

Celebration of International Customs Day 2017



The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Customs Department celebrated the International Customs Day (ICD) on Thursday 26th January 2017 at the MRA Custom House. The Chief Guest of the event, Honourable Dharmendar Seesunkur, Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms, was welcomed by the Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal in the presence of the Financial Secretary, Mr. Dev Manraj.

The theme of the ICD 2017 is dedicated to Customs modernization process: collecting and analyzing data under the slogan 'Data Analysis for Effective Border Management'. In his address, Honorable Seesunkur emphasised that the MRA is one of the prominent public sector organisations that has embraced information technology to enhance its systems and processes.

Mr Sudhamo Lal reassured that the MRA Customs is in the process of on-going modernisation to meet the expectations of its stakeholders. The Director of Customs, Mr. Ramburun focused his speech on the several development projects that the MRA Customs has undertaken so far.



On that occasion, the Chief Guest officially launched the E-Auction project, the Time Release Study (TRS) and the HS 2017 and the event concluded with the award of WCO Certificates of Merit to MRA staff and stakeholders



Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

During the first month of the year, the MRA celebrated the International Customs Day, which was graced by the Honourable Dharmendar Seesunkur, Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms. During January, the Director-General of the MRA announced that the 3-years-old VAT Lucky Draw Scheme has yielded satisfactory results and that it will be pursued during 2017.

Last but not least, Mauritius signed the the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on the Exchange of Country-by-Country Reports in Paris in January.

The MRA thanks taxpayers for their usual support

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Draw of Prizes for VLDS 2016 - (4th Quarter)

The 4th quarter draw of the VAT Lucky Draw Scheme (VLDS) 2016 was held on Tuesday 31st January 2017 at the MRA Head Office. The draw was held in the presence of a representative of the Gambling Regulatory Authority (GRA), members of the press and MRA Senior Management Team.

The Director General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, stressed that the public has understood the importance of the campaign and has contributed to making it a success. Some 40 578 entries were registered during 2016 through the MRA's Website and SMS and through these entries, the MRA has been able to detect cases of tax evasion. The Director General concluded by announcing the pursuance of the VAT Lucky Draw Scheme in 2017.



The invoice number of the winners of the draw and their respective prizes are shown hereunder:

| SN | Prizes | Invoice Number | Date | VAT Amount |
|-----|-----------|----------------|------------|------------|
| 1. | Rs 50 000 | 36714 | 26-12-2016 | 93 |
| 2. | Rs 25 000 | 74161 | 26-11-2016 | 322 |
| 3. | Rs 15 000 | 0000023073 | 12-11-2016 | 2607 |
| 4. | Rs 10 000 | 0070277716 | 20-11-2016 | 134 |
| 5. | Rs 10 000 | 172146 | 05-12-2016 | 822 |
| 6. | Rs 10 000 | G1179408 | 27-10-2016 | 372 |
| 7. | Rs 10 000 | 173499 | 18-12-2016 | 379 |
| 8. | Rs 10 000 | 0193 | 23-12-2016 | 293 |
| 9. | Rs 10 000 | 95258 | 06-11-2016 | 330 |
| 10. | Rs 10 000 | 6091247300200 | 03-12-2016 | 941 |
| 11. | Rs 5 000 | 57310 | 07-10-2016 | 295 |
| 12. | Rs 5 000 | 27102866 | 25-11-2016 | 339 |
| 13. | Rs 5 000 | 55351 | 24-10-2016 | 194 |
| 14. | Rs 5 000 | 15416 | 27-10-2016 | 1710 |
| 15. | Rs 5 000 | 167439 | 29-12-2016 | 193 |
| 16. | Rs 5 000 | QBA00043070CS | 19-12-2016 | 990 |
| 17. | Rs 5 000 | 569000717 | 29-11-2016 | 99 |
| 18. | Rs 5 000 | 129534 | 11-12-2016 | 333 |
| 19. | Rs 5 000 | 61228 | 03-11-2016 | 118 |
| 20. | Rs 5 000 | A16000009042 | 28-12-2016 | 678 |

MRA hosts the 'WCO Train the Trainer Workshop 2017 - Integrity & Ethics'



The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), in collaboration with the World Customs Organisation (WCO) ran a "Train the Trainer" workshop, on Integrity & Ethics, from 30th January to 03rd February 2017 at the MRA Custom House. The Chief Guest of the opening ceremony, held on 30th January 2017 was Mr. N. Beekarry, Director-General of the Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC), and he was welcomed by the Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal. In his keynote address, the Chief Guest highlighted that integrity is the cornerstone of any organisation and that the holding of such a workshop at the MRA proves that the MRA has the necessary frameworks for integrity and ethics.

The Director-General of the MRA emphasised that integrity is one of the core values of the MRA and that the MRA is determined to make its staff seasoned trainers in integrity and ethics. Mr. S. Narrainen, Director Internal Affairs Division, underlined MRA's achievements in terms of integrity.

The workshop aims at equipping trainers at the MRA with integrity and ethics training skills, who will in turn disseminate the skills to MRA staff. The WCO experts responsible for the training were Mrs. Patricia Revesz, WCO Integrity Development Advisor, and Mrs. Irina Kykylyk, Head of the Division of Professional Selection and Foreign Language Training Department for Specialized Training of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine. 28 MRA staff from the rank of Section Head, Team Leaders MRA and Technical Officers attended the workshop. The participants have shown keen interest in the development of an integrity strategy for the promotion of training on integrity and ethics at the MRA. A special awareness raising session for the benefit of Senior Managers was held on 02nd February 2017 and attended by an additional 15 Senior Officers from MRA, Police and ICAC.



Courtesy Call of Mr. T. Pattison at MRA



In the context of the merger of the Registrar General Department (RGD) with the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), Mr. Tim Pattison paid a courtesy call visit to the Acting Director General, Mr. Mario Hannelas, on Wednesday 18th January 2017 at the MRA Head Office.

Mr. Tim Pattison is the Programme Manager of Airbus Defence and Space Limited which provides the essential IT systems for the RGD namely LAVIMS and Digitisation of deeds under MeRP.

MRA Presentation at the IFA Seminar

On 20th January 2017, Mr M. Hannelas, Director Large Taxpayers Department made a presentation at a seminar organized by the International Fiscal Association (IFA) at the Flying Dodo. The theme of the seminar was "BEPS implementation challenges and the Multilateral Instrument - Recent Developments". Mr Hannelas elaborated on the commitments taken by Mauritius as an associate of the Inclusive Framework to implement the minimum standards under the BEPS project.



Emphasis was also laid on the work being carried out by the Forum on Harmful Tax practices in connection with BEPS Action 5 and the impending review of preferential regimes of all members of the Inclusive Framework including Mauritius.

As regards BEPS Action 13 (Country-by Country Reporting), the MRA resource person announced that Mauritius will adhere to the international norms and will sign the CBC Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement in Paris on 26th January 2017.

Mr. Hannelas concluded that it is extremely important to balance implementation of BEPS measures whilst continuing to be an attractive destination for foreign investors and also ensuring ease of doing business.



Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting



As part of the consultation process with the industry on challenges that lie ahead in the face of the BEPS project and review of the tax regime of Mauritius by the EU, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was set up by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

A TWG meeting chaired by Mr. Rajesh Ramlooll S.C, Deputy Solicitor-General, was held on Monday 23rd January 2017 to discuss on the Multilateral Instrument and its challenges for Mauritius. Members were also apprised of the decision of Mauritius to sign the Competent Authority Agreement on Country by Country Reporting and the timetable set by the Forum on Harmful Tax Practices for the next review of preferential tax regimes.

Mauritius signs the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on the Exchange of Country-by-Country Reports

Mauritius is now amongst the 57 countries to have signed the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on the Exchange of Country-by-Country Reports (CbC MCAA). The signing ceremony took place at the Inclusive Framework meeting which was held from Thursday 26th to Friday 27th January 2017 at the OECD Secretariat in Paris. Mauritius was represented by Mr M. Hannelas, Director Large Taxpayers Department. As an associate of the Inclusive Framework, Mauritius has committed to implement the minimum standard of CbC reporting



By signing the CbC MCAA, Mauritius agrees to bilaterally and automatically exchange Country-by-Country Reports with other signatories in line with Action 13 of the BEPS Action Plan. CbCR reports exchanged are aimed to provide tax administration with relevant and reliable information to perform an efficient and robust transfer pricing risk assessment analysis.

The CbC reporting is to be implemented for fiscal years starting from 1st July 2018 and will apply to Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) with an annual consolidated group revenue equal to or exceeding EUR 750 million.

MRA Customs: Trainee Customs' presentations

The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) recruited 81 Trainee Customs Officers (TCOI) in January 2016 and, after one year of traineeship, the trainee presented their projects to the MRA Management Team, Section Heads from Customs and the Mentors. The trainees were split into 11 groups and the presentations were made on two half days, as follows: Thursday 19th and Friday 20th January. It is to be recalled that the one year traineeship was split as follows:

- One week Induction Course;
- 4 months in class study including continuous assessments on 10 different modules;
- 6 months on-the-job training;
- 2 last months devoted to revision classes, final assessments and project work including presentation.



The addition to the workforce represents the determination of the MRA to strengthen border protection, to optimise revenue collection and to help the Customs Department in the on-going modernisation process.

Sensitizing Local Entrepreneurs

On Tuesday 31st January 2017, the National Women Entrepreneur Council (NWECC) organized a seminar at Vallée des Prêtres Community Centre, to sensitize woman entrepreneurs of the locality on how to start a business. The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) was called upon to participate in the seminar. Mr. C. Lochun, Technical Officer at the Taxpayer Education and Communication Department (TECD), explained the basics of taxation and the legal obligations of newly setup businesses.



The MRA regularly cooperates with local authorities as part of its education strategy to sensitize specific segments of the local population on the benefits of being tax compliant

FMSC Swimming Competition

The Federation Mauricienne Des Sports Corporatifs (FMSC) organised its last sports activities for the year 2016 with a swimming competition on Sunday 27th November 2016 at Serge Alfred swimming pool in Beau Bassin. Companies that are affiliated with the FMSC such as the Barclays, Accenture, SBM, and Waste Water Management Authority amongst others were represented by their best swimmers in order to harvest a maximum number of medals. The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) was represented by eight staff in the swimming competition. The eight MRA staff who are seasoned swimmers were given the opportunity to fine tune their preparations prior to the event with two training sessions at les salines swimming pool. During the training sessions, our staff coordinated and synchronised their participations for the different races of the competition such as relay, freestyle, breaststroke, etc.



The performance of MRA participants was excellent as they brought home a good share of medals as illustrated in below table.

| Name of staff | Category | Ranking | Reward |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Balgobin-Dabysing P. Devi | D2 -50M freestyle | 2 nd | Silver Medal |
| | D2 -50M backstroke | 2 nd | Silver Medal |
| | D2 -50M breaststroke | 3 rd | Bronze Medal |
| Mootien Pamela | D3- 50M freestyle | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| | D3- 50M breaststroke | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| | D3- 50M backstroke | 2 nd | Silver Medal |
| Balgobin-Dabysing P. Devi | Lady's Relay (4x50) | 2 nd | Silver Medal |
| Bhuruth Bajnathsingh Priya | | | |
| Mamoojee Amira B. | | | |
| Mootien Pamela | | | |
| Mungroosing Devkumar | H3- 50M freestyle | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| | H3 - 50M backstroke | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| | H3 - 50M breaststroke | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| Ramneorah Jaychand | H3- 50M backstroke | 3 rd | Bronze Medal |
| Mootien Pamela | Relay Mixed (4x50) | 1 st | Gold Medal |
| Balgobin-Dabysing P. Devi | | | |
| Mungroosing Devkumar | | | |
| Khelawon Harris | | | |