



Customs and Customs Brokers Quarterly Collaboration Meeting, May 2021

Customs and Brokers recently held their quarterly collaboration meeting at Customs HQ

Customs have the legal mandate to protect Solomon Islanders through maintaining control of Shipping, Aircraft, goods and cargo movements at national borders to prevent and detect smuggling and the introduction of prohibited and restricted goods. In addition, Customs collect SIG revenue of duties and taxes on imports, exports and Excise manufacturing, whilst at the same time facilitating legitimate business.

Brokers have a highly supportive role to Customs. They are licensed by the Comptroller to clear imports and exports through the Customs system by assessing and paying correct taxes and duties – usually on behalf of a client trader importer, or their employer. This is a complex task and requires highly skilled and trained people with detailed knowledge of Customs business processes.

This meeting therefor represented an opportunity for both sides to come together and share and discuss ideas, issues, problems and future plans on how to enhance our working relationship to better undertake our respective roles and mandates.

The key points discussed at this meeting were:

- ❖ The Comptroller's desire that the Brokers form a single professional body to represent its' members
- ❖ The submission by the Brokers of a draft Constitution for the establishment of such a body
- ❖ Topical operational issues
- ❖ The Comptroller's desire to raise the technical skill level of Brokers through provision of an enhanced training program on IT, tariff classification and Goods Valuation assessment

- ❖ Broad details of the changes that are being introduced in our Customs IT clearance system, ASYCUDA, both immediately and in the longer term
- ❖ The importance of Ethics and Integrity in all dealings with Customs
- ❖ New licensing requirements to become / retain Customs Broker accreditation by Customs

The meeting was a success, and all agree timely and open discussion on relevant issues is hugely important in our joint efforts to professionally service our clients, correctly assess and collect revenue, and provide efficient cargo clearance services to the trading community