

RESOLUTION OF THE HIGH LEVEL STRATEGIC GROUP
ON THE SAFE FRAMEWORK OF STANDARDS

(October 2006)

THE HIGH LEVEL STRATEGIC GROUP,

Noting :

- (a) the Customs Co-operation Council Resolution of June 2005 to adopt the Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (“SAFE Framework of Standards”);
- (b) the Customs Co-operation Council Resolution of June 2006 to extend the mandate of the High Level Strategic Group to develop strategies to guide implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards;
- (c) the Resolution of the High Level Strategic Group of April 2006;
- (d) the considerable progress made by the Vice-Chairpersons, Members and the Secretariat on reporting on implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards;
- (e) with appreciation, the excellent contribution and report of the Private Sector Consultative Group, including their initiatives in developing informational materials and matrices for the use of the Secretariat and WCO Members;

Believing that :

- (a) the SAFE Framework of Standards represents uniform and minimum international standards required to enhance supply chain security and facilitation;
- (b) capacity building is essential to enable many Members to implement the SAFE Framework of Standards;
- (c) the WCO has a critical role to play in promoting implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards.

RESOLVES as follows :

Implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards

- (1) It is imperative that work proceed with respect to the development of pilot projects in furtherance of mutual recognition;
- (2) Results of pilot projects should be monitored and reported upon at the next meeting of the High Level Strategic Group;

- (3) The SAFE Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Standards should not be diluted with respect to their application to small and medium sized enterprises;
- (4) The Pillar 1 Work Group (Council Resolution, June 2006) shall :
 - a. Take on the task of reviewing the data elements necessary for advance security risk assessment;
 - b. Develop a reasoned, periodic and transparent mechanism for making any future amendments to the SAFE Framework of Standards which incorporate both Customs and business perspectives;
 - c. Incorporate an appeal procedure for any proposed revocation, withdrawal or suspension of an AEO status in the AEO guidance; and
 - d. Review the AEO guidance for consistency regarding the use of the terms "Validation" and "Authorization". The term "Validation", as used in the SAFE Framework of Standards, defines the process by which a Member considers an AEO applicant, and "Authorization" is the actual conferral of AEO status;
- (5) The Pillar 2 Work Group (Council Resolution, June 2006) shall :
 - a. Continue its role as the "key" consultative venue for Customs and business to collectively develop and carry forward insight and practical solutions for specific areas of concern;
 - b. Consider the further exploration of issues of practical concern that relate to Mutual Recognition and small and medium sized enterprises;
- (6) The Policy Commission should consider a review of the language in the AEO guidance concerning the addition by Members of supplemental national criteria; and
- (7) All comments previously offered by Members as well as those offered at the High Level Strategic Group and Private Sector Consultative Group meetings regarding proposed Section "N" will be considered and incorporated as appropriate in an amended submission for presentation to the December 2006 Policy Commission;

Re-publication of the SAFE Framework of Standards

- (1) The Policy Commission should authorize the Secretariat to make editorial revisions of a non-substantive nature to take into account the then existing situation, and circulate a "red-line" version of the SAFE Framework of Standards that incorporates those suggested editorial amendments for the information and comment of Members in time for the next meeting of the High Level Strategic Group; and
- (2) The Secretariat shall re-publish the SAFE Framework of Standards after the Council Sessions in June 2007 to incorporate changes adopted by the Council since the SAFE Framework of Standards' last publication;

Intellectual Property Rights

- (1) Intellectual Property Rights should be addressed in an independent document which is not part of the SAFE Framework of Standards, thus providing emphasis for the importance of the issue;

Capacity Building

The High Level Strategic Group :

- (1) Notes the extensive WCO Columbus Programme capacity building work already undertaken since the Fifth Meeting of the High Level Strategic Group, especially the activities under Phase Two of the WCO Columbus Programme;
- (2) Notes the need to keep the momentum on capacity building going by all stakeholders;
- (3) Notes the need to increase political awareness of the WCO's capacity building activities;
- (4) Notes the importance of action planning, which is the bridge between Phase One and Phase Two of the Columbus Programme;
- (5) Recommends that WCO donor Members continue and augment delivery of capacity building;
- (6) Recommends that WCO donor Members continue to provide comprehensive information updates to the WCO Secretariat on their capacity building projects for donor co-ordination purposes;
- (7) Recommends that WCO Members continue to submit the monitoring matrices on a bi-annual basis; and
- (8) Recommends that members of the High Level Strategic Group and all stakeholders continue working to secure financial, technical and personnel contributions from donors for continuing WCO activities in the area of capacity building and helping to construct the WCO Compendium on implementation best practices and tools;

Co-operation with other International Organizations and National Governmental Entities with Border Control Responsibilities

- (1) The SAFE Framework of Standards provides a solid platform upon which the WCO and other international organizations, such as the International Maritime Organization, the International Organization for Standardization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, etc., can make strategic and appropriate alliances to secure and facilitate all manners of trade and transport. The SAFE Framework of Standards also provides a solid platform upon which WCO Members can positively engage other national governmental entities that have border control or transportation security responsibilities;

- (2) The Secretariat, WCO Members and the Private Sector Consultative Group members and their associate organizations are encouraged to promote the SAFE Framework of Standards within other international organizations and fora, in order to harmonize its implementation throughout the global community.
