



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS PRESS RELEASE

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS AND US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE IN BILATERAL TALKS TO FOSTER CLOSER COOPERATION ON EXPORT CONTROLS FOR STRATEGIC GOODS

Singapore Customs (SC) and Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) of the US Department of Commerce engaged in a discussion on bilateral licensing issues relating to controls on strategic goods which can be used for both civilian and military purposes (dual-use) on 10 July 2009. This is the third annual dialogue session between the two agencies with the previous session held in Washington last year.

2 SC and BIS have been maintaining close cooperation on pre-licensing checks and post-shipment verifications on strategic goods exports from the US to Singapore. The licensed dual-use strategic goods made up US\$107.3 million (S\$151.3 million) of the total exports from the US to Singapore valued at US\$28.8 billion (S\$40.6 billion) in 2008.

3 During the recent dialogue session in July 2009, SC and BIS made further progress in its bilateral cooperation on the export controls for strategic goods. Both agencies discussed the possibility of simplifying the documentation required by SC for Singapore exporters shipping strategic goods to the US.

4 With the US being a key strategic trading partner of Singapore, such simpler documentation process would translate to savings in business costs and time incurred by local traders of strategic goods. In 2008, SC approved a total of 7,948 strategic goods permits, of which 780 were permits for strategic goods exports to the US. The strategic goods exports from Singapore to the US totalled S\$64.7 million last year, with 25% of these exports being dual-use products.

5 The regular dialogues between SC and BIS are mutually beneficial as the constant discussions help align the common objectives of curbing illicit diversions of controlled goods to sanctioned countries and rogue entities, whilst according greater facilitation to legitimate traders. Besides regular face-to-face talks, both agencies also co-organise industry outreach initiatives to Singapore-based companies on the export control laws of Singapore and the US. One example is the seminar on export controls for the local trade industry held jointly by the US, Japan and Singapore in June 2007. SC also participates in various overseas seminars held by its international partners of strategic goods controls on a regular basis.

6 SC's Director-General, Mr Fong Yong Kian (方永健) said, "Securing legitimate trade is every country's responsibility. Singapore Customs will continue to tap on bilateral cooperation platforms such as our annual talks with the US Department of Commerce to boost Singapore's efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and controlled goods."

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