

inSYNC

singapore customs newsletter • issue 18 • may / june 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Exporters Give Origin Self-Certification Scheme the Thumbs Up

Page 06 >>

Singapore Customs Participates in WCO Global AEO Conference 2012

Page 07 >>

Enhancing Ties with Regional Counterparts

Page 08 >>



Singapore Tops Global Rankings on Logistics and Trade

Singapore's sterling performance in facilitating the efficient movement of goods across borders has helped the nation clinch top rankings internationally in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index, the World Economic Forum's Enabling Trade Index and the IMD Business School's World Competitiveness Yearbook.

Page 01 >>



Photo: Givaudan Singapore

Revised Industrial Exemption Factory Scheme Yields Cost Savings

By adopting a company-centric regulatory approach for its scheme catering to manufacturers using dutiable raw materials, Singapore Customs helps companies save on operating cost and enjoy greater flexibility in managing their feedstock inventories.

Page 04 >>

inSIGHT

FACILITATING ENTERPRISE, CONNECTING GLOBALLY

In this issue, we celebrate Singapore's pre-eminence as a trade and logistics hub. The nation topped the overall rankings in the recent World Bank Logistics Performance Index and the World Economic Forum Enabling Trade Index, while taking fourth place in the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook listing. In all three cases, Singapore led the field in the customs and border administration component.

Many factors contribute to our consistently good showing on the world stage, but none of them would be of any avail if the people behind them did not play their part. We take this opportunity to salute our staff and highlight their spirit of innovation. Our congratulations go out to those who have been recognised with this year's Public Service Awards.

Another cornerstone of Singapore Customs' excellence is the constant review of its processes and responsiveness to feedback from industry. Local manufacturers received a boost when we moved from a transaction-centric to a company-centric regulatory approach for our Industrial Exemption Factory Scheme. Together with the streamlined process for origin certification offered under the pilot ASEAN self-certification scheme, manufacturers have been able to reap considerable cost savings and benefit from more efficient processes.

On the world stage, our dynamic participation in customs activities highlights how we engage with other administrations to build and enhance customs connectivity and facilitate secure trade flows in an increasingly globalised world.

PATRICIA BAY
Editor



To read, download or subscribe to the online edition of inSYNC, please visit www.customs.gov.sg/insync

Find us on  <http://www.facebook.com/SingaporeCustoms>

CONTENTS

Features

- 01 Singapore Tops Global Rankings on Logistics and Trade
- 04 Revised Industrial Exemption Factory Scheme Yields Cost Savings
- 06 Exporters Give Origin Self-Certification Scheme the Thumbs Up

Updates

- 07 Singapore Customs Participates in WCO Global AEO Conference 2012
- 08 Enhancing Ties with Regional Counterparts

Inside Customs

- 10 Promoting Innovation To Serve Customers Better
- 12 Singapore Customs Shines in Public Service Awards
- 13 Training Calendar

DESIGN BY

Green House Design + Communications

Please let us know what you think of inSYNC. We welcome your ideas on what you would like to see and how we can do better. Write in to the Editor at customs_media@customs.gov.sg

InSYNC is a publication of Singapore Customs. Copyright of the materials contained in this publication belongs to Singapore Customs. Nothing in here shall be reproduced in whole or in part without prior written consent of Singapore Customs. All rights reserved. All information is correct at time of publication.

Singapore Tops Global Rankings on Logistics and Trade

Singapore's sterling performance in facilitating the efficient movement of goods across borders has helped the nation clinch top rankings internationally in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI), the World Economic Forum's Enabling Trade Index (ETI) and the IMD Business School's World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY).

In the rankings released recently by the three different organisations, Singapore took pole position in the logistics and trade performance listings, and was consistently ahead of the other countries in the areas of customs and border administration.

In the LPI published by the World Bank, Singapore was ranked first for efficiency of customs clearance and timeliness of shipments delivered, two of six components in the index. It also led the overall ranking of 155 countries, confirming its status as a regional logistics hub. The Index measures trade logistics performance on the ground.

Mr Heinrich Jessen, Chairman of Jebsen & Jessen, a logistics company operating in eight of the 10 ASEAN countries, agrees with the kudos given to Singapore for the timeliness of shipments delivered. The group has chosen to make Singapore its distribution hub and he says: "Customs clearance takes a lot longer in most of the neighbouring countries than it does in Singapore."

In the World Economic Forum's ETI, the story repeats itself. This is the third time that Singapore has topped the survey, which measures the extent to which economies develop institutions, policies and services that facilitate the free flow of goods over borders and to their destination.



WORLD BANK LOGISTICS PERFORMANCE INDEX 2012

COUNTRY/ ECONOMY	RANK						
	Overall	Customs	Infrastructure	International shipments	Logistics quality and competence	Tracking and tracing	Timeliness
Singapore	1	1	2	2	6	6	1
Hong Kong SAR	2	3	7	1	5	5	4
Finland	3	2	6	4	1	1	15
Germany	4	6	1	11	4	7	2
Netherlands	5	8	3	3	7	2	12



The ETI reflects four main enablers of trade: market access, border administration, transport and communications infrastructure and business environment. Besides gaining the top spot for facilitating the entry and exit of goods, Singapore also led 132 economies for market access and infrastructure.

Among Singapore's initiatives that helped it clinch the pole position for border administration are the TradeFIRST assessment framework that integrates facilitation, compliance and risk management, and TradeNet, the electronic national single window



WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ENABLING TRADE INDEX 2012

COUNTRY/ ECONOMY	RANK				
	Overall	Market access	Border administration	Transport and communications infrastructure	Business environment
Singapore	1	1	1	1	5
Hong Kong SAR	2	10	4	3	7
Denmark	3	67	3	8	4
Sweden	4	67	2	17	2
New Zealand	5	25	6	25	10

that enables one-stop submission of documents.

Swiss business school IMD compiles its own yearbook on the competitiveness of countries based on statistical data from international and national sources and from a survey of over 4,000 international executives. This year, Singapore's overall ranking based on economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure dropped from third to fourth place. However, Singapore emerged as having the best customs authority among 59 countries for facilitating the efficient transit of goods.

IMD WORLD COMPETITIVENESS YEARBOOK 2012 Customs authorities do facilitate the efficient transit of goods

RANK	COUNTRY/ECONOMY
1	Singapore
2	Ireland
3	Hong Kong
4	New Zealand
5	Sweden



Revised Industrial Exemption Factory Scheme Yields Cost Savings

By adopting a company-centric regulatory approach for its scheme catering to manufacturers using dutiable raw materials, Singapore Customs helps companies save on operating cost and enjoy greater flexibility in managing their feedstock inventories.



Photo: Givaudan Singapore

Following a review of the Industrial Exemption Factory (IEF) Scheme, a duty-exemption scheme available to industries using dutiable raw materials for the purpose of manufacturing non-dutiable products, Singapore Customs shifted from a transaction-centric to a company-centric regulatory approach. In the process, the processing fee was revised from \$225 for the issuance of a duty-exemption certificate for each consignment to \$600 per year for each IEF user. The change took effect from 1 May 2012.

The revised fee structure will reduce operating costs for the majority of IEF companies, which are mainly involved in the pharmaceutical, flavourings and

chemical industries. These companies use dutiable raw materials such as ethyl alcohol, wine and rum in the manufacture of products like food, flavourings, medicinal and chemical products. Under the IEF Scheme, qualified users are exempted from duty payment on their imported and locally purchased dutiable raw materials.

“We welcome the revised fee structure as our company imports alcohol regularly as a dutiable raw material to manufacture our products. We can save about \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year with the revised fee structure. With this savings, we are able to price our products to be more competitive in the market,” said Mr Lee Sa Hean, Givaudan Singapore’s Regional

Finance Director for South Asia and Oceania. Givaudan, headquartered in Switzerland, manufactures fragrances and flavours in Singapore.

Apart from cost savings, the new fee structure also provides IEF users with added flexibility to manage their feedstock inventories without being constrained by the number of individual shipments.

Mr Ta Yoke Kat, Supply Chain Director of Symrise Asia Pacific, a flavour and fragrance manufacturing company from Germany, said: “The IEF scheme benefits Symrise in terms of cost and ease of import of dutiable items and hence enables us to plan our raw materials and logistics more efficiently.

We feel that the Singapore Government is continuously looking for ways to help businesses to improve efficiencies and hence productivity.”

Manufacturers had provided feedback that the processing fee charged for each exemption permit to clear their consignments of dutiable raw materials was high, especially for companies that have a large number of imports. The fee was also levied regardless of the volume of duty exempted goods covered by the permit.

When Singapore Customs reviewed the IEF Scheme, it found that the processing fee was computed based on cost-recovery

per consignment, covering costs relating to processing, enforcement and systems required to regulate the IEF user.

Over time however, enforcement efforts had been reduced significantly due to streamlining of procedures and application of risk management practices. For instance, the practice of regular on-site stock inspections and reconciliation of monthly returns has been discontinued.

Companies are now managed by a Customs account manager who works closely with them to foster a closer Customs-Business partnership and ensure compliance.

With the streamlined procedures, the cost of administering the IEF Scheme for each company does not vary much with the number of transactions. Consequently, it was no longer necessary to tie the processing fee to each exemption permit.

Instead it would be more equitable to charge the fee on a 'per-company' basis. Using a cost-recovery approach, the cost involved in administering the scheme per company works out to \$600 per annum. Hence Singapore Customs went on to implement the new company-centric regulatory approach with resulting benefits for enterprises.



Photo: Symrise

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS' PRO-ENTERPRISE APPROACH

To promote and spur business enterprise, Singapore Customs regularly reviews its licensing schemes with an eye on reducing licence fees or allowing more facilitation to achieve cost savings for companies. In the second quarter of 2012, the agency revamped three of its schemes.

The table below summarises the fee reductions and new facilitation. For more details of the respective schemes, please refer to Customs Schemes & Licences under 'Traders & Businesses' at www.customs.gov.sg

SCHEME	PURPOSE	BEFORE	NOW
Excise Factory	A licence is required for the fermentation or manufacture of ale, beer, stout or porter since they are dutiable goods.	A single licence type for which a fee of \$43,200 per annum was imposed.	A new licence type has been created for microbreweries with an annual production volume of less than 1.8 million litres of beer/stout. The fee payable is \$8,400 per annum.
Licensed Warehouse (LWS)	The LWS allows traders to store imported dutiable goods such as liquors, tobacco products and dutiable motor vehicles with the duty and GST payable suspended pending re-export or local release.	A single tier licence.	Three tiers of licences created – Types I, II & III, with more facilitation accorded to companies placed on the higher tiers. For example, Type II and Type III licensees will be able to store both tobacco/liquor products and motor vehicles under a single licence, while Type III licensees will be able to operate multiple warehouses under a single licence.
Industrial Exemption Factory (IEF)	The IEF is a duty-exemption scheme available to industries using dutiable raw materials for the purpose of manufacturing non-dutiable products.	A transaction-centric approach where companies under the scheme were charged a processing fee of \$225 for a duty-exemption certificate for each consignment.	A company-centric approach where each company under the scheme is charged a flat fee of \$600 per annum regardless of the number of consignments.

Exporters Give Origin Self-Certification Scheme the Thumbs Up

A group of exporters in Singapore participating in a pilot ASEAN scheme for origin self-certification have discovered the benefits of being able to self-declare the country of origin of their goods. Through self-certification, they can enjoy preferential tariffs in the importing country without having to apply to Singapore Customs for a Preferential Certificate of Origin (PCO).

A PCO is a document that certifies an exporter's product as qualifying for preferential tariff treatment based on its rule of origin under an existing Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This document is usually issued by an external regulatory body, such as Singapore Customs. An exporter who wishes for his product to benefit from a preferential tariff rate will typically make out an application for this certificate each time he needs to make a shipment.

But since November 2010, a pioneering group of exporters from Singapore have been able to skip this additional step when making out exports to selected ASEAN member states.



Kwong Yu Industries, a major manufacturer of PVC compounds in Singapore and the Asia Pacific Region, is among the exporters participating in the pilot ASEAN scheme for origin self-certification.

Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand are currently participating in a pilot scheme for the implementation of a regional self-certification system meant to streamline origin certification procedures to facilitate trade of ASEAN originating goods.

Under this pilot scheme, exporters need only declare their goods as qualifying for preferential tariff rates on the commercial invoice, or if the invoice is not available at the time of export, any other commercial document such as a billing statement, delivery order or packing list, eliminating the need for a PCO.

"The scheme benefits us tremendously as we no longer have to engage an agent whenever we need to claim for preferential tariff. Previously an agent helped us handle the PCO applications. But this scheme has helped us save on costs," notes Ms Winnie Chung, a customer service supervisor from TR Formac, which manufactures and distributes industrial fasteners and components.

The sentiment is shared by Mr Girish Krishnan, a senior operations executive from Kwong Yu Industries, a manufacturer of PVC compounds. "Very convenient indeed," he says during an audit

conducted by Singapore Customs at the company's premises. "Please expand this to other countries soonest possible!"

Local exporters are not the only ones benefitting from the scheme. "My customers have given us feedback that they are very happy with the scheme. Goods are cleared expeditiously and they are still able to enjoy the 10 per cent reduction in tariff rates," says Ms Gwen Cheah, a logistics supervisor from Casco Adhesives. The company exports an assortment of household and industrial adhesives to distributors in Malaysia.

But has greater facilitation compromised compliance standards? The results of Singapore Customs' audits on the pilot group of exporters participating in the ASEAN origin self-certification scheme do not indicate so. Customs officers have found no compliance issues from the comprehensive audits carried out on the companies' exports since the implementation of the scheme.

"The compliance level of these companies is not worse off than those that have applied for a PCO," observes Singapore Customs Compliance Officer Muhammad Noor. "There were no problems detected despite us applying the same stringent standards of compliance checks."

Singapore Customs conducts regular verification audits on exporters that make country of origin declarations for preferential tariff claims on their products. These audits are conducted regardless of whether the origin is certified by an external regulatory body or self-certified by the exporter. This is to ensure that only genuine Singapore-manufactured products benefit from preferential tariff rates offered by Singapore's FTA partners.

Singapore Customs Participates in WCO Global AEO Conference 2012

Singapore Customs participated in the first ever World Customs Organisation (WCO) Global Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Conference held in Seoul, South Korea.

Centred on the theme “AEO, the Way Towards Secure and Competitive Growth”, the Conference, held from 17 to 19 April 2012, aimed to foster greater global connectivity between Customs authorities, and between Customs authorities and their businesses.

Co-hosted by the WCO and the Korea Customs Service, the event was attended by some 600 participants from Customs administrations, international organisations and private stakeholders from around the world.

This conference provided a good platform for participants to exchange ideas and share experiences on the development and implementation of the AEO programme and mutual recognition arrangements (MRA) in their country.

In his keynote address, Secretary General of the WCO Kunio Mikuriya reaffirmed the importance of dialogue based on trust and partnership between Customs administrations and the private sector so that a consensus of shared responsibility could be reached.

Mr Mikuriya described the risks involved in today’s trading environment and enunciated the principles behind the AEO programme – effective use of a combination of risk assessment and compliance checks, so that differentiated treatment could be given for different customers. He called for more widespread use of the WCO’s



Photo: Korea Customs Service

Singapore Customs’ Senior Assistant Director-General (Trade) Lim Teck Leong (third from right) with other round-table participants fielding questions from the floor on the last day of the conference.

Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (SAFE Framework of Standards) for developing an effective AEO programme, the signing of MRAs and trade recovery, so that the practices in different countries could converge.

Singapore Customs made a presentation on its Secure Trade Partnership programme and its approach and experience in mutual recognition of its AEO programme during the breakout sessions. Mr Lim Teck Leong, Singapore Customs’ Senior Assistant

Director-General (Trade), was also invited to participate in the round-table discussion on mutual recognition.

The good turnout and active sharing at the conference pointed to the high level of support for the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards. The sharing of perspectives by parties of diverse backgrounds allowed participants to gain valuable insights which would likely lead to refinement of future AEO programmes and MRAs that will benefit the global trading community.

Enhancing Ties with Regional Counterparts

Singapore Customs hosted a series of visits from regional customs administrations in April and May 2012. These visits affirmed the warm ties with its counterparts and also allowed the exchange of experiences and views on areas of common interest.



Mr Clement Cheung, Commissioner of the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (second from right) and his delegation visited PSA Corporation as part of their programme in Singapore, where they were briefed on Singapore's port operations.

EXCHANGING VIEWS ON TRADE FACILITATION WITH HONG KONG CUSTOMS

At the invitation of Singapore Customs Director-General Fong Yong Kian, Mr Clement Cheung, Commissioner of the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department, visited Singapore over two days from 17 to 18 April 2012.

Singapore Customs shared with Mr Cheung and his delegation the agency's experience in implementing TradeNet, Singapore's national trade single window, and how it had facilitated the declaration and clearance of goods in Singapore.

Mr Cheung shared that Hong Kong Customs had just launched their Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programme in April 2012, and both parties agreed to exchange experiences in this area to strengthen supply chain security.

Singapore Customs also arranged for the Commissioner and his delegation to visit PSA Corporation and Woodlands Checkpoint, where they were briefed on Singapore's port operations and the inspection technology used at its checkpoints.

DISCUSSING INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DEVELOPMENTS WITH NEW ZEALAND CUSTOMS

Ms Carolyn Tremain, Comptroller of New Zealand Customs Service, called on Mr Fong on 7 May 2012. Their discussions centred on recent customs developments, benchmarking practices and aspects of international cooperation.



Ms Carolyn Tremain, Comptroller of New Zealand Customs Service (centre), met Director-General of Customs Fong Yong Kian and Singapore Customs officers on 7 May 2012.

Mr Fong updated Ms Tremain that Singapore Customs will be implementing Advance Export Declaration (AED) and is developing its risk assessment procedures to enhance Singapore's supply chain security.

With AED, export declarations for all goods will have to be submitted before the goods leave Singapore. Local traders will be given a transition period of 18 months to get used to the AED implementation.

Ms Tremain shared that traders in New Zealand are also given an 18-month transition period to adjust to their new Joint Border Management System, which aims to keep New Zealand secure while facilitating modern trade and travel.

The Comptroller's visit ended with a tour of the Singapore Customs Academy, which focuses primarily on reaching out to the local trading and logistics community to enable them to better understand and comply with Customs requirements.

SHARING EXPERIENCES ON NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW IMPLEMENTATION WITH LAOS MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Mr Santiphab Phomvihane, Laos' Vice Minister of Finance, led a delegation which included Mr Athsaphangthong Siphandone, Acting Director General of Laos Customs, and representatives from the World Bank, on a study visit to Singapore Customs on 21 May 2012.

The main objective of the visit, which was funded and arranged by the World Bank, was to learn about Singapore's experience in implementing its national trade single window, TradeNet.

During the visit, Singapore Customs presented an overview of the TradeNet system. Among other things, the Vice Minister shared that Laos' Ministry of Finance was responsible for the setting up the country's national single window, and one of the tasks at hand was the examination of its legislation relating to the national single window.

EXCHANGING VIEWS WITH INDIA CUSTOMS

Mr Satish Kumar Goel, Chairman of India's Central Board of Excise and

Customs, called on Mr Fong on 24 May 2012. The two Customs chiefs had a fruitful discussion on AEO programmes.

Singapore Customs gave a presentation on its holistic TradeFIRST assessment framework, and the integration of the agency's AEO programmes, the Secure Trade Partnership, under the framework.

Mr Fong shared that the AEO programme benefits both multi-national corporations and small and medium enterprises in terms of strengthening supply chain security and facilitating goods flow with the mutual recognition of AEO programmes between economies.

Mr Goel noted that while there would be costs involved for maintaining the security, adhering to the standards and keeping track of transactions, companies would be prepared to incur these costs once they see the benefits of AEO accreditation and would be inclined to participate.

The Board's pilot implementation of its AEO programme, which is open to all import and export companies, logistic providers, warehouse custodians and

customs brokers, would be concluded soon, and more companies would then be able to benefit from the programme.

Mr Fong had visited India Customs last year, and this was Mr Goel's return visit. Both visits have strengthened ties and understanding between the two Customs administrations.



Mr Satish Kumar Goel, Chairman of India's Central Board of Excise and Customs (left), called on Director-General of Customs Fong Yong Kian on 24 May 2012.



Mr Santiphab Phomvihane, Vice Minister of Finance of Laos (right), and Mr Athsaphangthong Siphandone, Acting Director General of Laos Customs (left), visited Singapore Customs as part of a study trip arranged by the World Bank to learn about Singapore's experience in implementing its national trade single window – TradeNet.

Promoting Innovation To Serve Customers Better

Innovation is the key to staying relevant and allows Singapore Customs to come up with better ways to serve its customers and facilitate trade.



Customs officers visited Laundry Network to learn how innovation has contributed to higher productivity for the company.

For the second year running, Singapore Customs organised an innovation festival to celebrate and encourage innovation among its staff. Dubbed 'Joint Fest', it was held from 23 to 25 May 2012, and featured a series of exciting activities to ignite the spark of innovation within its officers.

Through interactive and informational activities, officers had a chance to learn and try their hand at generating innovative solutions for the organisation. Besides participating in talks and games at Revenue House, Customs officers also embarked on learning journeys across the island. They visited 3M, Laundry Network and ST Electronics to learn how these companies make innovation part and parcel of their operations.

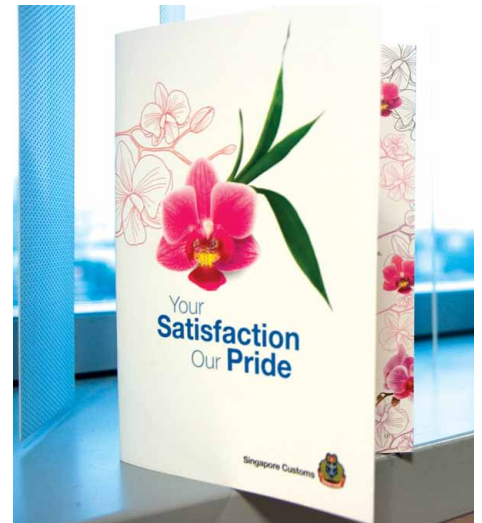
Aptly themed 'iLearn, iInnovate, iServe', the festival championed innovation and knowledge management as essential ingredients for service excellence within the organisation.

Elaborating on the chosen theme, Director-General of Customs Fong Yong Kian said at the festival's opening ceremony: "Within Singapore Customs, the knowledge that is learnt by the individual officer needs to be captured and stored. The knowledge then needs to be shared, so that in turn, more knowledge and ideas can be created. One idea sparks off another idea and soon, innovation is in the making."

With service at the heart of Singapore Customs' mission, the organisation

renewed its commitment to service excellence by launching its inaugural Singapore Customs Service Book and a revised Service Charter during the Joint Fest.

The Singapore Customs Service Book, titled 'Your Satisfaction, Our Pride' distils the essence of service excellence in the organisation and features Customs officers who have displayed utmost dedication in supporting customers and providing them with faster, better and more convenient services. The revised Service Charter was unveiled during a management visit to Changi Airport Terminal 3.



The inaugural Singapore Customs Service Book, featuring exemplary Customs officers who have displayed utmost dedication in serving their customers, was launched during the Joint Fest.

ON THE FRONTLINE

As part of the Joint Fest activities, Singapore Customs' senior management went on the ground to serve travellers at Singapore's Changi Airport Terminal 3. They guided tourists on the use of the electronic Tourist Refund Scheme kiosks, which simplifies the Goods and Services Tax (GST) refund process for departing tourists, as well as the self-service Tax Payment Kiosks for incoming tourists to pay duties and GST on goods they bring into Singapore.

This exercise allowed management to understand the real problems and issues travellers face, and interact with Customs officers on duty.

"Nothing beats serving the customer ourselves. Every customer is a human being. Smile, be courteous and confident about how we can help them," shared Director-General of Customs Fong Yong Kian of his experience.

Assistant Director-General (Corporate Services) Teo Siew Lan said: "It was a highly satisfying experience. You can tell if you have indeed served the traveller well from his acknowledgement and smile upon receipt of his passport and approval slip."

"Overall, I find the travellers' experience to be hassle-free. The new GST refund system is simple and easy to use. One of the tourists told me she is a repeat user of the kiosk, and can easily complete the transaction on her own," added Chief Information Officer Yeo Beng Huay.



(From Top) Director-General of Customs Fong Yong Kian, Assistant Director-General (Checkpoints) Mok Hei Chee and Acting Assistant Director-General (Policy & Planning) Sung Pik Wan took to the ground at Changi Airport Terminal 3 to help travellers with their GST refunds.

Singapore Customs Shines in Public Service Awards

Singapore Customs garnered top accolades at this year's Excellence in Public Service Awards. At the Awards ceremony held on 25 May 2012, its TradeFIRST framework bagged the award for best practice in regulation, while Customs officers Zahniar Binte Mohd Said and Charlie Chia Lee Yong were recognised for their dedicated service to the trading community.



The team that transformed Singapore Customs' trade facilitation approach with the TradeFIRST framework.

Singapore Customs was one of two public agencies awarded the Best Practice (Regulation) Award. The award recognises public agencies for their pro-business stance in the development of regulatory frameworks and practices, and encourages the adoption of "smart" regulatory practices underlined by a sound risk-management approach.

A game changer in customs-business partnership, TradeFIRST is Singapore Customs' one-stop trade facilitation system that fully integrates risk assessment and facilitation under a

single framework. TradeFIRST supports Singapore Customs' trade facilitation and compliance efforts by enabling the agency to assess a company holistically, based on a single set of assessment criteria applied across all Customs schemes. Thereafter, the company will be rated into one of the five bands under TradeFIRST, which determines the schemes and facilitation it can enjoy.

With this framework, Singapore Customs is also able to proactively partner traders in improving their systems and processes. By designating an account

manager to each company assessed under TradeFIRST, compliance outreach and facilitation measures are customised to the needs of the company. This integrated risk-management approach and partnership with the trade helps to raise the compliance and supply chain security standards of companies, resulting in reduced regulatory cost and greater facilitation for traders.

CUSTOMS SERVICE STARS

Singapore Customs Trade Officers Zahniar and Charlie were conferred the PS21 Star Service Award for their dedication and commitment to excellence in their service to the trading community. They share the secrets of their success.



“Providing quality service to all stakeholders means understanding issues from their perspective and ensuring that replies to them adequately address the issues they encounter. While I cannot always agree with their requests, I can still take the opportunity to educate them on the proper procedures and requirements to adopt.”

– Zahniar Binte Mohd Said



“Customers always come first, and even when they are difficult, I will always try to deliver services according to the 4Fs – fast, friendly, firm and fair. By understanding their issues holistically from their perspective, it is easier to adopt a flexible approach to manage their requests, so service delivery is not compromised.”

– Charlie Chia Lee Yong

TRAINING CALENDAR

Programme	Dates
<p>SC100 BASICS OF EVERY DECLARANT</p> <p>This three-day course provides trade declarants with an overview of customs procedures pertaining to the import and export of goods, the basic requirements for preparing TradeNet declarations, classification of goods, and the rules of origin.</p> <p>The course comprises three modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC101 Customs Procedures (2 days) • SC102 Classification and the Harmonised System (Half day) • SC103 Rules of Origin / Free Trade Agreements (Half day) <p>Participants may register for individual modules.</p>	<p>15 & 16 Aug 2012 (SC101 only)</p> <p>5 – 7 Sep 2012</p> <p>17 & 18 Sep 2012 (SC101 only)</p>
<p>SC200 STRATEGIC GOODS CONTROL PROGRAMME</p> <p>This one-day seminar provides an overview of Singapore’s strategic goods control system and its regulations, registration procedures and permit requirements for strategic goods transactions, as well as the essentials of an internal (export control) compliance programme.</p> <p>The seminar comprises two modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC201 Basics of Strategic Goods Control (Half day) • SC202 Essentials of Internal (Export Control Compliance Programme (Half day) <p>Participants may register for individual modules.</p>	<p>31 Aug 2012</p>
<p>TRADERS CLINICS</p> <p>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>22 & 23 Aug 2012</p> <p>26 & 27 Sep 2012</p>
<p>OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY-REGISTERED TRADERS</p> <p>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>18 Sep 2012</p>
<p>OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY-REGISTERED MANUFACTURERS</p> <p>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>16 Aug 2012</p>

Please note that dates are subject to change. For full programme and registration details, please refer to www.customsacademy.gov.sg



We make trade easy, fair and secure