



EPRC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Feasibility analysis for single electronic window for trade facilitation gets underway

In accordance with the approved national program for the establishment of a single electronic window (SEW) for foreign trade facilitation a five-member technical team from the *Société Générale de Surveillance* (SGS) and *Crimson Logic* arrived on 27 November to conduct a pro-bono feasibility analysis. EPRC coordinated the activities of the technical mission in support of the Working Group to establish the SEW.



Members of the technical mission included: Philippe Isler, Global Manager, Government Service, SGS, and Christopher Holden, Operations Manager, Ghana Community Network Services (GCNet), Accra, Ghana; Sathasivam Kolandaivelu, Regional Manager, Chan Fook Sen, Project Manager, Jonathan Koh, Director, Solutions and Consulting of *Crimson Logic*. The team stayed in Mongolia until 5 December, and met with private sector stakeholders and agencies involved in the SEW Working Group (WG). These meetings included:

- Mr. Ch. Saikhanbileg, Chair of the Working Group and Director of the Information and Communications Technology Agency (ICTA)
- Mr. B Battumur, Director, Mongolian National Customs Administration (MNCA)
- Mr. L. Zorig, Director, General Department of National Taxation (GDNT)
- Mr. S. Demberel, Chairman, Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI)

- Mr. D. Batbaatar, Director, State Specialized Inspection Agency (SSIA)
- Mr. G. Gantumur, Director, Mongolian Agency for Standardization and Measurement (MASM)
- Mr. S. Altangerel, Secretary of the Working Group and Director, IT Department, Mongolian Customs General Administration (MCGA).

On 4 December at a meeting of the SEW Working Group, the technical teams from the *Société Générale de Surveillance* and *Crimson Logic* made a presentation on their international experiences on establishing and running SEW, preliminary conclusions and findings of the feasibility study and potential options for collaboration with the Mongolian Government and private sector. Mr. B. Battumur, Head of Customs briefed the participants on the results of a trip to Zamiin Uud and Erlian, China; discussed current problems that Mongolia faces in trade at the border in contrast to the Chinese side, where facilities for trade are well organized. He emphasized the need to involve the private sector on establishing a SEW company and improving trade logistics facilities at Zamiin Uud.



Members of SEW WG exchanged ideas on how the SEW company could be established in Mongolia. Mr. L. Zorig, Director, GDNT and J. Enkhbayar, Deputy Director of SSIA stressed that proper coordination among agencies, upgrading technological and professional levels in some of the participating agencies and establishing an appropriate legal environment would be important factors to establish a sustainable SEW company in Mongolia. They commented that creation of an electronic network is not enough for Mongolia.

The feasibility study team, WG members, private sector stakeholders and the EPRC trade team staff also traveled to Zamiin Uud and Erlian, from 30 November to 3 December to examine border point customs clearance, tax and state inspection procedures, and railway operations.

The Director and staff of the CGA and freight forwarders of Mongolia held meetings with their Chinese counterparts of Erlian to address current transportation, logistics, and cross-border

access issues. There was ample discussion of suggested measures that parties must adopt to avoid the cargo logjam of last summer in Mongolia. Government-to-Government and Business-to-Business meetings will be held again in early 2008 to review options and put these measures in place.



The assignment ended on 4 December with a reception that USAID hosted for SEW WG members, representatives of private business and the visiting delegation.

Mongolian freight forwarders prepare for meetings with Chinese counterparts

On 19 December the project helped organize a meeting of representatives of fourteen freight forwarding companies, the Ulaanbaatar Railways (UBTZ), representatives of the National Committee on Transport and Trade Facilitation (NCTTF), ADB consultants, and EPRC staff working on the regulatory framework for trade facilitation Mongolia.



The meeting aimed at developing common negotiating positions for forthcoming meetings of Mongolian freight-forwarders with their Erlian counterparts, prepare recommendations for GoM Customs negotiations with Chinese Customs counterparts, and identify key priority actions that the GoM can take during next year. Participating in the meeting were:

- Mr. S. Demberel, Chairman, MNCCI

- Mr. B. Lkhagvadorj, Head, Customs Control Unit, GCA
- Mr. L. Khaltar, Vice Chairman, UBTZ
- Ms. S. Dariimaa, Deputy Chairman, Freight Management Division, UBTZ
- Ms. M. Enkhriimaa, Vice Director, Tuushin Co., Ltd
- Mr. D. Enkhee, Executive Director, TransGate Co., Ltd
- Mr. D. Nasanbat, Deputy Director, TransGate Co.,Ltd
- Ms. Ts. Elena, General Manager, MTT Co., Ltd
- Mr. B. Batkhuu, Business Development Manager, Mongolian Express Co., Ltd
- Mr. A. Ganbat, Director, MN Logistics Co., Ltd
- Ms. P. Solongo, General Manager, Aziin Zam Co., Ltd
- Mr. P. Batkhuyag, General Director, IFFC
- Mr. R. Shatar, General Director, Ilinex Co., Ltd
- Mr. V. Yondon, ADB consultant on Trade and Transport
- Ms. M. Battseren, General Manager, BLC Co., Ltd.
- Ms. D. Odonchimeg, Secretary, Logistics Committee, MNCCI
- Ms. D. Uyanga, Researcher
- Ms. P. Narantsetseg, Researcher

Major issues discussed were problems at the transshipment terminal in Zamiin Uud, implementation of the new Law on Railway Transport, and possible options for the private sector to co-invest in construction of the terminal. As an outcome of the meeting, the MNCCI, on behalf of freight forwarders, sent a request to the Minister for Road, Transport and Tourism and Chairman of NCTTF to discuss the issues related to the construction of a logistics complex in Zamiin Uud at the next meeting of the NCTTF as well as at Cabinet meetings. On 10 January, freight forwarders will also meet to "re-establish" their association, with the purpose of streamlining their participation in the activities of NCTTF and in sector policy development and implementation. The project agreed to assist the association to formulate suggested key priority actions for GoM consideration and conduct time/cost-distance analyses for the transport and logistics sector of Mongolia.

On 3 and 4 December an EPRC analyst worked in Zamiin Uud jointly with Mr. Narendra Singru, an ADB expert, to examine the current status and capacity of transport and logistics infrastructure in preparation for the development of ADB's Five Year Assistance Strategy in the transport sector of Mongolia. Following the trip, the team had meetings with Mr. D. Ganbold, Chairman of Railway Regulatory Authority, Mr. L. Khaltar, Deputy Chairman, UBTZ, Mr. S. Demberel, Chairman, MNCCI and private sector representatives. The trip and meetings led to conclusion that construction of an auto-to-rail trans-shipment terminal, customs and public purpose warehouse and measures on transport safety are high priority measures that need to be taken to facilitate cross border trade in Zamiin Uud. The meetings also noted the urgency to conduct feasibility studies for these facilities.

Information and Communication Technology Authority releases Joomla!Mongolia

At a press conference held on 11 December, the Information and Communications Technology Authority (ICTA) released an official version of the free and open source *Joomla!Mongolia* – Content Management System (CMS), version 1.0.

Based on the award winning *Joomla!* 1.0.13 CMS, Joomla!Mongolia facilitates the rapid development and administration of websites by virtue of having its core files,

administration panels, messages, sample website templates, and companion training materials fully in the Mongolian language. *Joomla!Mongolia* is free and open source under the terms of the General Public License (GPL) that provides access to source code of the software to facilitate improvements and contributions from all users.



The project assisted ICTA with the development of the CMS and made available a beta version in June 2007 for testing by developers and users. Release 1.0 has many improvements over the initial beta release as a result of feedback from the IT community, actual use in applications, and training conducted in government organizations and universities.

While the original purpose of the *Joomla!Mongolia* project was to ease the deployment and management of websites of government agencies to provide services and information to the general public, the software is available for free and can be downloaded from the www.joomla-mongolia.com website. Further development of the system, updates, extensions, and training materials are also available for free at the site.

This Newsletter is a monthly electronic publication of EPRC project activities. Comments, suggestions, and requests for inclusion or deletion from our mailing list can be forwarded to: Editor, EPRC Newsletter, by e-mail fbertoli@epc-chemonics.biz or fax: (976-11) 32 78 25.