



Dear Readers,

This *Integrity Newsletter* follows the 11th Session of the Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) held on 1 and 2 March 2012 at World Customs Organization (WCO) Headquarters in Brussels.

The ISC afforded an opportunity to present progress with integrity pilot projects. Two round tables were held. The first was entitled "Communication as a tool to build trust in State institutions". Further to the presentations made and the various contributions by participants, it was suggested that the next issue of the *Integrity Newsletter* be given over to this topic. We would appreciate your articles on the provisions made by your administrations to communicate both internally and externally on reform measures taken, especially in terms of combating corruption.

The second round table focused on internal affairs services and their usefulness in enhancing Customs integrity. Another interesting topic addressed by the ISC was informal trade practices, their impact on integrity, and how Customs can manage this type of practice while ensuring compliance.

The ISC also reiterated the importance of social and welfare activities in order to promote integrity and the concept of 'esprit de corps' within fiscal and Customs administrations. In this connection, we wish to thank you for all the contributions having enabled us to produce Newsletter 5 which was a special issue on this subject. Finally, the integrity component of the WCO Leadership and Management Development Programme was presented. Amongst other things, this Programme stresses that leaders need to take measures to promote integrity within their area of responsibility.

The WCO Secretariat wishes to thank Mr. Roy Skarslette from the Norwegian Customs Administration for having successfully chaired the last three Sessions of the ISC.

The WCO encourages its Members to continue sharing its best practices on a regular basis so that they can benefit others. The future of this Newsletter depends on your contributions.

We wish you a pleasant time reading through this Newsletter.

The WCO Capacity Building Directorate



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to this latest edition of the *WCO Integrity Newsletter*, which serves as an excellent communication platform on contemporary Integrity enhancement approaches in use today by WCO Members.

As a first substantive communiqué to you since my message earlier this year via the CLiKC! platform, and in line with many WCO Member requests for more practical information on how to improve various facets of Customs practices in their administrations, including in areas impacted by corruption, I wanted to inform you about the WCO Compendium of Customs Operational Practices for Enforcement and Seizures (COPES), which was recently endorsed by the WCO Enforcement Committee in March. I was fortunate to lead the development of this WCO document and I can assure you that the focus areas of this document, and the related procedural mechanisms to safeguard the physical caretaking of seized merchandise it addresses, are areas with significant integrity and anti-corruption considerations.

You may also recall that the subject of seized property – and issues related to its caretaking and/or recovery – was raised in several of the presentations at the last ISC session, which shows that this is a practical integrity issue for Members and affected stakeholders. Generally speaking, having robust and enhanced internal mechanisms to secure seized items such as currency, weapons, and drugs is just one of the ways in which the opportunities for corruption can be reduced in this topic area. I invite you to already take this opportunity to explore this document in the Enforcement section of the WCO Members' Web site as we move toward its final publication in the near future in multiple languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Serbian).

I also hope to draw on some of these elements over the course of the intersession in my dialogue with Members and/or within the Agenda for the next Integrity Sub-Committee in 2013.

David Dolan (USCBP)
ISC Chairperson



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



Dissemination of the Code of Ethics and Good Conduct

In December 2011, Central African Republic Customs started a five-year process to disseminate its Code of Ethics and Good Conduct. This project is being financed by the African Development Bank (AFDB) as part of a project in support of capacity building and economic and financial management by the government of the Central African Republic, of which Customs is a beneficiary.

Two of the Customs Administration's managers were tasked by the supervisory authority with leading seminars forming part of a programme to disseminate the Code of Ethics. The target audience consists of all the Customs officers from the Central or Regional Administration, ranging from senior officials to implementing officers, and including the key users of Customs services and economic operators.

Two seminars were held in December 2011. The first, which took place from 5 to 9 December 2011, drew together 47 Customs officers including the Central Customs Administration's Senior Inspectors and Inspectors, not only from the Directorate General of Indirect Duties but also from the Revenue Service and the capital's Customs Offices. The second seminar (19 to 23 December 2011) brought together 42 Customs officers, including Senior Inspectors and Inspectors serving in the Revenue Service and the regional Offices.

The methodology used encouraged active participation by the attendees by means of :

- asking volunteers to read the provisions of the Code;
- displaying a PowerPoint presentation on each section, enabling the facilitators to break down each article based on practical examples;
- initiating a discussion after each section.

Twelve seminars are planned for 2012. The first is aimed at Customs Inspectors and the second at Special Advisers and Customs Finance Inspectors and Directors General, Directors and Heads of Service. The forthcoming seminars will be aimed at lower ranked staff, before targeting Customs users and economic operators.

The initial seminars provided Customs officers with a real opportunity for discussion on their Administration. They scrutinized the ills affecting the Administration, offered possible solutions and made recommendations to that end. Central African Republic Customs officers have recognized weaknesses and failings and realized that there is still much to be done, however ownership of this process by Customs at all levels was regarded as vital.

SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES

Contact

Yeremi Sidoine

yeremi_sidoine@yahoo.fr

Evelyne Loudegue

evelyneloudegue@yahoo.fr

Omer Kowakoa

omerkowakoa@yahoo.fr



HONG KONG CHINA



Integrity and a healthy lifestyle - Hong Kong, China Customs

To law enforcement officers, the very basis of healthy living is integrity which has long been recognized as one of the core values of Hong Kong, China Customs in delivering its services and achieving enforcement goals. In today's world, we also face immense pressure and challenges for change as the community expects better services. In this process, Customs staff members inevitably encounter some degree of stress at work. It is widely recognized that promoting healthy living and a healthy lifestyle not only improves work performance, but also improves staff members' health so that they are better able to cope with the stress arising from the ever-changing work environment and thus provide quality services.

Promoting the importance of integrity and a healthy lifestyle

Over the years, Hong Kong, China Customs has launched a series of publicity and educational campaigns on staff integrity and a healthy lifestyle. An Integrity Steering Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner has been set up to formulate and review its long-term strategy on staff integrity. Under the Integrity Steering Committee, a Working Group on Promotion of Healthy Lifestyle and Staff Integrity has been established to promote the awareness of all staff members on the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staff integrity. The working group also co-ordinates resources in support of a healthy lifestyle and integrity promotion activities.

Communication

Hong Kong, China Customs publishes a quarterly newsletter, "*The Pine*", to instil the concept of a healthy lifestyle in staff by widely covering stories on the following areas:

- Experience sharing on proper work-life balance;
- Participation in volunteer work and community services;
- Various events/activities organized by clubs and teams;
- Balanced diet and physical training tips;
- Positive work-life attitude; and
- Care and love to colleagues, family members and society

To heighten staff awareness of the importance of upholding integrity, "*The Pine*" has devoted a column to publishing articles and sketches on the content of the "Code on Conduct and Discipline". It also includes articles on proper handling of conflict of interest situations. Real-life examples are used to illustrate the concept of conflict of interest so as to foster staff's awareness of this issue.



Being a departmental periodical, “*The Pine*” also provides a forum for staff to share their experience with colleagues on their interests and hobbies, and promotes a caring culture in the Department through reporting of periodic welfare visits.

Personal financial problems of individual staff members can compromise the integrity of the staff as well as the culture of integrity in the organization. Efforts to raise staff’s awareness of prudent financial management are therefore ongoing. From time to time, “*The Pine*” publishes articles from different organizations and interviews professionals to share their views on prudent financial management.

Departmental Sports and Recreation Club

Promotion of physical health can increase the efficiency and productivity of staff. Sports may not only help staff improve their physical fitness, but also relieve the stress from their work pressure and build up their resilience. The Departmental Sports and Recreation Club was formed to promote diversified sports and recreational activities among staff. Currently, there are 21 clubs and interest groups affiliated to the Departmental Sports and Recreation Club. In 2011, over 200 sports and recreational events including charitable activities, training classes, performances and inter-command competitions were organized for staff and their families.

Promoting a caring culture among our colleagues

Excessive and continuous stress at work will lower productivity. It also poses a threat to the mental and physical health of staff. Realizing that some staff, despite suffering from emotional problems, have been too self-conscious to seek assistance from others, Hong Kong, China Customs has launched a Caring Colleague Culture Campaign aiming at building and nurturing a culture that generates a heightened sense of solidarity and comradeship among colleagues. It is hoped that through mutual care in daily work life, some kind of assistance and support can be rendered to those reserved and out of sight staff.

On the education front, Hong Kong, China Customs works hand-in-hand with professional institutions with a view to arousing staff’s awareness of mental health issues. Seven series of Mental Health Courses were organized in 2011. They help participants understand sources of stress and their impact, introduce stress management skills as well as encourage participants to cultivate a positive attitude towards life.

To give closer attention to staff welfare needs and to promote a caring culture among our colleagues, Hong Kong, China Customs has appointed 82 officers as Health and Welfare Managers in various offices. To facilitate them performing their job effectively, these officers are provided with job-related training in areas such as mental health, first aid, dealing with pathological gamblers, and counselling skills. In addition to conducting periodic welfare visits, they act as contact points for officers seeking assistance in matters related to welfare, health and work.

Apart from in-house assistance, Hong Kong, China



Customs also commissions professional organizations to provide counselling services for individual officers and their family members, including a 24-hour telephone hotline for instant counselling and face-to-face counselling by professional social workers.

Way forward

Through these integrity-raising and healthy lifestyle-promoting initiatives, Hong Kong, China Customs has built up a healthy Customs work force that helps secure the confidence of the Hong Kong, China community as well as international law enforcement agencies. However, sustained endeavours are required to entrench a clean and honest culture. As such, Hong Kong, China Customs will continue its education and publicity to fortify the core values of integrity and a healthy lifestyle. Despite the challenges ahead, with the presence of an appropriate system and enthusiastic support of staff, we trust that these efforts will pay off.

For more information on our experience, please contact Mr. Max Lau, Senior Staff Officer in the Office of Service Administration.

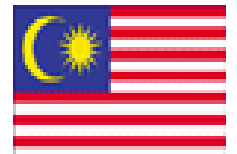
Contact

Mr. Max Lau
Senior Staff Officer
Office of Service Administration

max_tc_lau@customs.gov.hk

MALAYSIA

ROYAL MALAYSIAN CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT (RMCD) LAUNCHES THE ENHANCING INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY BLUEPRINT



On 1 June 2011, the Director General of the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD), Y Bhg Dato'Sri Hj. Mohamed Khalid bin Yusuf launched the Blueprint on Enhancing Integrity and Accountability at RMCD Headquarters, as part of its plan to meet Customs challenges in the 21st Century.

The five existing pillars of RMCD's Modernization Plan consist of One Customs Concept, RMCD Strategic Plan 2010-2014, Implementation of the Customs Transformation Programme, RMCD Integrity Plan for 2010-2014 and RMCD Human Resource Development Plan 2010-2014.

RMCD acknowledges the challenges Customs faces in managing integrity and accountability while fulfilling its role of collecting revenue, facilitating trade, improving delivery systems and enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, observing compliance of Customs laws and regulations, as well as contributing to the nation's economic development. A series of initiatives have been identified to achieve these functions, in accordance with the WCO Revised Arusha Declaration.

This Integrity and Accountability Blueprint will lay the foundation to produce responsible, professional, efficient and dedicated RMCD personnel.



The official launching of the Blueprint was broadcasted on the newly introduced RMCD Web TV, thus giving all RMCD officers access to the event.



Contact

Mrs. Radzah.Razak

Senior Assistant
Director of Customs

[Radziah.razak@](mailto:Radziah.razak@customs.gov.my)

customs.gov.my

ZAMBIA

Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) Integrity Committee

The vision of the ZRA Integrity Committee (ZRAIC) is to create and sustain a professional and corruption-free workforce for efficient service delivery.

The ZRAIC was established in 2006 and its members attended a two week induction course led by a consultant contracted by the Zambia Anti-Corruption Commission. The Integrity Committee initiative is one of the strategies of Zambia's first National Anti-Corruption Policy (NACP). The initiative is aimed at institutionalizing the prevention of corruption.

Composition of the ZRAIC

Four members of the ZRAIC are senior and middle managers from the ZRA. The Integrity Committee also has a Secretariat managed by the Ethics Officer. Integrity Committee members are appointed by the Commissioner General.

The role of the ZRAIC

- Promote transparency and minimize opportunities for corruption in the ZRA by spearheading and facilitating the process of corruption prevention;
- Implement corruption prevention measures aimed at simplifying processes and procedures to reduce opportunities for corruption;
- Facilitate policy and regulatory reforms such as the revision of the ZRA Code of Ethics, the Taxpayer Charter and other related documents;





- Train staff in ethics, integrity and anti-corruption theories and strategies;
- Receive, consider and provide redress on all complaints emanating from within and outside the ZRA relating to unethical conduct and unsatisfactory service delivery;
- Provide an efficient and transparent monitoring and reporting mechanism to expose unethical conduct and corruption;
- Prepare and submit quarterly performance reports on the implementation of anti-corruption programmes to the Secretary to the Cabinet through the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Customer feedback mechanisms

The table below illustrates the number of complaints and comments handled by the ZRAIC between 2008 and 2010. In 2009, the number of complaints recorded by the ZRA increased drastically to 217, compared with 17 in 2008. This was due to improved integrity awareness programmes for both members of staff and the public. Furthermore, the placement of suggestion boxes at local tax offices and border posts and the training of an integrity focal point in the ZRA have greatly contributed to the increase in the number of submissions recorded.

Year	Complaints	Comments	Total
2008	17	0	17
2009	173	45	217
2010	179	54	239

The ZRAIC has put in place a mechanism for receiving comments and complaints in line with the Taxpayer Charter. The mechanism includes the following methods : suggestion boxes and comments and complaints in-person and by letter, telephone, fax and e-mail.

Complaints may also be submitted through other channels such as the ZRA Internal Affairs Unit, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) or Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) via the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC).

The ZRAIC conducts various activities such as :

- In 2012, the ZRAIC developed an Ethics Training Module aimed at providing ethics training in a more co-ordinated manner.
- Integrity awareness programmes are conducted for all members of staff and the public.
- Facilitating the appointment and training of Integrity focal point staff in collaboration with the ACC in Zambia.
- Some utility vehicles have been branded with anti-corruption messages and contact numbers for the Integrity Committee.



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
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- The ZRAIC facilitated the development of the Code of Ethics for all members of the ZRA staff.
- The Taxpayer Charter was developed in 2008 in consultation with both members of staff and stakeholders.
- Development of anti-corruption materials including posters, leaflets and T-shirts with the slogan "Pay Taxes, not bribes".

The ZRAIC faces a number of challenges such as inadequate corruption prevention training due to insufficient financial resources and a lack of exposure to corruption prevention best practices for tax administrations. However, the ZRAIC is determined to attain its vision which is to create and sustain a professional and corrupt-free workforce in the ZRA in order to ensure efficient service delivery.

Contact

Zraic@zra.org.zm



INTEGRITY PILOT PROJECTS

An update on integrity pilot projects for which there have been recent developments is set out below.

Togo

The performance measurement project initiated in May 2011 continues to make progress. The WCO Secretariat and the Togo Customs Administration are continuing to work on a virtual basis. Monthly reports presenting the analysis of the data extracted from ASYCUDA are presented to the Director General and the Board. A visit by the project team is planned for September 2012. This project is being funded by the World Bank.



Egypt

The Egypt Customs Administration requested WCO assistance to identify an integrity pilot project. A mission has already taken place and a WCO team is to go to Alexandria to run an integrity development workshop. This workshop will assist with the identification of the integrity pilot project. This project is being financed by the Customs Co-operation Fund (CCF) - Korea.



Lesotho

Following a WCO mission, the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) has continued working on its integrity pilot project which consists in developing a strong relationship with the private sector. An LRA Business Partnership Forum and a Business Action Plan were launched in 2011.



Uruguay

A WCO mission visited Uruguay Customs in March 2012 in the context of the integrity pilot project. Uruguay Customs has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 8 associations that represent most of their private partners. Each MOU makes provision for the establishment of a joint team (private/public) and for the development of concrete action plans. Following the WCO visit, Customs and the private sector have continued to meet regularly to define joint activities and monitor the implementation of the action plans.



Please contact the WCO Secretariat should you want to know more about those integrity pilot projects



INTEGRITY NEWS

Integrity Workshop in Honduras

The WCO was invited to present its Integrity Development Programme during a national workshop entitled “Developing a competitive advantage in the current market : Customs modernization and border management”, organized on 8 and 9 February 2012 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The event was sponsored by the United States Department of Commerce and generated much interest, triggering the WCO’s participation in other events in the region.

Integrity Workshop in Guatemala

The WCO was invited to participate in a regional seminar organized in Antigua, Guatemala from 11 to 13 April 2012. The theme of the workshop was “Risk management and its impact on human resources, integrity and transparency”. The WCO was represented through the regional Vice-Chair. As a result of the seminar, a virtual platform has been created via the CLiKC! system to exchange ideas on integrity enhancement. This will lead to the development of an integrity roadmap for the region. The current regional Vice-Chair (Guatemala) and the incoming Vice-Chair (Uruguay) as well as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are moderating this platform.

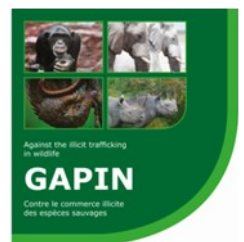
First African Union Workshop on Integrity and the Fight Against Corruption

The WCO was represented at the 1st Integrity Workshop organized by the African Union that took place on 6 and 7 June 2012 in Lusaka, Zambia. The WCO presented its Integrity Development Programme and listened to and learned what WCO Members of the African Union have done in this area.

Project GAPIN II

Project GAPIN II is well under way. Promotional material on CITES (Great Apes, ivory, endangered species) and related integrity efforts, such as posters, leaflets and T-shirts has been produced. “Ambassadors”, who are designated Customs officials, are promoting the project in Sub-Saharan Africa. An initial workshop aimed at raising awareness on CITES enforcement and integrity will be held at Zurich Airport from 19 to 22 June 2012 with the assistance of Swiss Customs. This project is being funded by the Swedish Government. Other workshops aimed at frontline officers are planned throughout the year. Seminars are also going to be held with the participation of key stakeholders committed to the fight against wildlife crime. Integrity will be part of the agenda of all events.

Please contact the WCO Secretariat for any information related to those integrity activities.



Contact

Patricia Revesz
patricia.revesz@
wcoomd.org