

ASYCUDAWorld

NEWSLETTER

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June, the training month

As we come to the end of June, the third month since this project started, it has become apparent that an enormous amount of work needs to be completed in order for the ASYCUDA World (ASYCUDA) system to be operational by 31 December 2021. Therefore, several activities had been planned for completion by the National

Project Team (NPT) for this month June on top of other ongoing initiatives.

A number of training sessions for the NPT have taken place this month to ensure understanding of how ASYCUDA works and how we can best utilise the programs within the system.

National Project Team and their work

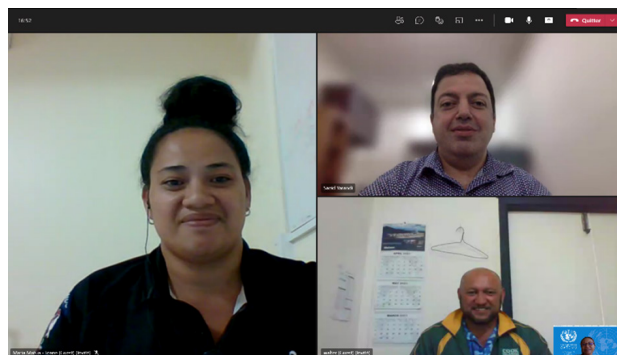
The NPT has two weekly Microsoft Teams meetings with ASYCUDA and Customs experts to discuss progress on

the ASYCUDA project. On top of having these meetings, training for the NPT continues to take place on a daily basis.

The Manifest

Manifest is a set of documents that detail cargo or goods laden for the Cook Islands. It consists of a number of fields that determine where the goods are from, who sent the goods, to whom it is being addressed, type of goods, size of goods in volume, and also in weight, how the goods are packed and what form of packaging it contains. It names the vessel transporting the goods, voyage number and date of arrival. It also records a reference number for each consignment of goods, which we refer to as Bill of Lading numbers.

Therefore, as a process to ensure that all goods arriving on a vessel are accounted for and cleared through the Cook Islands Customs Service (Customs), a need to automate manifests becomes a necessary action to deter non-compliance. Automation of manifests will be a new activity for the Cook Islands. Current practice is that manifests are provided to the shipping agents here in Rarotonga who in turn email those to the Customs office for manual processing.



NPT members Walter Tangata and Maria Ioane with ASYCUDA expert Saeid Yarandi and customs expert Patricia Havan (inset) during one of their meetings.

The NPT and the ASYCUDA experts sent out a needs assessment questionnaire to the necessary stakeholders to gauge what they would need in order to access to ASYCUDA.

Training

One of the initiatives undertaken for this month was joint Microsoft Teams training with National Project Teams of Tuvalu and Kiribati. These two countries are a part of six countries who have agreed and accepted ASYCUDA. It was agreed that to make better use of ASYCUDA experts time and availability, it would be better if all three countries undertake a joint training exercise.

However, before training could begin a prototype of ASYCUDA was developed for our use and, as agreed by all, the first training topic was on manifests. As part of this activity, we created manifests using ASYCUDA.

ASYCUDA manifest training for the NPT started on 24 May 2021 and was held over a two-week period of two hours per day. The training was led by ASYCUDA experts Saeid Yarandi and Ravindra Abeyasinghe and ably assisted by customs expert Patricia Havan.

Manifest: General segment of a manifest created as part of training exercise.



Participants from the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu along with ASYCUDA and customs experts in a combined Microsoft Team training session.

CCA Stakeholder Meeting

On Tuesday 29 June 2021, a meeting was convened with Customs Controlled Area (CCA) licence holders. This meeting was held in the Office of the Public Service Commissioner (OPSC).

The meeting was to provide a quarterly update on what has been happening in the Customs environment regarding goods held within the CCA as well as outstanding cargo. Timelines of how long goods can stay within a CCA for goods to be cleared - this is 20 days from date of importation. The period within which imported goods must be claimed – which is three months after date of importation.

Of the seventeen (17) CCA licence holders, five are shipping and/or airline agents and therefore are required to provide manifests for all goods destined for the Cook Islands.

As part of the meeting the NPT took the opportunity to also provide an update on the ASYCUDA project, and in particular to advise these five stakeholders what will be



Participants of the CCA stakeholders meeting held on 29th June 2021.

required of them in the coming weeks.

To that end the NPT will continue to provide regular updates on progress of the ASYCUDA project to stakeholders and the wider community. This will ensure that all are aware of the pending changes to Customs system and processes over the coming months.



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