



**SINGAPORE CUSTOMS** 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் சுங்கத்துறை

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

29 June 2018

### **Certified companies to enjoy facilitated customs clearance under new Singapore-Thailand arrangement**

Under a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) of Authorised Economic Operator programmes signed by Singapore Customs and the Customs Department of Thailand, companies certified by Singapore Customs as having robust security practices will enjoy faster clearance for their goods exported to Thailand.

Recognised as having lower risks, these companies will benefit from reduced documentary and cargo inspections.

Companies certified by Thailand will enjoy the same level of facilitation for their goods exported to Singapore.

This is the first MRA of Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programmes signed between two ASEAN countries.

The Singapore-Thailand MRA recognises the compatibility of the supply chain security measures implemented by companies certified under Singapore Customs' Secure Trade Partnership (STP) programme and the companies accredited under Thailand's Authorised Economic Operator programme.

Signed as an initiative under the Singapore-Thailand Enhanced Economic Relations programme (STEER), the MRA is set to deepen economic collaboration and facilitate bilateral trade growth between Singapore and Thailand.

Singapore's Director-General of Customs, Mr Ho Chee Pong, and Director-General of Thailand's Customs Department, Mr Kulit Sombatsiri, signed the MRA on 29 June 2018 on the sidelines of the 132<sup>nd</sup> World Customs Organisation (WCO) Council Session.

"The AEO-MRA signing reinforces the strong ties and close cooperation between both our customs administrations, as well as our commitment to maintain the regional and global supply chain security. It is a significant milestone in economic and customs cooperation within our region as it would greatly facilitate legitimate trade undertaken by companies under Thailand's Authorised Economic Operator programme as well as Singapore's Secure Trade Partnership programme," said Mr Ho.

"The MRA also reaffirms our collective commitment to the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025, particularly in the area of trade facilitation, which is an important engine of growth and development," added Mr Ho.

“By promoting customs-to-customs cooperation and mutual recognition of our AEOs, we can target high-risk shipments more effectively and expedite customs procedures for low-risk shipments, thus benefiting our traders and significantly contributing to trade facilitation,” said Mr Kulit.

“Our customs administrations have continuously developed close collaboration and strengthened bilateral cooperation in various areas of our mutual interests, including customs matters. Our cooperation will be even further strengthened by this important milestone,” he said.

Companies in Singapore with significant trade with Thailand welcomed the signing of the MRA.

“ST Microelectronics is delighted with the conclusion of the Singapore-Thailand MRA, the first between two ASEAN countries. We believe that this MRA will pave way for a smoother execution of logistics between the two countries, where ST Microelectronics has significant operations, and ultimately shorten customs clearance time for STP-certified companies. ST Microelectronics looks forward to more customs MRAs between ASEAN countries to further deepen and integrate our supply chain security in the region,” said Mr Lok Hwee-Chong, Director, Customs & Trade Compliance – Asia & Americas, ST Microelectronics.

“We are glad to hear that the Singapore-Thailand MRA has concluded. Our company is happy to see the development of the multinational security regime and increased cross-border supply chain security cooperation,” said Ms Grace Wang, Trade Compliance Manager, Avago Technologies International Sales Pte Ltd.

Singapore’s total trade with Thailand amounted to more than S\$30 billion in 2017, making Thailand our third largest trading partner in ASEAN and ninth largest trading partner internationally.

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### **About Singapore Customs’ Secure Trade Partnership (STP) Programme and Mutual Recognition Arrangements**

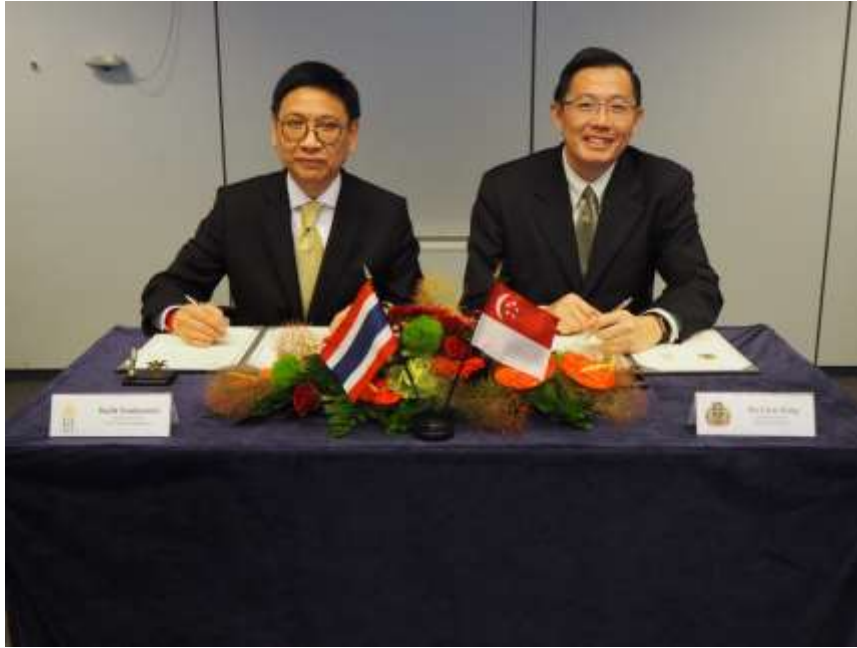
Singapore Customs’ STP programme is based on the World Customs Organisation’s Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (WCO SAFE Framework of Standards). The WCO SAFE Framework of Standards highlights the need for all stakeholders to take measures to ensure the security of the supply chain, and for customs administrations to establish Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programmes to certify companies which adopt robust security practices. To date, 92 companies are certified as AEOs by Singapore Customs.

Mutual recognition arrangements multiply the benefits of national AEO programmes by elevating trade facilitation and trade security to the international level. Such arrangements also help to facilitate continuous secure trade flows in situations of high alert or when international trade is disrupted.

Singapore Customs is the first customs administration in Southeast Asia to enter into mutual recognition of AEO programmes with other customs administrations. To date, it has signed MRAs with nine customs administrations: Thailand, Australia, Canada,

Republic of Korea, Japan, People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the United States.

## ANNEX



From left: Director-General of Customs Department, Thailand, Mr Kulit Sombatsiri, and Singapore's Director-General of Customs, Mr Ho Chee Pong, signed the Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Authorised Economic Operator programmes on 29 June 2018 on the sidelines of the 132<sup>nd</sup> World Customs Organisation Council Session.

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