PUBLIC NOTICE NO. 09/2016

Attention of all Custom House Agents, Importers, Exporters, Shipping Agents, Members of Regional Advisory Committees and Members of the Trade is invited to Circular No. 33/2016-Customs dated 22.07.2016 regarding "Review of entity based facilitation programmes viz. Accredited Client Programme (ACP) and Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme-Revised Guidelines".

2. As per CBEC Circular No. 33/2016-Customs dated 22.07.2016, the Board has decided to merge the two facilitation schemes namely Accredited Client Programme (ACP) and Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) into a combined three-tier Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme, and also enhance the scope of these programmes so as to provide further benefits to the entities who have demonstrated strong internal control system and willingness to comply with the laws administered by the Central Board of Excise and Customs. The prominent features of the new programme are:

i. Inclusion of Direct Port Delivery of imports to ensure just-in-time inventory management by manufacturers – clearance from wharf to warehouse.

ii. Inclusion of Direct Port Entry for factory stuffed containers meant for export by AEOs.

iii. Special focus on small and medium scale entities – any entity handling 25 import or export documents annually can become part of this programme.

iv. Provision of Deferred Payment of duties – delinking duty payment and Customs clearance.

v. Mutual Recognition Agreements with other Customs Administrations.
vi. Faster disbursal of drawback amount.

vii. Fast tracking of refunds and adjudications.

viii. Extension of facilitation to exports in addition to imports.

ix. Self-certified copies of FTA / PTA origin related or any other certificates required for clearance would be accepted.

x. Request based on-site inspection/examination.

xi. Paperless declarations with no supporting documents.

xii. Recognition by Partner Government Agencies and other Stakeholders as part of this programme.

3. The revised AEO Programme is appended to the Board Circular No. 33/2016-Customs dated 22.07.2016.


5. All the entities already certified under AEO Programme pursuant to Circular No 37/2011- Cus., dated 23.08.2011 and No. 28/2012-Customs dated 16.11.2012 would now be accorded the status of AEO-T2 or AEO-LO, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to benefits as per this circular subject to their adherence to prescribed standards and guidelines issued in this regard.

6. The entities already accorded the ACP status pursuant to Circular No. 42/2005 dated 24.11.2005 as amended are being granted one time opportunity for transition to the AEO status in terms of this circular. The entities are required to submit their applications, in the format appended to the Circular No. 33/2016, within 90 days. The application should be sent to the AEO Programme Manager, Directorate General of Performance Management, Customs & Central Excise, 'D' Block, I.P. Bhawan, I.P. Estate, New Delhi – 110002. In the meantime, they are being provisionally granted the status of AEO-T1 till a decision is taken on their application.
All the Trade Associations/Chamber of Commerce/Members of Regional Advisory Committees and Custom House Agents’ Association are requested to publicize the contents of this Public Notice among their members/constituents.

Copy forwarded for information to: As per list attached