
PRESS RELEASE

Launching of the Customs Compliance Program

Monday 26th November 2018, VICTORIA, SEYCHELLES: In a short ceremony held at the Guy Morel Institute on Monday 26th November, the Seychelles Revenue Commission (SRC) in partnership with The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI) and The Global Maritime Legal Solutions (Pty) Ltd (GMLS), had the pleasure launching Seychelles very first “Customs Compliance Program”. This is a program aimed at strengthening Customs and its partners through proper education and capacity building in the field of Customs.

Present for the launch ceremony was the Chairman of TACAB and SRC Board Member– Mr. Charles Morin. Representatives of the SRC Management –Mr. Ronald Cafrine- Commissioner General of SRC, Mr. Fred Morel – Deputy Commissioner General, Mr. Paul Barrack – Commissioner of Customs, and other SRC and TGMI staff including participants

During his speech, the Commissioner General of SRC – Mr. Ronald Cafrine made mention that this program is a long awaited one that is tailored for SRC officers and traders dealing with Customs procedure on a daily basis. Mr. Cafrine also mentioned “the true purpose of the program, is to facilitate trade and contribute towards the sustainable economic development of Seychelles”. Mr. Cafrine said that, “in order to support trade facilitation and promote compliance, there is a need for stakeholders to have access to formal training and development opportunities associated with international trade and meeting Customs requirements. The Customs Compliance Program concept has been developed to address the deficiency that currently exists in Seychelles for professional development in international trade and Customs.”

During his address, Mr. Cafrine also mentioned that over the past few years, customs has recorded significant levels of mistakes, made by brokers and importers/exporters in the ASYCUDA system and that research has shown an error rate of 55% on Bills Of Entry registered with customs with the sources of those errors being:

- Inaccurate application of the Harmonised System Code;
- Suspected document fraud, including fraudulent commercial invoices;
- Lack of understanding or awareness of Customs of documentary requirements
- Non-compliance with local Customs laws, other domestic policies and procedures,
- Incomplete bills of entry
- Lack of attention to important detail,

It is from this backdrop of trade knowledge deficiencies that SRC and its partners are making it a priority to provide the necessary training, aiming at bringing up and maintaining high the level of compliance at customs level. Mr. Cafrine also affirmed that with this program, SRC should be able to:

- Greatly improve and sustain a high level of compliance by customs brokers and others;
- Enhance effectiveness of our customs administration;
- Bring in new efficiencies,
- Boost staff morale and achieve higher productivity.

In terms of the beneficiaries of the program, over 40 Customs clearing agents and close to 400 importers & exporters would potentially benefit from this formal training opportunity in the coming months and years. Additionally, new customs applicants would also be better equipped professionally from day one. Mr. Cafrine also mentioned that with this programme SRC's own Customs officers will also benefit, as some would be trained alongside agents. Hence another addition to currently existing training opportunities for customs staff.

On another strategic note, Mr. Cafrine mentioned that this program is expected to complement other Customs initiatives, again aimed at improving trade facilitation. This includes the recently acquired cargo scanner at the seaport and the upcoming Cargo Targeting System (CTS).

Looking ahead, with this programme in full operation, it would facilitate the implementation of other best practice requirement, such as the "Authorized Economic Operators (AEO)", and the Single Window concept – which are all requirements of World Trade Organisation (WTO) and World Customs Organisation (WCO), both of which Seychelles is a member of.

Over the next few days, the partnership between TGMI, GMLS and SRC is expected to see about 45 participants complete the first training session in Customs Compliance.

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