



PERMANENT TECHNICAL  
COMMITTEE

PC0696Ea

(HYBRID MEETING)

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

Brussels, 21 March 2022.

**ADDENDUM PROPOSAL FROM THE WCO-UPU CONTACT COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS  
REGARDING MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONTACT COMMITTEE**

(Item III.c on the Agenda)

**SUMMARY**

**Purpose of document**

Considering the number of requests to become a member of or observer to the WCO-UPU Contact Committee (CC), the Co-Chairs of the CC propose removing the limitation on the number of observers from the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the CC.

Based on this proposal and with the endorsement from the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC), when reconstituting the CC for the 2022-2025 cycle, only the eight members of the CC will be determined. The seven observers will not be identified and the proposal of the Co-Chairs will be implemented on a provisional basis. A proposal to amend the ToR is planned to be presented to the PTC for endorsement in 2023.

**Action required of the PTC**

The PTC is invited to:

- examine the proposal from the Co-Chairs of the CC and, if appropriate, endorse the principle of amending the ToR and implementing it with provisional effect.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the WCO-UPU Contact Committee (CC), updated in October 2017, the CC was reconstituted with eight members and five observers each the WCO Membership and the UPU membership and two observers from their respective host countries for the 2017-2021 cycle. Please see the ToR for details.
2. The CC has the character of a working group whose conclusions, including the CC reconstitution, are submitted to the competent WCO and UPU bodies for approval, that is, the PTC within the WCO and the Postal Operations Council (POC) within the UPU.
3. One part of the ToR amendment in 2017 was to increase the number of the CC members from six to eight to allow more members of the WCO and the UPU to participate in the CC meetings, considering the growing interest in the Customs-Post issues, such as, e-commerce and digitalization of the postal supply chain.

## **II. Proposal for the Membership**

4. The CC's membership in the past had been purposely limited to ensure focused discussions and efficiency, bearing in mind the very technical nature of the body. However, given the numerous requests to become the member or observer of the CC and the realization that the CC could benefit from more participants sharing their experiences and ideas at CC meetings.
5. Considering these points, the Co-Chairs of the CC propose to remove the limitation on the number of observers from the ToR, as attached in Annex I, to allow every interested member of the WCO and the UPU, including other stakeholders, to participate in CC meetings starting from 2022 on a provisional basis.
6. This proposal will also be submitted to the POC in May 2022. Based on this proposal and endorsement from the WCO PTC and the UPU POC, only eight members of the CC from each Customs and Postal sides will be determined during the reconstitution for the 2022-2025 cycle.

## **III. The Way Forward**

7. The Secretariat will send letter to the Regional Vice-Chairs of the WCO to solicit CC candidates for the 2022-2025 cycle, which will be presented for endorsement at the 237<sup>th</sup>/238<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the PTC in October 2022. A new Customs Co-Chair will also need to be elected from among the Customs members of the CC.
8. A formal proposed amendment to the ToR is planned for discussion at the 42<sup>nd</sup> CC meeting in November 2022 and will be presented for endorsement in 2023, to the WCO PTC and the UPU POC.

**IV. Action required from the PTC**

9. The PTC is invited to:

- examine the proposal from the Co-Chairs of the CC and, if appropriate, endorse the principle of amending the ToR and implementing it with provisional effect.

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## **Terms of reference of the WCO–UPU Contact Committee**

Confirmed by the WCO Council – June 2003

Updated – July 2017

Chairperson: Spokesperson of the host organization

Established: 1965

Duration: Unspecified

### **1 Mandate**

The WCO–UPU Contact Committee was established in 1965 by an agreement between the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the UPU, following a resolution adopted by the UPU at its 15th Congress held in Vienna. The WCO–UPU Contact Committee has the character of a working group whose conclusions are submitted to the competent WCO and UPU bodies for approval. Within the WCO, this body is the Permanent Technical Committee and, within the UPU, the Customs Group of the Postal Operations Council.

### **2 Membership**

The WCO is represented by experts from eight member customs administrations and the UPU by experts from eight UPU member countries. Each organization is also represented by its own secretariat. Where possible, each expert shall be accompanied by a technical adviser from the national customs administration or designated operator, as appropriate. Consequently, the WCO–UPU Contact Committee shall not include representatives from a UPU member country and the customs administration of the same country. The customs administrations and UPU member country representatives of the host countries shall also be invited to the Committee as observers. Each of the two organizations may further invite up to five observers (representatives of customs administrations, designated operators, other member countries, international organizations, or private sector organizations), in consultation with the other organization.

The Committee is usually reconstituted every four years, following a decision by the supreme bodies of both organizations, namely the WCO Council and the UPU Congress.

### **3 Purpose and scope**

The Contact Committee deals with issues of common interest and, in particular, seeks to speed up and simplify customs formalities in the postal service. To this end, the WCO–UPU Contact Committee seeks to:

- work as a contact point between the two organizations on issues raised by the respective organizations;
- exchange information on issues of common interest related to postal traffic, in particular issues related to the clearance of postal items;

- facilitate, simplify and harmonize customs formalities and ensure effective customs control in respect of postal items, particularly in the e-commerce environment;
- ensure that effective security arrangements are made for the carriage of all postal items through the harmonized implementation of the WCO, UPU, ICAO, and other relevant security standards;
- facilitate the work of Customs in promoting and ensuring movements of legitimate trade through the postal network;
- enhance Customs control at export level by improving compliance with rules and regulations;
- develop and promote standards and tools and their use, including the exchange of advance electronic data between designated operators and customs authorities and safeguard data privacy;
- develop and regularly update the WCO–UPU Customs Matters Guide and other instruments and tools to assist in ensuring compliance and improving data quality;
- strengthen capacity-building actions by promoting the organization of joint WCO–UPU customs workshops in different regions of the world.

#### **4 Key deliverables**

A report, drafted after the meeting by the secretariat of the host organization, is sent to the Chairperson of the meeting for approval. The report must then be approved by the competent bodies of each of the two organizations. Within the WCO, this body is the Permanent Technical Committee and, within the UPU, the Customs Group of the Postal Operations Council. The report shall contain details of decisions taken and/or actions to be taken within agreed time frames. The WCO Secretariat, the UPU International Bureau and the members of the WCO–UPU Contact Committee shall make every effort to ensure that the conclusions of the Contact Committee are respected by their respective competent bodies.

#### **5 Means of operation**

The agenda for each meeting shall be drawn up by the organization hosting the meeting, in close consultation with the other organization, and shall be distributed to the delegates of the Contact Committee at least 30 days in advance of the opening date of the meeting, except in case of urgency. Working documents, especially those which may require consultation at the national level, should also be made available to delegates in sufficient time.

The WCO–UPU Contact Committee may set up working groups as it considers necessary to progress some of its functions. However, the Contact Committee shall retain overall responsibility for all matters within its competence.

The general administrative arrangements for the Contact Committee, including the dates and venues of its meetings, shall be decided by the host organization in close consultation and cooperation with the other organization.

#### **6 Resources required**

##### *Meetings*

The WCO–UPU Contact Committee shall be organized annually and alternately in Brussels (Belgium) and in Berne (Switzerland). If deemed necessary, WCO–UPU Contact Committee meetings may be held more than once a year, subject to agreement by the two organizations. The meeting shall be of two days' duration. Where appropriate and subject to agreement between the two organizations, Contact Committee meetings may be cancelled. In that case, the organization which proposed to host the cancelled meeting shall host the next meeting.

A separate preparatory meeting for the customs administrations and UPU member countries is to be arranged before the opening of the official meeting. In principle, the preparatory meeting discusses the issues based on each agenda item and seeks joint positions of the respective organizations. Each of the two organizations shall designate a spokesperson to present the documents prepared by (and speak on behalf of) his/her organization. However, all experts and observers may take the floor during the discussions. The meeting shall be chaired by the spokesperson for the organization hosting the meeting.

*General administrative arrangements*

The officers of the secretariat designated by the Secretary General of the WCO and the Director General of the UPU International Bureau shall perform the secretariat duties at the meetings of the Contact Committee.

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