



MINISTRY OF TOURISM,
TRADE, COMMERCE AND
NI-VANUATU BUSINESS

Vanuatu Electronic Single Window Project Monthly newsletter

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- Customs-Post systems interface Project launched
- OCO Digital Customs and e-Commerce Workshop
- Trade Portal Contact Points training
- Energy module training for Santo

UPCOMING EVENTS IN JUNE

1. Development of PCO Module prototype
2. Development of Environment ODS module system requirements

Customs-Post Systems interface Project launched!

A Project valued at US\$400,000 in total, Vanuatu was selected out of [22 LDC countries](#) worldwide to pilot this initiative to link the ASYCUDA system to the Postal system, CDS. The announcement came on 7th December 2020 when the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) Executive in Geneva approved the funds for the ASYCUDA component of the project.

The Project was officially launched virtually on 27th May, witnessed by national officials from Vanuatu Post, Customs and Trade, as well as international officials from EIF, Universal Postal Union, United Nations Conference for Trade and Development and Oceania Customs Organisation.

The implementation of this ASYCU-

DA-CDS interface in Vanuatu will promote trade facilitation and e-commerce and reduce time and costs of trading across borders in Vanuatu by:

1. Establishing closer collaboration between Customs and Post operator;
2. Reducing time spent at Customs both for outbound and inbound items;
3. Using advance risk management techniques to cope with increasing volume of postal consignments;
4. Increasing transparency in the clearance process and calculation of duties and taxes;
5. Promoting the development of MSMEs with affordable and secure means of

delivery of goods;

6. Support for the Government's Trade Facilitation and e-commerce initiatives;
7. Better information for Government decision-making; and
8. Better management of border risks.

Such a development has been piloted in Gibraltar and Georgia, however the Vanuatu project would be the first for LDC countries. Once implemented in Vanuatu, it can be adopted to other LDC countries worldwide as well in the Pacific region.

The Project will be supported under the VeSW Project and it has a life-span of 12 months, however the actual interface is expected to go live by the end of 2021.

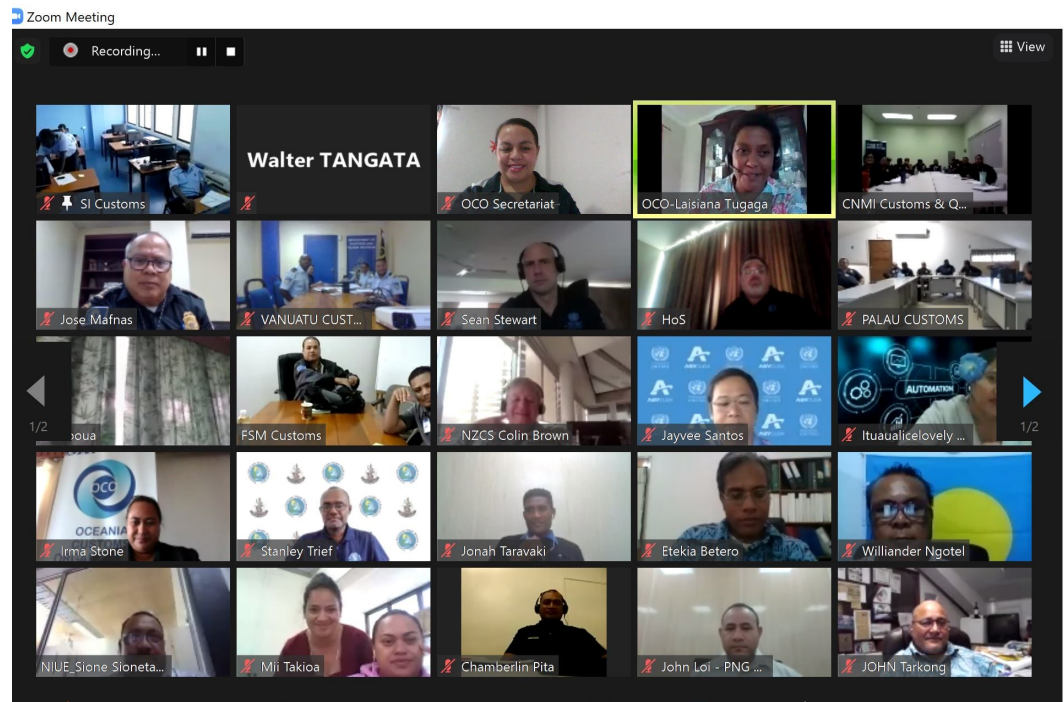


Director of Customs, Mr. Harold Tarosa delivering his remarks during the virtual launching of the project



Being the only Pacific country that has implemented a Single Window System, Vanuatu was invited to share its experience at this regional event

Oceania Customs Organisation's Digital Customs and e-commerce virtual workshop



Workshop Facilitators and 85 Customs Officials from around the Pacific.

The Oceania Customs Organisation organised its first *Virtual Workshop on Digital Customs & E-commerce* from 18-21 May, 2021 with 85 Customs officials from 16 countries participating. The objective of the workshop was to support members in the preparation of a coherent application and implementation of automation, single window and processes to facilitate e-commerce.

During the three-day workshop, the OCO Secretariat with the Regional Single Window Expert and UNCTAD presented on technical issues relating to Digital Customs, E-commerce and Single Window. UNCTAD is the key agency in the implementation of ASYCUDA World for the Pacific Island countries.

"E-commerce has real potential to narrow distances and trade costs, and to promote diversification of Pacific economies. COVID-19 has highlighted the significance of grow-

ing cross-border e-commerce and the need for Customs administrations in the Pacific to adequately prepare to facilitate and address issues stemming from e-commerce transactions but at the same time ensure safety and security for all" says Mr. Richard Brennan, OCO Head of Secretariat.

Stanley Trief, Manager of the Electronic Single Window System Project, also shared Vanuatu's experiences. Vanuatu is the first, and currently, the only country in the Pacific that has implemented an Electronic Single Window platform, which incorporates customs online payment, passenger processing and also links with other government agencies and services such as Biosecurity, Energy and Environment. In the future, Vanuatu's postal services will also be linked to the system. Mr. Trief

provided details of Vanuatu's experience on customs automation, system development process, IT, project and change management related issues.

Through the discussions, sharing of experiences and interactions, the key takeaways from the workshop for OCO members was the need for political support, and appropriate regulatory framework and processes as enablers to implement digital customs and e-commerce. At the same time provide avenue for, sustainable capacity building to customs officers to respond, adapt and innovate to the changing global trade landscapes.

Source : <https://www.ocosec.org>

Trade Portal Contact Points training



Some of the 20 Vanuatu Contact Points during the virtual training

Despite Vanuatu's outstanding ratification of the PACER Plus Agreement, the country was fortunate to have received funding from the Agreement and technical assistance from United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to develop and publish all regulatory and procedural requirements of goods, investment and immigration in Vanuatu, to fulfil the transparency article of the Agreement.

The Agreement also states that member countries are required to notify other Parties of any proposed or actual measures that might affect the operations of the Agreement or affect the other Party's interest under the Agreement. The Trade Portal therefore allows Vanuatu's Contact Points to fulfill this obligation efficiently. A Contact Points training was convened on 20th May as an opportunity for the UNCTAD Officials to train the Vanuatu Contact Points on how to use the Portal to provide notifications, request information or response under the respective articles of the Agreement of which they are responsible for.

The Vanuatu Trade Portal is accessible at:

<https://tradeportal.gov.vu>

Energy Module Santo Training

To ensure national conformity with the regulatory requirements and system processes, agencies' Officials, Customs Brokers and Traders in Luganville, Santo, also receive similar trainings to their counter-parts in Port Vila. This is standard VeSW Project practice, which has continuously contributed to the successful roll-out of the system nation-wide.

The same practice was done for the recently implemented Energy Efficient module for the Department of Energy, when a training on Energy regulatory requirements and the how to use this new module was conducted by Energy and VeSW Officials, for the identified users and agencies in Santo on 6th May. The training was attended by Santo Customs and Biosecurity Officials, Customs Brokers and Traders.

An interesting development during the module roll-out in Santo is that payment for Energy Certificates are now being done at Biosecurity offices. This arrangement was done because Energy does not have an office in Santo. It therefore fulfills the single window standards of a single point of payment for traders.



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on the [Single Window website](#).

The overall objective of the Vanuatu Electronic Single Window project is to expand Vanuatu's GDP through increased exports. The project outcome is to increase Vanuatu's competitiveness through the reduction of cost and time of trading across its borders. The Project is kindly funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the Australian Government. The Vanuatu Government is also providing in-kind contribution towards the project, in terms of personnel and ICT support.

The main implementing partner in the Project is United Nations for Trade and Development, UNCTAD.



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