



VANUATU DEPARTMENT OF
CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE

Vanuatu

ASYCUDA World Project

Monthly Newsletter

ISSUE 6

3RD OCTOBER 2016

IN THIS EDITION:

- CRMC held its 2nd meeting
- ASYCUDA Support mission 5-9 Sept
- ASYCUDA Technical & Functional mission 12-13 Sept
- Customs Clearance Procedures documented for the first time
- Historical Brokers Association formed
- Council of Ministers approved SOClass COM paper

UPCOMING EVENTS IN OCTOBER

1. ASYCUDA Technical mission 3-7 Oct
2. CRMC 3rd meeting 13 Oct

CRMC held its 2nd meeting



“Driving the changes”; CRMC Members at the 2nd meeting, 13th Sept.

Customs Reform & Modernization Committee (CRMC) 2nd meeting Agenda:

1. Matters arising
2. ASYCUDA Missions
3. Discussions on the proposed Standard Operating Procedures
4. Use of the TSC in AW to enforce Customs Valuation.
5. Approval for AW Performance Management Module Feasibility Study.
6. SOClass, Warehouse stocks, HS2017
7. Any Other Business

The CRMC's purpose is to drive reforms and changes to ensure the successful implementation of the ASYCUDA World (AW) project.

ASYCUDA September missions

... 3 weeks in photos



Customs Clearance Procedures documented for the first time

Flowcharts, Standard Operating Procedures and Terms of References drafted



To ensure the ASYCUDA World system is well configured to meet the entire Customs clearance requirements, the process must first be documented. To achieve this, the National Project Team with the assistance of the UNCTAD Consultants, have created simple and easy to use Flow Charts, Standard Operating Procedures and Terms of Reference of all players involved in the entire clearance process.

Amazingly, this will be the first time ever that Vanuatu Customs will have the clearance procedures documented for its Officers and external clients to use. In the past, Customs Officers, usually learn on the job with no documented guideline on how to carry out their duties. Not only can this result in inefficient revenue collection and trade facilitation, it can also mean inconsistent and poor service delivery to those in the trade industry. On the other hand, external clients, which include Shipping, Airlines, Freight Forwarders, Customs Brokers and Traders will now have clear guidelines on how the clearance process operates.

As mentioned in past articles, the implementation of ASYCUDA World in Vanuatu is more than a modernization project. It is an opportunity to bring about further reform to Vanuatu Customs to efficiently meet its national objectives of collecting revenue, protecting borders and facilitating trade.

All of these three sets of documentation are all related to each other. They will now assist the Project Team in preparing the ASYCUDA user profiles and the system user guides for both the internal and external users.

During the drafting of the clearance process, some selected processes will be adjusted to be more efficient. The CRMC approved these changes during its 2nd meeting in September. Such changes were anticipated in such reform exercise.

Historical Brokers Association formed



VANUATU CUSTOMS BROKERS AND FORWARDERS ASSOCIATION

In a joint statement, the establishment of the Vanuatu Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association was announced by the Acting Deputy Director Customs, Mr. George Pakoa, and the President of the newly formed Association, Mr. Gabriel Gauchet.

Membership of the Association is open to all Customs Brokers licensed under Customs legislation. Mr. Gauchet explained that the Association had a number of important objectives including representing the interests of members to the Vanuatu Government, and that members retain a close working relationship with Customs on border control, border security, collection of revenue and security

of those revenues to the betterment of life in Vanuatu.

Mr. Pakoa said that Customs had been very supportive of the creation of the association, as part of the current modernisation and reform programmes such as the ASYCUDA

World Project, Customs considers it important that Customs should foster an open, transparent and productive relationship with the private sector. Since the introduction of licenses for Customs Brokers in the new Customs legislation which was introduced in December 2013, DCIR has encouraged Customs Brokers to create a peak body with which Customs could interact, Mr. Pakoa said.

The inaugural meeting between Customs and the Association will occur very soon both gentleman said, with regular meetings occurring each year. Mr. Gauchet said that formation of the association presents the opportunity for Brokers to provide feedback to improve the performance of Customs, which will result in better facilitation rates for his clients. Both Mr. Pakoa and Mr. Gauchet agreed that the formation of the association was a positive step which will strengthen the relationship between these two very important organisations responsible for the efficient delivery of Vanuatu's international trade.

Council of Ministers approved SOClass COM paper



STRATEGY OBJECT

The process of acquiring the middleware software, SOClass, has reached its final stage on 15th September when the Council of Ministers (COM) approved the COM paper for purchase

of the software.

Prior to being tabled at the COM, the paper was presented at the Development Committee of Officials (DCO) by the Chairman of the ASYCUDA World Project Steering Committee, Mr. Tony Sewen (Director General, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management) and the ASYCUDA World Project Manager.

Finally, in its ordinary meeting on the 15th of September, the National Government Ministers approved the sole sourcing of the middleware as per recommendation and advice by the Government Central Tender Board and the State Law Office respectively.

The COM paper was signed and tabled by the Prime Minister, Honourable Charlot Salwai, as

Minister in charge of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and Honourable Gaetan Pikioune, Minister responsible for Customs.

The National Project Team is now liaising with the OGCIO for the purchase of this middleware software for the ASYCUDA World Production servers.

In brief, SOClass is an extension of the standard Java libraries used by AW. Among other things, it manages database connection, full document history and tracking, and security.

The payments for the SOClass licenses and the ASYCUDA World final payment in 2017 should conclude the final payments required for the completion of the ASYCUDA World project.



Department of Customs and Inland Revenue
ASYCUDA World Project

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
 Private Mail Bag 9108
 Port Vila
 Vanuatu
 Phone: (+678) 33380
 Gov. VOIP: 3732
 E-mail: awnpt@vanuatu.gov.vu
 Website: <http://customsinlandrevenue.gov.vu>
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VuDCIR/>



The ASYCUDA (Automated SYstem for CUstoms DAta) software, used by over 90 Customs Administrations around the World, was developed by the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD). An earlier version of ASYCUDA called ASYCUDA++ was implemented in Vanuatu in 1999.

ASYCUDA++ is a DOS based program with ICT limitations and therefore obsolete in this day and age. UNCTAD has therefore developed a web-based version of ASYCUDA known as ASYCUDA World. It takes advantage of the significant progress made in the field of ICT to provide improved automated support to the evolving requirements of both the Trading Community and Customs administrations.

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Upcoming tasks

The following tasks were identified by the National Project Team (NPT) and approved by the Customs Reform and Modernization Committee, as upcoming tasks in configuring the ASYCUDA World prototype server, the preparation and cleansing of the database, and the rolling out of trainings for internal and external users. They are brief tasks however involving large amount of work, giving the system an updated database from the current ASYCUDA++ setup. The tasks will not only involve the NPT, but the wider ASYCUDA World project team and Customs itself. Again, the scheduled date for implementation at the pilot site is still targeted for December 2016.

Tasks
Warehouse stock cleanup in ASY++ (in parallel with the work of the Warehouse Officers)
Inserting the HS2017 & supplementary units cleanup (in parallel with the work of the Tariff Committee)
Create SOPs
Creation and configuration of business units (Customer accounts)
User guide creation and Testing
System configuration
Reference tables update and cleanup (in consultation with CRM)
Taxation rules update and cleanup
Insert and update selectivity criteria
Conduct user trainings (internal and external)
Note: in each task there should be parallel testing between ASY++ and AW