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भारत सरकार

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

सीमा शुल्क मुख्य आयुक्त का कार्यालय, कोलकाता क्षेत्र
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, KOLKATA
 CUSTOMS ZONE**

सीमा शुल्क सदन, 15/1 स्ट्रैंड रोड, कोलकाता- 700001
CUSTOM HOUSE, 15/1 STRAND ROAD, KOLKATA- 700001
 Fax No. 91-33-2231-3289; E-mail: ccu-cuskoa@nic.in

**MINUTES OF THE CUSTOMS CLEARANCE FACILITATION COMMITTEE
 (CCFC) MEETING HELD ON 20-12-2022**

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The meeting of the Customs Clearance Facilitation Committee (CCFC) of Kolkata Customs Zone was held on 20-12-2022 at 03:00 PM, at the Board Room, Custom House, 15/1, Strand Road, 2nd Floor, Kolkata – 700001, under the Chairmanship of Shri Anil Kumar Gupta, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Kolkata Customs Zone

The following officers/representatives attended the meeting:-

Sl. No.	Name & Designation (Shri/Ms)	Organisation
1.	Shri Ataur Rahman	Commissioner of Customs (Port) & (AP & ACC)
2.	Shri Ranjan Khanna	Commissioner of Customs (Preventive)
3.	Shri Hitesh Godara	Additional Commissioner of Customs(Port)
4.	Shri Sushil Kale	Additional Commissioner of Customs (AP & ACC)
5.	Shri Dharmendra Pratap Singh	Joint Commissioner of Customs(CCO)
6.	Shri S. Devrajan	Joint Commissioner of Customs (Port)
7.	Smt. Anindita Nag	Assistant Commissioner of Customs,CCO
8.	Shri Rajib Kr. Sinha	Assistant Commissioner of Customs (SPS)
9.	Shri Paritosh Kumar	Superintendent of Customs (CCO)
10.	Shri Indranil Das	Preventive Officer (CCO)
11.	Shri Sudip Dey	President / CCHAA
12.	ALI HAIDER	CCHAA
13.	Shri Jayanta Sen	YML / ASIC
14.	Shri Arnab Chakraborty	FIEO

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The Chair extended a warm welcome to all the members, custodians & stakeholders of CCFC Meeting and the meeting was commenced with a discussion on the agenda point- “**Issue of high payment time of duty at payment stage by importers**” forwarded by NCTF Secretariat, Cus VI, Customs policy Wing, CBIC. The Chair observed that the Time Release Study shows that time taken for the duty payment after assessment is 70-85 hrs. at Port Commissionerate and 36-45 hrs. at Airport Commissionerate.

The CCHA pointed out the following reasons which could be causing delay in payment of duty

Nature of Port:

1. There is an uncertainty regarding the arrival of the vessel which very often does not meet the schedule due to the nature of the port at Kolkata which is a riverine Port .The mother vessels carrying the cargo are not able to berth at Kolkata Port due to less draft . Mother vessels may be berthed at Colombo or Singapore and only the feeder vessels come to this Port with the cargo, adding to the uncertainty of the schedule of arrival.Hence the importer is usually not ready with the finances.
2. Kolkata being a riverine port, ships are able to enter only when gates are opened during high tide leading to congestion and in turn to the uncertainty regarding the schedule of arrival of cargo, thus importers do not pay duty in advance.
3. Due to lesser number of functional berths available at Kolkata Port , the vessel is usually allotted non working berth where entry inward is granted. As and when working berth becomes available, the vessel moves there for unloading of cargo and further shifting of the same to CFS, if so required, for examination of the goods creating a time lag of 3-4 days thus further delaying the payment of duty.
4. Therefore if duty is paid after filing of advance bill of entry and the cargo fails to arrive on time then a new Bill of Entry has to be filed on late arrival of the cargo (previous Bill of Entry is cancelled) for which duty has to be paid afresh and the importer has to seek refund of duty already paid.
5. Hence the importers chose to pay duty only after inward entry is granted and Bill of Entry is integrated into the system .

Nature of Trade:

Kolkata Port mostly witnesses import of trading goods. The nature of trade in the region is not manufacture based. Since most of the importers deal in trading goods and are not required to meet any production/ delivery schedule, they utilize the free detention period for payment of duty even after assessment is complete.

Low interest levied on late duty payment:

The current interest rate for late payment of duty on Bill of Entry already assessed from the date of final entry is only 15%. This low rate of interest fails to act as a deterrent.

IGM/Bill of Entry mismatch:

In case IGM/Bill of Entry mismatch occurs in the system then the process of OCC and

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subsequent payment of duty is delayed while the importer does not immediately come to know that such a mismatch has occurred.

After discussion the following recommendations to reduce delay in duty payment were made:

1. Direct transfer of duty from account of the importer similar to Cash Ledger System of CGST would help reduce delay in payment of duty. Further same account could be used to credit any duty paid for any bill of entry cancelled due to non-arrival of cargo.
2. A higher rate of interest on delayed duty payment may be imposed on the importer which may help in encouraging timely payment of duty on assessment.
3. A SMS notification may be forwarded to the importer in the event of mismatch between IGM and Bill of Entry.

Other issues discussed during the meeting:-

The Chief Commissioner inquired about reasons for delay on the part of the AEO applicants to the deficiency memos issued by the Department. It was suggested that a letter in this regard may be forwarded to AEO applicant and deficiency memo should be disposed of in a time bound manner.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

This issues with the approval of Chief Commissioner of Customs, Kolkata Customs Zone.

(Dharmendra Pratap Singh)
JOINT COMMISSIONER
Chief Commissioner's Office
Custom House, Kolkata - 700 001

Date: 22-12-2022

Copy to:

1. The Principal Commissioner of Customs (AP & ACC);
2. The Commissioner of Customs (Port);
3. The Commissioner of Customs (Prev.), West Bengal;
4. The Additional / Joint Commissioner of Customs (Port / A&A / CCP);
5. All Concerned;
6. DC (EDI) for uploading in Kolkata Customs Web Page

Signed by Dharmendra
Pratap Singh
Date: 22-12-2022 18:27:23
Reason: Approved