

EDITORIAL



Welcome to the first edition of the *World Customs Journal*.

For some time a number of universities and research institutions have been seeking to raise the academic profile of the customs profession through the development and promotion of educational programs, academic and applied research and intellectual input to strategic decision making.

Last year the WCO formally recognised the efforts of the academic world at its inaugural Partnerships in Customs Academic Research and Development (PICARD) conference, at which it encouraged its academic counterparts to develop a publication such as this.

Initially being released as an e-Journal, but with the option of also publishing it as a print journal at a later date, the *World Customs Journal* is designed to provide customs professionals, academics, industry researchers, and research students with an opportunity to share and draw upon research, academic commentary and practical insights to enhance its readers' knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the roles and responsibilities of Customs.

Each edition will focus on particular topics of interest, and this first edition examines the evolving role of Customs from a number of perspectives, including the first part of Michael Wolfgang's comprehensive review of European customs law, the adept commentary by Michael Lux on the incorporation of international customs law into the European Community's legal system, Peter Wilmott's analysis of the EU's approach to customs reform, and my own commentary on the changing role of Customs.

This edition also provides some excellent insights into the key drivers for change facing practitioners around the globe. Martyn Dunne, Pravin Gordhan and Creck Buyonge address these issues in ways which not only highlight the distinctiveness of their respective operational environments but also emphasise the underlying national, regional and international interdependencies.

The next edition of the *World Customs Journal* will focus on the ways in which governments are seeking to ensure the security of international supply chains, including implementation strategies for the WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Editorial Board, I would like to thank the World Customs Organization for their support in reaching this significant milestone and invite you to participate in the development of the Journal by contributing articles or by simply providing feedback.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Widdowson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

David Widdowson
Editor-in-Chief