

CUSTOMS HOUSE BROKERS' ASSOCIATION

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Souvenir Magazine



www.customhousebrokers.com



MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

It gives me great pleasure to send my greetings and best wishes to the President and members of the Association on this auspicious occasion of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Customs House Brokers' Association.

A stretch of 30 years in service for the trading and business community at Customs is a substantially long period. And Change being the only Eternal Constant (the more so in a trading environment), the members of the Association must have witnessed, down the years, the incessant unfolding of a string of events that have transformed the erstwhile archaic and clustered agents of trade in and around the Port areas, (Customs included) into modern and sophisticated 'Partners in Trade'.



The most recent of transformations touching the trading and business environment is undoubtedly the establishment, in July this year, of the Mauritius Revenue Authority as the main agent of Government for the collection of taxes and the administration of the main revenue departments.

Wherever Change operates, it requires a fairly significant amount of transformation (in work methods as well as in mindset and outlook) from each individual forming part of the various organisations operating in that environment. And if the Customs is generally agreed as the most important and influential partner in the Trade Exchanges Pipeline, then the Customs House Brokers Association has the most important duty to administer unto itself the most appropriate elements of change in its work methods and mindset in order to allow it to bring its contribution more as a 'Trade Facilitator' than a mere paid service provider to the business community, in similar fashion as the modern role attributed to Customs (and its trading partners) under the Revised Kyoto Convention.

In this regard, I commend this initiative of your Association, which is being performed today, of requiring your members to swear-in their separate and personal commitment to perform their duty with fairness, integrity and transparency. Raising the level of integrity, fostering clean and transparent dealings and providing equal service to all users are among the most important goals of the Mauritius Revenue Authority. Mr President, you may assure all your members that they will find in the MRA all the support they will require in their endeavour towards providing a clean, prompt, professional and transparent service to the business community.

I am personally convinced that through a professionally enhanced service level built around Trust, Integrity and Transparency, the general confidence so generated shall be even more effective than regulations to bring the whole business community to resort to the services of your Association for transacting business at Customs.

I very humbly reiterate my greetings to you and all the members on the 30th anniversary of the Association. May I also take the opportunity to wish you and your members and their families a happy new year 2007, full of cordial and fruitful interaction amongst all partners in trade at the service of the country.

Sudhamo Lal
Director General
Mauritius Revenue Authority

**CUSTOMS HOUSE BROKERS' ASSOCIATION
REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**



Message from Director of Customs



During the past 4 years, have been trying very hard to professionalize the Mauritius Customs and Excise Department and turning it into a truly 'World Class' Customs Service. We have been very lucky indeed to have strong support from successive Governments to achieve this objective. Investments have been made to improve infrastructure and ensure our officers have all the tools at their disposal to provide an effective, efficient and quality level of service. Our state of the art IT system operating on a community network has been strengthened and made more reliable, with a host of new software applications added to facilitate trade. Customs requirements continue to be minimized. Procedures have been streamlined, and brought into line with international best practices. 'One-Stop-Shops and Single Windows have been implemented, while hours of service have been extended in many areas. The Customs Department has playing a lead role in implementing the Government's vision of creating a 'duty free' island and also facilitating the port and airport to become Indian Ocean logistics hubs. In this regard, we have been championing the need for a Port Community System to benefit all parties involved in trade and logistics transactions.

Mauritius Customs efforts to reform and modernization have been recognized nationally, regionally and internationally. Mauritius will be one of only 10 countries worldwide, and the only in Africa, chosen by the WCO to pilot test its Framework of Standards Authorized Economic Operator concept. Similarly Mauritius has also just been chosen as one of 6 customs services worldwide, and the only country in Africa, to participate in the IATA E-Freight project which will see the implementation of paperless air manifests.

It is important to note that this significant progress is being accomplished while the Department has also been fighting major battles against commercial fraud, drugs, counterfeit/IPR, money-laundering, and last but not least – corruption. Just 3 years ago, Customs was on the top of the list in terms of the public's perception of most corrupt public institutions in Mauritius. Recently, ICAC awarded the Customs and Excise Department as having in place the best anti-corruption framework in the public sector. These are indeed major turn-arounds and accomplishments.

One of the reasons why these reforms has been successful is because of the close working relationship which the Department has cultivated with its stakeholders. The Customs House Brokers Association plays an active role in advocating for further improvements, and bringing to our attention recommended solutions bottlenecks inevitably occur. The Association's new Code of Ethics is indeed admirable, as has been its efforts to support the new Customs Brokers Licensing Course.

However, I personally believe that much, much more needs to be done to enhance the professionalism and integrity of customs brokers in Mauritius. Certainly the comprehensive broker training and licensing program currently underway will be a step in the right direction. A higher bar will be set for new entrants to the profession.



Many brokers already licensed however, need to take a very close look at how they have been and are currently operating. For Customs reform to be successful, brokers must too reform, professionalize, and demonstrate a change of 'mind-set'. Those brokers that continue to hire out their front-end systems to certain 'free-lance' customs clerks, then blindly sign these declaration, must realize that they are accepting a huge risk and will be held accountable by the Department. Those brokers that fail to heed the call to put in place proper internal checks and controls before they submit their declaration to Customs, thereby necessitating Customs to take needless corrective actions, will be penalized accordingly. Performance of brokers, and their employees, is being closely monitored by Customs, and will continue to be an important factor in the Department's risk management program. Indeed, an important aspect of our anti-corruption program is putting in place mechanism to detect, then weed-out those stakeholders involved in fraudulent or corrupt practices.

For those brokers and customs clerks who are operating professionally and to the high ideals found in your Association's Code of Ethics, you have nothing to worry about. However, those individuals who fail to heed this warning, my only advice to you is to either change your mind-set, or change your occupation!

2007 will be very challenging for all of us. Let us work even harder next year in partnership for the good of Mauritius.

(Bert C. Cunningham)
Director MRA Customs

Challenges in life come in 3 broad categories

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| Easy | Those who take on the easy have a safe and boring life... |
| Difficult | Those who take on the difficult have a tough but satisfying life... |
| Impossible | Those who take on the impossible are remembered... |



Message of President Customs House Brokers' Association

It is an immense pleasure to introduce the first souvenir magazine of our association. This magazine has a vital role. It is a tool in the endeavour to establish an understanding on the future role of Customs House Brokers in Mauritius.

The role of Customs House Brokers is undergoing constant transformation. Our role does not stand only to ensure that goods of traders reach destination. With globalisation and different trade Protocols and Treaties, our involvement in international trade is getting greater.

The 21st Century will be the century of change. More things will change in more places in the next ten years than in the previous century. We should be ready for this challenge. Hence, far from only validating customs entries, we should promote international trade as an essential drive for economic prosperity.

In the wake of changes, Customs brokers are requested to bring together critical business information that allows importers to clear their goods safely, securely and quickly through Customs. We have to manage business data of our clients to ensure that their goods meet new Customs' requirements.

With the process of modernisation in the Customs Department, we have also to act as advisors to our clients. Simply by helping them to turn Customs information into highly useful business intelligence. In years to come, we will have to offer services that will help them develop new products, explore new markets, learn about global change, and cut costs.

The mission of Customs House Brokers is to facilitate and assist the business community for their competitiveness and to provide sound customs clearance with adequate support.

Moreover, we have to bear in mind that we are partners of the Mauritius Revenue Authority in assisting Customs to collect right revenues and to ensure that import and export satisfy government policies.



(Afzal Delbar)
President CHBA



SOCIAL COMMITMENT

The Customs House Brokers Association organizes social activities to mark its 30th Anniversary of foundation. The President of the Association declares that it is a very good start after 30 years of existence but it should become an annual event. This is not only to enhance our brand image but to be a socially responsible organization.

"What we do may seem terribly insignificant but it is terribly important that we do it anyway"

The first activity starts with an outing for children of poor family from Chamarel, Case Noyale, La Gaulette and le Morne on Thursday 16th December 2006.

Sixty eight children aged 8 yrs to 15 yrs visited the vessel "Mauritius Pride", Quay West, Indian Oil and the Port Area. They were received for lunch by the President, Mr. Afzal Delbar, at the Cargo Handling Corporation Canteen – New Container Terminal.

The children were accompanied by Mr. Bernard D'Argent, a social activist in the South and Sister Valery of Chamarel Parish. The children were also visited "Tomb of Father Jacques Désiré Laval", Les Salines garden and the area of the Bulk Sugar Terminal. Mr. André Bungaroo, Mr. Charles Maguitte and Mr. Jean Claude Troubat participated actively to make the event a great success. The Association donated gifts such as footballs, volley-balls, Badmintons and Dominoes for the social clubs of the regions.

"Broaden your vision for the whole world belongs to you. Care for others and share whatever you have with those less fortunate than you".

On the 30th of November 2006, the Customs House Brokers Association organizes a blood donation at Trou Fanfaron opposite to Customs Headquarters. The President and members of Customs House Brokers Association make extensive marketing to attract volunteers. The blood bank collected some 75 pints of blood on that day.

"When you make service your sole purpose in life, it eliminates fear, focuses your mind and gives you meaning"

On the 7th of December 2006, the Association organizes a lunch for the 170 inmates of the Human Service Trust. Customs House Brokers were present personally to serve the inmates and make animation. The President of the HST, Mr. Munsji Bhoojawan express special thanks to the CHBA and wish them good luck in their endeavors.

Started in 1888, formerly Calebasses infirmary, the Ashram has been taken over by the Human Service Trust in 1983 under the guidance of His Holiness Swami Krishnanand Saraswati and whose moto is "Service to mankind is service to god", the Human Service Trust has among its aims and objectives to serve the poor and the needy. It also propagates cultural and human values. The Human Service Trust treats sick people through Ayurveda system of medicines from 4 clinics throughout the Island.





FREIGHT ACADEMY



(Mr Brambhanand Jeerakun)
Rector at Freight Academy

A support to the International Trade Industry

The setting up of Freight Academy is not the result of luck. It was set up to help Freight Forwarders and Customs House Brokers keep abreast with the changing environment of Trade Business and the new World Order. This can only be achieved through professionalism which is the key to success.

Freight Academy is proud to stand as an outstanding pioneer Institution to provide efficient and effective training in the Customs Clearance and Freight Sector. The programme of Freight Academy grants the distinction of professional courses to Freight Forwarders and Customs Agents.

The purpose of the programme is two-fold. First, it aims at raising the level of professionalism in the industry by setting measurable standards of performance; second, it certifies that individuals have met the standard by demonstrating technical knowledge, and by processing know-how and appropriate work skill.

The courses-up to now, the only one of its kind in Mauritius-was mounted by Freight Academy for trainees, above all, to improve their ability to meet increasing customer demands for easy, quick, and high level of professional services. It will tangibly demonstrate to customers and clients, their commitment to the highest professionalism standard obtainable in the industry.

Training at Freight Academy will ensure a high level of services in the Business Sector; develop, among others, marketing skills; create, within the Trade Business, highly skilled and motivated workforce.

Mr Brambhanand Jeerakun, Rector at Freight Academy, comes from the Education Sector. He joined the Government Services as Primary School Teacher in 1969. He was appointed Deputy Head Teacher in 1993, Head Teacher in 1995, Primary School Inspector in 1998, Senior Primary School Inspector in 2001 and Principal Primary School Inspector in 2004. As Inspector he had the opportunity to work in 3 out of 4 zones. He had an active participation in the awareness campaign regarding Educational Reforms to end the 'Rate Race'. Besides implementation of policy decisions, he also had the responsibility to ensure pedagogical, infrastructural and managerial improvements especially in the low achieving Schools commonly known as ZEP Schools. He is holder of Advanced Certificate in Education and Diploma in Educational Supervision and Inspection from MIE and Diploma in Social work for University of Mauritius. He joined Freight Academy to impart the rich experience he has had in the Education Sector and help raise the Status of the workforce in the Trade Business.

