

WCO Integrity Newsletter

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WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

WCO Integrity Newsletter

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Dear Readers,

The WCO has the pleasure to introduce the 7th Edition of the Integrity Newsletter.

In this issue, the reader will find out about what Nigeria, Chile, Burkina Faso and Uruguay have done to enhance integrity in their Customs administrations. Nigeria has launched an important programme aimed at improving integrity in Customs that includes capacity building, an enhanced welfare package for staff and greater automation.

The second article refers to the Chilean Customs Administration's experience in relation to the development of a new Code of Ethics based on the legal changes that have occurred at the national level.

The reader will learn about the work of one of the WCO Project GAPIN Ambassadors who toured Burkina Faso and Guinea. Finally, the Integrity Newsletter takes us back to South America to present the Uruguay Customs project which consists of an alliance between Customs and the private sector as a key to integrity and transparency. Memoranda of Understanding were signed between both actors as an expression of commitment and responsibility in strengthening integrity. To underscore the Customs Administration's efforts still further, a new Code of Ethics is being developed to promote and support integrity among Customs officers.

Members are reminded that the 12th Session of the Integrity Sub-Committee will be held on 28 February and 1 March 2013. Be sure not to miss this unique event solely dedicated to discussing integrity at the WCO.

The WCO encourages its Members to continue sharing their best practices via this Integrity Newsletter so that other Customs administrations may learn from them and feel encouraged to implement similar measures. Please do not forget that the success of this publication depends on your contributions. We trust you will enjoy reading this Newsletter.

The WCO Capacity Building Directorate



Dear Colleagues,

I hope that this short message finds you well as we move toward the 12th Session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee. As we reflect on the constant challenges that our administrations face in the fight against corruption and the efforts to safeguard integrity, I look forward to working closely with the WCO Secretariat on the draft Agenda for that meeting to make it as robust and value-added for your delegates as possible.

The challenges we face require practical solutions and a pragmatic approach towards improving the situation in these critical areas. In this respect, I wanted to take a moment to update you on the intersessional developments with the Integrity Development Guide (IDG) – a very useful WCO instrument that assists the WCO Secretariat and Members during workshops and missions and which ultimately seeks to provide practical improvements for Members.

The IDG has been under revision by a dedicated team of volunteer Customs officials from a variety of Customs administrations. As a living document, there have been many improvements and updates to the various sections that relate directly to the provisions of the Revised Arusha Declaration. These updates have also included the integration of more pertinent and wide-ranging aspects that will provide for more fruitful dialogues when using the IDG on WCO missions. In line with these developments, I also encourage your administration to share your innovative and contemporary approaches in the area of integrity enhancement with other WCO Members, ideally by way of case studies and informational flyers.

In addition to the IDG, I would like to also note that there remains a wide range of WCO integrity development tools that are currently available to the Membership, including the regularly published WCO Integrity Newsletter, which provides concise and relevant examples of Member practices to progressively address integrity challenges as they arise.

David Dolan (USCBP)
WCO Integrity Sub-Committee Chairperson



NIGERIA



Small solutions, greater benefits

Recognizing that integrity is one of the biggest challenges to Customs efficiency and effectiveness, in 2009 the Nigeria Customs Administration looked for factors associated with a lack of integrity and identified six of them :

- Poor remuneration of staff
- Manual operations in processing goods
- An environment that could prompt people to be dishonest
- Ineffective sanctions and reward system
- Poor welfare provisions
- Differences in salaries in the public sector

Based on these factors, the Nigeria Customs Administration defined an agenda to work on different measures under the assumption that the solutions of these weaknesses could improve Customs integrity.

With a view to building capacity, it provided training for more than 1,300 officers out of the 20,000 Customs staff.

In order to address the problem of discipline and integrity, it was decided to apply sanctions that are deterrents and that include dismissal, reduction in rank and prosecution.

As part of enhancing the welfare package for staff, accommodation was provided to Customs officers as well as a bus service to take them to and from work. Additional vehicles and equipment were purchased to support operational activities.

Increased use of automation has improved the way of working of officers who are aware that computers record all transactions and that this can be used as a control mechanism.

Collaboration and partnership with stakeholders and international organizations has made it possible for staff to learn about what is being done elsewhere and to adapt it to the Nigerian environment.

Finally, developing mutual understanding between the Nigeria Customs Administration and the public through public relations has improved the image of Customs and the relationship with users.

Do not hesitate to contact the Nigeria Customs Administration to learn more about any of the measures presented in this article.

Should you want to know more about Nigeria's experience, do not hesitate to contact them at :

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CHILE



The creation of a Customs Court and the development of a Code of Ethics

Customs Court

Over recent years, transparency and integrity have captured the attention of the Chilean Customs Administration. The Administration has been involved in the drafting of legislation to establish a Fiscal and Customs Court ensuring more transparent and faster procedures and also offering the possibility of resolving disputes between importers and Customs using a judicial body that is independent from the Administration.

This reform will be completed by 2013 with the establishment of this Court throughout the country. Not only will this reform ensure compliance with Article X of the GATT Agreement, but it will also help in the context of the many free trade agreements signed by Chile as it will ensure an independent administrative and judicial review in Customs matters.

Customs Code of Ethics

A Customs Code of Ethics is being developed for distribution to all staff. It is inspired by the Revised Arusha Declaration, the WCO Model Code of Ethics, and by other codes.

The Code should guide the work of Customs officers when faced with difficult situations that could compromise their integrity or that of the organization. The Code contains tools, advice and examples to help officers behave in a responsible manner. Transparency, conflict of interest, confidentiality, audit, integrity, Customs culture and behaviours are included in the Code.

Innovative and positive values such as a healthy lifestyle, cultural and environmental concerns, and respect are incorporated in the Code. It also deals with gift acceptance, debt prevention and professional training. This Code contains an e-mail address for integrity-related queries and consultations. The Deputy Director of Human Resources is responsible for answering these queries.

As soon as the Customs Code of Ethics is officially announced by the Director General, it will be shared with regional Customs and made available on the Chilean Customs Administration's website for consultation by all.

Please contact Chile should you want to know more about their experience.

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BURKINA FASO



The work of a GAPIN Ambassador

The WCO GAPIN (Great Apes and Integrity) Project, sponsored by the Swedish Government, focuses on the protection of wildlife and related corruption. In the context of the Project, two Customs officers were chosen to act as GAPIN Ambassadors within the countries covered by the Project. One of the Ambassadors is an Inspector from Burkina Faso Customs. With the support of his Administration, he started touring his country in April 2012 with the purpose of presenting the Project and seeking support to carry out the defined objectives.

In preparation of his tour, several national authorities were contacted and met to discuss the illicit cross-border trade in species protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and to address the problem of corruption in this context.

The tour generated interest for the Project and spurred on Customs officers, especially those in the Bobo Dioulasso Mobile Unit (Western part of the country) which seized 300 crocodile skins originating in Ghana and bound for Nigeria, being transported by a Malian national, shortly after the Ambassador's visit.

In July 2012, a GAPIN II mission travelled to Guinea. The first session was led by the Director General of Customs who suggested extending the activities to other Customs Administration services such as the Directorate of Customs Investigations and the Postal Items Inspection Office. Organizations in contact with international trade could play a more effective role in combating trafficking in protected species because they maintain business relations with the stakeholders.

Airport and port visits

Presentations and discussions were also held in the airport and port Customs Offices, the Postal Items Inspection Office, the Customs Investigation Service, and OGUIDAP (Office guinéen de la diversité biologique et des aires protégées – Guinean Office for Biodiversity and Protected Areas). On these occasions, different aspects of the work of these services in connection with CITES, Project GAPIN and integrity were addressed. In view of these services' experience and their resources, Project GAPIN II revealed needs and challenges to be met in order to fight against the illicit cross-border trade in species protected under CITES and to enhance Customs integrity.

Communication

To promote good practices and integrity in the context of the Project, the Customs Administration of Guinea circulated the Revised Arusha Declaration in this country.



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES

In this connection, OGUIDAP welcomed the existence of the Project and has started to work on the identification of species and the actions to be taken when protected species are seized.

The Burkina Faso Customs Administration has also taken the initiative to produce roller banner stands displaying official Project posters. These have been placed in the arrivals and departures halls at Ouagadougou Airport, as well as in the visa waiting area and VIP lounge.

The Head of the non-governmental organization (NGO) 'SOS Elephants Chad', which is responsible for fighting elephant poaching in Chad and Guinea, showed interest in Project GAPIN and plans to co-ordinate activities with Guinea Customs.

This is just the beginning of a long process during which operational capacities need to be built in order to improve efficiency in detecting illicit trafficking in protected species. The awareness-raising process requires the involvement of Customs' partners such as public and private stakeholders, NGOs and associations, because the fight against the illicit cross-border trade in species protected under CITES and the battle to fight related corruption will be more effective through co-ordinated actions.



Roller banner stands at Ouagadougou airport

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URUGUAY



Paving the way...

For the Uruguay Customs Administration, like many others, the existence of integrity failings and corruption at work is a key issue that any modernization process must address.

In the case of Uruguay, results of a survey conducted by the National Directorate of Customs to measure public perception of the Administration were released in 2010. They confirmed the feeling that operators' and the public's trust and confidence in the organization were very low, particularly with regard to Customs officers' integrity.

The first step was to take on board and acknowledge the situation before embarking on a plan to change things.

The challenge was huge, but it was also felt that the private sector in Uruguay was open and willing to take on its share of responsibility for the issue.

As Uruguay Customs Director, Enrique Canon, put it when he took up his post, "external trade agents will be the architects of 21st Century Customs".

Step by step

The first strategic alliance was made with the Board of Integrity and Transparency (Junta de Etica y Transparencia), and workshops were held throughout 2010 and 2011 where Customs officers were brought up to date with all the regulations that they had to comply with as public servants. This led to internal debate and workshops entitled "Generating integrity"; the workshops were extensive and participatory in nature, and took place all around the country.

The second stage was to participate in the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) in October 2010, when a member of Uruguay Customs was able to listen to, discuss and find out about experiences in several countries. Uruguay Customs found it striking to learn that corruption is a challenge that many other Customs administrations share. During the ISC, views and experiences of other countries were presented as well as WCO integrity pilot projects. It also provided an opportunity to expand knowledge of the Revised Arusha Declaration and the WCO tools available to combat corruption.

From the outset, Uruguay Customs decided to concentrate on the 10th element of the Revised Arusha Declaration, which refers to the importance of fostering an open, transparent and productive relationship with the private sector to eradicate corruption and establish Codes of Integrity to that end.



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES

The first task was to draw up a list of key associations of external trade operators. The methodology consisted of sending a letter of invitation to each of them, setting out Customs' intention to sign Memoranda of Understanding on Integrity and Transparency. The content was based on the wording of the Revised Arusha Declaration.

It should be noted that the invitation stated that participation was to be voluntarily. Individual meetings were organized with each association to tell them about Customs' objectives, the importance of working in partnership and the benefits of charting a joint course of action.

It was decided to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with each association to acknowledge and accept their individual characteristics. A model text was used as a baseline that could be adapted to take account of those characteristics.

The first Memorandum was signed in May 2011 with the Association of Customs Brokers of Uruguay. Currently nine Memoranda have been signed with private sector agents : the Association of Customs Brokers of Uruguay (ADAU), the Association of Cargo Agents (AUDACA), the Uruguayan Association of Express Service Businesses (AUDESE), the Uruguayan Chamber of Logistics (CALOG), the Chamber of International Automotive Land Transport of Uruguay (CATIDU), the Free Trade Zone Chamber of Uruguay (CZFU), the Union of Exporters, the Navigation Centre (CENNAVE) and the Chamber of Commerce in August 2012, and negotiations are continuing with other associations.



Signing MOU with Uruguay Chamber of Commerce



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES

Once signed, the Memoranda are given effect by setting up a Joint Commission comprising two representatives of the Customs Administration, who are always the same, and two representatives of the association concerned. A one-year or six-month Action Plan, as appropriate, is drawn up, and meetings are scheduled to monitor and exchange views as to how the implementation process is progressing. Each plan of action includes a short, medium and long-term commitment.

These forums allow for interaction and have helped to establish formal spaces for exchanging information and reporting complaints, as well as for drawing up a transparent, ongoing agenda for improvements in the mutual interest.

Two years later, it can be stated that there is an increase in public and private confidence – a key foundation for strengthening integrity in external trade.

Uruguay Customs is currently in the implementation phase of the Memoranda and has achieved specific results that include complaints to the National Directorate for Customs and complaints by the Directorate to private operators, leading to effective outcomes after follow-up action. In the interests of greater transparency in Customs procedures, the Directorate has been making the arrangements necessary for the Administration and operators to put the results into practice.

Operators have reformulated their Codes of Ethics, and associations that did not previously have codes have drawn up and approved one. Additionally, the Customs Administration already has a Draft Code of Ethics that is undergoing the final stage of internal consultation required before it can be sent to the Government for approval.

In terms of the institutional backdrop, since February 2011, integrity has been incorporated into the induction course for new officials, and the subject features permanently on the Customs curriculum.

At the end of 2012, the results of each Memorandum will be assessed. The Customs Administration is also preparing a new survey to measure the various impacts of these and other policies it has carried out.

Uruguay Customs is following the way it paved for itself with the same conviction and purpose that it had at the outset, namely that the Memoranda are not merely a declaration of intent but include practical measures to improve external trade – the activity that links Customs and the private sector together.

Once Uruguay Customs took note of the image it was projecting, it recognized and accepted the problem, and triumphed over scepticism by joining forces with the private sector to overcome it.

The challenge, therefore, is to make that choice sustainable over time, to be able to pause and assess progress and to continue forging the way ahead, because greater integrity means greater development.

Do not hesitate to contact Uruguay Customs to know more about this project.

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INTEGRITY PILOT PROJECTS

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

Egypt

From 7 to 12 September 2012 a WCO mission went to Alexandria to conduct an Integrity Development Workshop at the request of the Commissioner of the Egyptian Revenue Authority (ERA). The action plan that was produced following the Workshop is still under review by the Commissioner. However, based on the discussions during the Workshop, ERA wishes to embark on a pilot project to enhance communication within and outside ERA.



Togo

From 15 to 19 October 2012, a WCO team conducted a third mission to Togo Customs as part of the "Performance Contracts" Project supported by the World Bank (Trade Facilitation Facility). Prior to this mission, in January 2011, the WCO conducted a preliminary analysis based on ASYCUDA data provided by Togo Customs. In May 2011, a first mission was carried out in the field to explore Togo Customs' procedures, concerns and expectations and performance policy principles were presented. In November 2011, the second mission helped the IT team to adjust some indicators developed in May 2011, develop new ones and organize their internal dissemination. Indicators raised specific problems related to Customs procedures which were also discussed.



The progress recorded since September 2011 includes: (1) shipping lines are now required to introduce the time of arrival of the ship into the ASYCUDA system. Two shipping lines have made significant progress in lodging their manifest within the time limits and discussions are taking place with the others; (2) clearance of transit manifests has improved thanks to a new procedure which is automated through ASYCUDA; (3) Indicators previously showed that the share of declarations not bearing an identification number for home use was high. Thanks to new measures adopted by Togo Customs this share has fallen from 30% to 4%.

Uruguay

Uruguay Customs has now signed 9 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 9 associations representing the majority of its private partners. The last Memorandum was signed with the Uruguay Chamber of Commerce at the end of August 2012. Details of this project are presented in the article on Uruguay Customs' pilot project in this issue.



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

Contact

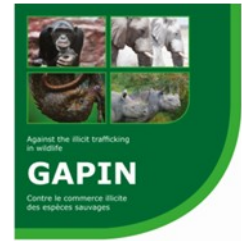
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INTEGRITY NEWS

GAPIN II

During the course of the year, a series of events has been organized in the context of Project GAPIN II. Each event included an awareness session on integrity. A Workshop for frontline officers working at ports took place in Durban (South Africa) from 28 to 31 August 2012. In the margins of the Workshop, the WCO was able to meet with the Unit responsible for integrity development in the South African Revenue Service (SARS). Another Workshop for frontline officers working at airports took place in Brussels (Belgium) from 4 to 7 September 2012 and a briefing was organized prior to a WCO CITES Operation in Kampala (Uganda) from 26-27 September 2012. During this event, the Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA), an NGO specialized in combating wildlife crime and corruption located in Cameroon, gave a presentation to sensitize Customs officers to the issue of corruption in relation to CITES enforcement.



20th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

The WCO was invited to attend and speak at the 20th Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Economic and Environmental Forum held from 12-14 September 2012 in Prague. The theme of the Forum was "Promoting security and stability through good governance". The WCO presentation provided practical examples of what some countries have achieved in the area of integrity.

Customs and Border Management Workshop

The WCO was invited to participate in a Customs and Border Management Workshop in El Salvador on 16 and 17 July 2012. The event was organized by the US Department of Commerce, the US Department of State and the US Customs and Border Protection Agency. The objective was to facilitate a dialogue between the public sector and the private sector on Customs and border management reform. During the Workshop the WCO was invited to present its integrity strategy.

FATF Meeting on Corruption

The WCO was invited to attend the 2nd Experts Meeting of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Corruption which took place on 13 October 2012 in Paris, France. This was a good opportunity to learn about the tools adopted by different countries as well as the actions taken to fight corruption, bribery, related money laundering and asset recovery.

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

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