



Trinidad and Tobago Customs and Excise Division

Introduction

THE REPUBLIC OF Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island state forming the southern-most islands of the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean. Trinidad, the larger of the two islands, is located 30km south of Tobago.

The country covers an area of 5,128 square km and is one of the wealthiest and most developed nations in the Caribbean. Its economy is primarily industrial and strongly influenced by the petroleum and petrochemical industries in particular.

The Customs and Excise Division is a division of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, and plays a key role in assisting the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to achieve its national and international policy aims. The Division has the following role:

- Revenue collection and protection – implementing national, regional and international policy, the aim of which is to raise revenue and combat any associated fraud.
- The correct application of trade policy – applying and monitoring compliance with trade-related rules and agreements, in order to facilitate legitimate trade.
- Protecting the physical borders, society and the environment – combating smuggling, and enforcing health standards and environmental policy and laws.
- Collect and disseminate accurate trade-related information and statistics –

required by law to provide this information to the Central Statistical Office for compilation, analysis and publication of trade data.

It is responsible for enforcing the following main laws in an efficient, professional manner and with integrity: the Customs Act; value added tax; anti-dumping and countervailing duties; the Excise General Provisions Act; liquor licences; brewery; spirit and spirit compounds; registration of clubs; petroleum tax; and the Free Zones Act.

Vision statement

To be the leading-edge service, law enforcement, trade facilitation and revenue collection organization in the region and beyond through the efforts of professional and dedicated staff.

Mission statement

To support economic growth and development by facilitating legitimate trade and travel, revenue generation and collection. To protect our borders and provide increased security to the global trade supply chain by enforcing compliance with all the laws and regulations under which we are empowered to act.

Strategic objectives

- Trade facilitation and border security – the effective application of risk management principles is key to achieving the balance between control and facilitation.

- Encouraging voluntary compliance – this is promoted not only by an awareness of rights and expectations of fair and efficient treatment but also clear, simple legislation and ‘user friendly’ administrative systems and procedures.
- Maximizing revenue collection – by improving compliance and managing risk as an organizational philosophy to support effective decision-making at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.
- Capacity building – to ensure that there is adequate professional and technical staff through continuous training and development.
- Public education – in respect of our Stakeholder Charter that balances rights/expectation and obligations, it will reflect the distinctive character of our regulatory responsibilities – we deliver State obligations rather than just services.

Stakeholder charter

- Service standards
- Voluntary compliance
- Partnerships
- Achieving the Mission

Modernization

Today, the Customs and Excise Division operates in a high-paced and dynamic environment that places a high demand on its services. With regards to trade, advancements in technology have allowed the Division to offer essential services to its internal and external stakeholders.

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Actg. Deputy Comptroller for Enforcement Glen Singh and Customs Officer Clinton Warner answer Customs-related questions from members of the public at Trinidad and Tobago's annual Trade and Investment Convention

With this in mind, the Division embarked on a period of modernization designed to change the way Customs and Excise does business and bringing its operations to the next level of excellence.

The ASYCUDA or 'Automated System for Customs Data' system was introduced during the early 1990s. The latest version of the software, ASYCUDA World, was recently implemented and operates on a centralized architecture which provides 24/7 processing of trade transactions through the Customs network via the Internet.

Other benefits of ASYCUDA: it allows for quality information for decision-making; more concise statistical data on trade in a timely fashion; and a reduction of cost outputs so savings can be passed onto Customs' clients.

International Customs Organizations

Trinidad and Tobago joined the WCO on 15 October 1973. It is also an active member of the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC).

General Information

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