

Editorial



This special edition of the World Customs Journal has been prepared by the International Network of Customs Universities (INCUI) in partnership with the World Customs Organization (WCO). Its publication was originally designed to coincide with PICARD¹ 2020, which was due to take place this month in Jamaica. However, the world as we know it has changed dramatically during the course of this year, and as a consequence the PICARD conference, like so many other meetings, will now be held virtually.²

The primary focus of this special edition of the Journal is the WCO itself, in recognition of the significant role it plays in providing support to the international customs and trade community. Some contributors examine the WCO's impact to date, lessons learned, and the practical influence that the organisation and its instruments have on the performance of its member administrations, the international trading community and society as a whole. Others address the present role and future direction of the WCO, in recognition of the changing nature of borders and the way in which border management and the customs mission have evolved since the organisation's inception.

Globalisation and changing social expectations have led to the emergence of new and sometimes conflicting national, regional and international priorities in areas as diverse as trade facilitation, supply chain security and environmental sustainability. At the same time, the international trading environment itself has changed dramatically, and continues to do so in the wake of the information revolution and the uncertainty of future technological advances.

The diversity of articles presented in this edition of the Journal reflects the broad remit of the WCO, to whom its member administrations—with a collective responsibility for managing more than 98 per cent of world trade—look for leadership, guidance and support, particularly in uncertain times—such as a once-in-a-century pandemic!

The Editorial Board would like to thank the WCO for its support in producing this special edition, and we look forward to meeting and debating with our contributors and readers 'virtually' at PICARD 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'D. Widdowson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D' and 'W'.

Professor David Widdowson AM
Editor-in-Chief

1 Partnership in Customs Academic Research and Development

2 PICARD 2020 will be held as a web conference from 23 to 26 November

