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A New Link Between Singapore and Japan Secured in the Global Supply Chain

Singapore Customs and Japan Customs reached a new milestone in facilitating and securing trade flows between the two countries with the signing of a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on supply chain security. This is the third MRA Singapore has signed to date, with the first two inked a year ago with South Korea and Canada.

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Nations Network in the Name of Non-Proliferation

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inSIGHT

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, TRADE SECURITY

For Singapore, free and open trade does not mean unmanaged trade. As one of the most connected, business-friendly economies and home to one of the busiest ports in the world, our safety and continued prosperity is dependent on the integrity of the global supply chain.

To balance the growing demands of fast, reliable trade and greater security, Singapore Customs subscribes to a total supply chain security approach, where both the responsibility and benefits of a secure global supply chain are shared among all players worldwide.

At the local level, measures such as the upcoming implementation of Advance Export Declaration look to strengthen security by bringing our trade practices in line with international norms. Between countries, bilateral frameworks, such as the recently signed Singapore-Japan Mutual Recognition Arrangement, allow for streamlined processes and time savings while protecting trade flows.

And at the international level, as a member of the global trading community, Singapore promotes cooperation and knowledge exchange among countries to address international security issues, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, through initiatives such as co-sponsoring the 12th International Export Control Conference.

We hope you find this issue an enlightening read. Engagement, knowledge sharing and cooperation are key factors in addressing the risks and challenges of international trade. In that same spirit, we welcome your feedback and inquiries on any of the topics addressed here.

PATRICIA BAY
Editor

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A New Link Between Singapore and Japan Secured in the Global Supply Chain

Singapore Customs and Japan Customs reached a new milestone in facilitating and securing trade flows between the two countries with the signing of a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on supply chain security. This is the third MRA Singapore has signed to date, with the first two inked a year ago with South Korea and Canada.

The signing of the MRA, which took place at the World Customs Organisation (WCO) Council Sessions held from 23 to 25 June 2011 in Brussels, marks the culmination of discussions between Singapore and Japan customs authorities that began in 2008.

Japan is Singapore's sixth largest trading partner with a trade volume exceeding S\$55 billion in 2010. Top exports to Japan include electronic chips and optical media while top imports from Japan include electronic integrated circuits and semi-manufactured gold.

With the MRA, both countries now mutually recognise companies that have been accorded Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) status by their respective customs administrations.

National AEO programmes encourage companies to adopt measures that comply with a set of supply chain security guidelines and be certified by the domestic customs administration

as such. MRAs effectively multiply the trade security and facilitation benefits of AEO schemes by elevating them from the domestic to the international level. MRAs also reduce the likelihood of duplicated security controls and validations, facilitating the cross-border movement of goods.

The mutual recognition of AEOs and custom controls between countries is an important element of the SAFE Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade. Developed by the WCO Council in June 2005 with the objectives of enhancing supply chain security and facilitating international trade, the Framework recognises the importance of cooperation between different customs administrations and their respective business communities.

Today, a total of 164 customs administrations worldwide have indicated their intent to implement the SAFE Framework, including

Singapore. The first in Southeast Asia to have entered into MRAs, Singapore joins a growing number of Customs administrations that have done so, such as Canada, the European Union, Japan, Korea, New Zealand and the United States.

WHAT MRAs MEAN FOR BUSINESS

For businesses certified under their country's AEO programme, their exports would be recognised by the other country's customs authority as

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGAPORE-JAPAN MRA

The Singapore-Japan MRA came into effect on 1 August 2011. The detailed procedures for STP-Plus companies to enjoy the benefits of mutual recognition are available in Circular No. 17/2011 at www.customs.gov.sg



Singapore Customs Director-General Mr Fong Yong Kian (left) signed the Mutual Recognition Arrangement with Mr Atsuo Shibota, Director-General of Japan's Customs and Tariff Bureau, at the WCO Council Sessions in June 2011.

being of lower risk, thus making them less liable for inspection and allowing their expedited release at the point of importation.

In a 2009 Time Release Study conducted by Japan Customs, the time required for the clearance of sea cargo imported by a Japanese AEO importer was three hours less than that of a non-AEO importer. Local companies certified under Singapore's AEO programme, the Secure Trade Partnership-Plus (STP-Plus), can expect similar time savings from Singapore's MRA partner countries.

Singapore Customs Director-General Mr Fong Yong Kian affirmed the benefits to Singapore businesses under the STP-Plus, "With this MRA, our STP-Plus companies' cargoes would be less prone to customs inspections at the ports

in Japan. This would enable the companies to better manage their supply chain, with benefits such as time-savings and greater predictability of international shipments."

Said Mr Alan Kohlscheen, IBM's Director of Import Compliance & Supply Chain Security, "We believe the Singapore Customs MRA with Japan is a significant step towards improved risk management and trade facilitation. Along with enhanced supply chain security, businesses can benefit from the streamlined requirements and shipment processing."

Aside from the opportunities afforded during times of peace, MRAs also serve to facilitate continued secure trade flows in situations of high alert or when international trade is disrupted.

PARTNERS IN SINGAPORE'S SECURE TRADE

Launched in 2007, Singapore's AEO programme is the Secure Trade Partnership (STP). The STP is a voluntary certification programme that encourages companies to adopt robust security measures in their trading operations, and to play their part in enhancing the security of the global supply chain.

Open to all supply chain stakeholders such as importers, exporters, warehouse operators, transporters and terminal operators among others, the programme guides companies in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of their supply chain security measures and practices.

Besides establishing the necessary domestic framework to enhance supply chain security within Singapore, the STP allows Singapore to engage important trading partners with compatible AEO programmes through MRAs. For this purpose, a higher level of accreditation known as the STP-Plus is used to align the programme with international standards.

In order to be accorded STP-Plus status, a company must fulfil the minimum criteria under the STP-Plus and attain the "Premium" band under TradeFIRST.

Full details of TradeFIRST and the STP programme, including the application procedure for certification, are available at www.customs.gov.sg

Nations Network in the Name of Non-Proliferation

To address the global challenge of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and strengthen the management of trade in strategic goods, over 300 officials from 75 countries, as well as experts from non-governmental organisations, met in Singapore for the 12th International Export Control Conference, the first to be hosted in Asia.

In August 2009, the United Arab Emirates seized military equipment that shipping documents falsely described as oil machinery spare parts. The cargo had been customs-sealed and loaded on a North Korean ship before it was transhipped several times en route to its declared destination of Iran.

Several months later, Thailand intercepted an aircraft refuelling in Bangkok that carried 35 tons of conventional weapons: rockets, rocket-propelled grenades and shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles. The proliferators had filed a number of flight plans in both directions to cover their tracks—a move that raised the suspicions of the authorities. The airway bill had claimed the cargo was “mechanical parts”.

These examples cited by one of the conference’s panel of distinguished speakers, Mr Vann Van Diepen, the United States Acting Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation, express the ever-present need to prevent the proliferation of WMD, their delivery systems, related technologies as well as destabilising conventional weapons.

“It is a challenge that no one nation can solve on its own,” said Mr Van Diepen, in appreciation of the Conference’s theme ‘Building a Network of Non-Proliferators’. “We all share a responsibility for global security and economic prosperity; therefore we are all part of this network.”

Co-sponsored by the Governments of Singapore, the United States of America and the European Union, the Conference brought together over 300 delegates at the Raffles City Convention Centre from 24 to 26 May 2011. A forum for participants to explore common challenges and share best practices, the international event also provided participants with networking opportunities to establish specific contacts for closer future collaboration.

BIGGER CHALLENGES IN A SMALLER WORLD

With global trade growing at an average rate of 6% per year between 1990 and 2010, the challenge of preventing the proliferation of WMD grows as well. Complicating matters is the increasing complexity of global supply chains, and the fact that many strategic goods are dual-use technology and products that can be used for both military and civilian purposes.

Gyroscopes, for example, are commonly found in consumer products such as smartphones and wireless pointers. They are also an essential navigational component in ballistic missiles.

“Globalisation, while fuelling Asia’s economic growth, has also increased the interlinkages among us. Unfortunately proliferators are also quick to take advantages of these interlinkages to carry out their activities and circumvent UN sanctions,” said Mr Chee Wee Kiong,

THE DUAL NATURE OF STRATEGIC GOODS

Strategic goods refer to items and their related technologies that can be used to develop, produce, operate, stockpile or acquire nuclear, chemical or biological weapons capable of causing mass destruction, or the missiles capable of delivering such weapons.

The category includes not just arms and military equipment, but also commercial items that could be used for the development of WMD.

Examples of such “dual-use” goods are integrated circuits, mass spectrometers, aluminium plates, pumps and valves. They also include chemicals such as triethanolamine (TEA)—widely used in consumer products such as cosmetics and shampoo, as well as botulinum toxin—the strongest toxin known to man that has legitimate medical and cosmetic uses.

In 2010, over \$1.8 billion worth of strategic goods were brought out of Singapore. In the same year, Singapore Customs processed over 17,700 permit applications for strategic goods, averaging more than 1,475 per month.



The 12th International Export Control Conference brought together officials from 75 countries and experts from international and non-governmental organisations to address the latest developments in strategic trade control and related border security issues.

Second Permanent Secretary for the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "They are creative and inventive in exploiting the complex logistical network that facilitates our inter- and intra-regional trade."

Describing these global developments in his keynote address, Singapore Customs Director-General Mr Fong Yong Kian highlighted the need for export control regimes to not unduly impede legitimate trade. He also spoke of the new ways used by proliferators to manipulate the supply chain, adapting their methods in a constant bid to overcome tightening sanctions.

These methods have included creating front companies and various intermediaries to circumvent export control regulations, seeking out

alternative suppliers such as overseas distributors, using circuitous shipping routes with multiple transshipment destinations to obscure their intended end point, and falsifying shipping documents.

BALANCING TRADE GROWTH WITH GREATER SECURITY

One of the first few countries in the region and the first in ASEAN to adopt an enhanced export control regime, Singapore is committed to implementing UN Security Council Resolutions and ensuring a peaceful global trading environment through counter-proliferation efforts.

As the national authority responsible for implementing Singapore's Strategic Trade Control regime, Singapore Customs balances the demands of

both fast, reliable trade and enhanced security. Most trade is legitimate after all, and traders expect shipments with dual-use commodities to reach their intended destinations without delay.

There are three ways in which Singapore Customs accomplishes this: engagement with the trading community, international cooperation and intelligence exchange.

Firstly, the agency holds regular outreach programmes for the business community to provide updates on the latest developments and share industry best practices. Outreach seminars with other countries are also organised to provide local businesses with insights into international strategic trade control policies.



In his keynote address, Singapore Customs Director-General Mr Fong Yong Kian affirmed Singapore's commitment to the international effort to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to uphold international treaties and UN Security Council resolutions on non-proliferation.

Such constant engagement encourages greater self-compliance within the industry and commitment from individual businesses to reduce the likelihood of proliferation by exercising due diligence.

Secondly, recognising that efforts to curb proliferation are only as strong as its weakest link in today's global supply chain, Singapore Customs actively supports regional capacity building efforts. Aside from participating in regional and international fora, Singapore has hosted a number of foreign fact-finding missions, sharing knowledge and exchanging contacts to facilitate future collaboration.

Thirdly, the reality is that goods in transit are usually harder to detect and intercept. Compared to origin or

destination countries, less information is available at transit ports and short turnarounds mean less time for inspections and risk profiling.

In Singapore where the annual container throughput is about 28 million TEUs, or twenty-foot equivalent units, the gathering of credible and timely intelligence through good international connections is a crucial element in intercepting suspect shipments. As such, Singapore Customs continues to strengthen its partnerships with countries and regions to build a tight, effective and efficient international network.



Over 300 delegates convened in Singapore at the Raffles City Convention Centre for the 12th International Export Control Conference from 24 to 26 May 2011, the first to be hosted in Asia.

How the TradeFIRST Assessment Works For You

Seven months after its launch in January 2011, over 200 companies have been assessed under the TradeFIRST framework. These companies have hailed the relative ease of completing the assessment, the opportunity to acquire valuable pointers on improving their supply chain security standards, and the tailored trade facilitation approach that enables them to improve their business competitiveness.

A one-stop trade facilitation framework designed to make trade easy, fair and secure, TradeFIRST, or the Trade Facilitation and Integrated Risk-based System, effectively streamlines the assessment process for businesses applying for Singapore Customs' facilitations and schemes. This means companies need only undergo a single assessment to qualify for a whole suite of facilitations under one of five TradeFIRST bands, while developing a more holistic partnership with Customs. Each company will be assigned a dedicated Account Manager who will explain and guide the company through the assessment process.

1**SELF-ASSESSMENT**

If you are a company looking to qualify for a scheme or facilitation, your first step is to complete the self-assessment checklist available at www.customs.gov.sg under TradeFIRST.

2**ACCOUNT MANAGER ASSESSMENT**

After the self-assessment and the submission of supporting documents to Singapore Customs, your company's assigned Account Manager will conduct a preliminary assessment and provide advice on areas for improvement before the on-site assessment.

3**ON-SITE VISIT**

To conduct the assessment, your Account Manager will arrange for a site visit. At this point, you might also be advised of additional facilitation that is suitable for your company.

4**EVALUATION AND BAND PLACEMENT**

As the final step, you will be informed of the band your company has been placed in, as well as the areas that can be further improved upon.

1

The self-assessment process helps companies gain a better understanding of the TradeFIRST assessment requirements and why they matter for improving security across the supply chain.

The assessment will cover five areas:

- a) Company Profile
- b) Inventory Management and Controls
- c) Compliance
- d) Procedures and Processes
- e) Security

2

By conducting a preliminary assessment and giving feedback, Account Managers allow companies sufficient time to improve on weak areas where necessary. The Account Manager will also get to understand each company's unique business model and operations.

"The TradeFIRST assessment has proved beneficial for us to learn about security requirements. Our Account Manager, Mr Teo Khai Ming, would verify with us, giving us suggestions on areas to improve or ways to enhance the system."

— **Ms Alice Foo, Operations Manager, Toll Group**

3

"There was good exchange of information and discussions on best practices that were extremely useful. Our management staff benefited from the sessions and with better understanding, will be motivated to explain and guide their staff on compliance."

— **Mr Sunny Chia, Director, International Trade Services, United Parcel Service Singapore**

4

Assessed companies will be placed in one of the following bands, from the highest to the lowest:

- a) Premium
- b) Enhanced
- c) Intermediate
- d) Standard
- e) Basic

As at August 2011, 44 companies have achieved the Premium band under TradeFIRST.

Customs, Businesses Co-create Advance Export Declaration Rules

Singapore Customs received a total of 65 responses when it sought feedback from the trading community on the proposed implementation of Advance Export Declaration (AED) in a public consultation held from 15 March to 12 April 2011.



A key objective of the public consultation was to obtain feedback from companies on how the proposed implementation details for AED could be improved. The feedback received would be considered by the taskforce, comprising the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Transport, Economic Development Board and Singapore Customs, which is looking into how AED could be implemented with minimal impact to trade.

The implementation of AED will require the export declarations for all goods to be submitted prior to their export. At present, traders can submit their export declarations for non-controlled and non-dutiable goods exported by sea or air within three days of the goods leaving Singapore.

With about half of Singapore's current export declarations already submitted in advance, the extension of AED to all

exports looks to strengthen the security of Singapore's supply chain and bring in line its export declaration practices with international norms.

VIEWES RECEIVED FROM ACROSS THE SUPPLY CHAIN

The public consultation saw the participation of companies from an array of industries, ranging from electronics manufacturers to freight companies, representing key nodes of the supply chain.

Recognising that AED would enhance Singapore's position as a secure and trusted location to develop their business, companies were generally supportive of the move, and expressed confidence that they would be able to comply with the AED requirement, given sufficient lead time to make the necessary preparations and adjustments to their operations.

This public consultation with the trading community follows extensive industry consultations with companies and key trade associations on the AED initiative since 2010. Many useful comments and suggestions from traders have been factored into the formulation and adjustment of implementation details.

While the final operational details for AED implementation have yet to be firmed up, Singapore Customs will adopt a flexible approach to minimise undue disruption to the trading community, with companies to be given lead time of about one year to make the necessary work process changes. There will also be a 'no penalty' phase of 18 months from the date of implementation to help companies adjust to and comply with the requirements while Singapore Customs monitors the implementation and fine-tunes the AED process.

Further feedback will be sought after AED implementation to ensure that the system continues to meet Singapore's twin objectives of facilitating and securing trade.

For a summary of Singapore Customs' responses to the feedback received from the public consultation, please visit www.customs.gov.sg under "News & Events".

Towards an Integrated ASEAN Customs Community

From 6 to 9 June 2010, the 20th annual Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Directors-General brought together customs chiefs responsible for overseeing customs cooperation within the region.

Held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, and chaired by the Acting Director-General of the Myanmar Customs Department Mr Aye Ko, the meeting achieved several outcomes supporting the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. The vision is to transform ASEAN into a highly competitive single market and production base fully integrated with the global community.

Among other developments, the Directors-General endorsed the ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) 2012, which is

based on the 2012 version of the World Customs Organisation's (WCO) Harmonised System. A common tariff nomenclature used by ASEAN customs to classify all traded goods, the AHTN 2012 was developed by a task force chaired by Singapore Customs and incorporates ASEAN member states' tariff lines for both intra- and extra-ASEAN trade, allowing traders to refer to a single publication when importing and exporting goods into and from ASEAN.

To increase the transparency of procedures and service standards among ASEAN customs authorities, the Directors-General endorsed a Compendium of Temporary Admission Practices of ASEAN Member States, as well as a Compilation of Key Performance Indicators of Customs Services, now available on the ASEAN website. There were also fruitful consultations with the customs administrations of China, Japan and Korea, as well as the WCO, the US-ASEAN Business Council and the Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers.

The meeting also saw the signing of a memorandum of understanding to strengthen, promote and develop customs cooperation between ASEAN and China. It identified areas of mutual interest including the development of customs techniques, capacity building and promoting the implementation of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards and other international trade facilitation conventions.

WCO Secretary General Commends Singapore Customs' TradeFIRST Initiative

Secretary General of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) Mr Kunio Mikuriya visited Singapore Customs and met with senior government and business representatives during a stopover in Singapore on 10 June 2011.

Mr Mikuriya met with members of the Singapore Customs senior management team and was briefed on the agency's latest initiatives, including the TradeFIRST framework launched earlier this year. A single, holistic trade assessment and facilitation framework for all Singapore Customs' schemes, TradeFIRST provides greater facilitation to companies with more robust internal security systems and practices.

The Secretary General noted that incorporating Singapore's national

authorised economic operator (AEO) programme — the Secure Trade Partnership — under the TradeFIRST framework was a good move as it helps market the programme and makes it easier for traders to be certified, while being in line with the on-going move towards improving professionalism in customs and compliance in business. He also explored how Singapore could play an enhanced role in supporting the implementation of WCO tools such as the AEO programme and the Single Window,

as well as customs reform in the ASEAN and APEC regions.

Mr Mikuriya also took the opportunity to call on senior officials from the Ministry of Finance, and met with the Chief Executive of the Singapore Business Federation and members of the Customs Advisory Committee to discuss current issues affecting global and regional trade facilitation and security.

The Point of No Return

Discovered as they attempted to cheat on the Tourist Refund Scheme by retaining GST-refunded jewellery worth over \$18,000 in Singapore, two Indian nationals and their Singaporean accomplice were arrested and charged under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act.

Under Singapore's Tourist Refund Scheme, tourists can claim a refund on the GST paid for goods brought out of Singapore. These purchased goods have to be personally taken to the GST Refund counter for inspection and their refund claim form endorsed by Singapore Custom officers before they leave the country.

On 6 June 2011, carrying a pouch containing 11 pieces of jewellery and their purchase receipts, Pakkiri Mohamed Abdul Karim had approached Customs officers at the transit area of Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 2 to make his GST claim. He was scheduled to depart for India later that day.

But after collecting the GST refund of more than \$1,000 for the jewellery, Pakkiri handed the pouch of jewellery over to an elderly Singaporean man who was waiting in the transit area. The Singaporean, who was an airport access pass holder, then proceeded to the Departure Hall, where he was joined by another Indian national, Perumal Sugumaran.

Pakkiri had planned to leave the jewellery with Perumal, and to collect it once he returned to Singapore the following Friday. Aware that retaining goods in Singapore after their GST refund claims have been made is forbidden, Pakkiri sought help from the Singaporean man to pass his jewellery to Perumal at the airport.

Sensing something amiss, Immigration & Checkpoints Authority officers moved in to stop and search them. All three men were promptly arrested and charged for conspiring to retain GST-refunded jewellery in Singapore.

The Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) and Singapore Customs take a serious view of foreigners who make false declarations and abuse the Tourist Refund Scheme. If convicted, offenders can be fined up to \$5,000, or in default, jailed up to six months.

Pakkiri and Perumal were each sentenced to a court fine of \$3,000, or in default, three weeks' imprisonment. Investigations are still ongoing for the Singaporean offender.



Visitors to Singapore are advised to abide by the rules of the Tourist Refund Scheme. Information on the scheme can be found in the e-Tax guide 'Guide to Visitors on Tourist Refund Scheme' on the IRAS website at www.iras.gov.sg or on the Singapore Customs website at www.customs.gov.sg under "Information for Travellers".

A Heartwarming Lunch and a Great Underwater Adventure

Always looking to give back to society, Singapore Customs regularly organises activities to bring joy to residents of its adopted charity, the Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled. A heartwarming lunch date and a fun-filled outing to Sentosa's Underwater World were two such activities where Customs staff and the home's residents spent memorable times together.

LUNCH @ BISHAN HOME

For most Customs staff, 17 June 2011 was a typical working Friday. But for a group of about 30 volunteers who had signed up for a lunch date with Bishan Home residents, lunch that day was a truly meaningful affair.

Arriving at Bishan Home, the volunteers were warmly greeted by its residents, who had been waiting eagerly for their friends. The Customs staff were given a quick briefing by the home's coordinator, Ms Chloe Lee, which included helpful pointers on interacting with the residents. It was advice that would come in handy for about half the volunteers who were participating in such an activity for the first time.

At the home's canteen, the volunteers prepared to serve lunch. It was the residents' favourite — McDonald's Filet-O-Fish, with Coke and buttered corn on the side. The elated looks on their faces were priceless, demonstrating that sometimes, the simplest pleasures can bring about the greatest joy.

The volunteers and residents enjoyed each others' company throughout the lunch. Some residents delighted in sharing their life stories while others happily sang with their new-found friends by the karaoke set. The volunteers found that they could bring happiness to the residents by something as simple as providing a listening ear.

It was a short but highly rewarding experience for both the volunteers and the residents of the home. First-time volunteer Shahila Binte Syed Ali Shah from Procedures and Systems Branch summed up everyone's feelings best when she said, "Let me know when the next event is okay?"

VISIT TO SENTOSA'S UNDERWATER WORLD

With their new-found friends from Bishan Home, 25 Customs volunteers headed to Sentosa's Underwater World on 30 July 2011 for half a day of fun-filled activities. With the recently opened Dolphin Lagoon as the Underwater World's latest attraction, the outing was an all-new experience for everyone.

The excitement felt by the Bishan Home residents was palpable as they set off that sunny morning, making the bus journey to Sentosa seem like a short eternity.

When everyone was finally assembled at the entrance to the Underwater World, each Customs volunteer was paired up with a Bishan Home resident. The buddy-pairs were free to explore the fascinating world of marine creatures. Most began with the touch pool of corals and starfish, while others were more eager to feed the fishes.

And of course, what is a visit to the Underwater World without a spectacular voyage through the oceanarium,



Customs volunteers helping the Bishan Home kitchen staff prepare the McDonald's lunch for the residents: mixing the corn kernels with the butter, then scooping them into individual cups.

an aquatic wonderland housing a variety of marine creatures from graceful stingrays to majestic sharks?

The trip culminated in a stop at the newly built Dolphin Lagoon to catch the state-of-the-art dolphin show. The well-trained and friendly mammals leapt through hoops and sped across the water as part of their dazzling routine. Everyone was thoroughly amused by the animals' antics and enjoyed the live performance.

After the show, the group proceeded to McDonald's at iFly for lunch. Once again, the residents' favourite Filet-O-Fish was

served up with Coke. Only this time, instead of buttered corn, the sets came with their preferred option of fries!

When lunch was over, everybody gathered around for a song-and-dance session. It was a time where everyone could express themselves freely and have fun learning new dance steps and singing new tunes.

The day's activities had to come to an end eventually. Although both volunteers and residents were tired out, they remained reluctant to head home. Gathered at the bus terminal, everyone took the opportunity to snap photographs, capturing fond memories of their outing together while waiting for the bus out of Sentosa.



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS' ADOPTED CHARITY

Since 2001, Singapore Customs has adopted the Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled as part of its community engagement programme. It aims to foster positive relationships within the community in which it operates, and to encourage its staff to participate in various community engagement activities. For the past 10 years, the agency's Staff Well-Being Committee has organised various activities for the home's residents, with the help of supportive volunteers from its staff.



Bishan Home residents and their friends from Customs viewing corals and starfish up close at the Underwater World's touch pool (top) and journeying through the fascinating oceanarium with its myriad of marine creatures swimming gracefully overhead (bottom).

REFLECTIONS

"I've always wanted to do voluntary work but I never really tried it till I joined Customs. It was my first time interacting with the residents and honestly, I was a bit apprehensive. However, as I spent more time with them and understood them better, I found them easy to get along with. The event was awesome and I really enjoyed my time with them! I'm glad to have participated in such a meaningful event and am looking forward to our next meeting!"

JASMINE KONG
Schemes & Licensing Branch

"It has been a long time since I last visited the Bishan Home residents. I've always made excuses for myself; no time, need to work, meetings, etc. But all it takes is determination, a supportive boss and good time management to make that trip. Seeing the looks on the residents' faces when we arrived and hearing their stories made me feel ashamed of the excuses I had made for myself. I hope more officers will make that extra effort to do their bit for the underprivileged in our society."

ANGIE TEO
Planning Branch

"Volunteering with Bishan Home keeps my spirits up! It reminds me to take a step back for a moment to appreciate life and to be more compassionate to the less fortunate."

NURAINI ASSIK
Tariffs & Trade Services Branch

TRAINING CALENDAR

| Programme | Dates |
|---|---|
| <p>OUTREACH ON TRADENET® VERSION 4.1 AND AHTN 2012 These half-day sessions will introduce TradeNet users to the key changes in the new version 4.1, which will roll out on 1 January 2012. The upgraded version will also incorporate the ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) 2012 (see Event Highlights).</p> | <p>15, 21 & 23 Sep 2011</p> <p>4, 7 & 11 Oct 2011</p> |
| <p>CUSTOMS COMPETENCY PROGRAMME FOR BUSINESSES PART I This two-day course provides an overview of customs procedures pertaining to the import and export of goods, registration with Customs, the basic requirements for preparing TradeNet declarations, classification of goods under the Harmonised System, customs valuation and import of dutiable goods.</p> | <p>6–7 Oct 2011</p> <p>10–11 Nov 2011</p> <p>8–9 Dec 2011</p> |
| <p>CUSTOMS COMPETENCY PROGRAMME FOR BUSINESSES PART II This four-day course covers topics such as temporary importation, manifest procedures, rules of origin, warehousing regimes, strategic goods control, supply chain security, customs laws and international regimes. It will be held over three full days and two half days.</p> | <p>11, 12, 17, 18 & 24 Oct 2011</p> |
| <p>STRATEGIC GOODS CONTROL PROGRAMME This one-day programme provides an overview of Singapore's strategic goods control system and covers the registration requirements and application procedures for strategic goods permits. Companies that are interested in setting up an internal export control compliance programme and wish to be considered for export facilitation under the Strategic Trade Scheme for Tier 2 or Tier 3 permits may also attend.</p> | <p>10 Oct 2011</p> |
| <p>TRADERS CLINICS These monthly one-on-one consultation sessions provide an avenue for traders to seek advice and provide feedback on general customs procedures and services.</p> | <p>26 & 27 Sep 2011</p> <p>17 & 18 Oct 2011</p> |
| <p>OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY-REGISTERED TRADERS This quarterly programme is designed to equip new traders with a better understanding of customs documentation procedures, as well as the various customs schemes and services available. For enquiries, please call 6355 2000 or email customs_documentation@customs.gov.sg</p> | <p>28 Sep 2011</p> <p>6 Dec 2011</p> |
| <p>OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY-REGISTERED MANUFACTURERS This bimonthly programme is designed to equip newly-registered manufacturers with a better understanding of the Rules of Origin under Singapore's Free Trade Agreements, the application procedures for Certificates of Origin, and the compliance requirements. For enquiries, please email customs_roo@customs.gov.sg.</p> | <p>20 Oct 2011</p> <p>7 Dec 2011</p> |

Please note that dates are subject to change. For full programme and registration details, please refer to www.customs.gov.sg under "News & Events".

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

OUTREACH ON TRADENET® VERSION 4.1 AND AHTN 2012

Singapore Customs will be implementing a TradeNet upgrade to version 4.1 on 1 January 2012. To introduce users to the changes for TradeNet 4.1, Singapore Customs will be conducting a series of half-day outreach sessions in September and October 2011. Traders, importers, exporters, freight forwarders, cargo and carrier agents are encouraged to attend any of these sessions to familiarise themselves with the changes.

TradeNet 4.1 will see the adoption of the World Customs Organisation (WCO)'s Data Model for some TradeNet permit fields, thereby promoting a uniform set of data requirements. It also incorporates the ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) 2012, which includes the amendments proposed by the WCO in addition to those made by ASEAN countries to promote consistency and uniformity in the classification of goods beyond ASEAN. The upgraded TradeNet version will also see the relaxation of permit amendment and cancellation rules to better facilitate trading activities.

The outreach sessions will be held on 15, 21, 23 September and 4, 7, 11 October 2011 from 9 am to 1 pm at the NTUC Auditorium located at No. 1 Marina Boulevard.

The Singapore Trade Classification, Customs & Excise Duties (STCCED) 2012 publication will also be on sale during these sessions.

Register for these sessions at www.customs.gov.sg under "News & Events".



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