



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

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

31 May 2018

### **Singapore and Australia sign arrangement to facilitate trade for certified companies**

Companies certified by Singapore Customs as having robust security practices can now look forward to faster customs clearance for their goods exported to Australia.

Under a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) of Authorised Economic Operator programmes signed by Singapore Customs and the Australian Border Force (ABF) on 31 May 2018, such Singapore companies certified as having lower risks will enjoy faster customs clearance with reduced documentary and cargo inspections.

Likewise, Australian companies that are certified by the ABF will enjoy similar facilitation for their goods exported to Singapore.

Singapore is the first ASEAN country to sign an MRA with Australia.

The Australia-Singapore MRA recognises the compatibility of the supply chain security measures implemented by companies certified under Singapore Customs' Secure Trade Partnership (STP) programme and the trusted companies of the ABF's Australian Trusted Trader programme.

As an initiative under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a pact signed by Singapore and Australia in 2015 to deepen existing areas of cooperation and catalyse new ones, the MRA is set to foster closer customs collaboration and elevate bilateral trade ties.

Singapore's Director-General of Customs, Mr Ho Chee Pong, and the Commissioner of ABF and Comptroller-General of Customs, Mr Michael Outram, signed the MRA in Singapore.

"The signing of this MRA reinforces the commitment of both our customs administrations to maintain the security of regional and global supply chains, and to facilitate legitimate trade undertaken by Authorised Economic Operators in both countries," said Mr Ho.

"As major trading partners, I am confident that this new MRA of our respective Authorised Economic Operator programmes will bring about much benefit to our businesses and boost bilateral trade," he said.

"The signing of the Authorised Economic Operator-MRA will further strengthen our close cooperation at the borders and smoothen the passage of goods between our two countries of trusted traders," said Mr Outram.

“It will also help us facilitate and support these companies that do the right thing, and help us focus our resources on finding and dealing with companies and people who do not do the right thing.”

Singapore companies which trade actively with Australian companies welcomed the signing of the MRA.

“This MRA between Singapore and Australia signifies an exemplary partnership between two great nations. It will fortify supply chain security and accelerate swift international trade while keeping both countries safe. It will certainly uplift trade facilitation and be beneficial to entire trade,” said Mr Vijay Chaudhary, Asia-Pacific and Japan Customs Operations & Compliance Manager, Hewlett-Packard Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd.

“The impact on Zebra Technologies’ business is significant because it improves the export capability of Zebra-Singapore’s distribution centre in export activities. We will benefit from the facilitated customs clearance process and timing, which will in turn lead to efficiencies and punctual deliveries for our customers in Australia. We look forward to secure trade flows between Singapore and Australia with the enhanced supply chain security,” said Ms Anna Luo, Senior Manager, Global Trade Compliance Office-Asia-Pacific, Zebra Technologies Asia Pacific Pte Ltd.

Singapore’s total trade with Australia amounted to more than S\$19 billion in 2017, making Australia our 13<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner in 2017.

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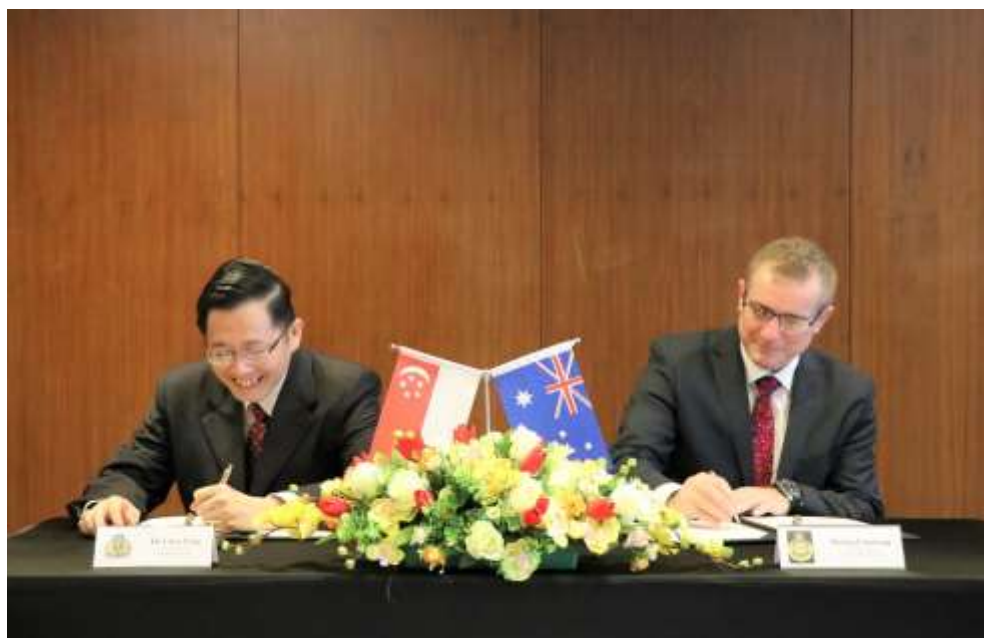
### **About Singapore Customs’ Secure Trade Partnership (STP) Programme and Mutual Recognition Arrangements**

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, 93 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 eight customs administrations: Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Japan, People’s Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the United States.

## ANNEX



(From left) Singapore's Director-General of Customs, Mr Ho Chee Pong, and Commissioner of Australian Border Force and Comptroller-General of Customs, Mr Michael Outram, signed the Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Authorised Economic Operator programmes between Singapore and Australia on 31 May 2018 in Singapore.

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