



The APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures

Taking Customs Reform into the
New Millennium and Bringing
Benefits to Business



ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

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The 1999 “Blueprint” of the Activity of the APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures

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Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation member economies



This document contains information on progress towards implementing the SCCP Collective Action Plan and work programme. Originally published in October 1997, the SCCP blueprint document has not changed other than being updated. This years edition has been re-arranged and photos added to celebrate the new millennium. However, the SCCP stands by all commitments made in earlier editions that may not appear in this edition. The first anniversary status report and the original SCCP blueprint are provided on the SCCP Home Page at <http://www.sccp.org>.

The SCCP invites the business community to provide input to the SCCP through the Internet at info@sccp.org or by faxing/e-mailing any of the SCCP members listed at the back of this document.



Customs Modernisation – bringing benefits to business



Benefits to business

- Improved Customs clearance and inspection procedures generate faster, more certain and, ultimately, less costly trade transactions
- Certainty, ease and speed of clearance make transactions more compatible with “just-in-time” inventory practices and promote business competitiveness
- Computerisation of Customs procedures results in time and cost savings due to the reduced need to prepare, handle, store and deliver Customs documentation
- Improvements in communications, access to information and the transparency of Customs processes and appeals increase the level of certainty and fairness
- A good compliance track record will result in faster clearance and less intrusive verification techniques.

Importers will know the amount of duties and taxes owing as a result of the clear and consistent rules. More efficient clearance will produce time and cost savings and provide the certainty required to exploit modern business practices such as “just-in-time” inventory.

Exporters will benefit from having similar Customs rules and procedures apply across the entire APEC market, thus increasing market access opportunities, while reducing costs and complexity.

Investors will be encouraged to build new enterprises, knowing that offshore inputs and products will be cleared through Customs quickly.

Customs Brokers will have the opportunity to refocus their services from dealing with forms and complexity to using their expertise and knowledge to bring a new range of professional services to clients operating in an expanding and evolving trade market.

Carriers will benefit from faster service, lower costs and the ability to use their equipment to its utmost capacity rather than having it delayed at Customs.



Pledge of the APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures

The SCCP will strive to:

- Facilitate legitimate trade and investment in the APEC region
- Maintain our role in protecting the community
- Simplify and harmonise Customs procedures
- Improve the speed, accuracy and transparency of Customs transactions
- Establish levels of service to provide traders with certainty
- Promote the professionalism and integrity of Customs Administrations
- Encourage voluntary compliance in APEC member economies
- Consult regularly with the APEC business community to ensure our activities meet their needs
- Form strategic partnerships with interested APEC business representatives
- Provide members with the required technical assistance to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equity
- Tailor the pace of progress to the diverse needs and abilities of APEC member economies.

“We welcome the progress made by the Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP) in its twelve-point Collective Action Plan and multi-year technical co-operation programme to facilitate trade in the region”, and “... appreciate the SCCP’s contribution to the World Customs Organization (WCO) in making efforts to modernize and harmonize Customs procedures on a global basis”.

(Joint Ministerial Statement of the Sixth APEC Finance Ministers Meeting — Langkawi 15-16 May 1999)



Introduction

WELCOME TO THE SCCP'S BLUEPRINT on the eve of the 21st Century. Ever since 1994 the SCCP has been working towards achieving the harmonisation and simplification of Customs procedures in the Asia-Pacific region. Our efforts have supported the *Bogor Declaration* and the APEC Economic Leaders' aim of achieving free and open trade in the region by the year 2010 for industrialised economies and 2020 for non industrialised economies.

Much has been accomplished by the SCCP, as will unfold upon reading this booklet. This activity to remove costly impediments to trade continues into 2000 and will end only when the SCCP's Collective Action Plan is completed. The initiatives that are being taken will contribute to the improvement of overall market accessibility and economic growth for all APEC members.

The SCCP is also looking to technology, in particular the use of the Internet and World Wide Web to address the needs of the future, keeping in mind that modern Customs administrations must keep up with advances in electronic technologies and make use of these technologies to facilitate the harmonisation and simplification of Customs procedures.

The chance to look within ourselves is a topic that will likely accompany the SCCP into 2000. "Customs Integrity" is being considered for Collective Action Plan status at our meeting in Rotorua in August.

1999 has been a busy year. The year when we were joined by our Customs colleagues from Peru, Russia and Viet Nam as full members of APEC. A focus in previous years has been providing industry with the opportunity to become involved in the initiatives of the SCCP. This continued in February in Wellington when Customs participated in a Business Outreach event that brought together business people, academics and officials in the process of looking to the Asia-Pacific trading future. This event, and earlier Customs – Industry dialogues held more recently in the Philippines, Canada and Malaysia, have sought to ensure that the SCCP's work programmes continue to reflect the changing needs of business.

“

The border of the future will be a much less 'physical' place, and its management will require new skills and thinking says New Zealand's Comptroller of Customs Graeme Ludlow. ”



The last few years – building on past success

SINCE its early days, APEC has progressed through the efforts of a number of committees, sub-committees and working groups. Among these is the Customs Procedures Working Group which, in 1994, became the Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP), reporting to the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI). The sub-committee's mandate is to facilitate trade by simplifying and harmonising Customs procedures.

Under the chairmanship of Japan in 1995 and the Republic of the Philippines in 1996, the sub-committee made great advances, resulting in some notable achievements. During Japan's year, members focused on FACTS – facilitation, accountability, consistency, transparency, and simplification, reaching a consensus on the SCCP Action Program in Sapporo in June 1995. Members agreed on a vision statement, a guiding framework and principles, a collective action plan (CAP), individual action plans, and statements on technical assistance.

In 1996, the SCCP developed a comprehensive framework for technical assistance and human resource development, providing a foundation for implementation of the collective action plan. Co-ordinators were identified for each of the nine CAP initiatives. Canada and Japan continue to be lead shepherds responsible for the guidance and direction of the APEC technical assistance framework. In 1997, Canada co-hosted a customs-industry symposium and helped expand the CAP work programme from nine to twelve initiatives.

With the SCCP's guiding principles in place and the CAP work programme identified the focus for Malaysia in 1998 was on meeting commitments made, soliciting the expertise and assistance of business in forging strategic partnerships and making sure that the SCCP's timetable remained on course. Peru, Russia and Viet Nam were welcomed as members. 1999 has been more of the same in the sense of maintaining the Collective Action Plan technical assistance at a peak rate of activity.

SCCP Guiding Principles FACTS

(February 1995, Fukuoka, Japan)

Facilitation: While ensuring proper enforcement of Customs laws and regulations, APEC Customs Administrations should strive to improve facilitation of Customs clearance procedures.

Accountability: Customs Administrations should be accountable for their actions through a transparent and easily accessible process of administration and/or judicial review.

Consistency: Customs laws, regulations, administrative guidelines and procedures should be applied in a uniform manner within each economy.

Transparency: Customs laws, regulations, administrative guidelines and procedures should be made publicly available in a prompt and easily accessible manner.

Simplification: Customs laws, regulations, administrative guidelines and procedures should be simplified to the extent possible so that Customs clearance can proceed without undue burdens.



How the SCCP works

WE meet usually when senior officials (SOM) meet. For the SCCP this has meant three meetings each year although this year the meetings were cut short to two for reason of a compressed APEC year in New Zealand because of national elections.

An indication of the direction of our work is given on the preceding page. Central to the activity is the 12 point Collective Action Plan. Mention of these plans will appear later in this Blueprint as progress to date against each is measured. Progress is reported to each meeting.

Additionally, we hear from Customs administrations that have introduced change resulting from this Collective Action Plan assistance and other change that is occurring as Customs modernises in the APEC region. Presentations and debate on issues before the SCCP go to make up the agenda of a typical meeting.



Major achievements and deliverables in 1999

THE implementation of the 12 point action plan is a major undertaking and a prime focus of the SCCP's activities. Member economies, have developed multi year technical assistance frameworks for each initiative. To date all of the initiatives have received funding support from the Trade and Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation (TILF) Special Account, funded by Japan. The objectives and expected outputs of each initiative are summarised in Table 1 while Table 2 indicates the year by which individual SCCP members have committed to full or partial implementation of each initiative. Detailed status reports can be viewed on the SCCP website at www.sccp.org.

1. Harmonisation of Tariff Structure with the HS Convention

Japan is the co-ordinator for this project and, in collaboration with other interested donor economies, is providing technical assistance to APEC member economies requesting it. There are five recipient economies: Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Philippines and Viet Nam.

Assistance for this project is being delivered through a phased approach and covers a wide range of issues and activities including workshops, advisory missions/dispatch of experts and technical advice to Customs central laboratories.

An overview workshop was held in Manila, the Republic of the Philippines in August 1998. The first advisory mission was conducted to PNG in June 1999 and one or two advisory missions are expected to be undertaken later this year.

2. Transparency of Customs Procedures, including Information on Customs Laws, Regulations, Administrative Guidelines, Procedures and Rulings

Singapore and Hong Kong, China are the co-ordinators for this project. Singapore has compiled a handbook using input provided by SCCP members on their "best practices" in disseminating Customs information to the public. This publication is available to the public on the SCCP website at www.sccp.org/frames-library.htm. Hong Kong, China has produced a video introducing the current dissemination methods of the Hong Kong, China Customs Administration. The co-ordinators are assessing the need for revisions to the "best practices" handbook, based on additional input provided by SCCP members in 1998. A survey has been conducted by Singapore and Hong Kong, China in 1998 and 1999 respectively to seek the business sector's views on the information dissemination instruments used by the two economies. Other member economies are encouraged to conduct a survey to seek their business sector's views on the information dissemination instruments used by them.

3. Simplification and Harmonisation on the Basis of the Kyoto Convention

New Zealand and Japan are the co-ordinators of this project. Assistance has awaited the revision of the Kyoto Convention by the World Customs Organisation, approval of which is expected in June 1999. However, an Overview Seminar was held in Suzhou, People's Republic of China to acquaint members of the ongoing revisions as they appeared at that time. 2000 will see the commencement of this assistance in earnest, likely with a seminar for policy officers being held in New Zealand early in 2000.





4. Adoption and Support for the UN/EDIFACT

Australia and the Republic of the Philippines are the co-ordinators for this CAP initiative, which directly supports the adoption of the UN electronic messaging format for automated systems, the United Nations/Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport.

Ongoing training is continuing to address issues and needs identified in the initial analysis. Two pilot projects have been established in Brunei and Indonesia providing “on the job” development training for these economies. It is also proposed to establish a “pilot” project in Viet Nam addressing local IT requirements.

The UN/EDIFACT technical assistance project will conclude at the end of 1999.

5. Adoption of the Principles of the WTO Valuation Agreement

Canada and the United States are the co-ordinators for this project, and together with Australia and New Zealand, are providing technical assistance to SCCP members requesting it. Recipient economies include Brunei Darussalam, Chile, the People’s Republic of China, Peru, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The technical assistance programme is being delivered in a phased approach, covering a wide range of issues and activities including: the legislative framework; creating the organisation; clearance and verification procedures; undervaluation; and training needs.

Following Needs Analysis Workshops conducted in all 10 original recipient economies in 1997, technical assistance began in March and April 1998 with the delivery of the WCO’s valuation course to Brunei Darussalam and Thailand. Specific valuation training modules were developed and designed, and delivery of this technical assistance began in the first quarter of 1999.

6. Adoption of the Principles of the WTO Intellectual Property (TRIPS) Agreement

The United States is the co-ordinator for this CAP initiative. Through a co-ordinated effort involving Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Japan, technical assistance is being provided to economies requesting it in order to implement the border enforcement aspects of the TRIPS Agreement. These technical assistance missions discuss Customs legal authority, administrative framework and operational procedures in the implementation of the TRIPS Agreement.

Technical assistance missions are on-going. To date the following missions have been completed: Chile (US & NZ in October 1998), Philippines (US & Japan in January 1999), Thailand (US & Canada in January 1999), Papua New Guinea (US in June 1999). Missions are scheduled for Indonesia (US & Canada in June 1999), Peru in September 1999, China in November 1999 and both Viet Nam and Russia in 1999.

Phases 1 and 2 of this CAP have been completed. Those phases consisted of the planning and presentation of a major IPR conference that was held in Tokyo in October 1997. The conference included two days of individual economy assessments to tailor the technical assistance to individual economy needs.



7. Introduction of Clear Appeals Provision

Canada and Republic of the Philippines were the co-ordinators for this project and are providing technical assistance to SCCP members requesting it. There are five participating economies: Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Papua New Guinea; the People's Republic of China; and the Republic of the Philippines.

A detailed needs analysis discussion paper was sent to participants in March 1998, to determine each economy's requirements pertaining to such areas as legislative framework, organisational structure, client services delivery, risk management and the decision-making process. Discussions held in June 1998 with each participating economy focused on the principles of a transparent appeals system. A similar approach will be taken with Russia, Viet Nam and Peru.

8. Introduction of an Advance Classification Ruling System

New Zealand and the Republic of Korea are the co-ordinators of this project and are providing technical assistance to SCCP members requesting it, with the assistance of other donor members. Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Philippines and Chinese Taipei have requested technical assistance. Brunei Darussalam has requested train-the-trainers assistance. Technical assistance was provided to the Republic of the Philippines in 1997 and to Chinese Taipei in June 1999. PNG will receive assistance later in 1999.

9. Provisions for Temporary Importation [etc]

Chinese Taipei and the United States, as the co-ordinators of this project, have planned a number of activities to meet the goals of the SCCP in this Collective Action Plan item.

In addition to five APEC economies already targeted for this assistance: Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Republic of the Philippines, two new APEC designate-members (Peru and Viet Nam) have requested assistance under this program.

Chinese Taipei agreed to host an Overview Seminar in September 1998 but both the US and Chinese Taipei decided to reschedule the project until March 1999 and to convert it to a Regional Advisory Missions. The first mission took place in Chinese Taipei during the week of March 15, 1999 for participants from Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Australia. This was followed immediately by an Advisory Mission to the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong, China during the week of March 22, 1999. A separate Advisory Mission will be held later in 1999 in Mexico for Chile and Peru.

The relevant expertise for private sector responsibilities in the A.T.A. Carnet System resides within the International Bureau of Chambers of Commerce (IBCC), which plays a key role in the operation of the A.T.A. Carnet System. It is therefore appropriate that the IBCC co-ordinate guidance and training of the Chambers or other guaranteeing organisations in each implementing economy.

A series of three workshops to prepare a package of materials on carnets for both instructors and participants were held at US Customs Headquarters in late 1998 and early 1999. Two technical experts from Canada joined their US counterparts, along with representatives from the US Council for International Business. The workshops proved to be useful in compiling materials and information about carnets.



10. Harmonised APEC Data Elements and APEC Customs Import Procedures

Canada and Australia are the co-ordinators of this project. The aim of the project is to develop a comprehensive import data set directory supported in UN/EDIFACT which includes a simplified "core set" of data elements largely derived from commercially available data. In addition, the project will produce information and comparison charts for each economy to use to make informed decisions about future harmonisation.

The data elements being identified would satisfy the standard data requirements of the majority of APEC trade transactions and so facilitate the exchange of information, provide a foundation for common forms and electronic commerce and allow economies to make informed decisions with respect to harmonisation with other initiatives such as the G7 data element harmonisation drive.

The emphasis of other international harmonisation efforts has been on the identification of redundant or outdated data elements and processes and development of common definitions and codes for the remaining data elements. The G7 countries have made considerable advances with respect to data element harmonisation. The project will build on the G7 work and develop comparison charts for each economy vis-a-vis the G7 data sets, definitions and codes being proposed.

All economies have been contacted but some are not ready to invest the time and resources to provide all the detailed information necessary to allow the project to identify commonalities and differences. For those economies which have provided detailed information, comparison charts with other economies and with the G7 data sets will be produced, allowing these economies to make informed decisions with respect to further harmonisation. For other economies, information will be provided but the individual economy would have to produce its own comparisons.

The International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations has agreed to assist by providing information on international trade which IFCBA members have on file.





11. Risk Management Techniques

Australia and the United States are the co-ordinators for this project and are providing technical assistance to requesting SCCP members. Australia is working in partnership with the Air Express Courier industry to implement a risk management approach in APEC Customs administrations.

Recipient economies include Brunei Darussalam, Chile, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, China; Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, The Republic of the Philippines, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Viet Nam.

During the fourth quarter of 1998, the first and second quarters of 1999, study missions visited the People's Republic of China, the Philippines and Indonesia to assess management commitment, to advise on development of a supporting infrastructure, to develop priorities, and to define timelines for implementation. Further study missions to the remaining participating economies will be undertaken in 1999 and 2000.

Feedback to date from participating economies has been very positive, with many expressing the view that implementation of risk management will lead to significant organisational improvement in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.

12. Guidelines for Express Consignments Clearance

The People's Republic of China and the United States are the co-ordinators for this project being carried out through an active partnership with the International Express Carriers Conference (IECC) and the Conference of Asia-Pacific Express Carriers (CAPEC). Canada and Australia are also providing assistance.

Seven specific principles have been identified by members including establishment of *de minimis*, facilitative clearance procedures for low-value shipments; risk assessment; and hours of operation suited to business needs. Automated procedures are preferred where possible.

In 1998, assessment missions for the purpose of establishing short term schedules for implementation were completed for Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines and Chinese Taipei. In addition, a questionnaire was prepared to determine specific technical assistance needs for the recipient economies. Phase 1 includes development of a best practices handbook which could be uploaded to the SCCP website.

For economies not receiving an assessment mission, a seminar which provides an overview of the WCO Guidelines is being planned. China is scheduled to organise this event to take place in Asia in late 1999. In addition, assessment missions to Viet Nam, Peru, Russia and Indonesia are scheduled for the northern autumn (fall), 1999.

As well as the CAP technical assistance programmes, the SCCP has a number of ongoing projects which support trade facilitation in the region. These include the following major initiatives:

Electronic Commerce

In 1998 electronic commerce was again a priority for APEC, with a focus on the paperless trading objectives contained within the Ministers' Blueprint for Action on Electronic Commerce. Within the SCCP, a SCCP Virtual Customs Group has been established under the leadership of Australia, for members to share ideas and experiences, and to develop common approaches to electronic commerce as it pertains to Customs.

During 1998, this working group developed a survey of members' experiences with electronic commerce resulting in the production of a compendium on electronic commerce. The SCCP is continuing to examine how electronic commerce, and the use of appropriate technology, can improve and simplify Customs procedures, thereby benefiting business and travellers with reduced costs, improved accuracy and speed of transactions, and greater standardisation where possible.

Facilitation of Business and Traveller Mobility

One of ABAC's priorities related to Customs, as indicated in the 1996 ABAC Report to Ministers, is the easing of cross-border flows by facilitating the movement of goods, services, people and technology in the region. Several SCCP members have undertaken a number of projects designed to facilitate the movement of travellers.

The Advance Passenger Clearance project and the APEC Business Travel Card project are successful pilot projects. These projects are designed to assist entry into participating economies and improve Customs clearance procedures for frequent travellers.

SCCP Website

The SCCP has established an Internet website, www.sccp.org, to relay status reports on SCCP CAP items to members and the business community, and to communicate plans and accomplishments, upcoming events and schedule of meetings. The website is currently managed by Canada on behalf of the SCCP. The web has been updated to reflect 1999 achievements.

The main objective of maintaining this website is to reinforce the SCCP's commitment to transparency and accessibility for business and industry.

In response to comments received from the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) at the second meeting of the SCCP, held in June 1998 in Kuching, Sarawak, the website has been enhanced by providing the business community with access to the APEC Tariff Database and Compendium on Rules of Origin through hyperlinks to the APEC Secretariat's website. The SCCP website also contains a library of SCCP published documents and links to other related APEC sites.

The SCCP is interested in making this site as useful to business and industry as possible, as a tool for accessing information on Customs procedures in APEC economies. Comments from business on improving the site are encouraged, and may be forwarded through any of SCCP members listed at the back of this document, or by contacting the SCCP through its email address info@sccp.org.



Customs – industry partnerships in trade facilitation

APEC recognises that trade facilitation and liberalisation can be achieved only with the commitment of governments and the co-operation of industry. The SCCP is open to co-operating with business to develop a modernised Customs framework which accords with the needs of business.

To this end, the SCCP developed draft guidelines governing the involvement of business in the SCCP Collective Action Plans and other initiatives. These guidelines, which were published as an Appendix to the 1997 Blueprint document, were endorsed by Ministers in Vancouver.

To date, several successful partnerships with business have been formed. Industry has provided the SCCP with valuable technical expertise and financial assistance with some CAP projects, as well as offers of assistance in the form of goods such as computers.

In managing the twelve point CAP, the SCCP is seeking, on an ongoing basis, to optimise the use of limited APEC and business resources through efficiency measures and to measure the progress of the SCCP initiatives against the established CAP objectives. This is needed to ensure that CAP implementation continues to meet the expectations of SCCP members and industry and that assistance from business is managed responsibly.

The SCCP is striving to provide members with greater access to industry, and to inform business about SCCP initiatives. Because business has a stake in the outcomes of the SCCP CAP, it is important for business to participate in its implementation.

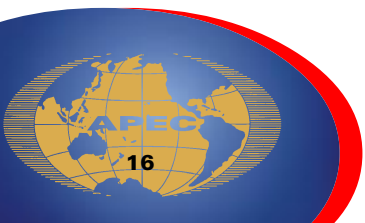
Members are seeking to further develop channels of communication with industry, such as through the SCCP website and the APEC Customs-Industry Dialogue, so that industry can take full advantage of, or contribute to, the SCCP's work programme.

During 1999, members have been working together on these management issues under the leadership of the New Zealand Chair.

International linkages and co-operation

CURRENTLY, the SCCP is working closely with the World Customs Organisation (WCO) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on the implementation of various international agreements. These include the WCO Kyoto and Harmonised System Conventions and the protocols for the WCO Rules of Origin, as well as the WTO 'TRIPS' and Valuation Agreements.

The technical assistance programmes will continue to support bilateral and multilateral initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, and the SCCP is working towards establishing formal communications linkages with other international fora.



Measuring progress and programme evaluation

WITH the technical assistance programmes well underway for CAP initiatives, and work on other pilot projects progressing well, it had become apparent that for continued success, and the support of industry, the SCCP's focus in 1998 would have to shift from a planning perspective toward ensuring implementation.

The SCCP has agreed that CAP co-ordinators will present a report, at the first SCCP meeting of each year, on progress to date in providing technical assistance. The co-ordinators will consult with the implementing economies, and prepare progress reports for the two BMC Meetings every year, highlighting any gaps, inconsistencies, or difficulties so that the necessary adjustments may be made to the CAP programmes in a timely manner.

Evaluation reports are required by the APEC Budget Management Committee (BMC) for all completed technical assistance projects. BMC will consider these evaluation reports in deciding whether to approve continued funding. These evaluation reports will also assist SCCP CAP co-ordinators in managing the effectiveness of the technical assistance projects, and making adjustments in the whole technical assistance program where necessary.

The evaluation reports will help CAP co-ordinators to ensure that the technical assistance activities are well designed, taking into account the needs of individual APEC economies, and will extend economies an opportunity to provide feedback on the technical assistance they have received.



Conclusion

AS APEC is almost at the door of the new millennium, the SCCP will be facing new challenges, developing new programmes, and working closely with the business and traveller communities to ensure the success of SCCP initiatives in the future.

To guarantee the success of the SCCP in achieving the ultimate goals of harmonisation and simplification of Customs procedures within APEC, the SCCP looks to business to provide it and Customs administrations in the region with the benefit of their experience. The result will be development of a Customs administration framework in the region which can only benefit both business and government.



Fax, telephone & e-mail list of "SCCP" contacts As of 18 June, 1999 (*) Updated

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Table 1: SCCP collective action plan objectives and expected outputs

OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS
<p>1. Harmonization of Tariff Structure with the HS Convention To ensure consistency of application, certainty and a level playing field for business through the HS Convention, the standard international harmonized system for the classification of goods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The accurate, consistent and uniform application of the HS Convention by all APEC member economies.
<p>2. Public Availability of Information on Customs Laws, Regulations, Administrative Guidelines and Rulings provided to the business sector on an ongoing basis To ensure traders have access to all the pertinent information for business decisions through the provision of accurate, consistent and user-friendly information to business on an ongoing basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve transparency of APEC Customs Administrations. To enhance the APEC Customs Administrations' competency in the dissemination of information on customs laws, regulations, procedures, rulings and guidelines.
<p>3. Simplification and Harmonization on the Basis of the Kyoto Convention To improve efficiency in customs clearance and the delivery of goods in order to benefit importers, exporters and manufacturers through simplified customs procedures and best practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplified and standardized customs procedures implemented by all APEC members.
<p>4. Adoption and Support for the UN/EDIFACT To use the standard UN electronic messaging format for automated systems, the United Nations/Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport, to promote an electronic highway for business.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation by member administrations of UN/EDIFACT international electronic messaging standards as the basis for their computerization programmes.
<p>5. Adoption of the Principles of the WTO Valuation Agreement To facilitate administration of the World Trade Organization's Valuation Agreement on standard procedures for valuing goods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of the Agreement by members, in a timely and orderly manner, to meet members' international obligations under the Agreement.
<p>6. Adoption of the Principles of the WTO Intellectual Property (TRIPS) Agreement To implement border enforcement procedures for protecting intellectual property rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic programme designed and developed to implement border endorsement of the Agreement by members, in a timely and orderly manner, to meet international obligations under the Agreement.
<p>7. Introduction of Clear Appeals Provision To provide business with an opportunity to challenge potentially erroneous or inequitable Customs decisions through mechanisms for transparent, independent and timely appeals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Customs appeal mechanisms by all members. The enhanced transparency and effectiveness of the appeals process and client service initiatives within APEC customs administrations.
<p>8. Introduction of an Advance Classification Ruling System To establish simplified procedures for providing classification information prior to importation, thus bringing certainty and predictability to international trading and helping traders to make sound business decisions based on legally binding advice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of simplified procedures for an advance classification ruling system to the customs procedures of each APEC economy, by the year 2000.
<p>9. Provisions for Temporary Importation, e.g., acceding to the A.T.A. Carnet Convention or the Istanbul Convention To help business move goods such as commercial samples, professional equipment, tools of trade and exhibition material across borders with a high degree of certainty as to how these goods will be treated by Customs by having standard procedures for admitting goods on a temporary basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of the terms of the A.T.A. Carnet and Istanbul Conventions. The provision of a common import/export document for the temporary importation of goods. An internationally accepted security for goods entitled to temporary admission without payment of duties and taxes.
<p>10. Harmonized APEC Data Elements To develop a comprehensive directory supported in UN/EDIFACT which includes a simplified "core set" of data elements, largely derived from commercially available data, that would satisfy the standard data requirements of the majority of APEC trade transactions and so facilitate the exchange of information and provide a foundation for common forms and electronic commerce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a set of trade data elements required for ordinary goods for home consumption. The development of a set of best practices guidelines for the processing and clearance associated with the movement of goods until the goods are no longer under any customs controls.
<p>11. Risk Management Techniques To focus Customs enforcement efforts on high-risk goods and travellers and facilitate the movement of low-risk shipments, through a flexible approach tailored to each APEC economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of a systematic risk management approach will allow APEC Customs administrations to facilitate legitimate trade and travel while maintaining control.
<p>12. Guidelines on Express Consignments Clearance To implement principles contained in the WCO Guidelines on Express Consignment Clearance, the international standard procedures for clearance of express goods, working in partnership with express industry associations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timely implementation of the international standard for customs clearance of express shipments. Trade facilitation while maintaining essential customs control responsibilities.



Table 2: SCCP collective action plan implementation schedule¹

	HS Convention	Public Availability of Information ☺	Kyoto Convention	UN/EDIFACT	WTO Valuation Agreement	TRIPS	Clear Appeal Provisions	Advance Classification Ruling System	Temporary Importations	Common Data Elements	Risk Management	Express Consignments Clearance
Plan Co-ordinators	Japan	HK, China Singapore	New Zealand Japan	Australia Philippines	Canada USA	USA	Canada Philippines	New Zealand Korea	USA Chinese	Canada Australia	Australia USA	USA China
Target Dates	1996	1998	1998*	1999	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	2002	2000
Australia	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓
Brunei	✓	✓	*	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	2002	2002
Canada	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓
Chile	✓	✓	*	✓	2000	2000	✓	✓	2000	1999	✓	✓
China	✓	✓	✓	1999	+	✓	✓	1999	✓	1999	2002	2000
HK,China	✓	✓	*	✓	N/A	✓	✓	N/A	✓	1999	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓	✓	*	✓	2000	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	✓
Japan	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓
Korea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000
Malaysia	✓	✓	*	✓	2000	2000	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000
Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	1999	2002	2000
NewZealand	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000
PNG	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	2002	2000
Philippines	✓	✓	*	1999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000
Singapore	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	✓	✓
Chinese Taipei	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	2000	2000	1999	2002	2000
Peru	✓	✓	✓	1999	2000	2000	✓	✓	2000	1999	2002	2000
Thailand	✓	✓	*	✓	2000	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000
United States	✓	✓	✓	1998	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1999	2002	2000

Legend

- ✓ Implemented
- ☺ Improving public availability of information is an on-going process
- +
- * Actual implementation date subject to progress in the WCO
- N/A Not applicable

¹ Russia and Viet Nam are to be included in the CAP implementation schedule.

For each CAP item, the level of implementation will vary among Customs Administrations. For the most recent additions to the CAP (common data elements, risk management and express consignments clearance), although the implementation date is shown as the target date, some economies have already implemented the item in full or in part. All member economies will have implemented the CAP item to varying degrees by the target date.



List of acronyms

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation
ABAC	APEC Business Advisory Council
ACID	APEC Custom-Industry Dialogue
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
A.T.A. Carnet	Admission Temporaire – Temporary Admission Carnet Convention
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BMC	Budget and Administrative Committee
CAP	Collective Action Plan
CTI	Committee on Trade and Investment
CAPEC	Conference of Asia-Pacific Express Carriers
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
FACTS	Facilitation, Accountability, Consistency, Transparency, Simplification
G7	Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United States ²
HS	Harmonised System of Tariff Classification
IATA	International Air Transport Association
IBCC	International Bureau of Chambers of Commerce
IECC	International Express Carriers Conference
IFCBA	International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
N/A	Not applicable
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PECC	Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
SCCP	Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures
SOM	Senior Officials or Senior Officials' Meeting
TBD	To be determined
TILF	Trade and Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation
TRIPS	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UN/EDIFACT	UN Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport
WCO	World Customs Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

² the G8 includes Russia





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