



ROCB A/P E-Newsletter No.58

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Foreword



Dear Readers,

Greetings from Bangkok. Bangkok is now in the rainy season as like many other areas in Southeast Asia. Quite often, it rains very hard with strong wind and lightening. It reminds us of the need for preparedness with rain that also brings traffic jams to and from work (laughter). Still the gifts from Mother Nature provide indispensable substances to trees and plants surrounding us. They look so glorious with refreshed green colors and beautiful flower blooms, which will later grow into abundant fruits. Beautifully maintained gardens and parks give us a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. Conversely, it requires good maintenance to be kept in good shape. As the ROCB A/P, has gone through the first quarter of 2017/18 with newly a developed Annual Workplan, I believe we are contributing to the regional Members' good maintenance for Customs capacity building to help members make rich harvest in the foreseeable future.


Customs reform and modernization require human resource development and professionalism. Building blocks for the 21st Century document accommodate "A professional, knowledge-based service culture" and "capacity building." Obviously, as the region's focal point for the WCO's regionalization approach in capacity building, the ROCB A/P should be manned with these professionals. In this regard, I am pleased to introduce you our new colleagues, who were seconded to the ROCB A/P at the beginning of the new fiscal year 2017/18 to take over the tasks from their respective predecessors. Mrs. Saori

Nojima of Japan (who is succeeding the tasks of Mr. Takayuki Miyoshi) is accredited as the WCO expert in IPR and Mercator Program Advisor who started her secondment term from early July 2017. Mr. Jo Hong-Young of Korea is the successor of Mr. Cho Kang-sik and is fully accredited as a WCO's AEO expert. He joined the Office in early September 2017. With their accredited expertise and knowledge on the WCO and key Customs business, the ROCB A/P will be able to provide Members with professional suggestions and down-to-earth recommendations upon their requests. Please consult the latter section of this E-Newsletter to meet them.

We are now working on our 2016/17 Annual Report which is about to be published. For the summary of our activities, as well as the regional Members' commitment and dedication, please kindly refer to the featured article in this E-Newsletter. At the same time, we are going to upload the full report on our homepage soon at www.rocb-ap.org. While thanking your keen interest in our activities and your contribution thereto, I would be pleased if you have some time to visit our homepage.

This issue of ROCB A/P E-Newsletter features our activities undertaken from July through to September 2017. Normally, the first quarter is reasonably quiet, however ROCB A/P continued to organize regional and national workshops for the benefit of regional Members along with its Annual Workplan 2017/18. Dr. Tong hua, our colleague from China contributed his special essay on his experiences and views regarding partnership with academia and relevant stake-holders within Customs. I hope this special topic provides fellow E-Newsletter readers with some food-for-thought. The ROCB A/P will be pleased to hear any of your constructive comments and suggestions/inputs on our activities, including communication and public relations, so that we may better serve to the regional Member Customs administrations. Please rest assured that all ROCB A/P staff members will continue to remain committed.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K. Igarashi'.

Kazunari Igarashi

Head of the ROCB A/P

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Special Topic

ROCB A/P Annual Report 2016/17



ROCB A/P's Annual Report 2016/17 will be published very soon. This Annual Report covers the ROCB A/P's activities conducted from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. During the fiscal year of 2016/17, the ROCB A/P organized 15 sub-/regional workshops and nearly 20 national workshops. ROCB A/P colleagues represented the WCO on numerous national and regional conferences to raise the profile of the tasks undertaken by the WCO. ROCB confirm there were 349 officials from 30 Member Customs administrations in the A/P region who took part in these sub-/regional capacity building activities organized by the ROCB A/P, which has a slightly drop compared to the year of 2015/16. The decrease in the number of participants attributes to can be attributed fewer workshops conducted last year than

the previous year.

The Report embraces Executive Summary and highlights, Overview reports of the ROCB A/P activities in the 2016/17, and the introduction of the Office. It is also appended with annexes of the ROCB A/P's 2-year Strategic Action Plan, Annual Work Plan for 2017/18, and summary of the Good Customs Practice Report on Exemplified Workshop Follow-Up Actions. Once it is published, an e-copy of the Report will be made public on our homepage at www.rocb-ap.org.

Special Report on Partnership with Academia and relevant stake-holders in Customs Knowledge-based Service and Capacity Building



By Dr. Tong Hua, ROCB A/P

Dear Readers,

Greetings from Bangkok!

I am Tong hua, CCF/China Operation Manager and Program Manager (Pacific Islands) of the ROCB A/P. I joined in the ROCB A/P team for nearly one year since November 2016. At the invitation of the WCO Research Unit, recently I attended the 12th WCO Annual PICARD Conference, which ran from 26 to 28 September 2017 in Hammamet, Tunisia. During the Conference, I participated a Roundtable Discussion Session and made a presentation on “Partnership between Academia and Customs-Practices in the A/P Region”, in which I recalled the history of PICARD Conference development, and highlighted the progress of a comparative study for Customs National E-Learning Platform under ROCB A/P’s Research Initiative, and then concluded with introduction of three successful models (China, Japan & Korea) of the capacity program, which were jointly designed and organized by the Academia and Customs in the A/P Region. Due to the limited discussion time at the PICARD Conference, I am happy to use this special report to share some food for thought with you. Special thanks to the Head of ROCB A/P Mr. Kazunari Igarashi for his unrivalled experiences and constructive advice throughout this process, and gave me a great opportunity to further expound this topic with three subheads as follows:

1. Capacity Building, Customs Modernization and Customs Academic Prosperity

In the past, Customs is a relatively mysterious area for most of the ‘Outside Customs’ researchers. Even they intended to study certain Customs topics by themselves, but it was not easy mainly because Customs Knowledge and Terminology is too professional and unique, and Customs deals with all kinds of goods throughout the world which requires the understanding of global supply chain and classification of goods. A researcher has to get familiar with the traditional Customs business only after working with Customs for quite a long-term accumulation and practice, then the person can gain experience and better understand the procedures, regulations and international standards, etc.

As we all know, Customs stores the original data of declaration forms and manifests which is the most valuable primary sources on Research Purpose. However, due to the confidential and none-digitalized data reasons, it was very difficult for ‘Outside Customs’ researchers to access the database they wanted to use. But thanks to the development of the New Information Communication Technology (ICT), for instance, like big data, data mining & predictive analytics tools and also the modernization of Customs Administration like paperless reform and targeting technologies, which makes the academic world might be acquirable to get the data especially for Quantitative Study not only from the Customs clearance platform, but also from other parties’ Single Window pipelines or open sources. Even some researchers they do not have a Customs background but nowadays they are willing to do the related research topics on Customs, border management and global trade, which increase more diversities and from different perspectives to see the Customs Matters. Maybe in the near future, according to the cooperation agreement on exchange authorized information and data between the academia and Customs, it will be much more convenient for researchers.



Another important issue is that the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) entered into force in February 2017. As the TFA is a binding international accord, it will have a significant impact on WTO Members’ domestic legislation, trade policies and Customs regimes. As Customs is the key implementing agency of the TFA, it is essential that the WCO and its Members collectively ensure smooth and effective implementation of the Agreement for it to successfully lead to the envisaged developments on national, regional and global level. Thus, the function and procedure of Customs play a more and more

important role in the trade facilitation and draw the attentions of academic world from all related disciplines and areas.

As the <WCO Framework of Principles and Practices on Customs Professionalism> indicated, human capital is the most valuable asset to keep pace with an ever-changing environment. That is why I feel as a capacity builder, our job is vital and meaningful, because we are trying to raise the awareness of the member countries going to the direction of modernization. For instance, at the invitation from the World Bank Group, Trade & Competitiveness of Myanmar, I attended the Myanmar Customs Department (MCD) Executive Leadership Course held on 22 and 23 August 2017 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, as a guest speaker. The course was designed to provide the MCD's executive-class officials with strategic thinking to handle various challenges associated with moving into new and increasingly more complex leadership roles, and gain a better understanding of global Customs initiatives that will help Myanmar Customs go along fast changing working environment. I made a presentation on the topic of visionary leadership in Customs modernization and reform, in which I highlighted the transformation of Customs functions on trade facilitation and supply chain security, and echoed further input on the capacity building and leadership training program for the MCD. My presentation was well received by the participants and the representative of World Bank and Director of MCD jointly awarded a certificate to me, for recognizing the ROCB A/P's professional input. The change process might take quite a long time, but a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. I strongly believe with the joint efforts by capacity builders and customs administration, finally there will cause a fundamental change. Through the transformation and progressive engagement of modern Customs administration, the outcomes of reform will build a more transparent and open Customs, thus it will create more new research topics and attract the attention of Academia. Eventually, this trend will positively impact the work of Customs as well.

2. Partners' Cooperation and Collaborative Research

According to the 4 Pillars of main functions, the ROCB A/P continues strategic discussion and cooperation with Development Partners (DPs) by conducting joint projects and participating in meetings/seminars/conferences. Throughout this cooperation, it fosters mutual understanding between DPs and the ROCB A/P and creates synergy in assisting A/P Members in Customs modernization by complementing works closely with DPs and seeks for cooperation to create synergy in carrying out projects with common interests. Obviously, Partners from Academic World will be the perfect match for us, and there are more players like Customs brokers in the global supply chain as well.

I do respect the founders of the WCO PICARD Programme very much, I think those people are really full of visionary. These annual WCO research conferences started since 2006, providing a platform for informed dialogue among Customs administrations, universities, and research institutes on topics relevant to Customs and international trade.

As I was the project manager when I worked in RTC-China (Shanghai Customs College) for hosting the 3rd WCO PICARD Conference in Shanghai, so I had a very special feeling about the continuous development of this academic and research conference. Using the interdisciplinary approach to research and policy analysis on Customs matters, international trade and border management has become the hallmark of this annual WCO event. I am so happy to see more and more new faces showed in the conference. At the recent 12th PICARD conference, before ending my speech, I shared my ideas on the close partnership between Academia and Customs, I suggested we may list it as a fourth pillar of the WCO SAFE.



With the encouragement of the Head of ROCB A/P, Mr. Kazunari Igarashi and the support from my dear colleagues in the ROCB Team. This year, I actively attended several conferences and meetings funded by my home administration, which built closer links among ROCB A/P, Academia and private sectors. For instance, other than the PICARD Conference, in the beginning of this year I was invited to moderate a panel discussion on “Economic

Security - Aspect of Trade Facilitation and Security” in the International Academic Conference held at the Azerbaijan Economic University in Baku, Azerbaijan, 27-30 January 2017. In the course of Baku mission, I visited the ROCB European Office and the International Networks of Customs Universities (INCUI) Baku Regional Office and had discussions on future think-tank projects and capacity building cooperation. Moreover, as the speaker of the opening session of the International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations (IFCBA) Special Event on 28 and 29 August 2017 in Bangkok, I highlighted the capacity building activities and WCO Study Report on Customs Brokers. I also made an analysis on the global environment and regional practices, and promoted the importance of Customs Brokers’ Professionalism joining forces with Customs administrations in advancing Customs modernization and trade facilitation. These activities have laid a solid foundation for future collaborative research projects.

3. ROCB Capacity Building Database and Think-Tank Function

One of the biggest advantages working in the ROCB A/P is that we can search, collect and study the previous workshops data. Lots of the successful projects and workshops carried out by the previous participants, organizers and resource persons enable

us to develop a key capacity building platform in this region. Actually I think those former materials and slides saved in our Common Drive are precious deposits for all researchers, especially it is very useful for regional comparative study and tracking study. Since most of the program managers in the ROCB A/P are very busy for organizing and observing workshops, we might be too focused on the logistics arrangement, sometimes we do not have enough time to conduct a research topic. Certainly, we can rely on our own resources to do research, but if with a formal collaboration procedure between the ROCB A/P and Members in this Region, we can also invite more partners from Academia, Research Institute, RTCs and NTCs to do joint research and make full use of those valuable 'data'. Meanwhile, we may find some Donors to support the ROCB A/P Research Project.

In the future, we can dig out some outlines and general introduction based on different topics of the current resources stored in the ROCB A/P database. On the other hand, promotion is also very important, that is why every time if I attend any events, I would like to give a brief introduction and promotion of the ROCB A/P's publications, such as annual report, E-newsletters and best practice reports, which are also publicized on the ROCB A/P website. If we do the same for introducing what we have for our capacity building resource, I think it would be very attractive to Academic World. Another thought is that, once finished an essay, it could be classified like the product of ROCB A/P and with the name of the partner's joint contribution. The best way to expand academic influence of the article is to publish it on some academic Customs journals, for example, <World Customs Journal>, <Journal of Borderlands Studies> and <Customs Scientific Journal>, etc. Another solution is that we can invite authors from prestigious Academia and Private Sector to draft special report on the ROCB A/P publications. I believe that after taking these steps, we will establish closer ties with academics and other partners to jointly promote the construction of the ROCB A/P Think-Tank capabilities.

These ideas sincerely represent myself, not necessarily on behalf of the viewpoint of the ROCB A/P. Any comments or ideas are warmly welcomed. Please free feel to share your insights with me, my email address is: tonghua@rocbap.org

WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS

ROCB A/P speaks at the 12th WCO Annual PICARD Conference

26-28 September 2017, Hammamet, Tunisia



At the invitation of the WCO Research Unit, Dr. Tong hua of the ROCB A/P, attended the 12th WCO Annual PICARD Conference, which ran from 26 to 28 September 2017 in Hammamet, Tunisia. This key WCO Event welcomed more than 200 participants from around 65 countries, representing

Customs administrations, the academic and research communities, international and regional organizations, and the private sector. The PICARD Conference of this year features four focus topics, namely Data Analysis, Trade Facilitation, Security and Customs-Tax Cooperation.

Dr. Tong hua participated a Roundtable Discussion Session and made a presentation on “Partnership between Academia and Customs : Practices in the AP Region”, in which he recalled the history of PICARD Conference development, and highlighted the progress of a comparative study for Customs National E-Learning Platform under ROCB A/P’s Research Initiative, and then concluded with introduction of three successful models of the capacity program, which were jointly designed and organized by the Academia and Customs in the A/P Region.

World Customs Organization Youtube Live Stream reported this event synchronously, including the session in which ROCB A/P spoke. Please refer the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5Qkid7GefM>

WCO National Workshop on Passenger Control for Lao PDR

25-29 September 2017, Vientiane, Lao PDR

WCO National Workshop on Passenger Control for Lao PDR was conducted on 25-29 September 2017 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, under the sponsorship of Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF/Japan). Twenty three officials from Vientiane International Airport and land checkpoints from the Vientiane Capital City area took part in the four day workshop. At the request of the WCO Secretariat, Mr. Kazunari Igarashi (Head of the ROCB A/P) conducted the workshop as a resource speaker along with a WCO Secretariat officer.



Prior to the commencement of the 4-day technical workshop sessions, resource speakers visited the Lao Customs Headquarters for a briefing on Lao Customs' organizational structure including roles and responsibilities as well as their institutional competence and enforcement equipment. They also visited Vientiane International Airport and Land Border Checkpoint at Laos-Thai Friendship Bridge 1 to observe flow of inbound and outbound passengers.

the four day technical workshop program covered the introduction of the WCO Risk Management Compendium, a series of lectures on passenger profiling, questioning techniques, studies on concealment methods, role play on systematic and escalated search technique. Lectures on non-verbal communication and neuro-linguistics were also given. On the last day of the workshop, an on-site exercise was conducted. In the course of the technical workshop, resource speakers gave several recommendations for possible amelioration of their passenger control practices and procedures while balancing the travel facilitation.



WCO National Workshop for Indonesia Customs on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy

11-15 September 2017, Jakarta, Indonesia



The WCO National Workshop for Indonesia Customs on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy was held on 11-15 September 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia under the sponsorship of the Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF/Japan). A total of 21 Custom officers in charge of border enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) participated in the workshop. Ms. Saori Nojima, Project Manager of the ROCB A/P, facilitated the workshop and resource persons from China Customs and Japan Customs took part in this workshop and shared their respective countries' practices with Indonesian colleagues.

During the workshop, the participants re-examined their current IPR enforcement at the border and impacts of illicit trafficking in IPR infringing goods, by comparing the requirement of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). The participants talked through challenges and possible solutions in a series of group discussions. The discussions covered a wide range of topics such as legal framework, operational procedures, risk analysis, information recordation at Customs, information sharing among Customs officers, cooperation with right holders and training programs. Through the group discussions, the participants identified specific future actions to take the group presentations on their findings to establish common understanding among all the participants for better IPR border enforcement.

The workshop was successfully concluded with the participants' clear recognition of the future institutional and individual actions. The participants showed their appreciation to the WCO, the ROCB A/P, Japan Customs and the resource speakers for their contribution to the workshop.



5-7 September 2017, Chongqing, China

At the invitation of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific (RILO A/P), Mr Tong hua, attended the 29th Administrative Meeting for National Contact Points of RILO A/P, which was held in 5-7 September 2017 in Chongqing, China This meeting introduced ROCB A/P’s Capacity Building efforts in supporting Customs Administrations, in particular the close collaboration between RILO A/P and ROCB A/P for jointly organizing high-class Capacity Building activities in the A/P region

More than 50 delegates and observers, from 21 Member administrations, 5 International Organizations (Interpol, RILO ECE, ROCB A/P, Traffic, WCO Secretariat) , 7 Embassies (Demark, India, Sweden, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Malaysia) attended the meeting and shared information on various regional trends of cross border crimes, such as drugs, security, environmental crimes, commercial fraud and IPR.



WCO and ROCB A/P joined development partners for greater collaboration on trade facilitation

4-7 September 2017, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF) 2017 include a series of trade facilitation-related workshops, were held on 5-6 September 2017 and 7 September 2017 respectively in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, by UNESCAP and ADB, in cooperation with



Indonesia Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs. Approximately 200 delegates from more than 30 countries in the A/P region representing government agencies, including Customs and Commerce Ministries, as well as business organizations, intergovernmental organizations, academia and think-tank institutes participated in the workshop. Mr.

Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, attended the Forum along with Deputy Director of WCO Compliance and Facilitation Directorate. The Forum provided the participants with an opportunity to share their trade facilitation innovations for sustainable development in the A/P region, focusing on key topics including paperless trade, public and private sector partnership, on enabling business environment, e-commerce and digital trade. Following the Forum, the development partner organizations organized capacity building workshops on expediting perishable goods, National Trade facilitation, measuring and monitoring of trade facilitation performance, e-commerce and Single Window interoperability.

Prior to the APTFF and workshops, a meeting of Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade facilitation (ROC-TF) was convened on 4 September 2017 at the same venue, which was attended by representatives from 9 organizations (i.e. ITC, ASEAN, APEC, AFACT, UNESCAP, ADB, WCO, WTO and UNECE).

Mr. Igarashi and WCO Deputy Director took part in this meeting and exchanged views on ways to increase collaboration and coordination on trade facilitation-related capacity building assistance activities. Mr. Igarashi made a presentation on the WCO Mercator Program and its implementation approach as well as pertinent regional capacity



building assistance for 2017/18. Attendees agreed to continue to exchange overviews on their respective activities for prompt implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

ROCB A/P Speaks at AEPC workshop on Trademark Infringement Determinations in a Border Enforcement Context

24 August 2017, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

At the invitation of APEC, Ms. Saori Nojima, Project Manager of the ROCB A/P, attended the workshop on Trademark Determination in a Border Enforcement Context on 24th August 2017 in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

The speakers and participants consisted of Customs, Intellectual Property Officers and private sector discussing the impact of trademark infringement, Customs role in IPR border enforcement, determinations between similar trademarks vs counterfeits, building effective relationships among Customs, Intellectual Property Officers and private sector etc. Ms. Nojima delivered a presentation on Customs roles in IPR Border Enforcement and highlighted the WCO's efforts and activities, common challenges at Customs and the possible way forward.



ROCB A/P raises the awareness of Visionary Leadership in Customs Modernization and Reform for the Myanmar Customs Department

22-23 August 2017, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

At the invitation of the World Bank Group, Trade & Competitiveness of Myanmar, Dr. Tong Hua, Program Manager of the ROCB A/P, attended the Myanmar Customs Leadership Course held on 22 and 23 August 2017 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. At the request of Myanmar Customs Department (MCD), the World Bank Group organized the first executive leadership course, aiming to provide the MCD's executive-class officials with strategic thinking to handle various challenges associated with moving into new and increasingly more complex leadership roles, the course was also an opportunity to gain a better understanding of global Customs initiatives that would assist Myanmar Customs in a fast changing working environment. 15 Director- and Assistant Director-level officials from the MCD and 5 guest speakers, including Dr. Tong, as well as staffs from the World Bank Group and the UKaid attended and/or observed the Course.



Dr. Tong made a presentation on the topic of visionary leadership in customs modernization and reform, in which he highlighted the transformation of customs functions on trade facilitation and supply chain security. He also made a comparative study of the China Customs' regional integrated clearance and paperless

reform including introduction of the Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS), and echoed further input on the capacity building and leadership training program for the MCD. His presentation was well received by the participants and the representative of World Bank and Director of MCD jointly awarded a certificate to Dr. Tong, for recognizing the ROCB A/P's professional input.

WCO reaffirms continuing collaboration with Brunei for capacity enhancement

26-27 July 2017, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

At the invitation of the Royal Brunei Customs and Excise Department (RCED), the WCO delegation consisting Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, and Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, visited Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam to meet Brunei's government leaders and Customs executives and exchange views for their future Customs modernization through active participation in the WCO's initiatives undertaken at global and regional levels. To this end, the WCO delegation met Second Finance Minister, Mr. YB Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Setia Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin haji Ibrahim, at the Ministry of Finance, and Acting Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade respectively and sought their support for furthering human resource development which is regarded as a key for continuing Customs reform and modernization. The delegation visited the RCED Headquarters and had an intensive discussion with RCED Acting Controller, Mr. Pengiran Hasnan Ali Hassan, and his team on possible way forward to deepen mutual collaboration for upheaving the RCED's on-going capacity building. At the request of the RCED Acting Controller, WCO Secretary General gave a special lecture on the Customs' roles on easing of the doing business, which was participated by some 50 RCED officials and representatives from various relevant authorities, including the Prime Minister's Office, followed by interactive question and answer session.



WCO Security Project Launching for Bangladesh

23-25 July 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh

At the invitation of Bangladesh National Board of Revenue (NBR), the WCO delegation consisting Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, and Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, visited Dhaka, Bangladesh to launch the WCO's Security. They also sought political support for accelerating Customs reform and modernization to contend with a series of challenges being discussed at the international arena, such as counter-terrorism and supply chain security and trade facilitation. ROCB A/P worked very closely with the BNR for arranging this visit (also refer to pertinent article at xxx).



Prior to the Launching of the WCO Security Project for Bangladesh (is the first of this kind under the Project for Southeast Asia and its surrounding counties) the WCO delegation met Bangladesh Finance Minister, Mr. Abdul Maal Abdul Muhith, as well as Commerce Minister and Home Affairs Minister respectively to seek their political support for the Customs efforts in modernizing and reforming its business and competencies to better contend with

various challenges of the day. The WCO delegation also had a formal meeting with NBR Chairman, Mr. Nojibur Rahman, and other NBR Members to discuss the WCO's prioritized work agenda and future undertakings, such as furthering economic connectivity, under the vision of "borders divide, Customs connect."

On 25 July 2015, WCO Security Project national launching ceremony was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in the presence of high-level government officials and the Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh. More than 50 officials representing relevant Ministries and stakeholders attended this first national launching event and reaffirmed the whole-government engagement to the Project, which covers border enforcement against precursor and detonators for improvised explosive devices, passenger control with the use of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record, and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. WCO Secretary General gave a keynote address and stressed the need for close cooperation among relevant competent authorities and with business so that the



appropriate balance between control against illicit trafficking and facilitation of legitimate trade could be maintained. This event attracted huge attention of the mass media in Bangladesh.

WCO advocates India's TFA implementation plan

21-22 July 2017, New Delhi, India

At the invitation of India Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), the WCO delegation consisting Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, and Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, visited New Delhi, India with a view to advocating CBEC's on-going commitment to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). To this end, on 21 July 2017, WCO Secretary General participated in the Trade Facilitation Forum held in New Delhi and made a keynote address in front of some 100 audiences representing various stakeholders and development partners, and commended the CBEC for their structured engagement to the TFA implementation through devising a concrete action plan as a good practice. For the purpose of garnering high-level political support for on-going Customs modernization, the WCO delegation met India's Finance Minister, Mr. Arun Jaitley, as well as Revenue Secretary and Commerce Secretary respectively and called for whole government approaches to create synergy for furthering the trade facilitation and economic connectivity. The WCO delegation had candid exchange with CBEC Chairperson, Ms. Vanaja N. Sarna, and other Board Members on various topics, including India's experiences in the recent introduction of GST and the management of the National Committee on Trade Facilitation, as well as Customs and Tax cooperation and illicit financial flow.



WCO supports Pakistan accelerating Customs modernization

18-19 July 2017, Islamabad, Pakistan

At the invitation of Pakistan Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the WCO delegation consisting Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, and Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, visited Islamabad, Pakistan with a view to meeting Pakistani government leaders to seek their political support for the on-going Customs reform and modernization and encourage their further contribution and commitment to a series of challenges surrounding Customs, including trade facilitation and supply chain security. To this end, the WCO delegation met Pakistani Finance Minister, Mr. Mohammad Ishaq Dar, as well as Commerce Minister and Special Assistant for Prime Minister on Revenue at the FRB Headquarters, in order to raise profile of the WCO activities and exchanged candid views on a series of matters, including counter-terrorism and supply chain security, trade facilitation and economic competitiveness, illicit financial flow, deployment of technologies and introduction of innovative business models, and Customs reform and modernization. On the same vein, the WCO delegation had very productive discussions with FRB Member (Customs), Mr. Muhammad Zahid, and his team on the way to future enhance collaboration between FRB and WCO.



High-level policy dialogue with Afghan government leaders on Customs modernization

16-17 July 2017, Kabul, Afghanistan



At the invitation of Afghan Customs Department (ACD), the WCO delegation consisting Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, and Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, visited Kabul, Afghanistan with a view to meeting Afghan government leaders to seek their political support for the on-going Customs reform and modernization. In Kabul, the WCO delegation met Afghan President, Mr. Ashraf Ghani, and cabinet ministers, including Finance Minister and Commerce Minister. WCO delegation had an intensive discussion with ACD Director General, Mr. Ahmad Reshad Popal, and his team on the future collaboration, especially in capacity building and more participation in the WCO activities. The delegation also visited Afghan Customs and tax Academy, where WCO Secretary General gave words of encouragement to the trainees. With kind arrangement made by the ACD, the delegation visited Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries as well and exchanged views on Customs-Business cooperation from various perspectives to further modernize ACD and ameliorate business environment for the sake of the country's economic development and stability.

WCO Regional Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)

17-20 July 2017, Melbourne, Australia

WCO Regional Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) was conducted on 17-20 July 2017 in Melbourne, Australia, under the sponsorship of CCF/Japan, and in cooperation with the ROCB A/P and Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), along with strong contribution from the resource person from the WCO. There were in total 33 delegates from the A/P Region, including delegates from the RILO AP. Mr. Poonyawee Sroythong of the ROCB A/P participated in the Workshop as a facilitator. This Regional Workshop was conducted with strong support and closed collaboration with the Australian Government and the RILO A/P. Specialists from the Australian Border Force and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission gave exclusive lectures about law enforcement, investigation, prosecution, and identification regarding the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Representatives from the RILO AP made a presentation on the analytical outcomes of the security-related offences. Participants shared their national practices and enforcement experiences.



WCO/Norad Project Mission on Stakeholder Engagement and Client Service for Vietnam Customs

10-14 July 2017, Hanoi, Vietnam

WCO/Norad Project Mission on Stakeholder Engagement and Client Service for Vietnam Customs was conducted on 10-14 July in Hanoi, Vietnam. Ms. Saori Nojima, Project Manager of the ROCB A/P, participated in the Mission as a resource person.



This was a final Mission to Vietnam under the WCO/Norad Project, which has been carried out since 2013, and entailed consultations and discussions on the project progresses as well as way forward for maintaining stakeholder engagement and improving client service. Outcomes of the WCO/Norad Project were reviewed and incorporated into an initial diagnostic report and recommendations for the WCO Mercator Program, which is designed to provide tailor-made support for the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). Given that stakeholder engagement and client service are regarded as important components of the WTO TFA, the Mission aimed at ensuring sustainability for the implementation of the WTO TFA. In the course of the Mission, Ms. Nojima made some presentations on the WCO Mercator Program with a view to fostering common understanding among participants and facilitated the diagnostic discussions. The Mission was successfully completed and the contributions of all stakeholders was duly appreciated in closing the event.



129th/130th Sessions of the WCO Council Convened

6-8 July 2017



The 129th/130th Session of the WCO Council was convened on 6-8 July 2017 at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels, in which more than 400 delegates and observers participated. Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, attended the sessions as an observer. In the wake of the Secretary General's report on the WCO activities over the last 12 months, the Council received a report from the WCO's respective technical committees' outcomes and adopted

the tools and guidelines endorsed by these committees. The Council also discussed several important policy matters, including governance issues, status of the WCO Regional Bodies, use of additional languages for the WCO Meetings, future accession to the WCO, and WCO budget issues. Due to intensive discussions on some of the policy issues, the Council agreed to convene an extraordinary Session in December 2017 at the WCO Headquarters to further discuss outstanding subjects including the election of Deputy Secretary General.

At the regional consultation session, which was presided by the Regional vice Chair, (i.e. Fiji) delegations from the A/P region agreed to the regional representation to the key WCO committees, such as the Policy Commission and Finance Committee. Seizing the opportunity of this high-level gathering, Mr. Igarashi called for the A/P Member administrations' continued support and contribution to the ROCB A/P's activities, especially the Regional Workshop Follow-Up Survey.

On this occasion of the Council Sessions, delegates celebrated the WCO's 65th Anniversary of its establishment along with the reunion of the WCO Professional Associates.

Staff Update

Welcome Mr. Jo, Hong-Young, Our New Colleague



Dear Fellows,

I am Hong-Young JO from Korea Customs. It's my pleasure and honor to be part in WCO ROCB A/P Team. First of all, I would like to express my thanks to my colleagues of ROCB A/P and Thai Customs for sincere welcome.

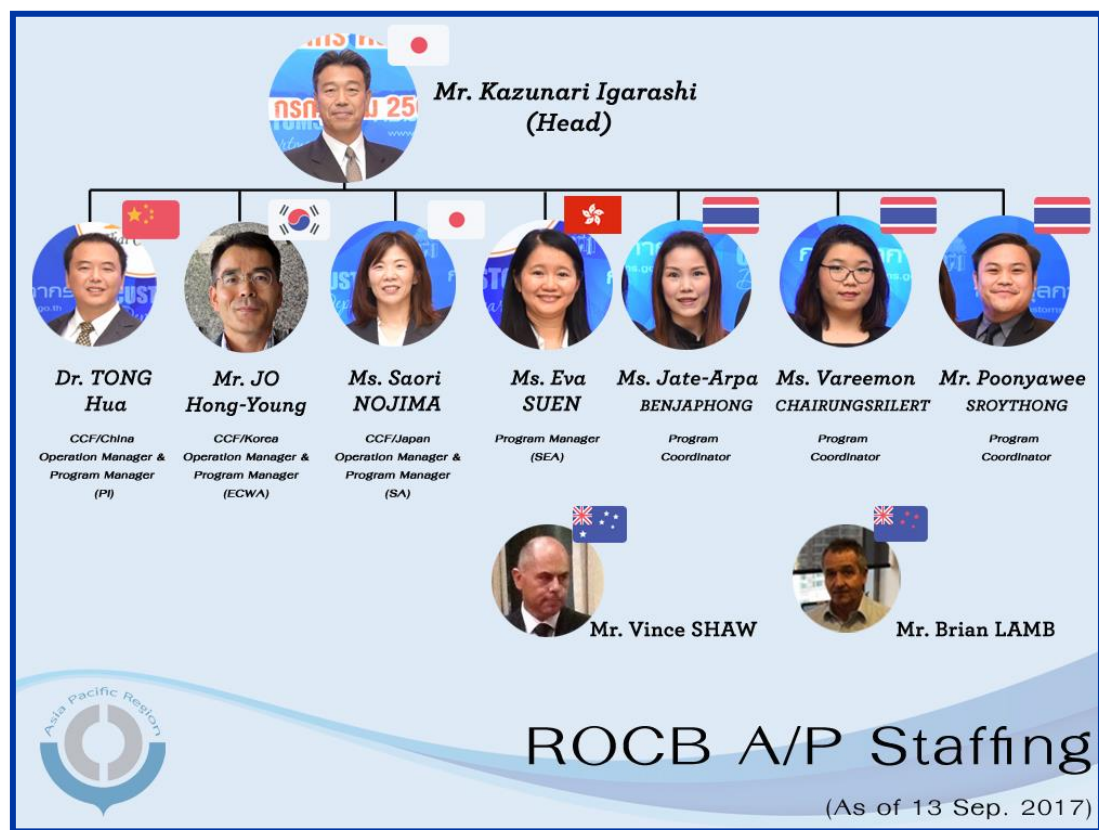
I have worked for Customs for around 32years in various areas including International affairs. During working period, I was proud of being an actor to introduce of new initiatives to Korea Customs e.g. Risk Management and AEO Program. Keeping this positive performance in my mind, I will work here with my valuable colleagues.

Briefly introduce by myself. I earned Master degree from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in the Unites States in 2008. I was accredited as a WCO Technical Operational Advisor in the AEO field in 2013. I have 2 daughters, first child is junior in colleague majoring in Chinese and second girl is 2nd grade in high school. My favorite sport is playing ping-pong. To be honest with you, I'm a representative player of Korea Customs.

The ROCB A/P has been taking key role to manage well capacity building projects since establishment. As one member of ROCB A/P Team, I will contribute to develop meaningful workshop and meeting for capacity building in this A/P region.

Here is new place and challenge for my life. I believe I make good relationship with dear colleagues and fruitful result. I am looking forward to happiness with you all in work.

Organization Arrangement



ROCB A/P is having 8 full-time seconded staff members (as of 13 September 2017), 1 from China, 1 from Korea, 1 from Hong Kong, China, 2 from Japan (including Head of the ROCB A/P), and 3 from Thailand.

In addition, the representatives from the Australia Department of Immigration and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) and New Zealand Customs Service based in Bangkok provide regular support and assistance to the ROCB A/P's activities.

The ROCB A/P very much appreciates to the home administrations of the above-mentioned seconded staff members for their contributions to the ROCB A/P and the

regional capacity building (CB) activities. The ROCB A/P would like to extend its profound appreciation to Japan Customs and Korea Customs Services (KCS) for providing financial support through their respective Customs Cooperation Funds (CCF/Japan, CCF/Korea and CCF/China respectively), who are the main sponsors for the CB activities conducted by the ROCB A/P. In addition, the ROCB A/P would like to express its special thanks to our development partners (DPs), in particular the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Regional Vice Chair, the Regional Training Centers (RTCs) as well as our host administration, the Thai Customs Department, for their contributions in various forms.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES

WCO A/P CB/TA Programs and Meetings Schedule

October 2017 and onwards (Indicative)

(NB) Official invitation will be circulated in due course

Event	Dates	Venue
◆ WCO National Workshop on Customs Valuation for Indonesia	9-13 Oct. 2016	tbd, Indonesia
◆ WCO A/P Contact Point Meeting	11-13 Oct. 2017	Cairns, Australia
◆ WCO Technology and Innovation Forum	31 Oct. – 2 Nov. 2017	Tokyo, Japan
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on TFA	6-10 Nov. 2017	Kashiwa, Japan
◆ WCO National Workshop on Risk Management for Bhutan	6-10 Nov. 2017	tbd, Bhutan
◆ WCO National Workshop on Hs and Advance Ruling for Lao PDR	13-17 Nov. 2017	Vientiane, Lao PDR
◆ WCO National Workshop on Risk Management for Nepal	14-17 Nov. 2017	tbd, Nepal,
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Cyber Investigation and Digital Forensics	21-23 Nov. 2017	Hong Kong, China
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Risk Management and Post Seizure Analysis	4-8 Dec. 2017	Kashiwa, Japan
◆ WCO Sub-regional Workshop on IPR for the Pacific	4-8 Dec. 2017	Suva, Fiji
◆ WCO Council Session	14-15 Dec. 2017	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO National Workshop on AEO for Sri Lanka	8-11 Jan. 2018	tbd, Sri Lanka
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Accreditation of ROO Experts	15-19 Jan. 2018	tbd, Korea
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Accreditation of Mercator Program Advisors	22-26 Jan. 2018	Suva, Fiji
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on AEO	5-9 Feb. 2018	tbd, Korea
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Accreditation of HS Experts	5-9 Feb. 2018	Kashiwa, Japan
◆ WCO Global Meeting of Heads of ROCBs/RTCs/VCs	22-23 Feb. 2018	Brussels, Belgium
◆ A/P Regional Training Center Heads Meeting	22 Feb. 2018	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO Capacity Building Committee Meeting	26-28 Feb. 2018	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO integrity Sub-Committee Meeting	1-2 Mar. 2018	Brussels, Belgium

◆ WCO National Workshop on PCA for Malaysia	5-9 Mar. 2018	tbd, Malaysia
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Money Laundering	12-15 Mar. 2018	Sydney, Australia
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Compliance and Enforcement Package	23-27 Apr. 2018	Melaka, Malaysia
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Human Resource Development	24-27 Apr. 2018	Hanoi, Vietnam
◆ WCO Council Session	28-30 Jun. 2018	Brussels, Belgium

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