

## FORMATION OF SINGAPORE CUSTOMS

From 1 April 2003, customs and trade documentation and facilitation will be under the purview of one agency through the formation of Singapore Customs under the Ministry of Finance. Traders and businessmen will enjoy a single point of contact for all their import and export matters.

Singapore Customs brings together the revenue enforcement and trade documentation functions of the current Customs and Excise Department and Trade Facilitation Division and Statistics Audit Unit of IE Singapore to focus on trade facilitation and revenue enforcement. It is also responsible for implementation of customs and trade enforcement measures including those related to free trade agreements and control of strategic goods.

Prior to the merger, two separate agencies have functions that affect trade processes. The Trade Facilitation Division and Statistics Audit Unit of IE Singapore process trade permits, verify the completeness and accuracy of submissions, perform checks on textile firms and issue certificates of origin, while Customs and Excise Department performs trade documentation and facilitation, and revenue enforcement functions.

In most countries, customs and trade enforcement functions are integrated. The formation of a single agency to handle trade facilitation and revenue enforcement matters will result in synergies in operations, and allow trade processes to be further streamlined. The formation of Singapore Customs is an important step forward to support Singapore's continued emphasis on free trade and enterprise.

Mr Ng How Yue, currently the Deputy-Director-General (Policy) of Customs and Excise Department, will be appointed as the Director-General of Singapore Customs.

### **What it means to the trade**

#### Permit declaration

Traders and freight forwarders will continue to apply for the relevant trade and customs permits via the TradeNet system, which will come under the purview of Singapore Customs.

All existing permit conditions and types of permits for clearance of cargo at the checkpoints will remain come 1 April 2003. From this date, the approving authority is Singapore Customs instead of Customs and Excise Department and IE Singapore. In the longer term, the entire trade documentation and facilitation process will be further simplified and streamlined.

### Online services

The same range of online services will continue to be available in the new Singapore Customs website at [www.customs.gov.sg](http://www.customs.gov.sg) and the related sites at [www.tradenet.gov.sg](http://www.tradenet.gov.sg) and [www.stgc.gov.sg](http://www.stgc.gov.sg).

### Supervision of stuffing/unstuffing operations

Customs services provided at licensed and bonded warehouses will be undertaken by Singapore Customs without any change in fees, application and payment processes.

### Cargo clearance

Singapore Customs officers will be stationed at the majority of the checkpoints for example, Changi Airport and Aircargo, Woodlands, Tuas and Singapore Cruise Centre. However, customs clearance of goods at the checkpoints will be conducted by officers from the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority.

Immigration & Checkpoints Authority will take over checkpoint clearance function of Customs and Excise Department and the immigration control function of the current Singapore Immigration and Registration to be a single command responsible for the security of Singapore's borders against the entry of undesirable persons and cargo through our land, air and sea checkpoints.

### Singapore Customs Headquarters

The Singapore Customs headquarters will remain at 55 Newton Road, #10-01 Revenue House, Singapore 30787. For a smooth transition, Trade Facilitation Division and Statistics Audit Unit will moved from their present office at Bugis Junction to Revenue House on 5 May 2003.

### Public enquiries

The Singapore Customs general enquiry line will remain at 6355 2000. Come 1 April 2003, when traders call this number, they will be able to enjoy "one stop service" for their queries on classification, assessment, valuation or any import/export/transshipment documentary requirements. Customs and trade information is also available from the following websites - [www.customs.gov.sg](http://www.customs.gov.sg), [www.tradenet.gov.sg](http://www.tradenet.gov.sg) and [www.stgc.gov.sg](http://www.stgc.gov.sg).

Traders can also direct their enquiries on cargo clearance to Immigration & Checkpoints Authority general enquiry line at 6391 6100 or access their website at [www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg).

Customs & Excise Department  
31 Mar 03