

**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
CUSTOMS & EXCISE DIVISION**

NOTICE TO IMPORTERS NO. 14 OF 2022

**SUBJECT: REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME VCP**

Compliance in the Customs environment refers to the degree to which taxpayers and traders, along with other intermediaries of the logistics supply chain, meet their legal obligations.

WCO Risk Management Compendium has Importers classified into four (4) categories of traders identified by the:

- a. Those who are voluntarily compliant
- b. Those who try to be compliant but do not necessarily always succeed
- c. Those who will avoid complying if possible
- d. Those who deliberately do not comply

A review of the existing VCP was conducted and the new VCP is an improved programme that is transparent and accessible. It is a fairness program which utilises the four (4) broad-based categories of “traders” being used in the “WCO Risk Management Compendium to promote voluntary compliance by providing incentives and simplified procedures for those importers who are voluntarily compliant and those who try to be compliant but do not necessarily always succeed.

Most modern Customs Administrations rely on people willingly and voluntarily doing the right thing. The Voluntary Compliance Programme (VCP) is a precursor to the implementation of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) program.

In order to participate in the VCP, the following is required:

1. Trade CIF that meets the set criteria of \$100,000,000.00 per month
2. A registered business (VAT/TIN #)in operation no less than three (3) years
3. A minimum of 100 Import Declaration processed per annum (2019-2021)
4. A satisfactory Compliance Ranking with the Customs and Excise Division
5. An absence of criminal offences related to the company’s overall activity
6. A High Level of compliance with customs legislation and other taxation laws
7. Proof of Financial solvency of the company as provided by the last 5 years financial reports
8. The person in charge of the applicant’s customs matters is **an employee** of the Company with a Customs Clerk licence, Grade II or III or **a contracted person** who holds a Customs Brokers Licence.

9. Internal policies and procedures that provide adequate safeguards against compromise of the supply chains until cargo is released from Customs control at destination.
10. An accounting system which is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles and which provides a full audit trail of your customs activities which facilitate audit-based customs control
11. Cargo and container integrity facilitated by the use of modern technology that conforms, at a minimum, to the current requirements as set forth in the various international agreements, including, but not limited to, the 1972 Customs Container Convention
12. Documented procedures that set forth the internal policy regarding the affixing and processing of cargo and containers that employ high-security seals according to ISO 17712 and/or other devices that are designed to prevent tampering with cargo.

Procedures to participate in the VCP

1. Complete the designated VCP Application Form
2. Complete the designated VDP Application Form
3. Complete the designated VCP Self- Assessment Questionnaire
4. Submit above stated documents to the Voluntary Compliance Task Force
5. Notifications of Approval to participate in the Programmes
6. Provision of Security for Post Audit Assessments
7. Acknowledgement of Terms and Conditions
8. Commencement of VCP Participation

Importers are to be guided accordingly.



Vidyah Marcial
Comptroller of Customs & Excise
Custom House, Port of Spain
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