

PREFACE

Moving goods across borders requires meeting a vast number of commercial, transport and regulatory requirements. More stringent requirements regarding product safety and security lead to potentially inefficient operations and often create unnecessary delays and costs. At present, a source of tremendous inefficiencies is associated with the preparation of transport and regulatory documents, unclear border procedures, and overzealous cargo inspection.

A Single Window (see Glossary) is one of the trade facilitation measures that has increasingly gained momentum, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, as it serves as the backbone for paperless trading. Once it is fully operational, the complexity as well as unnecessary delays and costs in administering cross-border movement of goods are expected to be significantly reduced.

To ensure that the Single Window facility responds to stakeholders' needs in different stages of the international supply chain, it is important that its design reflects present business processes. Given that the existing business processes may entail redundant activities and complexities that create procedural inefficiencies and bottlenecks, it is essential to simplify the existing business processes and harmonize them, where applicable, with relevant international recommendations, best practices, and standards such as UN/CEFACT Recommendation 18 on Facilitation Measures Related to International Trade Procedures, WCO Revised Kyoto Convention, WCO Customs Guidelines on Integrated Supply Chain Management, and WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade prior to adopting them as a basis for the design of the Single Window. The harmonization and simplification of business processes cannot be achieved without good and in-depth understanding of existing practices.

The *BPA Guide* offers a simple methodology to elicit, document, and analyse the existing “as-is” business processes involved in international trade, as well as aid in developing recommendations for further improvement. It suggests a set of practical steps and activities, from setting the scope of the business process analysis project; planning its implementation; collecting relevant data; and presenting it in an easily understandable manner, to analysing the captured data in order to identify bottlenecks and developing recommendations for improvement. This recommended set of steps and activities was generalized from the business process analysis exercise conducted in Thailand in preparation for the development of Thailand's Single Window e-Logistics, which is a national obligation under the ASEAN Single Window initiative. To demonstrate the practicalities of the *BPA Guide*, a step-by-step approach on how to elicit, document, and analyse the existing “as-is” business processes involved in international trade is presented. Based on the results, recommendations for further improvement are developed under consideration of existing conventions defined in the Guide.

The *BPA Guide* intends to serve practitioners and policymakers from government agencies or the private sector involved in:

- The harmonization and simplification of international trade procedures;
- The harmonization of related data requirements with the international standard; and
- The implementation of Single Window.

From the *BPA Guide*, practitioners will learn a step-by-step approach to business process analysis and the development of recommendations for future improvement. Policymakers, on the other hand, will benefit from a better understanding of the linkage between business process analysis

and trade facilitation measures, including business process simplification, data harmonization, and Single Window implementation. They will become acquainted with prerequisite steps that have to be taken prior to the implementation of trade facilitation measures.