



WCO Experts Guidelines



CAPACITY BUILDING DIRECTORATE



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES

Guidance for WCO Experts

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FOREWORD

In your capacity as WCO experts, you contribute to the WCO's endeavours to provide quality advice to our Members and to improve the professionalism of Customs Services worldwide through reform, modernization and the application of standards to meet the challenges facing Customs in the 21st Century.

During your missions on behalf of the WCO you will work in different cultural environments and you will be challenged to provide valuable and pragmatic advice and solutions that can be understood and applied by the recipient administration. In your role as a WCO expert, you will be asked to adopt a results-oriented approach and to deliver tangible results and proposals for the way ahead in the beneficiary service.

Although the WCO places much expectation on your shoulders, it is my sincere hope that we will equip you fully for your task through the briefing you will receive. The following guidance provides general information on the services and briefing you can expect from the WCO Secretariat as well as what we expect you to bring to the mission.

I also have every confidence in the support team I have set up within the Capacity Building Directorate and which is focused on your success, given that such success will contribute to the long-term viability of the WCO as a provider of Capacity Building of the highest quality.

If you do receive the support you require then please tell us. If not, then we would also like to know.

It is my sincere belief that you will find working in an international environment and under the auspices of a WCO programme to be one of the most rewarding experiences of your Customs career.

I welcome you to the WCO Experts Team and wish you a successful mission.



Lars Karlsson
Director, Capacity Building

INTRODUCTION

This brochure is intended to offer general guidance on WCO Capacity Building activities to our WCO experts.

It provides information on the level of assistance available when preparing your WCO mission, during the implementation stage and during the post-mission phase, as well as information on financial rules for WCO experts.

Additional details and easy access to WCO templates for the purposes of your mission are also provided.

Please note that all the explanations in this brochure apply to missions that are conducted in full by the WCO Secretariat.

For missions organized by one of our regional entities, such as one of our Regional Offices for Capacity Building (ROCBs), different procedures may apply. Please also bear in mind that some WCO missions are implemented by means of contributions by external donors and these funds may be subject to specific conditions. In such cases, your WCO contact or the relevant regional entity will provide you with further information. However, should you feel the need for clarification of any pending issues then do not hesitate to get in touch with the contacts at the Capacity Building Directorate (see [Capacity Building Directorate Contacts](#)).

Any ideas on how to improve this brochure are most welcome. Please share your suggestions with Ms. Elke Portz in the WCO Capacity Building Directorate: E-mail : elke.portz@wcoomd.org, Tel. : +32 2209 9620.

1 PRE-MISSION INFORMATION

1.1 General procedures

Within the WCO Capacity Building Directorate there are six Regional Development Managers who act as the contact points for the different WCO regions. You may be in contact with them, depending on the nature of your mission (see [Capacity Building Directorate Contacts](#)). Alternatively, you may be in contact with one of the officers dealing with a key technical area in the other WCO Directorates, or with both.

Your contact(s) will be happy to assist in the preparation for your mission and will be at your disposal throughout the planning, implementation and post-mission phases. Additionally, your contact(s) will share with you all relevant information on the content of your mission, your expected input and the anticipated achievements.

In advance of your mission, the WCO will seek your administration's permission for you to participate therein. Your WCO contact will be your first port of call to initiate the flight arrangements on your behalf and to put you in touch with the beneficiary administration, and with your Co-facilitator if the mission is being carried out by more than one expert.

1.2 Logistics

The WCO component

- *Approval by the administration seconding the expert*

The WCO will obtain your administration's approval for you to participate in a WCO mission and will set up a main contact at the Secretariat.

- *Travel*

The WCO will make the travel arrangements and your e-ticket(s) will be issued to you by e-mail against receipt of the duly completed [Travel and Banking Details Form](#). You are asked to indicate any airline travel requirements as soon as possible, given that significant discounts can be obtained on early reservations.

The WCO rules permit airline business class travel for experts only when the flight sector is over six hours' duration. Airline tickets will be purchased by the Secretariat at the most economic rate.

Please ask your WCO contact for further information if using other forms of transport. Travel arrangements within the host country are the responsibility of the host administration.

- *Contacts*

The WCO will put you in direct contact, as soon as possible, with the beneficiary country, as well as with your Co-facilitator if the mission is being carried out by more than one expert.

- *Advance payment*

Advance payment for accommodation and for the daily subsistence allowance will be initiated by the WCO, as explained in the 'Financial Information' section.

- *Insurance*

The WCO will provide health insurance for the duration of the mission up to a maximum amount of 5,000 euro. The cover is for accidents or urgent medical treatment only. Please note that ambulatory, non-urgent care will be at the patient's expense.

Kindly return the duly completed [Insurance Form](#) to your main WCO contact, with Mr. Marc Bruneau in copy (E-mail : Marc.bruneau@wcoomd.org).

- *Access to the WCO E-Learning Portal*

A new WCO Learning Portal has been in place since December 2010, through which our experts can obtain access to all WCO standardized training materials on their own WCO Accredited Expert virtual space. This new WCO Learning Portal also hosts this brochure and the WCO Accredited Expert Newsletter. Your personal profile and codes will provide access to all the WCO e-learning modules and training kits.

You are invited to follow the links available on the homepage of the following website (<http://clikc.wcoomd.org>). It would also be appreciated if you could promote the use of the resources available via the E-Learning Portal to your trainees or workshop participants. These additional resources can effectively complement your Capacity Building activity.

The expert's component

- *Passport / visa*

You are responsible for ensuring that you have a valid passport and any necessary visa documents.

We recommend that you obtain information about visa procedures in good time, as some countries may require applications to be submitted several weeks ahead of your mission.

Please familiarize yourself with the entry procedures of the beneficiary country. You may also be asked to contact the immigration authorities in some countries

during the course of your stay. Certain countries require additional forms upon entry to meet stricter security regulations.

A supporting letter from the WCO Division of Administration and Personnel is available subject to certain conditions.

- *Vaccinations*

Please ensure that you have any vaccinations that might be required upon entry (such as the obligatory yellow fever vaccination 10 days before entry into some countries) and that you follow any recommended preventive treatments (such as malaria prophylaxis, vaccinations, etc.).

- *Local transport from/to the airport*

As procedures for meeting experts upon arrival differ from one country to another, you are asked to agree with the beneficiary country on any logistical arrangements concerning your transport from/to the airport.

- *Hotel arrangements*

Unless the event takes place within the premises of a Regional Training Centre (RTC) offering accommodation, you will be asked to make your own accommodation arrangements to be paid for out of your daily subsistence allowance. Your contacts at the WCO or the beneficiary country can offer advice on suitable hotels close to the mission venue.

1.3 Mission preparation

The WCO component

- *Comprehensive mission information*

The WCO will provide you with information on the mission background together with the [Terms of Reference for WCO Missions](#).

This document provides you with clear information of the mission background, the target group, your expected input and the expected results.

- *Provision of WCO tools and standards*

The WCO will share all its relevant tools and standards for this action.

- *Corporate WCO presentation*

The WCO will provide you with a [WCO PowerPoint Template](#) for your PowerPoint presentations. In addition, any pre-existing PowerPoint

presentations for the introductory session, etc. will be shared with you by your WCO contact.

The expert's component

- *Contacts*

With the WCO's assistance, you are asked to establish contact with the destination country and with your Co-facilitator in cases where the mission is being carried out by more than one expert. This will enable you to collect relevant pre-mission information (such as organizational structure, statistics, priorities, needs of the administration in question, etc.) from the beneficiary country or other sources.

- *Interpretation / translation*

Be ready and willing to communicate in the official language of the mission, as the WCO commonly carries out activities without interpretation/translation unless otherwise advised by your WCO contact.

If translation services are confirmed, then please ensure timely sharing of key documents and presentations to enable translation ahead of the event. Also please clarify whether translation of mission outputs can be arranged.

- *Mission planning / agenda*

You are asked to propose a draft mission agenda to the WCO and the beneficiary country. If need be, ideas for your mission agenda can be discussed with you.

In the case of a co-facilitated mission in particular, experts should spend some time preparing before the event to ensure an agreed approach and sharing of roles and tasks. If this proves difficult, preparation time should be built into the time allocation planned for the mission.

- *Action setting*

Please consult and reach agreement with the beneficiary country, in advance of the mission, on the venue and action setting required (mission facilities, organization of side meetings with other stakeholders, etc.).

If the participants need to carry out any preparatory work in advance of the event, then please advise the beneficiary country accordingly and share any relevant background material.

- *Update on WCO trends and developments*

In addition to relevant tools and instruments shared with you by the WCO, you are asked to keep abreast of the latest WCO news, tools and decisions on the

WCO Members' website. If you are not yet registered, please complete the [Access Request Form For WCO Members' Site](#).

- *Corporate WCO presentations*

When preparing your mission documentation and presentations you are asked to take account of the latest developments and trends. To ensure that presentations adhere to a "corporate" standard, please use the [WCO PowerPoint Template](#) for you presentations.

- *WCO e-learning tools*

If your mission involves a training event then please complete and submit the "[Access Request Form For WCO Members' Site](#)" to the WCO to obtain your personal access code for the WCO e-modules.

1.4 Additional useful advice

With a Membership of 177 Customs administrations worldwide, it is difficult to share generic advice on preparatory steps that may prove more useful in some regions or countries rather than in others. Nevertheless, the following additional recommendations may be worth bearing in mind to mitigate any bureaucratic problems in the interests of a comfortable mission environment.

We recommend that you consider the following :

- Check in advance whether there is a restriction on the amount of cash that can be brought into the destination country.
- Access to cash dispensers and acceptance of credit cards might be limited in some countries.
- Be prepared for the weather/climate of the destination country.
- Keep contact details/addresses in your hand luggage as your hold luggage may be delayed.
- Should you have any religious/cultural requirements, then please advise the beneficiary country accordingly if you deem it appropriate to request assistance in this regard. Kindly also advise the recipient administration of any special dietary requirements.
- The situation in some destination countries may call for special security measures. For any mission-related travel in such countries, the beneficiary administration will be responsible for providing suitable and safe transport.
- Some countries impose confinements and/or curfews on their citizens. Please ensure that you are fully informed of such conditions in advance of your mission.
- Although the WCO does not provide business cards for experts on mission, it has no objection to experts adding a reference to their national business cards, such as "WCO facilitator", for using during such missions.

2 IN-COUNTRY INFORMATION

2.1 Logistics

The expert's component

- *In-country travel*

Please agree bilaterally with the host administration on arrangements for your daily transport to/from the venue. It is the responsibility of the beneficiary country to arrange any in-country travel that may be required to fulfil your mission tasks (visits to border posts, meetings at other stakeholder venues, etc.).

- *Pre-event activities*

It is recommended that you arrive in the country in good time to establish early contact with your counterpart in the beneficiary service and to carry out the following pre-event activities :

- confirm standing arrangements for the workshop/event;
- if appropriate and feasible, inspect the venue to confirm the suitability of equipment, room layout and the availability of requisite mission material;
- confirm the agenda, start and finish times, etc.;
- confirm the list of participants.

2.2 Mission

The WCO component

- Your WCO contact will be at your disposal in the event of any additional information required during your mission.
- The WCO will also grant you access to its tools and instruments during your mission, so please make the most of the available background information on the Organization's websites.

The expert's component

- *Donor visibility*

Do not forget to share information on any donations that made the event possible with participants and the beneficiary administration. Your WCO contact will provide you with this information and it is also contained in the Mission Terms of Reference.

- *Mission assessment*

You are asked to distribute the [WCO Evaluation Questionnaire](#) to participants in order to obtain feedback on their degree of satisfaction with this particular WCO assistance. This helps us to assess the quality and appropriateness of our assistance to our Members.

Please collect the completed questionnaires during the closing session and send them, together with your mission report, to your WCO contact.

3 POST-MISSION INFORMATION

3.1 Logistics

The WCO and expert components

- *Closure of your travel claim / Reimbursement of outstanding expenditures*

As indicated in the financial information, your WCO contact will initiate your travel expense claim on your behalf and ask for reimbursement of any additional expenses. To facilitate this process, please provide him/her with your travel vouchers and any invoices relating to additional expenses for which reimbursement is claimed.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR WCO CONTACT CAN ONLY FINALIZE YOUR TRAVEL EXPENSE CLAIM IF YOUR MISSION REPORT HAS BEEN INPUT INTO THE WCO INTRANET **BEFOREHAND!!!**

3.2 Mission

The WCO component

- *Quality assurance*

The WCO needs to report back to its stakeholders on immediate and medium-term results derived from WCO Capacity Building interventions, and your report will be a key source of information in this respect.

Upon receipt of your mission report and related annexes together with the participants' evaluation, your WCO contact will review all this information and contact you in due course to resolve any inconsistencies or seek supplementary data.

- *Visibility / publication*

The WCO will publish a short article regarding your mission on the WCO Public website. If your mission report provides sufficient background then no further information will be required. Ideally you should share some suitable mission photos with your WCO contact to enable him/her to produce an appealing article.

The expert's component

- *Reporting*

You are asked to send your mission report and the participants' mission evaluation to your WCO contact - see [WCO Mission Reporting Template](#) and [WCO Evaluation Questionnaire](#).

Please note that our Members and other stakeholders are no longer satisfied merely to learn about the number of events conducted. There is clearly a desire for information on what we have done and what we have achieved. The reporting focus should therefore be on specific results of a tangible, qualitative or quantitative nature and on any problems and mitigating solutions and suggested next steps.

- *Visibility / publication*

Please submit some photographs for promotional purposes.

- *Repository of WCO mission material*

As an annex to your final report, please share with your WCO contact the final approved agenda, all mission materials, all tangible outcomes (including those still at the draft stage) and a list of participants. This will enable the WCO to establish a collective source of information on assistance provided to a specific country/region or in a specific core area.

Links to relevant WCO templates

- [Capacity Building Directorate Contacts](#)
- [Travel and Banking Details Template](#)
- [Insurance Form](#)
- [WCO Mission Terms of Reference](#)
- [WCO PowerPoint Template](#)
- [Access Request Form For WCO Members' Site](#)
- [WCO Mission Reporting Template](#)
- [WCO Evaluation Questionnaire](#)

ANNEX : FINANCIAL INFORMATION

General procedures

In advance of your mission, your contact at the WCO will have to input a travel authorization request into the WCO Intranet system on your behalf. This will set in motion the procedures for travel and advance payment. Your contact will send your electronic flight ticket by e-mail.

Your WCO contact will also be responsible for finalizing a travel expense claim on your behalf upon completion of your mission, in order to claim any additional reimbursement.

To that end, please ensure that you send your WCO contact the following:

- Before the mission : all the relevant information together with the duly completed [Travel and Banking Details Form](#).
- After the mission : original boarding passes (all flight segments) and any invoices relating to additional expenses for which reimbursement is claimed.

Travel costs

- The WCO will cover travel costs, including costs incurred for obtaining a visa and vaccinations required in order to be permitted entry.
- The WCO will provide you with electronic flight tickets for any long distance travel prior to your mission. Upon your return, the WCO will reimburse additional transport costs to/from the beneficiary country against presentation of additional travel invoice (or invoices). In this context, the following travel expenses may be claimed upon return from your mission :
 - Taxi fares (a maximum of four (4) trips) :
 - Home to airport
 - Airport to meeting venue or hotel
 - Meeting venue or hotel back to airport
 - Airport to home

Accommodation and daily subsistence allowance

The WCO will provide you with a daily subsistence allowance for the period of your mission, based on the United Nations per diem rate and the number of overnight stays required to complete your mission. Your WCO contact can advise you on the appropriate rate for your mission.

The breakdown of the per diem you will receive in advance of your mission is as follows :

- 50% - Hotel
- 10% - Breakfast

- 15% - Lunch
- 15% - Dinner
- 10% - Miscellaneous expenses

The advance payment will be made either made directly to the expert's account or to an account of the seconding administration, against receipt of the duly completed [Travel and Banking Details Form](#). The system applicable is decided on by the seconding administration and may therefore vary between WCO Members.

If hotel costs exceed 50% of the agreed per diem rate, the WCO will perform a final calculation of reimbursable expenses against presentation of the relevant hotel invoice upon completion of the mission.

Fees

- The WCO promotes the philosophy of assistance from Members to Members, whereby donor Members provide their expertise as a form of in-kind support for our Capacity Building activities. As a result, we do not normally pay fees.
- In exceptional circumstances, the WCO pays fees in cases where it has no option but to outsource support requirements to consultants. This mainly applies in cases where no expertise is offered by our Members.

Other expenditure

Other expenditure will be reimbursed against presentation of invoices, as follows :

- Telephone calls and expenses for faxes, photocopies and Internet connections incurred for official purposes may be claimed within reason and against presentation of invoices/bills.
- The WCO provides health insurance for the duration of the mission, up to a maximum amount of 5,000 euro against submission of your duly completed [Insurance Form](#).
- Public transport costs necessarily incurred in the performance of your official duties, and
- Compulsory preventive medication (antimalarial medication, etc.).

Note

- In the event of an accident a medical emergency, please ensure you get in touch with your WCO contact and with Mr. Marc Bruneau (E-mail : marc.bruneau@wcoomd.org, Tel. : +32 2 209 94 31) as soon as possible.
- Please consult with your WCO contact prior to incurring any exceptional expenses.