



January-March 2021

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,

As I present this newsletter, I reflect on the last few months in which the OCO Secretariat has been providing a range of accredited Customs training modules to your staff. This training has a direct impact into your Organisation as it develops “local knowledge centers” through trained staff inside your Customs service which is at the core of our charter. The virtual delivery mode may have arisen from the Covid 19 impacts, however it has forced the OCO to realize the benefits in this training and develop itself for future capability in this area. The connection to the CCES has been a result of the Heads of Customs adopting a professional qualifications framework at the 2018 Melbourne Conference and we are very excited to watch it finally being delivered, the interest from across the membership has been simply amazing and we are working to ensure we can deliver the training package in the medium term as the demand is certainly there.

We have also seen delivery of the small craft application into our membership at the same time as delivering a multi agency multi national desk top exercise which we

piloted that will allow us to train all our members up in enforcement initiatives moving forward. Our partnership with the PIDC and PICP Secretariats is a key factor in being able to collectively strengthen our borders in line with the BOE Declaration and Blue Pacific Strategy. We are also especially thankful to partner with the WCO and ROCB A/P in the Master Trainer Program which lines up perfectly with our current online training programmes. In the month of March we ran a special series of women in customs highlighting 17 women and their role in the frontline. We have a special newsletter compiled and translated into French.

It is my belief that the Secretariat is delivering training initiatives in line with the work plan that will have greater impact at national level capacity building that we have had in several years and I thank the tireless efforts of the small team in the OCO and the steering committee for making that happen. I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Thank you and vinaka vakalevu.

Richard Brenan
Head of Secretariat

02 OUR ACTIVITIES

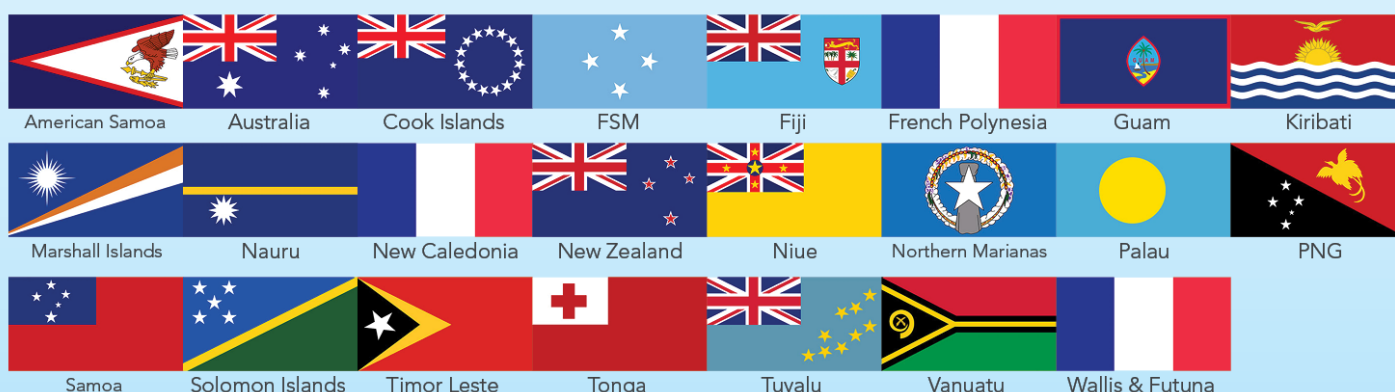


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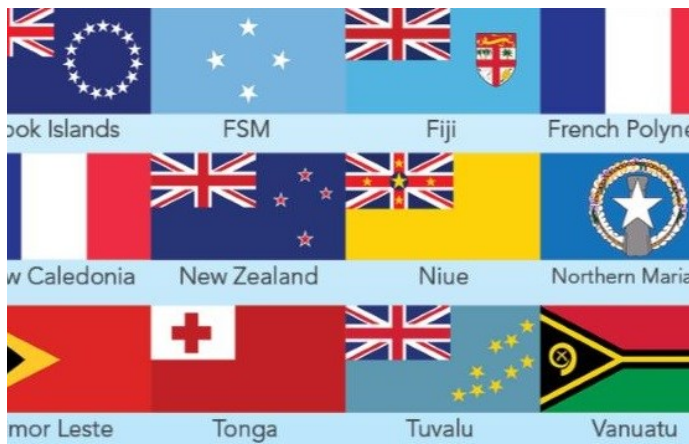
OUR MEMBERS





World Customs Organisation (WCO) Regional Workshop for E-Commerce

The OCO Secretariat participated in the WCO Regional Workshop for E-Commerce held online from 12-15 January 2021. OCO's work program on e-commerce has just begun and a survey was done to gauge members' current practices and procedures on the facilitation of cross-border e-commerce. The result of this survey will assist OCO to formulate a capacity-building response for members. [Read More...](#)



International Customs Day (ICD) 2021

OCO and its 23 members join the world in celebrating International Customs Day today, January 26, which has been dedicated to "the efforts of customs officers to support people and businesses by strengthening the global supply chain, reinforcing collaboration, harnessing technology and putting "people" at the center of the transformation process. "When we celebrated International Customs Day last year, we did not envisage our world changing so much because of COVID-19. Now that we have vaccines, most countries will begin their recovery paths this year and the International Customs Day slogan "Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain" sums up the demand on Customs administrations," Mr. Brennan says. [Read More...](#)



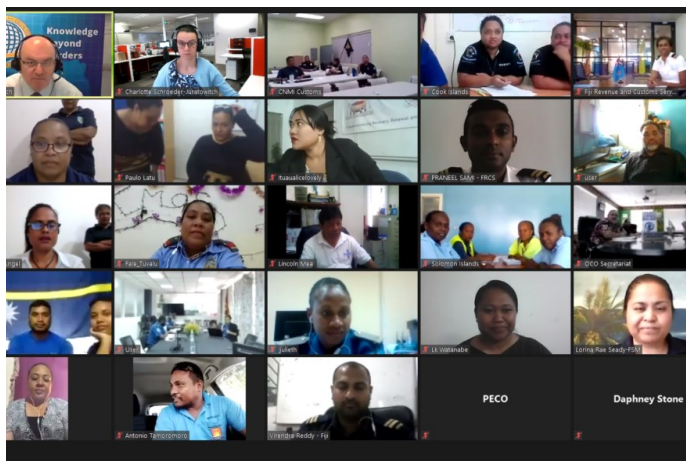
Customs Valuation and Harmonised System Classification are priority area for WCO Master Trainer Programme

The WCO, the Regional Office of Capacity Building (ROCB), JICA, Japan Customs and OCO joint Sub-Regional Master Trainer Programme (MTP) preparatory meeting held on Tuesday, January 26 has identified Customs Valuation and the Harmonised System (HS) classification as two priority areas that need capacity building for WCO Accredited Trainers in the Pacific. Customs Officers from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu discussed training needs with officials from the WCO, ROCB, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan Customs, and OCO, who are supporting the Master Training Programme to be held later in the year. [Read More...](#) Please also access this [link](#) to view OCO's partnership with ROCB Asia-Pacific.



OCO Courtesy Visit to Fiji Revenue and Customs Service

The OCO Head of Secretariat, Mr. Richard Brennan paid a courtesy call to Fiji Revenue and Customs Services Interim Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Jonetani Vuto on February 23. Mr. Brennan recently returned to Fiji having been in Australia since both countries went into lockdown last year. The two heads discussed issues pertinent to Customs operations in the region. [Read More...](#)



OCO Online Training Programme with CCES

More than 80 officers from 17 countries in the region begin a 10-month online training this month aimed at equipping them with skills to address daily challenges and those brought on by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The training delivered by the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies, Charles Sturt University, Canberra, and the Oceania Customs Organisation will end in November and leads to a Certificate III in Regional Customs Administrations. "This is the largest training of its kind, in terms of numbers to be undertaken by OCO in the region," OCO Chairman and Salvador Jacob said.

"It is an important training as we need to have our Customs Officers equipped with skills relevant to the changing environment, we work in. We are especially pleased that more than 60 percent of our trainees are women."

The virtual training has been divided into two cohorts due to the large number with each module lasting two weeks.

Participants of the course are from American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Marshall Islands, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. [Read More...](#)

2021 ONLINE COURSE (OCO-CCES)

OCO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

CERTIFICATE III IN REGIONAL CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION	CERTIFICATE IV IN REGIONAL CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for regional customs staff to effectively perform their duties (Level III) ◆ Customs Officer with technical experience of 3-5 years in Customs ◆ Participant would generally be below the age of 35 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for regional customs staff to be recognized as subject experts (Level IV) ◆ Customs Officer with technical experience of more than 8 years ◆ Has undertaken basic training on the subject matter ◆ Has knowledge and technical experience on the subject ◆ Prospective Trainer at the national level

NOMINATIONS – CERT III

- There will be two (2) streams undertaking 8 courses – Revenue & Enforcement Streams.
- For each stream, OCO funding will allow up to 4 participants (large administration >50 staff) and 2 participants (small administration < 50 staff) nominated by members. There will be about 35 students in each stream.
- The courses will be staggered for the 2 Streams to provide participants with reasonable gaps between the courses (up to 3 weeks). (refer Table 2)
- Once the nominations are confirmed, the participants will undertake the 8 units during the year 2021.
- If assessed competent the student will be awarded Certificate Level III at the end of the year. Top students will continue to Cert IV.

CERTIFICATE IV

Participants who have work experience, education and technical training can undertake if qualify under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy.

- The RPL policy will provide the requirements for recognition of prior learning as a process to provide a pathway to undertake Certificate IV without undertaking Certificate III.
- Nominees will be assessed on a number of criteria and applications will be evaluated both by OCO and CCES.
- Given the objective of Cert IV and the need to Train the Trainers – participants will be limited to 1-2 participants per Administration with the final list to be 20 Participants (who have met the criteria)
- The RPL Policy and processes will be undertaken in Feb-March 21 and Certificate IV courses will roll out from April 2021
- An important component of Cert IV is the Train the Trainers Course anticipated to be undertaken face-to-face in the 1st Quarter of 2022 (assuming that borders will open).

COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT

Students would have to complete the SIX (6) core subjects and then complete TWO (2) elective subjects to be awarded the Certificate III.

Core Modules (6)	Elective Modules (2)
1. Risk Management	1. Rules of Origin
2. Ethics and Governance	2. Trade Facilitation
3. Enforcement and Compliance	3. International Trade Transactions
4. Tariff	4. Cargo and Travelers: Processes and Procedures
5. Valuation	5. Maritime Enforcement
6. Legislation	

ASSESSMENT

To successfully complete each course, participants will be required to attain a 60% competency rating out of a possible 100% rating of Assessment.

At the successful completion of each module participant will be awarded a 'Level of Competency', either

- ◆ Competent
- ◆ Not Yet Competent
- ◆ Not Competent

To be assessed as 'competent' participants need to:

- i. Contribute to all the discussions and activities (50% of assessment)
- ii. Complete the major assignment (50% of assessment), and
- iii. Gain an average of 60% or higher when all assessment results are combined.



Pacific Law Enforcement Group (PLEG) Desktop Exercise

Through the Australia Pacific Security College (APSC), the region's law enforcement agencies- Customs, Police and Immigration- are working to improve their communication and networking processes to combat transnational crimes, which continue to increase in the Pacific region. The agencies' regional bodies, the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC), Pacific Transnational Crime Centre (PTCCC) and the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) conducted a joint-pilot exercise on operation command with 26 participants from Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands. [Read More...](#)



Communications Equipment for OCO Members

Ten members of the Oceania Secretariat Organisation have received communication equipment to assist them in accessing and sharing information on security issues. "The pandemic has forced us to implore new methods of operation where we all have had to rely more on the digital platform to remain connected," OCO Head of Secretariat, Richard Brennan says. The assistance was targeted for small and medium category members who may have financial constraints to develop their digital communication initiatives. [Read More...](#)



Regional Harmonised System HS2022 Virtual Workshop

OCO members are preparing for the implementation of HS 2022, which is the seventh edition of the Harmonized System (HS) nomenclature that will come into force on 1 January 2022. From 23-26 March, 2021, the OCO conducted a three-day virtual training aimed at assisting members interpret and apply HS 2022 and its amendments, as well as discuss members' progress in their preparations to implement the HS 2022 amendments. 51 Customs officers representing 14 OCO members took part in the training facilitated by experts from the OCO Secretariat, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United National Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD), World Health Organisation (WHO) and New Zealand Customs Service. [Read More...](#)



IN LOVING MEMORY

Mr. James Bire - 31 Dec 1975 - 6 Mar 2021

We were deeply saddened to hear the news of the passing of our friend and colleague, Mr. James Bire of PNG Customs Service. James was a great contributor of OCO and an active member of our regional forum over the past couple of years. James presided over the signing of the agreement for Customs Cooperation in Melbourne in 2018. For the Secretariat, one of the fondest memories we have of James is the facilitative role that he played in granting OCO guest status to the APEC Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures (SCCP). Through that, we were able to participate in the SCCP in 2018 hosted by PNG Customs, the meeting in which Mr. Bire was the Chairman. Our sympathies go out to his family and to his colleagues in PNG Customs.

..Farewell dear friend...

Spotlight



L-R: Ms Rejieli Rokosalu, Accountant, Mr Pranit Kumar, IT & Communications Officer and Tokanuea Karakaua, Temp Admin Assistant

New Appointments at OCO Secretariat

The Secretariat welcomed two new permanent appointments and one temporary appointment in February 2021. Pranit joined the Secretariat as the new IT & Communications Officer and has 9 years work experience in Information Technology having recently been employed with the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service in Suva, Fiji. Rejieli joined the Secretariat in mid-February possessing over a decade of work experience in Accounting and Finance. She was previously employed with the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC). Finally, we have a temporary Administration Assistant, Ms Tokanuea Karakaua who was previously employed with the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO). We hope that you will join us in welcoming our newest members of the OCO family.

Appointment of New Customs Head

The OCO Secretariat welcomes the following Head of Customs:

- **Mr. Jonetani Vuto**—*Interim Chief Executive Officer, Fiji Revenue and Customs Service*
- **Mr. David Towe**— *Chief Commissioner of Customs, PNG Customs Service*

International Womens Day 2021

#choosetochallenge

OCO ended its month-long celebration of the achievements of women through the Pacific Women in Customs series, which is a collection of feature stories of women in the profession. The Pacific Women in Customs series was in collaboration with PACNEWS.

“It is not every day that we celebrate the efforts of customs officers in the Pacific, let alone their efforts to keep our borders free from the pandemic,” Mr Jacob said.

“And it is even rare to be celebrating the women who are in customs and who have chosen a career path in a male dominated industry, but we are changing that.” The series featured 17 women from 11 OCO member countries and the OCO Secretariat. [Read More...](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

April
2021

- **Pacific Small Craft Application (PSCA) Training, Savusavu**
7-8 April 2021
- **OCO Planning Meeting & Strategic Plan Review**
28—30 April 2021
- **Enforcement and Compliance Cert III (Revenue stream)**
29 March-12 April 2021
- **Enforcement and Compliance Cert III (Enforcement stream)**
19 April—7 May 2021

May
2021

- **Criminal Business Disruption Workshop**
04-06 May 2021
- **Information Sharing Working Group Meeting (ISWG) —Quarter 4**
18 or 19 May (*tentative*)
- **Tariff Cert III (Revenue stream)**
10-28 May 2021
- **OCO Workshop Digital Customs and Cross Border E-Commerce**
25-27 May 2021
- **Steering Committee Meeting—Quarter 4**
26 May 2021

June
2021

- **Tariff Cert III (Enforcement stream)**
31 May—18 June 2021
- **Customs Brokers Training**
7-11 June 2021

GALLERY



THANK YOU
oceania customs organization



OCO assisted CNMI Customs with three new laptops for its online courses



GALLERY



Oceania Customs
Organization



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