



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் கங்கத்துறை

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Singapore Customs operations building combines enforcement and compliance functions under one roof

The new Customs Operations Command (COC) building situated at Bulim Drive was officially opened by Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance Mr Lawrence Wong on 15 November 2019.

The purpose-built facility caters to Singapore Customs' current and future operational needs, and allows for the full spectrum of intelligence, investigation, and compliance related functions to be integrated under one roof.

Before moving to the Bulim Drive location, the Customs Operations Command was located at Keppel Road. The Keppel Road building was built in 1940 and was originally designed to provide office space for Customs staff working at the sea ports and also served as staff quarters. The building was later re-purposed as a base for enforcement operations from the 1960s onwards. The need to find a replacement for the facility arose when Customs was informed in 2009 that the Keppel Road site had been earmarked for re-development.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Minister Lawrence Wong said that against the backdrop of globalisation and free trade coming under increasing pressures from protectionism and nationalistic tendencies, customs authorities across the world have to pursue trade facilitative measures to promote seamless flow of goods across borders.

To this end, Mr Wong urged that Singapore Customs should continue to enable legitimate trade. "Together with like-minded trading partners and jurisdictions, Singapore Customs should continue to promote and support free trade as well as a rules-based multilateral trade order." However, Mr Wong cautioned that "we need to remain a secure and trusted node in the international supply chain. Otherwise, Singapore's excellent connectivity could be exploited for illicit trade."

Recognising that leveraging technology is the way forward, Mr Wong shared that "to overcome the increasing workload amidst ageing and shrinking workforce, Singapore Customs is actively looking at harnessing technology to digitalise, automate and innovate to redesign processes to improve productivity."

Agreeing that people is key as the nature of work of Singapore Customs transforms, Director-General of Customs Mr Ho Chee Pong said: "The new COC provides modern facilities to support our enforcement operations, and the training and development of our officers. This facility enhances the operational capability of Singapore Customs and affirms our commitment to our mission of protecting revenue, and making trade easy, fair and secure. I am confident that the COC will be an important enabler in our transformation journey ahead."

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ANNEX



The new Customs Operations Command (COC) at Bulim Drive



The purpose-built COC has a total gross floor area of about 21,000 square metres.



The old COC located at Keppel Road from 1940 to 2019



The old COC located at Keppel Road from 1940 to 2019.



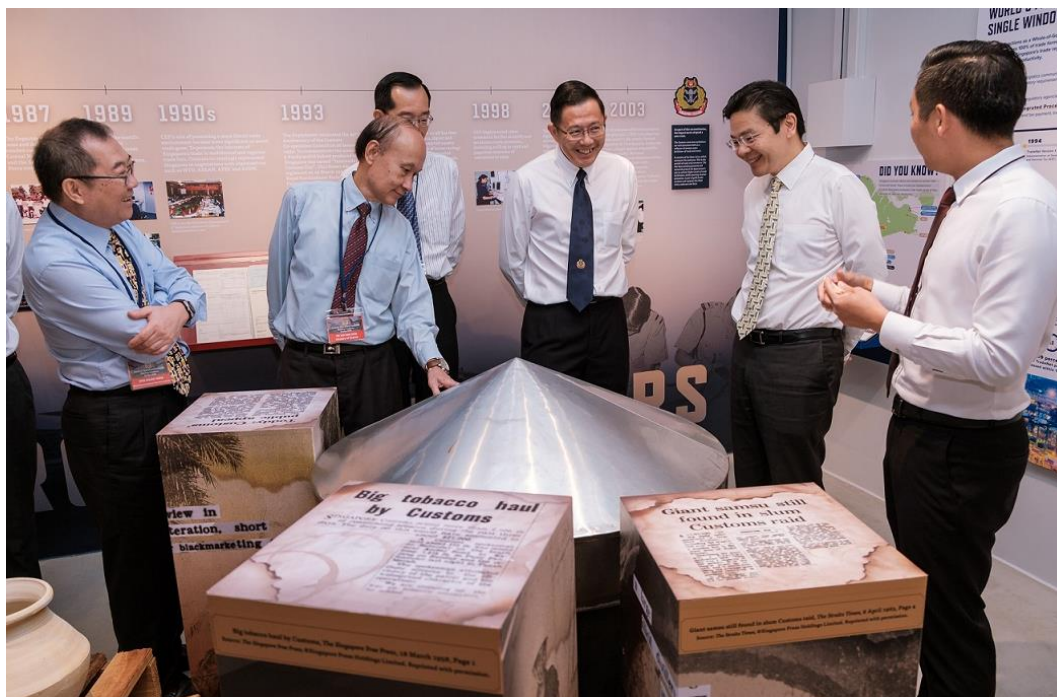
Carpark of the old Customs Operations Command located at Keppel Road.



Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance, delivering his speech at the opening of the new COC.



Minister Lawrence Wong unveiling the plaque at the opening of the new COC, accompanied by Mrs Tan Ching Yee, Permanent Secretary for Finance, and DG Ho Chee Pong.



From left to right: Mr Ong Khiaw Hong, Chief Executive of the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority, Dr Tan Kim Siew, Senior Consultant, Ministry of Finance, Mr Ng Wai Choong, Commissioner of the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, Mr Ho Chee Pong, Director-General of Customs, and Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance viewing the exhibits at the Customs Gallery.



Minister Lawrence Wong touring the Customs Gallery with Mr Ho Chee Pong (right) and Mr Lee Tiow Yong, Senior Assistant Director-General (Intelligence & Investigation) (left).



Mr Ho Chee Pong showing Minister Lawrence Wong the different aspects of the Customs Transformation Gallery.



Minister Lawrence Wong interacting with Customs staff and guests at the opening ceremony.



Minister Lawrence Wong being shown by Customs staff how contraband cigarettes could be hidden in various compartments of a bus.



Minister Lawrence Wong chatting with Customs staff and guests.



Minister Lawrence Wong viewing exhibits at the covered shed of the new COC.

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