



CUSTOMS NEWS

2014 August • Issue No.52 <http://www.customs.gov.hk>

THE COMMISSIONER SPEAKS

The summer of 2014 might appear serene and tranquil as compared with the tempestuous patch that we waded through last year, but there is no short of challenge on our wits and wisdom as criminal activities continue to emerge and evolve.

Frontline manpower remains stretched due to surging traffic volume, sophisticated methods of concealment and elevating public expectations. Powdered formula and illicit cigarettes continue to impose a drain on available resources and expose the risk of saturated enforcement capacity. We will alleviate the situation by flexible staff mobilization, upgrading of equipment and improved profiling techniques. Where appropriate, outreach efforts will be stepped up so that the private sector could take a more active role in preventive risk management.

On border control, Hong Kong Customs is sitting on the pedestal as a centre of excellence and role model for emulation. Because of your collective efforts, I received warm appreciation and sincere gratitude for this at the 71st Policy Session of the World Customs Organization from faraway countries that hardly come to mind in the normal course of dealings. From elephant tusks and rhino horns to ebony and sandalwood, what we regard as regular duties and routine chores have inspired a global agenda for wildlife conservation that is sounding echoes around every corner and gathering impetus by the day. The positive way in which we acted on intelligence input also produced earnest requests for closer cooperation and knowledge sharing from counterparts on distant land. From a

strategic standpoint, the widened liaison network and empowered allies will fortify our defenses against opportunistic perpetration.

As regards revenue protection, all relevant indicators show that the problem of tobacco smuggling is under control - tax revenue growing from \$4.2 billion in 2011-12 to \$5.8 billion in 2013-14, incidence of smoking reducing from 11.2% to 10.8% of the population, and public complaints dropping from over 3,000 in 2012 to less than 2,000 in 2013. This is made possible by sheer hard work. First, our enforcement campaign now covers the entire value chain from cross-boundary cargo for upstream supply, to urban warehouses for midstream storage and street paddling for downstream delivery. Second, innovative tactics are being developed to disturb emerging modalities, such as the conviction of two individuals abetting syndicates to access mobile services for telephone ordering. Similar progress is being made in tackling evasion of First Registration Tax by vehicle importers, with revenue recorded during the first half of 2014 increasing by 31% against the same period last year. Apart from strengthened capability for in-house assessment and on-site inspection, a mobile application was launched in May to enhance consumer awareness and vigilance. What we have done will help to ensure that this staple source of income could sustain various government services amidst domestic economic slowdown and external uncertainties. The fundamental question of whether the existing legislative regime needs updating to keep up with present-day circumstances must also



be looked at in due course.

A series of high profile operations launched after the amended Trade Descriptions Ordinance came into effect 13 months ago have created strong deterrent and restored market discipline, providing shoppers with peace of mind to exploit Hong Kong to the full. Many of these cases are pursued by a special duties team set up under the auspices of Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau that turns out to be an important breakthrough in applying organized crime investigation techniques to tackle devious traders, particularly those eyeing on visitors with little local knowledge. In time, this collaborative model blending together the finesse of uniformed personnel and civilian staff could unravel synergy that enables us to deal effectively with trade-related transgressions.

Although much has been accomplished, the saga of detecting and thwarting illicit trades will never see its final chapter. We should derive satisfaction and motivation from past successes while staying ahead and alert of evolving vulnerabilities.

Clement Cheung
Commissioner

HONG KONG CUSTOMS ADOPTS HOLISTIC STRATEGY AGAINST WILDLIFE CRIME

The illegal trade in wildlife not only poses a serious threat to the conservation of endangered species but also fuels transnational organized crime. From 2013 to June 2014, Hong Kong Customs seized over 168,300 kilogrammes of smuggling ivory, pangolin and pangolin scales and red sandalwood. As the gatekeeper of a premier trading and logistic hub in the Asia Pacific Region, Hong Kong Customs always remains vigilant to cross-border crimes including illegal trade on wildlife, and employs a holistic strategy to ensure enforcement effectiveness.

Risk Management and Intelligence Gathering

Hong Kong Customs has put in place IT systems like Customs and Excise Intelligence System (CEIS), Road Cargo System (ROCARS) and Air Cargo Clearance

System (ACCS), which provide various modules of risk indicators for profiling and targeting high-risk cargoes and passengers. With sophisticated risk profiling techniques and advanced non-intrusive inspection equipment, Hong Kong Customs maintains high efficiency in facilitating the legitimate flow of cargoes and passengers, whilst effectively prevents and counteracts illegal import and export of wildlife products. On the other hand, Hong Kong Customs accords high importance on expanding the intelligence network and exchanging information with source and destination countries of the smuggling items. The Department maintains well-structured notification mechanism with other Customs administrations to exchange intelligence as well as to share case information on wildlife crime.

Enforcement Achievements

In May this year, 1,000 kilogrammes of pangolin scales with a market value of about HK\$5 million were detected from a seaborne container arrived from Kenya. Subsequent intelligence gathering led to a further seizure of 2,340 kilogrammes of pangolin scales from a related shipment arrived from Cameroon. The haul valued over HK\$12 million and was the largest seizure of pangolin scales in five years.

In June this year, 790 kilogrammes of raw ivory tusks and semi-finished ivory products valued at HK\$7.9 million were seized from 15 transiting air passengers from Angola and destined for Cambodia as a result of risk assessment and profiling, contributing to the largest ivory amount ever seized from air passengers in Hong Kong.

Engagement in International Fora

Hong Kong Customs participates in different domains to sustain our perseverance in stamping out the wildlife transnational crime. Apart from engaging in various global enforcement operations against wildlife trafficking, the Department actively participates in different international and regional fora to share with counterparts the expertise in curbing wildlife offences.

Between May 19 and 20, officers



A total of one tonne of seized ivory was destroyed by way of incineration right after the Launching Ceremony on May 15, 2014.



Mr John E Scanlon (third from right), and his delegation meet Customs colleagues at the Airport Command.

from the Intelligence Bureau of Hong Kong Customs attended the “Workshop on Combating Smuggling of Timber from Madagascar to Asia” organized by the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime in Seoul, Korea. At the presence of 24 representatives from Africa and Asia Customs administrations, the World Customs Organization (WCO), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) regulatory authorities, the World Bank, INTERPOL and the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific Region, officers delivered presentations on the enforcement actions taken by Hong Kong Customs against African timber smuggling in Hong Kong and the successful operational experience on combating transnational timber smuggling. All participants had a fruitful discussion at the workshop and reached a consensus to enhance enforcement effectiveness by strengthening international co-operation and

timely intelligence exchange.

Raising Public Awareness

Apart from working closely with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department on the enforcement control of trade in endangered species, Hong Kong Customs also assists in raising public awareness of conservation of endangered species and enhancing public knowledge of relevant legislation.

The launching ceremony of the destruction of confiscated ivory on May 15, 2014 in Hong Kong kicked off the plan to destroy by incineration a total of 28 tonnes of stockpiled ivory within the next few years. The event had not just marked an important milestone of Hong Kong Customs’ enforcement efforts in combating illegal wildlife trade, but had as well sent an unequivocal message to the public that Hong Kong adopts zero tolerance to wildlife crime. Mr Luke Au Yeung, Acting Commissioner of Customs & Excise, together with

Mr Wong Kam-sing, the Secretary for the Environment and Mr John E Scanlon, the Secretary-General of CITES were invited to officiate at the ceremony. Guests from other Customs Administrations, consulates and international endangered species protection groups were present to witness this meaningful event.

After the ceremony, Mr Scanlon and his delegation from CITES visited the Customs clearance facilities at the Super Terminal 1, Hong Kong International Airport. The delegation was impressed by the fine balance between facilitation to the industry and control against illegal activities embedded in Hong Kong Customs’ cargo clearance and targeting regime. During the visit, Mr Scanlon commended Hong Kong Customs for its immense contributions paid to interdicting smuggling of endangered species in fulfillment of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region’s international obligation in wildlife protection.

The Honour

Hong Kong’s enforcement efforts are globally recognized and rewarded. Being a long working companion on CITES work, Hong Kong Customs received the CITES’ Certificate of Commendation in 2003 and 2012 respectively, recognizing its commitment on implementation of the Convention. In March, the Consulate General of the United States in Hong Kong also presented the Department with a Certificate of Appreciation for its exemplary actions in combating



Certificate of Commendation from Secretary-General of CITES to Hong Kong Customs and Excise in 2012.

the illegal trafficking of endangered species and unwavering commitment to the enforcement of the Convention.

Way Forward

The commendable enforcement achievements has explicitly proved the effectiveness of the tactics adopted by Hong Kong Customs against illicit wildlife trade. As always, Hong Kong Customs will continue working closely with local and overseas enforcement

agencies, business partners and other international organizations to curb the illegal movement of endangered species and wildlife products in a determined and decisive approach.

**Airport Command
Intelligence Bureau
Office of Customs Affairs and
Co-operation
Ports and Maritime Command**

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES ITS FIRST MOBILE APPLICATION "HK CAR TAX"

The Customs and Excise Department launched on May 30 its first free mobile application, "HK Car Tax", which provides information on sale and purchase of motor vehicles before first registration. It is a convenient way for members of the public to check the published retail price lists on their mobile phones. By promoting public awareness of their rights and liabilities when purchasing motor vehicles before first registration, the mobile application will help better protect consumers' interests and maintain a fair motor trade environment.

The mobile application contains the following features:

1. Notes to Buyer/Trader

It outlines the liabilities of buyers and traders and some exemplary practices for traders as reference;

2. Calculate FRT (First Registration Tax)

It provides a tool for calculating the first registration tax;



HK Car Tax mobile application.

3. Search Approved PRP (Published Retail Price)

It allows buyers and traders to check the corresponding published retail price lists for higher transparency in the prices of vehicles;

4. Promotional Video

This is an Announcement of Public Interest featured by celebrities;

5. Quiz

This is an entertaining quiz on general knowledge of first registration tax and related matters;

6. Glossary

It provides explanation of commonly used terms relating to the sale and purchase of motor vehicles before first registration; and

7. Useful Links

It provides direct links to the “Motor Vehicles First Registration Tax System” homepage, as well as relevant webpages of Transport Department and Environmental Protection Department.

Members of the public may download this application from App Store and Play Store or recommend it to family and friends for a better understanding of the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance and liabilities when

purchasing motor vehicles before first registration.

Motor Vehicles Valuation Group
Office of Dutiable
Commodities Administration

HK CUSTOMS GAINS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION IN COMBATING COUNTERFEITS

The Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau of Hong Kong Customs was highly commended by the Global Anti-Counterfeiting Group (GACG) and was presented the Global Anti-Counterfeiting Awards 2014 in June in recognition of its outstanding achievement in combating counterfeiting and piracy.

The Global Anti-Counterfeiting Awards are presented for outstanding achievement by individuals or organisations involved in combating counterfeiting and piracy, either to protect their own brands or products or in the development of an environment which encourages the combating of counterfeits and pirated products.

The IPIB won the Award in the category of National Public Body for its successful long-standing commitment to anti-counterfeiting activities and for co-operation with the public sector nationally and internationally and also with individuals and associations in the private sector. The Award

was presented on the World Anti-Counterfeiting Day held in Paris on June 5.

Commending the Department for its exemplary service, the Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung, expressed that the Department’s unswerving commitment in combating counterfeiting activities has not only won it international recognition, but has also inspired the businesses from around the world with confidence to invest in Hong Kong, driving our economic activities and upholding our reputation as Asia’s World City.

The World Anti-Counterfeiting Day was established in 1998 by the GACG to raise public awareness of the international costs of counterfeiting and piracy around the world. GACG, with 22 members covering nearly 40 countries, is an informal network of national and regional intellectual property protection and enforcement organisations.

Hong Kong Customs maintains

close contact with international counterparts. Customs officials participated in two international conferences organised by the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC) and the World Customs Organisation (WCO) respectively in Hong Kong in May.

The Assistant Commissioner (Intelligence and Investigation), Mr Albert Ho, attended the IACC Spring Conference from May 7 to



The Commendation presented to the IPIB of Hong Kong Customs.

9. Being the first time held in Asia, the Conference brought together leaders on all fronts, including law, security, government and business, for exchange of latest information and best practices.

In his keynote speech delivered at the Conference, Mr Ho emphasized that protecting intellectual property rights was a major task for Hong Kong Customs. To prevent Intellectual Property crimes, Hong Kong Customs would ensure that law enforcement strategies and tactics were effective and up-

to-date. Mr Ho said that close collaboration with the rights holders and publicity education to the public would also help to achieve the mission.

In addition, Mr Lee Hon-wah, the Head of Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau, attended the Global Anti-Counterfeiting Conference on May 8. The Conference was jointly organized by the WCO, the European Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and the European Union Academic Programme Hong Kong. Speaking

to experts around the world, Mr Lee acknowledged the importance of getting support from trademark owners and partners from the business sector in fighting against Intellectual Property crimes. He also addressed the health hazards and safety issues that counterfeits might bring about to consumers and the efforts of Hong Kong Customs in minimizing such threats to both domestic and overseas markets.

**Intellectual Property
Investigation Bureau**

CUSTOMS PASSING-OUT PARADE

The passing-out parade of the 98th to 102nd Customs Inspector Induction Courses with 97 graduates was inspected by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam, on May 2. More than 560 guests from various government departments, the private sector as well as families and friends of the graduates attended the ceremony held at the Customs and Excise Training School.

Addressing the ceremony, Mrs Lam expressed sincere congratulations to all the graduates who had successfully completed 24 weeks of strict and arduous training and commended them for their excellent performance at the parade. Mrs Lam encouraged the graduates to continue with self-learning to meet up with new challenges and keep abreast of the times.



Mrs Carrie Lam inspects the Customs passing-out parade.

She believed that the graduating inspectors would strive to fulfill the Customs' performance pledge of "Commitment and Excellence" and provide quality service to the community. Mrs Lam also complimented the instructors of

the Training School for their effort and hard work in fostering a new generation in Hong Kong Customs.

**Office of Training and
Development**

15th WCO ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL HEADS OF CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIONS CONFERENCE



Mr Clement Cheung (second left) speaks as one of the panelists in the Panel Discussion of Industry Engagement.

A delegation of Hong Kong Customs, led by the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Clement Cheung, attended the 15th World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia Pacific (A/P) Regional Heads of Customs Administrations (RHCA) Conference in Port Douglas, Australia from April 29 to May 2.

In the Panel Discussion of Industry Engagement, Mr Cheung stressed that Customs had to achieve a pragmatic balance between law enforcement and trade facilitation. “Despite different constraints and challenges, “Communication” and “Trust” are paramount in Customs-Trade relationship, and efficiency does not and should not compromise integrity,” he said.

Mr Cheung introduced to Member administrations various Business-Partnership programmes of Hong

Kong Customs with illustrations of successful enforcement attributed to engagement and support of trade partners. All along, Hong Kong Customs is dedicated in maintaining a harmonious Customs-trade relationship and building up partnership with the private sector for mutual benefits.

In another session at the RHCA Conference, Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support), Mr David Fong, called for tougher action in the fight against global drug problems while reporting on the Regional High-level Seminar on Customs Anti-drug Strategy held in Hong Kong in December 2013. Mr Fong stressed that no individual Member could work on its own and the Customs community should commit to a long-term partnership in the battle against drug trafficking.

Echoing with Hong Kong Customs, Members at the RHCA Conference agreed to step up enforcement efforts against the drug problem. The Conference endorsed all the recommendations put forth at the anti-drug seminar in December. These include organizing more transnational anti-drug operations and incorporating the “Framework for Customs Anti-drug Strategy” into the WCO Compliance and Enforcement Package.

The biennial RHCA Conference is hosted by the incumbent WCO A/P Vice-Chair. It provides an opportunity for senior officials of Customs administrations throughout the A/P region to discuss and exchange ideas on matters of common interest, and formulate plans and strategic priorities.

CO-OPERATION FRAMEWORK BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA CUSTOMS ENHANCED



Mr Clement Cheung (middle) meets with Mr Yu Guangzhou (right).

Brimming with opportunities for collaboration between Hong Kong and China Customs in recent years, both administrations are determined to enhance the existing co-operation framework for a closer partnership.

The Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support) of Hong Kong Customs, Mr David Fong, led a delegation to attend the Chief Liaison Officers' Meeting with the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China in Chengdu on March 11. At the meeting, both sides reviewed the outcome of mutual co-operation and examined a new co-operation plan, paving the way for the Annual Review Meeting in July.

The "2013/14 Annual Review

Meeting between the General Administration of Customs and Hong Kong Customs" was held in Beijing on July 15. The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Clement Cheung, led a seven-member delegation to attend the meeting and had constructive exchanges with the delegation headed by the Vice Minister of the General Administration of Customs, Mr Sun Yibiao.

The meeting recognized the remarkable achievements resulting from close co-operation between the two administrations on various fronts in the past year and discussed the latest development on areas including trade facilitation, anti-smuggling and customs clearance. Both sides also reached a consensus that the General

Administration of Customs and the Guangdong Sub-Administration of the General Administration of Customs would host the Annual Review Meetings alternately with Hong Kong Customs in future.

The Hong Kong delegation proceeded to the Beijing Detector Dog Base of the General Administration of Customs and visited the puppies bred under the "Mainland - Hong Kong Detector Dog Breeding Co-operation Pilot Programme".

In another meeting, the Minister of the General Administration of Customs, Mr Yu Guangzhou emphasized that co-operation between the two administrations would include implementation of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement and transformation and upgrade of processing trade enterprises. In addition, both sides should strengthen enforcement co-operation on anti-narcotics and anti-smuggling of cigarettes. Other areas included customs clearance efficiency, single window development, and monitoring cross-boundary e-commerce, for building up a mechanism to provide greatest benefits to enterprises in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

COMMISSIONER REITERATES ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TO TACKLE DRUG TRAFFICKING AND WILDLIFE CRIME AT WCO MEETINGS

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Clement Cheung, leading a delegation, attended the 71st Session of the Policy Commission and the 123rd/124th Sessions of the Customs Co-operation Council at the World Customs Organization (WCO) Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium between June 23 and 28.

Speaking at the sessions, Mr Cheung expressed support to the Compliance and Enforcement Package (CEP) Action Plan for achieving modern and effective compliance and enforcement practices via 20 tangible actions. In addition to advocating a Framework on Customs Anti-drug Strategy in the WCO fora, Hong Kong Customs undertook to continue co-operation with the WCO, Regional Intelligence Liaison Office, Regional Office of Capacity Building and Member administrations in the Asia Pacific Region on drug enforcement under the CEP endorsed at the meeting.

Mr Cheung also presented to Members the experience and holistic enforcement strategy of Hong Kong Customs in dealing with wildlife crime. Hong Kong Customs would be willing to share expertise with other Members in areas of risk profiling, intelligence exchange, and outreach efforts to private stakeholders.

At the Council Sessions, Mr Cheung further signed an arrangement with the Director-General of Singapore Customs to mutually recognize Hong Kong China's Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme and Singapore's Secure Trade Partnership (STP) Programme. This is the 4th Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) that Hong Kong Customs has concluded with other Customs administrations, after Mainland China, India and Korea.

Under the MRA, Singapore Customs will recognize Hong Kong's AEOs as lower-risk companies and provide them with goods clearance facilitation, thereby assisting local traders in accessing the Singapore market. Hong Kong Customs will extend the same treatment to Singapore's "STP-Plus" companies.

This annual meeting also covered agenda including the "Mercator Programme" for implementing the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement, Customs-business partnership and economic competitiveness, etc.

Mr Cheung took the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with Heads of overseas delegations from Australia, India, Mexico and the United States respectively on issues relating to intelligence exchange and strategic partnership.

Even though Hong Kong Customs' 3-year tenure in the Policy Commission has expired on June 30, Hong Kong Customs will continue supporting the WCO for the betterment of the global Customs community.



Mr Clement Cheung (right) and Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support), Mr David Fong (second right), meet with Chairperson of Central Board of Excise and Customs, Government of India, Ms J M Shanti Sundharam (left).

HK CUSTOMS DEPUTY COMMISSIONER VISITS SHENZHEN CUSTOMS



Delegates of Hong Kong Customs and Shenzhen Customs at the meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner of Hong Kong Customs, Mr Yu Koon-hing, led a delegation in a visit to Shenzhen Customs on June 18 and paid a courtesy call on the new Director General of the Shenzhen Customs District, Mr Wang Keguang.

At the meeting, the two sides affirmed co-operation between the two Customs Administrations and continual commitment in the fight against cross-border drug trafficking, parallel trading and smuggling. The two sides also agreed to explore measures to facilitate cargo clearance, and to further join hands in the Operation “Green Wind”, led by the General

Administration of China Customs to combat smuggling of agricultural products.

On the same day, the two sides held the first meeting of the “Joint Conference of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Customs on Passenger Clearance at Control Points”. Led by the Head of Rail and Ferry Command, Ms Ho Pui-shan, Divisional Commanders from the Rail and Ferry Command, the Land Boundary Command and the Airport Command attended the meeting. The Shenzhen side was headed by the Director of the Department of Passenger Luggage and Postal Items Supervision, Ms Liu Lizhen, with delegates

from the subordinate Customs of the Shenzhen Customs District, including Luohu Customs, Huanggang Customs, Huanggang Port, Futian Port, Wenjindu Customs, Shatoujiao Customs, Shekou Customs, Shenzhen Bay Customs and Airport Customs. At the meeting, the two sides exchanged views and shared experience on the interdiction of drug trafficking and combating of smuggling by parallel traders. There was also an effective discussion on issues of mutual concerns and areas for further bilateral co-operation.

MEETING ON CUSTOMS CLEARANCE FOR HONG KONG-ZHUHAI-MACAO BRIDGE

The High-Level Meeting for the Co-operation on Customs Clearance for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) among Guangdong Customs, Hong Kong Customs and Macao Customs Service was held in Gongbei, Zhuhai from May 19 to 20. Led by the Assistant Commissioner (Boundary and Ports), Mr Tang Yi-hoi, the five-member delegation, comprising representatives from the Land Boundary Command, the Office of Project Planning and Development and the Office of Customs Affairs and Co-operation, represented Hong Kong Customs in the meeting. The Guangdong delegation was led by the Deputy Director General of the Guangdong Sub-Administration of General Administration of Customs, Mr

Zhao Min, and the Deputy Director General of Gongbei Customs, Mr Xue Yuan, while Macao was represented by Assistant Director-General of the Macao Customs Service, Mr Ng Kuok-heng and his delegation.

The three Customs administrations attached great importance to the HZMB project and the Customs clearance modes to be used. The HZMB upon its opening will establish a new land transport link between the east and west coasts of the Pearl River, promoting economic and sustainable development in Hong Kong, Zhuhai and Macao. At the meeting, the three sides introduced their respective work progress

of the project and exchanged views on various items of co-operation, including establishing a communication mechanism for the HZMB Customs clearance and setting the priority of work for the coming year, etc. The discussion was productive and fruitful in enhancing mutual understanding and facilitating further co-operation among the three administrations on Customs clearance.

After the meeting, delegates from the three sides went on to inspect the work progress of the HZMB Zhuhai-Macao Boundary Crossing Facilities artificial island.



Mr Tang Yi-hoi (third left, front row), Mr Zhao Min (middle, front row), Mr Xue Yuan (third right, front row), and Mr Ng Kuok-heng (second right, front row), with delegates of the three sides in a group photo.

IT EXPERT GROUP MEETING BETWEEN HONG KONG CUSTOMS AND GACC WORKS OUT BLUEPRINT



The Divisional Commander of Lok Ma Chau Control Point, Mr Kenneth Chu (right), shows the facilities and operation of the Road Cargo System to Mr Han Jian (left).

With ever growing Mainland-Hong Kong economy and cross-border e-commerce, Customs business keeps getting busier. An IT Expert Group between the two places set up in end 2013 aimed to enhance co-operation and clearance convenience by integrating professional expertise and promoting exchanges. The Group had already met twice in Beijing and in Hong Kong respectively for thorough discussion on areas of co-operation in enhancing Customs services.

The second IT Expert Group Meeting between the two Customs was held on May 13 in Hong

Kong. The Deputy Director General of the Department of Scientific and Technological Development of the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), Mr Han Jian, led a delegation to meet with officials of the Hong Kong side, headed by the Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support), Mr David Fong. Both sides held an in-depth discussion on four areas, including

- (a) development of a single window system;
- (b) development of the IT system for the Wine Facilitation Scheme;

(c) co-operation in building up an interface network for the unified manifest; and

(d) customs control on e-commerce.

Overall speaking, the meeting had put in place a number of new initiatives with a joint research and reported periodically on the progress. In addition, it also served as the starting point for the development of a single window system in Hong Kong, which was vital for promoting trade connection and e-commerce between the two sides. Serving as a platform for “Business-to-Government” and “Business-to- Business”, the linkage would allow traders to submit information to a number of Government organizations in one go. This would be beneficial to the overall economic development of Hong Kong.

For enhancing future co-operation on IT development, the delegation visited the Road Cargo Selectivity Centre and Lok Ma Chau Control Point on May 14 to see for themselves Customs clearance of cross-border cargoes.

HK CUSTOMS PARTICIPATES IN WCO MEETINGS ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND INTEGRITY

The Senior Staff Officer (Training and Development) of Hong Kong Customs, Mr Koon Hon-chuen, and Senior Inspector, Ms Fan Kit-man Alman, attended three meetings in Brussels, Belgium from March 27 to April 4, including the 9th Global Meeting of Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Heads of the Regional Training Centers and the Vice-Chairs' Office; the 5th Session of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Capacity Building Committee (CBC); and the 13th Session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC).

Around 240 representatives from WCO Member administrations participated in the 5th Session of CBC. The theme of the meeting was "Strong People - Strong Organizations: Investing in People as the basis for Organizational



Mr Koon Hon-chuen (second right), First Secretary of Mission of the People's Republic of China to the European Union, Mr Sun Xiangyang (second left), Program Manager WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building, Mr Cheng Ching (first right), and Senior Inspector, Mr Wong Kai-wah James, in the meeting.

Development". Quoting Hong Kong Customs' Professional Development Training Block as an example, Mr Koon gave a presentation on the use of training infrastructure for competency-based training in operational and

management aspects.

At the ISC meeting, participants discussed practical issues relating to the combat of corruption and Customs governance.

OVERSEAS SENIOR OFFICIALS VISIT HK CUSTOMS

Attaching much importance to international co-operation, Hong Kong Customs receives delegations from overseas Customs administrations and law enforcement agencies from time to time to enhance mutual understanding and explore co-operation opportunities.

On May 9, Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Clement Cheung, met with a delegation of eight members led by the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Mr Thomas Winkowski. At the meeting, both sides re-affirmed their dedication and commitment to combat

offences relating to intellectual property rights and narcotics.

On May 15, Acting Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Luke Au Yeung, met with a six-member delegation led by the European Commissioner for Taxation, Customs, Statistics, Audit and Anti-Fraud, Mr Algirdas Semeta. Both



Mr Clement Cheung (fourth right) meets with Mr Thomas Winkowski (fourth left).



Mr Luke Au Yeung (fourth left) and Mr Rakop Srisupaat (third left) with the Thai delegation.



Mr Clement Cheung (left) meets with Ms Carolyn Tremain (right).

sides reviewed the close ties on various fronts and had an in-depth discussion on intellectual property rights enforcement and the Smart and Secure Trade Lanes Pilot Project between Hong Kong and the European Union.

On May 16, a six-member delegation led by the Director General of the Customs Department of Thailand, Mr Rakop Srisupaat, was received by Mr Luke Au Yeung. The two sides exchanged views on a wide range of issues of mutual interest, including protection of endangered species.

On the same day, Assistant Commissioner (Intelligence and Investigation), Mr Albert Ho, met with a two-member delegation led by President of the Customs Criminological Office, German Customs, Mr Norbert Drude. At the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on endangered species protection and anti-drugs enforcement, and agreed to enhance co-operation on these fronts.

The Comptroller (Chief Executive) of New Zealand Customs Service, Ms Carolyn Tremain, led a two-member

delegation to visit Hong Kong Customs on July 4 and met with Mr Clement Cheung. The two sides agreed to enhance co-operation in the field of intelligence exchange so as to strengthen enforcement capability in the fight against drug offences. After the meeting, the delegation visited the Computer Forensic Laboratory, the Electronic Crime Investigation Centre and the Airport Investigation Group of Hong Kong Customs for further understanding.

DOJ OFFICIALS VISIT CUSTOMS CONTROL POINTS

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Keith Yeung, SC, and five public prosecutors visited Shenzhen Bay and Lowu control points on March 21 to see Customs' efforts to detect contrabands amidst massive cargo and passenger flows. They were shown the state-of-the-art facilities and advanced information systems used by Customs for expeditious clearance of vehicles and cargoes, and briefed on the multi-pronged enforcement tactics employed to detect and deter cross-boundary smuggling. They were impressed to see the efficiency of Customs' work and the remarkable enforcement results.



A drug search demonstration by the Customs detector dog.

HONG KONG CUSTOMS OFFICERS ATTEND LAW ENFORCEMENT CO-OPERATION DEVELOPMENT COURSE IN MAINLAND



All participants of the course in a group photo.

To achieve a closer connection and communication, the Hong Kong Customs - Mainland Ministry of Public Security Law Enforcement Co-operation Development Course was held from May 14 to 22 in Hangzhou. A total of 25 participants from different major formations of Hong Kong Customs attended the course.

A close co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland enforcement agencies helps in tackling cross-border crimes. Participants of the course shared their work experience with an aim to enhancing mutual co-operation.

CUSTOMS OFFICER ATTENDS TRAINING AT FBI NATIONAL ACADEMY



Participants after accomplishing one of the physical challenges.

Representing the Greater China, Assistant Superintendent of Hong Kong Customs, Mr Barry Lai, attended the 256th session of Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy (FBINA) between January 21 and March 28 at the FBI Academy in Virginia, USA.

FBINA is a 10-week residential training program aiming to support, promote, and enhance personal and professional development of law enforcement officers at supervisory level from all over the world. It offers advanced investigative, leadership, management, and physical fitness training with strong emphasis on team-building and networking.

In this session, 221 law enforcement supervisors from 23 countries and 48 States of the U.S. joined hands together to meet all academic and physical challenges. They proudly fulfilled all training requirements with high standards amid the tough snow storm.

This once-in-a-lifetime training experience has increased officers' exposure to international law enforcement practices and also brings new insights and thoughts to them in their ongoing career development.



Mr Barry Lai gives a presentation in class.