

Customs News

2003 MARCH • ISSUE NO.21



Reviewing 2002 and forging ahead

Commissioner Raymond Wong said the Customs had made significant achievements in 2002 in the crackdowns on illicit fuel, illicit cigarettes, dangerous drugs and piracy.

At a year-end press conference held on January 29, 2003 to review the enforcement situation in 2002, Mr Wong attributed the achievements to the dedication and concerted efforts of his colleagues in the Department, and the adoption of intelligence-led operations.

To highlight some of the achievements, Mr Wong said there was an increase in the seizure of illicit fuel from 1.63 million litres of hydrocarbon oil in 926 cases in 2001 to 2.14 million litres in 1 229 cases in 2002.

The number of black spots for illicit fuel activities dropped from 35 in 2001 to 27 at present.

On the sale and purchase of illicit cigarettes, the number of persons arrested in 2002 increased by 60 per cent over 2001. The number of black spots for sale of illicit cigarettes declined from about 100 in early 2000 to 23 in recent months.

In a bid to stem the flow of drugs into Hong Kong, Customs officers arrested 215 drug offenders at land boundary control points in 2002, a notable rise of 29.5 per cent from 166 in 2001.

On the anti-piracy front, there was an increase of 3.2 per cent in the seizure of pirated compact discs (about 9.24 million) by the Department in 2002 as compared with the seizure (8.95 million) in 2001.

The number of detected smuggling cases increased from 187 in 2001 to 226 in 2002. The majority of the cases were Mainland-bound.

Customs has a dual role to play

Recognising the Department's need to play the dual role - a law enforcement body and a trade facilitator - in its day to day work, Mr Wong noted that the ever-increasing growth in the cross-boundary movement of cargoes and travellers had presented mounting challenges to his officers' work.



△ Commissioner Raymond Wong and Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li holding the year-end press conference.

He said, "In 2002, the Department cleared a total of 18.6 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) cargo containers, 12.4 million cross-boundary vehicles and 160 million travellers at the control points.

"Comparing with 2001, the average number of goods vehicles passing through the three land boundary control points in 2002 increased by 7 per cent, reaching 26 816 vehicles per day.

"Among the three, the busiest is the Lok Ma Chau Control Point, with a daily average throughput of 18 447 goods vehicles in 2002, a rise of 8.6 per cent when compared to 2001," he said.

To cater for the increases in the traffic throughput, Mr Wong said, the Customs had adopted a series of measures to facilitate speedier clearance of goods.

They included the re-engineering of customs procedures to shorten the clearance time, additional lane for clearance of goods vehicles between midnight and 7am, and the installation of a total of 42 sets of CCTV cameras of the Automatic Vehicle Recognition System at the three land-boundary control points since May 2002.

Continued on page 2

The average clearance time for a laden goods vehicle has been reduced from 45 seconds to 33 seconds and that for an empty goods vehicle from 20 seconds to 16 seconds. The average clearance capacity for goods vehicles is enhanced from about 90 in 2001 to the current rate of about 120 per lane per hour, representing a remarkable improvement of 33.3 per cent.

Looking ahead, Mr Wong pledged and said, "We will continue to pro-actively support the development of the logistics industry by way of strengthening our clearance efficiency, improving facilities at the control points, developing relevant IT projects and entering into partnership with the industry.

"On the other hand, we will continue to pursue intelligence-led enforcement operations vigorously against piracy, illicit cigarettes, illicit fuel and drugs," he continued.

One-Stop-Shop Customer Service Centre

Mr Wong took the opportunity to announce an initiative that would both enhance Customs service to the public and reduce costs - to set up a One-Stop-Shop Customer Service Centre on the second floor of Harbour Building. It is expected to come into operation in early 2004.

The Centre will bring all services in relation to the application of all types of controlling documents including licences and permits now carried out in various counters at different locations into a single office.

Mr Wong said, "We expect that this new single-window approach, coupled with the re-engineered operation mode of

the counter service and the value-added services of the Help Desk, would enhance our customer service in terms of both quality and productivity."

Under the Enhanced Productivity Programme, Customs had delivered a total savings of \$92.8 million over three years from 2000-01 to 2002-03, equivalent to 5 per cent of its recurrent operating expenditure, involving the deletion of 286 posts and reduction of \$10.6 million in general departmental expenses.

In support of the Government's continued effort to reduce public expenditure, Mr Wong said the Department would reduce its operating expenses by \$36.6 million, equivalent to 1.8 per cent of the Department's recurrent expenditure, in 2003-04 through the deletion of 73 posts and reduction of \$12.8 million in general departmental expenses.

Mr Wong said the deletion of posts would be made possible through the implementation of a series of measures to improve efficiency and productivity:

- re-prioritisation of work;
- re-organisation of duties;
- streamlining of work procedures;
- improvement of productivity through office automation and application of information technology;
- enhancement of efficiency through a wider application of the intelligence-led mode of operation; and
- outsourcing of some support services.

Information Unit

Hong Kong Customs celebrates International Customs Day

Over 300 guests - including local dignitaries, senior Government officials, consulate representatives, and customs representatives from the Mainland, Macau and other countries - attended the reception hosted by the Department at the Senior Officers' Mess on January 24 to celebrate the International Customs Day 2003.

This year, we were honoured to have Sir Gordon Wu, Chairman of the Hong Kong Port and Maritime Board, to be our principal guest. An exhibition on "Customs Trade Facilitation Initiatives" was held to signify the Department's efforts and determination in maintaining a fine balance between enforcement and trade facilitation.

The idea of International Customs Day was approved by the World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1982 as a means of promoting customs co-operation in the interest of international trade and forging closer links among customs officials of different customs administrations.

Since the Hong Kong Customs became a member of the WCO in 1987, this was the 16th year we celebrated the International Customs Day, and it has now become an annual event.

WCO and APEC Division
Customs Liaison Bureau



△ The Chairman of the Hong Kong Port and Maritime Board, Sir Gordon Wu, and Commissioner Raymond Wong proposing a toast at the International Customs Day reception.

DC attends textile conference in the US

Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li, accompanied by Assistant Superintendent Leung Shung-chi, attended the 14th Annual Textile and Apparel Importer-Trade and Transportation Conference in New York on November 20, 2002.

The Deputy Commissioner gave a presentation on "Enhancing Supply Chain Security and Implementing the Container Security Initiative (CSI) in Hong Kong". His presentation had impressed the participants and won their appreciation of the Hong Kong Customs' determination and commitment in the fight against terrorism.

Taking this opportunity, the Deputy Commissioner also paid courtesy visits to a number of customs administrations and law enforcement agencies in Japan and the US to further strengthen co-operative ties with our counterparts. In Japan, Mr Li visited the Customs and Tariff Bureau, the Tokyo Customs and the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office of the World Customs

Organization. During his visit to the US, he called at the US Customs Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration. Through these visits, the Deputy Commissioner had in-depth discussions with his overseas counterparts on the latest development of the CSI and their experiences in implementing the CSI.



△ Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li pictured with Deputy Commissioner of the US Customs Service Mr Douglas Browning.

HK and Korea Customs Co-operation Conference

Commissioner Raymond Wong and the Commissioner of Korea Customs Services, Mr Lee Yong-sup, led their delegations to attend the 23rd Customs Cooperation Conference between Hong Kong and the Republic of Korea in Hong Kong on November 20 and 21, 2002.

During the Conference, both administrations had updated each other on a wide range of topics of common interests, including the development of trade facilitation initiatives, organisational changes and application of new technologies and equipment in their respective administrations. Both sides had also had a frank discussion on issues relating to infringement of intellectual property rights and smuggling of illicit drugs and tobacco.

During their stay in Hong Kong, Commissioner Lee and the Korean delegation were invited to a tour on board a Customs launch to experience the maritime anti-smuggling operations in the waters of Hong Kong.



△ Participants of the 23rd Customs Co-operation Conference between Hong Kong and the Republic of Korea.

Customs Liaison Division
Customs Liaison Bureau

EC/HK Customs meet in HK

The Director of the General Affairs, Directorate-General Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission, Mr Manuel Arnal Monreal, led a six member delegation to Hong Kong to attend the Fourth Meeting of the Joint Customs Cooperation Committee (JCCC) on December 4 and 5, 2002.



Assistant Commissioner Chow Kwong chaired the meeting. Other members of the Hong Kong delegation were Senior Superintendent Lai Chun-kong, Superintendent Lui Kin-hung and Senior Inspector Chan Tat-wah. During the meeting, both sides exchanged information and shared experiences on protection of intellectual property rights; implementation of the US Container Security Initiative; recent Customs-related legislative amendments; and latest e-Customs developments.

The meeting concluded with considerable achievements and fruitful results. Both sides agreed that the meeting was conducive to enhancing the understanding between the EC and Hong Kong Customs.

Customs Liaison Division
Customs Liaison Bureau

△ Participants of the Fourth Meeting of the Joint Customs Cooperation Committee between European Community and Hong Kong.

Commissioner chairs ARM in Hong Kong

The Annual Review Meeting between Hong Kong Customs and the Customs General Administration (CGA) was held in Hong Kong on December 13, 2002. Commissioner Raymond Wong chaired the meeting and the Mainland delegation was led by the Deputy Commissioner of CGA, Mr Zhao Guanghua.

Year 2002 proved to be a fruitful year for both administrations as we have accomplished various co-operation items such as enforcement seminars, training programmes, operational meetings, familiarisation visits and study on cargo data sharing. During the meeting, both sides briefed each other on customs issues of common concern, such as trend of general cargo and cigarette smuggling and drug trafficking. Commissioner Wong hoped that both administrations could work hand in hand to step up efforts in combating smuggling.

After the meeting, both sides signed a resolution, which covers training programmes, familiarisation visits, enforcement seminars and the study on simplification of customs clearance procedures. Hong Kong Customs has also agreed to render assistance to CGA in the establishment of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office in Beijing in 2004.



Customs Liaison Division
Customs Liaison Bureau

◁ Commissioner Wong presenting a souvenir to Deputy Commissioner Zhao.

Guangdong and HK Customs to speed up customs clearance

The Second Working Group Meeting on Operational Efficiency of Land Boundary Control Points between Guangdong and Hong Kong Customs was held in Hong Kong on November 27, 2002. The Hong Kong delegation, led by Assistant Commissioner Lawrence Wong, comprising eight members from the Control Points Command, Ship Search and Cargo Command, Marine and Land Enforcement Command and the Office of Information Technology. The Guangdong delegation was led by the Deputy Head of Guangdong Sub-administration of Customs General Administration, Miss Sha Xiaojuan. Their six delegates were from the Guangdong Customs, Huanggang Customs and Dongguan Customs.

The meeting was held under a co-operative and harmonious atmosphere. Topics discussed included feasibility study on standardising road manifests; Container Security Initiative; automated clearance system at Huanggang and the pilot run of the GPS Control System by Guangdong Customs. Several



△ Participants of the Second Working Group Meeting on Operational Efficiency of Land Boundary Control Points between Guangdong and Hong Kong Customs.

agreements were reached in the meeting, which contributed immensely to future co-operation and communication between the two Customs administrations.

Control Points Command

Canadian Police Commissioner visits HK

The Commissioner of Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Mr Giuliano Zaccardelli, together with Chief Superintendent Mr Albert Cheuk of the Hong Kong Police, paid a visit to the Department on January 21, 2003.



◁ Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli and Assistant Commissioner William Chow watching a demonstration of the radiation detecting equipment at the Kwai Chung Customhouse.

During the visit, Assistant Commissioner William Chow and Superintendent Chan Yiu-wah briefed the visitors on measures and initiatives taken by Hong Kong Customs against terrorism. Commissioner Zaccardelli also paid a courtesy visit to Commissioner Raymond Wong and Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li who hosted a luncheon for the visitors.

The visit provided an excellent opportunity for both sides to exchange views and experiences on practices and strategies to counter terrorism and organised crimes.

Intelligence Bureau

National drug law enforcement agencies meet in Bangkok

represented the Hong Kong SAR Government to attend the 26th Meeting of the Heads of National Drug Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) in Bangkok between November 11 and 15, 2002. The other representative was Chief Superintendent Mr Kenny Ip of the Hong Kong Police.



△ Senior Superintendent Yu Koon-hing (left) and Chief Superintendent of the Hong Kong Police Mr Kenny Ip attending the HONLEA Meeting.

The HONLEA Meeting is organised annually by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) for heads of the national drug law enforcement agencies. It aims to review the regional trends of drug production, trafficking and related crimes; to examine enforcement issues on drug and precursor chemicals and money laundering; and to make recommendations on enforcement matters to the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The HONLEA Meeting was hosted by the Office of Narcotics Control Board of Thailand this year, with the attendance of 127 delegates from 20 member countries, nine observers from countries of other regions and two international organisations.

Yu Koon-hing
Head of Customs Drug Investigation Bureau

INCB Chemical Working Group Meeting

Superintendent Thomas Wu of the Customs Drug Investigation Bureau attended the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) first Project Prism Meeting at The Hague, Netherlands on December 11 and 12, 2002. The meeting was also attended by representatives from 14 countries/states and other

international organisations including the European Community, Interpol, the UK National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Project Prism is the third international tracking programme initiated by INCB which aims to monitor the movement of four chemicals, namely 1-phenyl-2-propanone, 3,4-Methylenedioxy-phenyl-2-propanone, Safrole and Sassafras Oil, all of which have their legitimate usage in either the pharmaceutical field or the perfume industry. However, they can also be used for manufacturing dangerous drugs "ice" and MDMA.

Initial consensus was reached among all participants after the two-day meeting to keep a tighter rein on the four chemicals in both domestic and international trade.

Customs Drug Investigation Bureau



△ Superintendent Thomas Wu and Director of National Narcotics Control Commission Mr Wang Xiang-dong at the Project Prism Meeting.

SAARC study group visits HK

The Controlled Chemicals Group (CCG) organised a three-day training course from October 28 to 30, 2002 for representatives of the seven member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC). The seven member states are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The course aimed to provide participants with a general idea of the work of the CCG in controlling precursor chemicals, including the control measures implemented by the CCG, its participation in international tracking programmes as well as its initiatives in combating illicit diversion of chemicals.

Through presentation and round-table discussion, participants were able to have a better understanding of the precursor chemical control programmes adopted by their neighbouring countries and exchange valuable experiences.

The Project Co-ordinator of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), Mr

Devandra Dutt, who attended the training course as an observer, praised the training course for being informative and professional.

The Customs Liaison Group organised a tour for the visitors to the Hong Kong International Airport, Lok Ma Chau Control Point and Kwai Chung Container Terminal.

Customs Drug Investigation Bureau



△ UNDCP Project Coordinator Mr Devandra Dutt (front row third from left) and Consul of India Mr T Jayaraman (front row fourth from right) with the SAARC study group.

US offers consumer product safety training

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) organised a three-week attachment training programme on enforcement of product safety for me between December 2 and 20, 2002. In the first week, I was arranged to attach to the Headquarters of CPSC in Washington DC and afterwards, I was assigned to work with the field investigators in Los Angeles.

The objectives of the course were to enable me to gain up-to-date information on the product safety regime of the US, to master the safety enforcement strategies, and to learn the investigation approaches adopted by the CPSC.

Through briefings, discussions, exchange of views and field attachment activities, the training programme has undoubtedly enhanced my knowledge of product safety enforcement, in particular hazard identification and analysis. It also broadened my understanding on CPSC's work of ensuring products safety and reducing risk of injuries and death associated with consumer products.

Taking that opportunity, I have also built up a friendly and constructive relationship between CPSC and the Department. The officials of CPSC have kindly agreed to render assistance in giving expert advice and guidance whenever necessary.

Lam Po-chuen

Deputy Head of Consumer Protection Division
Consumer Protection and Prosecution Bureau



△ Chief Trade Controls Officer Lam Po-chuen (right) and Senior Compliance Officer of CPSC Mr Frank J Krivda at Washington DC.

Working experience in RILO

I was posted to the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) for Asia Pacific (AP) in January 2001. During my two years' secondment in RILO, I had lots of unforgettable experiences, including the honour of being commended by the Director-General of the Japan Customs.

There are a total of 11 RILOs in the six continents of the world, functioning effectively to combat transnational Customs crime. Hong Kong Customs is the first Member administration of the World Customs Organization to run the RILO. The RILO AP operated in the territory for 11 years before moving to Japan in 1999.

The most difficult time for me with RILO AP was from July to October 2001, when many of the Japanese officers were posted out in one lot while the new Head had not yet assumed his post due to his overseas commitment. However, with the collective effort of all colleagues, we went through the difficult time.

I will never forget that I had climbed the Mount Fuji single-handedly. If you wish to face this challenge, I am happy to share my experience with you.

Senior Inspector Tse Ka-wah
Customs Liaison Bureau



△ The Director-General of Japan Customs, Mr Yoshio Tamura (left), presenting a commendation certificate to Senior Inspector Tse Ka-wah.

Customs and cargo industry sign MOU

The Department signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) under the Watch Out Programme with 15 representatives from associations and commercial operators of container terminals, air freight terminals and cross boundary transport industry on December 9, 2002.



△ Assistant Commissioner Lawrence Wong exchanging the MOU with Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Container Tractor Owner Association, Mr Lo Chung-tak.

The Watch Out Programme is a forward-looking initiative of the Hong Kong Customs in increasing co-operation with its business partners to enhance trade facilitation and effective customs control. The signing of MOU signified the determination

of the Hong Kong SAR Government in developing Hong Kong as an international cargo hub and the principal gateway to the Mainland.

Under the MOU, both the Hong Kong Customs and the cargo industry agreed to appoint designated staff for establishing effective communication and consultation channel; to co-operate and apply risk management techniques in their procedures pertaining to cargo handling, delivery and clearance for detecting and preventing Customs offences and smuggling; and to exchange in advance information and transfer cargo data or Customs instruction on cargo shipments to facilitate trade activities.

The Watch Out Programme opens a new platform in fostering mutual co-operation between Customs and the cargo industry. With the newly-established communication channels, timely and accurate exchange of information will ultimately result in lowering the level of Customs intervention on cargo movement.

Control Points Command

First Management Development Course for ASs and CTCOs

The first Customs Management Development Course (CMDC) organised by the Office of Training and Development for 16 Assistant Superintendents and four Chief Trade Control Officers was held between January 6 and 28, 2003. The three-week-long management development programme is aimed at enhancing participants' management competence and Customs knowledge.

Training topics encompassed Public Policy and Management, General Management and Customs Management. Renowned academics, experienced consultants, Government officials and representatives from overseas enforcement agencies were invited to deliver talks in the CMDC. Senior officers, including Assistant Commissioners, Senior Superintendents, Superintendents and Principal Trade Controls Officers, also gave talks on departmental strategies and management practices. A two-day attachment visit to the Guangdong Customs and a half-day visit to the MTRC were also arranged for the participants.

Throughout the training programme, all course members participated actively. They formed into groups and engaged in research projects related to the Department's businesses and management practices. A course-end project presentation was given by each of the project groups.

Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li was invited to officiate at the closing ceremony in which Assistant Commissioner Chow Kwong presented the "Best Project Presentation Award" to the winning team.

Polly Shuen
Senior Training Officer

Deputy Commissioner Raymond Li and the senior management of the Department attending the closing ceremony of the Customs Management Development Course.

Voice of a participant

The first CMDC marked a milestone in the Department's determination to enhance staff quality at the Assistant Superintendent and Chief Trade Controls Officer level. It has been my great pleasure to be nominated as one of the 20 participants.

The tailor-made training programme is designed for bringing in new administration and management concepts. The course has been well structured with a balanced focus given to both academic theory and practical application. Lectures given by renowned academics and senior officers were impressive and were able to broaden my vision. Of more significance is that they help changing our mindset and ways of looking at a problem. The new management concepts have no doubt established a solid platform for innovation and inspiration.

Taking the course can be a strenuous challenge as participants have to submit various assignments and a group project. Through the group project, I was able to apply the skills on how to work with others in achieving a common goal.

My experience on the course is something more impressive than words. I am confident that what I have learned from the course will be beneficial to my future career development. Taking this opportunity, I wish to express my gratitude to those in the Department who have dedicated to making this course a great success.

Assistant Superintendent Walter Mak Hoi-wan
Office of Management Services



Judicial officers visit optical disc factory

The Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau (IPIB) made arrangements for eight judicial officers to visit a local licensed optical disc factory in Chai Wan on December 7, 2002.

Through a briefing session by Acting Senior Superintendent of IPIB Fong Fai-hung on the current intellectual property situation and the licensing system implemented for local optical disc manufacturers, the judicial officers are made more aware of the impact of the new technology in optical disc manufacturing on law enforcement by Customs.

The half-day visit was concluded following a tour around the workshop and an introduction to the DVD manufacturing facility of the factory.

Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau



△ The judicial officers and officers from the IPIB visiting a licensed optical disc factory.

Commissioner launches Info-stations

Commissioner Raymond Wong officiated at an opening ceremony on January 27, 2003 to mark the launch of the first Info-station in Customs. This marked the success of the Department's continuous efforts in exploring ways to apply IT for the benefit of staff members.

By March 2003, all 82 Info-stations would be installed at 36 sites covering major offices of the Department. To allow flexibility of maintenance and user convenience, wireless network technology was applied in the Info-stations. The total cost of the

Info-stations and ancillary wireless network equipment is about \$2.6 million.

Officers using the Info-stations are able to access information databases such as Government Bulletin Board, Electronic Filing System and the Central Cyber Government Office (CCGO). To enable users to compile simple document and gain Internet access, office software is also installed. By using a zip disk, Government Office Automation (GOA) users can login to any one of the Info-stations to send or receive e-mails.

When the Pilot Accessibility Programme is completed in June 2003, all staff of the Department can enjoy Intranet e-mail communication and Internet browsing service through the Info-stations.

Computer System Operations Division
Office of Information Technology



◀ Commissioner Raymond Wong being briefed by a staff member of the Office of Information Technology on the operation of the Info-station.

Risk management products achieve "hit more with less" goal

To help frontline officers accomplish their momentous tasks of identifying suspected cargoes for inspection amongst voluminous cargoes, Hong Kong Customs applies the following risk management products to achieve the goal of "hit more with less":

(A) Trader Risk Grading

Trained officers of the Risk Management Division of the Intelligence Bureau pay enquiry visits to importers, exporters and their peripheral trading partners to collect vital background information of traders. Such information is pooled with significant information pertaining to risk evaluation gathered from other departmental and Government information systems for a meticulous risk assessment. A comprehensive risk grading is allotted to each and every trader after the assessment.

This risk grading is then stored in the Customs Control System for use by all cargo selectivity officers. The trader risk grading serves as an effective tool for frontline officers to identify high-risk consignments for a thorough inspection.

The application of this tool has resulted in the interception of 360 kilograms of cannabis, concealed in a container of coconuts, by our cargo examination team last year.

(B) General Risk Profiles

To assist officers in identifying high-risk cargoes crossing the

land boundary control points, the Risk Management Division has developed a set of General Risk Profile for different enforcement objectives. The Risk Profile depicts a series of vital risk factors in respect of the time, place, mode of transportation, driver and concealment method.

Owing to the incessant flow of cross-boundary traffic, officers dealing with cargo clearance at land boundary control points only have a very short time to process a crossing vehicle and decide whether or not to conduct a detailed examination on the cargo onboard the vehicle. The Risk Profile can greatly facilitate their decision-making as it is specially designed for easy reading. With full knowledge of the most high-risk period and location, officers can concentrate on other risk factors by matching the details shown in the profile and identify high-risk vehicles easily.

Supported by the General Risk Profile, officers at Lok Ma Chau Control Point recently made a seizure of more than 5.3 million sticks of smuggled cigarettes onboard an inbound vehicle.

We are confident that the deployment of risk management tools will greatly enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of customs control and at the same time facilitate legitimate trade and industry.

Risk Management Group
Intelligence Bureau

Information Systems Strategy Study

To provide a better service to the public, an overall strategy to establish a comprehensive and coherent information system (IS) to support the Department's future operational environment is needed. To this end, an Information System Strategy Study (ISSS) was conducted in December 2001. It is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2003.

Under ISSS, an IS strategic plan is formulated through an array of information technology (IT) opportunities identified for the future business and operation strategies of the Department. The IS strategic plan not only supports the Department's business strategy of IT-based and intelligence-led operations, but also

paves the way for the Department to enhance trade facilitation in order to tie in with the Government's policy of developing Hong Kong into a regional logistics centre.

According to the plan, four strategic aims have been devised, namely e-Services to facilitate trade activities; Central Information Support to enhance intelligence capabilities; Corporate Resources Support to facilitate human and asset resources strategic planning; and Infrastructure Support to construct a backbone for network data traffic.

Office of Information Technology

Customs Clearance Cubicle at HK-Macau Ferry Terminal

To provide more efficient and professional services to cross-boundary passengers, the Control Points Command launched a trial run of Customs Clearance Cubicle at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal on November 13, 2002.

The new Customs Clearance Cubicle helps protect the privacy of passengers undergoing baggage examination and smooth the passenger flow at the Customs Hall. Moreover, it will increase the transparency of Customs work and improve the efficiency in the detection of smuggling activities.

The cubicle is constructed of translucent glass and metallic frame. When passengers are directed for baggage examination, they would be invited to the Customs Clearance Cubicle where unnecessary interruption and embarrassment can be avoided.

To enhance the efficiency in the detection of smuggling and drug-trafficking activities, the Cubicle is installed with X-ray machine and metal detector. In addition, video and sound recording system are also set up to ensure transparency during the course of Customs inspection.

The establishment of the Customs Clearance Cubicle has marked a milestone of the services provided by the Department to the public. Through continuously offering professional clearance services and effectively detecting illicit activities, we are determined to uphold the Department's motto - "Commitment and Excellence".

Control Points Command



△ The metal detector installed at the Customs Clearance Cubicle.



△ The X-ray machine at the Customs Clearance Cubicle.