



# **REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Starting from 2004, Regional Offices for Capacity Building were established in all regions of the WCO, which are intended to take over the load in the practical implementation of the WCO standards and instruments.

In this direction, in May 2009, the Conference of Heads of Customs Services of the European region in Bergen, Norway, decided to establish a Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku, Azerbaijan.

This decision was approved at the 113th/114<sup>th</sup> WCO Council Sessions in June 2009. On 11 November 2009, the World Customs Organization and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of the Regional Office for Capacity Building.

The Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe) has been functioning in Baku, Azerbaijan, since 17 October 2011 based on the said Memorandum of Understanding.

Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region is the parent structure of the World Customs Organization in the region, whose mission is to effectively coordinate activities in the area of institutional development of customs services, based on international standards and instruments of the WCO.



## **II. MANDATE**

The ROCB Europe is a regional initiative by the WCO Europe Region, established in accordance with the WCO's commitment to regionalization of its Capacity Building Strategy. It acts in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, the Vice-Chair of the WCO Europe Region and the host administration.

The direction of the work of the ROCB Europe is based on the guidance steered by the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

## **III. SCOPE**

### **1. Role**

The ROCB Europe is central to capacity building efforts in the WCO Europe Region. It supports Members Administrations primarily in needs assessment process and helps coordinate Capacity Building activities within the region.

In this context, the role of the ROCB Europe consists of the following:

- Working toward Customs Capacity Building in the WCO Europe Region in the context of WCO's Capacity Building Strategy and regionalization approach;
- Supporting the development of Member Administrations on Customs reform and modernization;
- Promoting the work of the WCO and its tools and instruments;
- Identifying common priorities amongst the Members and taking action with a view to achieving the regional objectives in that regard;
- Improving the conditions or establishing necessary mechanisms for enhanced communication in the Region;
- Supporting the development of cooperation among Member Administrations;
- Launching initiatives on emerging trends in Customs that are relevant to the Region;
- Raising awareness on WCO tools and instruments as well as Capacity Building efforts;
- Promoting modern and professional human resources development programs.



## 2. Functions

The ROCB Europe exclusively aims at enhancing the capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

For that aim, the ROCB Europe performs its work in meeting the following functions:

- Identifying the needs and coordinating Capacity building activities for Member Administrations of the Region accordingly;
- Providing Customs capacity building support through coordination of technical assistance, training and experience sharing activities for Member Administrations;
- Organizing, coordinating or hosting regional, sub-regional and national events on customs capacity building and WCO instruments;
- Organizing appropriate activities with respect to Customs development and priorities of the Region;
- Establishing, managing or coordinating developmental projects for bolstering the Customs modernization that favor Member Administrations;
- Forming and maintaining close liaison with the Member Administrations;
- Developing, promoting and maintaining partnerships with key international and regional stakeholders;
- Representing the WCO at appropriate regional events where applicable;
- Supporting the implementation of international standards for Customs and trade;
- Promoting Public – Private Sector Partnership in Customs matters;
- Coordinating the activities of the Regional Training Centers in the Region;
- Collecting information on the projects, initiatives and best practices in the Region;
- Providing strategic guidance to management of Member Administrations in the Region when needed;



- Producing, collecting, analyzing or disseminating information about customs capacity building and WCO instruments;
- Providing a common platform for regional communication, view exchange, information sharing;
- Evaluating the developmental progress of Member Administrations.

## **IV. MEANS OF OPERATION**

### **1. Working Method**

The ROCB Europe performs its work by means of its professional as well as support services. Professional staff is seconded by the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region whereas support staff is provided by the host administration.

### **2. Annual Activity Plan**

The ROCB Europe conducts its work in the frame of an Annual Activity Plan on the basis of its strategy and regional needs and priorities. The draft Plan for the upcoming term is developed by the ROCB Europe in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and the Vice-Chair and submitted for endorsement by the Heads of Customs Conference of the WCO Europe Region.

### **3. Annual Progress Report**

The ROCB Europe drafts an Annual Progress Report which indicates the achievement made by the Office in the previous term. The Report is submitted to the Heads of Customs Conference of the WCO Europe Region for performance measurement and monitoring purposes.



## **V. RESOURCES**

### **1. Facilities**

The Office is located in its own building provided by the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan. The host administration bears essential expenses associated with daily functionality of the Office and maintenance.

### **2. Staff**

The ROCB Europe is provided with officials, including a Head, seconded by the Members Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

The officials seconded to the ROCB Europe by the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region enjoy the privileges granted by the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the request of the seconding Customs Administration, these officials are assigned technical attaché status by the WCO Secretariat.

The ROCB Europe staff is independent of their home administration and the host administration in terms of their work for the Office. The WCO Staff Rules applies to the staff of the ROCB Europe where applicable.<sup>1</sup>

The officials may be made available by the Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region through a remote working mechanism without the need for physically joining the Office.

The ROCB Europe may benefit from the work of officials from the other WCO Regions remotely as the case maybe.

### **3. Head of the Office**

The Head of the ROCB Europe is elected through an appointment process coordinated by the Vice-Chair in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat. In the event of a vacancy of the post, the Vice-Chair calls upon all the Members of the Region for nominating candidates.

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<sup>1</sup> This provision excludes the cases where the application of a certain staff rule is practically or structurally impossible. For example, terminal allowance.



A selection board may be formed if deemed necessary during the process. The final decision for the assignment for the post is approved by the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO European Region.

The Head of ROCB Europe is assigned for three years, with the possibility of extension for one additional year.

#### **4. Budget**

The ROCB Europe has its own budget, separate from that of the WCO.

The budget of the ROCB Europe is formed of annual voluntary contributions received from the Members of the WCO Europe Region. The Office may seek to generate additional income and financial support.

The Office keeps records of its financial dealings and it is subject to examinations of financial activities upon the decision of the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

The annual financial statement for the previous year as well as the budget estimate for the upcoming year are drafted by the ROCB Europe and submitted to the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations for endorsement.

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