



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

**Public Availability of Information on Customs Laws, Regulations,
Administrative Guidelines and Ruling provided to the business sector on an
ongoing basis**

"BEST PRACTICES" HANDBOOK 2005

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"BEST PRACTICES" HANDBOOK

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF MEMBERS ECONOMY

APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP)

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AUSTRALIA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Australian Customs Service (Customs) has introduced a national, centralised contact centre located in Sydney – the Customs Information and Support Centre (CI&SC). There are two national “1300” (local call cost) telephone services managed from this location. The first provides a support service to clients who use Customs electronic systems for the reporting, movement and clearance of cargo. The second is a general enquiry line for clients to obtain information on all Customs-related matters including advice, information and assistance to clients on Customs regulations, service, and procedures. The Australian Customs Service Trade Measures Branch also maintains a telephone service that handles enquiries on dumping-related matters. The availability of the above-mentioned telephone services are publicised by Australian Customs Service through pamphlets, publications and on relevant notices.
2. Customs has also provided an “1800” (free call) telephone service to assist industry with the implementation of its Cargo Management Re-engineering (CMR) project. This number was developed to assist with any enquires concerning the implementation of the export component of CMR during 2004. It is now is used to assist clients preparing for and implementing the import component of CMR.

Counter Services

3. Customs Client Services sections, located in all state capitals and major Customs Offices, act as a point in which the public could approach to make over-the-counter enquiries on Customs-related matters. The District Customs Offices also have counter services to handle public enquiries. However, the District Customs Offices do not normally dedicate staff to perform such specific functions.
4. The Trade Measures Branch maintains a non-confidential public file which may be accessed, in person, by interested parties.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

5. Australian Customs Service does hold scheduled meetings/sessions as and when there is a need to inform and advise its clients of major changes to Customs procedures. In this connection, branches of Australian Customs Service also conduct information sessions with their respective clients when relevant policy or procedural changes occur.
6. The Customs National Consultative Committee (CNCC) meets on a quarterly basis. It provides a forum for the discussion of Customs policy and procedural issues relevant to the trading community, business and Customs specialists. Membership of the Committee is drawn from Customs agents' associations, the Law Council, Customs consultants, and importers' representatives. Minutes from CNCC meetings can be found on the Australian Customs Service website.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

7. Australian Customs Service tariff information is available for sale by contacting the Publishing Section of Customs' central office, either by phoning 02 6275 5721, or emailing pubsact@customs.gov.au. Australian Customs Service legislation is available for sale by contacting Canprint in Canberra on phone 1300 889 873.
8. Australian Customs Service legislation and tariff information is available at www.customs.gov.au which is Customs Internet Website.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

9. Australian Customs Service publishes a broad range of topic specific publications (egs. brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, handbooks, etc.). As an illustration, it has produced a brochure entitled "Guide for Travellers – Know Before You Go" which provides details to travellers on Customs formalities, concessions, prohibitions and other related requirements and regulations. This is available free of charge at all Australian Customs Service offices and checkpoints. It is also handed out to airlines and travel agents (both local and overseas) for distribution to their passengers.
10. The production of printed materials is managed and coordinated by the Corporate Communication section that decides on the language used, style and presentation of the materials. The technical content is provided by the respective branch or section concerned. Publications are generated by a

perceived need for information on a particular topic.

Circulars and Correspondences

11. Australian Customs Service informs the importing community of the latest tariff classification information via the Australian Customs Notice(s) (ACNs), COMPILE messages (i.e. ACS electronic entry declaration system) and the distribution of minutes of the Tariff Officers Meetings (these minutes record the decisions made by Australia's senior tariff classifiers). The Australian Customs Dumping Notice(s) (ACDNs) are also published in a national newspaper and the Australian Customs Service website. It also uses various email distribution lists that clients may subscribe to via Customs Internet site.

Notices and Signboards

12. Acting as an agent for the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), Customs displays notices on the requirement to report currency in amounts exceeding AUS\$10,000. These notices are displayed at both inward and outward control points.

Others

13. Australian Customs Service produces an annual report to inform Parliament, stakeholders, educational and research institutions and the general public about the performance of Customs in relation to services provided. Annual reports are available in hard copy or on the Australian Customs Service website.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

14. Australian Customs Service has in place an electronic entry system (known as COMPILE) which importers can use to submit import entries to Customs electronically. 98% of entries are submitted using this system with the rest being furnished manually. Whilst there is not a true Bulletin Board available, the COMPILE system does have a facility called the Broadcast File that can be used to inform the importing community of impending legislative changes, system enhancements and other general information.
15. With the implementation of the import component of the Integrated Cargo System (ICS), which is part of the CMR Project, COMPILE will be superseded.

Under the ICS a broadcast facility will be available, however, messages will be received by industry in the form of an email. This is different to the COMPILE broadcast facility because it includes messages within the actual COMPILE system.

Automated Phone-Answering System

16. Australian Customs Service does not have an automatic telephone service. This will be considered as part of a project to improve its existing telephone services. However, initial feedback from its clients revealed that they prefer to speak personally with a Customs officer and they generally have a poor opinion of automated telephone system utilised by other government agencies in Australia.

Internet Website

17. Australian Customs Service has an Internet Website at the following address: <http://www.customs.gov.au>. The type of information available on the website includes Customs in general (background information of Customs), news releases, speeches (scripts of certain speeches made by Senior Executives), Customs regulations and services, Australian Customs Notices (ACNs), Australian Customs Dumping Notices (ADNs), Customs corporate structure and profile of the minister responsible for Customs. Customs also intends to include a Business Centre section on the website.

Fax on Demand

18. Australian Customs Service does not have an automated system for sending facsimiles to callers. However, materials that are regularly requested by the public can be despatched by the Customs Information and Support Centres (CI&SC) via facsimile. Due to the short operational time-frames, the Trade Measures Branch uses the facsimile frequently to communicate with interested/relevant parties during an investigation.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

19. Australian Customs Service provides a wide range of training courses, seminars and workshops for the Australian trading community. These sessions are invariably timed to coincide with the introduction of new initiatives or

Customs legislative changes. Australian Customs Service utilises the Customs website, ACNs, advertisements, peak industry body websites, and mailouts to provide information to the industry regarding the dates, times, and venues of the training available. It also uses bulk email lists to advertise when information sessions are being held. Clients can subscribe to a variety of Customs related mailing list via its Internet site.

20. The Trade Measures Branch regularly liaises with industry representatives through an anti-dumping taskforce. This provides a forum for industry and the Australian Customs Service to discuss emerging issues in Australian anti-dumping administration.
21. The Australian Customs Service provides regular graded alerts to a steel import monitoring committee in relation to the volume of imported steel products.
22. The Australian Customs Service has provided training sessions on Australia's dumping system to foreign Customs Administrations such as China, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and the Philippines. In most cases, these sessions have been funded by international bodies such as the United Nations (UN) or the WTO.
23. The Australian Customs Service also meets with delegations of foreign government officials to discuss Australia's anti-dumping administration. These discussions aim to build understanding between governments. Similarly, the Australian Customs Service is regularly represented at regional international trade meeting and conferences.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

24. Australian Customs Service Corporate Communication section issues media releases to publicise changes in Customs regulations (a recent example is the change in duty free concessions) and to publicise interesting and major detections (such as detections of drugs, weapons, and duty evasion) that may be of interest or importance to the general public. Such releases are made via newspapers, radio and television by using a contracted wire service, on either a national or local basis, depending on the issue. Approximately 10-15 media releases are issued by Customs monthly (this can vary considerably depending on the month), with additional releases being issued by the Minister for Justice and Customs. Press conferences may also be held where a significant detection has been made.
25. Australian Customs Service has also produced a number of advertisements in print and magazine media. Two campaigns are currently advertised on a

national, targeted basis. One campaign informs readers of the changes to importing and exporting requirements as a result of Customs Cargo Management Re-engineering project. This is advertised in Australian and international publications. The second campaign asks readers (specifically those travelling or living in remote and regional areas of Australia) to report suspicious border activity to the Customs Hotline (a “1800” free call number)

26. Australian Customs Service uses paid radio “community service announcements” and paid radio advertising on an occasional basis to reach target audiences where appropriate. These direct listeners to either the Customs Internet for further information, or to report suspicious border activity to the Customs Hotline.
27. Australian Customs Service is also currently involved in the production of a “reality” television show, called “Border Security”. This is produced by the Channel 7 Network Australia and takes viewers behind the scenes of Customs activities to protect Australia’s borders. It features of work of Australian Customs Service as well as quarantine and immigration officers.
28. Where appropriate, Australian Customs Service also allows and facilitates media requests to film in Customs-controlled areas such as airports, the National Surveillance Centre in Canberra, onboard Australia Customs Vessels and on surveillance flights. All such media requests are handled by the Corporate Communication section.
29. In line with legislative requirements, the Trade Measures Branch utilises the Government Gazette and national newspaper(s) to issue public notices on dumping matters. This occurs at key stages of an investigation where it is necessary to invite submission from interested parties as well as the end of the investigation to announce the decision. Neither the radio nor television is used for such public notice dissemination.

CANADA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY (CBSA)

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The CBSA has an Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS) which is a computerized, bilingual, 24-hours a day, seven days a week, telephone service that automatically answers all incoming calls and provides general border services information. Using a touch-tone telephone, clients can hear recorded information.

Note: If clients use a rotary-dial phone, they cannot hear the ACIS recorded information. However, if they call ACIS during office hours (08:00 – 16:00 local time), their call will be transferred directly to an agent.

Clients can also view a text version of this recorded information by visiting the CBSA Web site at <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/eservices/acis/acis-e.html> (English) or <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/eservices/acis/acis-f.html> (French).

Clients choose information from several topics under each of the following main categories:

- personal importations, traveller's exemptions, CANPASS, NEXUS, and personal postal information;
- commercial importations and exportations, trade agreements, and commercial postal information;
- currency exchange rates; and
- residency information.

If calling during office hours (08:00 - 16:00 local time), clients can also speak directly to an agent if they need more specific information.

2. ACIS currently operates out of 2 sites located in Saint John, New Brunswick, which handles calls from Eastern Canada and Winnipeg, Manitoba that takes calls from Western Canada. Agents located in the 2 call centres, answer frequently asked border services enquiries that require a minimum amount of interpretation. Using a Probing Guide, they also explain various CBSA-related policies and procedures as well as direct callers to contact sources to obtain

information on policies and procedures of other government departments and agencies. If an agent determines that the client's enquiry is not within their scope, the agent informs the client that they will be transferred to a CBSA office in the client's home region to speak with a CBSA officer, who can provide answers to complex enquiries that often require interpretation and/or further research by a program specialist.

3. ACIS is accessible by dialing a single toll-free number that is available throughout Canada. Callers from outside of Canada can access ACIS by calling special long-distance numbers (long-distance charges will apply).

Counter Services

4. In certain designated client service area located at the major ports of entry in Canada, there are CBSA officers that handle over-the-counter enquiries. Although this service has yet to be provided at all locations, CBSA is in the process of implementing uniformity and standardising this requirement for client service nation-wide. Officers belonging to a designated client service area will be appointed as client service representatives for that area and their functions ranging from answering questions to assisting the public to fill up various forms.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

5. The Customs Commercial System (CCS) Consultative Committee meets quarterly to address new and existing issues, policies and procedures relevant to CBSA CCS such as New Business Relationship Initiatives, Joint Service Initiatives and various consultation processes.
6. The Joint Private/Public Sector Forum on Paper Burden Reduction is also a committee created by the Canadian government to reduce the burden of compliance on small business. This forum meets 3-4 times a year.

PUBLICATIONS

CBSA Legislation and Customs Tariff

7. CBSA legislation, including the Customs Tariff, is available on the CBSA Web site, or can be purchased through the Government of Canada Web site at www.canada.gc.ca. This site provides access to free and priced publications produced and published by the Government of Canada. If you do not find the publication you need or if it is not in stock, the site will provide lists of bookstores or libraries that may stock the requested publication.

D-Memoranda and Customs Notices are also available through this Government of Canada Web site.

Guides and Pamphlets

8. CBSA procedures and requirements are communicated using various formats targeted at different audiences (e.g. travelers, importers and exporters). Guides and pamphlets are written in easy-to-read language and provide general information on CBSA programs and services.
9. The CBSA has approximately 40 guides and pamphlets, available free of charge at all CBSA offices throughout Canada (e.g. international airports and border crossings). They are also distributed to Canadian embassies abroad, and to travel agencies and tour organizers, as well as Government of Canada Information Centres.

D-memoranda and Customs Notices

D-memoranda

10. Information on CBSA policy and procedures is communicated internally and with external clients through D-memoranda. D-memoranda are more technical in nature than guides and pamphlets. They outline the legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures the CBSA uses to administer its programs. They provide guidelines and general information on CBSA programs and are made available to clients to facilitate compliance with CBSA requirements, as well as those requirements administered by the CBSA on behalf of other government departments. Interim memorandum may be developed when new policies or procedures are revised and when it is imperative for the information to be disseminated as quickly as possible. Once the information is incorporated into the D-memorandum, the interim memorandum is made obsolete.

Customs Notices

11. Customs notices are issued to support D-memoranda and to provide additional information, the nature of which would not generally be covered in a D-memorandum. They are also used to inform clients about proposed changes to CBSA programs and procedures, and to solicit their input. Customs notices are not intended as an ongoing reference.

Availability and Subscriptions (D-memorandum and Customs Notices)

12. All D-memoranda and customs notices are available on the CBSA website free of charge. The CBSA also provides the public with an electronic subscription service that will advise them by e-mail when a new or revised publication is issued.
13. For a fee, the public (e.g. importers, exporters, and customs brokers) may subscribe to Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) to obtain printed copies of new and/or revised D-memorandum and Customs Notices.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone-Answering System

14. The Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS) – Refer to “Telephone Services” under PERSONAL INTERFACE for additional information.

Internet Website

15. The CBSA has an Internet Website at the following address: <<http://www.rc.gc.ca>>, which contains notices, fact sheets and an assortment of Customs publications.

Fax on Demand

16. The CBSA does not offer a fax on demand service. However, CBSA agents responding to inquiries received through the Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS) are able to fax information to clients as required.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

17. CBSA conducts seminars for the trading community via Small Business Seminars and Trade Shows. Training is also provided to broker associations and other industry associations on new systems and procedures.
18. One-day trade seminars are provided to small and medium sized businesses to inform them on various aspects of the importing and exporting process. CBSA also provides seminars to the Small Business entrepreneur. These Seminars are provided regionally and are designed primarily to benefit small business importers and covers a wide range of business situations.
19. The CBSA information sessions on Customs processes and requirements are conducted by regional client service representatives. Specific programme

information is provided by the various regional programme coordinators, i.e. regional convention services coordinators and regional export coordinators.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

20. CBSA issues news releases as and when changes occurs which are of significant importance to the general public. News releases are issued on an average of one-per-week (around 50 per year). These are distributed to all major media through the wire services. In such cases, fact sheets or articles are provided for inclusion in specific magazines. Information disseminated via the media is on such issues like personal exemption, border passage, Customs clearance, etc. News conferences are also organised by Regional Office on occasions such as major drug busts or smuggling-related event. CBSA advertising efforts are generally limited to the print media in local communities and almost exclusively focus on operational changes such as office locations, telephone numbers, etc.

CHILE

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE CHILEAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

PUBLICATION AND AVAILABILITY OF CUSTOMS LAWS, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

1. The Chilean Customs Service permanently publishes Customs laws, by means of guidelines and circular legal letters and by legal order the Official Bulletin. Laws as well as regulations are published in the Diario Oficial (Official Gazette) of the Republic, the same as certain general Chilean Customs Service's decisions.
2. The main way of publication available to the business sector is the Customs website. This information is also sent via email or fax. Besides, Customs has a monthly Official Bulletin in which are published resolutions and most relevant decisions, including changes and complements to Tariff Code, such as the Compendium of Customs Regulations (DNA¹, Resolution 2400, 1985). A publishing company publishes the customs regulation for the private sector. Regarding certain matters, public-private working groups are formed before Customs' decision; some of them are permanent and others by sector, in order to discuss criteria on a specific matter.
3. Regarding new legislation, it is available to the public at the moment of issuance and at special cases, still before its effective date, in order that the private sector has the opportunity to know it before. At certain occasions it is specifically issued and stated that this new legislation shall be in effect 30 or more days after their issuance, with a view to become aware of it. Regulation concerning to control and enforcement are available to the public only from its effective date.
4. The divulgation of all these regulations is list at Customs Web site, and Intranet for internal users. This is aimed at officers who use it as a reference material at their daily work. Updating fresh information takes between one and two days from its issuance and is made internally.
5. The Chilean Customs is always working in updating its Website, in order to facilitate the access to the information. The web page aim to be simple and friendly user. Likewise, the information is being reviewed for determining what other issues are required to be included or modified, and which are eligible to be removed. As a supplement there is Prontus, a computer tool that works as a

¹ *Dirección Nacional de Aduanas* (Customs Central Office).

data publisher and that allows authorized users to update online information. Irrespective, there's a continuous work at updating the current Website aimed at maintaining timely information.

MAINTENANCE OF CUSTOMS WEBSITE

6. The Internet address of the Chilean Customs Service web page is www.aduana.cl. This web page is continuously updated at regular basis, whenever new information arises. Likewise, there's some data that has to be periodically included, such as weekly updated indicators, and others like foreign trade statistics, port traffic, dollar reference price, among others, which are monthly updated. The website contain information on the administration, particularly regarding institutional information, Customs functions, organization chart, general concepts and strategic project agenda. For travelers the website contains information useful for domestic and international travelers, such as regulations about luggage, free zones and duty free, etc.
7. The website contain information on import procedures as a "General Concepts" heading containing information on imports and related issues, warehouse, users' rights and duties and the updated list of Customs Brokers. Besides, through the website Customs Brokers are able to send out electronically their Import Declarations (DIN). For export procedures, the website includes the definition and export operations and procedures associated to it. Besides, through the website Customs Brokers are able to send out electronically their Export Declarations (DUS).
8. Additionally to the general and specific information, allocated by issue, the website considers a special link of "Frequent Questions and Answers" that includes different subjects which, although are covered in other chapters, are placed in a more didactic and friendly way. The website includes a special paragraph on free trade agreements signed by Chile, considering a special summary of each one and the full text of the Agreements. Among the Agreements currently in force there are the Free Trade Agreement with Mexico, Canada, Central America, Korea, United States and the European Union, complementary economic agreements with MERCOSUR, Peru and Venezuela. Still in the process of final approval are the Free Trade Agreements already signed with New Zealand, Singapore, and Brunei. Finally, according to its legal responsibilities the Customs Service generates the foreign trade statistics, through its Department of Studies, taking in consideration the import and export declarations. Those statistics are issued on a monthly basis including analysis desegregated for geographical area, countries and products, evolution of Chilean Foreign Trade, etc.

INQUIRY POINTS FOR CUSTOMS PROCEDURE

9. As a public policy empower by the Chilean government all Public Service must include in its web page a window called "Information Request" in which there's a link called "Information Office" which leads to the email address consultas@aduana.cl through which users can make questions on any kind of matters relative to Customs.
10. There is information available for ports of entry on all Customs Regional Administrations and ports of entry. In the area of "Border Points" (Pasos Fronterizos) appear in all border land points that are duly authorized and their time schedule.

PROCESS TO OBTAIN PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CHANGES TO CUSTOMS LAW/REGULATIONS

11. There's a permanent exchange between the private and public sector, including -among others- Brokers Associations, chambers and importer and exporter associations with which relevant information is exchanged, particularly in cases of legal change. Likewise, customs established working groups with different sectors, such as textiles, shoes and leather, information technologies and so on, in order to cooperate, exchange information and, eventually, reaching memorandums of agreements.

LEAFLET/OTHER MATERIALS FOR PROVIDING GENERAL OR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

12. In order to provide friendly user information Chilean Customs Service elaborate leaflets and/or other materials available to the public containing institutional information, that are usually distributed to the public at seminars, fairs, exhibitions and city meetings in which the Service participates. Additionally, Customs has informative leaflets for the general public on traveler and free zone legislation. It can be obtained at the information office at the DNA in Valparaiso and at the information offices at each Regional Administration.

TRAINING

13. The Chilean Customs Service provides extensive internal and external training. Constantly offers many courses on specific areas; weekly, Diplomas and Masters Programs. Also the Training Department yearly offers the Internal Regular Training Plan for officials, for strength their knowledge on customs and management issues.

14. Strong interaction with the private sector that constantly invite Customs experts to explain new law regulations and operational procedures to traders

MASS MEDIA

15. Chilean Customs Service Communication section issues media releases to publicize related information, and major detections (drugs, counterfeiting, and duty evasion) to the general public. Newspaper and some important cases covered by National TV News depending on the issues; are the main way of interaction and flow of information.

CHINA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE CUSTOMS GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. To facilitate the connection of enterprises with China Customs, most Customs Districts have set up enquiry telephone line for clearance matters. Though there is no a uniform number for all Customs districts, contact points can be found conveniently on clearance spot.

Counter Services

2. Customs Districts of Shenzhen, Huangpu, Shanghai, etc, with heavy workload, have set up special departments, which are responsible for accepting enquiry, appeals, opinions and advices from imports and exports enterprises and other aspects of the society by means of visit, telephone and Internet. Most Customs Districts have set up special offices on clearance spots, where Customs officers receive visiting people.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Chinese Customs holds dialogue sessions and meetings with various trade associations, facilitation committees and private enterprises although at an irregular basis. The purposes of such meetings are to raise the transparency of Customs laws, regulations and procedures to the trading community and to seek their feedback on the application of Customs formalities with a view to facilitate trade and enhance compliance.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The Customs legislation and tariff schedule of the Chinese Customs, eg. The Customs Import/Export Regulations of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Customs Import/Export Tariff of the PRC and the Customs Clearance Guide of the PRC, etc., are available for sale commercially at most Customs houses.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. Most of the procedures, formalities and requirements of the Chinese Customs relating to tariff system, bond system, clearance system, post-auditing system, protection of intellectual property rights and Customs notices are documented into brochures, leaflets and pamphlets.

Notices and Signboards

6. Signboards and notices are put up by the Chinese Customs at passengers' checkpoints, operational sites and places for Customs brokerage to provide information to the public on Customs formalities.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

7. In China, most of the trade declarations are processed electronically by the Automated Entry Processing System (AEPS). Declarants would have to access the data entering service centres which are operated by third parties for data input before entries could be made. As more trade declarations are being submitted via the telecommunication line, the declarants' computers are currently installed with a software package that contains all the information necessary to make an entry. Information on changes to existing and implementation of new procedures are downloaded onto the declarants' computers periodically.

Internet Website

8. Within this year, General Administration of Customs of the PRC is about to construct a large-scale Internet Website, including all Customs Districts, to achieve the functions of information dissemination, service, interaction and communication.

Others

9. Chinese Customs had recently published on CD Rom a handbook on China Customs Regulations and Procedures pertaining to Goods Declaration. The public can retrieve information concerning goods declaration from the CD.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers/Radio/Television

10. Chinese Customs also uses the newspapers, radio, and television, where appropriate, to disseminate information to the public on major changes to Customs legislation and important Customs notices.

HONG KONG, CHINA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE HONG KONG CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Hong Kong Customs has two toll free lines designated for public enquiries. These lines are located at the Customs Duty Controller Office and are handled by Customs officers.

Counter Services

2. Hong Kong Customs provides counter services to answer public enquiries relating to licence applications of dutiable commodities and assessment of motor vehicle first registration tax. These counter services are located at the Customs licence and permit offices.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Since 1994, Hong Kong Customs has set up four Customer Liaison Groups (CLG) with trade representatives of the dutiable commodities, air and sea freight, and cross boundary transportation industries. The CLGs meet quarterly to discuss improvements to Customs services in the four fields and to make Customs laws, regulations and procedures transparent to the traders.
4. Hong Kong Customs also participates in meetings held by trade organisations and other government departments to explain new policies, laws or procedural requirements that would affect a particular trade, and to collect and collate the responses from the traders. Examples of these trade forums and industrial committees with Hong Kong Customs participation are the Textile Advisory Board and Certification Coordination Committee of Hong Kong.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

5. All the laws of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) are published by the HKSAR government and are available for sale to the public who can purchase either at website <<http://bookstore.esdlife.com>> or in person

at the sales counter of the Publications Sales Unit. Changes in law are also announced in the HKSAR Government Gazette which the public can purchase either at website <<http://bookstore.esdlife.com>> or in person at the sales counter of the Publications Sales Unit. Consultation papers on new Customs laws are available to the public free of charge at various HKSAR government district offices.

6. HKSAR is a free port with no Customs tariff but traders are required by law to lodge trade declarations. When completing declarations, traders should use the appropriate commodity code number in accordance with the Hong Kong current Imports and Exports Classification List (Harmonised System). The List is published by the HKSAR government and can be purchased online at website <<http://www.statisticalbookstore.gov.hk>> of the Statistical Bookstore Hong Kong or in person at the HKSAR Government Publications Centre and also the Publication Unit of the Census and Statistics Department.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

7. Hong Kong Customs publishes a number of publications for public information. In general, they can be grouped into the following categories:
 - instructional booklet on how to lodge import and export declarations;
 - leaflets to explain Customs ordinances to assist compliance;
 - instructional pamphlets on various licence and permit applications;
 - informational booklet on standard of performance pledged to the public, for instance, the number of working days required for issuing a licence, etc.;
 - fact sheets introducing the organisational structure, functions and responsibilities of the department; and
 - reports detailing work achievements and new objectives of the department.
8. The above publications are issued and distributed by the respective Customs office concerned. They are free of charge and will be given upon request. They are also distributed in exhibitions and visits organised by the department for the public.

Circulars and Correspondences

9. Customs offices dealing with dutiable commodities and assessment of Motor Vehicle First Registration Tax will issue circulars to registered traders and trade associations. These circulars, which inform traders of changes in the law or procedural requirements that would affect their trade, are normally sent by

post.

Notices and Signboards

10. Hong Kong Customs puts up signboards at conspicuous locations at the Customs checkpoints to advise passengers of entitlement in duty-free concession, obligation to make declarations to Customs officers on dutiable goods, prohibition of certain goods, and channel to lodge complaints against dissatisfactory Customs services.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone-Answering System and Fax-on-Demand Service

11. Hong Kong Customs provides the public with a 24-hour telephone enquiry service through an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS). This system answers callers with pre-recorded information, in Cantonese, Putonghua or English, on the following subjects:
 - import and export declarations;
 - dutiable commodities licence/permit applications;
 - motor vehicle first registration tax;
 - import/export declaration charges, clothing levy and penalty charges;
 - consumer protection information;
 - procedures of lodging complaint against the department;
 - controlled chemicals information; and
 - request for facsimile copy of the above information;
12. In case of need, caller may switch to talk to an operator. Local calls made to the IVRS are toll free. The IVRS also builds in a Fax-on-Demand service from which callers can obtain the required information leaflets by fax.
13. Hong Kong Customs introduced the IVRS in January 2000, replacing the old system which had been introduced in April 1995 in support of the "Serving the Community Scheme" to provide better services to the public. The IVRS is well received by the public and entertains an average of 5,000 calls per month.

Internet Website

14. The public can access information about Hong Kong Customs via the department's Homepage under the HKSAR Government's Internet Website at <<http://www.customs.gov.hk>>. The Customs Homepage contains information on the organisational structure and functions of the department.
15. The Bilingual Laws Information System (BLIS), which is a searchable

electronic database of the statute laws of HKSAR, has been made available for public access at <<http://www.legislation.gov.hk/eng/index.htm>>. All government departments and the public can now search for the laws of the HKSAR at Government's Homepage.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

16. Hong Kong Customs conducts training session for the business community to assist their understanding of and compliance with Customs requirements. For instance, periodic training sessions and presentations on money laundering and terrorist financing are offered to the commercial industry so as to help them understand and comply properly with the up-to-date legislation and requirements with the aim of facilitating the investigation process and enhancing overall efficiency; product safety seminars are organized to promote traders' awareness of the statutory requirements on consumer protection legislation. In addition, Customs officers often act as guest speakers in seminars held by shipping associations to brief the traders on Customs clearance procedures, and deliver speeches and presentations at various international and local conferences as well as seminars relating to intellectual property rights protection.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

17. Hong Kong Customs announces changes or implementation of new Customs laws or procedures through the mass media, such as newspapers, television and radio. Whenever there is a need, it will conduct press conference for information dissemination. Hong Kong Customs also meets the press annually to report on the department's performance in the previous year.
18. Press releases are normally issued through the HKSAR Government Information Services to the local media and news agencies. For major issues, news conferences or media briefings are held in addition to the press release. The types of information that are disseminated via the media include changes in Customs law, policy, procedures or administrative requirements. Interdiction of Customs offences, seizure and arrest of goods and persons, and prosecution of cases are also reported by the mass media.

Others

19. The mass media of the HKSAR run reports and programmes on special subjects and current affairs. These programmes, usually in the form of special interviews or panel discussions, provide the HKSAR government departments with additional avenues to publicise major issues or explain new policies or new legislation. Hong Kong Customs also utilises these channels for information dissemination.

INDONESIA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CUSTOMS & EXCISE

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Indonesian Customs operates two designated lines to handle telephone enquiries. These two lines, which are no toll-free, operate between 8.00 am to 5.00 pm. To provide better service to the public, the Indonesian Customs has established an ad hoc unit specially designated to manage these two lines. The impetus behind the setup of this unit is as follows:
 - to provide information and instructions needed to solve problems faced by the public in complying with Customs procedures and regulations;
 - to understand problems faced by the public in complying with Customs procedures and regulations; and
 - to get input to review Customs procedures and regulations.
2. The Indonesian Customs, recognising that the current two lines are insufficient to handle and respond to telephone enquiries, will install more lines for this purpose in the future.

Counter Services

3. The Indonesian Customs does not have a specially designated unit to handle cross-the-counter enquiries. However, officers are deployed at client service counters to handle such enquiries.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

4. The Indonesian Customs conducts regular dialogue sessions and meetings with various trade organisations. Some of these meetings are scheduled while others are requested on an ad hoc basis. The main aim of such meetings is to increase the level of cooperation between Customs and the trading community. The Indonesian Customs also uses these meetings to inform and explain to the trading community of changes to Customs procedures and to seek their feedback.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

5. The Indonesian Customs Tariff Book and the Indonesian Customs Law are commercially available at major bookstores.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

6. The following formalities and procedures are documented by the Indonesian Customs into brochures, leaflets, pamphlets and guidebooks:
 - o import & export procedures;
 - o export processing zone;
 - o goods subject to Customs duty;
 - o goods subject to excise;
 - o restricted goods;
 - o personal effects; and
 - o Indonesian Customs in Brief, etc.
7. The above-mentioned publications are available free of charge at Customs Headquarters, Customs Inspection Offices and Airports. The information contained in these publications are also mailed or faxed to the public upon request.

Notices and Signboards

8. Notices and signboards are displayed by the Indonesian Customs at the Airport to inform the public/travellers of those goods that cannot be brought in and out of Indonesia.

Internet Website

9. The public can access information on Indonesia Customs website at the following Internet address: <http://www.beacukai.go.id>. The Customs Homepage contains information on Profile of Directorate General of Customs and Excise, Customs Regulation, contact person, Importer registration, Discussion forum, Customs Book, poling, and Hot news. At the moment, Customs Website is only in Indonesian Version while English Version is still under construction.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

10. The Indonesian Customs conducts general training courses for the trading

community to familiarise them with Customs regulations and procedures. Specific courses are also conducted prior to the implementation of new or change to existing laws, regulations and procedures. These courses include the Customs Broker Course, Electronic Data Interchange Course, Diskette Declaration Course, etc. These courses are conducted with the view of enhancing the trading community's compliance.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Radio and Television

11. The Indonesian Customs also uses the mass media, such as newspaper, television, and radio, to disseminate information to the public as and when it is considered necessary. The newspaper and television are normally used to disseminate new Customs procedures or regulations and to publicize smuggling seizures.

JAPAN

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE JAPAN CUSTOMS & TARIFF BUREAU

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone and Over-the-Counter Services

1. Japan Customs has 33 telephone lines (not toll free) which the general public can use to make enquiries on customs-related matters between 8.30 am to 5.00 pm (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays). These lines include direct lines to customs counsellor offices and customs branches. The public can also make enquiries personally by approaching any customs counsellor office.
2. These customs counsellor offices are established by Japan Customs to handle telephone and over-the-counter enquiries and to follow-up on complaints received from the public of dissatisfactory customs services.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Senior ranking officials from the Customs and Tariff Bureau meet up with the executives of Japan's 11 major trading firms annually to exchange views on customs and trade-related issues. Meetings are also conducted once a year between officials from the local customs offices and the "Hozeikai", which comprises managers of businesses operating in authorized customs areas. Japan Customs uses these yearly dialogue sessions to inform the trading community and seek their feedback relating to changes in customs laws, regulations, procedures and requirements.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The following are some of the Japan Customs publications which the public can purchase at ordinary bookstores:
 - o Japan Laws and Regulations Concerning Customs Duties and Customs Procedures;
 - o Customs Tariff Schedule of Japan; and
 - o Japan Export & Imports, Country by Commodity and Commodity by Country.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. Many of the Japan Customs procedures, formalities, requirements and its roles and functions are documented in the following brochures, leaflets, pamphlets and guidebooks:
 - Information on Customs Procedures in Japan;
 - A Guide to Customs Clearance Procedures;
 - Guide to Customs Clearance Procedures for Postal Shipment;
 - A Guide to Customs Duties and the Customs;
 - Customs Guide for Visitors;
 - Japanese Customs in Brief;
 - Guidebook on Import Declarations by Individuals; and
 - The Customs Answer.
6. Pamphlets and brochures on customs formalities for travellers are available at the customs counters of international airports. They are also handed out to airlines and travel agents for distribution to their passengers. With regards to those pamphlets on the commercial importation of goods, they are available at all customs offices.

Notices and Signboards

7. Signboards are put up by Japan Customs at customs counters and checkpoints to inform the public of various customs formalities. These signboards are sited at conspicuous places to catch the attention of the public.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone Answering System/Fax on Demand

8. Japan Customs operates an automated answering service which is accessible to the public by both telephone and fax. This service is provided by four main customs offices located in Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe and Nagoya. The telecommunication charges incidental to the use of this service are borne by the caller. Information on various customs formalities and answers to the most commonly asked questions are pre-set into the automated system for easy retrieval by users. Information stored in the memory of the automated system includes:
 - an outline of the import clearance procedures;
 - flow chart of customs clearance (from the arrival of imported goods to the release of goods);
 - import declarations by individuals; and

- tariff rates for major items.

Internet Website

9. The Internet address of Japan Customs Homepage is <<http://www.customs.go.jp/>>. This website contains information on various customs clearance procedures, statistics on import and export of goods, tasks of customs, etc.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

10. Japan Customs conducts general training courses, seminars and workshops for the trading community to familiarise them with customs laws, regulations, procedures and requirements. In addition, specific courses are conducted prior to implementation of new regulations and procedures.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

11. Mass media, e.g. television and radio broadcasting, newspapers and magazines, are used by Japan Customs to disseminate information to the public pertaining to changes in customs laws, regulations, procedures, etc. Results of law enforcement actions, seizure of contraband goods like illicit drugs and firearms are also disseminated via mass media.

KOREA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE KOREA CUSTOMS SERVICE

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Korea Customs Service (KCS) operates the Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center which provides one-stop services on all Customs administrative matters including tariff classification, clearance, and tax payment. Located at Seoul Main Customs, the Center has 25 experts including one Director. Available from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., the counseling service can be reached through 1577-8577 from anywhere in the country, with ARS directing users to necessary services. 16 calls can be answered at the same time and users pay only local telephone charges, without any additional service charge. Customs Ombudsman Offices located at each major regional Customs house also provide counseling services on the phone. Furthermore, About 220 information agents are assigned to handle telephone inquiries as well as conduct their given duties.

Counter Services

2. The Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center and Customs Ombudsman Offices at major regional Customs houses counsel visiting clients as well as telephone inquiries. To provide consistent answer, the Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center and Customs Ombudsman Offices consult each other on the question before giving out their official reply.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. KCS meets with the Korea International Trade Associations and members of the Korea Trading Agents Association around 5-10 times a year. It uses these sessions to inform and explain to the business community of new and/or revised laws and regulations. KCS has also been holding open discussions and informal talks with various business groups with a view of taking their opinions and viewpoints into consideration before making changes to Customs laws, procedures and systems.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The following are some of the key publications made commercially available to the public by KCS in collaboration with the Korea Customs & Trade Institute:
 - Customs Statutes Books: contains Customs laws, foreign trade laws, foreign exchange laws, drawback laws and their regulations, etc.;
 - Customs Laws and Regulations: covers Customs administrative notices, regulations, guidelines, etc.; and
 - Export and import guidebooks by HS items: covers detailed public notices based on HS and guidance on import/export clearance, international conventions, rules of origin and Customs duties and other taxes, etc.;
5. These publications are usually published once a year or as and when required due to revision to laws and regulations. They are available for sale at the bookstores located at KCS Headquarters and regional Customs houses as well as major public bookstores. They can also be found as reference materials at the KCS library located at the Headquarters building.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

6. KCS publishes many brochures, leaflets, pamphlets and handbooks regularly and whenever necessary. The recent publications are as follows:
 - The World Best Customs
 - Korean/English Customs Administration (Overall Customs administration)
 - Korea-Chile FTA -Guideline for Certificate of Origin
 - Self-Assessment program guideline for importers (English)
 - Customs Administration Service Charter Cartoon
 - International Trade Glossary
 - Korean/English Customs Glossary
7. These pamphlets can be found on KCS website, obtained from the Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center, Customs Ombudsman Offices and other places where clients often visit or be mailed free of charge.

Circulars and Correspondences

8. KCS issues circulars to inform the trading community of changes to existing or implementation of new Customs formalities and procedures. These circulars, which are in the form of “Customs Information Weekly” and “Customs Monthly Journal”, are published in collaboration with the Korea Customs & Trade Institute. They contain key Customs issues, revised Customs laws and

regulations, import/export statistics and other detailed and essential information, and are sent to subscribers at reasonable prices. Moreover, utilizing the PCRM (Policy Customer Relationship Management), KCS issues easy-to-read documents on Customs policy, and the revision or establishment of related laws and regulations and e-mail them to stakeholders and people who are interested in Customs administration. KCS provides a tailored email service according to interested subjects and related works so that a variety of clients with different stakes can receive differentiated information. The subscribers are categorized into the general public, stakeholders and clients, who are divided again according to related works and needs. Currently, the PCRM, consisting of policy promotion, newsletter, and public opinion survey services, provides the information to over 52,000 subscribers.

Notices and Signboards

9. Notices and Signboards are set up by KCS at conspicuous places most frequented by Customs clients such as Customs Ombudsman Office, passengers' baggage areas and import/export clearance sections. The notices and signboards set up at passengers' baggage areas give information on travellers' duty free allowances, dutiable goods and duty rates, import/export restrictions and prohibitions while that put up at the import/export clearance sections provide information on detailed clearance procedures, flow charts and documentary requirements.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

10. KCS website provides bulletin boards service including Public Notice, Public Notice of Administrative rules and KCS news, where information on the Customs Act, trade-related laws and HS is updated. Moreover, the EDI system (Electronic Data Interchange) operated by Korea Trade Net also provides updates to users regularly on Customs regulations and related laws.

Automated Phone-Answering System

11. Customs-Answer System of the Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center provides the automatic answering service utilizing FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) D/B outside working hours. Users can also receive answers through Fax for detailed information and arrange for appropriate time for the questions that cannot be answered readily.

Internet Website

12. KCS has an Internet Website that contains information pertaining to Customs laws, regulations, clearance procedures and other requirements at the following Internet address: <<http://www.customs.go.kr>>.

Others

13. Clients applying for the Internet counseling at <http://call.customs.go.kr>, the website of the Customs Comprehensive Counseling Center, can receive the answer within two working days and SMS messages are also sent to cell phones to notify the clients of the processing status.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

14. KCS makes about 200-300 press releases every year to disseminate information to the public through major newspapers and televisions. In particular, Customs officials participate in policy discussion programs and investigative reporting programs on TV, raising understanding of Customs policies among the public and discussing ways to reduce in advance negative side effects that can be created during policy implementation, thereby enhancing the overall quality of policies.

MALAYSIA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE ROYAL CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Telephone enquiries on all Customs-related matters from the public can be made via six designated lines and one direct line. These non toll-free lines are in operational from 7.30 am to 6.30 pm on Mondays to Fridays and from 7.30 am to 2.00 pm on Saturdays.
2. These enquiries can also be channeled to the Public Relations Unit which is manned by five experienced senior officers (including the Head of the Unit) and three supporting staff. The function of the Public Relations Unit, among others, is to furnish the public with information pertaining to the functions, procedures, rules and regulations of the department as well as to act as the Public Complaint Bureau.
3. Besides the above-designated lines, the public can contact directly the Divisions concerned through their respective direct lines. Initially, all telephone enquiries were made through two general lines which had to go through the telephone operators. With the recent installation of the DDI (Direct Dial to Internal) System, the public is able to dial direct to their desired extension numbers.

Counter Services

4. The Public Relations Unit attends to the public who come personally for information on various Customs matters. Apart from the Public Relations Unit, the public can also approach various branches such as the Valuation Branch, Tariff Branch, Import/Export Branch, etc., for specific and in-depth information on various matters.
5. Other than the branches located at the headquarters and the Public Relations Unit, the public may also approach the Customs state offices and Customs checkpoints throughout the country. Every state office and checkpoints offer the facility of enquiry counters manned by experienced Customs staff. At major state offices such as the Federal Territory, the public can have access to information through the Customs Information Counters (CIC).

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

6. Changes and amendments made to existing Customs laws, regulations, procedures and requirements are also imparted to the business community through meetings and dialogues held from time to time. A twice-yearly meeting held with the business associations' representatives (Customs Consultative Panel Meeting) organised by the Public Relations Unit has proven to be a great success in effectively disseminating Customs-related information to the public, particularly the business community.

PUBLICATION

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

7. Publications on Malaysian Customs laws, subsidiary legislation and tariff structure are commercially available to the public. These publications can be purchased at all major bookstores throughout the country. Changes/amendments to the Customs Act or any of its subsidiary legislation and changes to the tariff structure will be gazetted and be available at the National Printers. It will also be reported in the local newspapers as well as conveyed to the business community at dialogue sessions, meetings and briefings. These amendments are later published in revised editions of the respective publications.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

8. Malaysian Customs procedures, formalities and requirements are documented into brochures, leaflets and guidebooks published by the Public Relations Unit. These publications are available at all Customs offices and checkpoints located throughout the country. They are also displayed at all enquiry counters, Customs Information Counters, Customs Exhibition Counters and the Public Relations Unit. They are distributed free of charge to members of public. They are also mailed or faxed to members of the public upon request.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone-Answering System/Faxed-on-Demand System

9. The Malaysian Customs had officially launched its Automated Answering Phone Service "Infolink" on 18 Mar 97. Members of public can obtain the following information via this automated system:
 - o duty/tax exemption for visitors;
 - o raw petroleum export value;

- duties imposed on various types of vehicles;
 - import/export procedures;
 - temporary import procedures;
 - vehicle levy;
 - licensed warehouse and licensed manufacturing warehouse
 - internal tax drawback/refund procedures;
 - currency exchange;
 - list of Customs offices/stations.
10. "Infolink" is also equipped with the facility of a Fax-on-Demand service enabling the above information to be faxed to the public upon request.

Internet Website

11. Malaysian Customs is the process of creating an Internet Homepage for the purpose of providing general Customs-related information to the public. The Homepage will consist of the following information which is of importance and interest to members of public and business community:
- Royal Customs and Excise Department Organisation Profile;
 - Customs Regulations Guide;
 - Laws and Regulations administered by the Department;
 - Annual revenue collection; and
 - events and progress concerning the Department including the annual proposed budget.

Other Electronic Means

12. In anticipation of an influx of visitors to Malaysia in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games in September 1998, Malaysian Customs will be introducing other electronic means to disseminate Customs-related information at the new Kuala Lumpur International Airport which is scheduled to be in operation in 1998. These electronic means include:
- Electronic Board displaying Customs procedures, regulations and requirements for passengers;
 - Computerised Enquiry System; and
 - "Airtube" - Customs-related information projected on viewing screens at airports and on international flights.
13. The Malaysian Customs plans to eventually introduce these means to all International Airports and Customs checkpoints throughout the country.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

14. Malaysian Customs conducts seminars for the business community on various Customs-related matters. These seminars, such as Internal Taxes Facilitations and Customs Trade Facilitations, are organised by the Royal Customs Academy located in the state of Malacca. This Academy, which is headed by a Director of Customs, administers all departmental training programme. It also has two branches, one in the state of Sabah and the other in Sarawak. Apart from training Customs staff, it also conducts courses at international level with the cooperation of the World Customs Organisation. The objectives of the Royal Customs Academy are:
- to provide and improve knowledge and working skills, and instill positive attitude among officers and staff towards their jobs and organisation; and
 - to help create a Customs Literate Society among members of the public.
15. Apart from the seminars organised and conducted by the Customs Academy, Malaysian Customs also provides lecturers and speakers for courses and seminars organised by other organisations such as business/trading associations, schools/higher institutions and other public organisations.

MEXICO

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE MEXICAN GENERAL CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Tax Administration Service of Mexico has a toll-free line whereby the public can call to make enquiries on all Customs as well as general revenue-related matters. There are also two specific programmes, one in the Ministry of Tourism and the other in the Comptroller's Office. These two programmes, which are toll free, answer public enquiries on taxes and Customs laws, regulations, procedures and requirements. The toll free lines are manned by Customs experts who answer enquiries regarding Customs matters. In addition, facsimile machines are used to deliver written information.

Counter Services

2. The Tax Administration Service of Mexico has 332 units spread all over the country where the public can approach personally to make enquiries on all internal taxes as well as Customs-related matters. There is also consultation units installed at the main trading community associations headquarters and in every municipality buildings. In addition, there are moving units in 8 trailers which traverse along the areas located far away from any Revenue Office. The units are managed by trained and selected officers, specialised in international trade, who handle over-the-counter enquiries from 8.30 am to 6.00 pm.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Since 1989, monthly meetings are held at several Customs offices throughout the Mexican territory. The objective of these meetings, known as Facilitation Committees, is to exchange points of views between the authority and the private sector members with facilitation in mind. There are also another kind of monthly meetings, involving the entire government sectors, authority on foreign trade operations and representatives of the private sector, for the purpose of disseminating, explaining and seeking of feedback of the Customs laws, regulations and their amendments. These meetings are held to analyse and resolve specific problems that the exporters and importers face when dealing with Customs operations. They are also conducted at the local, regional and

national levels.

4. There are also dialogue sessions with the trade organisations and representatives from the Compound Commission for Exports Promotion. These sessions are either scheduled or specially requested. In addition, there is a Taxpayer Trustee Programme which coordinates local meetings to solve internal tax and Customs-related problems. In these monthly meetings, the local Customs Administrators and representatives of the trade associations would discuss problem areas and develop possible solutions.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

5. All Mexican Official Laws, Regulations, Decrees and General Rules, and its amendments thereof, are published in the Official Gazette of the Federation (DOF) to become effective. The DOF can be found in almost every newsstand. Further, the Legal General Administration of Revenue publishes Customs Laws, Regulations, Decrees and General Rules in the form of books, some of them with comparative analysis of former laws which improves public comprehension.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

6. Most of the Mexican Customs procedures and regulations are documented into brochures, leaflets and pamphlets. These publications are distributed free of charge to the public. They are available at all Customs offices, checkpoints, airports and seaports. They are also mailed or faxed on request.

Circulars and Correspondences

7. Whenever the Mexican Customs make any amendments to its clearance procedures or other formalities, a circular will be issued to inform the trading community. This circular, which lists down the changes, are faxed or mailed to the various trade organisations and associations for dissemination to their members.

Notices and Signboards

8. The Mexican General Customs Administration puts up notices and signboards at all frontier checkpoints to inform the public/travellers of their duty-free entitlements and allowances. These signboards are located at visible places to

catch the travellers' attention.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

9. Since 1991, Mexico has established an Integral Automation Customs System (SAAI) which facilitates, through the use of computer system, the exchange of information between the General Customs Administration, Customs offices, brokers, warehouses and banking institutions authorised to collect duties related to foreign trade, and to validate or refuse the formal entry documents prior to the clearance of goods. The SAAI and the exchange of information are being improved through electronic media, as well as through the reduction of paper document processing, acquisition of equipment and conformation of the existing infrastructure. The Bulletin Board is accessible to all registered Internet users. Information is regularly updated and uploaded onto the Bulletin Board to inform users of changes in Customs procedures, requirements and valuation.

Automated Phone-Answering System

10. The Tax Administration Service of Mexico has implemented an automated phone-answering system which is toll free and operates 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Answers to the most commonly asked questions relating to Customs and international trade matters are stored in the memory of the automated system which can be retrieved by the callers by simply following the instructions given by the system.

Internet Website

11. Mexican Customs has a Homepage in the Internet which contains information concerning rights and obligations of people entering the country (foreigners or Mexicans, Mexicans which are residents abroad), telephone numbers of Mexican Consulates, location and phone numbers of Inform and Complaining Offices, as well as laws, regulations, allowances, etc. This website is accessible to all Internet users at the following addresses: <http://www.aduanas.gob.mx> or <http://www.shcp.gob.mx>.

Fax on Demand

12. The Tax Administration Service of Mexico has a Fax-on-Demand service that allows the caller to request documents of internal taxes as well as

Customs-related matters to be faxed over upon request by the caller.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

13. Mexican Customs has a Training Department which handles the training of both Customs officers and members of the trading community. This department, which consists of 10 full-time staff, organises and coordinates regular training courses on Customs-related topics. Training courses are either scheduled or requested by the trading community.
14. In addition, the Institute of Fiscal Training, which consists of 200 full-time staff, organises training courses, seminars and workshops to the Customs brokers with specific annual programme. It also coordinates Interactive Television, Direct Courses, via satellite Conferences and Computer Interactive Programmes to the trading community.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

15. The Tax Administration Service uses local and national newspapers to advise the trading community of any changes to the Customs laws and regulations. In different states of Mexico, a video on the new 1997 Customs Law is being promoted on private television network.

NEW ZEALAND

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE NEW ZEALAND CUSTOMS SERVICE

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) introduced a national call centre on 1 October 1996 which is available to the general public. It was established following a major project which reviewed the New Zealand Customs approach to client servicing. The call centre operates 12 lines (toll-free) with a capacity for 30 lines. The lines are in operation from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm. Outside these times, the lines are connected to the call centre mobile telephone.
2. The unit that operates the call centre is designated with a manager, two team leaders and eight staff - all specially selected, experienced Customs officers. The selection of staff for the call centre is made on the basis of their telephone manner, their attitude towards clients and their wide Customs knowledge. The call centre objective is to answer 80% of the calls received without referral (it is currently running at 90%). Where referral is required, the call centre will locate the specialist officer before transferring the call.

Counter Services

3. Facilities are available in Customs offices located throughout New Zealand for the public to make personal over-the-counter enquiries. However, there are no teams or units specifically dedicated to perform this function. Each Customs office is different. A larger office has staff that individually answer enquiries specific to their particular area of work; smaller offices have staff that are able to answer a wide range of enquiries.
4. A significant change is to be made to improve such over-the-counter services. New Zealand Customs will re-organise its goods management and revenue responsibilities to provide all clients who visit a Customs office to be able to have their business, whether a query, clearance of goods or payment of duty, handled by one officer.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

5. New Zealand Customs regularly held dialogue sessions and meetings with members of the business community. This contact includes organisations such

as the Customs Brokers Association, the Manufacturers Association and the Chamber of Commerce. These meetings deal with specific concerns facing each organisation and opportunity is taken to explain new Customs procedures to them. Client feedback is an important element of the Service's Business Assistance Programme and each year, a Client Survey is survey is undertaken with the assistance of a private sector consultancy.

6. Information is also disseminated regularly to the business community by way of the publication "Customs Release." Additionally, a monthly information bulletin name "Contraband" is published.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

7. The Customs & Excise Act and Regulations are published in the New Zealand statutes. Copies are available for sale at major bookstores specialising in government legislation.
8. The Publication Unit of the NZCS is the publisher and supplier of all official NZCS information and sole New Zealand sales agent for the World Customs Organisation. The unit offers for sale to subscribers the following tariff-related documents: "The Tariff of New Zealand", "Tariff Amendments", "Tariff Binders", "New Zealand Customs Service Tariff Notes" and "Consolidated List of Approvals." Also offered for sale by the unit are copies of all the Customs forms required to support the new Customs legislation.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

9. The Publication Unit publishes a wide range of public domain information brochures, pamphlets and handbooks. Examples include pamphlets that: assist immigrants of Chinese ethnic origin; explain import rules; detail Customs charges on imports; provide information on importing motor vehicles, boats and household effects; and general advice for travellers. Handbooks are published on the deferred payment scheme, credit facilities for brokers, rules on trans-Tasman trade, etc. A series of Fact Sheets have also been developed to further assist Customs commercial clients.
10. All the above-mentioned publications are available free of charge from all Customs offices. They are also mailed out in response to enquiries to the call centre and in the case of information targetted at the travelling public, they are distributed to travel agents and overseas embassies/consulates.

Circulars and Correspondences

11. New Zealand Customs uses its mailing service to disseminate information as it maintains an extensive mailing list of clients who subscribe to Customs information. A fortnightly publication which advises clients of recent Customs decisions is mailed to the subscribers.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

12. Although New Zealand Customs does not have a specific programme to provide training to the trading community, some of the courses on documentation and classification which are conducted for its staff have included traders.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

13. New Zealand Customs issues media releases to publicise changes in existing law and to publicise detections against Customs law. Such releases are made via the newspapers and radio. Television is only used when major detection of drug is involved.

Customs Website

14. New Zealand Customs has a website available at www.customs.govt.nz which contains general information on customs matters as well as specific information for travelers, importers, exporters & manufacturers. This includes relevant legislation, regulations and Customs Fact Sheets as well as the working Tariff of New Zealand and a consolidated list of concessions.
15. The website provides contact information for Customs offices as well as useful links to other countries Customs websites. The website is updated on a regular basis.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Papua New Guinea does not have toll free lines but telephone numbers for Customs Enforcement and General operations are made known to the Public.

Counter Services

2. PNG Customs provides counter services to the general public to deal mainly Import and export queries, licensing and general customs information. These Counter services are located at all Customs Houses in PNG

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. PNG Customs has monthly meetings with Customs Brokers and other Industry Stakeholders to deal with problems faced by Brokers and Industry in their dealings with Customs and also for Customs to inform the Brokers and Industry of any changes to operations or legislation that may or will have an impact on the brokers, industry or the general public.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. ALL PNG Customs Acts is available for purchase at the Government Printing Office. The Customs Tariff can be purchased at the Customs Headquarters in electronic form or Hard Copy.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. PNG Customs has pamphlets for travelers, Valuation and posters on Drugs. Other general information will be produced in due course.

Circulars and Correspondences

6. PNG Customs also sends out circulars mainly to Customs Brokers on changes to systems or legislations. Correspondences are sent to companies or persons who write seeking information or advice.

Notices and Signboards

7. Customs signboards and notices are set up mainly at the airport informing passengers of their allowances and Customs requirements

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone-Answering System and Fax-on-Demand Service

8. PNG Customs does not have Automated Phone Answering system and Fax on Demand service

Internet Website

9. PNG Customs Service is currently in the processes of building a Customs Website. We hope to have the website up and running by December 2005.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

10. PNG Customs only participate in Courses, workshops and seminars when invited. We do not run any ourselves for the business community or general public.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

11. PNGIRC has a weekly column in the two national daily papers when the Commissioner General informs the general public on Income tax and Customs matters.

Others

12. PNG Customs also participates in Trade fairs and exhibitions where information on Customs requirements and Customs responsibilities relating to prohibited imports/exports is highlighted.

PERU

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF PERUVIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Although Peruvian Customs receives telephone enquiries from the public on Customs-related matters, there is no specific telephone line designated for this function.
2. Public can make enquiries between 8:30 am to 16:30 pm (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays).
3. On the other hand, foreign trade operators receive in their mobile information about their clearance or their goods release on line.

Counter Services

4. Peruvian Customs has Client-Attention Modules that works from 8.30 am to 16.30 pm and from Monday to Friday. They are located in the major Customs offices and handle both telephone and over-the-counter enquiries on Customs-related matters.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

5. Peruvian Customs meets monthly with the Trading Community Group which was established last year as a matter of priority. These meetings are basically to inform and explain them about the new and/or revised regulation and procedures. In addition, they have the opportunity to make suggestions and comments or even proposal to new regulations and procedures.
6. Besides, Peruvian Customs promotes the dialogue with other government agencies involved in foreign trade in order to reduce process and facilitate international trade

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

7. Peruvian Customs legislation is published in the Official Gazette "El Peruano", due to all laws is issued by our Congress and has to follow the official

procedure.

8. Compendium of Customs legislation is sold by particular editorials like BLAE, Caballero Bustamante, among others.
9. Tariff Structure is also published by Official Gazette "El Peruano" when there are changes. Nonetheless, people can buy this information in diskette or CD in our Headquarters
10. It is also sold by particular editorials as mentioned before.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

11. All information about Customs Procedures and related matters are available on Internet. Nonetheless, information on Customs formalities for travelers is available at the Customs counters of International Airport.

Circulars and Correspondences

12. Circulars are issued to "specify" any regulations or laws related to Customs matters issued by the Government. These circulars are published in the Official Gazette "El Peruano" and also are available in electronic means on Internet.

Notices and Signboards

13. Notices and signboards are displayed by Peruvian Customs at the Airport to inform the public/travellers of those goods that cannot be brought in and out of Peru.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Automated Phone-Answering System and Fax-on-Demand Service

14. Peruvian Customs Service does not have an automatic telephone service. Nonetheless, users can ask for information to the right offices.

Internet Website

15. Peruvian Customs Service has a Portal on the Internet at the following address <http://www.sunat.gob.pe> This Portal contains information on Customs and Internal Tax issues.
16. The part of Customs contains a variety of information. It is designed for ease and fast access and offers the following information: Customs Guidance (Baggage and Household, Postal procedures, Travel Information, Tariff

Classification and Rulings, Statistical Information, Enforcement, Revenue) Customs Operations (including tele-clearance, electronic payment, regimes and procedures, on line), Customs Tariff and Valuation (Integrated Tariff and Price Verification System), Transparent Management (Institutional Planning, Budget, Human Resources, Official Activities), Legislation (Customs legal base, Procedures), Training Information (Seminars, Workshops among others), Auction.

17. It is necessary to specify that foreign trade operators can transmit clearance data using Internet platform and the main operations are made by this means, that is, using our Portal.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

18. The Institute of Tax and Customs Administration as part of the National Superintendence of Tax administration manages the training programmes for Customs staff, Tax staff, members of the business community, students and public in general.
19. There is an annual programme for training. This Training Programme includes seminars, courses and workshops at both national and international level for staff, and national for trading community and public.
20. The IATA (acronyms in Spanish) has an auditorium with a capacity for 450 people, a SUM (Room of multiple uses) for 100 people both implemented with Ecran, Projector, Computer, Internet, Microphone (cord and cordless) etc. IATA also has 10 rooms for classes and two libraries where staff and public in general can borrow books, CDs, etc.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

21. Peruvian Customs uses the newspapers, where appropriate, to disseminate information to the public on changes to Customs procedures. Newspaper and television are normally used to publicize smuggling seizures.

PHILIPPINES

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Philippine Customs does not operate a designated telephone line which the public can call to make enquiries. However, the telephone numbers of Customs offices are listed in the telephone directory. These numbers are updated periodically. The Philippine Customs is also currently adding telephone lines and upgrading its trunkline apparatus at vital Customs offices with the view of improving the access of information by the public.

Counter Services

2. Facilities are available in Customs offices located at principal ports and areas where Customs activities are concentrated to handle over-the-counter enquiries. These facilities are known as Public Assistance Offices (PAOs). Personnel assigned to the PAOs are specially trained so that they are knowledgeable in Customs rules and regulations as well as in the basic rules of courtesy and ethics.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. The Philippine Customs conducts, at regular intervals, dialogue sessions and meetings with business/private sector organisations, egs. the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Philippine Industry, Chamber of Customs Brokers, etc. The main objectives of such meetings are to highlight matters of common concern and to derive solutions to problems faced by both parties.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines are available commercially to the public.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. On the basis of importance, some of the formalities of the Philippine Customs are documented into brochures, leaflets, pamphlets and handbooks. These include formalities on the clearance of baggage at the airport arrival area, clearance and release of unaccompanied baggage, the documentary requirements necessary for Customs processing in a particular office, etc. These brochures and pamphlets are distributed to the public as the circumstances warrant. In addition, the Philippine Customs also publishes a monthly newsletter which contains information on its current and planned activities.

Circulars and Correspondences

6. A Customs Brokers Organisation holds office in one of the rooms of the Port of Manila Building. The function of this brokers office is to disseminate information pertaining to the implementation of new or changes to existing Customs laws, regulations and procedures to its clientele or members.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Internet Website

7. The Internet Website of the Philippine Customs can be found at the following address: <<http://g-net.globe.com.ph/~bocglp/home.htm>>. The website contains general information on the Philippine Bureau of Customs and Customs Valuation.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

8. Seminars and workshops are conducted by the Philippine Customs to the trading community to familiarise them with Customs laws, regulations and procedures.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

9. The Philippine Customs uses, as the need arises, the newspapers, television and radio to disseminate important Customs notices to the public. The print media is normally used. Information disseminated via this channel usually concern matters affecting procedures, movement of personnel,

apprehensions/seizures involving large-scale revenue fraud, etc.

SINGAPORE

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE SINGAPORE CUSTOMS

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Singapore Customs maintains a general enquiry line for the public to obtain information on all Customs-related matters. This Customs Customer Service Line is in operation between 8.00 am to 5.30 pm on weekdays and 8.00 am to 12.45 pm on Saturdays. It is managed by the Call Centre Unit which comprises experienced officers specifically designated to handle telephone enquiries. These officers are trained to answer general enquiries on Customs procedures, documentation requirements and regulations (egs. duty free allowances, Customs permit requirement, submission of electronic Customs declarations etc) and to provide appropriate advice and solutions to callers who encounter problems relating to Customs clearance.

Counter Services

2. The Customs Service Counter located at the Corporate Headquarters acts as a point in which members of public can approach to make over-the-counter enquiries on Customs-related matters.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Singapore Customs conducts regular dialogue sessions with its business community which includes the various Chambers of Commerce, associations of the freight forwarders, shipping and transport agents, etc. These dialogue sessions are either scheduled or specially requested by the Singapore Customs or the business community. Besides discussing issues affecting the business community, Singapore Customs also uses these sessions to inform and explain to traders changes made to Customs procedures and seek their feedback.
4. Singapore Customs has also formed a Customs Advisory Committee, comprising key personnel from both the public and private sectors. Half-yearly meetings are held to discuss issues relating to customs.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

5. Singapore's Customs Act, the Regulation of Imports and Exports Act, Goods and Services Tax Act and other related legislation are made available on the Internet. The statutes can also be found in all public libraries and are available for sale at major bookstores. Amendments made to the Act or any of its subsidiary legislation is also published in the Government Gazette. In addition, Singapore's tariff structure and nomenclature are published in the "Singapore Trade Classification, Customs & Excise Duties, 2003". This publication can be purchased at the Customs Corporate Headquarters.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

6. Many of Singapore Customs' procedures, egs. documentation, valuation, classification, clearance of cargoes, temporary importations, etc., are documented into brochures, leaflets and pamphlets. These publications are distributed free of charge to the public and are available at all Customs offices and checkpoints. They are also posted or faxed upon requests.
7. In 2004, Singapore Customs has gone one step further to publish a Customs Service Charter which details our Quality Policy, service commitments and the service level the public can expect of Singapore Customs. Singapore Customs has also published a pamphlet to provide traders with more information on the strategic goods control system in Singapore in 2004.

Circulars and Correspondences

8. Whenever Singapore Customs makes any changes to its documentary or cargo clearance procedures, a notice or circular will be issued. This notice or circular, which lists down the changes, is faxed or mailed to the business community. Singapore Customs also compiled the answers to the most frequently asked questions (FAQs) received into a notice. This notice is faxed to the business community on a regular basis. The circulars, help lists and FAQs are also uploaded onto the Customs website for easier reference by the business community in Singapore.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

9. In Singapore, all import and export declarations are processed electronically via the TradeNet™ system, a local EDI network. Resident in the TradeNet™

system is a Bulletin Board which is accessible to all registered TradeNet™-users. Information is regularly uploaded into this Bulletin Board to inform the users of changes in Customs and trade procedures.

Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS)

10. Singapore Customs has in place an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) within our Customer Service Line, which is a 24-hours / 7-days-a-week automated phone information system.
11. The IVRS contains 8 different menus containing information ranging from registration, certificates of origin, classification, status of application, customs exchange rate etc to enable our customers to self-retrieve information relevant to their needs by following the simple system-generated vocal instructions on navigating the various menus.

Internet Website

12. Singapore Customs maintains a Homepage in the Internet at the following address: <<http://www.customs.gov.sg/>>. This website contains information related to administrative guidelines, customs documentation, operational procedures, customs fees and duty rates for our dutiable items, etc. These information are updated a on a regular basis. Inquiry contact points in the form of email addresses, telephone numbers and fax numbers to the different branches of Singapore Customs are also provided on the Singapore Customs website.
13. Other websites maintained by Singapore Customs are the TradeNet™ website <<http://www.tradenet.gov.sg>> and the Strategic Goods Control System website <<http://www.stgc.gov.sg>>. The TradeNet™ website provides useful information on the operation of the TradeNet™ system while the Strategic Goods Control System website provides information on the regulations and guidelines on the Strategic Goods Control System in Singapore.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

14. Singapore Customs conducts courses specially designed for traders, freight forwarders and shipping agents to improve their understanding of Customs documentation and procedures for importing, exporting and transshipping goods subject to duties and GST. Ad hoc courses are also conducted to coincide with the implementation of new regulations and procedures. For

example, a series of courses on the 1996 version of the HS was conducted in 1995 to familiarise the business community with the use of the new tariff nomenclature. Singapore Customs had also conducted training courses on the TradeNet™ system operational procedures to familiarise users on the operations of the TradeNet™ System. All these courses serve to inform the trading community of customs procedures, regulations and requirements with a view to enhance their voluntary compliance.

15. From April 2004, Singapore Customs also conducts structured strategic goods control courses for exporters, distributors, brokers, freight forwarders, cargo agents and carriers to improve their compliance with the requirements of the Strategic Goods (Control) Act and its regulations.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Radio and Television

16. Singapore Customs announces changes to or implementation of new Customs laws or Regulations through the mass media. The dissemination of information via the media is the responsibility of the Corporate Communications Branch. This branch issues press releases as and when changes occur which are of significant importance to the public. News conferences are also organised on occasion of detection of a major Customs offence. In most instances, the local newspapers and television stations are used.

CHINESE TAIPEI

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE CHINESE TAIPEI CUSTOMS

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. Chinese Taipei Customs operates 9 designated lines (of which 4 are toll free) which the public can use to make enquiries on all Customs-related matters during office hours, i.e. from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm. These telephone lines are handled by designated units managed by a senior-ranking Customs officer in the case of the Customs Headquarters and by sub-section chiefs for the local Customs bureaus. The availability of the telephone services and the functions of the units managing it are disseminated to the public through the mass media.

Counter Services

2. The Chinese Taipei Customs maintains 5 Customs Service Centres which the public can approach personally to make enquiries on Customs-related matters. These Customs Service Centres are located at the Customs Headquarters and 4 local Customs bureaus. There are designated units handling such over-the-counter enquiries and these units are led by a senior ranking Customs officer in the case of the Customs Headquarters and by sub-section chiefs for the 4 local Customs bureaus.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. Chinese Taipei Customs holds dialogue sessions with various trading communities such as the broker association and other concerned commercial associations that have dealings with Customs. It makes use of these sessions, which may be scheduled or specially requested by the various organisations concerned, to inform and explain to the trading community of changes in Customs rules, regulations and requirements.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The laws, regulations and subsidiary legislation of the Chinese Taipei Customs are published in the statutes which can be found in all public libraries and available for sale at major bookstores. Changes to any Customs law or its subsidiary legislation are also published in the official gazette of the Ministry of Finance. In addition, the tariff structure is published in the Customs Import Tariff and Classification of Import and Export Commodities. Members of the public can purchase publications on the tariff structure from designated Customs offices and major bookstores.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. Chinese Taipei Customs procedures, formalities and requirements are documented in the form of brochures, leaflets and pamphlets which are distributed free of charge to the public.

Circulars and Correspondences

6. Whenever Chinese Taipei Customs makes any change to its documentary or cargo clearance procedures, a circular will be mailed to the trading community informing them of the change.

Notices and Signboards

7. Chinese Taipei Customs puts up signboards and notices at the local Customs bureaus and all Customs checkpoints to inform the public/travellers of their duty free entitlements and allowances. These signboards and notices are sited at conspicuous places at the checkpoints to catch the travellers' attention.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

8. In Chinese Taipei, import/export declarations, manifests, etc., are submitted to Customs via a computer system known as Trade-Van, an island wide computer network system managed by Clearance Automation Network Service Company. Whilst there is not a true Customs Bulletin Board available, the system owner of Trade-Van does provide bulletin functions to serve its clients.

Automated Phone-Answering System

9. Chinese Taipei Customs has an automatic phone-answering service that is toll free and available between 7 am to 12 am. Answers to the following commonly

asked questions are pre-set into the system:

- the latest status of the import/export declarations;
- the duty rate of a commodity, and the import and export regulations/requirements of the government authorities in charge;
- items which are available for duty drawback or can be imported by bonded factories;
- enquiries about unpaid harbour construction fees;
- facsimile service for documents required;
- relevant Customs regulations; and
- telephone number of Information Desk.

Internet Website

10. Chinese Taipei Customs has an Internet Website at the following address: <http://web.customs.gov.tw>. The type of information available on the website includes Organization and Functions, News Bulletin, Laws and Regulations, Travelers' Information, Business Information, Link, On-line Apply, Tariff Database Search, Currency Exchange Rates, Statistics Information, Border Measures on IPR and Preventive Highlight.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

11. Chinese Taipei local Customs bureaus organise and coordinate regular training courses on Customs-related topics, e.g. Customs documentation courses, to the trading community. Such courses serve to inform the trading community of Customs procedures, regulations and requirements with a view of enhancing their voluntary compliance.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

12. Chinese Taipei Customs makes use of the mass media (usually the newspapers) to disseminate information to the public. It holds press conference once a week.

THAILAND

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Thai Customs operates ten regular lines which the public could call to make telephone enquiries on Customs-related matters. These lines are operational between 8.30 am to 4.30 pm. The numbers are (66) 02-249-0431-40 and (66) 02-667-7100.

Counter Services

2. The Thai Customs has a specially designated unit known as the Public Relations Sub-Division to handle over-the-counter enquiries. In addition, there is a Customs Service Centre located in Bangkok in which the public can approach to make enquiries on all Customs-related matters. All the Customs houses located throughout Thailand can also handle such enquiries.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

3. The Thai Customs meets regularly with the trading community to inform and explain to them changes in Customs procedures and regulations. The trading community's feedbacks on Customs policy are also sought at these meetings.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

4. The public can purchase the Customs Tariff of Thailand from the Customs Tariff Group, Customs Laws, Legislation and Regulation, etc., from the Public Relations Sub-Division. For the Statistic of Foreign Trade, you can download from our website at <http://www.customs.go.th>

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

5. Many of the Thai Customs formalities are documented in the form of brochures, leaflets, pamphlets and handbooks. These publications are available at the Customs houses.

Circulars and Correspondences

6. The Thai Customs also issues circulars to inform the trading community of changes to existing Customs formalities and procedures. These circulars are either mailed or faxed to all registered/authorised traders.

Notices and Signboards

7. Signboards and notices are put up by the Thai Customs at all checkpoints to inform the public of the various Customs formalities.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

8. In Thailand, some importers, exporters and agents submit their Customs declaration forms electronically via a Customs computer system. This system allows its users to access information on the bulletin board such as data on exchange rate, Customs tariff and statistic code which are uploaded and regularly updated by the Computer System Sub-Division.

Automated Phone-Answering-System

9. The Thai Customs has established Customs Call Center (Tel. 1164) to Interactive Voice Response System. A Customs Call Center has been established to provide Customs-related information; consultation and suggestions on import/export formalities; including tax and duty privileges. Interested entrepreneurs are welcome to contact us at the Customs Call Center.

Internet Website

10. The Thai Customs has an Internet Website. You can search for additional information at <http://www.customs.go.th>.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

11. The Thai Customs conducts general training courses for the trading community to familiarise them with Customs regulations and procedures. Specific courses are also conducted prior to the implementation of new or change to existing

laws, regulations and procedures. These courses include General Knowledge for Customs Brokers, General Knowledge on the GATT Valuation, New Procedures on Drawback, EDI and Customs Work, etc. The organising and coordination of the above courses are managed by the Training Division which consists of 41 full-time staff.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Radio and Television

12. The mass media, egs. the newspapers, radio and television, are also used by the Thai Customs to disseminate information to the public.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION INSTRUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

PERSONAL INTERFACE

Telephone Services

1. The Office of the Trade Relations is available to answer questions/enquiries from the trade. The Office of Trade Relations has two major functions: Trade Policy Development and Communication and Problem Resolution. The office serves as the primary contact for the international trade community for advancing their issues and ideas to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) leadership, and as primary contact for CBP to advance its agenda to the trade community.
2. Prior to importing, the Office of Trade Relations encourages individuals and members of the trading community to contact the CBP office at the port of entry where your merchandise will enter the United States. A complete directory of the various ports of entry can be found on the CBP Web site (www.cbp.gov). A CBP import specialist assigned to the commodity you are importing is available for questions. Import specialists are commodity specific and can provide classification advice, commodity specific requirements, advisory duty rates, and respond to questions about filing an entry (although in many ports, questions regarding entry filing are handled by entry specialists). Prior to calling the port, the importer should do as much research as possible. In order for the Import Specialist (or entry specialist) to best assist, it is important you be able to exactly describe the merchandise you are planning to import. You should be able to provide a full and complete description of the article and answer specific questions like: 1) the country of origin of the merchandise; 2) the composition of the merchandise; and 3) the intended use of the item.
3. The public is available to call CBP to make enquiries on all Customs-related matters. This line is operational during regular office hours and is managed by the Public Information Division of the Office of Public Affairs.

Counter Services

4. CBP receives over-the-counter requests from the public for rulings, advice and information letter on classification matters through its National Commodity Specialists Division in New York and on classification, valuation, marking, origin,

entry, drawback, IPR and carrier matters through its Tariff Classification Appeals and International Trade Compliance Divisions in Washington, DC. The New York Office consists of National Import Specialists who coordinate ruling requests throughout the country. The Washington, DC staff consists of attorneys. The public can also personally make enquiries on Customs-related matters at Customs locations situated throughout the United States.

Dialogue Sessions and Meetings

5. CBP regularly meets with representatives of the various broker, surety, importers, exporters and trade organisations and sends representatives to their meetings and seminars. These organisations include the National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association, the American Association of Exporters and Importers, the Joint Industry Group (an umbrella group representing over 20 organisations), surety associations and local trade/port authorities. The purpose of meeting with them is to solicit their views and increase their understanding on Customs regulations, projects and programs. Their feedback are also sought via written submissions pursuant to Electronic Bulletin Board postings. Information is disseminated in advance of these meetings through the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board, the Internet, Automated Broker Interface and via the printed Customs Bulletin and Federal Register.
6. Meetings are held with members of the trade on various trade issues which may be initiated by either CBP or the trading community. The Office of Trade Relations also holds occasional trade fairs in major cities. These serve to apprise of and define changes in Customs regulations and laws.

Others

7. The Passenger Service Representative (PSR) programme, established in 1992, is a component of CBP efforts to provide the highest quality customer service possible to the international travellers. PSR personnel are first line supervisory inspectors who are stationed at some of the busiest airports. The PSR personnel are front-line staff in civilian attire. They deal one-to-one with international travellers to defuse complaints, conduct problem resolution, and educate international travellers in advance about requirements for entering the United States. They also work closely with the airport authorities, the airline and tour industry.

PUBLICATIONS

Customs Legislation and Tariff Structure

8. The Customs Regulations, Tariff and many other publications are available for sale at the Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents and are viewable and searchable on the Internet. Many of these publications are available for free downloading from the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board. New regulations are also reflected in the printed Customs Bulletin and Federal Register. In addition, technical publications, reports and bulletins addressing specific commodities and field operational requirements are available.

Brochures, Leaflets, Pamphlets and Handbooks

9. CBP has many brochures, booklets and specialised "Informed Compliance" publications available free of charge at local Customs offices, the Internet, and the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board. These brochures and booklets may be requested by mail albeit in limited quantities.
10. CBP publishes a bi-monthly magazine entitled "Global Trade Talk" which provides valuable information on topics of interest to the trading community such as NAFTA, the Customs Modernization Act, informed compliance, automation, etc. The Public Information Division, Office of Public Affairs prepares and disseminates timely, accurate public information.

Notices and Signboards

11. CBP is installing self-service informational Customs kiosks at airport international terminals to disseminate information to air passengers. These kiosk computers operate through a touch-screen display. By simply typing in the country of destination, the passenger will receive a printout of the requested information. This printout can be slipped conveniently into the air ticket jacket. If additional information is required, the screen displays a telephone number to call for more information. Brochures and pamphlets on Customs and other agencies rules for importation and exportation of monetary instruments, agricultural and food items, medicines and animals are also available at the kiosks.

ELECTRONIC MEANS

Computer Bulletin Board

12. CBP maintains a Customs Electronic Bulletin Board (CEBB) that contains current Customs information including policy and procedural changes. It is

available 24 hours a day. It is currently being systematically migrated into the CBP website <www.cbp.gov>. The trading community, broker firms, law firms, shippers, consultants, and the general public can have access to the following information:

- o Federal Register Notices;
- o Final Rulings;
- o Ruling-modification Revocation;
- o Quota and Textile Reports;
- o Current and Historical Currency Conversion Rates;
- o Customs Directives and Handbooks;
- o Trade Operations Instructions;
- o Customs Valuation Encyclopedia;
- o NAFTA Information;
- o Informed Compliance Publications;
- o Duty rates/HTS;
- o ADD/CVD Instructions;
- o WTO Quota Elimination;
- o Office of Foreign Asset Control Most Recent Actions;
- o Intellectual Property Rights; and
- o Automated Manifest Systems.

13. Accessing the CEBB requires a personal computer with a modem and a communication package. The main bulletin menu alerts users to changes in the bulletin section of the bulletin board. Bulletins are used to direct attention to a specific new document or a change to the system that would affect users. Assistance on the use of CEBB is provided by the Office of Information and Technology. It can be contacted by calling a voice contact telephone number or the automated line into the Bulletin Board.

Internet Website

14. CBP has a Homepage on the Internet at the following address <<http://www.cbp.gov>>. This Homepage, designed for the international travel and trading community, contains a variety of information on Customs and Immigration issues. It is designed for ease and fast access and offers fifteen clickable icons for accessing public information within six categories: About CBP, Contacts, Ports, Questions, Legal, Contracting, Site map, News Room, Border Security, Import, Export, Travel and Careers.

15. Point-and-click Customs information now available on the Web includes rules and regulations for importers, exporters and Customs brokers; a directory listing the 301 ports of entry; details on cash rewards for reporting drug

smuggling; and publications such as “Known Before You Go”, “Customs Guide for International Travellers”, etc. This website is refreshed daily with new and updated information.

16. The Internet Informational Working Group (IIWG), which comprised of representatives from various offices, is responsible for identifying, selecting, prioritising and editing the information that will be placed on the CBP Homepage.

TRAINING

Courses, Seminars and Workshops

17. The Office of Trade Relations provides training on the local as well as the national level. Such training is conducted by all offices which significant impact on the at-large trading community. Courses range from orientation to Intellectual Property Rights, the Customs Brokers Examination, the Customs Modernisation Act, and newly promulgated or anticipated regulations and licensing.
18. The Office of Field Operations provides workshops for the trading community. The Office of Rulings and Regulations also conducts numerous training seminars for the trade to familiarise them with Customs requirements. Usually these are in partnership with trade associations.

MASS MEDIA

Newspapers, Television and Radio

19. The Office of Public Affairs subscribes to the PR Newswire Service that tailors the media distribution list to the appropriate audience(s) on a given topic. Although information on Customs laws, regulations, procedures and requirements is disseminated via the Federal Register and Customs Bulletin publications, occasionally, if deemed to be of general interest to the public, such information will be made by press release using the newswire service. Trade issues of general national interest would be similarly reported. Results of law enforcement action are generally handled by the local CBP offices involved and may involve any mode of mass media.