

In this issue...



▶▶▶ Training on ◀◀◀ Big Data Analytics



MRA embarks itself in Big Data Analytics

MRA Officers attended a two-weeks training course at the Custom House to effectively use Big Data Analytics for a smarter and more intelligent Customs in order to enhance Trade Facilitation while ensuring the proper mitigation of risks.



Big Data Analytics is an extremely powerful tool for improving business processes both at the operational and strategic levels. The application of big data analytics will enable the MRA and border regulatory agencies to adopt a proactive rather than a reactive response to supply chain risks, whilst facilitating legitimate trade. This can only be achieved through the right use of data available across the supply chain.



Big Data Analytics will enhance MRA's ability to harness the use of sophisticated analytics in future policy-making processes. It is also expected from the team which has received the training to capitalise on the use of latest AI technology and block chain to conduct better risk and compliance management. By bringing all the data together from the entire supply chain, the MRA will obtain an accurate and holistic picture thereof. This will enable the identification of trends which will assist officers in identifying suspicious activities, detecting frauds, fighting against trafficking of illicit drugs and prohibited goods as well as under and over valuation of goods.

The desired solution will help connect different systems such as the Customs Management System, Tax Revenue System, Passport & Immigration System, Cargo Community System, Cargo Handling System, Financial Investigation Unit and Non-Intrusive Inspection devices. The aim is to better control information flow and make information more intelligible for Customs, in the face of exponential growth in global trade. Predictive analytics is relevant to the MRA by using the vast amount of historical data in applying analytics in risks prediction. Risks based analysis can be made from data irrespective of its structure such as scanning images. Algorithms aimed at fraud detection, tax evasion, non-compliance, travel history trends would also benefit the MRA.

The two-weeks training culminated with the Award of Certificate which was held on Friday 28 February, 2020. The ceremony was graced by The Hon Nandcoomar Bodha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.



In his address, the Chief Guest, Hon. Nandcoomar Bodha, underlined the close collaboration between the European Union (EU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. He furthered that the training was expected to improve the Risk Management System at Customs, thereby enhancing the operational capabilities of MRA to target risky consignments and importers.

The Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, thanked the Hon. Minister for sparing time from his schedule to attend to the Award of Certificate Ceremony at the MRA and extended his thanks to the European Union for funding this project.



Mr. Lal concluded that the MRA is committed to enhance border protection, in line with Government's policy.



Fostering Business Integrity in Mauritius



A high level two-day conference on the theme 'Enhancing Business Integrity' was held at the InterContinental Resort, Balaclava on the 18 and 19 February 2020. The conference was organised by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Business Mauritius, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Mauritius Institute of Directors (MIOD) and the Mauritius Bankers Association (MBA).

The objective of the conference was to develop a greater cooperation between the Republic of Mauritius and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Working Group on Bribery with a view to sensitise businesses to emerging risks of corruption and financial crimes. More than one hundred representatives of parastatal and private companies from the banking and non-banking sector came together for an exchange of ideas in order to preserve the integrity of Mauritius.

The Prime Minister, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth officially opened the conference and reiterated his commitment to lead a merciless fight against corruption and financial crimes. He also made an urgent appeal to all social partners to unite together with the government in this fight.

The chairman of the OECD task force, Dr. Drago Kos, during his speech, stressed the importance of the public sector and private companies working together to fight corruption. Dr. Navin Beekary, Director-General of the ICAC, stressed that fighting corruption is essential to making Mauritius a popular destination for foreign investors in order to ensure economic prosperity.

The Director-General of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), Mr Sudhamo Lal, was the main speaker for the fourth panel discussion on the theme 'Sharing of Best Practices in Managing Integrity Risks'. Mr D Essoo, CEO of MBA was the moderator and the other panellists consisted of Professor D Malan, UNODC Consultant, Director of Centre for Corporate Governance in Africa, Head of Anti- Corruption Division, OECD, Managing Director of Absa Bank (Mauritius Ltd) and Mr S Benimadhu, Chief Executive of Stock Exchange of Mauritius.

At the end of the session, the panellists and participants unanimously agreed that the MRA Integrity Framework is comprehensive, which not only includes combatting malpractices or corruption, but also conforms to standards in service delivery.

MRA hosted the 7th Steering Committee and WCO ROCB ESA Meeting

The 7th Steering Committee of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) was held from Tuesday 04 to Thursday 06 February, 2020 at the Regional Training Centre, Custom House. Fourteen delegates attended the Steering Meeting, in their capacity as the ESA Members of the Policy Commission.



The WCO Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) East and Southern Africa (ESA) Management Meeting followed the Steering Committee on Friday, 07 February, 2020 at the seat of MRA Customs. The main objective of the meeting was to consider the reports of the last Regional Steering Committee in preparation of the WCO ESA Governing Council.

AFRITAC South providing capacity on 'Intelligence Matters' to MRA officers



Two resource persons from AFRITAC South conducted a mission at the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) on 'Intelligence Matters' from Monday 10 to Friday 21 February, 2020. The aim of the mission was to train MRA officers on modern techniques of collecting, analysing and managing intelligence from various sources in relation to maritime movements, narcotics and money laundering.

Mr. G. Bines and Mr. B. Collins were the resource persons for this high level workshop and 25 participants from different MRA Departments namely Customs, Fiscal Investigation Department (FID) and Legal Services Department (LSD) attended same.



Exchange programme between MRA and SLA

In the context of the exchange agreement between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles, the Seychelles Licensing Authority (SLA) made a request to the Economic Development Board (EDB) of Mauritius for an exchange programme with various licensing authorities in Mauritius from the 17 to the 20 February 2020.

In that respect, five delegates of the SLA conducted a visit at the Head Office of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) on Wednesday 19 February 2020. The purpose of the visit of the technical cadres of the SLA was to learn about the revenue collection mechanism, operational services, customs services focussed on liquor related licences and legislations governing licensing in key sectors.

Presentations were made by Mr D. Ramdin, Director, Operational Services Department, on Revenue Collection Process and Liquor License, and Mr. V. Ramburun, Director, Customs Department, on Licenses issued by Customs. The delegates had the opportunity to seek clarification on related matters.



MRA meets IMF representatives

The Director-General of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), Mr. Sudhamo Lal, welcomed three delegates from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the Head Office, Efram Court, Port Louis on Tuesday 25 February, 2020. The agenda of the meeting was the medium term revenue projections, tax administration reform measures and tax data used for GDP.

The meeting was also attended by officials of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development and by members of the MRA Management Team. Following a presentation by Mr. Sudhamo Lal, an interactive session was engaged between the participants, which concluded the meeting.

