



Permanent Technical Committee

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Brussels, 08 March 2024.

GLOSSARY OF INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS TERMS

Update on the Glossary of International Customs Terms

(Item XVIII on the Agenda)

SUMMARY

Purpose of document

As one of the oldest WCO tools, the Glossary of International Customs Terms plays a major role in setting a common Customs terminology of terms thus facilitating the work of the Council, Members and non-Members, international organizations and trade circles in attaining a uniform approach to Customs issues.

It is therefore important to ensure that the Glossary is regularly reviewed in light of the international trade environment within which Customs operates.

Action required of the Permanent Technical Committee

The Permanent Technical Committee is invited to:

- take note of the update provided on the status of the Glossary; and
- provide guidance on the proposed way forward.

I. Background

1. The Glossary of International Customs Terms is one of the oldest WCO tools that was developed in 1958 and has been regularly updated since then. Its aim is to capture definitions of certain Customs terms in a single document in order to establish a common Customs terminology, intended not only to facilitate the work of the Council, but also to assist Members and non-Members, international organizations and trade circles to develop a uniform approach to Customs issues and ensure use of the same terminology.
2. The regular update of the Glossary is within the purview of the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) as evidenced in its various previous Work Programmes

and meeting Reports over the past years. The work on review and update has been led by the Secretariat with volunteer support from Members.

II. Status update concerning the Glossary and proposed way forward

3. In 2017, the PTC approved, for inclusion in the Glossary, the definitions of Coordinated Border Management (CBM), One Stop Border Post, Transaction Value, Unique Consignment Reference (UCR), WCO Data Model, Advance ruling, Checking the Goods declaration, Customs formalities prior to the lodgement of the Goods declaration, Omission, Outward processing, Transfer pricing, and WTO Valuation Agreement. Additionally, the definition of 'SAFE Frameworks of Standards' was updated.
4. In 2018, the, the WCO Secretariat presented seven terms proposed for inclusion in the Glossary: 'Customs territory', 'Customs valuation', 'De minimis', two potential options for 'Globally Networked Customs (GNC)', Enquiry point/office, Perishable goods, and Time Release Study (TRS) .
5. As a result, the terms 'Globally Networked Customs (GNC)' subject to amendment to its first draft definition as proposed during the meeting (deleting 'of commercial nature'), 'Enquiry Point/Office', 'Perishable Goods' and 'Time Release Study (TRS) were approved with a view to incorporating them into the Glossary while the proposed definitions of the other three terms – 'Customs territory', 'Customs valuation', 'De minimis', were not approved due to either political sensitivities or technical reasons.
6. Based on the above developments, the current version of the Glossary can be accessed at <https://www.wcoomd.org/es-es/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/tools/glossary-of-international-customs-terms.aspx>
7. More recently, the October 2023 PTC, held discussions on strengthening customs-industry resilience. Specifically, a draft Concept Note prepared by the WCO Asia/Pacific Region and Asia/Pacific Regional Private Sector Group, including among others, a standard definition for the term "resilience" was discussed and endorsed for inclusion in the WCO Glossary of International Customs terms. Subsequently, the SAFE Working Group in November 2023 and the Policy Commission in December 2023 expressed support for definition. The definition will be included in the next update of the Glossary.

III. Proposed way forward

8. With a view to ensuring regular update of the Glossary, the Secretariat would like to suggest a comprehensive review of the Glossary using the approach below;
 - Examine and review the current version of the Glossary alongside the latest versions of WCO instruments and tools in order to identify new terms for inclusion and/or existing terms to be updated in the Glossary, with the aim of ensuring consistency between the Glossary and WCO instruments and tools.
 - Where necessary, with the approval of the PTC, certain draft terms may be submitted to the appropriate WCO structure or working body for technical input.
 - Noting that the Glossary is intended not only to facilitate the work of the Council, but also to assist Members and non-Members, international organizations and trade circles to develop a uniform approach to Customs

issues and ensure use of the same terminology, the PTC may consider extending the review to other prominent international instruments with the aim of identifying Customs-related terms whose inclusion in the Glossary might be necessary in view of any recent developments in the international trade environment.

9. In line with past practise as well as the envisaged scope of work, it would be appropriate to identify a group of volunteer Members willing to collaborate with the Secretariat in the review exercise.

IV. Action required

10. The PTC is invited to:
 - take note of the update provided on the status of the Glossary;
 - provide guidance on the proposed way forward.
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