



PERMANENT TECHNICAL  
COMMITTEE

PC0690Ea

-  
(HYBRID MEETING)

-  
235<sup>th</sup>/236<sup>th</sup> Sessions  
25-29 April 2022

Brussels, 7 March 2022.

### **E-COMMERCE**

#### **- Supporting Members' Implementation of the E-Commerce Package -**

#### **(Item X.a on the Agenda)**

#### **SUMMARY**

##### **Purpose of document**

The purpose of this document is to provide an update on capacity building and awareness raising activities in the area of cross-border e-commerce after the 233<sup>rd</sup>/234<sup>th</sup> Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) sessions.

This document also aims to provide information on the update of the Secretariat Note on expanding the concept of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) to cross-border e-commerce that was first developed in March 2021 and discussed at the PTC sessions in Spring 2021.

##### **Action required of the PTC**

The PTC is invited to :

- take note of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to support Members' implementation of the E-Commerce Package, and provide guidance, as appropriate; and,
- take note of the update of the Secretariat Note on expanding the concept of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) to cross-border e-commerce.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. At its June 2018 Sessions, the Council approved the WCO Framework of Standards on Cross-Border E-Commerce (hereafter “E-Commerce FoS”) and the accompanying Council Resolution. Subsequently, in June 2019 and December 2020, the Council approved a number of tools that support the implementation of the E-Commerce FoS and form part of the E-Commerce Package.
2. In addition, in December 2020, the Council also approved the E-Commerce FoS update/maintenance mechanism, a broad capacity building action plan for e-commerce, the key performance indicators (KPI) for possible monitoring and evaluation of the E-Commerce FoS implementation, as well as for capacity building purposes.
3. Following the finalization of the E-Commerce Package, the Secretariat is investing efforts in supporting the effective and harmonized implementation by Members of the E-Commerce FoS. Progress reports on the delivery of capacity building and awareness raising activities in the area of e-commerce were submitted to the 231<sup>st</sup>/232<sup>nd</sup> PTC sessions, June 2021 Policy Commission and Council, as well as to the 233<sup>rd</sup>/234<sup>th</sup> PTC sessions.

## **II. Capacity Building Activities**

4. In line with the capacity building plan for e-commerce as outlined in section III of doc. PC0618, the Secretariat has conducted a series of capacity building activities, with the support of relevant donors and pre-accredited and accredited experts.
5. Since the last update at the 233rd/234th PTC Sessions, through document PC0674, the Secretariat delivered the regional workshops for the North of Africa, Near and Middle East (MENA) and for the Europe (EUR) Regions. The MENA workshop was held online between 27 and 30 September 2021 with close to 100 experts from 15 Member Customs administrations, as well as from designated postal operators from the MENA region in attendance. The EUR workshop was held virtually in the period 24-28 January 2022 and gathered nearly 100 experts from 37 Member Customs administrations and designated postal operators. Both workshops benefited from the involvement of speakers from the Universal Postal Union, the Global Express Association, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. A representative of Alibaba Group spoke at the MENA workshop, while Alibaba Cainiao, Amazon, and DHL delivered presentations at the EUR workshop.
6. The Secretariat also contributed to a workshop on e-commerce organised by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) for the members of Mercosur that was held between 6 and 10 December 2021. The Secretariat presented the WCO E-Commerce FoS and associated Package, as well as the ongoing work at the WCO in the area of cross-border e-commerce.
7. Having completed the cycle of regional workshops for all WCO regions, national workshops on e-commerce will be planned from the third quarter of 2022, as the next step of implementation of the capacity building action plan, focusing on building sustainable capacity for implementing the modernization and reform process in each Member Customs administration that has requested assistance.
8. In this regard, capacity building support would be provided to the Members that notify their intention to implement the E-Commerce FoS; complete an assessment following the KPIs for monitoring and evaluation of the E-Commerce FoS
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implementation, and make an official request from the respective Director General to the WCO.

### III. Secretariat Note to support the implementation of the E-Commerce FoS

9. The topic-specific Secretariat Note on expanding the concept of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) to cross-border e-commerce was first developed in March 2021 as an information document by the Secretariat, providing information to apply the AEO concept to e-commerce stakeholders, in particular to new partners who are leading the expansion of e-commerce trade based on the E-Commerce FoS. It was discussed and taken note of at the 231<sup>st</sup>/232<sup>nd</sup> PTC sessions in Spring 2021.
10. The Spring 2021 PTC invited Members and Observers to provide input on expanding the concept of AEO to cross-border e-commerce to feed into a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Secretariat Note. To this end, the Secretariat issued an official letter on 10 June 2021, to invite Members to share their national experiences. Consequently, 31 responses were submitted by Member administrations with their invaluable inputs regarding the current state of play of the national implementation status and the future possible AEO expansion to e-commerce stakeholders.
11. The collective summary and statistics based on the inputs are attached as the new Annex II to the Secretariat Note (appended to this document). Overall, a number of Member administrations replied that the express carriers were already covered in their AEO programmes, and postal operators were also covered by some others. Furthermore, other types of stakeholders, namely, e-vendor, e-marketplace/e-platform, and fulfilment centres were also covered by a few Members under the scope of their AEO programmes. For future possible AEO expansion, some Members indicated their interest in expanding the programmes to cover postal operators, and other type of e-commerce stakeholders. In this regard, they expressed their intention to study and observe other Members' practices and experiences.

### IV. Action required

12. The Permanent Technical Committee is invited to :
  - take note of the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to support Members' implementation of the E-Commerce Package, and provide guidance, as appropriate; and,
  - take note of the update of the Secretariat Note on expanding the concept of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) to cross-border e-commerce as appended in the Annex hereto.

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