WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES
Established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council
Créée en 1952 sous le nom de Conseil de coopération douanière

PERMANENT TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE
-
207th/208th
Sessions
-
3 – 6 March 2015

PC0414E1a

Brussels, 19 February 2015.

GLOBALLY NETWORKED CUSTOMS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

IT Guidance for Executives

(Item XI. (b) on the Agenda)

Introduction

1.　　　During the 72nd Policy Commission, delegates were informed of the WCO Secretariat's current efforts to develop an "IT Guide for Executives", as a response to concerns raised by Members for the need of such a tool to support senior management level personnel with the essential awareness and knowledge necessary to undertake strategic IT management. The tool is currently being developed and will be partially deployed for a regional workshop that will be held back-to-back with the WCO IT Conference in May 2015.

Areas of Coverage

2.　　　The idea behind the need for differentiation between executive-level guidance and operational-level technical instruction is not new. The current Single Window Compendium is already published in 2 separate volumes, with volume 1, the Executive Guide, targeted at senior management level readers, such as Director-Generals, Commissioners, their deputies, Chief Information Officers, and senior executives. Volume 2, the Practitioners' Guide, is targeted at project leaders, managers and officers that are involved in the actual task of developing or implementing Single Window systems.

3.　　　The concept behind the Executive IT Guide is similar. It was considered that, while senior management level officials would not be involved in the technical and operational task of implementing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions and systems, such tactical activities need to be closely aligned with the corporate strategies and objectives of administrations, so that ICT solutions are skilfully deployed to the greatest effect and contributing to the administrations' core objectives.

4.   In designing this new Guide, preference was given to an approach that de-emphasized the technical aspects of ICT, but instead, provided the perspective of ICT as an essential part of the strategy development and corporate governance, so that participants will recognize the role of ICT as a strategic enabler, and the decisions and management processes that need to be put in place so that senior management can undertake effective and informed decision making to exploit information technology to its fullest potential, and in a scalable and sustainable way.

5.   References will also be made to related WCO tools and guidelines, such as the Capacity Building Compendium, and the Leadership and Management Development Program. This will ensure that a consistent approach is followed when dealing with related concepts that are also being addressed in these other tools.

6.   The new Executive IT Guide ultimately aims to distil and focus the key Capacity Building domains pertinent for leadership and management excellence for application in an IT-specific setting.

7.   The tool will be structured into 4 topics:

    i.   **Strategic Alignment & Information Technology:** This topic will deal with the need to integrate IT planning into the administration's strategic planning process, so that ICT is recognized as an enabler to achieve key strategic outcomes, rather than individual stand-alone tools aimed at enhancing specific operational results.

    ii.   **Strategic Perspectives in the Deployment & Application of ICT:** This topic will deal with the different uses of ICT in the modern work-space and their potential strategic implications. It will raise issues concerning how ICT is deployed, the business value they help to create, as well as issues concerning business continuity and disaster recovery.

    iii.   **Managing ICT Projects:** This topic will deal with the basics behind ICT project management and introduce the strategic considerations necessary for executive decision making. It will raise the awareness of senior management in understanding their critical role in the monitoring of progress, safeguarding of financial resources and key performance criteria relating to project management and implementation effectiveness.

    iv.   **ICT Governance:** This topic will deal with the issue of how complex, mission-critical systems should be managed. It will address aspects, including Enterprise Risk Management, human resource management to support ICT, and the need for effective change-management to ensure the smooth implementation of ICT systems.

Target Audience & Overall objectives of the Executive IT Guide

8.   The Executive IT Guide is aimed at Director-Generals, Commissioners, their deputies, and / or senior ranking officials with specific responsibilities in ensuring that ICT is being strategically deployed, and that ICT projects are well run, as well as promising mid-level managers at the central and operational levels of Customs administrations.

9.   It aims to provide succinct, non-technical, insights to enable senior management officials to:

- understand the importance of aligning ICT to the organization's strategies and objectives so that ICT serves as the strategic enabler for achieving results;

- ensuring appropriate project management and corporate governance structures in managing ICT projects;

- avoid common pitfalls where ICT was perceived as a purely operational tool that could be delegated, outsourced or simply managed in an ad hoc or piecemeal manner, without enough consideration over the strategic implications.

Future Deployment

10.   The Executive IT Guide will be deployed partially during a Regional Workshop that will take place back-to-back with the WCO IT Conference in May 2015. This will enable the Secretariat to assess the effectiveness and adequacy of the tool.

11.   The finalized version of the tool will be tabled to the Policy Commission in June 2015, and will be rolled out thereafter. The tool will be reviewed regularly, through Members' feedback and contributions. It is intended that future enhancements will also include case studies from Member administrations. A listing of the topic coverage and case studies can be found under Annex I of this document.

12.   The Guide is intended to be scalable in its deployment. The Secretariat foresees that it can be deployed:

- as an extension to Volume 1 of the WCO Single Window Compendium, to accentuate the executive management aspect of Single Window development during a National Single Window Workshop;

- as a module in the Leadership & Management Development program, to highlight the compatible aspects concerning the exercise of leadership in ICT developments;

- as a stand-alone workshop for Executive Leadership in ICT, to inform senior and middle-management Customs officials.

Content Delivery

13.   Unlike the Leadership & Management Development program, where Facilitators were specifically accredited to deliver the LMD Workshops, the accreditation of additional experts is not expected. Facilitators' guidance will be provided to both LMD, as well as Single Window and Data Model accredited experts, so that they will be able to deliver the content effectively.

Conclusion

14.   The PTC is invited to:

- take note of the Secretariat's development of this tool and to provide guidance and suggestions on the intended coverage of the tool;
- provide case material, such as trainings delivered to senior government officials in ICT, that would support the development of the Guide.

*
*   *

4.

Topic Headers	Possible Case study coverage

Module 1:
 • ICT should be aligned with business goals. Business goals should be derived from strategic plans and multi-year programmes that are derived from the strategic plans.
 • Understanding the reality of business architecture of Customs:
     o How does a Customs officer deliver on the ground?
     o Where and how does ICT support his/her work?
	- IT Strategy as part of Corporate Strategy Formulation
	 o Covering Strategy formulation, alignment and execution
	
	 - Enterprise Architecture
	 o Covering the application of EA in the Customs domain, and its importance as part of change management, IT system governance and continual improvements

Module 2:
 • ICT can improve everything, and can be deployed in all functions. Several of the functions cannot be performed properly without the use of ICT, and should be mandatorily used. The senior executive should be:
     o Clearly aware of the areas of application of ICT, and their corresponding business value they help create.
     o Understand the level and quality of implementation necessary to realize business value and productivity gains.
     o Appreciate the business critical nature of some of the applications.
	- Strategic Dimensions of WCO Data Model
	 o Covering the importance of having a standardized DM as part of border modernization
	
	 - Business Process Innovation
	 o Covering CBM, Border Modernization and enhancing productivity, effectiveness and efficiency through IT

Module 3:
 • ICT projects are often very challenging to implement.
     o Adopting a 'Project Management Approach'.
        ▪ Understanding the constraints of time, cost and effort.
     o Executive oversight and corporate reporting in IT project management
     o How to clearly define exit and success criteria in ICT projects.
	- Program management in Customs and Border Modernization
	
	 o Covering Leadership in Single Window Process Realignment
	 o Covering SW development and the role of lead agency / executive management in using IT as enabler

Module 4:
 • ICT Governance:
     o Understanding ICT Security Risks and taking steps to manage them.
     o Enterprise architecture and role it plays in IT development and management.
     o ICT and Human Resources:
        ▪ Managing outsourcing
	- Organizational Development and Information Technology
	 o Covering HR, Change Management, Org Structure, Corporate Governance, Enterprise Risk Management

_____