



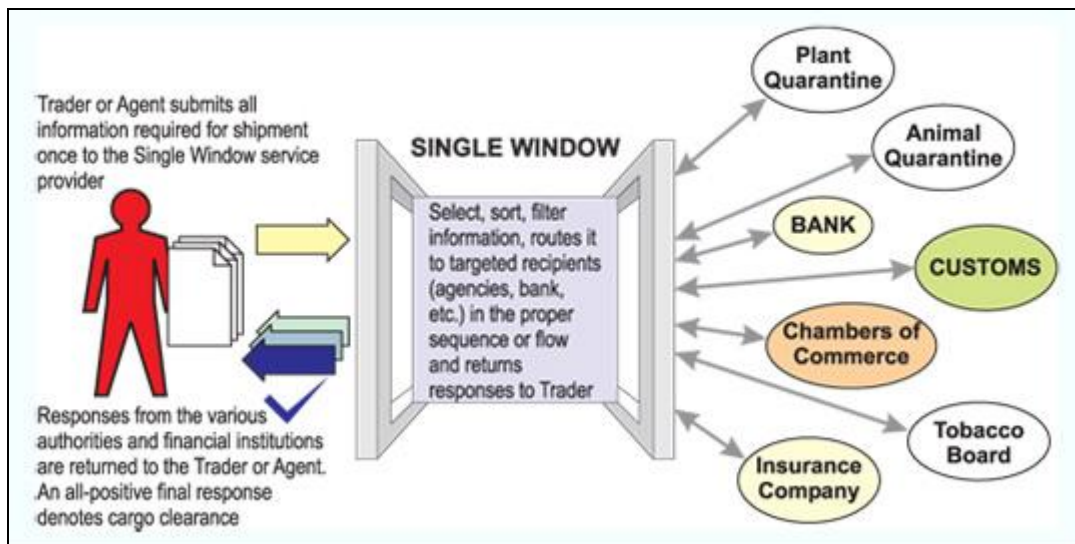
The ASEAN Single Window

I. Objective

The objective of this program is to support the development and implementation of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW). The program will provide technical assistance and training at both the ASEAN Secretariat and the national-level in select ASEAN member nations. All activities will be focused on assisting ASEAN with implementing the ASW by 2012.

II. Background on the ASEAN Single Window¹

A Single Window is a clearance system that enables a single submission of information and data, single and simultaneous processing of the data, and a single point of decision-making through close collaboration among the lines ministries and other parties involved in the customs clearance process. Instead of submitting different forms and information to multiple agencies (e.g. customs, ports, health, etc.) to get a shipment of goods cleared, a trader would only need to submit all the information to one agency.



A Single Window has multiple benefits for both government and industry. National governments benefit because the Single Window provides a cohesive approach to supply chain security, more effective and efficient deployment of resources, more efficient and accurate fiscal revenue yields, reduced corruption in the customs agencies, and improved customs compliance on the part of industry and traders. The private sector benefits because the Single Window reduces the financial and time costs of regulatory compliance, reducing rent seeking opportunities by customs agencies, ensures faster clearance and release of goods, a predictable, accurate set of regulations that is administered equitably.

¹ "Facilitating Trade with the ASEAN Single Window," issued by the Public Affairs Office of the ASEAN Secretariat, 13 April 2007.

The ASEAN Single Window (ASW), when fully implemented, will speed up the clearance of shipments and the release of goods by customs authorities in the ASEAN region. Through synchronizing the interventions of government agencies, traders, shippers, forwarders, transport operators and other parties, customs authorities aim to clear containerized shipments within 30 minutes, a target set in the Strategic Plan of Customs Development. Currently, clearance can take up to five days. Businesses will benefit from the cut in transaction costs and time, and greater predictability in administrative customs procedures. Consumers will enjoy more secure and timely delivery of goods at a lower cost.

The ASW will be in operation when all of the ten National Single Windows are operating in an integrated manner. For instance, if a container of goods destined for Malaysia first enters ASEAN through Thailand, a trader only has to submit the required data once to a centralized hub and the information would then be automatically shared and processed among the relevant agencies. The conceptual model and overall architecture of the ASW is based on international standards in business, data analysis and processing. It will be supported by information and communication technology (ICT) applications.

In the ASEAN Single Window environment, a non-ASEAN user submits a request electronically to clear a shipment of goods and the relevant information is automatically shared among the concerned National Single Windows through a secure interface, which facilitates simultaneous processing. Once the request is approved, the non-ASEAN user will be notified.

Under the 2005 Agreement to Establish and Implement the ASEAN Single Window, and its 2006 Protocol, the ASEAN Single Window will be implemented in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand by 2008, and in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam by 2012.

The development of the ASW meets not only ASEAN's own goals for regional economic integration, but also is a key priority area for the U.S. government in the ASEAN region. Development of the ASW is a key component of the Vientiane Action Programme's (VAP) provision to "*modernize customs procedures and practices and improve customs control and compliance in cooperation with line ministries and businesses.*"² The ASW is also a key priority of the ASEAN-US Enhanced Partnership Plan of Action and is one of the initial three focus areas of work under the Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA), signed by the ASEAN Secretariat and the U.S. Trade Representative's office in August 2006.

The development of the ASW is an excellent opportunity for Global Development Alliance (GDA) partnerships with private sector entities. The ASEANs have already been working closely with various ICT developers, service providers and consultants in developing the technical architecture, prototype, and detailed functional model of the ASW. Additionally, the US-ASEAN Business Council is very supportive of ASEAN development. The joint efforts of businesses, industries and governments will be crucial in developing and operating an ASW that meets the needs of businesses and consumers.

III. Statement of Work

The Contractor shall provide targeted technical assistance and training at both the ASEAN Secretariat and at the national level in select member nations. Activities will be implemented under the direction of USAID's Regional Development Mission / Asia (RDM/A) and in close coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. USAID RDM/A anticipates a two-tiered program lasting for 5 years to assist ASEAN with achieving the ASW by 2012. Tier 1 activities will assist the ASEAN Secretariat's ASEAN Single Window Steering Committee and other relevant departments. Tier 2 activities will complement Tier 1 by providing direct assistance to line ministries and government agencies in select ASEAN member nations. The objective is to provide both a "top-down" and "bottom-up" approach to implementing the ASW, with national-level pilot activities in one or more member nations complementing and informing the work at the ASEAN Secretariat level.

² Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) provision 2.3.5.1. The VAP is ASEAN's mid-term roadmap for achieving an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015.

In order to ensure follow-on funding for out-years of this program, it is critical that the Contractor show clear results starting in the first year. Given that over half of the ASEAN member nations intend to implement National Single Windows by 2008, and the remainder by 2012, it is critical that the project achieve clear, tangible successes in very short time frames in order to demonstrate effective development assistance. Success will be measured based on program outcomes, not program output indicators (like number of persons trained, number of assessments conducted, number of workshops implemented, etc.).

A. Technical Assistance Areas

Specific emphasis should be placed on providing assistance at the national level to line ministries and relevant government agencies in Vietnam, Laos, Philippines, Indonesia, and/or Thailand³, building upon progress already made in developing National Single Windows in these countries, as outlined in the *ASEAN Single Window Preparedness Survey Summary Report* to be released in September 2007.

Consideration must be made to the ability for pilot activities in one or more of the above countries to be replicated elsewhere in the region. Although the fundamental regulatory changes necessary to implement National Single Windows may be uniform to some degree, each of these countries possesses unique political and geographic differences that will have a major influence on how their National Single Windows are developed. As a land-locked country, the emphasis in Laos may be on moving goods quickly along north-south and east-west trade corridors linking bigger markets in the region. Indonesia and Philippines, as island nations, have unique issues concerning multiple points of entry and the need to move goods from land to sea to land before export. Singapore, with a functioning National Single Window, may be ahead of most other countries, but as a city-state its system is not entirely applicable to other countries in the region. Likewise, as communist countries, Vietnam and Laos have unique political systems that will have a major bearing on customs regulations that may not share commonalities with countries like Thailand or Cambodia. These are examples of unique issues that must be considered by the Contractor in determining the best methodology for developing pilot activities in one or more ASEAN member nations.

It is also important for the Contractor to understand that although conceptually not very difficult to understand, putting in place a Single Window is enormously complex predominantly in terms of the line ministries and government agencies responsible for the multiple, varied aspects of customs and trade issues in these countries. Though putting in place a framework and regulatory structure to manage a Single Window may be relatively easy in the abstract, key constraints to the success of the ASW lie in the functional relationships between relevant government agencies and coordination with the private sector. A key area of focus of this task order must be addressing the issue of coordination and functional implementation of the National Single Windows and fostering dialogue and engagement with the private sector in developing the National Single Windows and, on a regional level, the ASW.

The Contractor should use as a basis for developing its work plan and activities the *Proposal for Technical Assistance to ASEAN for the Implementation of the ASEAN Single Window* (APPENDIX A). This proposal was submitted to USAID and provides a foundation upon which the Contractor can focus its assistance.

B. Coordination

The Contractor shall be responsible for assessing other donor activities in the region specific to the establishment of the ASW or National Single Windows. For example, USAID Philippines is implementing the EMERGE project, which is working with the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Customs on pilot implementation of a National Single Window. As part of its East ASEAN Initiative, AusAID plans to initiate the Single Window for Investment and Trade (SWIFT) project in Philippines and Indonesia. The World Bank is also conducting work on the development of a Single Window related to Jakarta's main

³ Thailand is currently under 508 sanctions, meaning no direct assistance to the Royal Thai Government (RTG) is permitted with US government funding. If elections occur in December 2007 and a democratic government comes to power, it may be possible to include assistance to the RTG under this task order. However, this is subject to future events and approval from USAID.

port facility. It is critical that the Contractor work with USAID bilateral missions, other USG agencies, other donors, and the private sector to ensure complementarities and coordination.

IV. Deliverables

a. Work Plan Development

The Contractor shall be responsible for planning and implementing the activity. This will involve working with the ASEAN Secretariat and relevant ministries within select ASEAN Member Nations to: analyze the *ASEAN Single Window Preparedness Survey Summary Report*; identify which other donor-funded activities are being implemented in the region specific to the ASW or National Single Windows; identify key technical assistance tasks to be accomplished during the life of the activity at the ASEAN Secretariat and national level; prioritize these tasks in semi-annual work plans; and support implementation. The work plans will lay out the principal areas of focus of the Contractor's activities. The plan should incorporate input provided by the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) and shall be subject to USAID CTO approval.

The exact content and format for the work plans will be determined in discussions with RDMA upon award of the contract. In general the work plans should reflect achievements to date in development of the ASW and National Single Windows; a timeline for achieving the ASW and National Single Windows; and specific areas of intervention in which the Contractor will provide targeted technical assistance and training to meet ASEAN's goal of an ASW by 2012. These will be developed in consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat, select ASEAN member nations, USAID RDM/A, and other relevant agencies and entities in order to ensure effective coordination.

A draft of the work plan must be submitted to the project Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) at USAID RDM/A within 30 days of award of this task order.

b. Quarterly Reports

The Contractor shall, within two weeks of the end of a quarter, provide RDMA with brief quarterly reports (in hard copy and electronic versions, formatted in MS Word) highlighting: progress in meeting work plan objectives and benchmarks, issues/problems/concerns/opportunities, suggested significant adjustments in the work plan for the remainder of the program, and key financial data. In addition, the Contractor shall report "success stories" that describe in concrete terms the achievements and benefits of the project. A priority will be placed upon regular analysis of results and how results and progress can be increased and accelerated.

c. Final Report

At the end of the project the Contractor will submit to USAID/RDMA one original and one copy of a final report summarizing the tasks implemented under the task order, including results achieved, problems encountered, lessons learned, and an outline methodology that could be replicated in other developing countries (an electronic version of the report, formatted in MS Word, shall be provided in addition to hard copies). A copy of the report must also be sent to the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse, ATTN: Document Acquisitions, 1611 Kent Street, Suite 20, Arlington, VA 22209-2111 or email: docsubmit@dec.cdie.org. The final report should summarize the context and design of the activity, key achievements, and lessons learned.

V. Technical Assistance Requirements and Qualification

a. Staffing

USAID anticipates that this program may require both long- and short-term expatriate experts and trainers, as well as coordination and oversight from within the region. USAID also encourages the Contractor to coordinate with other U.S. agencies, contractors, and grantees, other donors, the private

sector, or local entities as appropriate in order to enhance the ability of the Contractor to operate effectively and in a timely fashion in select ASEAN member nations. The selection of long- and short-term expatriate experts for specific assignments will be subject to USAID approval.

b. Qualifications

Technical experts should ideally have extensive knowledge or experience in:

- Customs reform and the development of Single Windows, preferably including relevant work at the regional level;
- Managing, designing, and implementing relevant technical assistance activities in developing countries, preferably in SE Asia or command economies, and preferably with some level of collaboration with USAID;
- Supervising teams of short-term consultants;
- Assisting host country governments in implementing customs and trade policy reforms – preferably in areas related to the liberalization of trade and investment regimes, customs harmonization, and regional trade facilitation.
- Liaising on projects concurrently with USG agencies, host country government officials, private sector stakeholders, and other donors;

Expatriate experts should have extensive experience advising the governments of developing countries on issues relating to customs and trade reform and facilitation. Experience with UN e-Docs, Single Window implementation initiatives, or a regional customs harmonization effort is preferable. Local experts should have relevant technical expertise and demonstrated experience in dealing with the types of customs and trade issues to be addressed in this activity.

c. Technical Direction

Technical direction will be provided by the CTO at USAID RDM/A, who shall be identified by a separate letter from the USAID Contracting Officer.