



Meeting with Sri Lanka Customs

Date: 11th December 2012, Venue: DGC Office, Sri Lanka Customs

Current AW system issues to be taken up with SL Customs

1. Trade require a proper AW help desk to discuss urgent issues relating to the system during working hours & after working hours.
A dedicated phone is now allocated to this issue.

Telephone No is 0714789010. The relevant officer will answer the queries. If he cant he will note down the same and revert to the trade.

2. Suggest to give prior notices to the trade when there is a maintenance or upgrades take place in the system and the system is upgraded with a new version same should be communicated to respective users on time.

This was explained in detail. Customs will look into send a POP UP message via email. Sri Lanka Customs agreed to find a solution **by the end of January 2013** for this issue.

3. When working in the system, system gets terminated without any notices or warnings.
Same as 2.

Reasons were explained in details

No signal /slow network & when there are urgent amendments needed, SLC has no option but to switch off the system

Customs agreed to find a solution to inform the trade in advance via email/POP up message when there are such terminations in the system

Timeline: By end of January 2013

4. Most of the time multiple users cannot login to the system simultaneously.
ICT will issue VPN on the basis of the CusDecs submitted per day. If less than 10 one VPN. If between 10-20 two VPNs, if 100 CusDecs per day ten VPNs. However, if a person submitting 10 CusDecs wants 4 VPNs then he can pay 10,000/= rupees per VPN per year and buy so.

Customs have already taken measures to solve the issue. Customs agreed to look into this matter again as to how this could be resolved to facilitate the trade without any constraints.

Customs requested trade to contact the ICT division at Customs in this regard.

5. While accessing the system users are experiencing the following errors
 - Server error- This happens when incompatible data elements are fed in to the system. Eg: Blend code allowed length is 17. If more than this server error.

Please take a screen shot and email the same to Dr. Tharaka Mahaupatha.
tharaka321@yahoo.com.
 - Java errors - SLC asked the trade to go for high end PCs. The specs are given in Customs web. 64 bit computers with at least 4GB RAM. When they go for low end machines without enough memory and run multiple applications in the back ground this happens.
 - Timeout - Net work issues from the traders side. Trade to have a 2M line at least to resolve the issue. Please contact your network administrator.
 - Terminate the system - Net work issues from the traders side. Please contact your network administrator.
 - SSL extender cannot be established- Let us say the VPN certificate is installed in the browser internet explorer. Someone else makes the firefox as the default browser. This will cause this kind of issues.
SLC suggested re-installing VPN certificate when using the different browsers
 - Network problem - Already addressed above
 - Authentication failed- Password or the login name is incorrect.
According to the MOU signed, SLC requested trade to not to leak their PWs/usernames to a third party. Stick on to one user name and PW
Please contact ICT Division of Sri Lanka Customs for further clarifications.
 - XML errors- SLC suggested to mail XML errors to Dr. Tharaka Mahaupatha,
tharaka321@yahoo.com.
 - Print out issues- Please verify the CusDec by clicking on the eye mark  on the top menu of the CusDec before assessing.
6. When increasing the number of logins, already logged users are logoff by the system.
Please ask the trade to get more VPNs paying 10,000/= per VPN per year to Customs.
This way unwanted people will not get connected to the system. And the performance of the server can be maintained in the long run facilitating the legal trade.
7. Suggest to have a backup system to be used during the system interruptions.
This is not possible. We can have a disaster recovery site instead.

Progress of New Direct Trader Input - ASYCUDA WORLD

1.) Long Room Entry Flow vs Asycuda World

Steps	Previous	Steps	Current	Remarks
1	Key in —	1	DTI Entry submit	1 = 1 & 2
2	Numbering	2	Payment of Duty	2 = 7
3	Submit entry to relevant unit as per HS by wharf and appointment of appraiser by Superintendent of Customs	3	Accounts update	3 = 8
4	Appraise the Entry	4	Submit entry to relevant unit as per HS by wharf and appointment of appraiser by Superintendent of Customs	4 = 3
5	Refer to "D" Branch if required for Duty Waiver/ISFTA preference	5	Appraise the Entry	5 = 4
6	Satisfied the Entry by Superintendent of Customs	6	Refer to "D" Branch if required for Duty Waiver/ISFTA preference	6 = 5
7	Payment of Duty	7	Satisfied the Entry by Superintendent of Customs	7 = 6
8	Account update	8	Screening/Channel Selection (Amber: 75% & RED/Detail: 25%)	8 = 9
9	Screening/Channel Selection (Amber: 75% & RED/Detail: 25%)	9	Detach Warrant copy and direct for delivery of goods	9 = 10
10	Detach Warrant copy and direct for delivery of goods			
	Office of Entry – CBLR1		Office of Entry – CBHQ1	

Advantages

1. Availability of more information. (On drop down menu country codes etc.....)
2. Auto update of exchange rates.
3. Assessing time less.
4. Auto verification option.
5. Duty checking for HS code option.

Note: There are more details available in the ASYCUDA WORD system than the EDI but it is less than the ASYCUDA ++ (Eg : when we key the HS code in the ASYCUDA ++ system we can clearly see the description of the item as tariff but ASYCUDA WORLD text not shown)

This information is already available in the AWorld as well. User guidelines are available on the Custom web site. Those who have not attended the training sessions do not know how to retrieve the same.

Please contact or meet Dr. Tharaka Mahaupatha if further training needed.

Disadvantages

1. Due to operational flow change, it creates a huge rush creating work imbalance on the full operation.

In the ASYCUDA WORD system, process of the cusdec at CUSTOMS starts from the payment of the duty and it is big task to process & clear an urgent shipment in the same day than EDI . (In the EDI system, we had enough time to process the cusdec until pay the duty (up to 4.30 pm).

Customs will look for an alternate

2. No time advantage from Long room to DTI as operational time remains approx 2-1/2 to 3 hours for doc processing.

Customs will minimize the time within the next 3 months

3. EDI importers and exporters have lost the total time advantage where their earlier processing time was ½ an hour.

SLC has already identified more than 80 companies under AEO programme (Authorized Economic Operators) to provide green channel / Gold card facility which was used previously by EDI users.

SLC informed the trade that this facility would revamped once the system is totally ready within three months.

4. Cusdec Back page to be printed manually. This is no longer needed. SLC have gazetted and have conveyed the message to the operational staff. The DGC himself has signed the document.

5. Container page is not accepted by customs and have to print container numbers on back of delivery copy like previously. Customs will implement AWorld at the yards shortly, We will start from this week itself. The management of Sri Lanka Customs will inform ICT whether a printout is necessary. If so ICT Division of Sri Lanka Customs will allow the trade to take a printout of the Container page within one month of receipt of such instructions.
6. Value Declaration Form to be prepared manually. We will make this available in the system by the end of January.
7. Channeling for LCL shipments not done after 4.00pm –
SLC has agreed to provide night delivery on critical shipments when there is special request/approval – Trade to contact Mr. Nelson, Director of Customs on such cases.
8. Channeling selection have become totally non-transparent & hindering the importers.
Selection criteria should be changed urgently. Customs will solve this immediately
9. Greyline registration time is only till 7.00pm but RCT operates registration till up to 11.30pm. Need to match with RCT times.
Registration time will be extended till 8pm
10. At Geryline have to wait till all containers reach there. But RCT can register and release container by container. Need to match with RCT
Not possible to match RCT due to risk level of cargo
At the moment, SLC is allowing green channel facility in RCT for certain products (a list of products is available at Customs) Minimum 5,000 containers out of 18,000 are released through this facility without examinations.
Importers who have more than 10 containers would be mostly selected to release without examination & are benefited through this facility
11. **Payment of duty before satisfying the entry** –When there is a classification error, where there is an additional levies to be paid, customs will then and there collect it by amending the entry, but when it is on the other way, when there is an excess payment due to wrong classification, then need to follow the “refund procedure”, which would take a long time. It was suggested for a speedy refund procedure, speedy HS ruling procedure, if all necessary supporting documents are forwarded.
SLC suggested opening up a pre-payment account for both exports and imports
12. **More counters than the previous** – need to suggest simplifications
we used one counter for submit all documents at EDI UNIT but now we have to refer several counters A , B , C , D as the HS code (A- 1 to 46 , B-47 to 73 , C-74 to 84 , D - 85 to 99) . Most of the items categorized under "A" counter and there is huge rush in this counter (working staff same as other counter)

13. There are two additional points where two additional persons are involved - Previously which wharf clerks, themselves handled.

Customs will seriously look at the operational requirement & solve it

14. There is no special counter for priority basis – Persons manipulate the sequence for an additional charge.

Additional Persons are used to hand over the cusdecs to Superintend of Customs to appoint an Appraiser after accounts update and send the cusdec to remove the Warrant copy by another peon. (Previously done by WC)

Customs will seriously look at the operational requirement & solve it

15. We are not in a position to view or print the CURRENT ACCOUNT LEDGER in ASYCUDA WORLD. This was possible in DTI ASUCUDA ++.

Trade suggested allowing to view and print ledger as previously done in DTI system

SLC agreed to look into the possibility. The current account holders can take a summary from the export division at the moment. We will take steps to address give the facility to the traders in due time.

Other Issues discussed

1. Statement of problem / Issue:

All George -ASDA suppliers are requested to deliver their cargo to the nominated CFS (Logilink) on a given time slot on LCL basis.

Currently 800,000- 1,200,000pcs are consolidated at the Nominated CFS. All these cargo are subject to verification at the CVT ,Orogodawatta.

Due to verification arrangement at CVT the suppliers are wasting about 2-3 hours in between CVT and Logilink and incurring considerable costs for transport and labour.

Mostly they are unable to meet the given time slot to deliver cargo on time due to unpredictable time they spent at CVT and transportation in between.

Proposed Solution: Cargo Verification to be conducted at the CFS with same charges applicable at CVT since there is a considerable volume and continuous flow of cargo daily.

Possibility of arranging Verification at the CFS at the same BOI verification rate.

BOI rate for verification = Rs.104.00 per CBM

Customs Rate =Rs.300.00 per CBM

Suppliers are willing to use Customs Service at the CFS for cargo verification but due to higher tariff they always prefer to use BOI verification at CVT. If suppliers get the BOI rate at the CFS they could save time and additional transport costs.

Sri Lanka Customs stated that this is not possible to revise rates as they are as per the gazette. Further BOI has other charges which customs do not have.

2. Imposing of penalties on Import shipments

Customs tend to impose high amounts of penalties on minor issues in documents or in manifests without having a transparent basis. (Ex. We have faced this situation mostly due to the wrong declaration of consignee addresses)

SLC agreed to seriously look into this matter. It was suggested to check relevant section in the gazette (Sec 29 on manifest amendments) available in the SLC website.

Customs also informed the trade to report these cases to Mr. Kodikara Director of Customs (Imports)

3. Electronic Transactions Act, No. 19 of 2006, Evidence (Amendment) Act, No. 29 of 2005, and relevant information -

According to the above gazette SLC to accept electronic data as evidence and do away in keeping /maintaining hard copies in archives.

SLC agreed to check with their legal department for a special provision.