the need to ensure the proper positioning of the RTC in the organizational structure of the ASCCA. The ASCCA is currently planning to propose an amendment to the MoU, to ensure that the RTC is run and owned by the ASCCA, with support from the SCC.

Self-checklist

1. Does your RTC encounter any challenges around status?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** No. RTC Kenya is hosted by KESRA (Kenya School of Revenue Administration), which is a department in the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA).
- **RTC Mauritius:** Since the RTC is under the purview of the Human Resources and Training Department at the MRA, there is no challenge to its status.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No. RTC Hong Kong, China is the training college of Hong Kong Customs, i.e. Hong Kong Customs College (HKCC), providing diversified induction and specialized training for Hong Kong Customs officers. It is directly and completely operated and managed by the Hong Kong Customs.
- **RTC Korea:** RTC Korea is the Customs training institute for Customs in South Korea.
- **RTC Malaysia:** RTC Malaysia covers PCA and Strategic Management matters. It does not currently have any WCO accredited experts in these fields. Together with Malaysia's International Affairs Department in Customs Headquarters, RTC Malaysia is now in the process of discussing the creation of a new strategic management expert team.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia is structurally under the Financial Education and Training Agency (FETA), Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia. Even though structurally under FETA, technically and culturally RTC Indonesia has never been separated from the Directorate General Customs and Excise (DGCE) as the host administrator. Although some technical challenges still arise from this issue, RTC Indonesia strives to improve coordination with the hosts so that there are no significant problems.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No, as a WCO-SCC MoU was signed in 2002. But, as mentioned above, although the RTC is hosted by the ASCCA, there is a lack of legal status, financial resources, organizational capacity, and human resources. As a result, the ASCCA has been utilizing its own internal resources for RTC activities, and this creates heavy workload. The current functioning of the RTC is unsustainable.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No. The RTC is based at the premises of the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the State Customs Service of Ukraine.
- **RTC Jordan:** No. The RTC is a main part of Jordanian Customs.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is currently undergoing restructuring to streamline activities. The main steps are to support the ROCB in detecting needs and strengthening its team of trainers and experts. The facilities are 100% operational for face-to-face activities.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. (If any issues are being encountered) Having a regional decision regarding RTC status

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** N/A.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Status as RTC still maintained. As a training centre for RMCD (Royal Malaysian Customs Department), the RTC is maintaining training facilities and conducting courses for

Malaysia Customs officers online and face-to-face. Together with the Corporate Division (International Affairs) at Headquarters, RTC Malaysia is now in the process of discussing the creation of a new strategic management expert team for PCA and Strategic Management.

- **RTC Azerbaijan:** The status should be amended to ensure that the ASCCA is authorized to own and run the RTC (e.g. not only to host it), with support from the SCC.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

K. RTC team – size and status

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th PC Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to CS; SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **RTC Heads and staff members**
 - None has a specific legal status.
 - None of the RTCs have foreign staff members, i.e. all of their staff members are from host administrations.
 - The size of the RTC team varies from 3 to nearly 100 persons, depending on the internal and external needs of the training centre.
- **Various practices to enhance staff members' capability to assess needs and/or deliver capacity building missions.**
 - **RTC Kenya:** The RTC does not have an independent legal status. It has 134 staff members. 100% of the RTC staff is of Kenyan nationality. Continuous staff training to ensure that they are equipped both in technical subjects as well as training delivery skills. Also, collaboration initiatives with East Africa Partner States on joint training events. Two (2) resident trainers are accredited experts in Customs Valuation and Risk Management. Exchange programmes are yet to be implemented.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Organize benchmarking visits to other RTCs and international organizations, in order to become more familiar with the common interests of the Members and to benchmark where it is in terms of provision of international training cooperation.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Planning to cooperate with the other RTCs to arrange training events in various areas pertaining to Customs, in order to promote mutual learning and sharing of the best RTC practices. ASCCA International Cooperation aims to establish partnerships with various national Customs training centres and the RTC, to fill the gap. But, as it does not have the legal status, the ASCCA cannot represent the RTC officially, especially when there are financial and other legal implications

<Challenges>

- **RTC Kenya:** Few accreditation workshops are available compared to the need for experts.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No staff is fully dedicated to the RTC.

Self-checklist

1. Do the RTC Head and staff dedicate their whole time to RTC work (vis-à-vis spending some time on concurrent tasks from seconding administration or other entities)? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. The RTC Head and staff dedicate their time fully to RTC work, training of staff in Kenya Revenue Authority's departments, and of other stakeholders; and administration of the Kenya School of Revenue Administration.
- **RTC Mauritius:** The Human Resources and Training Department's training unit covers both internal training as well RTC training. The assistance of the Customs Department's Capacity Building Team, and especially the accredited trainers, is sought as and when required.
- **RTC Malaysia:** The staff (six senior officers and two clerical staff) are fully dedicated to RTC work, including administration and training. In addition, officers from Customs Headquarters, or from other States, and other experts from the region, are invited to present at the scheduled training programmes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. While there are designated officers taking charge of RTC matters, they are also responsible for other administration and training-related work of Hong Kong Customs. However, when there are significant RTC events to be conducted (e.g. WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting held in Hong Kong in December 2016 and other WCO workshops); RTC Hong Kong, China pool abundant manpower resources, both at RTC Hong Kong, China and other Hong Kong Customs departments, to support the events.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, there is no dedicated staff for the RTC but there are five officers and two trainers in the Customs Training Institute (CTI) who engage in RTC activities.
- **RTC Korea:** There is an international training team (one Chief and two Assistant Directors of Customs) in the CBCTI (RTC Korea). They are full-time staff working for RTC purposes to host workshops and seminars 7-8 times per year. The staff concurrently handles the work related to internal training. However, whenever there is RTC-related work to be done, they are fully focused on the RTC training.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No. RTC Indonesia does not have a fully dedicated Head and staff that focus on RTC work. To resolve this issue, RTC Indonesia creates an international training team which divides its time between the regional and local training work. However, the RTC does not exclude domestic training programmes, and so both RTC and domestic training programmes are developed and implemented in harmony.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** ASCCA has about three employees who deal with RTC matters on an ad-hoc basis; it is not a full-time job. Whenever there is a training course or event connected to the RTC, the ASCCA staff members work on that. The ASCCA Rector also functions as the Head of the RTC and divides his time accordingly. Since the ASCCA functions as both a public higher education institution and the SCC training institution, these both require substantial ASCCA resources. As indicated in the RTC Annual Report 2019-2020, the ASCCA arranged several training events in the RTC framework. However, this arrangement is not sustainable. RTC management requires an additional allocation of resources (time, organizational, human, financial).

- **RTC Ukraine:** The Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the State Customs Service of Ukraine has a staff of 61. Nearly 42,000 employees of the State Customs Service of Ukraine have raised their level of professional competence over the years of its existence. The Director of the RTC divides his time between the activities of the Department and those of the RTC. The staff of the Department carries out the work relating to the Regional Training Centre alongside their other duties. Whenever there is RTC-related work, the entire focus of the staff is on the RTC training.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Qatar:** There are 43 designated officers and four Customs training experts taking charge of the RTC work in Doha, Qatar. They are all dedicated to the RTC training.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No. Staff share their time with other administration activities. The RTC is currently undergoing a restructuring process.

2. Does the RTC combine various approaches to enhance staff members' capability assess needs and/or deliver capacity building activities?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The RTC administers a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) prior to developing training programmes. The RTC works closely with HR and the Commissioner of Customs and Border Control department who document training needs annually in the Annual Training Plan or may also communicate specific training needs as and when they arise. The RTC has also conducted Train-the-Trainers courses on how to effectively deliver face-to-face and online training.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Accredited experts usually receive formal training. Two RTC staff members and one staff member from the Capacity Building Unit of the Customs Department benefited from the 'WCO ESA Project Management Workshop' held from 03 to 11 December 2019 in Kenya.
- **RTC Malaysia:** The RTC regularly conducted capacity building courses for Customs officers as well as other government enforcement agencies with the help of the experts from the WCO and ROCB A/P. On top of that, staff have also experienced the best practices of other RTCs and of international organizations through participation in courses, activities and workshops. The delivery of capacity building activities is based on the needs assessment.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. RTC Hong Kong, China is dedicated to enabling its officers to acquire local and international best practice in relation to Customs operation, enforcement, and management as well as training and development. All new officers first receive relevant instructor's training. Depending on their respective job requirements and training needs, they are nominated to attend various job-related training (e.g. firearms, use of force, investigation and training management etc.) held in Hong Kong, China or by overseas Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and universities. The RTC also maintains very close cooperation with Mainland Customs training institutes with a view to enhancing exchanges and the effectiveness of the respective training.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes. Customs Training Institute (CTI) staff develop and arrange the curriculums for other international workshops based on the needs of the recipient administration and participants. At the end of each workshop, staff hold an evaluation meeting with participants and provide feedback for the planning process. CTI trainers deliver sessions on Human Resource Development and other Customs operations.

- **RTC Korea:** Yes. Some members of the Customs Human Resources Development Institute (CHREDI) visit foreign Customs training centres for benchmarking and experience best practices from them so as to enhance their capacity building knowledge and activities.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC staff regularly enhance their capabilities to deliver capacity-building activities based on the organizational and individual training needs analysis.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No, all capacity building activities are organized by the ASCCA. ASCCA is planning to enquire into a RTC management training programme, in order to ensure the necessary human resources capacity for the RTC, given the scarcity of resources.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes. The delivery of the training courses is based on the needs assessment.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes, with the help of national training centre staff and the cooperation of the Manager of Jordanian Customs, which supports the activities of RTC.
- **RTC Qatar:** The RTC Doha regularly conducts capacity building programmes in cooperation with the WCO for Members in the region, its own Customs Officers and government bodies. Moreover, RTC experts have also participated in a number of capacity building activities in other RTCs and international bodies. The RTC has also supported the translation efforts of many WCO instruments and tools into the Arabic language to enhance capacity building in other countries in the region.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is undergoing organizational restructuring.

3. Is RTC staff familiar with the WCO's standardized training products (e-learning, training kits)?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. The trainers are all on the WCO CLiKC! platform and make use of the training material in their respective subjects. Applicable WCO instruments and tools are also used in training.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, the staff is quite familiar with them.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes, the staff is familiar with WCO e-learning platform CLiKC!.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. All staff of RTC Hong Kong, China at the rank of Inspector and above are issued with a CLiKC! account. Relevant reference materials are provided to help them familiarize themselves with the system as well as the WCO training kits.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes. CTI staff members are familiar with WCO e-learning modules as well as CLiKC!.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. The staff is familiar with WCO's e-learning platform, CLiKC! The RTC is also operating its own e-Customs Learning and WCO e-Learning System.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. Even though RTC Indonesia staff do not have access to the CLiKC! platform, staff members are familiar with the e-learning training kits as Indonesia has developed its own e-learning platform.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes. The staff is familiar with the WCO's e-learning platform, CLiKC! The Department (RTC) has also its own e-learning tools. The employees of the Department have been designated as national contact points in HR issues and for the WCO e-learning

programme CLiKC! Over 500 employees of the SCS of Ukraine took part in CLiKC! e-learning modules in 2015-2020.

- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Qatar:** RTC staff members are quite familiar with the CLiKC! platform and use the training kits provided. Further, the RTC has developed its own e-learning strategy which has been published in the WCO Guide to Managing Customs Human Capital through Crises and Beyond.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No. The RTC has limited knowledge of WCO e-learning tools.

4. Is the RTC equipped with an up-to-date WCO library?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The RTC has both a physical and an online library. However, it is not fully resourced with WCO reference materials due to budget constraints. Nonetheless, all free WCO materials can be accessed by library users.
- **RTC Mauritius:** The RTC has three Documentation Centres where staff may consult any materials.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No. However, the RTC has successfully implemented an online library (KOHA-Open Source Integrated Library System).
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No. However, the RTC's internal electronic filing system allows easy access to WCO-related documents for reference whenever necessary.
- **RTC Japan:** Although the definition of "WCO library" is not clear, CTI staff can access WCO information and documents through the WCO Member website.
- **RTC Korea:** No, the RTC is not equipped with an up-to-date WCO library.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** There is no RTC library, but there is an ASCCA Library, which is used – from time-to-time – for RTC purposes (to a limited extent). There is therefore a need to equip the RTC with the necessary information resources.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Jordan:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No. The RTC is undergoing restructuring.

5. Is there adequate knowledge transfer set up between the RTC and its host administration in which WCO meeting/workshop/mission materials received by the nationals of the RTC host administration are shared with RTC staff, so that RTC staff members are able to familiarize themselves with up-to-date WCO information?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** A knowledge-sharing platform has been set up yet (iknow.kra.go.ke). However, the WCO information is not up-to-date.

- **RTC Mauritius:** On completion of local/overseas training, all course/learning materials (hard and soft copies) are submitted to the Training Academy to be passed on to the Documentation Centre for record keeping and consultation by staff.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The Royal Malaysian Customs Academy (AKMAL) often contacts and consults with the Customs Corporate Division (International Affairs) on RTC and other WCO-related matters. Materials are shared on request.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. WCO materials are disseminated to staff of RTC Hong Kong, China as well as other departments for sharing and/or follow-up actions. Officers who participate in a WCO workshop are required to submit a training report for internal sharing.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, CTI often contacts and consults with the Customs Tariff Bureau on RTC and other WCO-related matters. Materials can be provided on request.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No. The knowledge that is transferred between the RTC Indonesia and the host administration is adequate. However, because of the status challenges faced by the RTC Indonesia, there are some obstacles to disseminating the latest WCO information to RTC staff.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** To some extent. The host administration possesses an institutional memory of the training materials used by the RTC until the ASCCA's establishment in 2012. But these training materials are not sufficient and the RTC needs updated materials. There is a need to create a functioning link in order to establish an institutional memory at the ASCCA Library. Otherwise a separate RTC Library (corner) must be set up. Whenever certain documents are needed, the RTC sends a request to the SCC, the host administration. But this is basically a time-consuming process.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Qatar:** The RTC has a dedicated team of Customs experts to transfer the knowledge obtained from regional workshops to use in national training courses.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is in the process of establishing a methodology for the transfer of adequate knowledge.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Taking various approaches to enhance staff members' capability, including those listed above.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC India:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
 - **RTC Japan:** The RTC shares some WCO-related documents such as the RKC in Japanese with staff members.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.

- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Qatar:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes, it would be a great contribution.
2. Implementing and making available the WCO training products (e-learning courses, training kits for trainers and (e-) publications) and promoting their use as a key component of regional training.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, this would be of great use.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Agreed.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. All staff of RTC Hong Kong, China at the rank of Inspector and above is issued with a CLiKC! account. Relevant reference materials are provided to help them familiarize themselves with the system as well as the WCO training kits. Recently, probationary officers have also been issued with a CLiKC! account and training is provided with a view to promoting the WCO tools.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes, staff are introduced to such products and encouraged to use them to help them in their work.
 - **RTC Qatar:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.
3. If the RTC has permanent trainers, ensuring that they apply for the WCO accreditation workshop and that accredited experts are cascading down their knowledge and experience.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. Nomination of the RTC's permanent trainers to accreditation workshops should be encouraged. An accreditation database is maintained for the administration.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** The MRA encourages staff to attend the WCO accreditation workshop.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** There are NO permanent trainers but the Customs administration encourages officers with expertise and knowledge to apply for the WCO accreditation workshops in the relevant field. Currently, Malaysia has four (4) successful senior officers with full accreditation under STCE, RoO, IWT and TRS, and one (1) senior officer with partial accreditation under the Single Window.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs continuously selects the appropriate officers to attend accreditation workshops, not just staff of RTC Hong Kong, China.
 - **RTC Japan:** Although the individual trainer is not permanent, CTI encourages trainers to apply for WCO accreditation workshops when the opportunity arises.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes. The Multilateral Cooperation Division of the headquarters of Korea Customs Service encourages Korea Customs officials to apply for the WCO accreditation workshops in relevant field.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** There is no permanent training or permanent training capacity. However, WCO accreditation is strongly preferred and recommended.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes. The national Customs administration encourages officers to apply for the WCO accreditation workshops.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Qatar:** The RTC has a Trainers Preparation Programme, and also encourages trainers to apply for the WCO accreditation workshops, and supports them with this.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes. The goal is to strengthen the team of experts.

L. Strategic Plan and Action Plan as guidance for regional entities

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Non paper on regional plans, arising from the informal discussion per region at the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (2015)

<Practices>

- **Strategic Plans which apply to respective RTCs**
 - Some of the RTCs have their own strategic plans and/or action plans developed either through regional DG meetings or with the support of the respective ROCB or by the RTCs themselves.
 - Other RTCs do not have their own plans as such, but refer to regional strategic plans as their guiding principles or work closely with the corresponding ROCB who takes the lead in planning and delivering activities.
- **Modality of development and consultation of Strategic Plans which apply to RTCs directly or indirectly.**
 - **A/P:** The ROCB's Strategic Action Plan and its Annual Work Plan is developed in consultation with the Vice-Chair of the region and other stakeholders in line with updates of the Regional Strategic Plan adopted by the Regional Heads of Customs Administrations Meeting.
 - **Europe:** The regional capacity building strategy is produced by a special think-tank expert group led by the Vice-Chair for adoption at the Heads of Customs Conference.
 - **ESA:** The Regional Development Plan is developed by Regional Steering Group members for endorsement at the Regional Governing Council, and the Regional Implementation Plan is then developed by Regional Steering Group members, the ROCB and RTCs for endorsement at the Regional Governing Council.
 - **MENA:** No regional strategic plan has yet been adopted, but RTC Jordan has developed its own strategic plan.
- **Publication of guidance for RTCs**

➤ **Monitoring mechanism for implementation**

- **RTCs in AMS:** No mechanism to report.
- **RTCs in A/P:** No specific monitoring mechanism for RTCs, but overall capacity building achievement is assessed through ROCB reports.
- **RTCs in MENA:** No specific monitoring mechanism for RTCs.

➤ **Performance measurement**

- **RTCs in A/P:** No specific Key Performance Indicators or timeframe is set for performance measurement of the RTCs, but overall capacity building achievement is assessed through ROCB reports.
- **RTC Kenya:** Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were developed based on the balanced score card. Measures for activities in the implementation matrix were also set for quarterly review.

<Challenges>

- Compared to the strategic plans and action plans that are applicable to ROCBs, not many RTCs have strategic plans – some of them have strategies as national training centres, but not as RTCs.
- RTCs are committed not only to WCO regional capacity building activities but also other international programmes as well as domestic programmes as national training centres, and their facilities are sometimes not available.

Self-checklist

1. Does the region set out a Regional Strategic Plan over a certain period of years? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. ESA Region has a Strategic Plan.
- **RTC Mauritius:** ROCB ESA has come up with a three-year Strategic Plan which is monitored at their level. Each RTC has its own area of excellence which has been allocated by the ESA ROCB.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes, there is a Royal Malaysia Customs Department Strategic Plan covering five (5) years. However, it does not specifically state plans for the RTC but only the national training centre.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. The Strategic Action Plan and Annual Work Plan is developed in consultation with the Vice-Chair of the ROCB and other stakeholders in the Regional Heads of Customs Administration meeting.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, there is a Strategic Action Plan covering two years and an Annual Work Plan.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes, Same as the process as mentioned by Fiji.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia has a three-year strategic plan.

- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No. A Strategic Plan would be beneficial.
- **RTC Ukraine:** N/A.
- RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Is this Regional Strategic Plan converted into a roadmap and/or annual work plan of the RTC, so that the RTC has a defined work plan? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, this is done in in cooperation with the ROCB.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, done in collaboration with the ROCB.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China takes into account the capacity building activities to be held in Hong Kong and incorporates them into its own annual plan.
- **RTC Japan:** No.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No. In fact, this is one of the ASCCA's ROCB partnership points. To that end, the RTC will cooperate closely with the ROCB.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.

3. If the Regional Strategic Plan is not converted into a RTC roadmap and/or annual work plan to define the work plan of the RTC, is there alternative guidance to which the RTC can refer as a guiding document (e.g. Work Plan of the ROCB to which the RTC is closely linked)? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** N/A.
- **RTC Mauritius:** N/A
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The RTC usually communicates with ROCB A/P and RMCD Corporate Planning Division on the annual work plan as a RTC.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. RTC Hong Kong, China takes into account the capacity building activities to be held in Hong Kong and incorporates them into its own annual plan. The Work Plan of the ROCB A/P lists all the capacity building activities to be held, and can serve as an alternative guidance.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, CTI will communicate with ROCB A/P to conduct WCO regional activities.
- **RTC Korea:** It depends on the strategy of the CHRDI. But reference can be made to the Regional Strategic Plan if necessary.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia communicates closely with ROCB A/P and actively contributes to Customs Capacity Building Working Group (CCBWG) meetings twice a year that

coordinate work plans and priority activities for Strategic Plan of Customs Development (SPCD.).

- **RTC Azerbaijan:** The ASCCA uses its own training action plans (obtained from the SCC HR Department and other units) and refers to them. RTC activities are therefore sometimes incorporated into the ASCCA training programmes and vice-versa.
- **RTC Ukraine:** N/A.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** So far, the RTC has followed the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic Strategic Plan.

4. Does the RTC make a progress report to the region on the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan/RTC roadmap/RTC annual work plan? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, bi-annually.
- **RTC Mauritius:** The RTC sends a report to the RSG bi-annually.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The RTC reports to the region at the WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. Among other things on and off communication with ROCB A/P. RTC Hong Kong, China reports on the progress at the WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting annually.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, CTI shares its experience with the region at the WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes, the CHRDI shares its experience with the region at the WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes, to the ROCB Europe. This is separate from the ASCCA's reports to the SCC.
- **RTC Ukraine:** The RTC informs the ROCB about regional events organized by the RTC and sends a report every year to the RTC about its activities.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia reports to the region through the RTC Heads meetings. In addition, it submits a progress report to the Head of the Financial Education and Training Agency (FETA).

5. Does the RTC communicate directly with the Members on the development and implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan/RTC roadmap/RTC annual work plan?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The RTC only communicates directly with Members on a needs basis. The RTC is a member of and reports to the Regional Strategic Group (RSG).
- **RTC Mauritius:** Contact initiated as and when required.

- **RTC Malaysia** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No.
- **RTC Japan:** No.
- **RTC Korea:** RTC Korea: No, it is really hard to do this because there are too many countries to communicate to and obstacles such as a shortage of budget, and a shortage of the number of people who lead the projects.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No.

6. Does the RTC participate in the collection and analysis of training needs in the region?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, the RTC participates whenever the ROCB is collecting information on training needs.
- **RTC Mauritius:** A survey on Compliance and Enforcement was conducted in 2018 for ESA Member States which was used by the ROCB ESA to develop the three-year Strategic Plan 2018 -2021. It is planned to conduct a Training Needs assessment for the seven Member countries falling under the umbrella of RTC (Mauritius) by April 2021.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. However, the report which was sent by RTC Malaysia focused only on the RMCD's own strategic planning.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. RTC Hong Kong, China actively participates in the annual needs survey.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes. Japan Customs conducts an annual technical assistance needs survey in collaboration with ROCB A/P.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes, the annual needs survey.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No. However, RTC Indonesia participated in the collection and analysis of training needs focused on the ASEAN region and neighbouring countries.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No, but this action needs to be set up.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes. The Customs administration participates in the needs-analysis survey.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC only participates in the collection process, through institutional capacity building needs assessments of the different areas according to the priorities established by the DGA's strategic plan; this information is then submitted to the ROCB.

7. Does the RTC make a reasonable contribution to hosting WCO regional activities (vis-à-vis other international programmes as well as domestic programmes as national training centres, which may make the RTC facilities unavailable for WCO regional activities)?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, it does.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes. In the wake of COVID-19, face-to-face hosting of events has stopped; however, virtual training is still being carried out.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. AKMAL works closely with ROCB A/P in terms of hosting WCO regional activities.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. RTC Hong Kong, China contributes to hosting a WCO regional workshop/meeting annually.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia is ready to host WCO regional activities. Nor does it have any issue with allocating the training space for international and domestic programmes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** The ASCCA facilities are available for the RTC, and several training courses and other events have been hosted here. Also, a close ROCB collaboration is now on the RTC/ASCCA agenda.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes. Priority is always given to WCO events.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the challenges relating to, or shortcomings in, the strategic planning and/or annual planning of RTC work, and how to turn the strategic directions of the region into specific activities of the RTC.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. Hong Kong Customs would continue to participate in the WCO regional meetings with a view to contributing to the implementation of strategic directions.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to monitor progress on the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan/roadmap/annual work plan by the RTC and to receive further guidance, as appropriate.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes, Hong Kong Customs would continue to participate in the WCO regional meetings with a view to contributing to the implementation of strategic directions.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Setting appropriate Key Performance Indicators and the timeframe to monitor progress made by the RTC in a quantitative manner, complemented by a qualitative manner.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes, important for tracking goals.

M. Financial arrangement

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Status of WCO Regional Entities (SP0399 - Document of the 67th PC Session; SP0410 - Report of 67th PC Session to CS; SC0122 - Minutes of the 119th/120th Council Sessions; SP0605 - Document of the 77th PC Session; SP0612 - Report of 77th PC Session to Council, SC0166 - Minutes of the 129th/130th Council Sessions).
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **Salaries of RTC staff members**
 - All RTCs: Salaries of all RTC staff members are paid by the host administrations since they are working for the host administrations.

➤ **Operating and administrative cost of the RTC**

- All RTCs: Funding of RTC expenses is largely dependent on the host administrations; rent for office space, where applicable, staff training and hardware expenditure (e.g. office equipment, PCs, telephone) are also paid by the host administration.
- In some cases, part of the expenditure for hardware is funded by external development partners.

➤ **Regional funds**

- **RTC in AMS:** No funding is available other than that assigned by their host administrations.
- **RTCs in ESA:** The region has regional funds to support the activities of the RTCs, where funding comes from either regional Members or development partners.

➤ **Governing structure**

- Most of the RTCs: As the budget of RTCs largely comes from the host administration, procedures to ensure governance follow the norms of the respective administrations and/or governments.

<Challenges>

Self-checklist

1. Is the current funding arrangement for RTC operations working well under the joint efforts of the host administration and regional Members? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** There is no funding arrangement for the RTC with the regional Members.
- **RTC Mauritius:** There is no funding arrangement for the RTC with the region. However, the RTC does come up with cost-sharing solutions with the WCO/ROCB for planned events.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes. Workshops are funded by the WCO Customs Cooperation Funds (CCF), and the CTI covers administrative expenses.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No. Only national funds are currently available for RTC operations.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Only national funds are available.
- **RTC Qatar:** The RTC has funding arrangements to host and support activities in relation to capacity building.

- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No, there are no funding arrangements for RTC operations under joint efforts between the host administration and regional Members. However, the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic assumed all the expenses regarding logistics and administrative costs to promote the success of regional activities.

2. Does the region (regional Members and/or donors) have a proper mechanism to agree on the budget allocation, at least on a yearly basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The budget allocation is dealt with at ROCB level.
- **RTC Mauritius:** It is dealt with at ROCB level.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. RTC Malaysia obtains funds from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a yearly basis, but only subject to approval by the respective Ministry. RTC Malaysia also obtains funds from a few donors such as CCF Japan, the WCO, JICA, US Customs and Border Protection (USCBP), etc.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** There is no regional fund in A/P region. Funding of RTC Hong Kong, China is dependent on its host administration.
- **RTC Japan:** Workshops are funded by WCO CCF, and the CTI operates through its own budgets.
- **RTC Korea:** The External Relations Division of the Korea Customs Service (KCS) manages this with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and obtains the budget from it. Every year, the RTC is required to submit the next year's budget' plan in advance. It is reviewed and adjusted in line with budget issues.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No regional funding.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No. Funding of RTC Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine is dependent on the host administration.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

3. Does the region (regional Members and/or donors) have a proper mechanism to examine the proper use of financial contributions, at least on a yearly basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, the ESA region has a Finance Committee.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, but at the ROCB level.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The region has a competent authority to audit and confirm the budget allocation is spent accordingly.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** There is no regional fund in A/P region. Funding of RTC Hong Kong, China is dependent on its host administration.

- **RTC Japan:** There is no regional fund in A/P region. Workshops by WCO CCF are audited by the ROCB.
- **RTC Korea:** The budgetary allocation is spent only after approval by the competent authority.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the challenges relating to, or shortcomings in, the funding arrangement, if any, to gain full support of the region.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes, this should be discussed.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC India:** Yes, this should be discussed.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** N/A.
 - **RTC Japan:** The RTC is satisfied with the current mechanism of the ROCB.
 - **RTC Korea:** The RTC does not have any problems now because it follows the common sole rule of the Korean Government. However, there is a limitation on the use of the budget in terms of the selection of countries for seminars, since it is required to use the fund only in the developing countries.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to agree on the budget allocation.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes, this should be discussed.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes, it is very helpful.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** N/A.
 - **RTC Japan:** The RTC is satisfied with the current mechanism of the ROCB.
 - **RTC Korea:** RTC Korea does not have any issues because it has its own budget to host the seminars.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal mechanism to examine the proper use of financial contributions.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes, this should be discussed.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** N/A.

- **RTC Japan:** The RTC is satisfied with the current mechanism of the ROCB.
- **RTC Korea:** The RTC does not have any issues with this.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

N. National contact points

<Guiding documents>

- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)
- Discussion paper for the 10th Global Meeting of ROCBs-RTCs-VCs (Breakout session I, ROCBs) (2015)

<Practices>

- **Established National Contact Points (NCPs)**
 - Most of RTCs have regular contact between the RTCs and the corresponding home administrations.
 - A few RTCs have regular contact between the RTCs and national contact points.
- **Enhanced network with NCPs**
 - **RTCs in AMS:** Each RTC has their own NCP. Coordination with the ROCB.
 - **RTCs in Europe:** Meetings of National Training Centres in the region were held in 2014 and 2015, and may be regularized in the future. Both meetings were attended by most of the National Training Centres in the region.
 - **RTCs MENA:** Some RTCs use the list of NCPs provided by the ROCB and the rest have their own list.

<Challenges>

- Contacts by RTCs are in general limited to contacts with other regional entities (other RTCs in the region and the ROCB), rather with NCPs and/or National Training Centres.
- This situation suggests a common challenge for the RTCs in their roles in the region.

Self-checklist

1. Does the RTC have a list of NCPs?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** A list of NCPs in the ESA Region has been provided by the ROCB.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes, the AMS NCPs list.

- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Partly (only with RTCs in the Asia Pacific region).
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, but it has not been updated.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes, partly, the RTCs in Europe Region, but to some extent, others (RTCs in Korea and Japan) as well. The ASCCA International Cooperation aims to compile a list, which can be used to establish meaningful collaborations with various RTCs.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Qatar:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Is there a mechanism to maintain the validity of the list of NCPs, by reflecting changes in NCP contact details on a regular basis? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, communication by email informing the host administration and the ROCB of changes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** A formal mechanism has yet to be established.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. If there are any NCP changes, the ROCB A/P needs to be informed.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** The ROCB A/P is the coordinator keeping the list.
- **RTC Japan:** Changes of NCP are reported to the WCO.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia reports the changes of NCP to the ROCB.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Are the RTC staff contact details per Member/sub-region/theme made available for Members and/or NCPs (e.g. table of RTC staff contact details on regional website) Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Not Yet.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Not always, and action needs to be initiated in this perspective.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.

- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No.
- **RTC Japan:** No.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. The ROCB is provided with RTC contact information to be shared with Members.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Qatar:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

4. Is the RTC regularly in contact with the NCPs?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** As and when required.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Not on regular basis but only on a needs basis.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No.
- **RTC Japan:** No.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

5. Are there any other means to enhance communication between the RTC and the NCPs?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, through periodic meetings between the RTC NCP and the NCPs in the Commissioner of Customs and Border Control office.
- **RTC Mauritius:** There is a need to strengthen the line of communication between the two.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. Propose communication through the ROCB A/P or create a social media group.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Through the ROCB A/P.

- **RTC Japan:** Through the meetings of the ROCB A/P and/or RTC.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia will communicate via email or through the ROCB.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Through both the ASCCA's own efforts and sometimes through the ROCB.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Regularly approaching regional Members to have them check NCP information that is registered with the RTC, to ensure that NCP details are kept up to date.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes. It is now coordinated at the ROCB level.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, coordinated at the ROCB level.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Establishing a primary point of contact within the RTC per Member/sub-region/theme of enquiry, so that Members and/or NCPs can reach out to the RTC, without having to try to identify who to contact.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal roles of RTCs vis-à-vis Members in the region, in identifying, planning, delivering and monitoring regional training activities.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes. This is done at the RSG meeting, but only with respect to the delivery aspects.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, done at RSG meetings.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

O. Website and visibility

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

➤ Website of RTC

- Some RTCs have their own websites, others have pages on the host administrations' websites.
- Some RTCs have a dedicated website for the training institute, while they do not have separate segments devoted to the RTC functions. Events related to the RTC are duly publicized on such website.
- Some RTCs have pages in the regional Customs website, or the ROCB's website.
- Website contents: News articles, analysis, materials, etc., are largely contributed by host administrations, Members and the ROCB.

➤ RTC newsletters

- **RTC Kenya:** The training institute is active on social media (Facebook and Twitter) to disseminate information. It also contributes to the ROCB newsletter.
- **RTC Japan:** Issues its own newsletter which is independent from its home administration's newsletter. The newsletter is issued twice a year and is addressed to the ROCB and the RTCs in the region, participants in workshops and past training events, and the RTC's home administration.

<Challenges>

- The number of RTCs who have their own websites is rather limited as it stands.

Self-checklist

1. Is the RTC website/RTC's home website maintained and updated on a regular basis (more than once a month)? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Action is being initiated to insert a dedicated space for the RTC on the MRA's website which will be updated accordingly.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. RTC Malaysia has its own website, namely the Royal Malaysian Customs Academy (known as AKMAL), but for the time being it is solely for National Training Centre functions.

- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No designated website of RTC Hong Kong, China but only a website for Hong Kong Customs. The website of Hong Kong Customs is regularly updated.
- **RTC Japan:** The CTI has own website; updated as required.
- **RTC Korea:** The CHRDI has its own website, updated as required.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia has a home website: rtcindonesia.kemenkeu.go.id. It is updated occasionally.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No separate website. A section of the ASCCA web page could be created for a degree of RTC visibility but it would not be sufficient.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No. But the news on the activities of the RTC and the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the SCS is regularly sent for publication on the ROCB's website (Baku, Azerbaijan).
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Does not have a web page.

2. If the RTC website/RTC's home website has the function to track the number of visits, does it indicate increased access/visitors? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** N/A.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No such function displayed on the web page.
- **RTC Japan:** No.
- **RTC Korea:** No.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** N/A.
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

3. Are there any mechanisms to receive feedback on website contents and to improve them?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, through live chats and online surveys after a user interacts with the website.
- **RTC Mauritius:** N/A.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, there is a mechanism to receive public comments through CTI e-mail.
- **RTC Korea:** No.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** N/A
- **RTC Ukraine:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

4. Does the RTC issue newsletters to regional Members and/or other stakeholders? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** No.
- **RTC Mauritius:** ROCB asks Members to submit articles for publication on a quarterly basis, and these articles appear in the ROCB ESA Newsletter.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes, RTC Malaysia issues a yearly bulletin in Malaysia's national language but not devoted solely to RTC news. The bulletins are distributed through participants and experts attending WCO workshops.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China shares the latest information on the website of Hong Kong Customs.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, "CTI news" is sent to workshop participants by CTI e-mail.
- **RTC Korea:** No.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No.

5. Are there any mechanisms to receive feedback on newsletter contents and to improve them?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** N/A.
- **RTC Mauritius:** No.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** There is a “Contact us” function on the website of Hong Kong Customs. Visitors can provide their feedback via email or hotline.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, there is a mechanism to receive comments and feedback from the participants through CTI e-mail.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. If someone provides feedback about that, it is taken into consideration.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** N/A.
- **RTC Ukraine:** N/A.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No.

6. Are there any other mechanisms in place to promote regional activities that are conducted by the RTC?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Through the ESA ROCB website where the RTC sends clips of WCO activities. The RTC may also communicate to regional Members through the ROCB.
- **RTC Mauritius:** No. It is suggested that a dedicated platform for the sharing of training materials be created on the ROCB’s website, which will promote activities. These materials may also be shared with NCPs for better transmission to Member States.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** After the completion of a WCO activity, an article reporting the event is published in the Customs News and uploaded onto the website.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, “CTI News” which introduces its activities and is distributed to participants through CTI e-mail annually.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes, there is another website which is operated by External Relations Division of the KCS.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia promotes activities through social media.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** On the ASCCA web page (to be created, if no separate RTC website is developed), as well as through the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) headquartered in Australia. The INCU Regional Office is located at the ASCCA. Additionally, social media channels can be useful. The ROCB Europe web page also often serves as a basis. There is a need for a systematization.

- **RTC Ukraine:** WCO Europe ROCB website.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Revisiting the RTC's communication strategy, if any, to verify whether it meets the expectations of regional Members and other stakeholders.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** When necessary.
 - **RTC Japan:** When necessary.
 - **RTC Korea:** When necessary.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** No, there is no communication strategy.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Regularly updating the website contents to disseminate up-to-date information to Members and other stakeholders.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes. Through the ROCB website
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Already implemented.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** There is no dissemination on a separate website.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep:** N/A.

3. Establishing a mechanism to verify the effectiveness of the website contents, reflecting feedback from visitors, and improving the contents.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs keeps improving its effectiveness by regularly updating the website.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea :** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** There is no separate website, but if the ASCCA web page depicts the RTC, it would be appropriate to use that verification.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

4. Establishing a mechanism to verify the effectiveness of the newsletter contents, reflecting feedback from readers, and improving the contents.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs keeps improving the effectiveness by regular updating of the website and providing news/information on a timely basis.
 - **RTC Japan:** Already implemented.
 - **RTC Korea:** Already implemented.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** No newsletters are in use.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** N/A.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** N/A.

P. Effective regional training activities

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- **Effective support of regional training activities by developing regional training materials that are customized to regional requirements.**
- **Effective development and support of the WCO's blended learning programmes:**
 - **RTCs in AMS:** Role to be redefined based on the Regional Strategic Plan which is currently under development.
 - **RTCs in ESA:** Development of a regional version of training materials taking into account regional requirements such of the EAC, the COMESA and the SADC through the ESA train-the-trainers programme, which are made available under CLiKC!
 - **RTC Kenya:** The RTC has been working closely with the Commissioner of Customs and Border Control office to require officers to undertake certain CLiKC! courses in a financial year. This guided approach has increased the uptake of courses by operational officers.
- **Leading role in discussions at the regional forum for capacity building.**
- **Other means:**
 - **RTCs in A/P, RTCs in ESA:** Exploring the 'Centre of Excellence' concept in the region, whereby RTCs identify their focus topics, and analyse developments in, and good practices on, specified topics to share with Members.

- **RTCs in Europe:** Encourages its staff to apply for WCO expert accreditation to ensure a qualified level of knowledge and delivery.
- **RTCs in MENA:** Use the WCO accredited experts from their home administrations and encourage the trainers to apply for WCO accreditation workshops.
- **RTC Qatar:** Developed the Customs Competencies guide to enhance the competency-based training.

<Challenges>

- RTCs are committed not only to WCO regional capacity building activities but also other international programmes as well as domestic programmes as national training centres, and their facilities are sometimes not available.
- Generally speaking, the RTCs continue to be structures that provide infrastructure for training events. The objectives of being 'Centres of Excellence' has not been met.
- The RTC function is seen as a 'small side function' and not enough is undertaken by the RTCs to create the capacities that are required to serve other Members.

Self-checklist

1. What approach does the RTC take in engaging with effective regional training activities? How does it engage with proper understanding of capacity building needs in the region for effective planning and delivery of such activities? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The RTC hosts WCO-organized training and provides logistical support throughout the training, e.g. airport pick-ups and transportation from hotel to the training institute. There is close collaboration with the ROCB, and the RTC takes a lead role in its area of excellence, whenever training needs are identified in the region.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Reviews Members' training needs on a yearly basis, participates in the development of Regional Strategic Plan in collaboration with the ROCB.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Close co-operation with ROCB A/P when organizing training and workshops in terms of logistical arrangements. In addition, Malaysia shares its accredited or technical officer's' expertise through regional and national activities.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs participates in the development of the Regional Strategic Plan. It maintains close communication with ROCB A/P in identifying the training needs in the region. RTC Hong Kong, China executes the plan by organizing relevant capacity building activities.
- **RTC Japan:** Close collaboration with ROCB A/P is essential in order to know and analyse the needs of participants and make activities more effective.
- **RTC Korea:** CHRDI offers training programmes specialized in Single Window/IT based on the result of pre-demand surveys. It also operates a Customs Field Training Complex as a specialized training facility. Last year (2021), it set up a "VR Experience Zone" in which visitors can experience "container inspection procedures" in a virtual environment. In addition, the Institute develops training courses through which trainees can experience Korea's overall Customs administration, and runs the courses during the seminars that it hosts.
- **RTC Indonesia:** There are two approaches. Firstly, RTC Indonesia conducts training needs analysis for ASEAN and bilateral training, such as in Timor Leste. Secondly, it offers training

available through the grant scheme for the Asia Pacific Region. Furthermore, it also has a close cooperation with ROCB A/P when organizing training.

- **RTC Azerbaijan:** The ASCCA International Cooperation, Lifelong Learning Department and Department for Monitoring and Evaluation are involved in assessing various training needs. But the regional dimension is not fully present. In order to improve this, the RTC aims to cooperate with the ROCB to coordinate. Additionally, feedback and a list of needs received from various units of the SCC also sometimes mention a regional dimension. A mechanism to sufficiently ensure the regional coverage is therefore lacking.
- **RTC Ukraine:** So far, the RTC has only hosted regional WCO activities.
- **RTC Jordan:** There is cooperation with the ROCB in order to analyse the needs of the region and accomplish things according to the priorities.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The approach is reactive, since the Dominican Republic does not have an academic offer, it accepts what the region has to offer.

2. Has the RTC been always available to host WCO regional training activities? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Readily available and priority is given to such activities, provided that the costs of travel and accommodation of delegates are met by the WCO/ROCB/Donors. Logistical support is provided as and when required.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. Slots are allocated and reserved for WCO workshops in RTC Malaysia's yearly training calendar. However additional slots will be subject to availability.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, RTC Japan has consulted with the ROCB about the schedule, field, and number of workshops, depending on its availability.
- **RTC Korea:** Possible if discussed in advance. After checking up with the CHRDI, the schedule can be adjusted if necessary.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. How many WCO regional training activities did the RTC host during the one year?
(The number of activities hosted)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

RTC	2019	2020	2021	2022
Kenya	7		2	3
Mauritius				

Malaysia	1	1	-	
Hong Kong, China	2	2	3	4
Japan	4			
Korea	8	1	4	5
Ukraine	1			
RTC Jordan				5
Dominican Rep.	10	2	-	1
Indonesia (became a RTC in 2021)				

4. Would development of regional training materials be considered relevant in your region?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Extremely relevant. Some existing materials should be customized to the EAC legislation and specificities.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, especially in French and Lusophone.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. But it is subject to our current organization's need.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes. The modules, however, need to be developed considering the regional/sub-regional development level.
- **RTC Korea:** Partially agree. Before developing the materials, the RTC needs to consider the effectiveness and efficiency of the materials. In other words, because the resource (budget and human resource) is limited, it should think the value of the materials. The RTC has already seen cases which the materials are not used well many times.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

5. If development of regional training materials is deemed relevant in the region, does the RTC have a proper stake in developing such materials?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** WCO Accredited Experts may assist in the development of course materials in specific fields with the professional and technical support of the WCO and other Members. The RTC needs support to develop training materials in French and more importantly in Lusophone.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No. The regional training materials are usually provided by the WCO and experts.

- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. Would try to cooperate and/or participate when appropriate.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, the RTC tries to cooperate in some parts to develop such materials on a best effort basis.
- **RTC Korea:** No. The RTC should discuss this with the person in charge of it if necessary.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No, but this possibility could be created, depending on the stake.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Experts may assist in the development of course materials in specific fields with the professional and technical support of the WCO and other Member States.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** There is a limited budget available. Applications must be evaluated.

6. Does the RTC contribute to any regional discussion forum for training purposes? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. Within the framework of the seminars on training and Human Resources managers.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Through the RTC Heads meeting
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The RTC regularly participates in the RTC' Heads meetings which are organized by the ROCB A/P and WCO.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. Through participation in the WCO A/P RTC Heads Meeting.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, the CTI regularly participates in the RTC' Heads meetings which are organized by the ROCB A/P and WCO.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. The CHRDI regularly participates in the RTC' Heads meetings which are organized by the ROCB.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. RTC Indonesia regularly participates in the RTC's Head meetings and CCBWG.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes, at the RTC' Heads meetings. The RTC Head, ASCCA international coordinator and ASCCA lifelong learning department specialist also participate in the meetings of the WCO Regional Structures, when requested.
Via the ASCCA International Cooperation, which establishes bilateral partnerships with the training centres in different regions (currently: CBCTI/Korea RTC, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University Faculty/RTC North Macedonia, CTI/RTC Japan), the RTC Azerbaijan aims at fostering both intra- and inter-regional training collaboration.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Not yet.
- **RTC Jordan:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is at the disposal of the activities programmed by the ROCB, or by any initiative by any WCO directorate or body, etc.

7. Does the RTC contribute to any global discussion forum for training purposes? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, WCO Global Meetings.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, by attending the WCO Capacity Building Committee.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - Through the WCO RTC Heads meeting.
 - Works closely with other international Customs agencies such as USCBP, Australian Border Force, and Japan Customs.
 - Actively participates in the bi-annual ASEAN Customs Capacity Building Working Group Meeting.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes. Through participation in the Global Meeting of Regional Entities and the WCO Capacity Building Committee Meeting.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, through participation in the WCO RTC Heads meeting, WCO Global Meetings, and Capacity Building Committee.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes, WCO Global Meetings.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. Through participation in the WCO RTC Head meetings.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** The RTC is represented at the WCO Global Meetings arranged by the WCO Capacity Building Directorate (CBD), as well as in any survey and other discussions initiated by the WCO CBD (if the RTC is invited) and ROCB Europe.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes, through participation in the WCO RTC Heads meeting.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Not currently. The RTC is undergoing restructuring.

8. Does the RTC has focus topics for which it is able to analyse the development and good practices of Members in depth and share outcomes of the study for their inspiration?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** The RTC has been appointed as a Centre of Excellence on the Economic Competitiveness Package. But no developments or good practices have been produced so far.
- **RTC Mauritius:** WCO accredited experts assist in specific fields.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** No focus topics at this moment. RTC Hong Kong, China is willing to share its expertise and training materials with other Members upon request and where resources are available.
- **RTC Japan:** No focus topics at this moment. However, the CTI is willing to share its expertise and training materials with other Members upon request and where resources are available.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. The CHRDI regularly participates in the RTC Heads meetings which are organized by the ROCB.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes. The WCO accredited experts assist in specific topics.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** As mentioned (on page 50), the ASCCA starts using its international cooperation with various national training centres/RTCs to analyse common training needs and interests. Additionally, the RTC has also submitted its preferences to become a 'Centre of Excellence' in a number of areas.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Jordan:** No.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Not currently. The RTC is undergoing restructuring.

9. Does the RTC have WCO accredited experts among its staff members?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, one is an accredited expert in Customs Valuation and another is accredited in Risk Management. The total number of accredited experts is two (2).
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, there are accredited experts in diverse fields.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No, but WCO accredited experts are currently working in other RMCD divisions.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** The accredited experts of Hong Kong Customs are currently working in other departments, not at RTC Hong Kong, China.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. WCO accredited experts are also working in the KCS. RTC Korea uses them as an instructor and a facilitator of programmes.

- **RTC Indonesia:** No. The WCO accredited experts are in the Directorate General Customs and Excise (DGCE) as the host administrator.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No, but there are some accredited experts at the SCC, which can make them available to the RTC when needed. However, this is quite a limited possibility.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes: three staff Members.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No. 'The RTC does not have any accredited staff members; however, there are several WCO accredited experts in the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic.
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.

10. Does the RTC use blended training methods during regional training activities? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** In the past, the RTC has hosted regional training activities without participating in training delivery planning. However, staff undertaking WCO courses are often required to learn online first through the CLiKC! Platform.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Action has already been initiated to shift towards blended learning. Nevertheless, there is an immediate need for technical assistance in the development of blended learning.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. The training methods include practical exercises, case studies, group discussions and presentation. In addition, there is practice on online training methods such as MyCLiKC and other online tools.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Depending on the programme designed by the WCO.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes, in terms of e-learning blended programme, it depends on the programme designed by the WCO. The RTC also has experience in utilizing a variety of methods other than traditional lectures, for example, role play, exercises using PCs, case studies, group discussions, lecturing exercise by participants, Partner Country Method (PCM) exercises, developing AP, study tour, etc.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes. A variety of means are employed, such as practical exercises, case studies, group discussions, etc. during the programmes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Not yet.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Capacity to create online Customs training is being developed at the ASCCA. No blended training at the moment. Some training courses were grouped into theoretical and practical. WCO guidelines on virtual training courses are being explored to establish a blended training, learning and teaching capacity.
- **RTC Ukraine:** The Department uses blended training methods during national training activities (in Ukrainian).
- **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Discussing at appropriate regional meetings the optimal roles of RTCs vis-à-vis Members in the region, in identifying, planning, delivering and monitoring regional training activities.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, fully agree.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China has already taken this approach to discuss with other Members at regional meetings.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes. Already implemented at the WCO RTC Heads Meeting.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Making its facility available for WCO regional capacity building activities (vis-à-vis other international programme as well as domestic programmes as national training centres).
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, the RTC always entertains such requests.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China has already taken this approach to support the regional capacity building activities.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes, as much as available, but this depends on the RTC's training schedule.
 - **RTC Korea:** Possibly, but depends on the condition of the CHRDI.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Developing regional training materials taking into account regional requirements.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** This would be of great use.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** No.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Upon request and resource availability.
 - **RTC Japan:** If necessary.
 - **RTC Korea:** If necessary.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** depends on resources.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes. Upon request and resource availability.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

4. Contributing to regional and global discussion forum for training purposes.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, if sponsored.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China has already taken this approach and actively participates in the regional and global discussion forum.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.

- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.
5. Participating in the WCO Virtual Customs Orientation Academy through assistance to the Academy's coordinator and/or active participation to the regional chats to offer regional insights on technical subjects.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China has continuously nominated officers to participate as virtual student and take up the role of virtual tutor.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.
6. Identifying focus topics for which it is able to analyse developments and good practices of Members in depth and to share outcomes of the study for Member inspiration and ultimately to help the WCO Secretariat to identify the gaps between existing international standards and Member requirements.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes. It is the responsibility of the ROCB.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Upon request and resource availability.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Maybe. It would be better to utilize the WCO accredited experts.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.
7. Encouraging its staff to apply for WCO expert accreditation to ensure qualified level of knowledge and delivery.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes, the host administration needs to prioritize RTC staff nomination for accreditation.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** The staff is always encouraged to do so.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes. Staff members are strongly urged to apply for accreditation.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs continuously selects the appropriate officers to attend the accreditation workshop with a view to increasing the pool of accredited experts.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes. The KCS (host administration) and RTC Korea encourage the staff to do so.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

8. Using blended training methods during regional training activities.
- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
 - **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, since it would be more cost effective.
 - **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Depending on the programme designed by the WCO.
 - **RTC Japan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Korea:** Yes.
 - **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
 - **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
 - **RTC Jordan:** Yes.
 - **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

Q. Staff training opportunities

<Guiding documents>

- Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
- Good Practices and Challenges of the WCO Regional Entities – Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres (2014)

<Practices>

- Expertise and capabilities of RTC staff members
 - Some RTCs ensure their own staff participate in training programmes on CLiKC!, and also utilize the networking function of CLiKC!, while some RTCs indicate a low rate of attendance stemming from the languages available for the modules.
 - Some RTCs ensure their staff members attend workshops and trainings.
 - A few RTCs have WCO accredited experts who regularly facilitate WCO workshops.
 - RTC Kenya: Trainers continually learn in their areas of expertise through CLiKC!, WCO workshops and nationally organized training/workshops.

<Challenges>

- Not many RTCs have their own staff attend workshops and trainings.
- One of the potential reasons for this would be that the nomination/selection of participating staff is made by the host administration from its entire range of officials, and RTC staff is not always considered as part of this process.

Self-checklist

1. What specific roles do RTC staff members play in capacity building activities? Analysis of the needs? Coordination with the WCO Secretariat/experts/ROCB/Members? Logistical support? Delivery of missions? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** RTC staff is only involved in the coordination and logistical support. Experts may provide training support also, e.g. the Mercator programme.
- **RTC Mauritius:** RTC Staff members are fully involved in the capacity building initiatives and provide all logistical support necessary for the smooth running of training being hosted/conducted at the RTC. The services of the WCO accredited experts at the MRA are enlisted as and when required to facilitate/co-facilitate the training initiatives.
- **RTC Malaysia:** RTC staff provide logistical support for all the courses/activities/workshops with the cooperation of ROCB A/P and WCO. In addition, the RTC contributes to the annual needs survey, reports and responses, as well as participating in WCO meeting with regards to capacity building matters.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China (i) provides logistics support for the WCO capacity building activities to be held in Hong Kong; (ii) contributes to the annual needs survey; (iii) provides training materials and shares good practices via the ROCB A/P; and (iv) participates in WCO meetings to discuss capacity building issues.
- **RTC Japan:** Staff of the CTI mainly engage in coordination with the WCO Secretariat/experts/ROCB with respect to the schedule and curriculum, including arrangement of lectures, and logistical support. Trainers, where appropriate and available, facilitate or participate in WCO Workshops.
- **RTC Korea:** The members of the CHRDI international training team carry out all activities such as planning, analysis of the needs, logistical support, coordination, budget, accounting, etc. from A to Z to ensure the successful outcome of the programmes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** RTC Indonesia staff members play specific roles in capacity-building activities, including analysis of the needs, coordination, logistical support, and delivery of missions.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** In all matters. This is because the ASCCA also manages the arrangement, coordination and evaluation of all capacity building measures. Some collaboration with the relevant units of the SCC are also implemented, depending on the tasks at hand. Key actions include logistical support and, to some extent, also needs analysis.
- **RTC Ukraine:** RTC staff members keep a constant liaison with the WCO Secretariat/experts/ROCB/Members, and provide logistical support. They also take part in the delivery of WCO missions (Strategic trade control enforcement, Integrity, Training).
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC offers logistical support and provide appropriate services and assistance for all capacity building activities.

2. What approach does RTC take in fostering staff capability? (Descriptive answers)

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Staff members are trained by the host administration and the RTC when funds are available. There is a need for improvement in international exposure where staff participate in regional events, WCO Technical Working Groups and WCO meetings.
- **RTC Mauritius:** The RTC capitalizes on opportunities to promote the capacity building of its staff, currently using the virtual training mode.
- **RTC Malaysia:** The RTC nominated its officers for an international/local training programme as well as benchmarking visits with the purpose of enhancing their capability, knowledge and skills, as well as gaining experience.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs has its Staff Development Programme and arranges different structured training courses for officers at different career stages. Depending on the training needs and job requirements of individual officers, Hong Kong Customs nominates officers to undergo diversified management or specialized training both in Hong Kong and overseas.
- **RTC Japan:** Where appropriate and available, the CTI has its staff participate in international workshops.
- **RTC Korea:** Where appropriate and available, the CHRDI has its staff participate in international seminars and workshops. It also visits foreign training institute for benchmarking. Lastly, it has a yearly fostering programme called “K-ACE programme” (named after the “WCO accredited experts”), where it 1) selects qualified staff for capacity building activities and/or other external affairs, and 2) helps them enhance relevant capabilities including presentation skills, conference manners and know-how, etc.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Whenever such opportunities arise and are available, RTC Indonesia deputizes its staff members to participate in the international training programmes to enhance and continuously improve their capabilities.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** ASCCA uses its international cooperation and partnerships to try to arrange some capacity building events. Furthermore, the national training courses conducted by the SCC lecturers are also helpful. More recently, the ASCCA/RTC also consulted the ROCB about a further training scheme. E-learning partnerships with platforms such as edX and Coursera also serve for the purpose.
- **RTC Ukraine:** The RTC Ukraine has their staff participate in international training programmes, as well as training programmes on CLiKC!; staff members also attend workshops and training to become WCO accredited experts.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is undergoing restructuring.

3. Does the RTC encourage its staff members to consult with the WCO website and CLiKC! to familiarize themselves with the latest WCO tools and instruments? Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. All staff of the host administration are encouraged to learn on CLiKC! For Customs staff, it is mandatory that they undertake particular courses in a financial year.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes, as they need to keep abreast of the latest trends/developments in training.

- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Yes.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes. ASCCA is the coordinating institution for the use of the WCO E-Learning resources/CLiCK! Platform in Azerbaijan. RTC/ASCCA invites and encourages the SCC personnel to pursue the WCO e-learning resources. ASCCA staff members deployed to deal with RTC matters on an ad-hoc basis also follow the CLiCK! courses.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** The RTC is undergoing restructuring.

4. Does the RTC have WCO accredited experts among its staff members?

Y N

(Facts and justifications which provide grounds for the above assessment or which highlight issues)

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes. Two (2) resident trainers.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Accredited experts are called upon to assist the RTC staff members. It would be highly beneficial if RTC staff members were to be given this opportunity of being trained.
- **RTC Malaysia:** No, but WCO accredited experts are currently working in other RMCD Divisions.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** The accredited experts of Hong Kong Customs are currently working at other departments, not at RTC Hong Kong, China.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** No. The positions of WCO accredited experts are at the Directorate General Customs and Excise (DGCE) as the host administrator, and so the staff members of RTC Indonesia have not been accredited.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** No.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** No.

Would you consider the following elements as potential steps forward?

1. Revisiting the RTC's staff fostering strategy, if any, to seize various opportunities and to best serve its Members.
 - **RTC Kenya:** Yes.

- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Fiji:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs regularly reviews its training strategy.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

2. Encourage staff to stay up-to-date with WCO learning strategies and tools.

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** RTC Hong Kong, China has already taken this approach to encourage its staff to stay up-to-date with the WCO learning strategies and tools.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **.RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

3. Encouraging its staff to apply for WCO expert accreditation to ensure a qualified level of knowledge and delivery.

- **RTC Kenya:** Yes.
- **RTC Mauritius:** Yes.
- **RTC Malaysia:** Yes.
- **RTC Hong Kong, China:** Hong Kong Customs would continue to select the appropriate officers to attend the accreditation workshop with a view to increasing the pool of accredited experts.
- **RTC Japan:** Yes.
- **RTC Korea:** Yes.
- **RTC Indonesia:** Yes.
- **RTC Azerbaijan:** Yes.
- **RTC Ukraine:** Yes.
- **RTC Dominican Rep.:** Yes.

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3. Annex I

Excerpts from the Capacity Building Operational Strategy (2008)
– Key roles and principles of the ROCBs and the RTCs –

ROCBs	
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To co-ordinate Customs capacity building activities in the region. • To develop staff within the region to be able to support Members with organizational development. • To support the implementation of international standards for Customs and trade according to the SAFE Framework of Standards and to provide support for the development of the Revised Kyoto Convention. • To establish projects in individual Members of economic regions which implement the identified Columbus Programme objectives. • To co-ordinate the activities of the Regional Training Centres. • To develop, promote and maintain partnership with key regional stakeholders. • To identify and co-ordinate the needs of the region. • To report quarterly the work of the ROCB to the Capacity Building Directorate and the Regional Vice-Chair. • To identify policy gaps to the Secretariat. • To represent the WCO at appropriate regional fora. • To promote and, where appropriate, manage Secretariat activities in the region. • To translate key Secretariat documents into regionally common languages.
Development of overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate the development requirement for each Member, and develop a regional strategy supported by mission statement, vision and goals covering a period of three to five years.
Development, management, implementation and monitoring of an annual operational plan covering:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific project activities. • Seminar activity. • Liaison with the regional Members through surveys, diagnostic missions and evaluation activities. • Liaison with the Capacity Building Directorate of the WCO. • Development of appropriate databases based on the WORLDCAP programme. • Liaison with other regional structures representing stakeholders and donors. • Promotion and support for bilateral or multilateral benchmarking of Customs administrations.

ROCBs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at appropriate regional meetings. • Attendance at relevant meetings at the Secretariat.
Operational activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, manage and monitor a pool of experts in organizational development and technical Customs matters. • Organize and manage high-level seminars for senior managers, which explain new initiatives and their implications. • Provide action planning and monitoring support for Columbus Phase 2 actions based on the needs identified at the diagnostic stage. • Identify common issues amongst the Members in the implementation of new initiatives and provide seminars, workshops, or direct consultancy to address them. • Seek opportunities to establish development projects, with the support of the Secretariat, evaluate lessons learnt and distribute advice to Members. • Evaluate the developmental progress of the Members at regular intervals, to both confirm progress and identify further development requirements. • Liaise with the Secretariat to propose and prioritize technical external assistance to Members.
Relations with regional structures and donor organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key regional organizations and establish a regular communication with them. • Identify developmental projects of interest to regional stakeholders. • Attend appropriate regional fora and promote the WCO agenda. • Organize donor conferences. • Identify support capital for infrastructure development projects.
Relations with RTCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate the activities of the Training Centres in the region. • Encourage Regional Training Centres to develop specialist training products e.g., management training, business skills, enforcement, compliance, etc. • Identify training needs at a strategic level. • Evaluate training impact at a strategic level.
Communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a regional website. • Look for sustainable solutions to deal with language requirements in the region, and ensure translation of key documents and instruments of the WCO.
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with Council policy. • The impact of the annual plan at a regional level. • The SAFE Framework of Standards evaluation matrix.

ROCBs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Phase 2 Columbus Programme objectives as articulated in the diagnostic reports. • Proper financial management.

RTCs	
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of regionally relevant training. • The maintenance of specialist trainer pools. • The provision of specialist training at a regional level. • The development and support of the WCO's blended learning programme. • To develop and maintain an annual training plan. • The maintenance of accurate management records on the training provided. • The evaluation of the training given in terms of student reaction, learning achieved and transfer of learning to the workplace. (The overall impact of the training should be evaluated by the ROCB or Directors General). • In addition to the training mounted by the RTCs directly, they should be able to supply training materials to Members to enable them to mount their own training.
Training in Customs matters in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of such training is important both for the development of effective relationships between Customs and economic operators and as a potential source of income for the RTC.
Specific training programmes for the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RTC should develop specific training programmes for the region. This can be based on adapted material provided by the Secretariat or by developing specific regional material. • From the emerging findings of the Columbus Programme, there is a particular need to develop programmes which improve the overall management skills of the Members, both in terms of Customs operational management and business management skills, such as programme management, project management, change management, etc. Here engagement with the private sector, both for development and delivery of such training, should be encouraged.
Pool of trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RTCs - working in co-operation with the Capacity Building Directorate of the WCO - will be expected to maintain pools of accredited trainers for Customs specialist subjects, such as Valuation, Classification, Origin, etc.
Provision of specialist training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of specialist training at a regional level is the major role of the RTC. Based on annual training needs surveys, RTCs should mount regionally relevant training, either at the RTC or in accommodation provided by Members. • In mounting training programmes, priority should be given to those where the training given can be fully supported by the administrations from which the trainees come when they return. This may require the development of additional training for managers so that they can fulfil this role.

RTCs	
WCO e-learning platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wherever possible, the RTCs should install the WCO e-learning platform and blended learning modules. These programmes provide an important source of learning which can be accessed by staff at all levels. They do, however, require the support of a tutorial process which should be managed and monitored by the RTC. The specialist pool of trainers should provide the basis of this tutorial support.• The installation of the WCO e-learning platform in the RTC will also allow the tailoring of the courses according to specific regional needs and characteristics.
