



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Activity Title:	Review and Update of Customs Standard Operating Procedures
Estimated Duration:	6 Months
Estimated Budget:	AUD 55,000
Location:	Remote with travel to Solomon Islands
Estimated Start Date:	October 2026
Reporting to:	Trade in Goods Adviser

I. BACKGROUND

PACER Plus (Agreement) is a regional trade and development agreement supporting deeper economic integration between Pacific Island Countries, Australia and New Zealand. Now in its second implementation cycle to 2030, it focuses on consolidating reforms, strengthening national and regional systems, and increasing utilisation of trade, investment and labour mobility opportunities.

The Agreement combines market access commitments with a DEC Work Programme. During this cycle, Parties have agreed to a more disciplined approach to implementation prioritising, sequencing and measuring results so that collective effort is focused where it can deliver the greatest impact.

The review and updating of the Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division (SICED) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), together with the proposed modernization of customs legislation and the upgrading of the ASYCUDA World System, is directly aligned with the objectives of the PACER Plus Development and Economic Cooperation (DEC) Work Programme. The DEC Work Programme supports Pacific Parties to implement PACER Plus and realize its trade and economic benefits through initiatives that modernize customs systems, improve trade facilitation, strengthen border management, and enhance institutional capacity.

Specifically, this activity contributes to the Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation component of PACER Plus, which aims to improve predictability, consistency, transparency, and efficiency in customs operations and border management. PACER Plus encourages participating countries to simplify and harmonise customs procedures, strengthen risk management practices, improve the use of automated systems, facilitate paperless trade, and align customs administration with international standards and best practices. The activity supports the broader PACER Plus objective of creating a more predictable and efficient trading environment that reduces barriers to trade, facilitates the movement of goods across borders, and strengthens the capacity of Pacific Island customs administrations to participate more effectively in regional and international trade.

In accordance with international standards and best practices established under the World Customs Organization (WCO) Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) and the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA), the Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division (SICED) is currently drafting it's a new Customs and Excise Bill and recently upgraded the ASYCUDA World System, which supports the Division's daily customs operations and business processes.



The effective implementation of organisational policies, programmes, and services requires comprehensive, current, and well-documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). SOPs provide clear guidance on operational processes, roles and responsibilities, service standards, internal controls, and reporting requirements. They promote consistency, accountability, efficiency, transparency, and compliance with legislative, regulatory, and policy obligations.

II. OBJECTIVE & SCOPE

The objectives of this work are:

- Strengthen the operational effectiveness, compliance, and service delivery of the Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division (SICED).
- Review, develop, and standardise policies, workflows, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Align policies, workflows, and SOPs with international customs standards, legislative reforms, organisational priorities, and customs modernisation initiatives.

The scope of work to deliver the above objectives includes:

- a) Review and assess existing policies, procedures, workflows, manuals, and Standard Operating Procedures to determine their relevance, effectiveness, and compliance with current operational requirements.
- b) Develop and update policies, workflows, and Standard Operating Procedures that align with current and future Customs business processes, legislative requirements, and the ASYCUDA World environment.
- c) Provide technical and advisory support to the Reform and Modernization Unit and Corporate Services Division throughout the review, development, validation, and implementation process.
- d) Strengthen institutional capacity by establishing standardized, documented, and sustainable operational procedures that support transparency, accountability, compliance, and continuous improvement.
- e) Ensure alignment with international customs standards and best practices, including the World Customs Organization (WCO) Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC), the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA), and relevant PACER Plus commitments.

To achieve the above objectives, the Consultant/cy is required to:

The review and update of SOPs, workflows, policies, manuals, and related operational documents shall include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

a. Document Review and Assessment

- Review all existing SOPs, operational manuals, guidelines, workflows, process maps, and related documentation against:
 - The General Annex and Specific Annexes of the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention;
 - Relevant provisions of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement;



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- Existing Customs and Excise legislation and regulations;
 - Government policies and directives; and
 - Organizational policies, strategic plans, and reform initiatives.
- Assess the adequacy, relevance, consistency, and effectiveness of existing documentation.
- Identify gaps, duplications, inconsistencies, outdated provisions, and areas requiring improvement.
- Determine SOPs requiring revision and updating;
- Consolidation and streamlining; and/or
- Prepare a gap analysis report with recommendations for improvement and prioritization.
- b. Process Mapping and Business Process Analysis**
 - Document and validate current operational processes across Customs functions.
 - Map end-to-end business processes and identify process owners and responsibilities.
 - Analyse existing workflows to identify:
 - Operational bottlenecks;
 - Inefficiencies;
 - Compliance risks;
 - Control weaknesses; and
 - Duplication of effort.
 - Review and assess internal controls, compliance requirements, authorization processes, and risk mitigation measures.
 - Evaluate reporting, escalation, and decision-making pathways.
 - Develop revised business process maps reflecting improved operational practices and future-state requirements.
- c. Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement**
 - Conduct interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and consultations with Customs management and staff.
 - Engage relevant government agencies, border agencies, private sector representatives, customs brokers, freight forwarders, development partners, and other stakeholders where necessary.
 - Document stakeholder feedback on:
 - Operational challenges;
 - Service delivery issues;
 - Compliance constraints;
 - Emerging business requirements; and
 - Opportunities for modernization and improvement.
 - Ensure stakeholder inputs are incorporated into the review and development process.
- d. SOP and Workflow Revision and Development**
 - Review and revise existing workflows based on findings from document reviews, consultations, and process analysis.
 - Update existing SOPs to reflect:
 - Current legislation and policies;
 - Revised business processes;
 - Automation requirements;



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- Risk management principles; and
 - International best practices.
 - Develop new SOPs and supporting procedures where operational, compliance, or policy gaps exist.
 - Standardize document templates, format, numbering systems, terminology, and document control requirements.
 - Define clear:
 - Roles and responsibilities;
 - Delegations and authorities;
 - Service standards;
 - Compliance controls; and
 - Escalation and reporting lines.
 - Incorporate monitoring, performance reporting, quality assurance, and continuous improvement mechanisms into all SOPs.
 - Align SOPs with the proposed Customs modernization agenda and future ASYCUDA World enhancements.
- e. Validation, Approval, and Finalization**
- Prepare draft SOPs, workflows, manuals, and supporting documentation for review by SICED management.
 - Present draft documents to relevant stakeholders for consultation and feedback.
 - Facilitate validation workshops and technical review sessions.
 - Address comments and recommendations received during the review process.
 - Finalize all SOPs, workflows, manuals, and associated documentation.
 - Prepare SOP approval packages, including:
 - Approval briefs;
 - Document control registers;
 - Version control records; and
 - Implementation recommendations.
 - Submit final approved documents in both electronic and editable formats.
- f. Technical Support and Capacity Building**
- Provide ongoing technical support and advice to the Reform and Modernization Unit and Corporate Services Division throughout the assignment.
 - Build internal capacity through coaching, mentoring, workshops, and knowledge transfer activities.
 - Support the establishment of a governance framework for SOP management, review, and continuous improvement.
 - Develop recommendations for future SOP review cycles, monitoring arrangements, and change management processes.
 - Identify SOPs requiring revision, consolidation and/or development.

III. DELIVERABLES

The consultant will deliver the following outputs:

1. Process Review and Assessment.
2. Process Mapping and Business Process Analysis.
3. Consultation and Validation of Current Processes and Systems.



4. Development of New SOPs and Workflows.
5. Consultation and Validation of Proposed/New SOPs and Workflows.
6. Approved Technical Support and Capacity-Building Plan.
7. Final approved SOPs and Workflow Packages submitted in electronic and editable formats.

IV. TIME AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES

The Activity shall be completed within a period of no longer than six (6) months, according to the indicative timeframes below. Exact commencement and completion dates, as well as the scope of work, may be amended in consultation with the PPIU and the SICED.

Nr.	Deliverables	Indicative Time Frame (delivered by)	Payment Schedule
1.	Process Review and Assessment	November 2026	15%
2.	Process Mapping and Business Process Analysis	December 2026	15%
3.	Consultation and Validation of Current Process and systems	December 2026	10%
4.	New SOP's and workflows Developed	February 2027	20%
5.	Consultation and Validation of Proposed / New SOPs and Workflows	April 2027	10%
6.	Technical Support and Capacity Building plan approved	May 2027	10%
7.	Final approved SOPs and Workflows packages approved and submitted in electronic and editable formats	June 2027	20%

Note: Travel expenses for the Consultant(s) are included in the Consultancy Fees. Costs for stakeholder consultations must have prior approval from the PPIU and must follow the PPIU Procurement Policy.

V. REPORTING:

- The Activity will be supervised by the Trade in Goods Adviser from PPIU and the Comptroller of Customs for SICED.
- The Consultant is required to report to the Trade in Goods Adviser and the SICED Team, who will ensure that the deliverables are submitted according to the indicated timeframes and quality standards.
- Regular discussions will also be carried out during the consultancy period to monitor progress and constraints, support required and proposed solutions.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED OF CONSULTANT(S)

Preference will be given to Pacific-based consultants who possess the following qualifications, skills and experience, and personal specifications:



1. Qualifications:

A bachelor's degree in Customs Administration, International Trade, Public Administration, or related discipline or relevant professional certifications in project management, customs modernization, or IT systems is an advantage.

2. Skills & Experience:

- At least 10 years of professional experience in Business Process Analysis and Reengineering with preference to customs clearance processes reengineering and knowledge of ASYCUSA World
- Proven experience conducting:
 - diagnostic reviews.
 - Business process analyses and Business Process Reengineering.
 - Gap assessments and modernization roadmaps.

3. Technical Expertise

- Customs procedures and clearance processes including but not limited to
 - Imports/Exports/Transit/Transshipment/Warehousing
 - Manifest Control and Reconciliation
 - The Harmonised System of Commodity Classification
 - Risk Management, Declaration Processing, Cargo Examination and Post Clearance Audit
 - Customs and Trade Knowledge
- In-depth understanding of:
 - WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).
 - WCO standards and instruments (Revised Kyoto Convention, SAFE Framework, Data Model).
 - International best practices in customs modernization and border management.
- Experience working with government customs authorities and international development partners.
- Analytical and Reporting Skills

4. Personal Specifications

- Excellent command of English (oral and written)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team under tight deadlines.

VII. MELA CONTRIBUTION

This activity is aligned with the organisation's Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Adaptation (MELA) logical framework by strengthening the systems, processes, and governance arrangements necessary for effective performance management and organisational learning.

The review and update of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will contribute to improved monitoring and performance measurement by establishing clear operational standards, roles, responsibilities, workflows, controls, and reporting requirements. From an evaluation perspective, the revised SOPs will support the collection of reliable and consistent operational data, enabling management to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of customs processes and services.



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The documentation and standardisation of procedures will also facilitate internal audits, performance reviews, and future organisational assessments.

The accountability dimension is strengthened through clearly documented responsibilities, delegated authorities, internal controls, and compliance requirements. Updated SOPs will enhance transparency, reinforce good governance practices, and ensure that officers are guided by consistent procedures that support legislative, policy, and government reporting obligations.

Overall, this activity contributes to a more effective, accountable, and process-oriented Customs administration capable of delivering high-quality services and achieving its strategic objectives.