



भारतसरकार  
 GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
 वित्तमंत्रालय, राजस्वविभाग  
 MINISTRY OF FINANCE, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
 सीमा शुल्क आयुक्तका कार्यालय, चेन्नै-IV (निर्यात)  
 OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS - CHENNAI-  
 IV (EXPORT)  
 सीमाशुल्कभवन, नं ६०, राजाजीसालैचेन्नै 600001,  
 CUSTOM HOUSE, NO. 60, RAJAJI SALAI, CHENNAI - 600001

F. No. S.Misc.17/2021-AM-CH-IV

Date: 01-03-2024

**MINUTES OF THE PTFC MEETING HELD ON 13.02.2024 AT 16:30 HRS**

1. A meeting of the Permanent Trade Facilitation Committee (PTFC) was held on 13.02.2024 at 16:30 Hrs through video conference. **Shri. A. Manimaran, Commissioner of Customs**, Export Commissionerate chaired the meeting.
2. The following officers of Export Commissionerate and members of the trade attended the meeting:
  - a. **Smt DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner**
  - b. **Shri R.Sri Balaji, Additional Commissioner**
  - c. **Smt S. Sridevi, Assistant Commissioner**
  - d. **Shri M. Ezhilarasan, Deputy Commissioner**
  - e. **Shri Ravichandran P, Assistant Commissioner**
  - f. **Shri M. Yedukondalu, Assistant Commissioner**
  - g. **Shri S. Madhavan, Assistant Commissioner**
  - h. **Shri E.L Ganesh Ramkumar, Assistant Commissioner**
  - i. **Shri Kaki Vijaykumar, Assistant Commissioner**
  - j. **Shri R.N.Sekar, President, Chennai Customs Broker Association (CCBA)**
  - k. **Shri C.V Karunakaran, CCBA**
    - l. **Shri S. Shivashankar, CCBA**
  - m. **Shri S. Balaji, CCBA**
  - n. **Shri Kannan, NACFS**
  - o. **Smt. Selvanayagi, Jt. Director, FIEO**
  - p. **Shri Thomas Antony, Secretary, CHENSAA**
  - q. **Shri Y. Leeladharan, Chennai & Ennore Ports Steamer Agents Association**
3. **Smt DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs**, Export Commissionerate welcomed all the members of the Trade present for the monthly exercise of stakeholders meeting and commenced the meeting.

**Points Raised during previous PTFC meeting held on 17.01.2024 at 15.30 HRS (Raised by Shri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA): Non-Receipt of Customs Examination order after goods registration**

*It is noticed that in the recent days more than 90% Bills of Entry were not receiving Customs Examination orders after goods registration. In many occasions officers deny to show the customs examination order and asked us to go for 100% examination, since customs examination copy is not in our hand unable to submit any additional document required. This badly delays clearance of consignments.*

4. **Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** extended its sincere thanks on behalf of association to the respected commissioner for resolving Non-receipt of customs examination orders. Upon completion of goods registration, examination orders are immediately received through their registered email id. Your kind intervention has greatly benefited our members on pan-India basis in the registration process. **The Chairman** acknowledged the appreciation and directed them to proceed on agenda points.

#### **Fresh Agenda Points sponsored by CCBA**

**5. Point No.1: First Check Bills** - *B/Es first checks are being issued for drawl of sample for test, Normally, upon drawl of sample report will be given by shed officers immediately, however, there are officers who are not giving report and giving report only after receipt of test report, till such time bills are shown as pending with examination. Therefore, it is requested and suggested that these examination officers have to be sensitized to give report immediately upon drawl of samples.*

**5.1. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** stated that there are first check bills of entry for drawl of sample for testing the composition of goods. The shed examiners immediately provide the examination report in ICES for the Bill of Entry after drawl of sample. Subsequently, the bill of entry is forwarded to the group for assessment, once the test report arrives for sample drawn, the assessing officer assesses the Bill of Entry, and the bill goes to shed officer for OOC and CHAs would approach shed for Out of Charge (OOC). However, some officers, selectively, are holding the bill within their system after drawing a sample, waiting to receive the report from the lab before issuing it. This practice results in the bill pending at the examination stage and custom brokers are required to visit the Container Freight Station (CFS) three times: firstly, during the examination; secondly, after receipt of the test report; and thirdly, once the bill is assessed, for Out of Charge (OOC). This process can be eliminated, and the officers may be directed to resort to the practice of giving examination report immediately which will be a great relief to trade.

**5.2.** The Chairman said it is not common practice but some officers are resorting to this and asked response from Docks Admin.

**5.3. Smt. D.S Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs requested for specific instances** from the CCBA President and the request pertains to instances where challenges arise due to the delay in uploading reports for first-check bills. It has been noted that when reports are not uploaded, the Faceless Assessment Groups (FAG) sends the first check bills back to shed without assessment for report submission, which inadvertently increases

dwell time and consumes more time. Without the test report from the Central Revenue Control Laboratory (CRCL), assessment cannot be completed. The issue seems to occur either with the report pending in the examination queue or in the assessment queue and feedback received by us is that once test report is not uploaded, the FAG sends back first check bills to give comments on test report or to submit along with the report. and called for ways to deal with this issue.

**5.4. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** submitted that when the report is incomplete, if any additional details are needed and are not provided, the test report for the sample drawn is awaited, a query is raised by the officers at FAG which results in the bill of entry being held with the assessment group rather than the examination officer. In instances where the examination report is not entered in ICES, the bill of entry remains pending with shed examiner even though the physical examination of the goods for the bill of entry, including container sealing and sample collection for testing, has been completed. Selective officers are resorting to this new procedure and may be sensitized.

**5.5. Smt. DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** said that we will look into it and will examine the issue.

**5.6. The Chairman** enquired the technicalities and the challenges if any faced by the officers and why officers have to wait for the test report for giving the examination report.

**5.7. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** explained a scenario where the officer who conducted the examination doesn't enter the examination report in ICES for the want of test report and when the report arrives, if the officer is on leave, other available officers may claim that they have not examined the goods and therefore cannot give examination report in ICES until the officer who examined the goods returns. Additionally, Roster changes further complicates matters. This unnecessary delay persists only in some CFSs, not in all CFSs, so I urge for sensitization on this matter.

**5.8. Smt. DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** expressed a need to examine the issue further, stating that the CRCL report may only be viewed locally due to port code linkage, not accessible to FAG officers, and requested for instances from past and present wherever they are facing issues for thorough examination.

**5.9. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** informed that there is a facility available with every FAG officer to see the online report provided by the CRCL. The same was clarified when it was taken up during CCFC. Alternatively, we also **upload** the test report.

**5.10. Smt. DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** noted that there is a problem with uploading, as there have been instances in the past where the process of uploading report have been altered. So, essentially, the question arises as to who is responsible for the uploading. If the department is responsible for uploading the examination report, it's one issue, but if it's the importer responsible for uploading, it's a different matter. Therefore, we will examine all angles of the situation.

**5.11. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** has expressed his intention to meet the Chairman and ADC personally to provide further inputs on the topic under discussion, aiming to share comprehensive details.

**5.12. The Chairman** told Mr. Sekar to provide a sample of three bills of entry from the last month, expressing the intention to scrutinize the entire movement, observe the types of reports and their delays within their systems, inquire about the reports entered by officers post-receiving CRCL test results, understand the general examination instructions for such officers handling and drawing samples for CRCL, and assured that if any issues are identified, they would issue standing instructions promptly.

**(Action: Docks Admin)**

**6. Point No.2:** *When bills are pending with Officers at CFS and the said Officers are on leave, such bills should be automatically routed to the Officers who are on duty without any manual request to the concern AC/DC for ID Change.*

**6.1. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** stated that when an officer is on leave or there are changes in roster, they are compelled to contact the respective CFS Assistant Commissioners to request a change of ID to the current officer available at the CFS. We request you to direct the respective CFS Assistant Commissioners to allot the bill of entry to the IDs of the available officers automatically, rather than the CHAs approaching the CFS Assistant Commissioners. Alternatively, officers with pending bills upon taking leave can automatically transfer those bills to the officers available at the CFS. We propose that the department takes the initiative to handle it.

**6.2. Smt DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** replied that instances of this issue haven't been noticed. A system is in place for changing officers' IDs for which request is to be submitted to EDI from docks, whenever officers are going on leave. If challenges or instances have been encountered in this regard, please inform us, and the situation will be thoroughly examined.

**6.3. The Chairman** also replied that the system is in place, we will check whether the system is working properly or not, especially on the second Saturdays and closed holidays where officers might take leave.

**(Action: Docks Admin)**

**7.** The Chairman directed **Smt DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** to announce the upcoming IGST Refund Drive which Export Commissionerate of Chennai Customs is planning.

**7.1. Smt DS Sangeetha, Additional Commissioner of Customs** announced that Export Commissionerate is planning to have a special IGST drive. On account of various errors, there are many pending IGST claims. In the interest of trade, we are extending this drive for a period of two weeks,

commencing from the 19th of this month. There are various types of errors for example- SB 001 to 006. Specific errors like SB 005, involving invalid invoice mismatch, can be rectified when the exporter approaches us with a payment made through a challan, along with the required documents. Upon rectification, the scroll can be generated, and the IGST amount can be dispersed. This outreach is prompted by pendency, and we need stakeholders to sensitize all exporters under their umbrella. Take advantage of this opportunity to clear as many IGST refunds as possible. Formal communication will be sent via mail, and a public notice will be issued. It is in the interest of trade to make use of this opportunity. Proper guidance can be provided wherever there is difficulty. Officers presented as nodal offices can be contacted, and the situation can be utilized for the benefit of everyone.

**7.2. The Chairman** also informed that since 2017, quite a few IGST refunds have been stuck due to various errors. Some of these issues can be rectified by customs officers within the application itself, or when exporters approach with the respective documents. In some cases, Exporters themselves can rectify errors in the ICEGATE portal. In Chennai customs alone, there are over forty thousand pending cases. We often receive grievances that IGST refunds are not getting sanctioned, even though we generate a scroll; sometimes it doesn't get generated due to various reasons. To address this, a special drive has been announced for the next fifteen days. During this period, people can approach the concerned section, and dedicated officers will be available to resolve issues, guide them, and assist anyone who comes with the respective documents. The goal is to take these cases to the next level and expedite the clearance of long-pending IGST refunds. As part of our efforts, Export Commissionerate will share a list of shipping bills with associations, enabling them to collaborate in addressing errors. This includes error codes on exporter details and customs broker's information, making it more useful for the trade body. A public notice will be issued shortly. Many exporters may have forgotten about their pending refunds which got stuck due to errors. It is crucial to ensure that they are reminded and encouraged to approach and resolve their pending refunds through your assistance. Through joint effort, we can make this special drive a success.

**7.3. Sri R.N. Sekar, President, CCBA** affirmed their commitment to include the drive in their circular and they will actively notify exporters, urging them to clear their long-pending IGST refunds.

**(Action: IGST Refunds)**

**The Chairman** asked for fresh points, if any from the stakeholders to discuss. **Smt. Selvanayagi, Jt. Director, FIEO** with the permission of the chairman rose following points for clarification

**Point No.3: Clarification regarding Acknowledgement after document submission.**

**8. Smt. Selvanayagi, Jt. Director, FIEO** enquired about the issuance of Show

Cause notices for e-BRC purposes. The exporters are instructed to submit e-BRC and other necessary documents. Documents are submitted either directly by exporters or through customs broker. Exporters are directed by section officers to personally obtain acknowledgments from the section for document submission. Urgent document submissions may be required when notices have tight deadlines. Personal hearings follow if documents are not submitted after multiple notices. Clarification is sought on whether Exporters are required to personally collect acknowledgments from the Office.

**8.1. The Chairman** replied that they didn't issue any such instructions because exporters or their agents send documents through authorized individuals receive acknowledgment on submission. Acknowledgments were provided by the section in cases when individuals visited directly for urgent matters. He clarified that a personal hearing has to be scheduled before adjudication, especially in these instances when no response from exporters or their agents is received .

#### **Point No. 4: Clarification on duly signed documents.**

**9. Smt. Selvanayagi, Jt. Director, FIEO** sought another point for clarification that whether it's necessary for the online BRC submissions to be duly signed by the exporter, especially since in some cases, they are being sent by customs agents instead of the exporter and whether they must be submitted along with the shipping bill number. While small numbers are manageable, larger quantities, such as five hundred or a hundred certificates, may pose difficulties. Clarification is needed to effectively convey this information to exporters.

**9.1. The Chairman** replied that sending documents electronically via email or courier is preferred, especially for large volumes of documents. Exporters often send documents directly through email, courier, or postal services, while customs agents may deliver them in person. When it comes to online BRC submissions, exporters typically should generate a copy and attach it to a covering letter, referencing the show-cause notice and signing it accordingly. Authorized signatures are required for completion of adjudication, particularly for notices. However, some find it difficult to provide copies. Using PDF format is recommended for easy emailing, scanning, and attaching documents. It's preferable for exporters to scan and email well-signed, digitized documents for efficient processing. Otherwise, physical submission may be required.

**9.2. Shri R.Sri Balaji, Additional Commissioner of Customs** informed that exporters could submit one copy to Sevottam and collect the acknowledgement and another copy to the officers.

**9.3. Smt. Selvanayagi, Jt. Director, FIEO** thanked and assured for informing the exporters for special IGST Refund on all India basis.

As no further points rose or left for discussion, the Additional Commissioner of Customs, with permission from the Chairman, concluded the PTFC meeting.

I/1793306/2024

**DEKKAGOUNDER SUBRAMANI SANGEETHA  
ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER  
APPRAISING MAIN  
EXPORT COMMISSIONERATE  
CHENNAI CUSTOMS**

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All Trade Bodies