



भारत सरकार **GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**
 वित्त मंत्रालय **MINISTRY OF FINANCE**
 राजस्व विभाग **DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE**
 केन्द्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमाशुल्क बोर्ड
CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES AND CUSTOMS
 सीमाशुल्क आयुक्तका कार्यालय
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS
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Permanent Trade Facilitation Committee- Minutes of the meeting held on 14.02.2025 - Reg.

A meeting of the Permanent Trade Facilitation Committee was held at 04.00pm on 14.02.2025 in the EDI Hall, Custom House, Cochin. Shri. Gurkaran Singh Bains IRS, Commissioner of Customs, chaired the meeting.

The following officers of Customs were present.

1. Shri. Ashwin John George IRS, Joint Commissioner
2. Shri. Ashif A. IRS, Deputy Commissioner
3. Shri. Jimmi Joseph IRS, Deputy Commissioner
4. Shri. Harrison Antony IRS, Deputy Commissioner
5. Shri. Anil Raj R IRS, Deputy Commissioner
6. Smt. C T Bindhu IRS, Deputy Commissioner
7. Shri R. Jayachandran, Deputy Commissioner
8. Shri. K.S. Bijumon IRS, Assistant Commissioner
9. Shri. Roy K. Mani IRS, Assistant Commissioner
10. Shri. K Madhukumar IRS, Assistant Commissioner

The various trade and partner government agencies were represented by the following persons:

1. Shri N.N. Menon, EOU Sector
2. Shri. Abraham Philip, Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry
3. Shri Sajith D, Cochin International Airport Ltd
4. Shri Shaik Eshack S D, MIV CFS
5. Shri Kuruvilla Xavier, DP World

6. Shri Dawn Jacob Varghese, Cochin Customs Broker's Association
7. Shri. Andrew Antonio Fernandez, Cochin Customs Broker's Association
8. Shri Rajeev M.C., FIEO
9. Shri V. Veeraraghav, GDKL CFS
10. Shri T.K. Biju, Cochin Port Authority
11. Shri George Prakash James, Cochin Port Authority
12. Shri Sajimon Zechariah, One Line Shipping
13. Shri T. Rajesh, One Line Shipping
14. Shri C.S. Ramawat, Plant Quarantine
15. Shri Arun S. Kumar, FSSAI
16. Smt. Dhanya K.N., FSSAI
17. Shri Alex K Nixon, Seafood Exporters Association of India
18. Shri. Prakash Iyer, Kerala Steamer Agents' Association
19. Shri Sijo George, Kerala Steamer Agents' Association
20. Shri Biju D, Consolidators' Association of Kerala
21. Shri Sreekumar G., KSIE CFS

The Chair welcomed the members to the PTFC meeting. Thereafter, the discussion commenced with the grievance raised by the CCBA that certain shipping lines are not allowing to nominate certain CFS and are intentionally not mentioning the CFS of importer's choice in the manifest for the clearance of import consignments. The chair informed the representative of Kerala Steamer Agents' Association that if an importer or his representative inform their preferred CFS well in advance, then the same CFS should be mentioned in the manifest. Otherwise, it would be contrary to the provisions of Section 30(2) of the Customs Act and may invite applicable penal provisions. The chair then enquired with the representative of CCBA whether they have anything more to add on the issue. Shri Andrew Antonio Fernandez, representing CCBA, informed the chair that in 90% of the cases shipping lines are informed well in advance about the preferred CFS. He further submitted that several shipping lines are insisting on a deposit for nominating certain CFS, and also are not allowing to nominate certain CFS. The chair reiterated that if importer had informed the shipping line about his preferred CFS well in advance and could produce documentary evidence to the same effect and yet the shipping line had entered a different CFS in the manifest, further applicable action under the Customs Act, 1962 may be invited in case the importer or his representative filed complaint regarding the same.

Thereafter other points were taken up for discussion.

FRESH POINTS FOR DISCUSSION:

Points raised by Cochin Customs Brokers' Association:

1: Request for Additional Officer at the DPD and RMS Section

a. It was submitted by the Cochin Customs Brokers' Association that recently there has been a significant increase in the number of DPD and RMS bills, causing delays in the release of import containers. Therefore an additional officer may be posted at the DPD and RMS section during peak days to ensure faster clearance of import consignments and avoid backlogs.

The Chair informed that on verification of data of facilitated bills of entries for the last two years, no significant increase is noticed in the number of facilitated bills. The chair further informed that vide circular 01/2025-Cus automated out of charge had been launched for AEO T2 and T3 clients which would again reduce the number of facilitated bills handled by the officer.

b. During restricted and Saturday holidays, it would be beneficial if a dedicated officer is appointed to oversee the import clearance process and the timely release of DPD/RMS Bills.

The chair informed that turn duty holiday posting is being issued to avoid the delay in clearance due to holidays.

2: Delays in CHA license renewal and CBLMS updation:

It was submitted by Shri. Andrew Antonio Fernandez, representative of Cochin Customs Broker's Association, that the completion of formalities for CHA license renewal is taking significant time causing hardships to their members whose main licenses are in Cochin. Furthermore, even after the renewal process is completed, the validity extension in the CBLMS system is not updated in a timely manner which affects the work at the Form-C extended Customs stations.

The Chair informed that as per the Customs Broker Licensing Regulations, 2018, Customs Broker Licenses have lifetime validity provided that there is valid bond and bank guarantee/NSC/cash security.

Shri Andrew Antonio Fernandez submitted that validity was mentioned in the licenses issued long back. The chair informed that in such cases where there is a valid bank guarantee the concerned brokers may submit intimation to I&B section and the same will be rectified at the earliest. Shri Andrew Antonio Fernandez further submitted that in CBLMS portal also there is a mandatory field for entering the validity of the license. The chair informed that Mumbai Customs is the nodal agency to update the profile of CHA license in CBLMS portal, in accordance with communications made by the parent Commissionerate. Regarding the validity of license, the chair assured that henceforth the year 2099 would be intimated to Mumbai Customs as validity of the license, provided there is a valid security in the form of bank guarantee/cash security against it.

Fresh Points by CIAL

CIAL had submitted the application for AEO (LO) Certificate in February 2024, and the Directorate of International Customs (DIC), New Delhi approved it in August, 2024 on the basis of recommendation of this Commissionerate. However, the DIC, New Delhi informed that they could not generate the AEO certificate in ICES due to the error: "Entity has not registered in ICEGATE". As per the instructions, CIAL re-registered their PAN under the 'custodian' category in ICEGATE on 27/12/2024 to generate the certificate in ICES. Then, the DIC, New Delhi has informed that they cannot generate/upload the AEO certificate as the above error persists in the system and the issue has been escalated to the DG Systems. Due to the technical issue, they had not received the AEO (LO) Certificate approved by the DIC in August 2024, and requested to resolve the same.

The chair informed that the matter is pending with DG (Systems) due to technical issue and resolution is awaited. The chair further informed that recommendation had already been sent to DIC vide email dated 08.01.2025 and a copy of the same would be shared with CIAL.

(Action owner: AEO Cell)

Fresh points by Kerala Steamer Agents' Association

1. SCMTR implementation issues:

1.1 Shri Prakash Iyer, representative of KSAA, submitted that their members are facing many issues with respect to implementation of

SCMTR. They requested to designate an officer to resolve the issues related to SCMTR filing and also to conduct a training for the members of the association.

The chair informed that an officer has already been designated to address issues with filings under SCMTR. The chair further informed that ICES, vide letter dated 27.01.2025, had agreed to conduct a physical training on the matter.

1.2 Waiver of amendment charges in SCMTR during implementation stage.

The chair informed that the amendment charges are collected in accordance with Notification No. 36/2017-Customs (N.T) dated 11.04.2017 read with Levy of Fees (Customs Documents) Amendments Regulations, 2017 and the same cannot be waived.

1.3 Permission for manual clearances in cases of issues of ICEGATE server/System glitches and issuance of an SOP for the same:

The chair agreed to issue an SOP for the manual clearances in cases of technical glitches in ICEGATE system. However, the chair informed that permission for manual clearance would be granted if the requests are accompanied by screenshots/other evidences of technical glitches.

(Action owner: I&B)

2. Clarification on the need of bank guarantee for SCMTR registration as Steamer Agents and validity of the SCMTR registration.

The chair informed that regulation 3(1)(A) of SCMTR mandates furnishing of a bond of Rupees five lakhs and a bank guarantee/postal security/National Saving Certificate/fixed deposit receipt issued by a nationalized bank in the name of the Commissioner of Customs for an amount of Rupees five lakhs. As per Regulation 3(4) of Sea Cargo Manifest Transshipment Regulations, 2018, registration shall be valid unless and until revoked.

3. NOC – for Cargo Destruction or Public Auction of unclaimed shipment of Container No: TCLU9722846

Shri Prakash Iyer submitted that a container with Digital Multifunction Device with accessories had been lying with the CFS – Falcon since 07.01.2017. The shipment, as per the Bills of Lading, was consigned to M/s SKY2C Freight Systems India Pvt. Ltd. The container is

lying at Falcon CFS for over 8 years, as the consignee could not clear the shipment due to restrictions on import of the cargo. It was requested to expedite the process of clearance of this long-stay container unit.

The chair assured to resolve the issue at the earliest.

Fresh points by Federation of Indian Export Organization.

Shri Rajeev M.C., representative of FIEO, submitted that a member exporter, M/s Shabari Cottons, was not able to upload their shipping bills in DGFT website since April 2024. Due to this they are unable to generate bank certificates and to sell their ROSCTL scrips. They had taken up the matter several times with ICEGATE and also through CPGRAMS. But the matter is not yet solved.

The chair informed that it is a system related issue. The chair suggested that a letter will be issued to the exporter with the details of exports made and the exporter may submit the same to DGFT for manually updating in DGFT website.

(Action owner: EDI)

Other points raised:

Point 1: Shri Sijo George, representing KSSA, submitted that updation of digital signature in the profile in ICEGATE is not possible for child registration and requested for a solution. The chair directed to submit a representation in this respect. Chair directed DC (EDI) to follow up the matter with DG (Systems).

(Action owner: EDI)

Point 2: Shri Andrew Antonio Fernandez submitted that CIAL used to have an EDI centre till 2022. They requested to restart the same. The chair informed that the feasibility of the same would be looked into. DC (EDI) informed that DG (Systems) had invited tenders for the appointment of EDI service providers all over India and the process is still going on.

Point 3: Shri Kuruvilla Xavier, representing DP World, submitted that Container Scanning Division is not integrated with ICEGATE. Therefore, the officers require physical copy of import documents for verifying the scanned image, which result in delay of clearance of scanned containers.

The chair informed that the matter will be looked into with respect to the feasibility.

Since no other points were raised by the members for discussion, the Chair concluded the meeting by thanking the members and informed that the date for next meeting of the Permanent Trade Facilitation Committee will be intimated.

This is issued with the approval of Commissioner of Customs (Chairman, PTFC).

(Jimmi Joseph)
(Deputy Commissioner)

Submitted to:

1. The Chief Commissioner of Central Tax, Central Excise & Customs, Thiruvananthapuram Zone, Cochin. [For information please]

Copy to:

ADC/JC, All DC/AC/All members of PTFC/ EDI (for uploading on customs website)