



REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION



ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN 2009

April 2010

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1. Harmonisation with the EU Common Transit Convention

In cooperation with EU consultants (IPA 2007 Programme), the following activities have been realized:

- A Task Force has been formed to analyze the differences between the national legislation and the EU Common Transit Convention,
- The national Regulation has been compared with that of the EU and the areas which need to be harmonized have been identified,
- The other government agencies and institutions which might be involved have been identified,
- A Plan on Harmonisation with the EU Common Transit Convention has been adopted,
- A team has been formed which started to draft the legislation needed,
- A team has been formed which started to draft procedures and standards.

2. Legal framework for binding electronic customs declaration drawn up

Amendments to the Customs Code have been drafted (expected to be passed in April 2010). The amendments aim at further harmonisation with the EU Customs Code, EU Council Regulation no. 2913/1992 and the Amendments to the Regulations 82/97, 955/1999, 2700/2000, 648/2005 and 1791/2006, thus establishing legal grounds for implementation of the new electronic Customs Declaration Processing System (CDPS) in the Customs Administration. Binding electronic customs declaration and summary import and summary export declarations are introduced. There is ongoing drafting of accountancy rules related to the import duties, in conformity with the EU legislation.

The amendments to the Customs Code envisage abolition of the authorizations granted by the Customs Administration to legal entities for carrying out representation activities in customs procedures, elimination of the concept – high-risk person, which used to apply for withdrawal of the authorisations for representation in customs procedures from legal entities, as well as transfer of the provisions related to a single customs duty rate of customs duty to the Customs Tariff Law.

3. Adopted Legal Framework for Integrated Customs Tariff

Amendments to the Customs Tariff Law (adopted at the beginning of 2010) have been made, thus creating legal grounds for establishment of Integrated Customs Tariff – TARIM (a kind of national TARIC), integrating all tariff and non-tariff measures, in conformity with the regulations in force in the Republic of Macedonia. The Customs Administration has been appointed administrator of TARIM.

4. Amendments to the Administrative Tax Law, concerning the processing of customs declarations

Amendments have been made to the Administrative Tax Law (adopted in January 2010), providing for abolition of administrative taxes for:

- Lodgement of customs declarations,
- Requests for issuance of movement certificate EUR 1,
- Issuance of documents laid down by international and interstate Agreements, accepted and ratified by the Republic of Macedonia and used instead of customs declarations and



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- Entry related to the bringing and taking of goods into and from a free zone or free warehouse.

The abolishment of these administrative taxes aims at harmonisation with the European standards, reduction of the burden for the economic operators, as well as simplification of administrative procedures.

5. The Customs Administration appointed - institution competent for the CCN Gateway with the European Commission and the EU Member States

On 07th July 2009, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia passed a decision assigning the Customs Administration to run the set up and maintenance of a communication gateway with the European Commission and the EU Member States – Common Communication Network and Common System Interface (CCN/CSI), thus fulfilling one of the requirements for accession to the Common Transit Convention between the European Communities and the EFTA countries, interconnection of the electronic Customs Declaration processing system of the Republic of Macedonia with the relevant EU and EC systems, as well as interconnection with the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) of the EU.

6. Connection with the EU Customs IT Systems

With the support of EU consultants, financed under the IPA 2007, preparation of ToR¹ for development of software for connection with the NCTS and Common Communication Network and Common System Interface CCN/CSI . CCN/CSI started in September 2009. The funds for this software have been provided from the IPA 2008 programme.

With the support of EU consultants, financed under the IPA 2007, preparation of ToR for interconnection with the Integrated Customs Tariff (TARIC), European Binding Tariff Information (EBTI), Quota, Surveillance, as well as the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS) is ongoing. Development and funding of software and the necessary equipment has been provided for within the framework of IPA 2009.

In order to ensure coordinated and timely development of its ICT systems, in cooperation with experts engaged under the IPA 2007 programme, a new ICT Development Strategy has been drawn up, its essential objective being development of an ICT service and an integrated IT system environment, in conformity with EU and other international standards, which will entirely support the business strategy of the Customs Administration, facilitate trade and transport and ensure risk-management, and make sure that the work, in terms of investments is performed with highest efficiency. The objectives of the ICT Strategy derive from the business strategy, established in the Strategic Plan of the of the Customs Administration and its Action Plans, the National Plan for the Adoption of the Acquis (multi-annual indicative planning document for development of e-customs projects, modernized EU Customs Code and its Implementing Regulation), as well as the recommendations of the DG TAXUD Monitoring Mission on IT awareness. The ICT Strategy covers all aspects for project planning, laid down by the European Commission in the area of interoperability of the customs systems and it exhaustively elaborates the Interoperability Implementation Strategy.

In cooperation with the consultants engaged under the IPA 2007 programme, an Interoperability Implementation Strategy has been drawn up, being an integral part of the ICT Strategy of the Customs Administration. This document includes plans for the forthcoming projects:

¹ Terms of Reference



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- New Computerised Transit System;
- Integrated Tariff Environment, including: Combined Nomenclature, TARIC, electronic Binding Tariff Information, Tariff Quota and Surveillance, European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances, Suspensions, Specimen Management System, Data Dissemination System;
- Excise management and control system;
- Automated export system;
- Automated import system;
- Customs portal, and other systems.

7. Automatic adoption of the EC Regulations on classification of goods in the Combined Nomenclature introduced

The **Regulation on the Application of the European Communities Commission Regulations concerning the classification of certain goods in the Combined Nomenclature** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 114 of 2009), has been appended, thus ensuring continuous adoption and application of the EU Regulations.

8. 2010 Customs Tariff harmonized with the European Union's Combined Nomenclature

In accordance with the obligations arising from the accession of the Republic of Macedonia to the World Trade Organisation, the Customs Tariff has been harmonized with the amendments to the EU Combined Nomenclature, published in the Official Journal of the EU, no. L 287 of 31 October 2009. The MFN² customs duty rates of 426 tariff items have been amended. As a result of the latest trends in trade, due to the decreased trade volume of certain goods, 330 tariff items have been erased and 167 new tariff items have been introduced, as well as 31 new tariff items at national level. With these amendments of the tariff codes and description of goods, the 2010 Customs Tariff has been almost entirely harmonized with the 2010 EU Combined Nomenclature.

9. The Republic of Macedonia acceded to the Revised Kyoto Convention

On 28th July 2009, the Republic of Macedonia acceded to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonisation of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention) of the WCO³. The harmonization of standards is envisaged to be realized in 2010 with the support of the EU consultants, engaged under the IPA 2007 Project.

The Revised Kyoto Convention is one of the most important WCO instruments for implementation of unified customs procedures by all Contracting Parties. It is the main instrument for trade facilitation, transparent simplified procedures, use of information technology and risk-management, as well as partnership with the business community. Since its entry into force on 3rd February 2006, 64 WCO countries have acceded to it.

10. Administration and collection of excises transferred from the Public Revenue Office to the Customs Administration

As from 01st January 2010, the Customs Administration took over the administration and

² Most Favored Nation

³ World Customs Organisation



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the collection of excise duties from the Public Revenue Office for the entire territory of the Republic of Macedonia. Previously, the Customs Administration was only in charge for the management of excises at import and export. The competences have been transferred with **Amendment to the Law on Excise and the Law on the Customs Administration** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 105/09 of 21st August 2009), on grounds of which on 07th October 2009 new Rulebook for the implementation of the Law on Excise was adopted.

The basic functions which are taken over by the Customs Administration are:

- Issuance of excise documents,
- Issuance of excise approvals for non-excise use of excise goods (alcohol for pharmacies, hospitals, cosmetics etc.),
- Issuance of excise tax stamps (banderoles),
- Receipt, processing and certification of excise documents,
- Receipt of excise declarations and establishment of excise claims,
- Control of excise tax payers,
- Offences and crimes, as laid down in the Excise Law,
- Take-over of the initiated administrative cases from the Public Revenue Office and carrying out the administrative procedure,
- Application and developments of an IT excise management system.

In terms of the organization of work related to the administration of the excises, the following have been adopted:

- Amendments to the Rulebook on the organization of work at the Customs Administration,
- Amendments to the Rulebook on the job post systematization at the Customs Administration,
- Guidelines on the application of the Law on Excise in customs operations,
- Guidelines on keeping a Register of holders of excise license and a Register of holders of authorizations for excise preferential use,
- Guidelines on the manner and procedure for excise tax refunds for use of liquid oil gas,
- Guidelines on the manner and procedure for excise tax refunds to special subjects.

11. Audit Mission for transfer of competences for decentralized management of the European Union Assistance

In March 2009, the European Commission carried out an audit of the preparedness of the Customs Administration for decentralized management of the EU assistance for the First and Third component of IPA. The outcomes of the audit were positive.

12. Implementation of IPA Projects

The realization of the Projects financed under the European Commission Programme – IPA 2007 started. The first meetings of the Steering Committees of the Projects “Technical Assistance for further harmonisation of the national legislation with the acquis in the area of customs” and “Technical assistance for strengthening of the border controls” took place in November 2009 in Skopje.



13. Fifth meeting of the Subcommittee on Trade, Industry and Customs and Taxation

The Fifth meeting of the Subcommittee on Trade, Industry and Customs and Taxation, within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Committee between the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia was held in Skopje on 28th and 30th April 2009.

During the Subcommittee, a technical meeting was held between representatives of the Customs Administration and the European Commission Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union, who discussed the issues related to the development and implementation of the concept Authorised Economic Operator, the application of pre-arrival and pre-departure information, diagonal cumulation in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, adoption of the legislation related to the implementation of the EU Modernised Customs Code, as well as the possibility for further cooperation in the ICT domain.

14. The Republic of Macedonia acceded to EU CUSTOMS 2013

In August 2009, with the ratification of the Memorandum on Understanding, the Republic of Macedonia officially acceded to the Programme CUSTOMS 2013 of the EU.

CUSTOMS 2013 Programme is aimed at improvement and unification of customs procedures in the EU member States and the countries candidates for accession, particularly in the area of safety and security of the external borders, fight against fraud and protection of the financial and economic interests, as well as creating greater competitiveness between the companies through faster customs procedures and paperless environment .

In December 2009, a workshop for the Customs 2007/2013 Steering Committee members was held under the Customs 2013 Programme. The workshop was focused on transfer of experience from the participation in the programme by the Customs Administration of Bulgaria, who are members since 1996.

15. Initial analysis of the EC Customs Blueprints 2007

The Blueprints of the European Commission are practical guidelines to the EU best practices, according to which the Customs Administrations can measure their own operational capacity. In 2009 the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia started to study the blueprints, assess its own differences and to develop a plan for complete harmonization with the Blueprints.

16. Second phase for harmonisation with the WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (SAFE)

Within the Second phase of the Project for harmonisation with the Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade, a World Customs Administration (WCO) Mission visited Macedonia in July 2009 to assess the development of the Customs Administration since July 2007 onwards and to give recommendations for further alignment with the SAFE Framework. The Mission representatives met representatives from government and public institutions, as well as the business community and their associations. According to the Mission Report, the Republic of Macedonia has almost fully established high level of controls based on risk-analysis, integrated border management, trade facilitation, ethical standards and integrity of the employees.

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17. New Customs Declaration Processing software (CDPS) compatible for interconnection with the EU customs systems

On 23rd January 2009, the Customs Administration signed a Contract for procurement of an electronic Customs Declaration Processing System (CDPS).

Although with slight delays by the contractor in terms of the agreed time schedule for delivery of the phases, the development of the new CDPS is ongoing. Testing of the first two modules for transit and import is under way. A so-called “Virtual Customs Office” has been created, where testing is performed and the functionalities of the software are checked for their compliance with the technical specifications. Most of the hardware and system software has been procured and installed. Digital certificates for the customs officials have also been procured. The new CDPS should be put in function by June 2010. Quality assessment and acceptance of the new CDPS shall be provided by consultants financed under the IPA 2007. This system shall replace the existing system for customs declaration processing (ASYCUDA) and introduce: electronic processing of declarations for import, export and transit, additional sub-systems and revenue collection functionalities, guarantees, risk-analysis, authorizations, customs tariff, as well as sub-systems for management of laboratory, excise, intellectual property, knowledge base and e-learning. The new CDPS should also provide development and integration of the business community and the government institutions through a co-called system external domain. The business community is constantly informed about the features of the new CDPS through presentations and conferences, through the media and the Advisory Council - association with the business community.

Analyses are underway for provision of access to the border inspection authorities to the risk-analysis criteria in the CDPS, which should ensure more efficient and effective risk-analysis-based inspections at entry into the Republic of Macedonia. It is also considered to provide 24/7 support of this kind of risk-analysis-based inspections, as well as introduction of the Customs Administration with 24 hour support in these controls.

18. Upgrade of the electronic Single Window/One Stop Shop for issuing import and export licenses and tariff quota– EXIM

The EXIM continues to successfully function in 2009. In July 2009, a Memorandum on Cooperation was signed with the USAID e-Gov Project for further development and upgrade of the EXIM. There are ongoing interventions in the software – addition of new functionalities (electronic request and issuance of transport licenses in bilateral road traffic, connection with the new ICT system of the Veterinary Inspectorate, connection with the new CDPS, introduction of new reports). Single Window for Export/Import Licenses and Quotas – EXIM with the other electronic systems of the Customs Administration. On 17th February 2010, at the official contest of IT solutions in the public sector, this system won the first prize. With this award, the EXIM system is entitled to participate at the International WITSA 2010 Global ICT Excellence Awards, which will be held on 26th May within the World Congress on Information Technology 2010 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Analyses are underway focused on introduction of licenses for release of goods free circulation in the country (not only import and export licenses).

To the end of presentation of the benefits and encouraging its clients to use the EXIM system, presentations have been held in Skopje, Bitola and Strumica, attended by over 250 representatives of the business community.



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In December 2009, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) recommended EXIM as a model for development of electronic single window system for export and import declarations in the region.

At the beginning of this year, at the official contest of IT solutions in the public sector, this system won the first prize. With this award, the EXIM system is entitled to participate at the International WITSA 2010 Global ICT Excellence Awards for 2009 within the World Congress on Information Technology 2010.

19. Electronic receipt of requests, processing and issuance of authorization for inward processing

By the end of 2009, the **web application for processing requests for inward processing** was finished. This application ensures:

- Electronic submission of requests for inward processing by the economic operators,
- Receipt and verification of requests by the Customs Administration,
- Automated control of the validity of data indicated in the request,
- Processing of the request by the Customs Administration and exchange of information with the applicants,
- Issuance of authorisations,
- Creation of reports.

The application does not yet function with digital signatures, but the economic operators can submit their requests through the website of the Customs Administration. This application ensures shorter times for administration and processing of the requests and increased transparency and traceability of the requests. Activities for promotion of the web application were started at the beginning of 2010, as well as preparation of **User Manual on the application for processing requests for authorisations for inward processing**.

There are ongoing activities for upgrade of the application which will include digital signature, electronic registry of import and a possibility for electronic application and obtaining the authorisations for other customs procedures with economic impact.

20. Development of Integrated Information System (IIS) in the Customs Administration

The testing and the transition period of several months, when both the old and the new system and traditional archiving were in function ended on 31st December 2009 and on 01st January 2010, IIS officially became productive and mandatory for use in the Customs Administration.

This generation of IIS covers:

- Human resource management module,
- Material and financial operations module,
- Electronic Document Management System.

The Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) includes:

- archiving and processing of electronic documents and electronic copies of paper documents,
- circulation of electronic documents and electronic signature,
- electronic tracing of the status of document in terms of preparation, distribution, movement, archiving, locating, authenticity, security and history.

EDMS embodies:

- 170 identified and described work processes,
- minimum deadlines for execution/completion of the work processes,
- identified connection points and relations between the work processes,



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- identified standard document types,
- electronic signing of documents.

EDMS enables:

- Centralized acceptance of electronic and paper documents,
- Authentic authorized copies of paper documents,
- Centralized physical and logical archive,
- Authorization and security of documents at a level of single document, organizational unit, user group/functionalities/privileges and work processes,
- Electronic search and tracing of documents,
- Scanning, classification, marking, recording, receipt and sending of incoming and outgoing and internal mail,
- Assigning responsibilities/competences for the documents (creator, organizational unit, phases in the work processes and ad-hock),
- Electronic exchange of documents with external associates.

The functioning of the EDMS has been regulated with 22 internal acts.

- Description of work processes by phases,
- Guidelines for EDMS use,
- User manual for web scanning of documents,
- User Manual for password changing in EDMS,
- Manual for internal communication between the organizational units in EDMS,
- User Manual for web client users in EDMS,
- User Manual for electronic signing of documents,
- Guidelines for processing of documents such as invoices in EDMS,
- Rules of procedure of the EDMS Help Desk,
- User Manual for invoicing and record keeping related to leased premises,
- User Manual for electronic registry of laboratory materials,
- User Manual for registry of seized goods,
- User Manual for use of the labour output assessment software,
- User Manual for use of the capital assets inventory software,
- User manual for archive processing of client electronic requests,
- Guidelines on the use of the software for material and financial operations,
- User Manual for electronic lodgment of documents to the Customs Administration,
- User Manual for the application for registry of EUR 1 forms,
- User Manual for the customs seals registry application,
- User Manual for the application for recruitment and employment processes,
- User Manual for the application for registry of the Asset Declarations,
- Guidelines for access to the electronic registry system,
- Manual for browsing/searching Guidelines prepared by the Customs Administration in EDMS

Preparations for next generation of EDMS have been made, covering:

- definition of all types of records in the Customs Administration, type and character of data,
- definition of all kinds of forms for internal and external use,
- harmonization of the information and forms and elimination of double registry,
- definition of administrators and depositaries,
- development of software solution,
- adoption of written rules for the use of the system



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21. Advisory Council for cooperation between the business community and the Customs Administration

On 30th January 2009, the Customs Administration, the Economic Chamber of Macedonia, Association of Chambers of Commerce of Macedonia, the Economic Chamber for North-West Macedonia, MAKAMTRANS - Association of Independent Transporters' Syndicates, the Association of Macedonian Enterprises for Road International Transport "Makedonija Soobrakaj" (A.M.E.R.I.T) and the Macedonian International Freight Forwarding and Logistics Operators Association (MIFA) signed a **Memorandum on Cooperation and a Memorandum Establishing an Advisory Council**. Later, the Memorandum was also signed by the American – Macedonian Chambers of Commerce.

The aim of the Memorandum is to promote the partnership between the Customs Administration and the business community and ensure high level of security and facilitation of international trade. The enhancement of the cooperation with the business community by establishing an Advisory Council is a standard established by the Convention on Simplification and Harmonization of the Customs Procedures (Reviewed Kyoto Convention), ratified by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia in January 2008.

Since its establishment in January 2009, the Advisory Council holds at least one meeting per month. Several conferences and training sessions have been organized by the Advisory Council. The cooperation within this Advisory Council has resulted in adoption of amendments to the legislation and changes in the organization of work of the Customs Administration.

22. Criteria for reduction of the amount of the general guarantee alleviated

In order to reduce the costs for the economic operators, in 2009 the Customs Administration adopted amendments to the **Guidelines for assessment of the criteria for the amount of the general guarantee**, thus reducing the amount of the applicant's minimal capital from one million euros to three hundred thousand euros, while the requirement for positive auditor's opinion on the financial reports, being a second criteria, remains in force only for the economic operators which are obliged to provide opinion from an independent auditor do so by the Trade Company Law.

23. 2009 Customs Tariff in English

The Customs Administration prepared the **2009 Customs Tariff** in English and made it available on its website. The objective is to provide information to the domestic and foreign users concerning the classification of goods, the customs duties (MFN⁴ and preferential), trade policy measures, VAT and excises.

24. Operationalisation of the concept – Authorised Economic Operator

At the beginning of 2009, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted **amendments to the Customs Code Implementing Regulation**, providing for operationalisation of the concept – Authorised Economic Operator, introduced with the amendments to the Customs Code in 2008. Nevertheless, as in the EU Member States this legal possibility has not yet started to live.

⁴ Most Favored Nation



25. Measures for trade and transport facilitation – Regulatory Guillotine

To the end of trade and transport facilitation, in 2009 the Government of the Republic of Macedonia passed 50 measures within the second phase of the Regulatory Guillotine. The campaign for constant measures aiming at facilitation of trade gained a permanent character, as a result of which, the list of measures has been continuously expanded since then, and the realization of these measures regularly followed. Some of the more significant measures under this project are:

- 24 – hour presence of the phytosanitary and veterinary inspection units at the major border crossing points,
- Introduction of a selective risk-analysis based control system by the phytosanitary inspectorate,
- Analysis of the possibilities for joint customs controls with the Customs Services of the neighbouring countries,
- Cut-down of the fees for the services rendered by the veterinary and sanitary inspection units,
- Harmonization of the transit regime at the border crossing of the Republic of Macedonia with that of the neighbouring countries,
- The Ministry of Interior in cooperation with the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia should consider the possibility to provide for a “green lane” for empty motor vehicles and vehicles transporting easily-perishable goods at those border crossing where there is such a possibility,
- Strengthening of the controls at the illegal border crossings to the end of eradication of trafficking of mass consumption goods and counterfeits,
- Acceptance of the documents issued by the EU customs authorities for issuance of the relevant approvals in the Republic of Macedonia.

26. Introduced possibility for the economic operators to appeal the Minutes/Report from the control of proofs of origin of goods in terms of preferential treatment

In July 2009, amendments to the **Guidelines for the Preferential Agreements** were passed, under which, besides other things, a possibility is provided to the exporters to appeal the findings in the Report made by the competent Commission of the Customs Administration on the verification of the proof of origin upon the request by a foreign customs authority (in case they disagree with the findings in the report).

Namely, if the exporter disagrees with the findings in the Report, he/she can appeal the Report within 8 days following the receipt of the Report before the Commission of the relevant Regional Customs House (precept is indicated in the Report itself). The customs authority, because of the appeal, forms another Commission which reviews the entire case once again prepares a Report, which is submitted to the party. No appeal is allowed against the second Report. According to the results from the control performed if there is amendment in the customs declaration and the exporter or his representative is compliant with the findings in the Report, he is obliged to lodge a new declaration. In case the exporter or his representative disagree with the findings and a new amended customs declaration is not lodged, the customs authority, acting ex-officio, draws up a decision for amendment of the data in the customs declaration.

The exporter, in conformity with the legal provisions, has the right to appeal this Decision before the Ministry of Finance, being a second-instance authority.



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27. E-learning module on the application of the Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) System introduced

In cooperation with the EC Directorate General on Taxation and Customs Union, e-learning module on the Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) system was created in July 2009. According to this system, introduced in the EU on 01st July 2009, every economic operator involved in customs import/export activities must register in the system and obtain a unique EORI number.

The e-learning module is of informative character and is intended to introduce the economic operators to the instruments for enhancement of the security measures related to import and export of goods in and from the EU, thus facilitating the legitimate trade and reducing any possible risks. The module was created under the Customs 2013 programme and is an integral part of the e-learning training Strategy. It can be found on the Customs Administration's website.

In August 2009, the Customs Administration organized training on the role of the EORI numbers. The training, organized under the Customs 2013 Programme, aimed at familiarization with the meaning of the EORI number, who should have such a number, where it can be obtained and the legal regulations related to the EORI number.

28. Grounds for keeping statistics related to the trade exchange with Kosovo set up

In the middle of 2009, **the Rulebook on the manner of completion of customs declarations and the Book of country codes have been appended with new country names and codes**, including Kosovo - XK and Montenegro - ME, while the country name and code Serbia and Montenegro (CS) has been replaced with Serbia – RS.

29. Abolished Road Tax for foreign vehicles transporting goods in Macedonia

In September 2009 the **Decision on the amount and manner of payment of the public road fee for tractors and trailers** (road tax) was amended. This provided for abolishment of the road tax for foreign vehicles transporting goods and passengers, which used to be collected by the Customs Administration.

30. The manner of conversion of the customs value from foreign currencies into denars regulated

In September 2009, the Minister of Finance passed new **Rulebook on the manner of application of the average exchange rate when establishing the customs value of goods**, précising the period and regulating the manner how the average denar exchange rate is to be applied for conversion of foreign currencies when establishing the customs value of the goods, as base for calculation of import duties.

31. Customs procedure for temporary import of goods used in hunting tourism regulated

To the end of unification of the customs procedures on the entire territory of the Republic of Macedonia, in September 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the customs procedure for temporary import of**



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goods used in the hunting tourism , (personal belongings, sports purpose goods, hunting equipment and animals used for hunting).

At the same time, **software for record-keeping of the cross-border traffic of pets** was also put in function. The software is available to the customs officials of all border crossing points.

32. Construction of Border Crossing Blace (Macedonian border with Kosovo)

All preparations for the start of the construction of the border crossing Blace were finalized at the end of 2009. At the beginning of this year, the Customs Administration and the most successful bidder on the open invitation to Bids signed a contract for construction of the Border Crossing Blace – passenger terminal, located at the Macedonian border with Kosovo. The Project is financed with a loan from the World Bank under the Second Trade and Transport Facilitation Project. The construction should start in April this year and the entire project is expected to be completed within 14 months.

33. Diagonal cumulation of origin with Serbia

This means that raw materials originating in Serbia can be used in the manufacturing process of ready-made products and when exported in the EU Member States, they automatically obtain a status of products with Macedonian origin.

34. Initiated activities for signing Free Trade Agreements with the Mediterranean countries

To the end of fulfillment of the requirements for inclusion of the Republic of Macedonia in the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean system of diagonal cumulation of origin of goods, analysis of the mutual trade exchange with the Mediterranean countries had been done, and negotiations have been launched for conclusion of Free Trade Agreements with Israel and Egypt.

35. Renewed initiative for conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement with the Russian Federation

The poor trade exchange with the Russian Federation was basis for renewal of the negotiations for conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement which will ensure greater distribution and availability of Macedonian products on the Russian market, particularly of agricultural products.

36. Amount of work

As before, the economic operators in 2009 showed greatest interest for authorizations for inward process and customs warehousing. The companies' interest for authorizations for simplified procedures has increased almost twice than the previous years, but it still remains on a very low level, compared to the expectations and benefits they enable.

On the other hand, the interest for obtaining an authorization for local customs clearance (warehouse, import and export) has increased considerably.

Type of authorisation	2009	2008	2007
Customs representation	33	25	22
Procedures with economic impact	533	213	226
Authorised consignee	24	9	8
Local customs clearance	59	32	27
Authorised exporter	11	8	1
Binding tariff information	167	174	99



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In 2009, the Customs Administration started with systematic surveillance and control of the holders of authorizations for carrying out representation activities before the customs authorities, as a result of what, the authorizations of 3 companies have been withdrawn, due to established irregularities.

A total of 402 thousand customs declarations have been processed in 2009, being by 16.4% less than in 2008 (468 thousand in 2008). Of the total number, 231 thousand were import customs declarations, being by 3.4% less than those processed in 2008, when 269 thousand of import customs declarations were processed. In 2009, a total of 171 thousand export customs declarations were processed, being by 15% less, compared to 2008. There were no major changes in the structure of processed declarations in 2009, neither in the road, rail, post nor air transport.

287 thousand freight motor vehicles, 249 thousand railway carriages and 12 thousand aircrafts crossed the Macedonian borders in 2009.



37. Intelligence activities regulated

In March 2009 the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the operation of the Intelligence Department**, as well as the manner of gathering information for prevention and detection of customs offences and criminal acts, their assessment, analysis, research and forwarding to the other organizational units of the Customs Administration and other state authorities.

38. Central List of Suspects

In March 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the Central List of Suspects**, regulating the roles and responsibilities of the Customs Administration in the preparation and use of data in the Central List of Suspects (CLS), containing data on legal and natural entities and vehicles which it is reasonably believed that additional attention should be paid to during any customs control.

The CLS is a tool, assisting the customs officials when performing control. A customs official performing control may at any time request information from the Communication and Coordination department, whether a person or vehicle can be found on the CLS. If the person or vehicle is on the list, the customs official receives clear instructions on the measures he/she should take.

According to the Guidelines for the Central List of Suspects, in August 2009 and **Operational Instruction defining the use of the electronic system – Central List of Suspects**.

39. Electronic System for exchange of intelligence information and messages

To the end of further enhancement of the capacities for fight against customs frauds, an electronic system for exchange of intelligence information and messages between the Intelligence Department and the border posts was set up in June 2009. The administration and use of the system have been defined with an **Operational Instruction for the use of the system for electronic exchange of intelligence messages**.

40. Introduction of software for intelligence information processing

In cooperation with the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations Limited, activities for implementation of a **System for processing of intelligence, seizures, offences, searches and data from searches (TRIPS)** are ongoing. **According to plan, this system shall become fully operational by the end of June 2010.**

41. Functioning of the Video Surveillance System, recording and transmission regulated

To the end of defining the **operation with the CCTV⁵ system for video surveillance, recording and transmission**, in January 2009 the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines**. The Guidelines lay down the manner of operation and standard procedures for this system. Fixed and rotating cameras have been installed at all border crossing points (a total of 240 cameras), controlled by the Coordination and Communication department. Based on risk-analysis, intelligence and other information, targeted monitoring is performed and the cameras record 24/7. The video records are kept for a period of 6 months.

⁵ CCTV - Closed Circuit Television



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The Guidelines were revised in April 2009 in order to closely define the authorisations for access and real-time control of the system, as well as the access to and use of the recorded material.

42. The operation of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition System - ANPR regulated

At the end of April 2009, **Guidelines for the operation with the ANPR system** were adopted, laying down the manner of work with the system, as well as the obligations and competences for its maintenance and management. The ANPR system is a system which enables automatic recognition of the license plates and their recording into a unified database.



The ANPR system also enables comparison of data with a previously defined database of license plates numbers and a possibility for warning/alarming.

With the interconnection of the ANPR systems with the Customs Declaration Processing System, it will be possible to automate the discharge of customs declarations, simplified procedures and transit procedures.

43. Precise rules of procedure for 197 Customs Hotline

At the end of April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for receipt, processing and acting upon calls received at the customs hot line 197**, regulating the competences for system administration.

44. Functioning of the radio communication system of the Customs Administration regulated

In April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the radio communication system (RCS)** of the Customs Administration. RCS is comprised of portable radio station, dispatch radio station, radio repetition station, radio link and a central radio link.

The RCS frequencies of the Customs Administration are strictly defined and cannot impede the operation of the other radio communication systems in the Republic of Macedonia, property of other institutions. The frequency can be VHF (very high frequency) or UHF (ultra high frequency).

The radiorepetitor stations, radio links and the central radio link have been installed on defined locations on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

45. Extension of the radio communication network

In 2009, activities for extension of the radio communication network, which is under the competences of the Ministry of Interior, in the region of western Macedonia were started aiming at ensuring greater bandwidth and redundancy of the network radio links. The set-up of

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equipment has been finalized at the following locations: Stogovo, Pelister, Vodno, Kozjak, Prilep, Kavadarci. The link Prilep-Kozjak-Kavadarci is fully functional.

46. Established electronic national database on value

In June 2009, the Customs Administration put in function an electronic national database on value, as part of the system for risk-analysis. The establishment of this database is in conformity with the WCO guidelines for fight against customs frauds related to customs value, laid down in the WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation. The administration and use have been regulated with the **Instruction for use of the national database on value**.

47. The Customs Valuation Compendium and the Explanatory Notes to the 2007 Harmonised System of the WCO, published in Macedonian language

The translation of the **Customs Valuation Compendium and the Explanatory Notes to the 2007 Harmonised System of the World Customs Organisation** in Macedonian language was finalised by the end of 2009 and published in January 2010. These publications contain essential information and practical examples for determination of the customs value and practical application of the Harmonised System and are useful tools for facilitation in the everyday work of the customs officials and appropriate application of the legislation.

The Customs Valuation Compendium contains the entire text of the Agreement on Implementation of Article VII of the 1994 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, essential information and practical examples for determination of the customs value.

The 5 books of the Explanatory Notes to the 2007 Harmonised System, contain the official texts of the fourth, latest edition of the 2007 Explanatory Notes on the Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System of the World Customs Organisation.

48. Electronic database of the official seals of every Customs Service

An electronic database containing prints of every official customs seal of every foreign Customs Service has been made available on the intranet portal of the Customs Administration. This way, every customs official can check and verify each print of seals, being used for certification of the EUR 1 movement certificates, in accordance with the Free Trade Agreements and can quickly and easily establish the accuracy and authenticity of the seals when controlling the import documents.

49. Established database on chemical substances - dual use goods

With the assistance of the US Embassy, a database on chemical substances, goods and technologies with dual use has been established. This database, where certain tariff headings have been separately indicated, was introduced as risk criteria, aiming at prevention of export of chemicals having dual use. The customs officials have been trained on how to use this database.

50. Guidelines for Preferential Agreements amended

The amendments to the **Guidelines for Preferential Agreements** have been adopted in conformity with the amended Protocols on origin of goods which the Republic of Macedonia has signed with other countries, and the competences for verification of the proofs of origin have been transferred from the Customs System Sector to the Control and Investigation Sector.



51. Strengthening of border controls

Under the project on enhancement of the Customs Administration capacities in the fight against frauds, cross-border crime, corruption and illegal trade, in cooperation with EU consultants, financed under the IPA 2007 programme:

- a list of the necessary technical equipment for improvement of the operation and enhancement of the capacities in detection of illicit trade has been prepared (the procedure for selection of most favourable bidder is ongoing),
- a list of technical equipment for the border crossing to meet EU border crossings standards has been prepared;
- there is an ongoing revision of the standard rules of procedure at the border crossing points of every agency having competences in border operations, in accordance with the Schengen legislation.
- technical specification for integration of data obtained from several sources in a single system for the needs of control, investigations and operations of the Customs Administration.

52. National Forum on Frequently Asked Questions related to tariff classification of goods, value and origin FAQ forum

In June, the Customs Administration set up a forum on its intranet site, thus enabling the customs officials to electronically ask questions about tariff classification of goods, value and origin and send them to the competent organizational units at the Headquarters. The administration and use of the forum have been regulated with an **Instruction for use of the national forum application** (Questions & Answers).

53. Procedures for apprehension, detention and interrogation of persons

In July 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for apprehension, detention and interrogation of persons**. The Guidelines regulate the procedures for bringing and detention of a suspect, as measures to ensure his/her presence for successful realisation of the criminal proceedings, as well as the manner of interrogation of a person, suspected of having committed a crime. The apprehension as a measure to ensure the presence of the defendant is performed by the customs inspectors and the customs officials of the border crossings and inland customs offices only in case of reasonable doubts of a committed crime.

54. Planning, preparation and conducting controls of trade companies' premises

In April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for conducting controls at trade companies' premises**, regulating the stages of planning, preparation and how post-clearance audits are carried out, as well as the manner of preparation and acting upon Reports from performed controls.

55. Procedures for procurement, keeping, issuance and use of the new custom seals regulated

To the end of regulating the procedures for procurement, keeping, issuance and use of the new customs seals, in April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for customs seals**.

There are two types of seals: metal and plastic, affixed on packages and bags, as well as means of transport, customs warehouses or other premises where goods are kept, in order to secure the



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type, quality and quantity of goods and its integrity. The seals ensure greater security of the sealed area, can easily be identified, and are produced in a manner that, if tampered with, they leave easily visible traces. The seals are numbered with subsequent alpha-numeric marks.

56. The use of the Customs patrol boats defined

In August 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the operation of the customs boats** by the Mobile Units regulating the roles and responsibilities of the customs officials in order to ensure safe operation of the vessels, their sailing in (anchoring), and the control procedures for other vessels.

57. Handling and use of Fire Arms and Ammunition regulated

In February 2009, the Customs Administration adopted new **Guidelines for handling fire arms and ammunition**, defining the manner of issuance, safekeeping, and use of weapons and ammunition and their surrender.

58. Procedures in case of detected increased level of ion radiation

In April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for acting in cases of detection of higher level of ion radiation**, regulating the use of special equipment, processes and the roles and responsibilities in such cases.

59. Procedures when handling and dealing with hazardous and harmful substances

In April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for handling and dealing with hazardous and harmful substances**, aiming at protecting the customs officials and other persons as well as the environment in case of detection of hazardous and harmful substances. The Guidelines regulate the use of special equipment and processes and the competences when dealing with such situation.

60. Electronic exchange of information related to transfer of foreign currencies and securities with the Directorate for Prevention of Money Laundering

In 2009 a systems for data exchange with the **Directorate for Prevention of Money Laundering** was put in function. The system enables electronic recording of data concerning imported and exported foreign currencies and securities through the border crossing point.

61. Data exchange with the Public Revenue Office

VPN⁶ communication line has been established with the Public revenue Office for exchange of confidential data about legal and natural entities, aiming at prevention of corruption and economic crime.

62. Customs Laboratory

A process for accreditation of the methods of analysis and testing of the customs laboratory has been initiated by the accreditation body, in order to assess and fulfill the requirements, according to ISO 17025. In this direction, a consultancy firm has been engaged; the draft documentation of the quality management system comprised of 80 documents (procedures,

⁶ VPN - virtual private network



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guidelines and records) has been prepared, in conformity with the requirements of the ISO 17025 standard. Amendments to the Rulebook on the organization of work at the Customs Administration are underway, according to which the Customs Laboratory will become an independent organizational unit, thus meeting one of the major criteria for accreditation.

Some of the procured equipment, worth 20 thousand euros, has been installed and put in use in 2009. A digester, cabinet for flammable and corrosive chemicals and racks for samples and chemicals have been installed. The installment of the rest of the equipment depends on the procurement of gases. This equipment will be used for qualitative and quantitative analyses mainly in oil derivatives, including chemical contents, determination of aromatic and non-aromatic contents by mass, identification of marker and colour in oil, analysis of organic preparations, separation of mixtures of chemicals etc. Within this period, the customs laboratory performed the analyses in conformity with the analytical methods of the Laboratory Guide of the World Customs Organisation, ILJADe (base of harmonized analytical methods used in the EU customs laboratories), consultations with external laboratories and finding methods for preparation of samples for analysis, as methods for instrument analysis.



The following test methods have been elaborated, introduced and established: determination of total amount of proteins in soy protein, additive according to Kjeldahl method, pH metric titration for determination of NaOH concentration, determination of phosphates in dicalcium phosphate dehydrate, determination of calcium hydroxide in hydrated slacked lime, determination of alcohol contents in beer, determination of the type of surface active substance, determination of free fat acids, determination of cellulose fibers in polyester, evaporative acids in preserved products, determination of salt in vegetable products, determination of distillation features in oil products, determination of the density in oil derivatives, determination of sulphur in oil products, determination of ash in sugar, polarimetric determination of saccharose in sugar, contents of elements in jewellery (costume jewellery), determination of dairy fats, determination of fat-acidic contents in oils, determination of fungicides.

63. Intellectual Property Right Protection

For the achievements in the area of intellectual property rights protection, the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia received the WCO Grand Prix „Yolanda Benitez WCO Trophy 2009 Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy“ for the results achieved in the fight against counterfeiting and piracy. Macedonian Customs won in competition against 174 administrations, members of the WCO.



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The award was presented by the WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya at the last annual session of the Customs Cooperation Council, held on 27th June 2009 in Brussels. The Yolanda Benitez WCO Trophy was previously awarded to the customs services of Italy in 2008, Germany in 2007 and Korea in 2006. Second and third prize went to the Customs Administrations of Belgium, Saudi Arabia and Uruguay.

The World Customs Administration is dedicating this annual award, presented for the fourth year in succession, to Yolanda Benitez, Customs Chief at the Ciudad del Este Customs Terminal in Paraguay, who was shot dead by traffickers for combating the illegal importation of several container-loads of pirate CD-ROMs.



In 2009, the Customs Administration continued with activities to raise the awareness on the negative consequences of the trade in counterfeits (tax evasion, money laundering, financial frauds, document forgery).

In this direction, the activities for fight against this phenomenon continue and are focused on investigation of the financial transaction of persons who import and transport counterfeits.

At the end of 2009, the number of registered requests lodged by companies for customs protective measures of their intellectual property rights reached 250 compared to 199 such requests in 2008.

On grounds of reasonable doubts related to import and transit of goods violating intellectual property rights, **over one million items and 196 kilos of counterfeit goods** were seized in 2009 (compared to 983,301 items, 20,217 kg, 10,826 litres and 550 metres of counterfeit goods in 2008).

In 2008, the Customs Administration assisted in destruction of around 70 thousand pieces of counterfeit goods (230 thousand in 2008).

In 2009, the Customs Administration intervened in 130 cases of import and transit of goods suspected of violation of intellectual property rights (173 such cases in 2008). The decrease of interventions is due to the reduced attempts for import and particularly transit as a result of the rigorous controls, the strengthened measures of the neighbouring countries particularly by the Republic of Bulgaria.

736 thousand
CDs, DVDs, VCDs, CD-Rs



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53 thousand pieces
cosmetic/beauty products



21 thousand pieces of sports equipment and
footwear



20 thousand mobile phone spare parts and
accessories



14 thousand perfumes, eau de toilettes and
deodorants



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136 thousand labels and buttons



14 thousand sunglasses, bags, belts, wallets, pendants, watches, lighters and other accessories



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6 thousand automobile spare parts



25 thousand pieces other goods



Pursuant the provisions of the Law on Customs Measures for IPR Protection, and following the completion of the procedures for determination of the authenticity of the goods, i.e. confirmation of their counterfeit character and violation of IPR, the Customs Administration assisted the holders of brands in destruction of 70 thousand pieces of counterfeit goods (230 thousand in 2008).



64. Law Enforcement

Trade Companies Control

194 controls of trade companies (244 in 2008) were carried out in 2009, on ground of which 801 procedures for subsequent collection of outstanding customs debt, the total amount being MKD 14.3 million were initiated (1,189 procedures for subsequent collection of customs debt in 2008).



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In 2009 the Customs Administration conducted controls at the premises of 324 companies-holders of authorizations for inward processing and customs warehousing (418 in 2008). On grounds of these controls, the Customs Administration imposed 196 on-the-spot fines (206 in 2008); revoked the authorisations in 15 cases (19 in 2008).

396 requests for verification of customs value (215 in 2008) and 203 requests for verification of proofs of origin (208 in 2008) were sent to foreign customs administrations, within the framework of mutual administrative assistance in customs matters. On grounds of the obtained results from the foreign Customs Services, procedures for subsequent collection of MKD 75 million (about EUR 1.2 million) were initiated.

The risk-analysis based controls resulted in collection of MKD 675 million (about EUR 11 million) of import duties in 2009.

Joint cooperation

In its activities for fight against illegal trade, the Customs Administration closely cooperates with the Border Police, Financial Police, Directorate for Prevention of Money Laundering, the Public Revenue Office, Veterinary Inspectorate, Food Directorate, Directorate for Radiation safety and other state authorities. The systems for automatic transfer of data from the Central Registry for legal entities and the Central Depository – data on payments taken over by the revenue collection software are used on daily basis.

Prevented attempts for smuggling and seized goods

The special units of the Customs Administration performed detailed inspection of 4,308 freight motor vehicles (4,883 in 2008), 2,677 buses (908 in 2008), 2,685 passenger motor vehicles (5,251 in 2008) and 30 trains. These controls, together with those carried out at the border and inland Customs Offices resulted in detection of attempts for illicit import or transit and seizures of significant quantities of goods, including:

1,114,800 cigarettes



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118,547 textile articles



24,989 electric appliances and equipment



1,005 watches



25,000 pieces of medicaments and medical products



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106,527 pieces of cosmetics and personal hygiene products



165,274 pieces of jewellery



1,191 pieces of fabric, leather/fur, carpets



13,400 pairs of shoes



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38.200 items and 2084 kg of food and foodstuffs



1.232 pieces of gas, hunting and pistol ammunition and 6 pieces of weapons



2.229 pieces of machines, tools, parts, 6,667 bags, wallets, belts and large quantities of toys and different household and industrial products.

For the confiscated goods for which the legal procedures have been closed (all administrative and court procedures finalised), in 2009 the Customs Administration organised and held 3 public auctions, published 8 announcements for bidding sale, and carried out 3 sales with immediate negotiations/bargaining, and sold goods worth about 290 thousand denars. Within the same period, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia passed 10 Decisions for donation of confiscated goods to government agencies and humanitarian organisations. The goods which cannot be sold or donated are being destroyed, as stipulated by the customs regulations. In 2009, a total of 111 thousand cigarettes, 264 litres of alcohol, 1,820 kg of pork tongues, 20 kg of hair products, 1 photo-laboratory machine, 1,260 kg of small technical goods and other goods have been destroyed.

Illegal transfer of cash

In 2009, the Customs Administration detected several attempts for illegal import and export of foreign currencies over the legally allowed limit, and seized 204 thousand Swiss francs, 193 thousand euros and 5 thousand British pounds (in 2008: 998 thousand euros (including and 170 thousand counterfeit American dollars).



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Counterfeit court-fee stamps seized

In November 2009 at the Border Crossing Jazinec, during the detailed search of a passenger motor vehicle with Macedonian license plates, the customs officials found 143,274 50 denar court-fee stamps, packed in four paper packets wrapped with duct tape. They were concealed under the upholstery of the vehicle. The total value of the stamps exceeds 7 million denars.

Illicit trade in narcotics

In 2009, the Customs Administration detected and participated in detection of several attempts for illegal trade in narcotics, seizing 170 kg of heroin, 10,000 ecstasy pills and 2,400 pieces of ephedrine precursor (in 2008: 12 kg of morphine, 37.7 kg of heroin, 49 grams of cannabis seed).



Archeological and ethnological objects, art paintings, old coins

In July 2009 at the Tabanovce border crossing– exit from the country, the customs officials detected an attempt for smuggling of 596 old coins, jewellery and figurines, originating from 1st century –Roman Time, 1st Century A.D. and XIIth century – Byzantine time, while the jewellery and figurines – from the iron age - VI-VIIth B.C. Within the same month, the customs officials of the Bogorodica border crossing, found 2 undeclared icons painted on wood, medieval Christian art original pieces of inestimable value originating between XIV-XVIII century.



Health and Environmental Protection

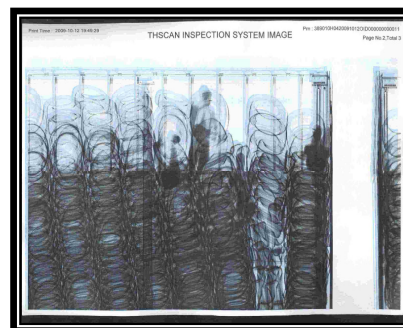
In 2009, the Customs Administration detected 7 cases (6 in 2008) of cases of significantly higher radiation, above the permitted level at entrance into Macedonia. In cooperation with the Radiation Safety Directorate, measures were undertaken to eliminate the harmful consequences.



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Prevented entrance and transit of illegal immigrants

In four separate cases, 2 of which were revealed with the mobile x-ray scanners for large vehicles and containers, the Customs Administration prevented attempts for entrance and transit through Macedonia of 36 illegal immigrants.



Customs Criminal acts

On basis of investigations carried out, in 2009 the Customs Administration pressed criminal charges against 49 legal and 147 natural persons, suspected of being involved in a total of 123 criminal acts. The majority of the criminal charges in 2009 were brought on grounds of suspected criminal acts: fraud, smuggling and illegal trafficking of excise goods.

Criminal act	2008	2009
Bringing dangerous materials into the country	1	
Tax Evasion	5	
Excise Law and false declaration of criminal act	1	
Theft	1	
Trafficking	38	26
Unlawful manufacture, possession and trade in weapons	1	2
Unlawful manufacture	1	
Unlawful manufacture and trade in narcotics	2	4
Unlawful manufacture and trade in weapons	3	
Trade in excise goods without banderoles	35	28
Preventing an official person in performing an official duty	1	
Transport of excise goods from excise warehouse	3	5
Document forgery and use of forged document	20	4
Counterfeiting money	1	
Customs fraud	51	44
Unlawful trade		1
Production and release for free circulation of harmful medical products		3
Falsifying marks of value		2
Smuggling of migrants		2
Export of goods under temporary protection or cultural heritage or natural rarities		1
Unauthorized production and release for trade of generally dangerous materials		1
Total	164	123

Customs offences

In 2009, charges for committed customs offences were pressed in 1,534 cases. 640 cases (863 in 2008) were concluded within the same year, resulting in imposed and collected fines in the amount of MKD 43 million. At the same time, there were 3,861 mandatory fines for committed customs offences, the total amount of which reached MKD 45 million (about EUR 733 thousand).

International operations

In 2009, the Customs Administration coordinated and organized 8 international operations at national level: DEMETER, focused on prevention of illegal trade in waste and hazardous materials; PANDORA, control of high risk consignments arriving from Asian countries; CITES, fight against smuggling of protected rare species of wild animals; TROJAN HORSE, fight against smuggling of goods violating intellectual property rights; BARTER, prevention of illicit trade in drugs; SEZAM, project focused on seizures of illegal money; OBELIKS, project focused on cultural heritage protection and ATLAS - prevention of illegal money transfer in air traffic.

The cooperation with the RILO within the WCO has been intensified, through the data input in the CEN database. The cooperation also continued with ZKA Balkan Info for exchange of data on seizures, as well as data on potential drug smuggling.

Import duties collected in 2009

MKD 39 billion was collected as import duties in 2009, being by 23% less than the amount collected in 2008.

Of this amount, MKD 5.4 million (about EUR 88 million) were collected as customs and other customs duties, being by 15% less than the realized in 2008.

The revenues from import VAT in 2009 are MKD 32.5 billion (about EUR 528 million), being by 25% less than the collected revenues from VAT in 2008.

The revenues collected from excise duties in 2009 are MKD 886 million (about EUR 14.4 million), being by 9% less, compared to 2008.

The Customs Administration collected MKD 280 million (about EUR 4.5 million) as revenues from other fees at import and export, being by 3% more than the amount collected in 2008.

The main reason for the fall in the collected revenues lies in the considerably decreased value of import. The value of the import in 2009 was MKD 201 billion, being by 23.2 % less than that in 2008, when the total import was worth MKD 261 billion. Lower values of the imported goods has been noticed with vehicles, machines, mechanical devices and their parts, furniture, mineral oils, apparel, footwear, ceramic products, plastic masses and products of plastic masses, iron and steel products, and organic chemical products.

The drop of the stock exchange prices of fuels, metals, plastic materials in 2009, compared to 2008 has affected the import volumes of this group of products, resulting in decrease of the income from customs duties for this group of products.

The reduction of the basic customs duty rates has affected the decline in the collection of customs duties for the following groups of products: machines and mechanical devices,



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electrical machines, equipment and their spare parts, ceramic products, plastic masses and organic chemical products.

The reduction of the preferential duty rates in conformity with the foreseen dynamics for their reduction laid down in the Free Trade Agreements has also impacted the total revenues collected in 2009. The preferential duty rates have mostly dropped for products imported from the EU.

The biggest impact to the decrease of the revenues from VAT has been marked by the fall of the VAT for fuels, products of iron and steel and vehicles, considering the fact that the imported volume of this group of products has considerably dropped.



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65. WCO Regional Training Centre opened in the Republic of Macedonia

In September 2009, the WCO Secretary General Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, the Dean of the Faculty of Economics –University St. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje Mr. Ljubomir Kekenovski and the Director General of the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia Mr. Vanco Kargov signed a Memorandum on Cooperation for establishment of a WCO Regional Training Centre in the Republic of Macedonia.



The Regional Training Center was established with the aim to contribute to the building of the administrative capacities of the Customs Services in the region, to provide quality and faster customs formalities, by at the same time having in mind the primary objective of the WCO - global harmonization of the customs operations. The first activities which will be performed in the Centre in 2010 will include: European Conference on Management in Customs for high level management, Regional Conference on Improving the Revenue Collection- Role of customs revenues in the financial system; and a Meeting of representatives of the Regional Training Centres of the WCO Europe Region.

66. WCO e-learning platform set-up

The WCO Mission installed their e-learning platform at the Customs Administration. The customs officials have been trained to use the platform and a plan for installation of the modules and the system, in accordance with the Strategy for Training and Professional Education of customs officials and the Action Plan and the Annual Training programme. The modules for border controls, integrity, SAFE Programme and the Amendments to the Harmonised system have been translated into Macedonian. In March 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for use of the e-learning programme**.

67. Monthly newsletter CUSTOMS

10 issues of the newsletter CUSTOMS were published in 2009. The newsletter contains novelties in the customs operations and information and data of interest for the wider trade and business community. The purpose of the CUSTOMS newsletter is to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the customs work, to inform the business community about the ongoing and planned activities in the area of customs operations, as well as to publish information of interest to all employees of the Customs Administration.



68. The documents in the Customs library continuously listed

The customs library has been divided in 10 different fields of interest. It is an instrument through which all the customs employees have access to all materials (printed, audio and video) available to the Central Administration, which have been obtained in different ways (purchased, donated, own publication or through participating in international activities). The founding of this library ensures collection and making inventory of all materials, their systematic classification and registry, according to the area of reference, as well as continuous updating of its contents. The List of books, publications, video and audio materials have been published on

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the Customs Administration intranet portal and are available for use by all its employees. The List will be regularly updated and appended, in accordance to the inflow of new materials.

69. Training on “Appropriate spelling and speaking in Macedonian language”

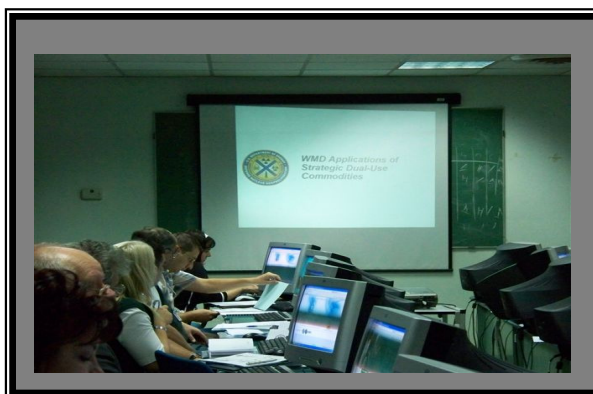
In December 2009, the Training Department organised training on appropriate spelling and speaking in Macedonian language. The training covered the following topics: appropriate spelling and pronunciation of separate sounds and sounds in a word, spelling rules (use of capital letter, contractions and abbreviations, speaking and written communication) accent, transcription of foreign names, punctuation, characteristics of certain styles in spelling, use of foreign words, synonyms and antonyms, word order in a Macedonian sentence. The training was lectured by professors from the Macedonian language institute.

70. New Programme on Technical Assistance with the Customs and Tax Administration of the Kingdom of Netherlands

By the end of 2009, the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia and the Customs and Tax Administration of the Kingdom of the Netherlands agreed upon a new programme for technical cooperation to be realized within the period 2010-2014. According to the Agreement, the Dutch Customs and Tax Administration will provide expertise to the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia for further enhancement of the capacities engaged in the area of surveillance of trade companies, customs procedures with economic impact and authorized economic operator, protection of intellectual property rights, customs laboratory and cooperation with the Public Revenue Office. The Programme shall particularly contribute to improvement of the human resource management system, introduction of a new system of competences, changes in the work culture and improvement of the communication and management skills.

71. 2009 Training Programme of the Custom Administration fully realized

In accordance with the Annual Training Programme, in 2009 there were 253 events (213 in 2008) including training sessions, seminars, work shops and presentations. These were attended by 3,276 customs officials (compared to 3,418 in 2008) of the Customs Administration, each of them having received 90 hours of training, while each employee of the Customs Administration, according to these figures, has received approximately 24 hours (compared to 58 in 2008) or 3 days (compared to 4 in 2008) of training.



Besides the training realized by trainers from the Customs Administration, some of the courses ere organised with the assistance of experts from foreign customs services and organizations, particularly within the framework of:

- Programme on Technical Assistance provided by the Customs and Tax Administration of the Netherlands in the area of customs procedures with economic impact, customs value, origin and protection of intellectual property;

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- Assistance in law enforcement (control and investigations), provided by the Government of the United States of America;
- Programme on cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, in the area of TARIC, customs laboratory, European customs legislation regulating the procedures for sale of confiscated goods, collection of customs debt, authorized economic operator and use of pre-arrival and pre-departure information.

72. Signed contract with the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations Ltd

The two-year engagement of the consultants engaged through Crown Agents was successfully completed in September 2010. The consultants were engaged in several domains: introduction/implementation of control systems and procedures based on risk analysis, development of investigation and intelligence functions, on-the filed support and technical management of the Control and Investigation Sector in activities for detection of illicit trade, smuggling and economic crime, development of the interagency cooperation in the country and abroad, development and efficient implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy.

The new Agreement which covers a period of 12 months, based on mutual cooperation and self-financing (of non-commercial nature), foresees further development of the intelligence and risk analysis and provides a legal basis for participation of employees of the Customs Administration in projects of this company in other countries.

73. Defined benefit scheme for customs officials / Privileged years of service

According to the possibilities laid down in the Law on the Customs Administration, and on grounds of a study made by a licensed agency, the issued approvals by the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and the provided budget funds, as from the second half of 2009 some customs officials receive increased contributions for pension insurance. Depending on how arduous and hazardous the work conditions have been determined as, certain job posts are entitled to contributions for additional 2 to 4 months of retirement contributions for each 12 month period of service.

74. Transfer and rotation of customs officials defined

In April 2009, the Customs Administration adopted Guidelines on rotation and transfers of customs officials, defining the objectives, types and manner of rotation and transfers of customs officials in cycles and individually, aiming at transparent reduction of possible misuse of official powers.

75. Career Advancement at Customs defined

In order to ensure righteous and transparent career advancement to the customs officials in the Service, Guidelines regulating this issue have been drafted.

76. Recognition of the knowledge of the customs officials in customs matters

The proposed amendments to the Customs Code provide for possibilities for the customs officials with 3 or more years of experience in customs matters to obtain a license to carry out representation activities in customs procedures. According to the legislation, the Customs Administration organises training, testing and licensing of natural persons applying for a license for carrying out representation activities in customs procedures. Considering the fact that the



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customs trainers and evaluators are required to have the best knowledge in customs matters, it was logical to enable them and other experienced customs officials, to automatically obtain a license for representation activities in customs procedures.

77. First Sports Games organized by the Syndicate of customs officials

In October 2009, the first sports games, organized by the syndicate of the employees of the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia took place in the sports arena Biljanini Izvori and Hotel Park in Ohrid. About 150 customs officials took part at the sports games, representing the Regional Customs Houses Kumanovo, Stip, Bitola, Skopje and Gevgelija, as well as the Headquarters.



In the spirit of fair-play, optimism, and friendship, during the two-day tournaments, the customs officials competed in seven disciplines: football, basketball, volleyball, archery, Chess, ping-pong and tug of war. The President of the Independent Syndicate awarded the most capable with diplomas, and a Cup to the winner at most disciplines – the Headquarters of the Customs Administration.

78. Repression of misuse of official powers and conflict of interests

Internal Inspections

In 2009, there were 58 internal inspections in the Customs Administration (46 in 2008, 33 in 2007 and 22 in 2006).

It is noticeable from the table on the right that particular attention has been paid to the regularity of the work in

Organisational unit	Number of inspections			
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Headquarters	35	17	2	
Customs House Skopje	8	9	10	16
Customs House Kumanovo	4	2	1	1
Customs House Stip	4	8	9	2
Customs House Bitola	2	5	6	2
Customs House Gevgelija	5	5	5	1
Total	58	46	33	22

the Customs Administration Headquarters (HQ), with 35 inspections carried out, compared to 2008, when there were 17, and particularly in 2007 when there were only 2 internal inspections in the HQ. On grounds of the findings of these inspections, it is then proceeded to internal investigations, examining the existance of disciplinary liability, as well as proceeding to investigative measures and investigations against doers of customs offences and criminal acts.

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Internal Investigations

In 2008, there were 127 internal investigations (compared to 140 in 2008, 240 in 2007 and 71 in 2006). In 52 cases (compared to 70 in 2008, 87 in 2007) the inspectors established disciplinary violations and irregularities.

Unlike 2007 and 2006, when there was not a single internal inspection in the Customs Headquarters, there were 20 investigations in the HQ in 2008. In 2006, there were 71 internal investigations.

Organisational unit	Number of investigations			
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Headquarters	44	20		
Customs House Skopje	24	33	65	23
Customs House Kumanovo	24	22	29	17
Customs House Stip	11	18	57	7
Customs House Bitola	12	25	27	14
Customs House Gevgelija	12	22	62	10
Total	127	140	240	71

Disciplinary procedures

99 disciplinary procedures (93 in 2008) were initiated in 2009 for establishment of responsibility of the customs officials suspected of violation of the discipline and order at work. These procedures resulted in termination of employment for 27 customs officials, fines for 42 officials, while in 30 cases, the proceedings were stopped due to outdatedness of disciplinary liability or absence of responsibility (in 2008: 46 decisions on termination of employment, 35 decisions to fine the responsible officials, and 17 cases where the procedures were stopped due to outdatedness of disciplinary liability or absence of responsibility).

16 officials were suspended because it was established that they have been involved in / have committed criminal acts related to their official duties (4 in 2008).

Of the 169 criminal inquiries initiated within 2002-2009, 108 of the inquiries involving 90 customs officials who are still employed with the Customs Administration and 84 ex-employees were still in court proceedings at the end of January 2010. These criminal inquiries involve cases, some of which are 2 months old, while some are up to 7 years old. A total of 50 criminal cases have seen their closings with final verdicts, while the status of 11 such cases is unknown. There are 100 criminal cases in the First-Instance Courts, some 2-months-old, while some lasting for 7 years. Of these, 40 cases are under investigation, 11 cases are returned to retrying at the first-instance authority (the Customs Administration), and there are ongoing court trials for 10 cases. 39 cases are in a phase of judicial analysis. Eight inquiries are ongoing with the Courts of Appeals. These cases are from 1 to 5 years old. In cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, during January 2010 criminal charges were brought in 1 case, for which there are ongoing proceedings at the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Internal Audit

In 2009, there were 22 internal audits (11 in 2008), which resulted in 93 recommendations (40 in 2008) for improvement of the operations in the organisational units - subject to the audit. 69 of the recommendations given in 2009 have been realised, 13 are under realisation and the deadline for realisation of 11 recommendations is 2010.



79. Administration and dealing with the Customs Administration's capital assets regulated

In order to ensure more efficient and more economical use of its material resources, In July 2009, the Customs Administration adopted **Guidelines for the record keeping and movement of the capital assets of the Customs Administration** were adopted, regulating the procedures for records keeping/registry and movement of the Customs Administration's capital assets during their lifespan and until they become no longer useful and discharged.

80. Rules for the use of IT equipment in terms of security, drafted

With the purpose of introducing rules related to the use, the procedures and standards related to the information technology of the Customs Administration, its optimal use and management, as well as data protection and provision of effective, efficient and secure operation of the IT systems and technological infrastructure, **Guidelines for the use of the IT equipment in terms of IT security** in the Customs Administration have been drafted.

81. Enabled use of GPS data for the use of the official vehicles of the Customs Administration

In May 2009, the Customs Administration adopted new **Guidelines for the use of the Customs official vehicles**, regulating the procedures for safe-keeping, granting and use of official motor vehicles of the Customs Administration, their categorisation, registry, marking, maintenance and mending, their surveillance and the manner of use of the Global Positioning System, as well as the staff's responsibility

82. Electronic system for registry of working hours introduced

A **System for working hours and access control** has been introduced. The system aims at monitoring and control of the working time of the employees of the Customs Administration. The electronic system for working hours defines the manner and procedure for registry of the working hours in the Customs Administration, the look of the access card, the responsibilities of the employees and managers and the competences for appropriate registry of the working hours, and its control, as well as the control of the access to the premises of the Customs Administration. Magnetic locks have been installed, controlling the access to and the movement in the Customs Administration's premises.

In February 2009, new **Guidelines for working hours** were adopted, defining the start and end of work, tolerance, control with the new software and control of the working hours and entry into the Customs Administration's premises, the competences for surveillance of the working hours. The provisions regulating the procedures for doing overtime work have also been revised and included in the Guidelines.

83. The use of the Customs patrol boats defined

In August 2009, the Customs Administration also passed **Guidelines for the operation of the customs boats** and **Manual for Customs Boats** regulating the organisation of work with the patrol boats, their use and safe-guarding of the working equipment, as well as the training of the officials assigned to operate with these boats. The roles and responsibilities of the customs officials in order to ensure safe operation of the vessels, their sailing in (anchoring), and the control procedures for other vessels have also been closely defined.



V. LOGISTICS

84. Leasing/renting of business premises and advertising space at the border crossing defined

In March, the Customs Administration adopted Guidelines for the manner and procedure for renting / leasing the business premises and advertising space at the Border Crossings Points for road transport of the Republic of Macedonia, being managed, administered and maintained by the Customs Administration

85. Commission monitoring the financial risks of the Customs Administration established

In March 2009, the Customs Administration formed a **Commission on management of the assets and liabilities** of the Customs Administration. The role of this Commission is to monitor, analyse and propose measures to reduce the risks from financial losses and to increase the efficiency of use of the financial resources of the Customs Administration. The Commission works on grounds of Rules of Procedures, adopted by the Commission itself. која самата го има донесено.

86. Revised procedures for handling seized goods and goods abandoned to the state

In April 2009, the Customs Administration revised the Guidelines for handling seized goods and goods abandoned to the state, in order to eliminate the difficulties and obstacles established so far.

87. Regulation of work processes and inclusion of the Sector for Administrative and Technical Matters

The following internal acts have been amended to include the competences of the newly-formed Sector for Administrative and Technical Matters:

- Guidelines for the use of service mobile phones,
- Guidelines for the preparation and execution of the financial plan, the procurement plan and the investment plan,
- Guidelines for procurement.

88. Maintenance of premises

Several premises have been refurbished, including: the Seat of the Regional Customs House Bitola (for its 30th birthday, reconstructions have been made to the façade and the toilets, a new room of 100m² for the Archives has been constructed, the flooring in the entire building has been changed, more efficient heating/cooling has been ensured, and the roof has been replaced with sheet metal with thermo isolation), the Border Crossing Novo Selo, the Regional Customs House Skopje and the Customs Office Trubarevo, as well as the warehouse for confiscated goods in Tetovo. The refurbishment of the Seat of the Regional Customs House Bitola finished in October 2009, being the first refurbishment since the opening, thirty years ago.



The border crossings have been equipped with the necessary equipment for power supply for the mobile X-ray scanners.



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Four weighing scales have been installed, thus ensuring faster export clearance procedure at BCP Tabanovce, BCP Blace, BCP Medzitlija and BCP Kafasan. On two occasions, the Customs Administration drastically reduced the terminal fee, and since 2009 the weighing has been made free-of-charge. Two mobile weighing scales for heavy freight vehicles have been procured for the needs of the customs officials of the Mobile Units.

A Programme for the set-up of temporary facilities has been drawn up and adopted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The Programme regulates the set-up of all temporary facilities at the border crossing points by the Customs Administration. All premises and facilities which are not part of the adopted programme have been removed in cooperation with the State Inspectorate for Civil Engineering and Urban Planning.

Geodesic recording and survey of all facilities at the border crossings have been finished. The land where there are urbanistic plans at the border crossings has been measured and geodesic elaborates have been made, which will later serve to continue the process for entry of the facilities and land in the records of the Real Property Cadastre Agency.

All infrastructural works have been finished and timely premises have been set up at St. Naum, as a preparation for the opening of the new water border crossing between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania.

The first phase of the land expropriation at the border crossing Blace has been finalized and all plots have been registered at the Real Property Cadastre Agency as property of the Republic of Macedonia.

89. Other activities aiming at enhancement of the logistics of the Customs Administration

To the end of further improvement of the conditions for carrying out its competences, in the reporting period the Customs Administration drafted new and revised the following existing internal acts:

- Guidelines for use of the Customs Administration's budget representational funds,
- Accountancy rules for record- keeping of donations in the Customs Administration;
- Guidelines for the manner and procedures for withholding sums from the employees' wages;
- Guidelines for administration of funds paid on the Customs Administration account;
- Guidelines for acting in case of fire;
- Guidelines for the Customs Administration's internal control system;
- Guidelines for liquidation/settlement of accounting documents in the Customs Administration;
- Guidelines for access to the Customs Administration's ICT system;
- Rulebook on handling classified information in the Customs Administration;
- Guidelines for handling classified information in the Customs Administration;
- Guidelines for weighing vehicles on weighing scales;
- Guidelines for client treatment in the Customs Administration;
- Guidelines for collection of fees at the Customs Terminals;
- Guidelines for preparation of plans and monitoring of their realization;
- New Code of Practice;
- Guidelines for the minimal equipment at each organizational unit of the Customs Administration.



VI. INTERNATIONAL AND INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

90. Regional Coordination Forum – EU TACTA Project (Technical Assistance to Customs and Tax Administrations)

The Fifth Regional Coordination Forum under the EU TACTA Project took place in Skopje in May 2009. The meeting was attended by the Directors General of the Customs Administrations of the Republic of Macedonia and the countries beneficiaries of the Western Balkan: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro. At the meeting, the Directors General adopted conclusions stating their commitment to strengthen the mutual cooperation in the area of electronic information exchange and connection of the customs information systems, the possibilities for joint and mutual controls. However, since then there are no activities whatsoever, in terms of the stated commitments.

The TACTA Project provides assistance for modernization of the organizational structure and customs operation, supports the development of new strategies in the fight against customs frauds and illegal trade. Regional cooperation is one of the basic pillars of the Project and the constant dialogue between the Customs Services of the Western Balkan countries ensures enhancement of the institutional cooperation of the Customs Services.

91. Presentation of the Macedonian experience in the introduction of the electronic system for issuance of licenses for import, export and transit of goods and tariff quota - EXIM

Because of the interest shown by the CEFTA Contracting Parties, the Customs Administration – coordinator of the project activities for introduction of the electronic Single Window for issuance of licenses for import, export, transit of goods and quota (EXIM), organised a Regional Meeting where it presented its experience with the introduction of the Single Window, a system which is unique in the region.



92. Regional Conference on the Macedonian experience in the introduction of the electronic system for issuance of licenses for import, export and transit of goods and tariff quota - EXIM

The Customs Administration, in association with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the USAID – Business Environment Project and the CEFTA 2006 Secretariat organised and in December 2009, held the Third Southeast Conference on Trade and Transport Facilitation, Single Window and Trade Data Harmonisation. Representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Kosovo, Serbia, Turkey, Croatia, Montenegro, Sweden, the UNECE, the WCO, the European Commission and the USAID Project (Business Environment and e-Gov) attended the Conference. The delegates defined the areas of further regional cooperation in terms of application of modern technologies for trade facilitation, introduction of Single Window concept and trade data harmonisation, as well as the basic principles for electronic data exchange between the countries of the region.

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93. Regional Seminar on Identification of Counterfeits

On 17th September 2009, the Customs Administration, in cooperation with SNB REACT – European Anti-Counterfeiting Network, organised a Seminar on identification of trademarks for protection of their intellectual property rights. Besides customs officials, state market inspectors and other officials, the Seminar was attended by representatives of the relevant agencies from the Region, domestic and foreign representatives of holder of the brands etc.

The seminar was a continuation of the permanent training, aiming at educating the customs officials and state market inspectors to identify and recognise counterfeit products.

94. Support from the US Government

In May 2009, the US Government donated to the Customs Administration radiation detection equipment, computer and office equipment, as well as other auxiliary equipment for the Customs Mobile Units, worth about 150 thousand US dollars. In October 2009, another donation was handed over to the Customs Administration including: digital mobile radio stations, as part of the previous donation for introduction of a radio communication system for the needs of the Customs Administration.

95. Donor Coordination Meetings

In June and December 2009, the Customs Administration organized the Fifth and Sixth Donor Coordination Meetings related to Customs. The meetings were attended by present and potential donors who contribute to and support the reforms in the Customs Administration. The Customs Administration presented the areas and projects which might be of interest to be financed by donors.

96. Intensification of cooperation with Serbian Customs

On 6th August 2009, the Customs Administrations of Macedonia and Serbia signed an Agreement on the harmonized Data Set to be exchanged through the SEED system. This concept for cooperation, through electronic data exchange will contribute to more efficient implementation of the customs legislation and fight against cross-border crime.

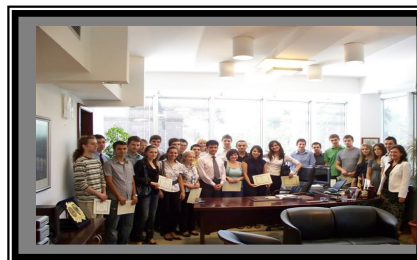
97. Extended validity of the Memorandum on Cooperation with Japan Tobacco International

In June 2009, the Memorandum on cooperation with JTI was extended for another two years. The objectives of the Memorandum include joint activities to the end of prevention of the illicit trade in tobacco products, manufactured by JTI.

98. Cooperation with the academic institutions

The Agreement on long-term cooperation with the Faculty of Customs and Freight-forwarding – Ohrid continued to be realized by organizing summer practice courses for 45 regular students from the Customs and Freight Forwarding study Programme.

In cooperation with the Faculty of Economics in Skopje, 10 students volunteered at the Customs Administration.



99. Implementing Protocol to the Memorandum on Cooperation signed between the Ministry of Interior – Public Security Bureau and the Ministry of Finance – Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia, signed

In July 2009, an Implementing Protocol to the Memorandum on Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Interior – Public Security Bureau and the Ministry of Finance – Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia. The Protocol regulates the manner and scope of cooperation, coordination and joint activities to the end of more efficient protection of the state borders, fight against organised and other types of crime, facilitation and expedition of the movement of goods and passengers, as well as enhancement of the safety of the citizens and the society. Among other things, the Protocol regulates the cooperation at the border crossings and along the border line, the levels of cooperation and the traffic control methodology, as well as more efficient use of the available resources

100. Internet and Intranet portal of the Customs Administration

In 2009, 329 notifications were published on the intranet portal of the Customs Administration, (compared to 220 in 2008), while 823 notifications (700 in 2008) were published on the official web site in Macedonian, English and Albanian language.

101. Customs Hotline – 197

A total of 56,963 calls were received on the customs hotline -197 (98,859 calls in 2008) or an average of 156 calls a day, out of which 69 provided useful information, while 77 led to additional investigation from other departments. In order to ensure safer operation, a call recording system was procured in 2009.

102. Free access to information of public character

In accordance to the Law on Free Access to Public Character Information, a total of 22 requests were received during 2009. The Customs Administration responded positively to 17 requests, providing the requested information in the appropriate form. Five requests for access to information were rejected, due to the fact that the Customs Administration is not the institution which holds that piece of information, and forwarded these requests to the institutions holders of the relevant information.

