



मुख्य आयुक्त सीमाशुल्ककार्यालय
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS
चेन्नैसीमाशुल्क क्षेत्र
CHENNAI CUSTOMS ZONE
सीमाशुल्कभवन, नं.60, राजाजीसालै, चेन्नै 600 001.
CUSTOM HOUSE, NO.60, RAJAJI SALAI, CHENNAI 600 001.

04-07-2025

फा.सं./F.No.S2/109/2015-Prev.Tech

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The 122nd Customs Clearance Facilitation Committee (CCFC) meeting was held on 27.06.2025 (Friday) at 11.30 AM through Virtual Mode. Shri A.R.S.Kumar, Pr. Chief Commissioner of Customs, Chennai Zone, chaired the meeting.

2. The following officials from Customs Department, PGAs and other Stakeholders attended the meeting:

S/Shri/Smt.

1. Istikhar Baig, Principal Commissioner (Preventive)
2. Dr. M.G.Thamizh Valavan, Principal Commissioner (Airport / ACC)
3. A.Prasad, Commissioner (General)
4. Bidhan Chandra, Commissioner (Import)
5. A.Manimaran, Commissioner (Export)
6. Dr.A.V.T.Bharathidhasan, Commissioner (Audit)
7. R.Rajasekhar, Addl. Commissioner (CCO)
8. D.Lakshmikantha, Addl. Commissioner (Export)
9. D.S.Sangeetha, Addl. Commissioner (Import)
10. Rajesh Vithalrao Shelke, Addl. Commissioner (General)
11. N.Madhusudhana Reddy, Addl. Commissioner (Import)
12. Y.Srinivasa Rao, Addl. Commissioner (Prev.)
13. Vignesh Sakthivel, Addl. Commissioner (Prev.)
14. Dr.Mahesh Chavan, Joint Commissioner (Export)
15. S.Saraswathi, Joint Commissioner (Preventive)
16. Dr.Venugopalan Nair, Deputy Commissioner (CCO)
17. T.Senthil Murugan, DC (Import)
18. M.Sitalakshmi, AC (Import)
19. S.Shiva Kumar, AC (Import)
20. R.Jones Ferling Raja, AC (Import)
21. V.P.Vinod Kumar, AC (Import)
22. D.Dwarakanadha Reddy, AD, DGTS, CZU

23. S.Kirubanandasamy, Traffic Manager, Chennai Port Authority
24. Om Pragesh, Chief Manager (Traffic), Kamarajar Port Ltd.
25. U.Ameer. M/s. Adani Kattupalli Port Ltd.
26. M.S.Shakul, DGM, CCTL DP World
27. Santhi Muthuswami Pillai, Inspector, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)
28. Nitin M Jadhav, Asst. Drug Controller-Import (Sea), CDSCO
29. Arun Pucchakayala, Joint Director, BIS
30. Mohan SM, DD, RPQS
31. T.S.Sudeesh, Sr. Manager, AAICLAS
32. R.N.Sekar, President, CCBA
33. R.Kumar, Vice President, CCBA
34. S.Natarajan, Secretary, CCBA
35. Sivashankar, Customs Committee Head, CCBA
36. Ananth Sairam, PRO, CCBA
37. Valarmathi, EC Member, CCBA
38. Y.Leeladharan, Chairman, Chennai & Ennore Ports Steamer Agents Association
39. S.Padmanabhan, Secretary, NACFS-National Chapter
40. R.Rajakumari, Manager, CWC, DPE, Thiruvottiyur
41. Santhosh, Terminal Manager, CONCOR
42. Pynthamil Selvi, AE, TNPCB

3. Members of the following organizations did not participate in the Video Conference.

- a. Textile Committee
- b. Port Health Officer
- c. AQCS
- d. CITPL
- e. FSSAI

4. Shri R.Rajasekhar, Addl. Commissioner (CCO) welcomed all and invited the Chairman, CCFC, to make the opening remarks.

4.1 Shri A.R.S. Kumar, Principal Chief Commissioner of Customs and Chairman of the CCFC, warmly welcomed all Members and emphasized that the forum brings together key stakeholders involved in the Customs clearance process. He encouraged everyone to actively participate and share their concerns or suggestions to enable constructive dialogue and find effective solutions. He then requested Shri R. Rajasekhar, Additional Commissioner (CCO), to proceed with the meeting.

5. The Additional Commissioner (CCO) asked Dr. Venugopalan Nair, Deputy Commissioner (CCO), to make a brief presentation on the Public Notices and Facility Circulars issued during the last one month.

6. With the permission of the Chairman, the following fresh points raised were taken up for discussion.

Point No.MAA267:- Standard Examination Orders prescribed by system not to be overridden by FAG Officers

7. Shri R.N. Sekar, President of CCBA, highlighted that several NAC FAG officers

from locations outside Chennai have been overriding the Standard Examination Orders (SEO) by inserting additional examination instructions that are not relevant to the declared commodity in the Bill of Entry. He requested that FAG officers at other locations be sensitized to adhere to the SEOs and refrain from adding irrelevant examination requirements.

7 . 1 The Chairman acknowledged the concern raised and invited the views of the Commissioner (Import). Shri Bidhan Chandra, Commissioner (Import), stated that overriding of Standard Examination Orders (SEO) does not occur frequently; however, in certain instances—such as when there is a change in notification—officers may be compelled to insert additional examination orders. He further clarified that for textile items, a Pre-shipment Inspection Certificate (PSIC) is mandatory, and a Previous Test Report (PTR) is often required to support the PSIC. In cases where the PTR is unavailable, FAG officers may need to include additional examination instructions specifying relevant testing parameters. Dr. M.G. Thamizh Valavan, Principal Commissioner (ACC), while concurring with the concerns raised by the President, CCBA, suggested that CCBA submit specific instances of such cases so they can be appropriately taken up with the concerned NAC, especially if the additional orders are found to be irrelevant. He also proposed that, to prevent unnecessary insertion of examination orders, the DG (Systems) may consider introducing an additional level of approval at the Deputy/ Assistant Commissioner level.

7 . 2 The Chairman requested the President of CCBA to bring specific instances of such examination orders to the attention of the Principal Commissioner and Commissioner of ACC and Import Commissionerate respectively, so that these cases may be taken up with the concerned NACs to prevent their recurrence. In response, the President of CCBA assured that a list of such instances would be submitted to both the Principal Commissioner (ACC) and Commissioner (Import). The Chairman further directed both the Principal Commissioner (ACC) and Commissioner (Import) to ensure that, going forward, any additional examination orders in their respective FAGs are issued only with the prior approval of a Deputy or Assistant Commissioner.

**[Action: Pr.Commissioner (ACC) / Commissioner (Import) / The President, CCBA]
(Point Closed)**

Point No. MAA268:- Functioning of CMFC Section on 24x7 basis

8 . The President of CCBA stated that the CMFC Section currently handles the movement of import containers to CFS under PNR, transshipment of SEZ containers, and movement of containers to ICDs. However, this section operates only during daytime hours, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Given that container deliveries and movements now occur on a 24x7 basis, he requested that the CMFC Section also be made operational round-the-clock, as a trade facilitation measure to ensure more efficient clearance for the EXIM trade.

8 . 1 Shri Istikhar Baig, Principal Commissioner (Preventive) stated that the CMFC section under Preventive Commissionerate has commenced operations on 24x7 basis w.e.f. 24.06.2025 vide **Public Notice No. 35/2025, dt.24.06.2025**. The CMFC section will now operate round the clock to co-ordinate and facilitate the smooth and timely movement of containers from Port Terminals to their destinations or Ports of Discharge.

8 . 2 Upon the Chairman seeking the views of the President, CCBA, on further improving the functioning of the CMFC Section, the President suggested that all existing manual processes be migrated to an online platform. In response, the Chairman informed that Chennai Customs is also considering similar measures and that the Port Authorities will also be involved in a study of the practices followed at Nhava Sheva, with the objective of replicating suitable systems at Chennai.

(Point Closed)

Other unlisted Issues discussed with the permission of the Chair.

9 . Shri A. Manimaran, Commissioner (Export), informed that a significant number of Drawback Shipping Bills were pending due to unresolved queries. As many exporters were unaware of these pending issues, a Public Notice was issued along with a list of such Shipping Bills. He acknowledged the positive response from the trade, particularly due to the support of trade bodies like CCBA. The Commissioner further stated that, similarly, several long-pending Shipping Bills related to post-export benefits such as RoDTEP and RoSCTL were held up due to non-integration with the EGM or unrectified EGM errors. To address this, **Facility Circular No. 7/2025 dated 24.06.2025** was issued, listing the affected Shipping Bills. The circular is also available on the Chennai Customs Zone website. He requested CCBA to widely publicize the circular among exporters to enable them to avail the pending post-export benefits.

[Action: The President, CCBA]

(Point Closed)

1 0 . Dr. M.G. Thamizh Valavan, Principal Commissioner (ACC), observed that discussions at NAC meetings have frequently highlighted concerns regarding dwell time, particularly delays in obtaining NOCs from Participating Government Agencies (PGAs). The Chairman concurred with the issue raised by the Principal Commissioner and sought to identify the specific points where such delays occur. He also requested for details on the measures being considered or implemented by the PGAs to reduce these delays.

1 0 . 1 The Principal Commissioner (ACC) stated that a majority of the grievances pertain to delays at the office of the Drug Controller. In response, Shri Nitin M. Jhadav, Assistant Drug Controller (ADC), clarified that there are no delays on their part. He informed that a letter was recently received from the Customs Commissioner indicating that several Bills of Entry were pending, to which a detailed reply was sent outlining the procedures followed. He emphasized that same-day clearance is provided when complete documentation, as per the prescribed checklist, is submitted.

The ADC further stated that in cases where there are deficiencies in documentation, the same is promptly communicated to the importer or the Customs Broker (CHA). He highlighted that, in matters involving legal or labeling compliance under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, utmost caution is exercised to ensure the quality and safety of imported products, given the public health implications.

He also noted that laboratory reports are generally issued quickly, and in certain cases, the ADC's office does not insist on waiting for the lab report if the importer furnishes a Letter of Guarantee, affirming that the product will not be sold in India until the lab

report is received. The ADC reiterated that there are no undue delays from their side and added that they have already written to the Customs Commissioner requesting specific instances along with relevant Bill of Entry details, but no response has been received so far. He also mentioned that the Drug Controller's Office has been commended by the WTO for its efficiency and prompt clearance process.

10.2 The Principal Commissioner (ACC) expressed his appreciation and happiness on learning that the Drug Controller's Office had been appreciated by the WTO. However, he pointed out two specific concerns that continue to cause delays in clearance: (i) the practice of raising piecemeal queries, and (ii) the insistence on submission of physical documents instead of relying on e-Sanchit.

In response, the Assistant Drug Controller (ADC) explained that delays often occur because the applications are submitted with irrelevant documents and product labels that do not pertain to the actual item being imported. In many cases, incorrect batch numbers are provided – importers submit batch numbers of other products rather than those of the specific item being imported. Due to such inconsistencies, the ADC's office relies on documents that are duly endorsed by Customs.

The ADC further stated that, during the introduction of SWIFT, it was agreed at an Inter-Ministerial High-Level Meeting that in such cases, the Proper Officer of Customs may endorse the product label and submit it in a sealed cover, which would then be accepted by the Drug Controller's Office.

He also highlighted that due to an acute shortage of inspectorate staff, it is not feasible to conduct physical verification for every consignment. Additionally, he informed that instances of fabrication of dual NOCs and forged labels had been detected in the past, and appropriate action had been taken against the concerned importers, with the details also communicated to Customs.

10.3 Shri Sekar, President of CCBA, pointed out that the ADC's office requires submission of documents to their designated email ID by 3:00 PM each day, and only those submissions are taken up for processing. He further noted that queries raised after 5:00 PM are not examined the same day, and any replies received are only processed the following day, resulting in significant delays. He also highlighted that, due to the AGT (Annual General Transfer), several dual NOCs have been pending at the ADC (Sea Port) office for nearly 10 days.

In response, the ADC clarified that the issuance of dual NOCs and clearance are separate functions – the dual NOC is handled by the Deputy Drug Controller (DDC), while the clearance is managed by the ADC. He acknowledged that, following the recent AGT at the Sea Port office, there have been numerous administrative changes at all levels. Consequently, some time is required for the new officers to become fully familiar with their responsibilities.

The ADC also explained that user IDs need to be updated online, and the transition period for the newly posted officers is currently underway. He assured the trade that efforts are being made to reduce pendency. He further informed that a new DDC has joined and is actively addressing the pending issues.

10.4 Regarding the submission of documents to the designated email IDs of the Drug Controller's Office, the ADC explained that under the SWIFT system, once a Bill of Entry (BE) is cleared, their office no longer has access to the cleared BE or any office copy. Therefore, to maintain proper records, they currently require submission of documents via email. The ADC further informed that the CDSCO Headquarters is in the process of developing a dedicated online portal, similar to the one used by FSSAI, to streamline document handling. Until the portal is operational, the existing practice of submitting documents to designated email IDs will continue, as it is essential for record-keeping in the absence of post-clearance access to the BE.

10.5 The Chairman advised Shri Nitin M. Jhadav, Assistant Drug Controller (ADC), to sensitize the newly posted officers to raise all queries in a single instance, rather than issuing them in a piecemeal manner, as such practices lead to delays in clearance and are not in the interest of trade or the country. He clarified that raising a follow-up query is acceptable if it logically stems from the initial query, but entirely unrelated second queries should be avoided.

In response to the Chairman's query on why documents uploaded through e-Sanchit are not being accepted and why importers are instead required to email documents to designated IDs, the ADC explained that several instances of document fabrication had been detected. He further informed that, during the introduction of the SWIFT system, it was agreed at an Inter-Ministerial High-Level Meeting that in such cases, the Proper Officer of Customs may endorse the product label and submit it in a sealed cover, which would be considered valid by the Drug Controller's Office.

10.6 The Principal Commissioner (ACC) stated that the current practice of the Drug Controller's Office insisting on submission of documents via their designated email ID defeats the fundamental purpose of the e-Sanchit system, which was designed to facilitate seamless and paperless documentation. He emphasized that either the required documents should be transmitted to the ADC's designated email ID through the official Customs email ID, or the e-Sanchit system should be fully implemented and relied upon. He further suggested that this issue be escalated to the Board for appropriate action with the concerned Ministry to ensure uniformity and efficiency in the clearance process.

10.7 Shri Nitin M. Jhadav, Assistant Drug Controller (ADC), added that instances of importers submitting irrelevant documents to the designated email ID of the Drug Controller's Office constitute only about 2-3% of the total clearances. However, based on their experience, this 2-3% of cases often involves non-genuine importers. He further stated that, in the vast majority of cases, the Drug Controller's Office accepts product labels based on historical data, provided there are no discrepancies in the Bills of Entry or accompanying submissions.

The ADC explained that their office focuses on specific risk indicators, such as sudden and unexplained drops in the value of consignments compared to past imports, potential quality issues, mismatches between the Certificate of Analysis and the physical product labels, and any instances that raise reasonable suspicion. In such cases – given the implications for public health – they exercise heightened scrutiny and therefore insist

on documents that are duly endorsed by Customs.

**[Action: Deputy Drug Controller / Assistant Drug Control]
(Point Closed)**

1 1 . Shri Bidhan Chandra, Commissioner (Import), drew attention to the significant pendency in SVB finalization. He stated that once an Investigation Report (IR) is issued, coordination is required to obtain the list of Bills of Entry (BEs) covered under that IR and to proceed with the finalization of Provisional Assessments. He emphasized that the CCBA should actively facilitate this process by coordinating between the importers and Customs to ensure timely submission of the required documentation.

1 1 . 1 The Chairman noted that a large number of Bills of Entry assessed on a provisional basis are pending finalization, and that importers are required to submit the necessary documents for the same. He emphasized that, as per the Board's Action Plan, all non SVB cases requiring documents from importers must be finalized by September 2025. The Chairman directed the Commissioner (Import) to ensure that cases requiring importer-submitted documents are duly endorsed to the concerned Customs Brokers (CBs).

He further requested the President of CCBA to impress upon their members the importance of timely finalization of provisional assessments and to ensure that the required documents are submitted without delay. In response, the President of CCBA assured the Chairman that he would meet the concerned Additional Commissioner, obtain a list of such pending cases, and coordinate with their members to facilitate prompt submission of the documents.

**[Action: The President, CCBA]
(Point Closed)**

12. The President, CCBA, stated that DG Systems has informed that after 30.06.2025, the operation of EDI Service Centre will be discontinued. The Chairman asked the President, CCBA, to approach Directorate General of Systems through their national forum FFFAI for continuance of EDI Service Centre as the time is very short.

(Point Closed)

1 3 . The Chairman stated that during the recently concluded Hon'ble Finance Minister's Conclave, one of the key issues highlighted was reducing the dwell time of imported cargo. He further informed that a detailed analysis of dwell time across various stages of the import clearance process has been conducted at the national level. Emphasizing that timely clearance of goods is a shared responsibility, he urged all stakeholders to contribute actively towards reducing delays. The Chairman also mentioned that a specific study was undertaken to assess the time taken for clearances by Participating Government Agencies (PGAs), and he appealed to all PGAs and stakeholders to work collectively towards reducing dwell time and enhancing overall trade facilitation.

14. Shri R.Rajasekhar, Addl. Commissioner (CCO) informed the Members that he will be superannuating on 30.06.2025 and Shri Rajesh Vithalrao Shelke, Addl. Commissioner, will be taking charge from 01.07.2025. The Members wished both Shri

R.Rajasekhar and Shri Rajesh Vithalrao Shelke.

15. The Chairman concluded the Meeting by thanking all the Members.

16. The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

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

राजेश वी शेलके

RAJESH V SHELKE

अपर आयुक्त सीमा शुल्क (मु.आ.का.)

ADDL. COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS (CCO)

Copy submitted to

The Joint Secretary (Customs)
CBIC, North Block, New Delhi.

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Copy to:

The Deputy/ Assistant Commissioner (EDI), Custom House, Chennai

(With a request to upload the minutes of the meeting in the Chennai Custom House website)