

Heading :

*The following report
may be of interest to :*

Summary :



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Customs Alliances Programme

All Importers and Exporters

The Thai Customs Department recently launched the 'Customs Alliances' ('CA') programme in order to make customs services and operations more transparent and efficient through a close collaboration between Customs and private sectors.

The CA programme provides a direct communication channel between Customs and enrolled business partners. This is done by appointing one 'Account Officer' ('AO') who is a customs official assigned to act as the direct channel and main coordinator between relevant bureaus within Customs and the enrolled business partners.

Importers/exporters would be able to directly contact and ask for the AO's help if there are any disputes with and challenges from Customs. The responsible AO will then consult with the relevant Customs specialists (for example for classification the AO would take it up with the Customs Tariff Bureau whereas for law interpretation the AO would discuss this with the Legal Affairs Bureau) to help enrolled companies deal with the customs issues more effectively. Under the CA programme, customs issues and disputes are expected to be resolved more promptly and transparently according to Customs.

At this initial stage, the CA programme will target eight pilot industries/product groups which are:

- agricultural products;
- pharmaceutical products;
- plastics and articles of plastics;
- iron/steel and articles made thereof;
- machinery and mechanical appliances;
- electrical machinery and equipment; and
- vehicles.

The CA programme is seen as a clear window of opportunity for businesses to deal with customs-related issues with import-export issues promptly. Nevertheless, before deciding to join the programme, interested companies are recommended to consider issues such as confidentiality and what level of information needs to be shared as part of the application process.

The deadline to enroll in the programme (either through the relevant Chamber of Commerce or directly with Customs in case the company has received an invitation to join the programme from Customs) will be closed by the **end of March 2017**.

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