



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

in conjunction with



World Customs Forum 2009

TRADE FACILITATION IN A TIME OF ECONOMIC CRISIS

Preserving the Engine
of Global Economic Growth



A two-day conference focusing on the future of facilitation for low-risk operators and the use of multilateral standards within the international supply chain

SEATTLE, 05-06 OCTOBER 2009

Bell Harbor Conference Center
World Trade Center Seattle

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRLED BY

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Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Customs and Excise Studies, University of Canberra

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Deputy Director, Compliance and Facilitation Directorate, World Customs Organization

WHO WILL ATTEND?

Government and Multilateral Policymakers, Senior Trade Compliance, International Logistics, and Supply-Chain Managers, Corporate and Trade Organization Executives, Supply-Chain IT Providers, Legal Advisors, Academics and Economists

event@trusted-trade.net

WORLD CUSTOMS FORUM 2009

CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION

Key policymakers from Customs administrations and multilateral organizations, leading representatives of major international and national trade and industry advocacy groups, recognized experts in global trade, supply chain security, trade law, the logistics industry and governmental and policymaker stakeholders will meet at the World Customs Forum 2009.

The World Customs Organization (WCO), in conjunction with the Trusted Trade Alliance and host trade organization the American Association of Exporters and Importers, will hold a two-day event at Bell Harbor Conference Center in Seattle, WA, USA on 5-6 October, 2009. Representing over 170 Member Customs administrations globally, the WCO is renowned for developing effective trade instruments and standards designed to positively impact today's trading environment.

This conference, the third annual World Customs Forum and the first to be held in the Americas, will focus on the critical role of continued facilitation of legitimate cross-border trade in this time of economic crisis. The program will survey the global implementation of regulatory initiatives flowing from the WCO SAFE Framework and other multilateral standards, and is designed to allow the stakeholders in the international supply chain the opportunity to engage in a critical dialogue on the key issues affecting their future.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The Conference will consider the impact of the current global economic crisis on cross-border trade and discuss methods aimed at improving coordination between national governments with regards to common regulatory initiatives, and with the traders tasked with compliance under these initiatives. Also in focus will be improving the working relationships between traders and their governments, with the WCO and other multilaterals in the role of facilitator and objective monitor.

The ultimate objective of these relationships must be to improve effective import and export processing, while reducing the costs of compliance through standard processes and harmonized datasets. Further, the conference will address the need to keep the concepts of risk management and facilitation of the trusted trader in focus while establishing ways the multilateral trading community can prevent the imposition of additional burdens (whether due to protectionist impulses or uncoordinated and incompatible regulatory initiatives).

Throughout the conference, the goal will be to encourage communication and critical dialogue among private-sector and public-sector stakeholders, key policymakers and noted academic experts in the field. This dialogue will serve as a means to ensure that the proven economic gains of the past decades resulting from cross-border trade are not overcome by short-sighted economic and political priorities.

STRATEGIC BACKGROUND OF THE WORLD CUSTOMS FORUM 2009

International trading volumes have dropped precipitously since the latter half of 2008. While this decline is linked to global macroeconomic factors, there is a risk that increased focus on national interests and protectionist impulses will exacerbate the crisis by making cross-border trade more difficult and expensive. The World Customs Organization has been instrumental in establishing standards including the SAFE Framework and the WCO Data Model. These standards, currently in the early stages of being rolled out by governments around the world, have provided a foundation for further discussions on topics like single window and coordinated border management. The overarching goal of these initiatives and the discussions they have fostered is a lessening of the burden on trade internationally through increased use of standard processes, standard messaging, and the elimination of duplicative and variant requirements at each step in the trans-border flow of goods. While these initiatives have been broadly viewed as positive by all trade stakeholders, putting theory into practice is proving to be considerably more difficult.

As many countries move toward e-customs and implementation of initiatives under the umbrella of the SAFE Framework, early indications are that some are doing so in an uncoordinated way, with different border agencies having contradictory requirements within the same country, and with different countries rolling out divergent processes. In many cases these new initiatives are imposed in addition to the existing regimes, with the end result being an increased burden of cost and a decrease in processing efficiencies for the trade and government alike. This can undermine or preclude effective use of automation in targeting and cargo processing. New requirements may also be susceptible to hidden protectionist agendas that are at odds with the principles of the WCO SAFE Framework and the Kyoto Convention. A key objective of the Conference will be to give governments, multilateral policymakers, and the trade an opportunity to conduct a critical review of progress on national initiatives under SAFE, the WCO data model, and the revised Kyoto Convention, in order to determine whether appropriate adjustments are required to fulfill the promise of multilateral trade security and facilitation.

No objective source of review and reporting exists for the true end-to-end costs associated with global trade. The costs of trade processing and compliance on a multi-country cross-border basis are increasingly difficult to calculate. Yet as countries roll out new e-customs systems and new security based reporting requirements, the cost of trade has become a critical economic factor for business. Consequently, a strategic objective of this conference is to address opportunities for an objective assessment to determine whether new regulatory initiatives are in line with WCO standards, are cost-effective, or whether they are in fact protectionism in disguise.



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BENEFITS OF ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE

- Hear key global policymakers' views on the current status of cross-border trade, and what needs to be done to ensure that it weathers the current economic crisis.
- Engage in a dialogue regarding the feasibility of countries' utilization of standards, harmonization of systems and data, and sharing of consignment and trader data across borders in a way that benefits government and trade alike.
- Expand your understanding of the international roll-out of initiatives under the SAFE Framework and related national regulatory measures, including advance data reporting, AEO, and new developments in export control regimes and licensing practices that affect your business.
- Hear what governments, trade organizations, and multilateral agencies are doing to advance government-to-government exchange of data in the export and import process.
- Explore best practices and areas of concern related to these initiatives and consider whether objective measurement of their cost impact on international trade is possible and desirable.
- Broaden your knowledge on bilateral and multilateral efforts to achieve the goal of a "Single Window" for trade, and consider the likely effects on your supply chain.
- Benchmark best practices with top private sector players who have already implemented global strategies to meet new global regulatory requirements.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? JUST CONTACT US:

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