

No. 8

ROCB A/P
Good Customs Practice Report:
Knowledge Management



Korea Customs Service
Thai Customs

Jun 2012

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Foreword

To highlight the importance of Knowledge Management (KM) for capacity building, the WCO dedicated the year of 2011 for promotion and pursuit of knowledge activities and designated “Knowledge, a catalyst for Customs excellence” as the celebrating theme for International Customs Day 2011. In various international customs forums, ROCB A/P also noted that KM was widely recognized as an integral part of customs modernization, which underpins policy and strategic planning, sustains leadership and people development and inspires trade development through sharing knowledge among Customs Administrations, business partners and general public. To address the need from our Members, ROCB A/P decided to publish this Good Customs Practice Report in order to facilitate them to enhance their KM initiatives.

In this Report, our Members not only introduce their major KM Initiatives with the relevant planning and development details, but also share the benefits and lessons learned from these KM projects. With the commitment from the contributing Members, this Report on KM is scheduled for publication in two phases (in June and October 2012 respectively). We hope that this Report would provide our Members with a good benchmarking reference for developing their KM initiatives.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to our first group of contributing Members, namely *Korea Customs Service and Thai Customs*, for sharing their valuable good practices on KM. My appreciation would also go to *Mr. Kelvin WONG*, ROCB A/P for his professional efforts in coordinating and editing this Report. With the support from our Members, ROCB A/P would continue to give its best efforts in rendering the technical and management assistance and strive for the betterment of capacity building in our region.

Yoshihiro KOSAKA

Head of WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building



Good Practice Report By Korea Customs Service

1 Foundation of Knowledge Management

1.1 Introduction and Development of Knowledge Management

1.1.1 The Korea Customs Service (KCS) has introduced knowledge management (KM) since 2000 when facing the following challenges.

- (a) As a result of rise in trade volume and standard of living, the expectations toward the Customs service have also become higher. The business sectors demands higher quality service from the KCS which befits the international standards while the general public tends to evaluate the Customs service as customers. In addition, the international community also asks the KCS to strengthen its role in trade security by prohibiting exportation of illegal goods in tandem with the enhanced international standards. The KCS has to strengthen its capacity in order to meet these emerging expectations and requirements.
- (b) The international trade environment faced by the KCS has also changed. Since the 911 attacks in 2001, Customs Administrations have put more emphasis on trade security along with trade facilitation. Under this circumstance, the KCS needed to improve its capacity in response to such environmental changes in an active and prompt manner.
- (c) Customs workloads have been increased exponentially since 1970 – the trade volume of Korea as well as the number of inbound and outbound passengers increased by more than hundred folds – whereas the staff strength of KCS is only doubled.

Against this backdrop, the KCS kick-started to develop the KM in order to provide quality Customs service to the public.

1.1.2 There are 4 stages for the KM development in the KCS:

- (a) Introduction Stage ('00~'03): The foundation for KM was set up including a system, instruments and organizational structure.
 - ✚ Established the KCS Knowledge Management System ('01) and launched the second-phase of the system ('03)
 - ✚ Set up the dedicated team and formulated the operational guidelines for KM ('02)
- (b) Growing Stage ('04~'06): More activities were organized along with development of more sophisticated system.
 - ✚ Adopted a “Knowledge Mileage System” and established “Customs Knowledge Portal (CKP)” ('04~'05)
 - ✚ Expanded the system to include e-scheduler and e-HR. ('04)
 - ✚ Came up with measures and operational rules to promote active use of the CKP ('05)
 - ✚ Developed a specialized system for the active utilization of “Community of Practice” (CoP)¹ ('06)
- (c) Mature Stage ('07 ~'10): The KCS established an environment where the staff can create, share and spread knowledge voluntarily and actively.
 - ✚ Introduced web 2.0-based system on a trial basis and established a comprehensive development plan ('07)
 - Established the foundation for utilizing Wiki, blogs and User Creative Contents (UCC)
 - ✚ Launched a tailor-made CKP based on web 2.0. ('08)
 - Adopted Wiki technology, “1 blog for 1 person” scheme, UCC and other applications

¹ Under CoP, staff members voluntarily participate in various problem-solving groups for different customs issues and thereby create new work knowledge.

-  Advanced the CKP for more systematic management of ideas collected internally and externally ('09)
 - Started running a system called "Beyond Expectation²" to collect new ideas
- (d) Complementation Stage ('10~): More enhancement initiatives are taken forward to ensure the ongoing KM development.
 -  Created mature organizational culture of KM through communication
 - Utilized UCC for sharing and disseminating news and messages from customs offices and local communities
 -  Launched projects such as "Customs Map"³ ('10) and "Vitamin C project"⁴ ('11)"
 -  Made continuous effort for better quality of knowledge activities
 - Created "Expert Leader Group ('10) and selected core knowledge ('11)
 -  Created added value through advancing the CKP to satisfy the global standard
 - Exported the CKP to Ecuador ('10)

1.2 Strategy for Advancement of KM

1.2.1 The goal of the KCS for KM is to achieve the vision, "World Best Customs to realize a trading powerhouse." To achieve this goal, the KCS adopts the three-pronged strategies as follows.

² "Beyond Expectation" is a system which processes and incorporates internal ideas with customers' opinions. All ideas collected from customers are registered in the system.

³ "Customs Map Project" aims to create organizational culture where officers from all 47 Customs offices share their culture and communicate by uploading UCC onto the Customs Map.

⁴ "Vitamin C Project" is a project to instill a culture for knowledge sharing. It is named after Vitamin C with a meaning to revitalize KCS with exciting and joyful organizational culture. It is an enhanced version of the Customs Map Project running with the use of UCC by individual and work teams.

- (a) Reinforcing KM foundation: organizing activities relating to creation of horizontal organizational culture, institution improvement and staff capacity building
- (b) Enhancing work efficiency: organizing activities to upgrade knowledge so as to make it more applicable to work and creating knowledge through collaboration
- (c) Improving public service: developing programs to capitalize on knowledge and public satisfaction with Customs administration

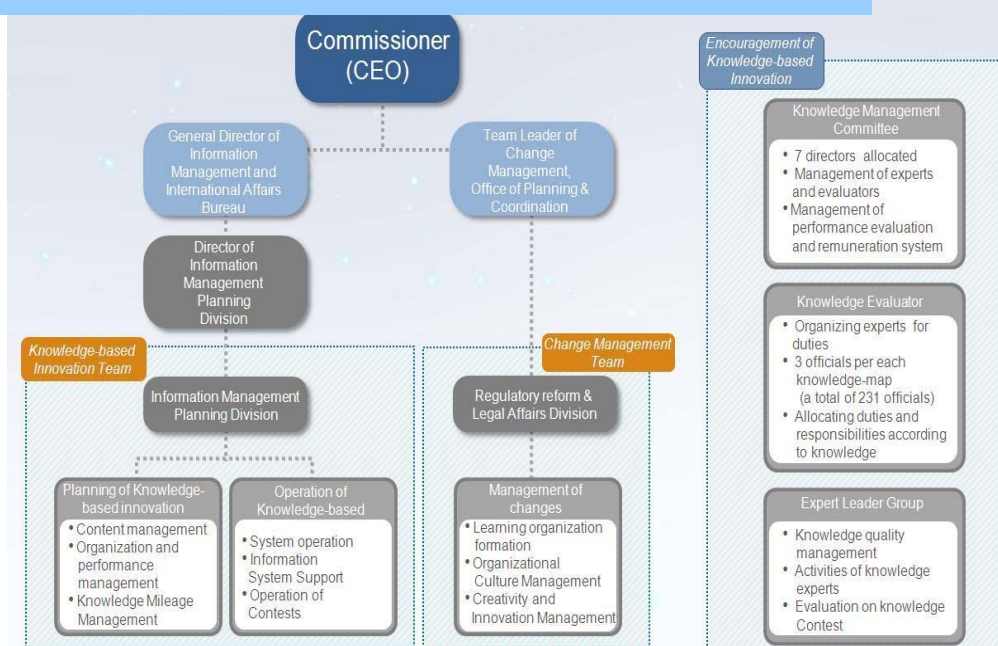
The KCS establishes a dedicated division which sets out the KM strategies and action plan having due regard to the opinions gathered from the staff of all customs offices and those in charge of KM. Detailed plans are also formulated every year for effective implementation of the strategies.

1.3 KM Organization and Operational Rules

1.3.1 The KCS established the KM organization and operational rules for development and implementation of the KM initiatives.

1.3.2 Under the lead of the Commissioner as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Director General of Information Management & International Affairs Bureau takes the role of Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Director of Information Management & Planning Division heads the overall operation for KM. Besides, there are two divisions responsible for KM, namely Information Management & Planning Division which is in charge of planning, system operation and knowledge administration supported by 3 staff members; and Regulatory Reform & Legal Affairs Division which is in charge of CoP activities and creation of organizational culture supported by 4 staff members. In addition, the KM committee comprising 7 chief directors from different bureaus coordinates the KM-related works. 156 knowledge evaluators and 351 advisors (for Expert Leader Group) are also involved in KM.

[KM Operational Organization of the KCS]



1.3.3 KM is operated in accordance with the KM operational rules, which cover the definition of knowledge, organization for KM, registration / deletion / evaluation of knowledge, competitions for promotion of KM, reward scheme and other operational processes.

2 KM Activities and Outcomes

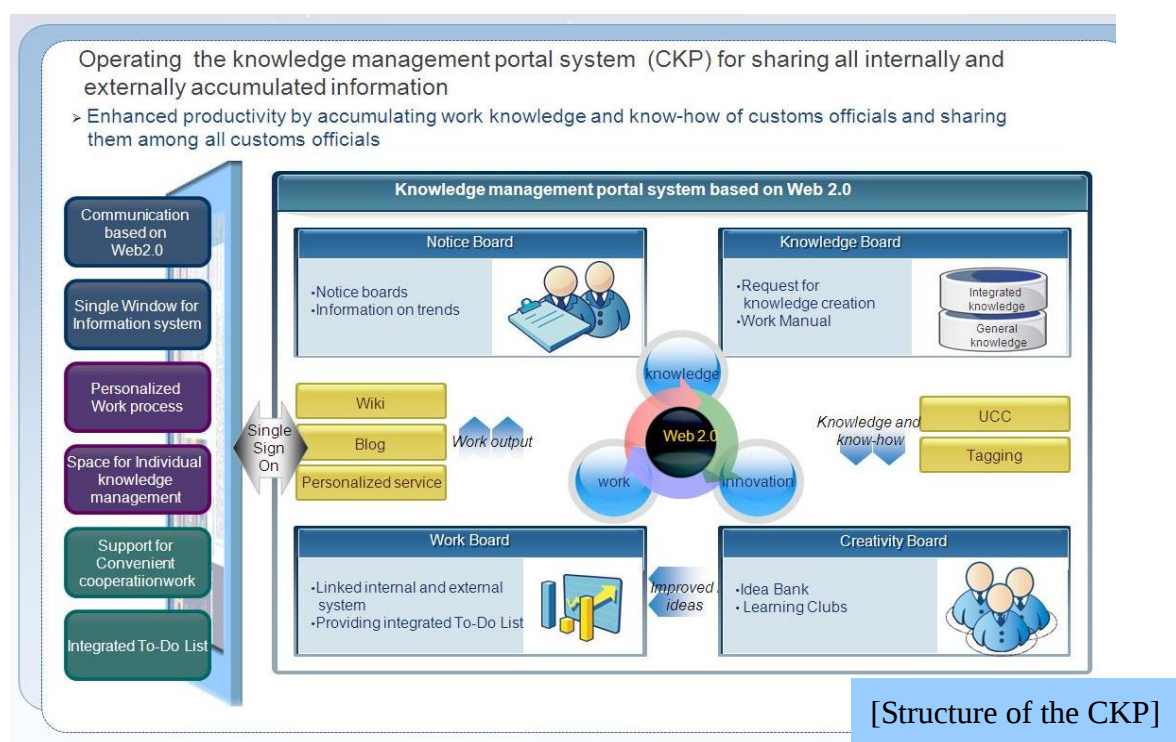
2.1 Reinforcement of KM Foundation

2.1.1 For the efficient KM operation, the KCS set up a KM dedicated system in 2001. The current KM system is established after two enhancement exercises in 2006 and 2008 respectively. The CKP not only provides functions for knowledge management but also connects with all systems operated by the KCS. One of its core functions is to translate knowledge of individual staff member into knowledge for the KCS according to the “Knowledge Map”⁵, which provides the work categorization of

⁵ “Knowledge Map” classifies the work of KCS into 7 categories i.e. strategies and adjustment; internal audit and operation; clearance support; post clearance audit and policies; investigation and enforcement; information management and international affairs; and commodity information. These categories are further divided into 144 sub-groups and used for both creation and utilization of knowledge in the system.

the KCS. With the support of CKP, staff members can register, search and utilize knowledge easily whereby the knowledge for the KCS is also effectively accumulated.

2.1.2 For the convenience of knowledge creation, the KCS also adopted technologies based on web 2.0 in 2007. Staff members can capitalize on UCC, blogs and other functions based on web 2.0 to create and use knowledge more efficiently. Besides, the CKP offers more convenience for knowledge acquirement by increasing the number of access to the system. As a result, the CKP is being firmly established as the main system of KCS with 13,385 hits, 2,953 visitors, 4,400 accesses per day. To sustain the ongoing development on KM, the KCS conducts yearly maintenance to advance the system functions which include the “Single Sign On” (SSO)⁶, online test and survey. The contents of CKP are also enriched to cover Economic Situations⁷ and Cultural Campaign Support to attract the staff to use the system.



⁶ SSO: a process whereby a user is only required to log in once to gain access to all systems.

⁷ The Economic Situations provides information on the status of export/import, investigation/control and tax revenue in real time for the head office managers. The managers of the main Customs offices are also offered with such information under a monitoring system.

2.1.3 To strengthen the KM foundation, the KCS also organizes activities to create horizontal organizational culture. With the active support and participation of the management, the KCS launches a yearly project for creation of vibrant organizational culture. The KCS has been working on creation of the organizational culture where the managers and staff can actively participate together for KM projects, such as “Customs Map” and “Vitamin C”. These projects vitalize cultural exchanges and communication among customs offices. It helps staff members develop strong sense of belonging to the KCS and encourages managers for active participation, thereby enhancing the overall participation in the KM. To promote the culture of sharing within the KCS, the Commissioner also runs a personal blog called “Commissioner Plaza” to communicate with the staff directly.

2.1.4 Knowledge creation in the KCS is based on work experience of all staff members. Field officers create knowledge based on their field experience such as operational manual while the staff at the Headquarters produces knowledge in relation to strategies such as work plan of the KCS. To upgrade the knowledge quality, the knowledge created can also be revised to an advanced form depending on the needs of the staff members who utilize the knowledge.

2.1.5 The participation of KM activities hinges on the awareness of importance of KM and the support from the management. To meet this end, the KCS arranges ongoing education to the managers to raise their awareness of the importance and the need of KM. Recognizing that capacity building and appropriate attitude towards KM are essential for the better quality and active use of KM, the KCS is also dedicated to strengthening operational capacity of staff members through training and education. For new comers, training and education is focused on raising KM awareness while opportunities to benchmark best practices abroad and KM leadership training are provided for staff responsible for KM to encourage them to find creative ideas and upgrade their KM capacity.

2.2 Enhancement of Work Efficiency

2.2.1 Staff members are free to create knowledge in the CKP according to the “Knowledge Map”. In order to maintain the high-standard KM, all the knowledge created is subjected to a two-step evaluation process before being posted. Under this two-step evaluation, one knowledge evaluator is assigned for the 1st step evaluation and three for the 2nd step evaluation. The evaluator for the 1st step reviews if the knowledge fits the category of the “Knowledge Map” while the evaluators for the 2nd step assess the quality of the content. After passing this evaluation process, the knowledge can be registered with the CKP and shared with other staff members.

2.2.2. The KCS also organizes and operates the “Knowledge Leader Group” through which the quality of created knowledge can be assured. The group comprises professionals in each area of seven categories of the “Knowledge Map”. Knowledge Leader Group is organized to provide quick answers to the questions posted by staff members on the “Knowledge Market”⁸.

2.2.3 Another effective means to maintain high quality of knowledge is by way of collaboration. Knowledge created through collaboration complements disadvantages of the knowledge created by individuals and goes beyond the original. The KCS encourages brainstorming for creation of knowledge by providing related facilities, such as Wiki and CoP. The CKP is equipped with “Co-editing Board” to support the function of Wiki. Staff members can voluntarily participate in the problem-solving activities through the CoP, which is run in two forms, i.e. one for the study to enhance staff capacity and another to solve problems on work. The staff members work to find solutions by organizing the public-private CoP, collecting customer opinions and discussing problems with others regularly. For effective coordination, all the CoPs and the respective work outcomes are required to be registered with the CKP. Currently, more than 1,000 CoPs have been registered under the system.

⁸ “Knowledge Market” is a Q&A function in the CKP which enables quick answers to the question posted under the Knowledge Map. To ensure the timely response, the Expert Leader Group will also receive a notification when a question is posted.

2.3 Improvement for Public Service

2.3.1 The KCS strives for excellence through institutional improvement. One good example for these initiatives is a scheme called “Beyond Imagination” that was launched for promotion of creating new Customs-related ideas. As a result, the KCS develops its policies with more inspiring ideas such as “Shoes of Hope Festival”—where 12,000 pairs of seized fake shoes were redesigned and offered to children in developing countries, which amounted to 500 million Korean won approximately; and “Green Cap Guide” scheme—where those from multicultural families who have good command of foreign languages were arranged to wear green caps and vests to help foreign tourists with immigration and clearance procedures, thereby contributing to the society and establishing their own role.

2.3.2 Owing to the relentless efforts to develop KM, the KCS has also greatly enhanced the work efficiency and upgraded the service quality. Processing time of the import cargo maintains at 2.1 days on average, which is most efficient in the world. In addition, the KCS processes clearances at the fastest speed among 169 WCO members: on average, 2.5 hours for import clearance and 10 minutes for tax payment. Such high quality of clearance service saves a lot of logistic costs for traders, amounting to more than 2.4 trillion Korean won annually.

2.3.3. Relying on such high work efficiency, Korea ranked 1st among 183 countries in “Trade across Borders” sector of “Doing Business” rankings of the World Bank for 3 years straight, took 1st place in “Airport Service Quality” for the 5th year straight from 2006 to 2010. The KM of KCS also started gaining world’s recognition by receiving awards from various organizations such as “Knowledge Innovation Award” by Maeil Business Newspaper-Booz & Co., MAKE Awards by Teleos and Presidential Citation in 2011.

2.3.4 The enhancement of customs service is evidenced by higher customer satisfaction. From the customer survey, it is revealed that the satisfaction rate for the e-clearance system and customer service has increased by 5.4% from 2007 to 2011 and 4.6% from 2007 to 2010 respectively.

3 Challenges, Lessons Learned For Success and Future Plan

3.1 Challenges and Lessons Learn for Success

3.1.1 While developing the KM, the KCS faced several challenges, i.e. how to raise the staff awareness of importance of KM, and how to change a tacit knowledge into an explicit one. At the very beginning, the staff used to have a misunderstanding that KM is only an extra work and not related to the work operation. Such a wrong idea was gradually rectified by providing staff with more opportunities to share their own knowledge through KM competitions and establishing more platforms for creating knowledge which is highly practical to the work operations. As the awareness of importance of KM uplifted by the ongoing education and training, such misunderstanding on KM is eventually dissipated.

3.1.2 To establish the sophisticated KM, the KCS sees that a comprehensive and systematic approach to develop KM, not missing any of the essential factors such as HR, institutions, systems and culture, is the key to success. To give the impetus for KM development, the awareness of management staff should also be raised through ongoing education and training programs. Moreover, instilling a dynamic and horizontal KM culture in the organization is also fundamental for the ongoing KM development.

3.1.3 To sustain staff active participation and awareness for KM, a mechanism for quality control on knowledge created is also indispensable. The existing two-step evaluation process ensures that registered knowledge is useful and highly applicable to the work of KCS. As a result, the staff members become more active to participate in the KM activities as they build up confidence in the knowledge quality and practicality. The knowledge level and KM awareness of staff members are also uplifted as the ongoing training and education programs are put in place.

3.1.4 Last but not least, the support from the senior management is of paramount significance for the KM development. To show his appreciation and support for KM activities, the Commissioner of KCS maintains a personal blog to communicate directly with the staff members on the KM issues. To the effect, staff members become also more enthusiastic to participate in the KM activities.

3.2 Future plan

3.2.1 The KM of KCS is committed to becoming the world's best customs administration and the purpose will be achieved effectively through the implementation of KM strategies. In the short term, the KCS is planning to carry out more detailed activities for the effective implementation of KM strategies. In the long run, a systematic plan is being prepared in pursuit of further enhancement. The KCS will continue the ongoing development of KM with a view to providing high quality of customs service to the public.



Good Practice Report By Thai Customs

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission of Thailand sets Knowledge Management (KM) as a key area of the Public Sector Reform Initiative. The Royal Decree on Good Governance Article II also stated that “government agencies are required to regularly develop knowledge within their organization in a pattern of the learning organization. Data and information are to be organized for further application to create faster, more accurate and up to date work methods. They must also promote and develop capabilities, build visions and change paradigm of the officials within their organization, encouraging efficiency and mutual learning effecting result of performance”⁹.

1.1.2 Driven by the Royal Decree stated above and the need within the Thai Customs Department¹⁰ herself, KM becomes the key policy in managing human resources in the Thai Customs Department. In 2006, Thai Customs issued the Customs Order establishing a Knowledge Management Working Group with the aim of managing knowledge within the organization. Its key tasks include the determination of a range of strategies and practices for enhancing Customs knowledge as well as monitoring and evaluating knowledge management to be compliant with the standard of the Public Sector Management Quality Award (PMQA) set by the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission.

⁹ Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (2011). *Knowledge Management: Creating Change Management Teams through Knowledge Management within the Public Sector*. Retrieved 17 Feb 2012 from http://www.opdc.go.th/english/main/content_view.php?cat_id=2&content_id=18&page=13

¹⁰ The new era of Thai Customs commenced in B.E. 2417 in the reign of King Rama V to collect taxes and duties and has become the foundation of the present Customs Department.

1.2 Main Drivers for KM

1.2.1 The main drivers for KM in Thai Customs are as follows:

- (a) To develop Thai Customs to be a learning organization
- (b) To leverage the expertise of Customs officers and staffs in selected areas across the organization
- (c) To manage the proliferation of data and information, thereby allowing relevant Customs officers and Customs clients to rapidly access useful and relevant knowledge resources and best practice guidelines

1.2.2 In Thai Customs, there are approximately 6,000 officers responsible for various duties and work areas. Obviously, there is a considerable gap of age difference between the young and the experienced officers. Since the learning of some skills and knowledge cannot be done in a short period of time, a systematic and well-organized knowledge management is clearly in need.

1.3 Overview for KM

1.3.1 Thai Customs aims to implement KM to achieve the Customs vision of becoming the “World-Class Customs for Competitiveness and Social Safety” (Thai Customs vision at the time they started doing KM). In this regard, the Thai Customs Department has encouraged all Customs officers to focus on KM process and utilize the KM outcomes as much as possible so as to contribute to the overall benefit of the officers themselves, of Customs, of society, and of the nation as a whole.

1.3.2 At the beginning, a team responsible for KM has been established to identify the key KM initiatives required in Thai Customs. Thai Customs executives and Customs officers from various bureaus have been included in the team. After having been identified, KM initiatives were assigned to the related and responsible bureaus which then later on brought the idea of KM to implement within their bureaus.

1.3.3 The assigned bureaus started by developing informal discussion about their works, and also invited partners from both government and private sectors to cooperate. The teams within each assigned bureaus then implemented KM and reported back to the main KM team of Thai Customs.

1.3.4 The steps for KM implementation include:

- (a) Knowledge Identification: Identify the knowledge areas required to achieve the organization's strategic plan
- (b) Knowledge Creation and Acquisition: Explore the location and format of the knowledge required
- (c) Knowledge Organization: Categorize the knowledge into groups, subjects, and areas
- (d) Knowledge Codification and Refinement: Identify the key idea of each knowledge areas
- (e) Knowledge Access: Disseminate the KM outcomes by integrating it into Thai Customs IT system for convenience of access
- (f) Knowledge Sharing: Adopt and motivate the sharing and the exchange of KM outcomes, and develop CoP (Community of Practice)
- (g) Learning: Motivate all officers to be eager to continue learning

2 Major KM Initiatives and Implementation

2.1 The major KM initiatives of Thai Customs are:

- (a) Customs Tariff – assigned to the Customs Tariff Bureau
- (b) Customs Valuation – assigned to the Customs Standard Procedures and Valuation Bureau
- (c) Post Clearance Audit & Investigation – assigned to the Post-Clearance Audit Bureau and the Investigation and Suppression Bureau
- (d) Customs Procedures: E-import – assigned to the Customs Standard Procedures and Valuation Bureau

2.2 For the KM implementation from the Fiscal Year 2006 (B.E.2549) to 2011 (B.E.2554), the Thai Customs Department focuses on a range of KM issues as follows:

2006

-  Customs Classification of Automotive Products under Chapter 87, Subheadings 8702 to 8704 and Subheading 8708
-  Determination of Customs Valuation by applying the “Deductive Value” method

2007

-  Selection of High-Risk Shipments
-  Development of Technical Knowledge in Customs Inspection as well as Examination of Documents

2008

-  Customs Procedures for Importation and Exportation of Uncut Diamonds
-  Profiling of Passengers indicating the Risk of Smuggling and Tax Avoidance

2009

-  Customs Clearance of Wood Products
-  Electronic Customs Clearance for Export Express Consignments
-  Prevention and Suppression of Intellectual Property Rights Infringement

2010

-  Electronic Customs Clearance for Import Express Consignments
-  Customs Valuation: Knowledge relating to costs to be adjusted with the price actually paid or payable for the Goods sold
-  Prevention and Suppression of Narcotic Drugs

2011

-  Customs Procedures for Exportation of Consignments from Free Zone and Bonded Warehouse by using Tax Privilege for Reduction or Exemption of Duties under Section 12 of the Customs Tariff Decree BE 2530

-  Identification of Target Products for the purpose of Post Clearance Audit of Chemical Products
-  Increasing the Efficiency in Customs Clearance Processes by using an X-ray Machine

2.3 In addition, Thai Customs also expands the scope of KM to Regional Customs Offices I to IV as follows:

Regional Customs Office I

-  Regional Customs Office I : Border Trade
-  Maptaphut Customs House: Customs Clearance of Petroleum Products and Liquefied Petroleum Imported and Exported in Bulk Cargo

Regional Customs Office II

-  Mukdahan Customs House: Inspection Technique for Wood Imported from Lao PDR
-  Nong Khai Customs House: Techniques for Appraising and Inspecting Goods

Regional Customs Office III

-  Mae Sai Customs House: One Stop Service-OSS
-  Chiang Saen Customs House: Single Officer for Supporting e-Customs System

Regional Customs Office IV

-  Padang Besar Customs House: Top 10 Import and Export Products at Padang Besar Customs Sadao Customs House: (1) Customs Clearance at Sadao Customs House (2) Appraisal of goods by Sadao Customs officers

3. Benefits

3.1 As a result of KM implementation, Thai Customs attains the institutional benefits as follows.

- (a) Customs officers can easily search for knowledge and skill required to accomplish their duties.
- (b) Customs officers achieve higher efficiency and spend less time in doing work.
- (c) KM processes encourage Customs officers to communicate more among themselves and share their working experiences.
- (d) KM helps establish and maintain the knowledge within the organization. Knowledge outcomes will stay in the organization even though the respective staff members no longer work for Thai Customs.

4 Challenges and Future Planning

4.1 For further enhancement on KM, Thai Customs are encountering the challenges to:

- (a) provide more training to the KM Team Members to ensure effective KM implementation;
- (b) strengthen staff participation in the KM programs so as to secure the expected outcomes; and
- (c) extend the benefits of KM outcomes from the domestic / bureau level to the departmental level.

4.2 For the future planning, Thai Customs will give priority to motivate the KM outcomes sharing within the organization. This is to inspire staff to continuously seek and share knowledge from each other and thereby strengthen the ongoing KM development. The KM outcomes have already been integrated into Thai Customs IT database and website (<http://www.customs.go.th>). A new modified KM website is being developed and expected to be completed soon.

(Note: This document summarizes the information in relation to Knowledge Management within the Thai Customs Department as of 13 March 2012. This is neither an official document nor official translation. This document is provided solely for information purpose.)