

FOREWORD



The challenges posed by globalization, trade facilitation initiatives, and security concerns, to the role of Customs in the 21st century necessitates a renewed professional approach to the management and operations of Customs administrations across the globe.

The responsibility of regulating international trade must simultaneously serve national goals and international standards and obligations. Issues such as the WTO Trade Facilitation agenda, international supply chain security, intellectual property rights, revenue management and fraud, all fall within the ambit of routine Customs work. Customs has a unique and complex role in this environment, which demands an understanding of globalization, political, economic and trading factors, and the ability to translate knowledge into practical strategies and operational policies.

The application of modern management techniques and new technology is vital.

The modern Customs manager therefore requires a much broader set of knowledge, skills and behaviour than has been traditionally required. This can only be derived from a more professional approach to development and career management, and the availability of well researched information on which to base decisions.

Against this backdrop, however, we have found that there is relatively little academic research or study dedicated specifically to Customs.

Recognizing that encouraging more academic research into topics relevant to Customs and establishing a vehicle to capture this information would significantly enhance strategic decision-making, in 2006 the WCO launched the PICARD programme (Partnerships in Customs Academic Research and Development). This initiative met with strong support and cooperation from universities.

At the first PICARD conference convened by the WCO in 2006, Members and the academic world alike recognized that there is a large gap in the market for research into Customs and border management. Included in the conference recommendations was the establishment of a research journal for Customs matters, as well as increased access to Customs by institutions for research purposes.

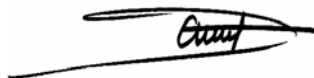
Universities agreed to initiate a journal through their newly established network, the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU), which had been established to provide the World Customs Organization and other organizations with a single point of contact with universities and research institutes active in the field of Customs research, education and training. The INCU was designed to provide a global resource for governments and the private sector, and an educational source for students wishing to further their knowledge in the field of Customs management and administration.

The *World Customs Journal* will serve as a valuable source of reference for Customs to meet the requirements of the new strategic environment. It will also serve as the flagship of the cooperative effort being made by the WCO and the academic world.

I hope that Customs managers, students and researchers everywhere will take this opportunity to publish valuable insights into the world in and around Customs. Indeed, the WCO itself will stand to benefit from the considerably expanded knowledge base.

In promoting this journal we are aware that the articles produced will be subject to rigorous academic standards and are therefore free from censorship by the Customs world or the WCO. This means that the viewpoints expressed, of necessity do not reflect the views of the WCO or its individual membership.

I am therefore pleased and proud to extend the gratitude and good wishes of the WCO Members to the editors and I look forward to many more editions.



Michel Danet
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