



JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

Vision: To be recognized as a world class regional Customs Organization that collaborates with regional and global partners to deliver high quality services and sustainable solutions to Member Administrations

OCEANIA CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION NEWSLETTER

FOREWORD



Dear Readers,

It has been over six months since I took up the position as Head of OCO Secretariat and the Organisation as a whole has undergone some significant changes during this period. Notwithstanding the changes, what's caught my attention is the vast range of capacity building activities that we provide and the value of the partnership we have with regional and international organisations to enable effective delivery of services to

our members. Herein is the purpose of this e-newsletter.

I am pleased introduce the redesigned version of the OCO new publication, the quarterly e-newsletter launched to strengthen the connection and facilitate the communication between the Secretariat and members and our partners, The contents of the e-Newsletter mainly includes information updates of activities undertaken by the Secretariat, announcement and notification of upcoming events.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. Do let us know if there are any particular subjects you would like to see covered in future newsletter, not to mention what you, as a member or partner would like to hear from OCO.

Richard Brenan
Head of Secretariat

02 OUR ACTIVITIES

Our activities for the period July to December 2019



07 MEET THE TEAM

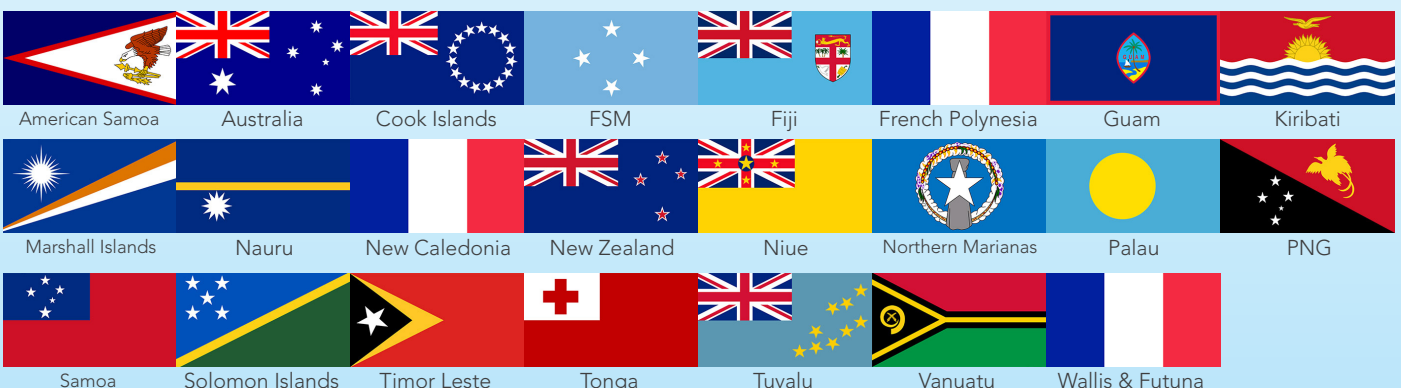
Meet your team from the Secretariat



10 UPCOMING EVENTS

Some of our upcoming events

OUR MEMBERS





PACER Plus in-Country Work - Tuvalu

The training was conducted to build stakeholders awareness and understanding of the PACER Plus Rules of Origin



Pacific Sub-Regional Cash Courier Workshop, July 2019, Rarotonga, Cook Islands

OCO participated in a Pacific sub-regional cash courier workshop facilitated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), NZ Customs Service, NZ Police Service with coordination support from the APG and hosted by the Government of the Cook Islands.



Pacer Plus Transparency Provision Workshop and ASYCUDA World Study Tour, Vanuatu

The workshop assisted PACER Plus signatories understand their obligations on the transparency provisions through the, availability of information, clear contact point for private sector and also the transparent application of the PACER plus provisions on customs laws and regulations.

The Automation visit allowed participants to get details of Vanuatu's experience about customs automation, system development process, IT-related issues, and project and change management. The participants also undertook visit to the Customs Wharf Area and Airport to view the system in operation. The participants were impressed with the capability that the ASYCUDA system offers.



JULY 2019



Pacific Fusion Centre Reference Group Meeting, Canberra, Australia

OCO participated in the Inaugural Reference Group Meeting of the Pacific Fusion Centre. The Objective of this meeting was to discuss the findings of the feasibility study. The Reference Group will play a key role in guiding the design and establishment of the Centre until governance arrangements are agreed by the region.

AUGUST 2019



Pacer Plus Legislation National Consultation, ROO workshop and Transposition of Tariff Schedules consultation - Niue, Tonga, and Solomon Islands

The OCO with financial support under the PACER Plus Project Readiness Package co-facilitated the PACER Plus ROO Workshops in Niue, Tonga and Solomon Islands. The objective of the workshop(s) was to deepen the knowledge and enhance customs capacity on the implementation of PACER Plus ROO.



PACHS Review Meeting, 16-20 September Nadi

The OCO Secretariat organized the Pacific Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (PACHS) Review Meeting on 16-17 September, 2019 in Nadi, Fiji.

The Meeting was attended by 19 Customs Officials representing 12 Customs Administrations of the OCO (CNMI, Cooks Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). Also present were experts from the Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

The participants together with the experts formulated the regional and national action plans to ensure that OCO undertake the timely amendment to the PACHS and members complete the migration to HS2022 by the date of its entry into force.

The participants also took part in a 3-day refresher training on HS classification facilitated by Mr. Bill Raikuna, Regional Customs Expert from 18-20 September, 2019.



Asia Regional Workshop on Enforcement Against Trade in Counterfeit Goods , Bangkok , Thailand

OCO participated in the Asia Regional Workshop on Enforcement against Trade in Counterfeit Goods, which was co-organized by USPTO, Department of Justice, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Homeland Security, EUIPO, and the ASEAN Secretariat.



PACER Plus ROO Workshop - Samoa

The training was conducted to build stakeholders awareness and understanding of the PACER Plus Rules of Origin

OCTOBER 2019



PACER Plus Trade Officials Meeting- Port Vila, Vanuatu

OCO was represented at the PACER Plus Trade Officials meeting and provided presentation the OCO PACER Project and its activities and implementation and a joint presentation with UNCTAD on Customs Transparency provisions.



Subcommittee on Regional Security

The Head of Secretariat, Mr. Richard Brennan and the Operations Manager, Mrs. Irma Daphney Stone represented the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) in the Forum Regional Security Reference Group Meeting as well as Observers in the Forum Officials Regional Security Meeting in Suva hosted by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

DECEMBER 2019



Change Management and Gender Equality Workshop

In partnership with the Australian Border Force (ABF), SPC, Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) Secretariat, World Customs Organisation (WCO) and World Bank Group (WBG), the OCO convened the Workshop attended by 23 senior management staff of which 48% were female participants.

The OCO Secretariat and participants have committed to further promoting gender and equality at the national level having made a number of recommendations accordingly. As a region, in coordination with OCO and relevant partners, participants have also agreed to use the International Women's Day in March 2020 to organize activities and raise awareness of gender equality in customs across all of the OCO members.





Ionics Briefing and Training

OCO organised a training on dangerous substances trafficked in the region and use of practical INCB intelligence exchange systems during a 2-day event hosted at OCO Headquarters in Suva, Fiji. INCB led sessions on awareness raising, safe handling and interdiction, precursors and synthetic drug trafficking and intelligence exchange, with key officers from the OCO, Fiji Police and Fiji Revenue and Customs Service.



Regional Vessel Search and Border Fundamentals Course, Sydney, Australia

OCO in partnership with the International Border Cooperation Program (IBCP) supported the participation of 10 customs officers from OCO member countries to attend the Regional Vessel search and Border Fundamentals Course at the Australian Border Force College in Sydney. The course drew multi-agency participation with attendees from Immigration and Police Officers learning alongside Customs Officers.

MEET OUR TEAM



MR. RICHARD BRENNAN

Head of Secretariat



MS. DAPHENY STONE

Manager Operations



MS. LAISIANA TUGAGA

Trade & Revenue
Adviser



**MR. LEONAITIASI
TAUKAFA**

Accountant



**MS. HEILALA
ERENAVULA**

Human Resources &
Logistics Officer



**MS. STEPHANIE
WAQANIVALAGI**

Executive Assistant



**MS. ASENACA
MASIWINI**

Assistant Accountant



**MR. KELEMEDI
GUKIREWA**

Technical Assistant –
APAN

Capacity Development for Forum Island Countries for the implementation of Harmonised System 2017 Project



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



**Oceania Customs
Organisation Secretariat**



**NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE**

Project Description

The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus was signed by Australia, New Zealand and nine Pacific Island Countries (PICs) - Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu in 2017.

In all free trade agreements as in PACER Plus, the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) is used to define the product coverage, in the form of product lists with HS codes and/or product descriptions, identify products. Every five years, the World Customs Organization (WCO) makes an update to the HS and the latest version, HS 2017 became effective on 1 January, 2017.

In February 2017, only 3 of the PICs had adopted HS 2017. The uniform application of the HS across the PICs is very important to ensure the correct identification of the products being exported/imported under the PACER Plus. In this regard, the Capacity Development for Forum Island Countries for the implementation of HS 2017 Project is aimed at assisting PACER Plus signatory countries to implement HS 2017 and provide other related capacity building activities to effectively implement the Agreement when it comes into force.



Duration

November 2017 – December 2019



Project Budget

AUD 2million (PACER Plus Readiness Package by Australia and New Zealand)



Beneficiaries

Customs administrations of nine PICs PACER Plus signatory countries - Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.



Project Activities

1. Support PICs customs administrations to implement HS 2017 and to prepare them to progress to implementing HS 2022
2. Provide HS Tools to assist users of the HS
3. Capacity Building on Transposition of Tariff Schedule and Product Specific Rules from HS 2012 (or earlier) to HS 2017
4. Development of Training Modules and Training of the Trainers on PACER Plus Rules of Origin
5. Customs Officers Capacity Building on PACER Plus and Customs Matters
6. Strengthening Legislative Capacity to implement HS 2017 and customs provisions in the PACER Plus.



Project Partners

- Implementing Partner – OCO, Customs Administration of the PICs
- Other Partners – Australia Border Force, Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Customs Service, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Pacific Community (SPC), Centre for Customs & Excise Studies-Charles Sturt University, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Project Outcomes

- ✓ All of the PACER Plus PICs signatories have adopted and using HS 2017.
- ✓ PACER Plus signatories have the capacity to undertake their own transposition when HS 2022 is implemented
- ✓ Sustained Rules of Origin capacity through the use of national trainers to train Customs and Stakeholders on PACER Plus ROO
- ✓ Workshops conducted in 9 PACER Plus signatory sensitizing the Agreement
- ✓ Cross section of Trading Community benefitted from training on HS and ROO
- ✓ Network of Customs Officers established
- ✓ Network of ROO Trainers established
- ✓ Legislative drafting technical assistance completed.
- ✓ Cooperation with regional and national institutions improved
- ✓ Increase participation of women in capacity building activities.

Capacity Development for Forum Island Countries for the implementation of Harmonised System 2017 Project

Regional Workshops
conducted



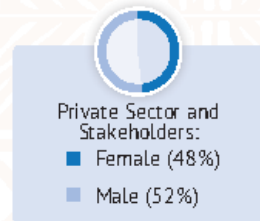
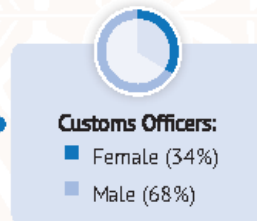
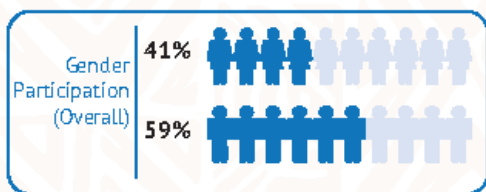
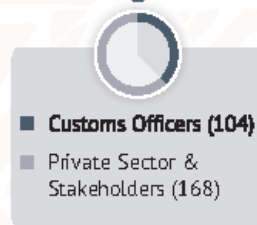
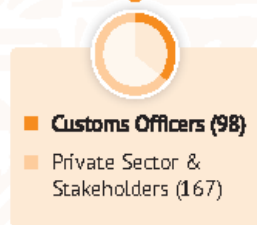
National Workshops
on Harmonized
System (Customs +
Private Sector)



National Workshops
on Rules of Origin
(Customs + Private
Sector)



Regional Trainers on
PACER Plus ROO



UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2020

- **PIDC Regional Workshop NCP's—Information & Intelligence Sharing**
Apia , Samoa , 17th—21st February

March 2020

- **UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs**
Vienna ,Austria , 2nd—6th March
- **Asia Regional Workshop on IP Criminal and Border Enforcement**
Denpasar ,Indonesia , 10th—13th March
- **WTO Regional Trade Facilitation Workshop for Pacific Island Countries**
Sydney , Australia , 16th-20th March

April 2020

- **Sub-regional Enforcement Workshop/Re-engagement Meetings (North Pacific)**
Guam , 20th—24th April
- **Sub-Regional Workshop on Risk Management (North Pacific)**
Guam , 20th—24th April

GALLERY



Oceania Customs Organization



Private Mail Bag,
84 Harris Rd,
Suva,
Fiji Islands

Phone: (679) 331 3110
E-mail: info@ocosec.org

www.ocosec.org