

OCO PACER PLUS PROJECT

Supporting customs administrations to implement HS 2017

The OCO has completed the in-country work to assist members with the transposition work from their current HS version to the HS 2017. As part of this work, the OCO had also purchased the HS 2017 books for the transposition work at national level.

Todate, seven of the nine signatory countries have adopted HS 2017.



Launch of the PACHS 17

In partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, OCO launched the Pacific Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System 2017 (PACHS 17) on 11th June, 2018.

The PACHS17 is a multipurpose goods nomenclature that forms the basis for Customs Tariffs and International Merchandise Trade Statistics. The main objective of the PACHS17 is to establish uniformity in the classification of goods amongst members. PACHS17 has enabled all OCO members that are at different levels of implementing HS17 adopt a common benchmark and better reflect goods exported and imported by the Pacific region using a standardized system of names and



Technical Guide on Transposition of Tariff Schedule and PSR

The development work on the formulation of Guidelines for the transposition of the Tariff Reduction Schedules and Rules of Origin Product Specific Rules (PSR) from HS 2012 and HS 2017 is now underway.

The Guidelines that will provide some general principles of the transposition will be discussed with members in a Regional Workshop (January 2019) and thereafter members can use to effectively manage their respective HS transposition process consistent with Article 17 (Amendments to the Harmonized System) of Chapter 2 (Trade in Goods)

Strengthening Legislative Capacity

The legislative gap assessments was completed for all nine countries and the Gap Analysis was consolidated with the Chapman Tripp Reports for the signatory countries. In October, OCO has completed engagement of two legal consultants to undertake legislative work.

The legislative work will include review of Customs legislations and procedures to enable Customs administration to implement PACER plus obligations including the Rules of Origin and customs procedures. The legislative work will involve two country visits:

- ◆ One week in-country visit to review the existing Customs legal and regulatory rules and procedures.
- ◆ When drafting is completed, consultants will conduct a national Workshop to disseminate

Customs Officers Capacity Building on PACER Plus and Customs Matters

Commencing in August, 2018, the OCO is undertaking National HS Training for the 9 member countries. During the HS 2017 transposition work, it was assessed that members needed further training on HS classification following adoption of the HS 2017.

The Workshop was convened for both Customs Officers and Stakeholders with the objective to provide members with the necessary knowledge and tools to correctly apply HS 2017. The involvement of the Stakeholders in particular the Customs Brokers is imperative given that for the majority of the members, the import-export clearances is on the basis of *self-assessment* hence the responsibility to correctly classify goods rests on the brokers, agents and importers/exporters. The capacity building for the brokers/stakeholders is equally important to ensure correct application of HS 2017.

The Training was completed in seven countries and a total of 111 Customs Brokers/Stakeholders across seven countries have been trained. The training for the remaining two countries, Vanuatu and Niue is scheduled to be completed before the end of the year.

PACER Plus Rules of Origin Train the Trainers

The first phase of the ROO Training program, the TTT Core Workshop was held from 23-27 July, 2018 in Nadi, Fiji. 18 Customs Officials from eleven member countries took part. All of the PACER Plus signatories were represented. The aim of the TTT Core Workshop was to promote the knowledge of how to effectively educate others and develop the training technique skills that a trainer will require to achieve this. The TTT Workshops was facilitated by the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies (CCES).



Following the TTT Workshop, 18 Customs Officers undertook an obligatory online course on ROO between the months of August-September 2018. On 8-12 October, 2018, the participants attended Specialized PACER Plus ROO TTT Course in Canberra, Australia facilitated by CCES. During this workshop, the participants specifically discussed the PACER Plus ROO and included the assessment of participants to determine their qualification as OCO-accredited trainers.

With the successful completion of the courses, the next steps for accreditation as “OCO Trainers”, participants will be assessed delivering a Rule of Origin workshop at the national level.

The completion of this Activity ensures that the Trainers are able to use the training modules to conduct ROO training both to customs and to the stakeholders. The education to the importers/exporters enables them to utilize the Agreement and benefit from opportunities provided under PACER Plus.



PC Trade Assessment

The PC Trade Assessment is now complete with the submission of the Assessment Report together with the Outcome of the PCT Validation Workshop Members to MFAT. Five of the OCO members, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Tuvalu and Federated State of Micronesia use PC Trade as their Customs system.

The OCO continues to be part of the ongoing discussions on IT solutions for members as it relates to the implementation of their obligations under the PACER Plus Agreement.

Upcoming Events

Date	Activity	Location
November, 2018		
5-9	National HS Workshop	Samoa
12-16	National HS Workshop	Vanuatu
19-20	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Vanuatu
22-23	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Solomon Islands
	Legal Review of Customs legislation – Tonga, Kiribati, Nauru	
December, 2018		
3-7	National HS Workshop	Niue
6-7	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Samoa
10-11	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Tonga
12-14	National Workshop – Draft Legislation	Tonga
January, 2019		
7-14	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Solomon Islands
21-25	Regional Workshop on Transposition of Tariff Schedule	Tonga
28-1 Feb	National Workshop – Draft Legislation	Nauru
February, 2019		
4-8	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Cook Islands
4-5	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Cook Islands
6-7	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Niue
11-15	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Vanuatu
12-13	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Kiribati
18-19	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Nauru
26-27	PACER Plus ROO Workshop	Tuvalu
March, 2019		
4-8	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Niue
11-15	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Tuvalu
25-29	Legal Review of Customs legislation	Samoa

***The Legislative work are tentative and progressively been confirmed with members*

Project is supported with financial assistance:



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



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