



TRADE BEAT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL
LIAISON UNIT

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THE JAMAICA CUSTOMS AGENCY'S ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY

The Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA), in recognizing its public responsibilities is committed to providing the highest degree of ethics to inspire confidence and elevate the Agency to a leading position reflecting international standards

of integrity. The JCA's Anti-Corruption Strategy is a multi-pronged initiative which creates and maintains high levels of staff and organizational integrity, while combating widespread corruption. The Anti-Corruption and Ethics Committee of the JCA, ensures that the implementation and the review of the strategy reflects our modernization efforts. The JCA continues to commit to facilitate legitimate trade, foster compliance to optimize revenue collection, and to adopt a comprehensive approach to border protection. This mission is achieved through the effective management of competent, motivated and professional human resources in keeping with the Agency's policy objectives.



To fulfill our objectives, the JCA's Anti-Corruption Strategy incorporates a number of initiatives; these include the staffing policy, an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, risk management tools, increased automation of Customs processes, a comprehensive regulatory framework and an enhanced relationship with our stakeholders.

Staffing Policy

The potential for risk is significantly reduced as it relates to our recruiting process, as candidates are subject to security vetting, and set term renewable contracts for senior staff. The recruitment process may include a polygraph component for select positions,



and term contracts are limited for three (3) years. Staff members are guided by the JCA 's Integrity Manual, the Staff Orders and the HR Policy Document, which outlines ethical behaviour, compliance with the law and standards of conduct. A revised version will be available in December 2014, to reflect the current environment, while maintaining key elements of the World Customs Organization 's (WCO) Integrity Guide.



Customer Satisfaction Survey

We recognize that satisfied customers are less susceptible to corruption and therefore we actively pursue high levels of customer service.

We assess our performance through the use of our annual Customer

Satisfaction Survey which measures customer satisfaction, and the efficiency of the cargo clearing process during the peak period at our major air and sea ports. The overall objective of the survey is to identify key areas for enhanced service delivery and improved Customs processes. The results of the findings are shared, and recommendations are delivered to internal and external stakeholders to facilitate improvement to services delivered by the Customs staff, as well as the wider border control agencies. In 2013, for the second consecutive year, the JCA was voted the number one (1) Customs administration for Customer Service as it relates to Customs inspection at the Donald Sangster International Airport (DSIA) located in Montego Bay Jamaica. This survey is conducted by the Airport Council International-Airport Service Quality (ACI-ASQ) which does international benchmarking in the Caribbean and Latin American Region.

Risk Management Tools

The JCA's "Agency Risk Management Policy 2014" (ARMP) is a systematic approach to determining which transactions present the greatest risk to Customs objectives and targets control efforts and resources on these risks to



effect the general Customs policy. The ARMP guides our internal and external audit plan and seeks to integrate existing risk management elements to ensure alignment with international standards and best practices. The regime places substantial emphasis on pre-clearance, intelligence and post clearance controls. A key intelligence mechanism that supports our efforts is the 1-888-corrupt hot line which is managed off-shore to garner intelligence through confidential means.

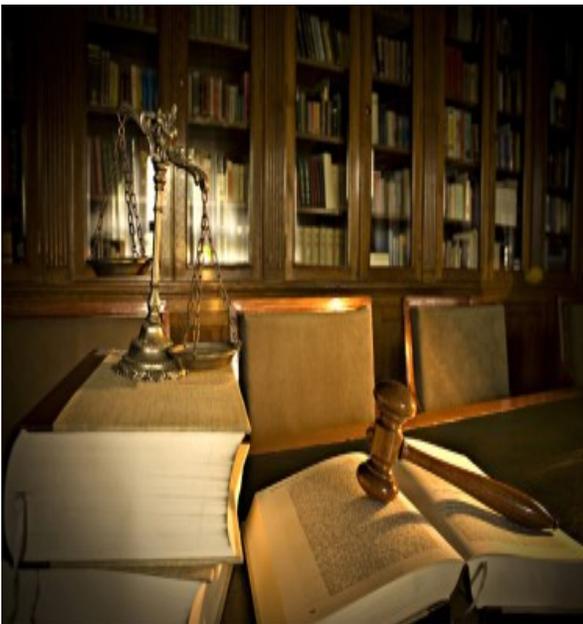


Automation of Customs Processes

The modernization of Jamaica Customs has consistently been on the agenda of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) and ongoing initiatives have been taken to transform the Agency into being one of the most efficient Customs administrations of the world. The implementation of the Customs Automated Services (CASE) system was

one of the principal initiatives taken to automate the technical infrastructure of Jamaica Customs. The CASE has been in operation for over a decade, attributing to increased revenue collection, increased levels of efficiency and improved trade facilitation. However, with a suite of over twenty (20) systems and satellite programmes serving the CASE, there is an absence of a fully integrated ICT solution to serve Risk Management, Post Clearance Audit and an electronic-manifest application to fulfill the needs of the stakeholders and the JCA.

Consequently, the JCA has embarked on the implementation of the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) World, with related pilot activities set to commence in December 2014. The ASYCUDA World platform is dynamic and meets the global standards of the current trade environment, allowing for customization of applications targeted to JCA's specific needs. Once implemented, ASYCUDA World will require staff to document their actions using their credentials, which supports transparency, accountability and traceability, which strengthens the integrity of the System.



Comprehensive Regulatory Framework

Recent amendments to the Customs Act were passed to facilitate the implementation of ASYCUDA World, which enables an environment for electronic declaration. The system also creates an environment for enhanced risk management by providing for the advanced submission of Electronic Manifests, which facilitates Pre-Arrival processing which would be supported by the new framework.

The GOJ through the implementation of the Omnibus Legislation 2014 has sought to establish a transparent and comprehensive system to govern all tax incentives. The Omnibus Legislation saw the simplification of tax bills, and repealed approximately ninety-nine percent (99%) of various Incentive Acts and Amendments to the Customs and Stamp Duty Acts. The Revenue Administration Act (RAA) and the General Consumption Tax (GCT) Act have also been amended to allow tax authorities access to third party information to enable better Post Audit assessment and greater transparency of fiscal obligations. The Tax Collections Act strengthens the power of the Commissioner of Customs, in pursuit of the collection of taxes and outstanding amounts owed to the GOJ.

Relationship with the Stakeholders

The JCA, as part of its commitment to facilitate international trade and uphold global security standards, re-launched its Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme in July 2014, which fulfills the security criteria vital to the integrity of the programme. Risk management techniques are essential to streamlining the trade process, as well as facilitating the AEO programme. The AEO programme provides an international platform where both Customs administrations and the trade related private sector, can share in the responsibility of securing the international supply chain. The development of Customs to Business relations is a necessary component of the AEO programme, designed to engage and validate all players and build integrity in the trade process.

The JCA in its continuous efforts to enhance relationships with the private sector hosts a monthly Quality Assurance Meeting, which provides an opportunity for open dialogue amongst our stakeholders. This meeting is also aimed at resolving issues and making recommendations to improve the quality of service delivered by the JCA, which fosters compliance and encourages integrity. An advisory board, comprised of representatives from the private sector and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the GOJ is established, and supports an equitable and transparent relationship with the JCA.



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