Compendium of International Organisations' Practices

Working Towards More Effective International Instruments

Snapshots of IO Practices

WCO Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG)

Organisation(s): World Customs Organizations (WCO)

The Snapshots of IO Practices present examples of specific efforts undertaken by an international organisation to work towards more effective international instruments. They aim to highlight examples of practices within the five focus areas of the Partnership of International Organisations for Effective International Rulemaking (IO Partnership), namely the variety and development of international instruments, their implementation, evaluation, ensuring stakeholder engagement, and co-ordination among IOs. The snapshots are submitted by the secretariats of the relevant international organisations implementing the relevant practice. The practices were compiled by the OECD Secretariat and focal points of the IO Partnership (UNCITRAL, OIE, WHO, ISO, WCO, BIPM, and SIECA), with a brief review to ensure consistency and comparability of the information provided within the snapshots. The inclusion of a practice in these snapshots implies no endorsement or assessment of that practice on the part of the OECD Secretariat or the focal points of the IO Partnership.

1	Overview of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
1.1	Organisation	World Customs Organization (WCO)	
1.2	Area of relevance among the IO partnership focus themes (variety of instruments, implementation, stakeholder engagement, evaluation, co-ordination)	Stakeholder engagement	
1.3	Name of the Practice	WCO Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG)	
1.4	Name of person(s) completing the template	Milena Budimirovic, Senior Technical Officer, Procedures and Facilitation, WCO	

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2	Description of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
2.1	Please describe the practice shortly, providing information on its core features.	The PSCG is a WCO body, consisting of private sector representatives from associations covering different industry sectors, different sized businesses and all six WCO regions. Under normal circumstances, it meets twice to three times a year at the WCO Headquarters. Furthermore, its members take an active part as observers to WCO working bodies and contribute to the development of its instruments and tools. More information is available on the WCO web site: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/key-issues/private-sector-consultative-group.aspx and on the PSCG web site, whose access is restricted: https://www.wcopscg.org/	
2.2	What are the objectives of the practice?	The PSCG was formed for the purpose of informing and advising the WCO Secretary General, the Policy Commission and WCO Members on Customs and international trade matters from the perspective of the private sector. The PSCG complements the contributions of private sector Observers to WCO Committee meetings.	
2.3	What have been the key results of the practice?	The PSCG's key deliverables are : - to inform and advise the WCO Secretary General, the Policy Commission and WCO Members on Customs and international trade matters from the perspective of the private sector; - to support the adoption and effective implementation of agreed WCO and other relevant international instruments;	

		• to leverage business resources and government relationship to advocate for and implement programmes developed and adopted by the WCO. The PSCG members have been contributing significantly especially in the Working Group on the SAFE Framework of Standards for Securing and Facilitating Global Trade (SWG) and within the Working Group on E-Commerce (WGEC). Both working groups are co-chaired by PSCG representatives, although the WGEC has in the meantime completed its work and is not functional anymore. PSCG members are active observers in a range of other WCO working bodies.	
2.4	In what year was the practice introduced?	2005	
2.5	Has the practice been updated/reformed since then? If yes, when and how has it evolved over time?	Yes, in terms of the number of members, that is determined by the Terms of Reference. The PSCG currently has 30 members which cover different industry sectors, different sized businesses and all six WCO regions. A proposal to expand from 27 to 30 and to include the Regional Private Sector Groups (RPSGs) was approved by the Policy Commission and Council in June 2021.	
2.6	What do you consider to be the primary strengths of the practice?	Collectively addressing global cross-border issues and eminating Customs-Business partnership at national level. The PSCG Members have provided valuable information on Business practices that would impact and shape the development of international Customs standards and related guidelines in various areas such as security, e-commerce, performation measurements, trade facilitation, intellectual property rights etc. The PSCG's contribution to the work of	

		the WCO was particularly instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of providing regular updates regarding issues faced on the ground. Since the PSCG often invites the Secretary General and the Directors to the its meetings, the practice ensures continued Customs-Business dialogue at the highest level and provides a mechanism to address any emerging issues at very early stage. As a result of this practice, we saw the formation of RPSGs in three of the six WCO regions, which strengthens the Customs-Business dialogue further at regional level.	
2.7	What do you consider to be the main challenges faced during the implementation of the practice?	Membership is selected for the financial year and is limited. However, some of the newly selected members in the past were not in a position to attend the meetings (financial contstraints, lack of time and sometimes of interest) and therefore not in a position to effectively contribute to the discussions, potentially taking the place of another active member. There might be some divergences in the points of view from different PSCG Members.	
2.8	Does the practice have a formal/normative basis within the organisation or is it conducted informally? Does this basis make the practice mandatory or voluntary? If there is formal basis, please provide the relevant link or documentation.	The PSCG was established with the approval of the WCO Council and works in line with the Terms of Reference: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/key-issues/private-sector-consultative-group/terms-of-reference-for-the-private-sector-consultative-group.aspx.	

2.9	At what frequency is the practice applied? i.e. is it conducted once or on an iterative basis?	The PSCG usually meets twice or three times a year and commonly back-to-back with the SWG. Most WCO working bodies are open to participation of PSCG members.	
		During the first four months or more of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PSCG was holding virtual weekly/bi-weekly online meetings with the WCO Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Council Chairperson in attendance. These meetings were enabling the members of the group to provide status updates relevant to their respective industries, discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international trade and the global economy, and served as a table for discussing proposals for courses of action by the global Customs community. The PSCG now meets once a month.	
2.10	Is this practice applied systematically, (e.g. with respect to every normative instrument, according to specific criteria or on an ad hoc basis)?	The PSCG meetings are held regularly and contribution from the group is continuous on most of the instruments and tools developed within the WCO through the different working bodies, especially those relating to trade facilitation matters.	
2.11	Please provide specific details or examples to illustrate the practice (including supporting links and documents).	As already mentioned above, the most intensive contribution was within the SWG and the WGEC.	
		Tools developed under the SAFE Package are available at the following link: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/safe_package.aspx	
		Tools developed under the E-Commerce Package are available at the following link: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/ecommerce.aspx.	

3	Design of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
3.1	Who designed the practice (e.g. Was it developed internally, in collaboration with other organisations, etc?)	Established by the WCO Council.	
3.2	Which stakeholders were engaged with in the design of the practice?	N/A	
3.3	How long did it take to design the practice?	The PSCG was established in 2005 at the same time as the publication of the WCO SAFE Framework and Standards.	
3.4	What resources were needed to design the practice initially (i.e., staff, budget etc.)?	For establishing the PSCG, a Terms of Reference were approved by the Council. PSCG members were and are financed through their own budget to have usually one or two representatives attend the PSCG meetings held two to three times a year in the WCO Headquarters. However, the WCO had from the start provided the necessary logistical support (meeting room and coffee breaks), as well as a technical officer to attend these meetings and co-ordinate between the PSCG and the Secretariat on both technical and logistical matters, when required. A web page was created to host information on the PSCG.	
3.5	What challenges were encountered during the design of the practice and how were they overcome?	N/A	
3.6	Has the practice been tested before implementation (i.e. pilot phase)? If yes, please describe.	N/A	

4	Implementation of the Practice		Comments and intersections
4.1	Which units are responsible for implementing the practice within your IO?	Office of the Deputy Secretary General and the Procedures and Facilitaion Sub-Directorate.	
4.2	Are IO members involved in implementing the practice? If so, how?	No.	
4.3	Are external actors beyond the organisation or its membership involved in implementing the practice? If so, how?	Members of the PSCG are private sector associations, individual companies and RPSGs. There are currently 30 members: 1. Agility Bahrain 2. Association of Professional Customs Brokers of the Americas (ASAPRA) 3. Business Alliance for Secure Commerce (BASC) 4. DIGITALEUROPE 5. Expeditors 6. Federation of Industrial Chambers and Associations of Central America and Dominican Republic (FECAICA) 7. Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents (FONASBA) 8. Flour Mills of Nigeria 9. Fonterra 10. Global Express Association (GEA) 11. Huawei 12. International Air Transport Association (IATA) 13. IBM 14. Indelox 15. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 16. International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations (IFCBA)	

| | | 17. International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA)
18. International Port Community Systems Association (IPCSA)
19. International Road Transport Union (IRU)
20. Kuehne + Nagel
21. Michelin
22. A. P. Moller Maersk
23. Pharmaceutical Security Institute (PSI)
24. Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi
25. Solvay, Belgium
26. South African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF)
27. Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Sri Lanka

Regional Private Sector Groups (RPSGs):

28. Regional Private Sector Group for Americas and Caribbean region (RPSG AMS)
29. Regional Private Sector Group for East and Southern Africa (RPSG ESA)
30. Regional Private Sector Group for Asia Pacific (RPSG AP)

Members are visible on the WCO web site: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/key-issues/private-sector-consultative-group/membership.aspx | |
| 4.4 | Which resources are needed to implement the practice (e.g., staff and budget)? | PSCG members are required to be active and therefore attend the PSCG meetings (with one to two staff members) which take place in the WCO Headquarters in Brussels. | |

5	Outputs and Evaluation of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
5.1	Has the practice been evaluated or reviewed?	In order to further improve the functioning of the PSCG, the Terms of Reference have been amended several times (in 2014, 2017 and 2021).	
5.2	If yes, who carried out the evaluation (please specify whether it was done internally or externally)		
5.3	If yes, please describe the evaluation methodology? (e.g. were any quantitative or qualitative indicators/criteria used to measure/assess the outcomes of the practice?).		
5.4	If yes, what were the conclusions of the evaluation,and has the practice evolved subsequently? If possible, please attach related documents or provide a link.		
6	Additional comments and information	Answers	Comments and intersections
6.1	Is there any more information or documentation that would be valuable to share in relation to the practice (e.g. links, reports, meeting minutes, supporting documents)?	http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/key-issues/private-sector-consultative-group/terms-of-reference-for-the-private-sector-consultative-group.aspx	
	Sources		