



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

## **SINGAPORE CUSTOMS**

### **2012 SINGAPORE QUALITY AWARD WINNER**

#### **KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

Formed in 1910 as the Government Monopolies Department, Singapore Customs is today the lead agency on customs and trade regulatory matters.

Singapore Customs believes that trade can be best facilitated by putting in place a trusted regulatory regime that ensures fair play for all parties. Its strategies for trade facilitation, compliance and security are complementary and aim to provide a conducive environment where legitimate trade can flow seamlessly. This is achieved by:

##### **i) Partnering with Businesses**

Singapore Customs adopts a partnership approach with the business community to achieve mutual understanding and co-create regulatory solutions. Businesses are engaged in frequent consultation to understand and address their concerns and to seek their input for improvements.

In 2012, it launched the Singapore Customs Academy to help businesses better understand and comply with customs regulations. Courses are conducted in a modular format, with an online portal which is accessible round the clock. This is particularly useful for SMEs with fewer employees and less flexibility to send staff for training.

##### **ii) Adopting a Whole-of-Government Approach**

Singapore Customs adopts a Whole-of-Government approach to resolving a wide range of issues. It works closely with agencies like the Singapore Police Force and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority in joint enforcement operations to curb illicit activities in Singapore. It also supports the Ministries of Trade & Industry, Transport, and Home Affairs to ensure security of the global supply chain.

##### **iii) Collaborating with the International Customs Community**

Singapore Customs collaborates with the Customs administrations of other countries to facilitate global trade. It plays a key role in negotiating Free Trade Agreements with Singapore's trading partners, driving regional economic integration projects such as the ASEAN Customs Transit System and ASEAN Self-Certification of Origin initiatives in ASEAN. It also participates actively at multi-lateral and global levels to push the trade facilitation agenda forward. It has also gone beyond border security to work with international partners to ensure security of the global supply chain and establish Singapore as a secure and trusted nation.

#### **iv) Tapping Technology to boost Productivity**

Singapore Customs leverages on technology to bring about innovations that gave Singapore a competitive edge. In 1989, it pioneered the world's first national trade single window system, TradeNet®. With TradeNet®, traders need submit only one application for a trade permit, which is then processed by multiple government agencies in seconds.

In 2007, TradeNet® evolved into TradeXchange, a national IT platform that connects and integrates players in the trading, logistics and finance communities. TradeXchange has raised the productivity of the logistics sector by automating data extraction, and eliminating the need for multiple data entries. Companies have also been able to cut down the preparation time for trade declarations by up to 50 per cent, from three to four days, to just one or two days. In addition, freight forwarders saved time for their marine cargo insurance applications by up to 90 per cent. As more companies adopt TradeXchange, they stand to benefit from higher productivity and greater business agility<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Putting People at the Heart of Everything**

Singapore Customs has placed great emphasis on people management. The people-centric management style of its leaders has resulted in highly motivated and productive employees. In the 2011 Employee Engagement Survey, Singapore Customs obtained best-of-class scores in the areas of "teamwork", "learning and development" as well as "supervisory practices".

These initiatives have reaped significant benefits for the nation. Singapore has been ranked first in the World Bank's Doing Business Report for the ease of trading across borders in the last five years.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Singapore has been ranked first in Border Administration in the World Economic Forum – Global Enabling Trade Report in the past three years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> With faster processing of marine cargo insurance, factoring approval from bank and more efficient permit declaration, it is believed that businesses will be able to optimise its resources to respond faster to meet its customers' needs.

<sup>2</sup> Singapore Customs was ranked first over the last 5 years in the World Bank Doing Business Report for the ease of trading across borders. This ranking is based on three sub-indicators which look at documents to export and import, time to export and import (customs clearance) and cost to export and import.

<sup>3</sup> Singapore topped the rankings in the World Economic Forum- Global Enabling Trade Report for border administration which assesses the extent to which border authorities facilitate the entry and exit of goods. The sub-index border administration is a composite consisting of three pillars, namely, efficiency of customs administration, efficiency of import-export procedures and transparency of border administration which SC excels in at all fronts.