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### Laying of Foundation Stone of the Integrated Governmental Clearance Centre (IGCC)



26 January 2020

### INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY 2020

Customs fostering  
Sustainability  
for People, Prosperity  
and the Planet

  
World Customs Organization  
Organisation Mondiale des Douanes



# IGCC: One-Stop-Shop for the clearance of Cargo at the Airport

The Integrated Governmental Clearance Centre (IGCC) will be a one-stop-shop to provide all necessary facilities for the clearance of cargo at Plaine Magnien, next to the SSR International Airport.

The concept of the IGCC is recommended by the World Customs Organisation under the “Coordinated Border Management” which necessitates bringing all the related government agencies concerned with the processing of permits and authorisations and the clearance of goods under one roof. The IGCC will regroup amongst others: Customs, Health, Agriculture, Ministry of Commerce, Food Import Unit, Mauritius Standard Bureau and Pharmacy Board. The building will cost around Rs. 650 million and it is expected to be completed by June 2021.



The IGCC will be unique with a modern architectural design. It will be equipped with all the necessary facilities and amenities to provide a value added service to the trading community; modern office space for a better interaction between government authorities and stakeholders, training room facilities, conference rooms for meetings and video-conferencing, canteen and other welfare amenities.

The IGCC will also be an eco-friendly building encompassing “green” concepts such as the use of solar energy, maximum use of natural lighting, and rain-water harvesting systems

The Foundation Stone of the Integrated Governmental Clearance Centre (IGCC) was laid by the Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, Republic of Mauritius on the occasion of the International Customs Day on Sunday 26 January, 2020 at Plaine Magnien. Dr. The Hon. Renganaden Padayachy, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Mr. Nayen Koomar Ballah, Chairperson, MRA Board, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, Director-General, MRA, other Ministers, Members of Parliament and eminent personalities were also present during the ceremony.





# The MRA celebrates International Customs Day 2020

Instituted by the World Customs Organization (WCO), International Customs Day is held on January 26 every year, which commemorates the day in 1953 when the inaugural session of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) was held in Brussels, Belgium.

The International Customs Day (ICD) this year was dedicated to the contribution of Customs towards a sustainable future where social, economic, health and environmental needs are at the heart of actions, with the slogan "Customs fostering Sustainability for People, Prosperity and the Planet"



The International Customs Day was marked by the launching of a new mobile container scanner and remittance of certificates of merits awarded by the World Customs Organisation.





## A new mobile container scanner for better control

With a view to further facilitating trade and cope with the government programme for port extension, MRA Customs is investing massively in non-intrusive inspection equipment which is a pre-requisite for safety requirements according to the WCO SAFE Framework of standards. In this regard, a new Mobile container scanner has been procured from Nuctech Ltd, the MT1213DE and is operational since September 2019.



This new equipment is a fully autonomous system without any additional infrastructure and can be used to scan goods anywhere in Mauritius. This scanner, as per its mobile nature, will go towards containers, rather than having containers come to the existing fixed scanners. It adopts the advanced Interlaced Dual-Energy as the radiation source and can provide excellent screening features such as organic/inorganic material discrimination, high penetration, fast-scan and radioactivity monitoring.

The scanner functions well in harsh weather conditions such as extreme hot, cold, rainy or windy. It can be driven independently during site transfer and can be deployed for use within 15 minutes. Therefore, it provides Customs the best mobility and no doubt enhances the efficiency for combating illicit trafficking.





# Certificates of merit awarded by the World Customs Organisation (WCO) to MRA officers and stakeholders

To foster cooperation with its stakeholders, the World Customs Organization (WCO) awards people and organisations connected in the supply chain of customs administrations all over the world. In Mauritius, WCO gave eight awards of merit to customs officers, customs sections of the MRA and agencies involved in trade facilitation.



1. Brigades Des Marchandises (MRA Customs) represented by Mr. Persand Ootam;
2. Compliance Unit of the Seaport Operations Section (MRA Customs) represented by Mr. Cangy Jean-Marc, Technical Officer;
3. Customs Anti-Narcotics Section (MRA Customs) represented by Mr. Baichoo Hemrajsingh, Technical Officer;
4. Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change represented by Mr. Mooloo Santaram, Director of Environment;
5. Freight Academy represented by Mr. Delbar Afzal;
6. Mr. Ramnundun Vijay, Director, Human Resources and Training Department;
7. Ruwa-Koonjbeharry, Mrs. Dudesha, Customs Officer II, Seaport Operations Section, and
8. Caully, Mrs. Deepa, Customs Officer II, Seaport Operations Section.



# Training Course:

## MRA officers to act as prosecutors

A Training Course was organized for by Human Resources and Training Department in collaboration with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) at the seat of the Custom House, Mer Rouge on 16 January 2020.



Some thirty MRA officers benefitted from the expertise of Miss Anusha Rawoah, Senior State Counsel, Office of the DPP who acted as the resource person.



The topic of the training session was 'The Mauritian Legal System and the Prosecution Process'.



# ATAF organises Intermediate Course on Tax Audit for MRA officers

The African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) conducted an Intermediate Course on Tax Audit at the MRA Training Academy, Custom House, Port Louis from 27 to 31 January 2020. This course was developed by ATAF with the support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

This programme consists of an online course module which is run for 13 weeks followed by a face to face intermediate seminar.



The 1<sup>st</sup> ATAF Blended Learning Course on Tax Audit was held from 15 April to 15 July 2013. Up to now, 33 MRA officers have completed the online module and the next step is to progress with the Intermediate Level Blended learning.



Mr. Dhanraj Ramdin, Director, Operational Services Department, declared the workshop open. In his address, he urged the officers to participate actively in the training by sharing their experience and raising pertinent questions on grey areas of taxation.

"The aim of this exercise is to enhance existing knowledge and sharpen the skills of the participants with regard to contemporary issues relevant to auditing, Value Added Tax and International Taxation", he added.

# Caroline Mutayabarwa

ATAF Secretariat



## An overview of the blended Tax Audit Learning Programme.

The African Tax Administrators Forum (ATAF) completed a decade of its existence in 2019. The mission of ATAF is to serve as an African network that aims at improving tax systems in Africa through exchanges, knowledge dissemination, capacity development and active contribution to the regional and global tax agenda. An improved tax system will increase accountability of the State to its citizens, enhance domestic resource mobilisation and thereby foster inclusive economic growth.

One of the mandates of ATAF is to provide technical assistance to the tax administrations from numerous member-countries, including the sub-national tax administrations and customs. In that context, ATAF conducted an Intermediate Course on Tax Audit in Mauritius for the benefits of officers of the MRA.

Mrs. Caroline Mutayabarwa, ATAF Secretariat, was present in Mauritius and shared that the intermediate tax audit course aims to provide participants with an opportunity to examine in detail complex tax issues and enhance tax auditor's skills. She added that the strength of the course is the foundational course (the online leg) from which participants are expected to have grasped basic concepts, and the five-day face to face intervention solidifies on that. It is the continental pool of experts who brings with them specific country experiences that enriches the course, she said.

Mrs. Mutubarwa conveyed that since 2013, ATAF has trained 341 participants for the intermediate leg; around 75 for the advanced leg (started in 2018) and 600 plus for the online leg. However, she admitted that the main challenge is to get all who went through the online leg to attend both the advanced and intermediate legs. *"The recent country requests for the courses to be delivered locally will provide an opportunity for more employees from tax administrations to attend all three legs of the blended tax audit learning programme. Language except for Portuguese has not been an issue because the team of experts can facilitate both in French and English. ATAF looks forward to starting offering the course in Portuguese once it finalizes sourcing the Portuguese experts",* Mrs. Mutubarwa explained.

Mrs. Mutubarwa highlighted that the MRA is vice Chair of the ATAF Council, hence ATAF gets first-hand guidance in that regard. MRA staffs have attended almost all ATAF activities with membership in one of the ATAF's technical committee on automatic exchange of information. There is definitely going to be a shift on capacity building interventions to bring out competencies that employers are looking for to meet their mandate particularly in the wake of technological advancement, she concluded.