

TRADE FACILITATION

Recent trade facilitation measures taken by the Maldives Customs Service

The following communication, dated 18 October 2000, has been received from the Ministry of Trade and Industries of the Maldives.

1. Background

As an effective response to the continuous growth in the economy and increasing volume of trade, the ASYCUDA++ software developed by UNCTAD has been introduced successfully by the Maldives Customs Service. This initiative has radically changed and simplified customs procedures and documentation by streamlining the system, resulting in continuous improvement in facilitation of trade.

2. Introduction of EDI/DTI Services

- The introduction of the **Electronic Data Interchange Service (EDI) and Direct Trader Input (DTI)** Service on 25 May 2000 has been a big boost to aligning the services to an international standard. Eighty percent of the declarations submitted to the Customs Air Cargo are processed through the DTI Centre (broker service) resulting in fast clearance of cargo. Consequently the human resources reserved for this job have been reduced in order to strengthen customs procedures. In addition, this has contributed to a quick clearance service to the benefit of traders.
- The **DTI** Centre established at the passenger terminal eases the clearance process for passengers carrying dutiable items. Initially the clearance of items processed through the Customs Air Cargo is processed at the Centre located at the passenger terminal, thus providing an easy and quick service to such passengers.
- The **EDI Service** has been provided to frequent traders in order to facilitate clients' submission of Customs Declaration Forms for clearing Sea and Air Cargo.
- The **Wide Area Network (WAN)** developed by means of modern hardware, has enabled us to build a centralized data base that helps to monitor and maintain the integrity of the system. Hence, it creates a flexible environment from which transactional details can be generated and so facilitate trade. This WAN between the Customs regional office, at S.Gan and the Customs Head Office, was established on 14 October 2000 and facilitates generation of timely and up-to-date statistics for Customs, and provides a service to clients in Male and in S.Gan. Furthermore, it provides the technical infrastructure to extend EDI services in the future.

3. Implementation of the HS Tariff Nomenclature

Customs tariffs were fully revised on the basis of the Harmonized System, the implementation of which was concluded on 29 May 2000. The new system has proved to be of considerable assistance to clients and raised our classification system to international standards.

4. Launching of Customs Website

The Maldives Customs launched a website on 24 August 2000 (www.customs.gov.mv) to provide potential clients access to information regarding external trade regulations and an overview of the customs service as a whole.
