Meeting topic	Customs Consultative Committee
Attendees	John O'Leary (Acting Chair) — eCustoms & Risk Mgt Customs Division, Revenue Sean O' Seaghdha — Legislation — Customs Division, Revenue Celine O'Neill — Brexit — Customs Division, Revenue Anne Coleman Dunne — Dept. Business, Enterprise & Innovation Tommy Murray — Dept. Business, Enterprise & Innovation Alma Ní Choigligh — Dept. Foreign Affairs & Trade Noel Hand — Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Derek Tierney — Dept. of the Taoiseach Paul Hannon — Dept. of Transport, Tourism & Sport Richael Duffy — Dept. of Finance Jane Dempsey — Dept. of Agriculture, Food & the Marine Pat Ivory — Ibec Kathryn O'Donovan — Ibec Jonathan McMillan — Enterprise Ireland Manus Rooney — Enterprise Ireland David Savage — The Chambers of Commerce Ireland CLG Ian Talbot — The Chambers of Commerce Ireland CLG Paul Lynam — British Irish Chamber of Commerce David Lusby — Primark Verona Murphy — Irish Road Hauliers Association John Nolan — Irish Road Hauliers Association Seamus Kavanagh — Irish International Freight Association Tom Thornton — Irish International Freight Association Pascal Koenig — Irish Exporters Association Brad Quinn — Irish Exporters Association Roisin Murry — Bord Bia John Dawson — Bell Transport & Logistics Adam Fitzsimons — Customs - IT
	Derek Dunne – Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers
Apologies	Aidan Flynn – Freight Transport Association Ireland Florance Carey (Chair) – Customs Division, Revenue Lynda Slattery – International Policy & Brexit Unit, Customs Division, Revenue Joe McBride – Dublin Airport & Trade Facilitation, Customs Division, Revenue Eddie Burke – Dept. of Transport, Tourism & Sport Susan Evans – Dept. of Finance Eilis Carroll – Dept. of Agriculture, Food & the Marine John Conlon – Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Malcolm Kirkby – Logistics & Freight Association of Ireland Peter O'Reilly – Logistics & Freight Association of Ireland Declan Ivory – ICT Ireland Aisling Carney – American Chamber of Commerce Ireland Brian Cotter – American Chamber of Commerce Ireland Tony Goodwin – Irish Road Hauliers Association Shane Hamill – Bord Bia Stephen Cummins – Irish Association of International Express Carriers Simon McKeever – Irish Exporters Association

	Carol Lynch – The Chambers of Commerce Ireland CLG
	David Brown – Customs - IT
	Emma Ormond – Primark
	John P O'Loughlin – PwC
	Lorraine Lavelle – PwC
	David Putt – Irish Shipping Agent Association
	Colm Walsh – Freight Fox
Secretary	Rachel McKenna – Brexit – Customs Division, Revenue
Date of meeting	21/06/2019
Venue	Dublin Castle
Single Item Agenda	Capacity in the market to carry out Customs procedures – issues arising
Opening	John O'Leary, (Acting) Chair, welcomed the group to today's CCC meeting, noting the single item agenda. John noted that today will focus solely on the difficulties customs clearance agents/services face in having declarations lodged post-Brexit. If the capacity to have declarations lodged is limited, this will disrupt the smooth flow of trade and is not in anyone's interest. The group present today includes representation from a number of Government bodies and agencies aimed at listening to the concerns and challenges being faced and considering potential, realistic and deliverable supports.
Presentation	John provided the group with a presentation covering Revenue's view of the customs clearance sector, looking at the journey taken by the customs agent/s and the potential impacts and challenges Brexit may pose in this regard. It was acknowledged that the area is highly complex and requires knowledge and relevant software. Revenue have conducted analysis of preliminary data provided to them by express carriers and parcel operators in order to provide estimates of the potential impact of Brexit on the sector. However, while there are many predictions, there is very little certainty as to the exact scale of the challenge. Revenue data suggests up to 92,000 individual operators are currently trading with the UK but it's unclear as to relevance of these numbers to the actual volume of customs transactions post-Brexit. Further information is available in the Presentation:
	Presentation – Customs Clearance Agents and Brexit
	The state of the s

Discussion & Comments

Following the presentation, the table was opened for discussion and comments. While there was some discussion around engagement with counterparts in HMRC, Revenue were clear that Customs is an EU competence and there cannot be bi-lateral arrangements between the EU and the UK. Ireland is well represented at EU level.

The group were advised that the UK Government had set up a fund for hauliers. Enterprise Ireland representatives requested information on this such as the level of interest from the sector, the level of support for IT and the training element.

Potential Issues & Challenges faced

Business representatives highlighted that the long-recognised issue of lack of customs skills in the market limits the ability of business to prepare for an uncertain Brexit outcome.

There was a lengthy discussion following the presentation and several current and potential issues were voiced by the group. These included:

Financial difficulties: hiring of new staff; investment in training; IT software; lack of sufficient funding to address issues – additional staff/training/IT software/office equipment i.e. desks, etc.

Lack of Agents:

Agents unwilling/unable to take on additional work. Some noted that courses had been undertaken but the learning has not been put into practice and so is at risk of being forgotten.

Lack of Training: Important not to confuse 'customs awareness training' with 'customs training' – it's highly complex and technical work; third-level training institutions close for the summer; Systems & Programmes could be put in place by the end of October, but availability of educators is an issue.

Timing:

Post-clearance/back office work should not be underestimated.

The final message that Revenue wished to make is clear: not having the capacity to do declarations does not mean they won't be required. Declarations will be required in a no-deal Brexit scenario. Business representatives emphasised that Brexit creates a hugely uncertain environment for companies to prepare for. Revenue are committed to ensure, where possible, the continued smooth free-flow of trade post-Brexit.

Potential Supports

Workshop style engagement with all key stakeholder's present.

A trade representative enquired whether access could be given to the customs Public Interface Test (PIT) environment to facilitate new users in becoming familiar with declaration filing. Revenue undertook to examine the possibility

	but cautioned that a system originally designed to test messaging systems might be of limited actual value to trade.
	Education/Training – Existing customs agents providing and/or assisting with training of new customs agents.
	Financial support package – provided by the State/EU to enable recruitment and training of customs agents in time for 31 October.
	Re-instatement of Grants in the sector which were phased out in 1992.
	It was also noted that there was an announcement by the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation in April 2019, regarding the relaxation of the Employment Permit Scheme in the area of logistics/transport distribution sector which would allow for customs agents to be recruited from outside the EEA area in the event that the skills/personnel couldn't be recruited from within the EU and which could assist with mitigating skills shortages in this area.
Item 4: AOB	None.
Item 5: Date of next	The next meeting is scheduled for 08/07/19. Confirmation will issue shortly.
meeting	Chair thanked all members for their participation.
Action 1:	Revenue have committed to reviewing the possibility of providing a simulated experience, live version of the PIT environment.
Action 2:	It was advised that potential financial assistance and training would be looked into by relevant bodies present today, it was unlikely that there would be any confirmation of same for the meeting of the group on 08/07/19.