

1999 ASEAN CUSTOMS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND WORK PROGRAMME

Adopted in Genting Highlands, Malaysia on 14 July 1999

INTRODUCTION TO ASEAN CUSTOMS PIWP

1. The Plan of Action was developed for the purpose of managing the implementation of the ASEAN Customs Vision 2020, which carries the following theme:

“an ASEAN Customs Partnership for World Class Standards and Excellence in efficiency, professionalism and service, and uniformity through harmonised procedures, to promote trade and investment and to protect the health and well-being of the ASEAN community”

2. The above theme was included in the ASEAN Vision 2020 Statement, adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at their Second Informal Summit held on 15-16 December 1997 in Kuala Lumpur. The Customs Vision identified fifteen customs areas that will be collectively and cooperatively developed in order to achieve the Vision. The fifteen areas are:

- Tariff Classification
- Customs Valuation
- Cargo Processing
- Post Clearance Audit
- Transit
- Temporary Admission
- Enforcement
- Mutual Assistance
- Automation
- Strategic Planning and Management
- Transparency Enhancement
- Training and Human Resource Development
- Technical Assistance to CLMV
- International Customs Fora
- Partnership with the Business Community

STRUCTURE OF THE PIWP

3. Since the Plan is the implementing instrument of the Vision 2020, it sets out the long term objective for each of the customs area (element). However, for the purposes of managing and controlling its implementation, and for practical reasons, it was agreed that the development of the detailed plans for each element be undertaken in cycles of 5-6 years, with cycle 1 covering the years 1999-2004.
4. Each plan therefore sets out the short-term objectives for the current cycle, and also the strategies and activities planned for the cycle. In addition, each plan also briefly covers the review and monitoring mechanism, and the management of overlaps between the relevant customs areas.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNTRY COORDINATORS

5. These plans were developed by the respective Country Coordinators and the ASEAN Secretariat. As agreed at the Sixth Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on Customs Procedures held in Manila on 8-9 May 1997, the terms of reference of the Country Coordinators are:
 - a. with assistance from the ASEAN Secretariat, to initiate, monitor and coordinate activities on customs areas assigned, for reporting to ASEAN Customs DGs Meeting, relevant customs working groups and other relevant ASEAN bodies;
 - b. to follow-up on mandates and decisions from DGs Meetings, relevant customs working groups and other relevant ASEAN bodies;
 - c. to monitor, in collaboration with ASEAN Secretariat and the IABGCM in Brussels, international developments on customs in the areas assigned for reporting to the Customs DGs and the working groups on customs.
6. It was also agreed that:
 - a. the ASEAN Secretariat would be the overall coordinator for all customs areas;
 - b. all initiatives and other issues raised by Country Coordinators would have to be considered and agreed to at the ASEAN level before being implemented, and
 - c. that once endorsed, implementation would be made by the Member Countries.
7. The Country Coordinators would thus be taking the lead in implementing the activities agreed for each of the element concerned and ensuring their successful implementation.
8. Once finalised by the Experts Committee on Customs Matters (ECCM) the Plan will be submitted to the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs for endorsement
9. As some of the activities such as workshops/seminars and those needing the resources of consultants will require funding, and given the limited resources, priority for funding under the UNDP ASP-6 project has been assigned in the following order, as discussed by ASEAN Customs (2nd ECCM Meeting)

- a. Customs Post Clearance Audit (PCA), covering:
 - planning and recommendations to implement PCA
 - formulation of guidelines on PCA
 - training on PCA
- b. Cargo Processing, covering:
 - selectivity checking and monitoring performance (planning and implementation, and training)
 - in-depth country studies on procedures
- c. Customs Valuation, covering:
 - implementation of the WTO Valuation Agreement
 - operationalisation and harmonisation of the WTO Valuation Agreement
- d. ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN)
 - finalisation of the AHTN
 - implementation of the AHTN
- e. Protocol on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit (relevant for customs)
- f. Automation
 - country studies on status and blueprint for automation
- g. Enforcement covering implementation of risk management
- h. Temporary Admission
- i. Strategic Planning and Management, covering:
 - customs reform and modernisation programme