

E-newsletter  
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# ROCB

Asia Pacific Region

WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building



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ROCB A/P Annual Work Plan 2015/2016

ROCB A/P Staff Changed

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Mr. Jing Cheng, Mr. Kangsik Cho, Mr. Takayuki Miyoshi,  
Ms. Alpha Wong, Ms. Pariyabhat Ariyapongkoon,  
Ms. Narumon Siricharoenwat

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## Foreword

Bangkok, October 2015

Dear Readers,



It is my great honor and pleasure to greet you as the incumbent Head of the ROCB A/P on the occasion of publicizing a commemorative 50<sup>th</sup> issue of the ROCB A/P Newsletter. Recalling the first Newsletter of the ROCB issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2004, I cannot help thinking of the passion, commitment and determination of my predecessors as well as former and current ROCB A/P colleagues in continuously disseminating relevant information on a series of activities undertaken by the ROCB A/P on a quarterly basis over the last 11 years. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest appreciation and most profound compliments to their dedication and accomplishments. At the same time, I myself determined to continue close communication and dissemination of pertinent information to the regional member administrations to assure accountability and governance.

Coincidentally, the WCO A/P Customs News being published by Regional Vice-Chair (currently the Royal Malaysian Customs Department) marks its 50<sup>th</sup> issue. I would like to present my compliments to the regional member Customs administrations and Regional Vice-Chair for commemorating 50<sup>th</sup> issue of such an enlightening publication, which indeed showcases active commitment and support from the entire regional member administrations and proves that the A/P region is one of the most active and dynamic regions through continued innovation and advancement in Customs reform and modernization as well as enhanced international cooperation and experience sharing. Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the ROCB A/P, I am pleased to renew my readiness and determination to contribute to achieving shared goals of better and effective Customs under the flag of the WCO in the years to come.

This issue features the ROCB A/P's activities undertaken in the period between July and September 2015. As the readers of this E-Newsletter are aware, this E-Newsletter is a media to disseminate pertinent information of the region's capacity building activities and member administrations' continued efforts in reform and modernization.

## Foreword

In this respect, I would like to highlight an insightful contribution from Dr. Somchai Sujjapongse, ex-Director General of the Thai Customs Department (currently Permanent Secretary of the Royal Thai Ministry of Finance), on his leadership in implementing international standards, namely accession to the Revised Kyoto Convention and conclusion of AEO Mutual Recognition Arrangement, as well as fostering close coordination towards establishing a national Single Window; and commitment to the ASEAN Single Window with a view to responding to the emerging challenges and changing global business environment. Thai Customs has been one of the members, who have most actively participated in the regional capacity building programs. Capacity building programs should be designed and delivered in a result-oriented manner and, at the same time, member administrations participating in the capacity building programs are encouraged to make proactive commitment and efforts to this end. Therefore, the recent accomplishments of the Thai Customs Department as articulated in Dr. Somchai's contribution are quite exemplifying anecdotes and his contribution perfectly fits in this commemorative 50<sup>th</sup> issue of the E-Newsletter of the ROCB A/P, which has been embraced within the premises of the Thai Customs Department.

In the context of result-oriented approach towards capacity building, starting in July 2015, I have initiated a Regional Workshop Follow-up Survey, to be completed by the Workshop participants on their actual actions taken and lessons learnt from the workshops. For more details, please refer to the pertinent article under the Special Topics.

I would like to also highlight the publication of the ROCB A/P's Annual Report 2014/2015. Hard copies will be mailed to the respective member administrations in due course. Among other things, it is noteworthy that the participants to the regional workshops marked the record high in 2014/2015 thanks to the members' keen interest. Throughout the editing process of this Annual Report, I reaffirmed the value of the collaboration among the relevant parties concerned, (including the WCO Secretariat, Regional Vice-Chair, regional member administrations and relevant stakeholders), on the ever-increasing demand of high-quality capacity building programs to contend with and the challenges faced by the international Customs community. I also would like to thank my colleagues at the ROCB A/P, especially Ms. Alpha- Wong and Ms. Yotsawadee Trakonsup, for their unsparing dedication and contribution to editing the Annual Report, which I am very proud to present to the Customs community around the world.

This edition of the E-Newsletter and previous editions are made available at the ROCB A/P's homepage at [www.rocb-ap.org](http://www.rocb-ap.org). ROCB A/P calls for the Readers' candid feedback and inputs to E-Newsletter as well as critical suggestions to the activities undertaken by the ROCB A/P with a view to ensuring high quality of our work.

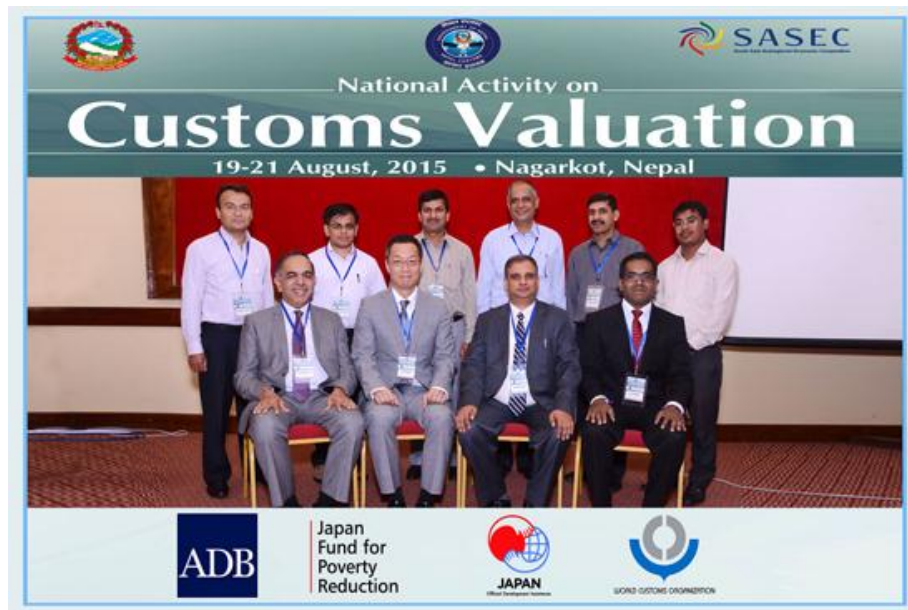
Yours sincerely,



Kazunari Igarashi  
Head of the ROCB A/P

## ROCB A/P's Workshops and Meetings

### First National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for Nepal Customs under the WCO-ADB Multi-year Assistance for SASEC Countries (\*)



19 August 2015, Nagarkot, Nepal

The ROCB A/P and the ADB with support from the WCO Secretariat conducted the First National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for Nepal Customs under the WCO-ADB Multi-year Assistance for the SASEC Countries (Multi-year Project) from 19 to 21 August 2015 in Nagarkot, Nepal. Three Project Core Members (PCMs) of this Multi-year Project and 3 supporting officers from Nepal Customs met with the experts from Maldives, Sri Lanka and the ROCB A/P.

This Multi-year Project is designed to support SASEC Countries to realize the proper management of Customs Valuation control ideally through Post Clearance Audit by ensuring both effective trade facilitation and proper collection of national revenue. The Project consists of (i) two Sub-regional Workshops, in which the respective countries create their own tailor-made Action Plans to enhance capacity for proper management of Customs Valuation control; and (ii) two national expert missions to support implementing their respective Action Plans. Each participating SASEC country is required to set their own target under the multi-year Project in its Action Plan. Accordingly, Nepal Customs has set its target as "Draw up a model training course with a set of training materials".

During the 3-day activity, the participants and experts; (i) updated a set of training materials and (ii) discussed how to prepare for the next final activity under this project. The Final activity for Nepal Customs under this multi-year project is provisionally agreed to being organized in March 2016, in which PCMs are expected to deliver lectures on Customs valuation control for their colleagues by using the created training materials under this multi-year project.

(\*) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka



8 September 2015, Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran

The WCO, in cooperation with the ROCB A/P and the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), organized the WCO Sub-Regional Workshop on Customs Valuation from 8 to 11 September 2015 in Tehran, Iran, under the sponsorship of the CCF/Japan. Mr. Takayuki Miyoshi and Ms. Pariyabhat Ariyapongkason joined the WCO Secretariat resource person and facilitated the Workshop. In total, 9 participants from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan including 11 observers from the host country, Iran, attended the Workshop.

The objectives of this Workshop were to; (i) develop and deepen the participants' knowledge on Customs valuation and its effective control, and (ii) enhance their training skills and potential for being a national trainer on the Customs valuation.

WCO and ROCB experts delivered lectures on the WTO Valuation Agreement, various measures for valuation control including Post Clearance Audit and trainers' skills and methodology. During the Workshop, discussions about national valuation challenges also took place between the participants and experts.



## ROCB A/P's Workshops and Meetings

### Customs and Business Cooperation to contend with IPR Infringing



21 September 2015, Melacca, Malaysia

WCO, in cooperation with the ROCB A/P, RILO A/P and Royal Malaysian Customs Department, organized the Regional IPR Train-the-Trainer Workshop for the Joint Enforcement Action against Counterfeiting and Piracy in the Asia/Pacific Region on 21-23 September 2015 in Malaysia. The financial support for the workshop was provided by Customs Cooperation Fund of Japan (CCF/Japan). A total of 26 participants from the 23 member Customs administrations participated in this Workshop. Mr. Kangsik Cho attended this Regional Workshop as a resource person, along with other resource persons from the WCO Secretariat, RILO A/P and Japan Customs.

Participants were provided opportunities to get practical knowledge i. e. risk-based targeting for effective IPR border enforcement, information sharing among member administrations and cooperation with right holders. Representatives from 8 private companies made presentations on how to identify the products.

## ROCB A/P's Workshops and Meetings

### ROCB A/P Supports the First Regional Seminar on COPES



22 September 2015, Hong Kong, China

The WCO and Hong Kong Customs jointly organized the WCO Regional Seminar on COPES (Compendium of Customs Operational Practices for Enforcement and Seizures) at the Regional Training Center, Hong Kong, China, from 22 to 24 September 2015. As the first regional seminar under the COPES Project, the ROCB A/P supported the seminar by sending Ms. Alpha Wong to assist with logistics arrangements and facilitate the Seminar.

A total of 32 participants from 15 Customs administrations in the A/P region took part in the seminar, which was led by criminal investigation experts from the WCO. Through the lectures and syndicate group exercises, seminar participants were introduced to the methodologies and techniques in handling intelligence and seized goods with a view to increasing the quality of prosecution. Such invaluable know-how had been included in the COPES as well as the WCO Customs Risk Management Compendium. It is also expected that COPES Seminar complements Customs capacity building aspect of the Customs Anti-Drug Strategy initiated by Hong Kong Customs.

The Workshop was very successful with participants' actively involved. They all appreciated the hard work and contributions made by the WCO, the ROCB A/P and Hong Kong Customs.



## ROCB A/P's Workshops and Meetings

### First National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for India Customs under the WCO-ADB Multi-year Assistance for SASEC Countries (\*)

28 September 2015, Faridabad, India

The ROCB A/P and the ADB with support from the WCO Secretariat conducted the First National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for India Customs under the WCO-ADB multi-year Assistance for the SASEC Countries (Multi-year Project) from 28 September to 1 October 2015 in Faridabad, India. 3 Project Core Members (PCMs) of this Multi-year Project of India Customs and experts from India, Sri Lanka and the ROCB A/P joined the work.



This Multi-year Project was designed to support SASEC Countries' efforts to realize the proper management of Customs Valuation control ideally through Post Clearance Audit for ensuring both effective trade facilitation and proper collection of national revenue. The Project consists of (i) two Sub-regional Workshops, in which the respective countries created own tailor-made Action Plans to enhance capacity for proper management of Customs Valuation control; and (ii) two national expert missions to support implementing their respective Action Plans. Each participating SASEC country is required to set its own target under the Multi-year Project in its Action Plan. Accordingly, India Customs has set its target as "Conduct National Workshop of training for trainers in India after finalizing the model training module (course) and training materials".

## ROCB A/P's Workshops and Meetings

## First National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for India Customs under the WCO-ADB Multi-year Assistance for SASEC Countries (\*) (Continued)

During the 4-day activity, the PCMs and the experts; (i) organized the 3-day National Workshop for training of trainers programme on Onsite Post Clearance Audit and (ii) discussed how to further improve the quality of the training course and its materials and prepare for the next final activity under this project. The Final activity for India Customs under this Multi-year Project is provisionally agreed to be organized in June 2016, in which PCMs are expected to deliver lectures on Customs Valuation control for their colleagues by using the finalized training

(\*) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

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## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### Ad-hoc Study Meeting with Thai Suvarnabhumi Airport Customs

27 July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

On 27 July 2015, at the request of the Thai Customs Department's Suvarnabhumi Airport Passenger Control Customs Bureau, Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P had an ad-hoc study meeting with Mr. Chaikut Kumkun, Director of Suvarnabhumi Airport Passenger Control Customs Bureau, along with his staff members on duty and tax calculation. Mr. Igarashi, (former Deputy Director for Passenger Processing at Japan Customs and Tariff Bureau), provided a thorough explanation on duty free allowances for air passengers and duty and tax calculations by applying simplified duty rates. He also explained to Mr. Chaikut the Customs clearance procedures for commercial cargo carried by air passengers.



This ad-hoc meeting was meant to explore further streamlining options for passenger processing at Suvarnabhumi Airport, especially taxation of air passengers goods, in the wake of the Thai Customs Department's decision to introduce credit card payment of Customs duties and taxes, which will be started on 1 September 2015.

The ROCB A/P is more than happy to have any sort of ad-hoc study meetings upon Member administrations' request across various domains.



## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### WCO National Workshop on IPR for Bangladesh

2 to 6 August 2015, Sylhet, Bangladesh

Reported by Mr. Masashi GOHARA

IPR Specialist

IPR National Center

Japan Customs

The WCO organized a National Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for Bangladesh Customs at Sylhet, Bangladesh, from 2 to 6 August 2015. The main objective of the Workshop was to raise awareness among the officers of the Bangladesh National Board of Revenue (NBR) and to help familiarize them with the latest counterfeiting trends. I took part in the Workshop as a Japanese Expert in the field of IPR.

The Workshop was launched with an opening ceremony attended by three Ministers responsible for counterfeiting, health and safety issues (Minister of Finance, Minister of Social Welfare and State Minister of Finance and Planning), demonstrating the government-wide proactive stance and strong political will towards addressing IPR issues.

The Workshop was facilitated by three IPR Experts, namely Ms. Junko Yamamoto from the WCO (Mission Leader), Mr. Sha Jie, WCO Accredited Expert for IPR from China Customs, and me. During the course of the Workshop, the three Experts discussed how IPR infringements could negatively impact socio-economic well-being and how Customs plays an important part in combating such



infringements. The Experts and participants also shared the good practices of Japan, China, Bangladesh and other Customs authorities with respect to IPR border measures, leading to a lively and fruitful discussion. Of particular significance was the final day of the Workshop when we welcomed more than 10 Right Holders who gave us a product identification training

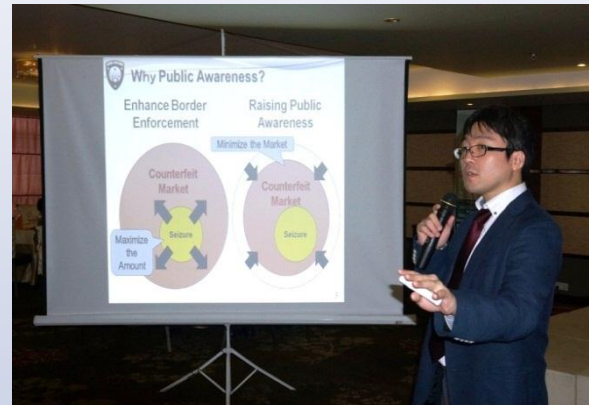
course. This was the first such event in the history of Bangladesh Customs.

## ROCB A/P's Contributions

## WCO National Workshop on IPR for Bangladesh (Continued)

As we are all painfully aware, the issue of counterfeiting and piracy is becoming a big concern. It stifles innovation and obstructs economic development. It also generates financing for criminal organizations and endangers people's health and safety. Through this Workshop, all the participants were reminded of the importance of Customs' duty to combat counterfeiting. I have no doubt that the productive outcome of the Workshop will contribute to stronger IPR border measures by Bangladesh Customs. I look forward to hearing their major successes in this field from my new best friends in Bangladesh in the near future.

As an active donor, Japan Customs will further enhance capacity building activities, which have been carried out for a long time.



## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### ROCB A/P Promotes the WCO CLiKC! Platform among the ASEAN Customs Capacity Building Directors

20 August 2015, Bangkok, Thailand



Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, (Head of the ROCB A/P), attended the 17th meeting of the ASEAN Customs Capacity Building Working Group in Bangkok. Mr Igarashi spoke about the latest developments in the WCO CLiKC to encourage the ASEAN Member Customs administrations to make better use of the e-learning modules as part of their human resource development efforts.

More than 20 delegates from the ASEAN Secretariat and the Member Customs administrations participated in the Meeting. Mr. Igarashi also seized this opportunity to brief them on their administrations' participation in the WCO's regional capacity building programs. These were organized in cooperation with the ROCB A/P in 2014/2015, and the rationales behind the planned regional capacity building programs contained in the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016. In the wake of the presentation, a delegate of Thai Customs shared his administration's approach for the use CLiKC, the E-learning modules, which are mandatory in their training programs, also included some associated challenges.



## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### ROCB A/P Represents the WCO to APEC Secure Travel Workshop

30 August 2015, Cebu, the Philippines



Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, attended the APEC Secure Travel Workshop on Countering Foreign Terrorist Fighter Travel, which was held on 30-31 August 2015 in Cebu, Philippines. The workshop objectives were to discuss and share good practices in implementing the UNSCR 2178 (2014) on countering so-called “foreign terrorist fighters” and mitigate relevant security threats in the Asia/Pacific region. Approximately 60 representatives from the APEC member economies and international organizations, including the WCO, attended the Workshop.

Mr. Igarashi, as one of guest speakers, made a presentation on the WCO’s initiatives in securing aviation travel, in particular, responding to the adoption of the UNSCR 2178 (2014) from the Customs perspectives. Also discussed the roles being undertaken by WCO at international level, and by the Customs at national level respectively, in leading coordinated border management to contend with a series of challenges in border control. Representatives of the US Customs and Border Protection and US Transportation Security Administration led the Workshop as resource speakers. Participants actively contributed to the discussion sharing their experiences in counter terrorism measures. Participants underlined the needs and importance of continued experience sharing and capacity building to contend with complex challenges.

## ROCB A/P's Contributions

## ROCB A/P Briefs the WCO's Counter-Terrorism and Security Initiatives to APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group

1 September 2015, Cebu, the Philippines

Upon a request from the WCO Secretariat, Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, attended the 6th APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group, held on 1-3 September 2015 in Cebu, Philippines. Mr. Igarashi briefed working group on the WCO's counter-terrorism and security initiatives, which were unanimously adopted at the recent WCO Council Sessions in June 2015. The aim was to deepen the understanding of latest technical standards developed by the WCO and seeking possible collaboration in the Asia/Pacific region to contend with perceived complex challenges in supply chain and travel security.



In his presentation, Mr. Igarashi highlighted the principles and 4 core elements of the SAFE FoS, including the addition of new Pillar 3 on Customs and other Government agencies cooperation including the electronic pre-loading cargo information requirement, as well as updates of Customs-



Business Partnership Guidelines and AEO Compendium. He also explained the advancement in the aviation security program and adoption of the WCO security initiative. The Working Group welcomed and appreciated the WCO's contribution with the sharing on updated information on these trade supply chain security measures. It was recognized there are good potentials for

both APEC and WCO to collaborate, especially in capacity building for the implementation of these newly adopted standards and guidelines to ensure safety of supply chain and travel security in the Asia/Pacific region.

## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### ROCB A/P Highlights WCO's Effort in Building Members' Capacity for Paperless Trade

9 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

At the invitation of the UNESCAP, Ms. Alpha Wong of the ROCP A/P attended the first meeting of the Legal and Technical Working Groups of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation, held on 9-11 September 2015 at the UN Convention Center in Bangkok, Thailand. Forty-seven representatives from 19 UNESCAP Member administrations, including some Customs officials, and UN advisers on paperless trade participated in the Meeting.



The Legal and Technical Working Groups were established under the above-said Steering Group in April 2015 with a view to further improving the draft text of the regional arrangement for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade and preparing a draft road map for the implementation of substantive provisions in the draft text. During the 3-day meeting, there were plenary discussion and break-out session for the two Working Groups to discuss the draft articles one by one as well as deliverables for supporting members in the implementation of paperless trade. Ms. Wong spoke on the WCO tools for facilitating trade and activities organized by the WCO and the ROCB A/P to build capacity of Customs



## ROCB A/P's Contributions

## ROCB A/P Promotes WCO Economic Competitiveness Package to ASEM Eurasia Symposium

10 September 2015, Seoul, Korea



Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, attended the ASEM Symposium on Eurasia Transport and Logistics Network, held on 10 September 2015 in Seoul, Korea. Approximately 500 delegates, including Transport Ministers/Vice Ministers and Ambassadors of ASEM member countries, attended this Symposium. Mr. Igarashi, as WCO representative, joined a Panel Session on “Seamless Transport Network in Eurasia: Maritime Transport” and spoke about the WCO’s missions and on-going initiatives in facilitating trade through development of pertinent tools and guidelines. Among other things, he highlighted the contents and expected effects of the Economic Competitiveness Package (ECP), which participating countries in the Eurasian Network may adopt and refer in the course of designing harmonized and simplified common border-crossing procedures on every mode of transport while assuring supply chain security.

This high-level Symposium was organized to discuss the social and economic potentials to reinvigorate establish a multi-modal transport and network corridor between Asia and Europe, had been proposed by Korean President Park Geun-hye at the ASEM Summit Meeting in October 2014. Against this background, President Park herself attended the opening session and delivered welcome remarks. President Park stressed the potential of the economic and social development alongside a continent-wide corridor, and made proposals which the participating countries need to tackle jointly. In this regard, President Park touched upon the imperative need to get rid of regulatory barriers through simplified and harmonized Customs border crossing procedures. President Park discussed taking remedies to a number of challenges and bottlenecks, which she referred to in her remarks around Customs clearance simplification and harmonization. President Park proposed establishing an Expert Group and expressed her government’s readiness to host its first meeting in spring next year. In the wake of President Park’s remarks and photo session, there were keynote speeches from the Ministers/Vice Ministers in charge of Transport from 19 countries reaffirming their support and commitment to the Eurasian Transport and Logistics Network project.

## ROCB A/P's Contributions

### ROCB A/P Optimizes Customs Joint Enforcement through Capacity Building

15-17 September 2015, Yogyakarta, Indonesia



Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of ROCB A/P, attended the 27th Administrative Meeting for National Contact Points of RILO A/P, which was held on 15-17 September 2015 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He shared ROCB A/P's on-going efforts in supporting the regional Customs community's efforts in contending with various illicit trafficking through organization of pertinent capacity building programs. More than 50 delegates and observers, from 19 Member administrations and 3 regional bodies (ROCB A/P, RILO ECE and RILO ME), attended the Meeting.

Delegates heard presentations on the regional trends in illicit trafficking as well as members' experiences in countering various customs offences, such as drugs, including New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), environmental crime, IPR and commercial fraud. He re-affirmed the importance of enhancing international cooperation and information sharing among the member.



## Guest Visits

### Japanese Customs Attaché Waters the ROCB Trees



23 July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

On 23 July 2015, Mr. Keiichi Tatsumi, a Customs Attaché to the Japanese Embassy in Thailand, paid a courtesy visit to the ROCB A/P. Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, welcomed him. Mr. Tatsumi joined the ROCB A/P staff members to welcome Lao Customs colleagues visiting Thailand for their study visit sponsored by JICA. On this occasion, he was invited to water the ROCB Trees, which were planted in commemoration of the ROCB A/P's 10th anniversary and symbolize the region's growing cooperation in capacity building activities.





## Guest Visits

### Laos Customs Colleagues Visit the ROCB A/P



23 July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

On the occasion of a study visit to the Thai Customs Department, sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), a group of Lao Customs colleagues paid a courtesy visit to the ROCB A/P on 23 July 2015. The group was led by Mr. Masaki Okamoto, a JICA Expert. Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, and other ROCB A/P staff members warmly welcomed them. Mr. Igarashi told them about the ROCB A/P's role in coordinating capacity building programs and his hope of working closely with Lao Customs to assist their continuous efforts in Customs reform and modernization. He also wished that their study visit will be a fruitful one and provided some lessons learnt.



## Guest Visits

### ROCB A/P and RILO A/P Seek Synergy in Technical Assistance Programs



18 August 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

On 18 August 2015, Mr. Lee Chul-hun, Deputy Head of RILO A/P, and Mr. Wang Liang, Intelligence Analyst, visited the ROCB A/P to discuss ways to collaborate and seek synergy in the capacity building programs to be delivered in 2015/2016.

This was Mr. Lee's first visit to the ROCB A/P in the capacity of his newly assigned Deputy Head of RILO A/P. Mr Lee and Mr Wang were warmly welcomed by Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, (Head of the ROCB A/P), Mr. Cheng Jing and Ms. Alpha Wong. Mr. Igarashi provided a briefing on the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016, which has been based on the annual needs survey conducted jointly with Japan Customs earlier this year. (Approved Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016 is made available on the ROCB A/P's website at [http://www.rocb-ap.org/file\\_media/file\\_document/rocbplan/ROCB%20AP%20Annual%20Work%20Plan%202015-2016.pdf](http://www.rocb-ap.org/file_media/file_document/rocbplan/ROCB%20AP%20Annual%20Work%20Plan%202015-2016.pdf)).

The ROCB A/P and RILO A/P have agreed to maintain close cooperation to enrich the context of the planned regional and national workshops, especially those related to enforcement and intelligence functions, for the sake of the regional Members' interest and needs.

## Guest Visits

### Korea Customs Attachés Visit the ROCB A/P to Bid a Farewell and Say Hello



21 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. You Young-han, departing Korea Customs Attaché based in Thailand, and Mr. Lee Chul-jae, (Mr. You's successor) visited the ROCB A/P. Mr. You, who served as Korea Customs Attaché at the Korea Embassy in Thailand for 3 years, wished the ROCB A/P continued growth and success.

In return, Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P thanked him, as a representative of Korea Customs Service, for his personal friendship as well as KCS' continued support for the ROCB A/P in various forms, including the secondment of a Project Manager to the Office. Mr Igarashi also wished Mr. You continued success and good health. Mr. Lee was kindly introduced to ROCB A/P staff who warmly welcomes him to Bangkok. ROCB A/P sincerely hopes the existing close cooperation between KCS and ROCB A/P is further strengthened in the years to come.

## Guest Visits

### ASEAN Customs Capacity Building Working Group Participants Visit ROCB A/P



21 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. Oentarto Wibowo, Chairperson of the ASEAN Customs Capacity Building Working Group (CCBWG), and participants at the meeting including representatives of the ASEAN Secretariat paid a courtesy visit to the ROCB A/P. The visit was arranged by the Thai Customs Department, who hosted the ASEAN CCBWG Meeting on 19-21 September 2015 in Bangkok. Delegates were warmly welcomed by Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head of the ROCB A/P, and other ROCB A/P.

Mr. Igarashi took this opportunity to introduce the ROCB A/P staff members to them and gave a brief explanation of the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016. Mr. Igarashi encouraged their active participation in the planned regional/national training opportunities. Mr. Igarashi also called for close contact with the ROCB A/P so that the future WCO national workshops for the respective ASEAN Members could be organized and delivered in a more relevant and focused manner. After taking group and individual photos at the ROCB A/P entrance, all of the delegates were cordially invited to water the so-called 'ROCB A/P trees', which were planted in commemoration of the ROCB A/P's 10th anniversary ceremony in November 2015.



## Special Topics

### Reaching the New Frontier of Thai Customs



**A special article by Dr. Somchai Sujjapongse,  
Director General of the Thai Customs Department**

#### ***Moving towards the RKC***

After several years of pushing forwards to become a contracting party of the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention: RKC), Thai Customs officially became the 100th member of the RKC since the Instrument of Accession was deposited with the WCO Secretary General, Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, during the 125th/126th Sessions of the Customs Co-operation Council on 12 June 2015.

After acceding to the Convention, it is necessary for Thai Customs to comply with Article 3 of the Convention which refers to the acceptance of the Body and the General Annex of the Convention. However, prior to of the accession to the RKC, Thai Customs must amend its national laws and regulations to be in line with the RKC provision.

This is another historical chapter of Thai Customs and it is an important step to streamline and modernize Customs systems which will bear fruit for lifting the competitiveness of enterprises. Furthermore, the revision of national laws/regulations also expedites the import/export procedures and increases the predictability and transparency of Customs procedures, for example; the implementation/revision of advance rulings, de minimis value, outward processing, and duty exemption in returnable box.

It is obvious that becoming the contracting party of the RKC is an economic accelerator for the country as well as its trade partners. However, it is undeniable that further improvement of the investment environment and trade facilitation is still required.

### ***Building up Business Partnership through AEOs***

Recently, Thai Customs signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Authorized Economic Operators Programme with Hong Kong Customs. This MRA mainly aims to maximize trade facilitation for the business as it is expected to expedite the Customs clearance for AEOs members while ensuring security in the supply chain.

AEO Programs reflect the importance of building up partnerships with businesses. Operators who redesign their security processes to meet the Customs standards and criteria as authorized operators enjoy certain privileges in the Customs clearance process. This minimizes time in inspecting and releasing cargo, including fewer documents.

In the near future, Thai Customs also plans to further expand its AEO programme by signing MRAs with new partner countries. Currently, they are cooperating with Korean Customs Service to follow up the action plan for concluding an MRA. Even though Thai Customs has recently started up its AEO programme, it is undeniable that companies are increasingly interested in becoming AEO members.

### ***Coordination with other Agencies***

As the importance of virtual integration of government agencies grows more and more, Thailand is currently investing in the 'National Single Window' system. The system has been established to create a single entry point where related government agencies can exchange import/export-related information with each other by interfacing through this platform.

Besides the National Single Window, ASEAN member states are in a pilot phase to integrate their National Single Windows. This so called 'ASEAN Single Window', is an integrated platform where each Customs agency in ASEAN Member States can exchange and retrieve all necessary information related to importation and exportation. The pilot phase is expected to be completed this year. The system will not only benefit Customs Administrations, but will also further improve the business environment and economic competitiveness for the region. We believe that the implementation of the ASEAN Single Window will significantly increase trade volume within ASEAN Member States.

Over the past decades, since the establishment of Thai Customs in 1874 A.D., it has shifted the scope of responsibilities from revenue collection to social protection and international trade facilitation. This year, in accordance with the WCO's scheme, CBM-Coordinated Border Management, Thai Customs is ready to implement new measures to respond to the emerging challenges and changing global trends

### ***Initiating the ROCB A/P Survey on the follow-up actions taken after the participation in the WCO Regional Workshop -Complementing the WCO Regional Training Evaluation Package -***

The Terms of Reference states that the ROCB A/P's overall objectives include the delivery of organizational development support to Members. The same specifies that the ROCB A/P is required to evaluate the development progress of the members at regular intervals, to both confirm progress and identify further development requirements. Conduct an Annual Technical Needs Survey in cooperation with the Regional Training Coordinator (Japan Customs). Given the financial and human resources are limited to deliver capacity building assistance, the WCO and the ROCB A/P do their best to prioritize the Members' needs and deliver the regional workshop to a high standard. At the same time, in order to optimize the ramifications of these regional capacity building assistance programs organized, it is imperative to encourage the workshop/seminar participants to apply these lessons learnt to their daily operations wherever appropriate and disseminate pertinent information to the right people in a timely manner.

In this regard, the ROCB A/P has initiated conducting a follow-up action survey on the regional workshops organized in the previous fiscal year, - i.e. 2014/2015. A questionnaire is sent to the Workshop/seminar participants 6 months after the programs have been organized. This survey intends to collect pertinent information on the follow-up actions taken at their respective home administrations in the wake of participation in the captioned Regional Workshop/Seminar with a view to considering and designing possible tailor-made technical cooperation programs to the Members in need.

This survey does NOT intend to evaluate and/or criticize any of reporting or recommendations the workshop/seminar participants have made, but this is rather to take a sort of snapshot of impact of the technical cooperation programs. It is also expected that this questionnaire remind the workshop participants of their expected roles and actions after the respective regional capacity building programs. As appropriate, the ROCB A/P is going to share relevant information on some of the innovative and exemplifying follow-up actions through ROCB A/P homepage and E-Newsletter with a view to further encouraging other workshop/seminar participants to follow the similar approaches, which are proved to be doable and practical.

The WCO Secretariat has also developed a Regional Training Evaluation Package in the wake of a series of discussions at their relevant meetings in the context of professional development. Objectives of the evaluation are slightly different from the one of the ROCB A/P. Therefore, we circulate another copy of the questionnaire in the WCO template together with the ROCB A/P's questionnaire. It is considered that they are not duplicating, but complementing each other.

As of 1 October 2015, we have circulated the questionnaires to the participants of the following regional workshops:

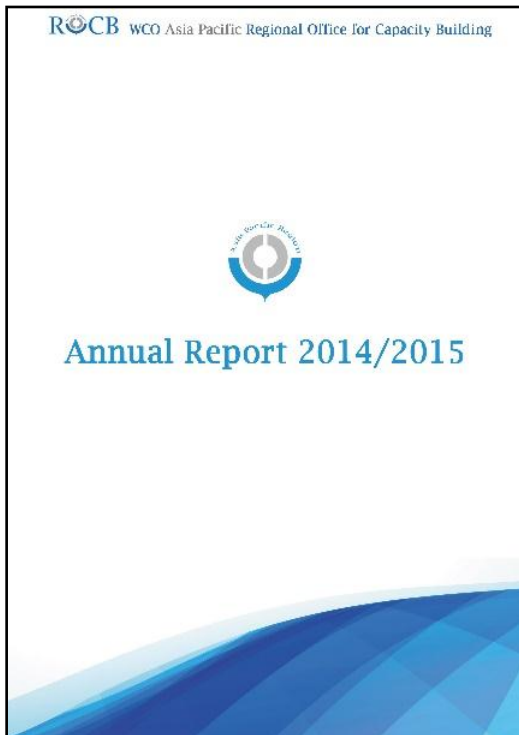
- (1) WCO Regional Seminar on Chemical Analysis
- (2) WCO-UNESCAP Regional Workshop on Single Window in the context of the WTO TFA (Jan. 2015)
- (3) WCO Regional Workshop on AEO (Jan. 2015)
- (4) WCO Regional Workshop on Intelligence Management (Feb. 2015)
- (5) WCO-ADB Regional Workshop on Strategic Initiative for Trade facilitation (Mar. 2015)

Because of fewer than expected number of replies to the survey at this moment, the ROCB A/P is not able to provide detailed analysis or typologies of follow-up actions. Believing that the ownership and commitment of the respective workshop/seminar participants and continued dialogue are the keys for reaping the good fruits from the collective efforts towards Customs reform and modernization, the ROCB A/P is going to continue this monitoring and encouragement initiative to optimize the value and effectiveness of the regional capacity building assistance programs coordinated by the ROCB A/P in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and other development partners.

For more information about the Regional Workshop Follow-Up Survey initiative, please write to [igarashi@rocbap.org](mailto:igarashi@rocbap.org).

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ROCB A/P's Annual Report 2014/2015 has been published on 21 September 2015.

This Report features summaries of the regional/national workshops organized by the ROCB A/P in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and other development partners. The report also carries several articles on the ROCB A/P's contribution to the international meetings and workshops, representing the WCO, and collaboration with development partners. In addition to the gist of our activities in 2014/2015, the Report has annexes of ROCB A/P Strategic Action Plan 2014-2016 as well as the concept and the table of the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016, which was devised based on the results of the annual technical assistance needs survey conducted jointly with the Regional Training Coordinator (Japan Customs) early this year.

Readers of this E-Newsletter, who wishes to have an electronic copy of this publication, please contact us at [rocb@rocbap.org](mailto:rocb@rocbap.org).

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In accordance with the ROCB A/P's Terms of Reference, the ROCB A/P is supposed to develop its Strategic Action Plan for a 2-year term and Annual Work Plan for the purpose of assuring its work accountability and governance to the regional Directors General. The Plans are to be worked out in close consultation with the Regional Vice-Chair with the intent of assuring effective use of limited resources and making the region's capacity building more focused and relevant to the needs of the regional Member Customs Administrations. To this end, in the course of devising the ROCB A/P's Annual Work Plan, Regional Training Coordinator (i.e. Japan Customs) and the ROCB A/P jointly conduct an Annual Technical Assistance Needs Survey each year. It is therefore the ROCB A/P's Strategic Action Plan is closely linked with the incumbent A/P Regional Strategic Plan.

Customs Cooperation Funds are primary financial sources of the WCO's capacity building activities. Likewise, capacity building programs for the A/P region are funded by those voluntary contributions from the donor administrations, namely Japan, Korea and China, consultations with donor administrations for the funding of the proposed capacity building programs are done under the coordination of the WCO Secretariat. The ROCB A/P's Annual Plan for 2015/2016 was subsequently approved by the WCO Capacity Building Directorate in mid-July 2015 and made open to the Member administrations in the A/P region. The approved Annual Work Plan is attached to this article. (The Annual Work Plan has been uploaded onto the ROCB A/P's homepage ([www.rocb-ap.org](http://www.rocb-ap.org)) under "Resources" column as well.)

The Annual Work Plan for 2015/2016 accommodates quite a good number of the regional/sub-regional and national workshops. These workshops are categorized into the improvement of 4 core Customs functions, namely: (1) WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement implementation; (2) revenue; (3) compliance; and (4) organizational development. More specifically, the workshops focus on introduction and implementation of a series of internationally-recognized good practices for Customs reform and modernization, including:

- (i) implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and other international instruments, including HS 2017;
- (ii) enhancement of coordinated border management, including better coordination for single window;
- (iii) accumulation of the regional expertise on the subjects of prominent technical assistance needs;
- (iv) implementation of security-related WCO tools and programs, including strategic trade control enforcement and detection of explosives; and
- (v) corridor-focused transit facilitation.

Regional Training Centers (RTCs) play key roles to deliver those planned regional/sub-regional workshops for the interest of the Member Customs Administrations in the A/P region. Accordingly, the ROCB A/P has also consulted the WCO Secretariat and RTCs and coordinated the dates and venues of the most of these regional/national capacity building programs. For the most current calendar of these events, please kindly refer to the "Future Activities" on the very last page of this E-Newsletter.

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## Staff Updates

## Welcome Ms. Narumon Siricharoenwat



22 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

"I am Narumon Siricharoenwat. My nickname is Nok. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am presently working as Program Coordinator in ROCB A/P with having a total of fourteen years of work experience in The Thai Customs Department. I previously worked as a Human Resources Officer in Customs academy with responsibility to co-operate in overseas Technical Assistance. It is a great chance for me to work at ROCB A/P. I am positive that I care about the organization, its initiatives and fulfilling them with integrity.

I would like to thank everyone for warm welcome I have receive from my colleagues and experts, I am sure my experiences will be useful for this work."

## Staff Updates

### Farewell Ms. Yotsawadee Trakonsup, Program Coordinator of the ROCB A/P



30 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

Ms. Yotsawadee Trakonsup or Khun “Or”, Program Coordinator, who has been seconded to the ROCB A/P since October 2013, is about to conclude her great dedication at the end of September 2015. During her 2-year secondment at the ROCB A/P, she worked extremely hard, especially dedicated the launch of the new ROCB A/P homepage, which is now accessed by more than 600 visitors daily. Ms. Yotsawadee also compiled the ROCB A/P’s Annual Reports. As some of the readers of this A/P News have observed, ROCB A/P recognizes that she has unsparingly donated her talent in graphic design to these important communication tools. She also coordinated a number of regional workshops and contacted lots of the Customs colleagues in the A/P region and the WCO Secretariat in order to facilitate their attendance to the regional workshops



## Future Activities

## October 2015- Onwards (Indicative)

5 October 2015

Event	Dates	Venue
◆ ADB/WCO Time Release Study Conference	6-8 Oct. 2015	Tokyo, Japan
◆ ADB Time Release Study Exit Conference	13 Oct. 2015	Putrajaya, Malaysia
◆ UNESCAP/ADB Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2015	19-23 Oct. 2015	Wuhan, China
◆ ADB National Workshop on Valuation/PCA for Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka)	26-30 Oct. 2015	Colombo, Sri Lanka
◆ ADB SASEC Customs Sub-Committee	27-28 Oct. 2015	Cebu, Philippines
◆ 13 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of WCO Asia/Pacific Regional Training Centers	3-4 Nov. 2015	Malacca, Malaysia
◆ WCO RILO/UNEP Green Customs Workshop	10-13 Nov. 2015	Seoul, Korea
◆ WCO A/P Regional Contact Point Meeting	17-19 Nov. 2015	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
◆ WCO National Workshop on PCA for Samoa	16-20 Nov. 2015	Samoa
◆ WCO/ADB National Workshop on Single Window for Bhutan	23-27 Nov. 2015	Bhutan
◆ WCO National Workshop on the Revised Kyoto Convention for Samoa	7-11 Dec. 2015	Samoa
◆ Post Operational Workshop under Project CADS	8-10 Dec. 2015	Hong Kong, China
◆ ADB National Workshop on Valuation/PCA for Maldives	24-28 Jan. 2016	Maldives
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Revenue Package and Advance Ruling	25-29 Jan. 2016	Malacca, Malaysia
◆ ADB National Workshop on Valuation/PCA for India	15-19 Feb. 2016	New Delhi, India
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Accreditation of TRS experts	7-11 Mar. 2016	Faridabad, India
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Trade Facilitation Agreement and Single Window	7-11 Mar. 2016	Cheonan, Korea
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Strategic Leadership in Information Technology	21-22 Mar. 2016	Melaka, Malaysia

## Future Activities

## October 2015- Onwards (Indicative)

Event	Dates	Venue
◆ WCO Sub-Regional Workshop on Transit Corridor in GMS	4-8 Apr. 2016	Shanghai, China
◆ ROCBs-RTCs-VCs Meeting	7-8 Apr. 2016	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO Capacity Building Committee Meeting	11-13 Apr. 2016	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO Integrity Sub-Committee Meeting	14-15 Apr. 2016	Brussels, Belgium
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Strategic Trade Control Enforcement	18-22 Apr. 2016	Shanghai, China
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on HS2017	18-22 Apr. 2016	Kashiwa, Japan
◆ WCO Sub-Regional Workshop on Transit Corridor for South Asia	25-29 Apr. 2016	Faridabad, India
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Accreditation of PCA Experts	9-13 May 2016	Cheonan, Korea
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on IPR	16-20 May 2016	Faridabad, India
◆ OCO Annual Conference	1-3 Jun. 2016	Tuvalu
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Implementation of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	6-10 Jun. 2016	Kashiwa, Japan
◆ WCO Regional Workshop on Compliance Enforcement Package	20-24 Jun. 2016	Faridabad, India
◆ WCO Sub-regional Workshop on Interrogation and Investigation of Drug Smuggling Cases for Pacific Islands	27 Jun.–1 Jul. 2016	Suva, Fiji
◆ WCO Council Sessions	14-16 Jul. 2016	Brussels, Belgium

NB: Official invitations will be circulated in due course.