



Montenegro
Ministry of Finance
CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

REPORT

**On activities of the Internal Control Unit
for 2013**

Customs Administration, January 2014

»Top priority for all Governments should be to ensure that Customs is free of corruption. This requires a firm commitment at the highest political and administrative levels to establishing and maintaining a high standard of integrity throughout the civil service and particularly in the Customs«

World Customs organization

Customs administration has in the past undertaken a number of actions to efficiently implement anticorruption strategy and maintain a high level of integrity of the customs service, increase the efficiency of the service, to ensure an adequate flow of revenues in the budget, ensure consistent application of regulations, and protect the customs area. Continuous and consistent enforcement of anti-corruption measures at all levels of management, through a series of joint and coordinated measures undertaken in the ordinary performance of tasks, reduce opportunities for corrupt practices by maximizing the level of integrity in the customs service. The Code of Ethics is part of the system of the Integrity program and suggests that only the ethically based path towards the desired goal is the right path. In this regard the new Code of Ethics of customs officers and administration employees entered into force on 1 January 2013. The Code regulates the issues of legality, impartiality, professional standards and responsibilities of customs officers, acceptance of gifts, conflict of interest ... In order to monitor the effective implementation of the Code of Ethics was established the Ethical Committee. Recognizing the need for prevention and remedying conditions for corruption, unethical and unprofessional practices at the operational level of activities, Customs administration has appointed ethical trustees within the customs houses.

As part of activities to develop Integrity Plan, an evaluation of the susceptibility of the risk of corruption was conducted and created risk maps of individual jobs and organizational units that contains indicators and level of exposure to the risk.

In order to enhance the professional and administrative capacity to fight corruption, special attention is paid to the implementation of training in the field of integrity, ethics and anti-corruption, with the aim of raising awareness on the code of ethics and level of integrity expected of all employees to maintain high level of moral, as well as ethical and professional standards of customs officers.

In order to promote ways in which citizens can report corruption, the Customs Administration on 1 July launched the campaign "Corruption is not an option," aimed at joint combatting and zero tolerance of corruption, as the obligation of all of us.

Customs Administration adopted a policy of zero tolerance to corruption, which means sentencing of appropriate sanctions, regardless of the acquired tangible gains in corruptive actions and position of officers, on their own initiative, as well as through the exchange of data and information with other governmental agencies dealing with repressive anticorruption measures. In a decisive effort to eradicate unprofessional conduct and performance of customs officers, during 2013 the Customs Administration, on the basis of disciplinary proceedings for serious violations of official duties, sentenced disciplinary measure-fines against eight customs officers, while four customs officers were suspended because of committed serious violations of official duties .

With the effective cooperation of the Customs Administration with state authorities responsible for the enforcement of repressive measures to combat corruption and organized crime, in 2013 were initiated criminal proceedings against four customs officers for crimes of abuse of power and bribery while the 11 customs officers the criminal proceedings are underway for offenses of abuse of power, receiving bribery, giving bribery, giving bribery as inciting method...

Undertaken activities of this Administration in the field of strengthening integrity and fighting corruption was recognized by the umbrella institution in this area, the World Customs Organization, who in its publication "WCO Integrity Newsletter " No 8 noted the anti-corruption model of the Customs Administration of Montenegro as an example of best practice.

PREVENTIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES

INTEGRITY

Customs administration conducts Program of integrity development through the plans of activities that foster and promote the integrity of the customs service, and also reduce the risk of corruption. Based on the reports of all organizational units i.e. entities obligated to report, was drafted and adopted the **Annual Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan on the development of integrity in the Customs Service of Montenegro for 2012**. With the adoption of the report was completed cycle of previous Program of Integrity of the Customs administration and activities have been undertaken to develop a **new plan of integrity of customs officers**.

Within **IPA 2010 Twinning project** entitled "Support to the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan" of the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative , the Customs Administration is involved in component 4, related to the preparation and implementation of the risk analysis of corruption and integrity plans of the state government who are most exposed to corruption. Officials of the Internal Control Unit participated in defining and development of guidelines for developing integrity plans, which establishes the framework, procedure and method of preparing, adoption and implementation of integrity plans for all these bodies in accordance with Article 68 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees. Moreover, organized by the Directorate for the anti-corruption initiative, officers from the Internal Control Unit participated in a workshop entitled "**Analysis of corruption risk**" on 23-24 January 2013, together with representatives of the Police Administration, Supreme State Prosecutor and the Basic Court in Podgorica.

With the Decision of the Director 03 / 01 D - 3123/1 and D - 3122/1 of 13/03/2013 was designated the **Integrity Manager** who is responsible for the preparation and implementation of integrity plan, and the **Working Group for the preparation and drafting of the integrity plan**. Integrity Plan will contain a set of measures of legal and practical nature to prevent and eliminate opportunities for the creation and development of various forms of corrupt behaviour within the administration as a whole, individual organizational units and individual work posts.

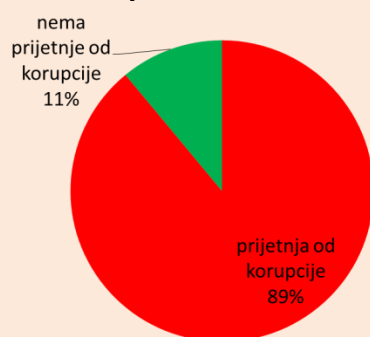
The workshop on drafting the questionnaire for risk analysis within the implementation of integrity plans of Montenegrin government was organized on 18/04/2013 in the premises of the Customs Administration. The workshop was attended by Integrity Manager Ana Vuletić, members of the Working Group for the preparation and drafting of the integrity plan, as well as Klaus But, the expert from Germany in the area of integrity and Peter Weiss, adviser to the Twinning project. During the workshop was developed the form of integrity plan for the Customs administration and questionnaire to determine work

areas and tasks, especially endangered by corruption, as well as risk indicators. Experts conveyed reactions and experiences from the German Federal Ministry of the Interior.

The workshop on identification, assessment and ranking of risk analysis within the implementation of integrity plan was organized on 20/06/2013 in the premises of the Customs Administration. The workshop was attended by members of the Working Group for the development and drafting of the integrity plan and Bećir Kečanović, expert from Slovenia in the field of integrity. During the workshop was developed the Phase IV of development of integrity plans related to the management and risk identification, as well as risk types.

On 23/10/2013 in the premises of the Customs Administration was organized meeting of the German expert for integrity Inge Sorgatz with Integrity Manager and members of the Working Group for the drafting of the Integrity Plan. During the meeting were discussed the issues of risk maps, risk criteria, indicators of progress and methods of informing on the results of work. **German expert fully supported the efforts of the Customs in the fight against corruption, with special emphasis on the already elaborated risk map, which can also serve other governmental agencies, as an example of good practice in enhancing integrity.**

Chart 1 Corruption threat

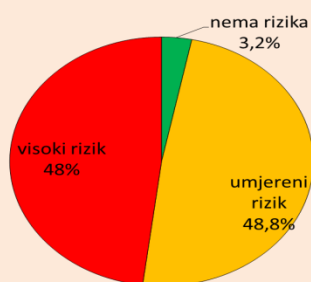


Customs administration conducted a comprehensive analysis of all work posts that, subject to general assessment of internal and external factors, is prone to the occurrence and development of corruption and other forms of illegal or unethical behaviour

Risk map of work posts in the Customs Administration (281) shows that:

- 89% of work posts is threatened by corruption threat, while
- 11% of the work posts is not exposed to the risk of corruption.

Chart 2 Rate of corruption risk



In comparison to 89% of workplaces that are exposed to the threat of corruption, the following percentage of risk of corruption¹ was established:

- 3.2% of the work posts in the Customs administration - no risk of corruption (green box)
- 43% of the work posts - moderate risk of corruption (yellow box), while
- 43% of the work posts - high risk of corruption (red box).

¹¹ Indicators of risk corruption are in the range of 0-20 (no risk-green box); 20-40 (moderate risk-yellow box and 40+(high risk, red box)

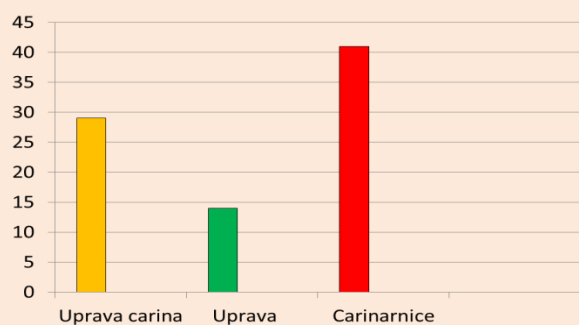
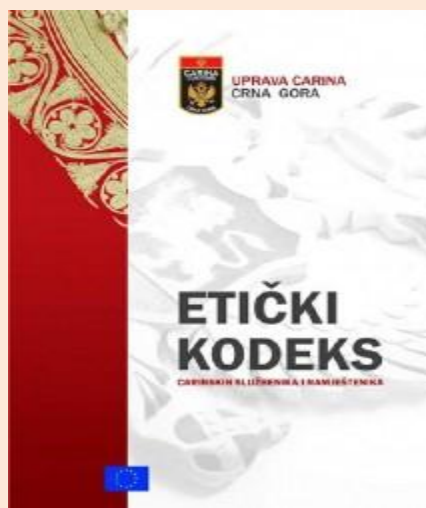


Chart 3 Average rate of corruption risk

The total average rating of corruption risks:

- At the level of the entire Customs Administration (281 work posts) the average score was 29 (yellow graph),
- The average rating of the corruption risk of administrative functions (118 work posts) is 14 (green graph), and
- Average rating of corruption risk at the level of Customs House (163 work posts) is 41 (red graph).

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CUSTOMS OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES



The purpose of customs ethics is to develop a customs service that guarantees that all employees abide by the rule of law and perform their duties in a fair, impartial, honest, reliable, courteous and professional, but firm manner².

Starting from the international recommendations and standards, new developments in the legislation governing the labour relations, and specificities arising from the mandate of the customs service, Customs administration has developed a **new Code of Ethics of customs officers and administration employees**, which **entered into force on 1 January 2013**.

Code of Ethics is bounding the customs officials to the rules of conduct that are consistent with promoting the highest ethical values and it is aimed at enhancing the reputation of the customs service. It includes

measures for a clear understanding of the obligations established by laws and other regulations, as well as an understanding of issues of public interest in the context of the customs service. In addition to the fundamental values stipulated in the Code of Ethics, such as compliance to the law, personality and integrity are also defined mechanisms for the promotion of ethics, which should be used to guide the customs officials. The code also consists of practical measures to be undertaken to ensure that the actions of customs officers are in accordance with the regulations, as well as disciplinary responsibility for violation of the standards and rules of the Code of Ethics. In accordance with the Code of Ethics, all employees of the Customs Administration have signed the Declaration of acceptance of the Code of Ethics, as well as statement on potential conflict of interest and declaration on owned property.

² »CUSTOMS BLUEPRINT- PATH TOWARDS A MODERN CUSTOMS SERVICE« - European Commission

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the Code of Ethics, monitoring of the implementation of this Code is done by the **Ethics Committee**, which consists of a Chairman and four members, of which the Chairman and two members are from the ranks of the customs officials, one representative of the trade union of the Customs Administration and one representative from non-governmental sector that deals with the protection of human rights and liberties.

In order to improve the implementation of the Code and the anti-corruption activities in all areas of operation, in January 2013 were appointed **four ethics trustees**, who are responsible for monitoring of implementation of the Code of Ethics within the customs houses, namely:

- Customs house Podgorica- Rajko Pejović (Head of CO Ilino Brdo);
- Customs house Bar- Nataša Zec (Head of CO for customs-administrative procedure in Customs house Bar);
- Customs house Bijelo Polje- Anes Feleć (Head of CO Kula) and
- Customs house Kotor- Branko Pavičević (Head of CO Terminal Kotor).



Ethics trustees contribute to the efficiency of the Ethics Committee and provide assistance in the field of action of the Ethics Committee.

On 11/04/2013 in the premises of the Customs Administration was held a meeting of the Internal Control Unit with the members of the Ethics Committee of the Customs administration and Ethics trustees. The aim of the meeting was to define, coordinate work, the method and scope of work of the Ethics trustees and Ethics Committee, and undertaking specific activities aimed at efficient implementation of the Code of Ethics.

Ethics trustees in their customs houses have organized meetings with the heads of customs offices, in order to inform them about the planned activities for raising awareness on the importance of the fight against corruption and the implementation and respect of norms of the Code of Ethics.



On 17/10/2013 **Vladan Joković, the director of the Customs Administration held a meeting with union representatives of the Customs Administration, members of the Ethics Committee and officers of the Internal Control.** Topic of the meeting was maintenance of high degree of integrity in the service and improvement of anti-corruption activities, joint activities of all segments of the customs service. It was concluded that corruption can severely limit the ability of customs service used in the successful performance of core duties, and that the fight against corruption is a priority in the activities of the Customs Administration. It is imperative in the work to prevent and sanction the corruption, and creation of an environment and the

adoption of standards that will reduce the possibility to conduct corruptive activities. **It was agreed to conduct joint action of management at all levels of the Customs Administration, the control units, the Ethics Committee and the trade unions and thereby constantly improving set of anti-corruption measures and strengthening the integrity of the institution and its employees.**

In accordance with the agreement reached at the meeting with the Director, the Ethics Committee and the Internal control Unit, the union of Customs Administration during the 4th quarter of 2013 carried out a series of activities aimed at raising awareness and informing their members of the harmful effects of corruption. The representatives of trade union organizations held a meeting with union members in Rozaje (customs office Kula, CO Dračnovac, CO Rozaje and Berane), Pljevlje (CO Ranče, CO Metaljka, CO Pljevlja) and Herceg Novi (CO Debeli Brijeg, CO Sitnica, CO Zelenika and CO Bijela).. At these meetings with representatives of union participated over 30 customs officers. The importance of Code of Ethics was pointed out to the customs officers and administration employees, the importance of fighting corruption, recalling the zero tolerance towards corruption and stressing that the Customs Administration, in cooperation with other governmental agencies, responsible for the fight against corruption, performs enhanced monitoring of compliance of work duties by customs officers.

Code of Ethics prescribes that the customs officer is not allowed to consume alcohol during working hours and in workplace, or not to drink alcohol before coming to work, as well as narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In this regard, officers of the Internal control unit in November 2013 carried out an ad-hoc review of the implementation of the above provisions in CO Podgorica airport, CO Božaj and CO Tivat airport. Controls were performed using a method of Alko-Gnost test strips, which in a quick manner determined presence and concentration of alcohol in the person being tested.



The control determined that customs officials respect the norms and standards prescribed by the Code of Ethics, and the alcohol tests, conducted in controlled customs offices, were negative. In the future period, it is planned to exercise increased control of respect for professional standards and responsibilities of customs officers, in all organizational units.

In accordance with the Article 23 of the Code of Ethics for Customs officers and administration employees, customs officials are required to provide accurate information about their financial status. In this respect, the control procedure is initiated, and all customs officers of the Internal Control Unit have submitted the updated Statement of Property (Form 5 of the Code of Ethics of customs officers and administration employees).

2013-2014 Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Fight against Corruption and Organized Crime, for the period 2010 - 2014

Customs Administration is obligated to report every six months on the implementation of the measures envisaged by the Action Plan. In this regard, the internal control unit drafted and submitted, through the software applications of the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, **Report on the Implementation of the 2013-2014 Action Plan for the fight against corruption and organized crime (2013-2014)**, which are under the responsibility of this Administration, for the period **January-July and July-December 2013**, as well as statistical data on reports on corruption and further actions.

REPRESSIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES

Customs administration undertakes measures to detect and prevent internal fraud and corruption, and in this regard it initiates disciplinary and other proceedings. Effective cooperation between the Customs Administration and state authorities to suppress corruption and organized crime, is achieved through agreements with the Administration for Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, the Prosecutor's Office, the Police and the Tax Administration, as well as through participation in the work of the Special Investigation Team. Customs administration has established good cooperation with neighbouring customs services, on the basis of bilateral agreements and protocols, as well as with international organizations.

Control activities of the Internal Control Unit

In the period from 01/01/2013 – 31/12/2013 the internal control unit conducted **17 investigations based on which** ordered the immediate line managers of organizational units of the Customs administration to take legal action to **initiate disciplinary proceedings against 13 customs officers**.

Based on one investigation, the proposal was given to **further processing to the State prosecutor** for review and further action and determine the elements of criminal liability of customs officers for criminal offenses against official duty. Based on **one investigation**, the proposal was given to **further processing to the Police administration** for further investigation and determination of the existence of the elements of the criminal offence in the actions of the customs officers.

Disciplinary actions

During the reporting period:

- **2 officers** were sentenced disciplinary measure – **pecuniary fine for two months in the amount of 40% of the salary** paid in the month in which the severe disciplinary violation was committed, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees (“Official Gazette of Montenegro” no. 39/11 and 66/12)- non-executing or unconscientiously, untimely or negligent performance of official duties;

- **1 officer was sentenced disciplinary measure – pecuniary fine for two months in the amount of 40% of the salary** paid in the month in which the severe disciplinary violation was committed, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1, Item 1 and 9 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees (»(“Official Gazette

of Montenegro" no. 39/11 and 66/12) - non-executing or unconscientiously, untimely or negligent performance of official duties, as well as violent, inappropriate or insulting conduct towards parties or showing any form of intolerance;

- **1 officer was sentenced disciplinary measure – pecuniary fine for two months in the amount of 40% of the salary** paid in the month in which the severe disciplinary violation was committed, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1, Item 4 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees ("Official Gazette of Montenegro" no. 39/11 and 66/12)– abuse of official position or exceeding official powers;

- **4 officers** were sentenced disciplinary measure – **pecuniary fine for two months in the amount of 20% of the salary** paid in the month in which the severe disciplinary violation was committed severe disciplinary violation, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees ("Official Gazette of Montenegro" no. 39/11 and 66/12)- non-executing or unconscientiously, untimely or negligent performance of official duties;

- **1 officer was acquitted of disciplinary responsibility** for severe disciplinary violation, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees ("Official Gazette of Montenegro" no. 39/11 and 66/12);

- **against 4 officers was terminated disciplinary procedure, and temporarily suspended to perform duties**, pending the conclusion of the criminal procedure, due to committed severe disciplinary violation, referred to in the Article 83, Paragraph 1, Item 4 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees ("Official Gazette of Montenegro" no. 39/11 and 66/12) – **abuse of official position or exceeding official powers.**

Criminal charges filed against customs officers in 2013 on the basis of suspicion of corruptive criminal offences



Action "Net" conducted by the Police administration in cooperation with the customs administration during the period August 2012 – February 2013, on the orders of the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office, resulted in the detention of three customs officers, I.M. (33), D.N. (33), and B.J. (38) and responsible persons in three companies in Podgorica, Z.C. (52), A.G. (35), and J.R. (30). Following the act of the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of Montenegro - Department of combating organized crime, corruption, terrorism and war crimes, after the criminal charges were filed by the police administration in May 2013, against the above three officers, was issued the order on conducting investigation due to grounded suspicion that they committed criminal offence of taking bribe, from the Article 423, Paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code and prolonged criminal offence of taking bribe from the Article 423, Paragraph 4 of the Criminal Code, and that the proceeding against said individuals in currently underway.

Also in 2013, Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of Montenegro - Department of combating organized crime, corruption, terrorism and war crimes, issued a warrant to conduct an investigation, issued the order on conducting investigation **against 1 officer**, due to grounded suspicion that he committed criminal offence of taking bribe, from the Article 423, Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code.

For **11 officers** and employees of this state authority, were adopted the first-instance judgment (not final) (for proceedings started in 2010) on the grounds of:

- Criminal offence of abuse of official status, Article 416 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code in reference to the Article 116 of the Law on amendments to the Criminal Code,
- Criminal offence of abuse of official status as enticing method, Article 416 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code in reference to the Article 24 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code in reference to the Article 116 of the Law on amendments to the Criminal Code,
- Criminal offence of giving bribery as enticing method, Article 424 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code in reference to the Article 24 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code,
- Criminal offence of receiving bribery, Article 423 Paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code;
- Criminal offence of robbery.



Reports of citizens for performance and conduct of customs officers

Customs Administration has established a system of registration via "Open Line". Citizens can use telephone number 08008133 to anonymously submit complaints on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Customs Administration. All calls are free and confidential. The number can be found on the website of the Customs Administration, where all interested parties can familiarize with other projects, activities, reports, regulations, and other important information regarding the customs service. All applicants are being notified of the results of the verification and the measures taken. Also, in addition to applications



sent via "Open Line", citizens can also send complaints about the performance and conduct of customs officers by email, mail and telephone, as well as through on-line application form for corruption.

During the reporting period were addressed 47 complaints of citizens on performance and conduct of customs officers, **representing an increase of 50 % compared to 2012**. Out of total number of applications, open line received 41 applications, 4 applications by email, 1 application by phone and 1 application through other state authorities. Four applications were related to the performance and conduct of customs officers with corruptive elements.

PROMOTIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES

+ CORRUPTION IS NOT AN OPTION



On 1 July 2013 Customs administration has started the public campaign **»Corruption is not an option«** in order to promote ways how the people can report corruption to the customs administration and encouraging as many persons to report suspicions in corruption and to resist all forms of corruptive behaviour.

Within this campaign were undertaken following activities:

- Made 20,000 promotional flyers, which were distributed with Pobjeda daily newspaper, Chamber of Commerce newsletter, newsletter of the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, as well as at border crossings;
- Made a short video/advertisement, which is broadcasted on public TV channel;
- Placed on-line application form to report corruption on the site of the Customs administration;
- Billboard placed in Podgorica.



Given the importance of the private sector in efficient anti-corruption measures, **the Customs Administration, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, organized a round table "Corruption is not an option", on 07/08/2013 at the premises of the Chamber of Commerce.** The goal of the Roundtable was to raise awareness and strengthen the incentives of the sector to report any irregularity in the performance of customs officers, presenting the proactive approach of the Customs administration in the fight against this phenomenon, and in this respect the established system of mechanisms for reporting. At the Roundtable were also

presented the standards of integrity, ethics and anti-corruption mechanisms of the Customs Administration, the practical experience of the application of the Code of Professional Ethics through the presentation of examples of good practice, as well as mechanisms for reporting corruption.



Customs administration achieves substantial cooperation with government authorities who are responsible for the prevention of corruption. In the campaign of the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative **"Not a cent for a bribe"** Customs administration provided Customs houses with promotional materials-flyers, with the aim of active participation of citizens in the fight against corruption and to raise public awareness on the issue. Radivoje Pejović, Chairman of the Ethics Committee, in September 2013, visiting on a radio show that "Antena M" realizes in cooperation with the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative - **"Clean Hands"**, promoting anti-corruption measures implemented by the Customs, methods and mechanisms to report corruption, and the results achieved

in this field in the past.

At the website of customs administration are continuously being placed information / reports and communications in the area of education and training of customs officers, professional ethics, integrity and anti-corruption. To the citizens are also available **contact information of the manager of integrity, ethics committee and ethical trustees**, and with that the Customs Administration makes available to public all its mechanisms to combat corruption, as incentive for the public to report any form of illicit behaviour of customs officers.

EDUCATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES

Customs administration has adopted the training plan for 2013 on topic of code of ethics,



combatting corruption and integrity. The plan of specific trainings of customs administration was aimed at raising awareness on importance of combatting corruption and dedication of administration to conduct activities in order to detect and prevent corruption, improvement of knowledge and abilities for the purpose of more efficient, responsible and transparent performance of tasks.

In accordance with the Plan, two cycles of training have been successfully implemented. The first cycle of training was organized in the second quarter of 2013 for heads of offices, shift leaders, and the customs inspectors in the customs houses Kotor, Podgorica, Bijelo Polje and Bar. In the fourth quarter was successfully implemented the second cycle of training for customs officers customs officers-associates from border customs offices, which, in accordance with the job description, are especially exposed to the threat of corruption.

Each training cycle was attended by about 180 customs officers, representing 55% of customs officers who perform customs core duties.

During the trainings the lecturers were:

- Ana Vuletić, Head of Internal Control Unit;
- Radivoje Pejović, Chairman of the Board of Ethics;
- Siniša Bjeković, Member of the Board of Ethics (representative of the NGO sector);
- Radoje Bošković, Member of the Board of Ethics;
- Rajko Pejović, Ethics trustee in Customs House Podgorica;
- Nataša Zec, Ethical trustee in the customs house Bar;
- Anes Feleć, Ethical trustee in the customs house Bijelo Polje;
- Branko Pavićević, Ethical trustee in the customs house Kotor.



To the training participants was emphasized the strong commitment of the Customs administration to implement measures towards the detection and prevention of corruption. Also, it was explained more into the detail the concept of corruption, types and indicators, methods of identification, the negative effects of corruption, methods of reporting ... It were also presented the risk maps of individual job posts, as well as a risk map of organizational units of the Customs Administration, which are made under the Integrity Plan. Anti-corruption mechanisms were presented: rotation of officers, avoiding conflicts of interest, protection of employees who report corruption etc.

The importance of respecting standards and code of conduct which officers and employees must comply in performing their work was highlighted, prescribed by the Code of Ethics, which are making them politically neutral, loyal to service, honest, impartial, efficient, polite and effective in accordance with the public interest. The training included procedures and treatment of gifts, entrusted funds and information, reporting of potential and actual conflicts of interest.

With the evaluation, the participants have assessed the trainings as a positive contribution to the improvement of knowledge on corruption, as negative phenomenon, familiarization with preventive and specific actions in combatting this phenomenon, and raising of awareness on the need and necessity of personal and professional engagement in combatting corruption.

Officers from the customs administration in cooperation with the Human resources management authority, other state authorities and international organizations, have attended following trainings/seminars on topic of integrity, combatting and ethics:

- „Code of ethics of civil servants and state employees”, organized by the Human resources management authority, attended by 12 officers;
- „Combatting corruption”, organized by the Human resources management authority, attended by 1 officer;
- „Development of integrity plans in state administration – drafting, adoption and implementation”, organized by the Human resources management authority, attended by 1 officer;

- „Impact of reform of state administration on combatting corruption and process of EU integrations”, organized by the Human resources management authority, attended by 1 officer;
- „Combatting organized crime and corruption- strengthening prosecutors network”, organized by the Human resources management authority, attended by 2 officers;
- „Prevention of corruption», organized by the HRMA, attended by 5 officers;
- Seminar »Prevention of corruption, integrity plans«, organized by the HRMA, RACVIAC, TAIEX and UAI, held in Podgorica, attended by 1 officer;
- Roundtable »Integrity in public and private sector – results and challenges«, organized by UAI and US chamber of commerce in Montenegro, held in Podgorica, attended by 2 officers;
- Conference »Report on corruption and criminal among private economic operators«, organized by Monstat, held in Podgorica, attended by 1 officer.

Undertaken activities of this Administration in the field of strengthening integrity and fighting corruption was recognized by the umbrella institution in this area, the World Customs Organization, who in its publication "WCO Integrity Newsletter " No 8 noted the anti-corruption model of the Customs Administration of Montenegro as an example of best practice.

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The purpose of those discussions was to: (1) identify the mechanisms that could be developed to establish a reporting system; (2) define the proposed guarantees for protecting whistleblowers; (3) establish mechanisms for informing employees about the penalties imposed following the infringements.


The outcomes of the workshop were as follows:

1. A department responsible for handling complaints and providing consultation to employees has been included in the organizational structure.
2. A web page for enhancing integrity amongst employees has been created on the ECA's official website.
3. The Code of Conduct has been approved by the Commissioner and will be published shortly.

Contact

Mr. Essam M. Aly
essam54@yahoo.com

MONTENEGRO



Code of Ethics for Customs Officers and employees

The Montenegro Customs Service has made integrity a pillar of its reputation, and business ethics a guiding principle in the accomplishment of its duties. Therefore, and to comply with international standards, the Customs Service drafted a new Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees which was adopted in July 2012 and implemented in January 2013.

The Code of Ethics contains a clear ethical framework for the conduct of Customs officers. It comprises provisions on issues of legality, impartiality, professional standards and accountability, conflicts of interest, gift acceptance, etc. The Code also contains a series of practical measures which must be undertaken in order to ensure that the actions of Customs officers are in harmony with the regulations or provisions of the Code. By way of example, the Code defines the procedures related to potential and real conflicts of interest, gift acceptance, and declaration of assets. The Customs Service has also set up a system of internal sanctions in the event of conduct unbecoming of Customs officers. Such sanctions are established in accordance with the law.

Implementation of the Code of Ethics

Since maintaining a high level of integrity in the Customs Service involves the efficient implementation of the Code of Ethics, it was decided to establish a Board of Ethics. This independent body provides an opinion on the application of the Code of Ethics and monitors the application of ethical provisions and standards in practice.

The Board of Ethics consists of a Chairperson and two representatives chosen from Customs officers, one representative of the Customs Union and a representative from a non-governmental organization (NGO) involved in the protection of human rights and freedoms.

SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES

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Trustees for Ethics

In order to improve the implementation of the Code, prevent occurrences of corruption and take action in the event of unethical and unprofessional conduct, the Customs Service has nominated four trustees for ethics who are officers in charge of monitoring the application of the Code of Ethics within Customs houses.

Customs officers can turn to the trustees for ethics for guidance on all issues and dilemmas related to integrity, their rights and the conduct to adopt. The latter can offer clarification on specific problems, provide assistance in interpreting the provisions of the Code of Ethics and express a need for education on integrity and the fight against corruption.

The Customs Service has initiated a campaign entitled "Consistent implementation of provisions of the Code of Ethics and decisively combating corruption" aimed at familiarizing front-line Customs Officers with the preventive aspects of the Code, as well as sanctions envisaged in case of breaches of the provisions of the Code.

Informing the Public

Promoting ethical values and enhancing the importance and reputation of the Customs Service relies on involving the public. To that end, the Customs Service organized a Conference entitled "Promotion of the Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees" in October 2012. The Conference brought together representatives of State institutions responsible for prevention and repression in the fight against corruption as well as in the NGO sector. Experts from Montenegro and neighbouring countries (Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia) shared their experience and best practices in this area. The dedication of the Customs Service in applying integrity standards was recognized as an example of good practice in enhancing integrity.

Customs is paying special attention to co-operation with the private sector while focusing on transparency. This has been highlighted through participation in a round table entitled "Impact of the Code of Ethics on the reduction of corruption in private sector" held in November 2012. Aside from promoting the rules and standards defined in the Code, the Customs Service has also emphasized the important role of the private sector in the efficient implementation of the provisions of the Code of Ethics, through awareness-raising and increasing incentives for physical and legal persons to report any irregularities detected.

The full commitment of the Customs Service of Montenegro in combating corruption and enhancing integrity resulted in the development of a new Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees, thus establishing a higher level of professional responsibility and zero tolerance to corruption.

Contact

Ms Ana Vuletic
Head of the Internal Control
Montenegro Customs
ana.vuletic@carina.gov.me
u.me

SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES