

## CUSTOMS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMPLIANCE FORUM

### Looking for a job or a career?

**T**he customs/logistics sector needs an estimated 50,000 additional new workers in the next six months.

From 1st January 2021, all movements of goods between the UK and the EU will need a customs declaration. This is new work that was not previously required. It will require the inputting of data for sending to the HMRC computer system, CHIEF (which is being replaced by a new system called CDS).

There is a range of possible positions available:

- Data entry clerks – no specialist knowledge just attention to detail and the ability to type fast
- Specialist data entry clerks – basic customs knowledge giving ability to create or sense check data
- Junior customs specialists – better customs knowledge able to provide the data elements to specialist/data entry clerks
- Senior customs specialists – able to advise exporters/importers on what is needed and translate this into the correct data elements for entries
- Subject matter experts, sometimes called international trade compliance specialists, who understand not only the customs requirements but also their in-depth implications for all in the supply chain including complex multinational/industry supply chains

Customs work is complex, interesting and continually changing, an ideal career for those with an eye for detail, an ability to work on complex problems and enjoy finding practical and cost effective solutions, an ability to create revenue/savings and a willingness to undertake continuous learning. Since actually entering the data to CHIEF/CDS is computerised, it can for the most part be completed anywhere; only in a few cases does this need to be done near the port of exit or entry.

To date, there has not been a rush to recruit new employees. Companies are still talking about Brexit uncertainty, so do not want to spend time and money recruiting permanent staff until the uncertainty is clarified – for example, we do not yet have full details of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the UK and the EU. Whether or not there is an FTA will not make a difference to

the need to file customs entries with HMRC, not unless any FTA signed is wildly different to any other there has ever been. At this time there is every expectation within HMRC and the government in general that customs entries will be required.

The secondary issue quoted is that trained people are in short supply. The level of training needed will differ depending on the type of role to be undertaken and current employers are apparently not so willing to pay for training. Again, this should not be an impediment.

The government is running a grants scheme that offers free grants for:

- Customs training at any level, from any bona fide provider regardless of whether or not it results in a formal qualification; this training can even be provided in-house, full course costs are reimbursed to applicants and there are plenty of providers and plenty of spaces for delegates as face-to-face training (Covid-19 permitting) and online (live and recorded)
- Purchase of IT and training to use it for what the government calls 'intermediaries' – for example, freight agents, logistics providers and customs brokers
- Employment of new staff for intermediaries, including recruitment costs and even salary for the first few months

The grants are only available to companies (from one-person companies up to the largest global player), so here we do have an issue: unless you have your own company or are already employed by a company you cannot access the grants. CILT has pressed this with HMRC but as yet to no avail.

CILT also offers two certified and accredited training courses (Certificate of Customs Competency and AEO Certified Practitioner) that qualify for these grants and take people with no previous experience right up to those with several years' experience, ensuring that they are fully conversant with the most up-to-date regulations and can be considered specialists.

Without correct customs entries goods cannot cross borders, so now is the time to develop scarce skills and gain not only a job, but also an interesting career.

**Susan Morley FCILT**  
Chair, Customs and International Trade Compliance Forum.

## GOLF FORUM

**A**lthough this may be the least of your woes right now, the measures to control the spread of coronavirus continue to play havoc with the Forum's programme of events for 2020.

The latest casualty is the Summer Event, which was due to take place at Copt Heath Golf Club on 25th June. Although most courses in the country are now open for play, they are operating under guidelines from Golf England that restrict use of a course to members and place limitations on the availability of toilets, changing rooms and catering facilities. Therefore while such restrictions remain in place, and especially the access to the clubhouse and catering, the organising decision-makers feel it is not acceptable for Forum members travelling long distances to be without such facilities, plus and as important this also limits the key aspects of networking and camaraderie. However, we will all be able to enjoy this venue again since Copt Heath has been rebooked for the 2021 calendar.

Our Forum completely understands and sympathises with the many businesses and individuals that have been hit hard by the Covid-19 outbreak and we know that fit and healthy golfers can consider themselves to be very lucky to be able to enjoy their sport again, albeit in limited format. With that in mind, it remains a fervent hope that further relaxation of coronavirus control measures will enable us to pick up some of the 2020 events programme as soon as possible.

Our next scheduled event is an eight-a-side match against the Liberal Golf Circle at West Essex Golf Club on 22nd July. Whether this match goes ahead is being kept under constant review in the light of developments in government and Golf England advice. Nonetheless, this should not stop any golf-playing members of CILT from joining the Forum and making themselves eligible to be a member of that team. In the meantime, stay safe and we look forward to seeing you on a golf course somewhere soon.

Further information, contact:  
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