

# RCL JAPAN BRIEF

VOL.22 | AUG



Central Customs Laboratory, Japan

# Message from the DG of the WCO A/P RCL Japan

Dear Readers,

It is a great honor and privilege to extend my warmest greetings to all readers of the RCL Japan Brief.

I am pleased to announce that, as of July 1, 2025, I have been appointed as the Director General of the Laboratory. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all members for your continued cooperation and support since 2014. As the customs landscape has become more complex, the role of the customs laboratory has become increasingly significant. I look forward to working closely with you all in addressing the emerging challenges and advancing the mission of the Customs Laboratory.

Please also note that, effective July 1, several members of international team in RCL Japan have been reassigned as part of our annual personnel rotation. The newly appointed members are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities with dedication and professionalism. I kindly ask for your continued support and collaboration as they take on their new roles.

During the first half of this year, the Laboratory carried out a range of important RCL activities, including the following:

Concerning the information sharing activities in the Customs analysis field, RCL Japan issued the 10th commemorative volume the “Collection of Good Practices on Customs Laboratory Matters” this June. We sincerely appreciate the valuable contributions from WCO members who shared their good practices to enrich this special edition.

As for capacity building activities, the Central Customs Laboratory of Japan (CCL Japan) warmly welcomed four participants from the Royal Malaysian Customs Department for a four-week practical training program on Customs chemical analysis. CCL Japan provided an overview of the laboratory’s infrastructure and carried out hands-on training tailored to the participants’ specific needs, with the aim of enhancing their proficiency in customs chemical analysis in support of Malaysian Customs’ effort to



**TAKETSUGU Shuichi**  
**Director General of**  
**CCL Japan**

establish its own Customs laboratory.

CCL Japan also received 10 participants in the WCO Career Development Programme in April 2025, providing them with an overview of the function of the CCL and explaining the importance of Customs analysis, followed by demonstrations of analytical and inspection equipment in the CCL laboratory building.

As I conclude this message, I would like to express our sincere commitment to fulfilling our mission in close collaboration with the WCO Secretariat, ROCB A/P, and our valued partners in the Asia/Pacific region and beyond. We look forward to continuing this important journey together.

Sincerely,

TAKETSUGU Shuichi



New international team members at the RCL Japan (From the right: Mr. OSAKI Nobuaki (Head of Co-ordination of International Affairs Section), Mr. TAKETSUGU Shuichi (Director-General), Mr. KANEKO Kenichi (Deputy Director-General), Mr. HATTORI Shunichi (Officer of Co-ordination of International Affairs Section))

< From Members >

- I'm delighted to begin my new position at CCL Japan. I look forward to strengthening collaborations with laboratories around the world. (KANEKO)
- I'm greatly honored to work in the International Coordination Division one more year. I would like to make a continuous effort to strengthen the network among Customs laboratory members. (OSAKI)
- It is a privilege to join the International Coordination Division. I hope to grow through this opportunity and contribute to the efforts of WCO members. (HATTORI)

Since 2016, the Central Customs Laboratory of Japan (CCL Japan) has annually published the Collection of Good Practices as part of information-sharing activities of WCO RCL.

This June, the 10th volume was issued on the WCO Member-only Website at <https://www.wcoomd.org/en.aspx>, and WCO Asia/Pacific Member-only Website at <https://www.wcoasiapacific.org/>, marking a significant milestone in this series. This publication was made possible through the continuous collaboration and generous input from Customs laboratories worldwide, who have consistently shared their analysis methods and best practices.

This volume covers the analysis methods in the field of “Tobacco Products”, good practices and analytical methods for “Illegal Drugs and New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)”, and good practices related to Customs Laboratory matters, especially the establishment of a Customs laboratory. Furthermore, for this volume, the Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN) provided the Minutes of the Customs programme celebrating the 25th anniversary of the CLEN and Minutes of the ECICS workshop -50 years’ experience and future-. We warmly congratulate CLEN on its 25th anniversary and sincerely thank you for sharing the special appendices.

Finally, in order for the next volume to grow into a more effective edition, we would greatly appreciate it if you could share your new research and good practices in the field of Customs analysis, and/or new topics for the next volume with us at any time ([cclmaile@mof.go.jp](mailto:cclmaile@mof.go.jp)).

### Collection of Good Practices on Customs Laboratory Matters Vol. 10

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#### I. Introduction

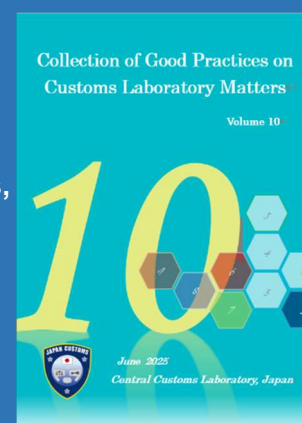
- Message from WCO A/P Vice-Chair, WCO and CCL Japan

#### II. Good Practices on Customs Chemical Analysis in the field of “Tobacco products, Illegal drugs and other areas”

- From Spain, Czech Republic, Netherlands, France, Hungary, Poland Austria, Indonesia, Korea, Japan and Peru.

#### III. Good Practices on Customs Laboratory matters, especially Establishment of Customs Laboratory

#### IV. Special appendices from CLEN



## The WCO Career Development Programme

On April 15, the Central Customs Laboratory (CCL) received a visit from nine participants\* in the WCO Career Development Programme, as part of an international activity under the Customs technical cooperation. The CCL provided an overview of its function and explained the importance of Customs analysis, followed by demonstrations of analytical and inspection equipment in the CCL laboratory building.



\* Cape Verde, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Maldives, Peru, Timor-Leste, Tunisia,

From May 12 to June 6, the Central Customs Laboratory (CCL) welcomed four participants in the practical training on Customs analysis for Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD). The CCL has been providing technical cooperation to establish a Customs Laboratory in the RMCD, in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), since 2021. So far, CCL Japan has held two workshops aiming to teach about the facilities of the Japan Customs Laboratory and the management framework of Customs analysis work to ensure proper and smooth Customs analysis operations for HS classification purposes in Malaysia.

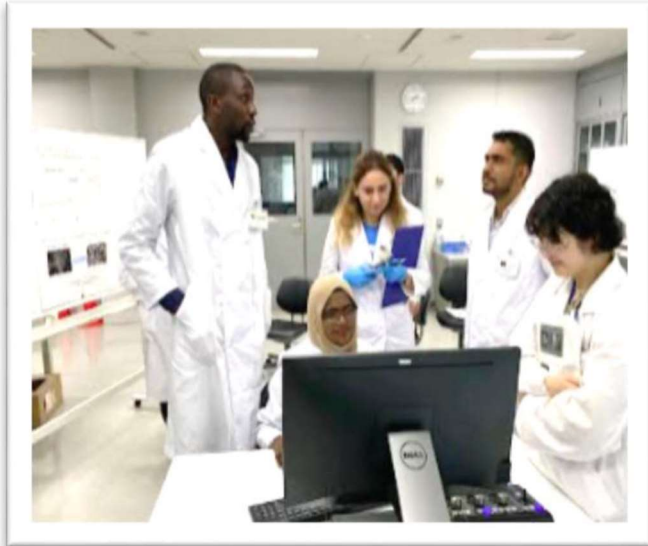


In this training course, with a view to setting up the Malaysian Customs laboratory in 2026, we provided practical training in chemical analysis to enhance participants' proficiency, along with lectures on more specialized analytical techniques such as data treatment. As part of the course, participants developed a final report detailing analytical methods for various target commodities, including alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, and others. We aim to provide ongoing support in establishing official analytical methods based on this report.



## FROM MS. MAUROOFA MOHAMED

### MALDIVES CUSTOMS SERVICE



The training experience acquired during the World Customs Organization (WCO) Regional Customs Laboratory Professionals Programme 2024, held at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels and the Central Customs Laboratory (CCL) in Japan, has been of significant value to the Maldives Customs Service. The training encompassed both the Harmonized System (HS) and practical laboratory exercises, providing essential insights into laboratory techniques. These insights are particularly valuable as the Maldives Customs Service endeavors to establish its own laboratory.

The workshop in Brussels offered a comprehensive understanding of HS codes, General Interpretative Rules (GIRs), and classifications across a diverse range of goods. This training significantly enhanced my knowledge of product classification. Furthermore, the exchange of information with representatives from other international customs administrations provided a wealth of knowledge regarding the operational frameworks of customs laboratories in different countries.

The hands-on training at Japan's CCL further strengthened my practical skills in laboratory management, safety protocols, and advanced analytical techniques. Exposure to cutting-edge equipment such as High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Gas Chromatography- Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS), Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR), and Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FT-IR) significantly enhanced my expertise. Additionally, I gained invaluable experience by analyzing a variety of samples, including DNA, fruit juice composition, drug detection, and caffeine in energy drinks. This practical exposure reinforced theoretical concepts and improved my ability to correlate chemical analysis with tariff classification, a critical aspect of the Maldives Customs Service's operations.



The two-day visit to Kobe Customs provided a valuable opportunity to observe and understand the functioning of regional customs operations in Japan. I gained substantial knowledge about customs clearance procedures and the roles of appraisers and laboratory staff.

Moreover, Japan's meticulous approach to laboratory management, strict adherence to safety protocols, systematic sample handling, and advanced equipment calibration practices were particularly noteworthy. The implementation of similar

standardized management practices and safety protocols would be highly beneficial for the Maldives Customs Service in optimizing laboratory efficiency and ensuring workplace safety upon the establishment of its own laboratory.

Overall, this training program has been an invaluable experience, enhancing my technical expertise and reinforcing the critical role of customs laboratories. As the Maldives Customs Service advances toward the establishment of its Customs laboratory, the knowledge and insights gained from this training will be instrumental in shaping and modernizing laboratory practices in accordance with international standards. I strongly recommend that other Customs administrations facilitate the participation of their laboratory officers in this program at the leading regional Customs laboratories to enhance their technical proficiency.



From August 2025 25 to 27, the 4th Meeting of Heads of WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Customs Laboratory at RCL China (Qingdao Customs Laboratory).

- From October 27 to December 4, 2025, Attachment training at RCL Japan, RCL Korea and RCL India under the WCO Regional Customs Laboratory Professionals Programme 2025/26.
- Contact point information will be updated on the website of the WCO Asia/Pacific Vice-Chair Secretariat.

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RCL Brief welcomes readers' contributions which describe articles on Customs analysis-related matters, such as new analytical (or inspection device) technologies, latest news or topics on your Customs laboratory work, introduction to your Customs laboratory, challenges in drug enforcement, etc.

Please use the e-mail address "[cclmaile@mof.go.jp](mailto:cclmaile@mof.go.jp)" for submission.

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*Please send your comments or questions to [cclmaile@mof.go.jp](mailto:cclmaile@mof.go.jp), if any. You can find further information about CCL, Japan on our website: [http://www.customs.go.jp/ccl/e\\_index.htm](http://www.customs.go.jp/ccl/e_index.htm)*

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