

Editorial



Since publication of the last edition of the *World Customs Journal* in which it was announced that trade facilitation would be the theme of the current edition, considerable progress has been made by the World Trade Organization in progressing the trade facilitation agenda. After years of negotiation, WTO members reached agreement on a comprehensive text for a new Agreement on Trade Facilitation at the Bali Ministerial Conference in December 2013.

The Agreement seeks to clarify and improve relevant aspects of GATT Articles V (Freedom of Transit), VIII (Fees and Formalities connected with Importation and Exportation) and X (Publication and Administration of Trade Regulations), with a view to further expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. The Agreement also contains provisions relating to technical assistance and capacity building support that may be required by developing and least-developed countries to effectively implement the range of agreed initiatives.

Article 13 of the Agreement, which covers institutional arrangements, establishes a Committee on Trade Facilitation to drive the implementation process. In doing so, it will seek advice from other relevant organisations such as the World Customs Organization. In response to the WTO Agreement, the WCO issued its Dublin Resolution which sets out its commitment to assist the WTO in this important task. Both the WTO Agreement and the Dublin Resolution have been reproduced in Section 3 of this edition of the *Journal* which includes a broad range of articles on different aspects of trade facilitation from both our academic and practitioner contributors.

The next edition of the *Journal* will include several articles that focus on collaborative border management, together with a selection of papers delivered at the Inaugural INCU Global Conference that is being held from 21 to 23 May in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan. Continuing the theme of trade facilitation, the title of the conference is *Trade Facilitation Post-Bali: Putting Policy into Practice*. For those who are able to attend the conference, I very much look forward to meeting you in Baku!

Finally, I would like to welcome Professor Enrique Barreira who joins us on the Editorial Board. Professor Barreira is a highly respected lawyer specialising in customs, tax and trade law. He is a founding member of the International Customs Law Academy and played a key role in drafting the Argentine Customs Code. We look forward to Professor Barreira's contribution to the *Journal*.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Widdowson', followed by a period. The signature is fluid and cursive.

David Widdowson
Editor-in-Chief