



Customs News

2002 DECEMBER • ISSUE NO.20

Greetings from the Commissioner

With the festival season just around the corner, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes.



*Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year*

Raymond Wong
Commissioner



CE presents Star and Medals to 9 Customs officers

The Chief Executive, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, presented one Star and six Medals to seven Customs officers at Government House on October 12, 2002. The Head of Trade Controls, Andrew Wong Ching-wai, was presented the Bronze Bauhinia Star. The 2002 Honour List of the Department is as follows:



△ Andrew Wong Ching-wai

Bronze Bauhinia Star

Andrew Wong Ching-wai

Medals for Meritorious Service

Li Chung-leung

Tong Ching-kit

Man Wing-yiu*

Lam Ming-mon

Chan Wing-shing

Tsang Hoi-ping

Medals of Honour

Tai Yau-nim*

Winnie Ng So-ling

*Unable to attend the presentation due to other commitments.

Office of Service Administration



△ Li Chung-leung



△ Tong Ching-kit



△ Lam Ming-mon



△ Chan Wing-shing



△ Tsang Hoi-ping



△ Winnie Ng So-ling

HK and US sign CSI DoP

Hong Kong Customs and the US Customs Service signed a Declaration of Principles (DoP) on the Container Security Initiative (CSI) on September 23, 2002. The DoP signifies the two sides' commitment to enhancing the security of ocean-going containers through intensifying information exchange and strengthening customs co-operation at seaport.

Container Security Initiative

The CSI was unveiled by the Commissioner of the US Customs Service, Mr Robert C. Bonner, on January 17, 2002. The programme consists of four core elements: (a) establishing security criteria to identify high-risk containers; (b) pre-screening containers before they arrive at the US ports; (c) using technology to pre-screen high-risk containers; and (d) developing and using smart and secure containers.

The CSI is designed not only to detect terrorists who may attempt to sabotage the global shipping system but also to deter them from using the system in the first place.

At present, several ports in Canada and Europe have joined the CSI. Besides Hong Kong, the ports of Rotterdam (Netherlands), Antwerp (Belgium), Le Havre (France), Bremerhaven and Hamburg (Germany), as well as Singapore have already signed similar DoPs.

Benefits of joining CSI

Being the busiest container port in the world, Hong Kong needs to live up to its reputation as a safe port, which is crucial for maintaining our competitiveness. The partnership with the US Customs on CSI will not only make our port more secure but also make the global trading system safer. This will also help ensure the smooth flow of US-bound cargo originated from Hong Kong.

It is anticipated that joining the CSI may subsequently lead to an increase in the inspection rate of export cargoes. However, the examined containers under seals will normally not be examined again when they arrive at the US ports. Hence, the lead time for the delivery of shipments to the US can be ensured. Moreover, if cargo manifests can be submitted in advance, we can select cargoes for examination while they are being kept at the terminal before being loaded onto vessels. Therefore, it is expected that the impact on cargo flow will be minimum.

Following the signing of the DoP will be consultations on the implementation of a CSI pilot scheme in Hong Kong. We look forward to gaining support from the shipping industry to strive for success of the scheme as well as the continuous competitiveness of our port.

Ship Search and Cargo Command



△ Commissioner Raymond Wong and the Commissioner of the US Customs Service, Mr Robert C. Bonner, exchanging the Declaration of Principles. The Signing Ceremony is witnessed by the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology, Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen, and the US Consul General for Hong Kong and Macau, Mr James Keith.

WCO Meeting on Security and Facilitation

The World Customs Organization (WCO) held the first meeting on Security and Facilitation of International Trade Supply Chain on September 5 and 6, 2002 at its Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. On behalf of the Department, Senior Superintendent Wong Ching-lim, Superintendent Lui Kin-hung and Assistant Superintendent Mak Hoi-wan attended the meeting.

The meeting was a WCO initiative to address the increasing global concern over the security of international trade supply chain. Such initiative was translated into action by the forming of a Task Force comprising delegates from more than 50 Customs administrations and 25 international organisations. The Task Force is mandated to formulate guidelines and measures that can protect the international trade supply chain from terrorism while maintaining facilitation to legitimate trade.



△ Senior Superintendent Wong Ching-lim (left) and Superintendent Lui Kin-hung attending the WCO Meeting.

At the first meeting, participants had active discussion on a diverse range of topics including the enhancement of import, export and in-transit controls; improvement of technology and automation; advance electronic transmission of Customs data; and use of risk assessment techniques to select cargoes and conveyances for examination.

The meeting provided a forum for delegates to express their concerns and put forward valuable suggestions for the formulation of acceptable guidelines for compliance by members. Hong Kong Customs will continue to participate in the forthcoming meetings to ensure that any contemplated guidelines are compatible with current practices.

WCO and APEC Division
Customs Liaison Bureau

WCO RCP Meeting held in New Zealand

The 12th Regional Contact Points (RCP) Meeting of the World Customs Organization (WCO)'s Asia Pacific Region was held in Auckland, New Zealand between October 22 and 25, 2002. Forty delegates from 22 Member administrations, together with three observers from the WCO, Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) for the Asia Pacific Region, and the Oceania Customs Organization respectively, attended the meeting. Hong Kong Customs was represented by Senior Superintendent Leung Chi-chiu and Assistant Superintendent Leung Tak-yin.

During the meeting, delegates exchanged ideas on a wide range of Customs subjects. Apart from Customs enforcement and business facilitation subjects, the meeting also touched on issues of emerging concern such as international trade supply chain security and customs capacity building.

As the former Regional Vice-Chairman, Hong Kong Customs presented a report on the work and achievements of the Region over the past two years. We also updated participants on the proposal for regional synergy to combat cigarette smuggling that we put up earlier this year.

WCO and APEC Division
Customs Liaison Bureau



△ Participants of the 12th Regional Contact Points Meeting.

APEC Meetings held in Mexico

Superintendent Lui Kin-hung and Assistant Superintendent Leung Tak-yin attended a series of APEC meetings in Mexico from August 9 to 17, 2002. The delegation had attended the APEC Customs-Business Dialogue (ACBD), meetings of the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI), Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP) and meetings of the SCCP Working Groups.

As the Hong Kong Customs had made remarkable achievements in promoting trade facilitation and fostering co-operation with industry in the past year, the Department was once again nominated to be the Chairman of the SCCP Trade Facilitation Working Group. Under the chairmanship of Superintendent Lui, an ardent discussion was evoked on the identification of "Pathfinder Initiative" to invigorate progress towards the Bogor Goal and the suggestion of a new mandate of the Trade Facilitation Working Group.

In addition, the Department compiled a compendium - "Best Practices on Customs-Business Partnership" detailing 40 partnership programmes implemented by APEC member economies. The compendium was distributed to all SCCP members during the meeting. Since the publication was a very useful reference material for administrations that were about to develop new partnership programmes or expand the existing ones, the SCCP had endorsed to upload it to the APEC website for public access and to distribute it to members of the World Customs Organization Asia Pacific Region.

WCO and APEC Division
Customs Liaison Bureau

Visit to Thai and Malaysian enforcement agencies

Superintendent Cheung Chi-kwong and Senior Inspector Wan Hung-sum of the Customs Drug Investigation Bureau visited their enforcement counterparts in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur between September 9 and 14, 2002 with a view to renewing and consolidating co-operative relationship with the two agencies.

During their visit to Bangkok, the officers met with officials of the Royal Thai Customs, Royal Thai Police, Office of Narcotics Control Board of Thailand, the US Drug Enforcement Administration (Bangkok Country Office), Liaison Officers of The Netherlands Police and the New Zealand Customs in Bangkok.



△ Superintendent Cheung Chi-kwong and Senior Inspector Wan Hung-sum pictured with the Director of Investigation, Technology and Communication, Mr Pongsak Puttong (third from right), and officials of the Office of Narcotics Control Board of Thailand.

During their stay in Kuala Lumpur, the officers visited the Narcotic Branch of the Royal Malaysia Customs and the Narcotic Department of the Royal Malaysia Police.

Discussions mainly focused on the current drug trafficking trend and the drug abuse problem in the region. To enhance investigative capabilities, they shared their work experiences and best practices among themselves. More significantly, they mapped out operational strategies to counter criminals who exploit the legal and enforcement loopholes.

Customs Drug Investigation Bureau



△ (From left) Deputy Director (Investigations), Mr Sulaiman Mahmud; Deputy Director (Intelligence/Operation), Mr Dato' Mangsor Bin Ismail; Superintendent Cheung Chi-kwong; Head of Coordination, Ms Sasikala Devi; and Senior Inspector Wan Hung-sum pictured at the Royal Malaysia Police Headquarters.

Air Cargo Forum and Expo held in HK

The International Air Cargo Association held its 21st International Air Cargo Forum (ACF) and Exposition in Hong Kong between September 17 and 20, 2002. The theme was "Air Commerce: New Challenges Ahead". This world-class event is held every two years among Europe, North America and Asia. This year, the Hong Kong Airport Authority was the host and the Department was appointed as a key Committee member.

Over 1 200 delegates from the air cargo industry all over the world gathered in Hong Kong to address current challenges and opportunities facing the air cargo industry, with over 9 000 local and overseas visitors attended the exhibition. To commemorate the occasion, the Airport Command has produced a VCD on Customs daily operation at the airport and distributed 1 300 of them to the attending delegates.

The ACF2002 was concluded with a tour to the cargo forwarding facilities provided by the Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminal Limited. During the tour, the delegates also visited Customs offices at Super Terminal One. Officers of the Airport Command gave briefings to the visitors on Customs clearance, and the operation of the X-ray machine, Ion scanner and drug detector dogs.

Airport Command



△ Representatives of the Airport Command participating in the Air Cargo Forum.

Three senior officers attend advanced management programmes

Three senior officers have recently been nominated by the Department to attend advanced management programmes organised by renowned overseas academic institutions.

Assistant Commissioner Lawrence Wong attended the Advanced Management Programme organised by the Harvard Business School of Harvard University in the US between September 4 and November 2, 2002.

Chief Superintendent Chan Hon-kit attended the Senior Executive Programme organised by the Templeton College of the University of Oxford in the UK between October 6 and November 2, 2002.

Principal Trade Controls Officer Raymond Wong attended the Advanced Management Programme organised by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in the US between September 22 and October 25, 2002.

These programmes are designed for senior executives who are in or directly support the top management. They embrace global participation from diverse sectors and offer participants the unequalled opportunity to share and expand their worldviews. The courses offered valuable opportunities for our three senior officers to increase their depth of knowledge in key functional areas and broaden their vision as they prepare themselves to assume or broaden their responsibilities in top management.

Office of Training and Development

Risk management training programme

Assistant Superintendent Jeffrey Alexander Moosa of the Risk Management Division attended an 11-day training/attachment programme organised by the Australian Customs Service from September 2 to 12, 2002.

The objectives of the training/attachment are to learn from the Australian experience in order to develop our own strategies and plans to exercise effective Customs control and at the same time to offer greater facilitation to legitimate trade through practicing modern risk management principles with the help of advanced IT.

Australian Customs officials had arranged interviews and briefing for participants to share their experiences on risk management analysis; information analysis; border targeting and screening processes; intelligence network; cargo clearance automation systems; and import/export processing arrangements.

The Australian Customs Service also made arrangements for participants to visit various Customs establishments and related agencies including airport terminals, regional intelligence offices, border control offices, Air Mail Transit Centre, and Dog Detection Unit.

Intelligence Bureau



△ Assistant Superintendent Jeffrey Alexander Moosa (centre) with Regional Director-Victoria of the Australian Customs Service Mr Brain Hurrell (left) and Regional Manager-Victoria Ms Jaclyne Fisher at the Melbourne Customhouse.

Malaysian Customs course

Senior Inspector Li Kwok-ki and I were nominated to attend a Training Management Course organised by the Royal Customs Academy Malaysia from October 15 to 26, 2002. The objective of the course is to enable participants to learn about the concept and fundamentals of efficient and effective training management within an organisation, as well as the importance of human resources development.



The course content included identifying and analysing training needs; designing training module; planning and delivery of training programme; and training evaluation. Through lectures and exercises, we got deeper understanding on training management. The course not only enriches our knowledge but also helps us develop valuable friendship with our overseas counterparts.

Inspector Cheung Sheung-chi
Office of Training and Development

◁ Participants of the Training Management Course with staff of the Royal Customs Academy Malaysia.

Two former Service members commended by AFP

Two former Service members, Greco Tsang Kwok-keung and Kam Koon-ying, were awarded Australian Federal Police (AFP) Commissioner's Certificate in August 2002. The commendation was awarded in recognition of their commitment, dedication and professionalism in ensuring the success of an operation which led to the seizure of 357 kilograms of heroin in Fiji, and the apprehension and prosecution of a major organised crime group.

Prior to joining the AFP in 1992, Mr Tsang was an outstanding investigator working mainly in narcotics investigation during his 14 years' service with the Hong Kong Customs. His utmost effort in combating dangerous drugs resulted in numerous successes. He has been awarded one Deputy Commissioner's commendation, two Assistant Commissioner's commendations as well as three Favourable Entries.



△ Greco Tsang Kwok-keung receiving the AFP Commissioner's Certificate.



Office of Service Administration

◁ Kam Koon-ying receiving the AFP Commissioner's Certificate.

Mr Kam also joined the AFP in 1992. Throughout his 13 years' service with the Hong Kong Customs, he gained much experience in narcotics investigation, financial investigation and intelligence handling. As a prominent law enforcement officer, he was awarded one Deputy Commissioner's commendation and one Assistant Commissioner's commendation for his leadership, ability and devotion to anti-narcotics duty in 1992. In the same year, Mr Kam was highly appreciated by the US Drug Enforcement Administration and the US Customs for his remarkable contributions to their joint investigations.

It took more effort for the officers to stand out from an overseas law enforcement arena. Their achievements, recognised by the AFP, are attributable to their high capabilities and professionalism in drug investigation. Both officers took pride in having served with the Hong Kong Customs and applied skills and past experience to their present commitment. We congratulate them on receiving the honour and wish them further success in fighting crimes.

Amendments to CESSO

In the light of the establishment of the Customs Liaison Bureau (CLB) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) on July 2, the Office of Management Services (OMS) has recently conducted a review of the Customs and Excise Service Standing Orders (CESSO). Other than consequential amendments to the establishment of the two Bureaux, the following key areas of CESSO have been amended:

Uniform Matters

- All members except the Commissioner Grade Officers and those with plainclothes permit shall wear uniform while on duty;
- Superintendent and above may authorise the wearing of plainclothes; and
- Prior approval is required from the Director of Administration for members to accept honours and awards from foreign States and organisations.

Discipline Matters

- Imposing guidelines on the conduct and behaviours of members; and
- Simplifying reporting procedures on members being arrested by other law enforcement agencies.

Destruction of Confiscated Goods

- Appointment of Destruction Officer on a rotation basis and one of the appointees should not be responsible for the seizure management of Exhibit Store; and
- Destruction Supervisor should conduct surprise check during the course of destruction.

Miscellaneous

- Including Special Task Force (STF) and Complaints Investigation Group (CIG) as Major Formations;
- Changing the schedule of the annual appraisal exercise for Chief Customs Officer;
- Marking of amendment history for CESSO; and
- Rules on the use of Service Holiday Houses be promulgated in the Service Holiday Houses Circular.

Office of Management Services

CPC strives to provide quality clearance services

The Department is committed to providing a first class clearance service at the land boundary control points. In order to shorten the clearance time and enhance Customs efficiency in processing goods vehicles passing through the boundary, the Control Points Command has introduced a series of "Streamlined Procedures at the Customs Kiosks of Land Boundary Control Points" since March 2002.

After the full implementation of the whole project, it is estimated that the processing time for goods vehicles would be reduced from 45 to 30 seconds for a loaded goods vehicle and from 20 to 16 seconds for an empty goods vehicle.

The Automatic Vehicle Recognition System (AVRS) was introduced during the third phase of the project. The AVRS is a generalised computer system equipped with digital cameras and infrared detectors simulating the functions of human eyes. It makes use of digital recognition technology to identify the licence plate numbers of vehicles crossing the Lok Ma Chau (LMC), Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok Control Points. The numbers recognised would be input into the Land Boundary System (LBS) via a keyboard interface.

At the first stage, the sole purpose of AVRS is to replace manual inputs to speed up the processing time and reduce human errors. Another function of the system is to maintain an accurate record of all vehicles passing through the control points and leave no room for omission of vehicles crossing records.

At the second stage, a new arrangement has been put into trial to enhance the cargo throughput at LMC by the re-engineering of Customs clearance procedures at the Control Point with the assistance of AVRS. Under this arrangement, the "one-stop-shop" arrangement is being implemented at the existing Immigration kiosks with the installation of modified AVRS. In these kiosks, officers from the Customs and Immigration Department sit side by side to process customs and immigration clearance at the same time. Through the inter-communication network between LBS and AVRS, the new LED display board located next to the Immigration kiosk would signal the drivers whether their vehicles have been selected for customs inspection. The same message would also be sent to the terminal located at the relevant examination platform to inform Customs officers about the need for further actions. Moreover, the practice of returning a copy of the cargo manifest to the drivers has been suspended.

The "one-stop-shop" trial run started on October 15, 2002 at the kiosks of two southbound (from Huanggang to LMC) lanes for three months.

The implementation of the "Streamlined Procedures" has been running on the right track. To sum up, the current average processing time for each vehicle crossing the boundary has been shortened by 13 seconds and the new arrangement is highly appreciated by the industry.

Control Points Command



△ Customs kiosk at Lok Ma Chau Control Point is installed with advanced computer system to speed up clearance.

Bone marrow saves Fellows of Sorrow

Senior Inspector Gryphon Sou was invited by the Hong Kong Bone Marrow Match Foundation (HKMMF) to attend a Presentation Ceremony at Government House on September 13, 2002. The Secretary for Justice, Ms Elsie Leung, presented a trophy to him for his generous act of donating bone marrow to a six-year-old girl. During the Presentation Ceremony, Mr Sou was invited to give a speech.

"Being one of the 36 Donors, I have the pleasure to share with you my unforgettable experience in donating bone marrow.

I have joined the Bone Marrow Donors' Registry of HKMMF since 1991. In 2000, HKMMF informed me that there was a match of my bone marrow with a blood cancer patient. I had no hesitation in giving my helping hand when I spared a thought for a person who was suffering and struggling for life. Hence, I consented to donate my bone marrow to save a little girl whom I had never met.

I was admitted to the hospital one day before the operation for the final tests of my physical state. Early in the morning of the second day, I was sent to an operation theater. In a painless operation, two doctors punctured my loin muscles by using large syringes and extracted marrow via my pelvic bone. The operation lasted about two hours and I regained my consciousness and could eat two hours later.

The pain was much beyond my expectation. The internal wounds caused some radiating pain. On the third day, I could leave the ward for strolling. After a week, I could go swimming but definitely not the butterfly style. Occasionally the internal wounds caused some dull and crushing pain. I resumed my normal life and work after two weeks. This was quite normal for my age of late 30s. There was no adverse effect on my health. In comparison with the patient's constant pain, mine is nothing at all!

A year later, I met the little girl through the arrangement of HKMMF. It is inspiring that she has recovered and has been living merrily with her parents, brother and sister.

Christmas is coming soon. During festive periods, we may be busy with many kinds of celebrations. When we are enjoying our festivities, please spare a thought for some of the less fortunate people who are suffering from fatal blood diseases.

I reckon that a bigger size of Bone Marrow Donors' Registry may lead to a higher chance of bone marrow match. More patients can survive by the transplantation of bone marrow. Ladies and Gentlemen, please support HKMMF by all means."

HKMMF's only source of funding is from charitable donations. Any support you can provide would be greatly appreciated. Donation can be deposited into the account of "Hong Kong Marrow Match Foundation" (Account Number: 267-038222-001) at any branch of Hang Seng Bank.



△ The Secretary for Justice, Ms Elsie Leung, presenting a trophy to Senior Inspector Gryphon Sou.

Contribution to Customs News

"Customs News" is a departmental newsletter aimed at strengthening the communication between the management and staff. It is for dissemination of information on various aspects of the Department. It is also a forum for the exchange of staffs views.

Your contribution, in Chinese or English or both, and preferably with photographs to supplement its contents are welcome. You may share with your colleagues your work experiences or any interesting issues of your Formation. Your views and opinions on various aspects of the development of the Department are also welcome.

Please send your contribution to the Customs News Editorial Team at Room 512B, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong. Please also provide your name, office and contact telephone number.

For enquiries, please feel free to contact the Customs News Editorial Team at telephone number 2852 3227.

Customs commended by IPR industry

The Department is fully committed to the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR). Our persistent and stringent enforcement action has effectively suppressed copyright piracy and trademark counterfeiting. In recognition of our anti-piracy and anti-counterfeiting work, Nokia Corporation and the Motion Picture Association (MPA) presented tokens of appreciation to the Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau in August 2002.



△ Nokia Corporation presenting a commemorative "crystal mobile phone" to Head of the Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau Tam Yiu-keung.

The MPA also presented Letters of Appreciation to the seven members of our Anti-Internet Piracy Team to commend their efforts in cracking down a website offering pirated goods for auction sale. The operation is the first of its kind in which Hong Kong Customs worked hand in hand with the intellectual property industry and the US Customs Service in tracing and pinning down copyright pirates in the cyber-space.

Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau



△ The Motion Picture Association presenting Letters of Appreciation to the seven "Cyber-Cops" of the Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau.

Departmental Seminar

A total of 160 participants attended a Departmental Seminar held on October 19, 2002 at the Senior Officers' Mess. Customs Civil Secretary Stella Au-Yeung spoke on "Report of the Study Group on the Integration of the Trade Controls Officer Grade and the Customs and Excise Service Grade".

Other topics included "The Intelligence Bureau and You" by Senior Superintendent Leung Chi-chiu; "The Latest Development in Boundary Crossing Facilities" by Superintendent Kwok Kai-chiu; and "An Overview of Training for the Customs and Excise Department" by Senior Superintendent Tong Ching-kit and Senior Training Officer Polly Shuen.

Office of Service Administration



△ Customs Civil Secretary Stella Au-Yeung making a presentation at the Departmental Seminar.

Training roadmap

In the past few years, the working environment of the Department has changed rapidly, making it necessary for our colleagues to enhance their skills to cope with the changes. There is a growing emphasis on risk management and intelligence analysis; the emergence of Internet piracy; and the increasing partnership between Customs and traders.

In January 2002, the Department has appointed a consultant to conduct a comprehensive study to identify the latest training needs as well as to revise the training roadmap for each selected rank. In its report, the consultant has recommended a new set of training roadmap aiming to strengthen both the core competencies and functional skills of individual ranks. The revised training roadmap comprises three parts: core competencies of individual ranks, functional skills unique to cross-formation work categories and functional skills unique to individual formations.

The revised training roadmap will facilitate the adoption of modular training specifically based on competencies or functional skills; readily provide a clear checklist to both managers and staff when considering individual training and development needs; support the provision of timely posting-related training; and balance the needs between organisational improvement and personal development.

Training Development Group
Office of Training and Development