THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION RISK MANAGEMENT AND ISSUES OF ITS DIGITALIZATION

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КАЛИТ СЎЗЛАР

personnel management, foreign trade operations, corruption risks, modeling, corruption risk management system

АННОТАЦИЯ

The article is devoted to the issue of digitalization of the process of prevention of corruption factors. The task is considered in conjunction with the management of the personnel capacity of the customs service. The process of controlling corruption risk zones is modeled and the lack of alternatives to digitalization of this process is substantiated. Information model of customs service activity management and trigger scheme of corruption risk management has been developed. The main tasks and functional model of interaction of the "Corruption Risk Management" system with other information systems of the Customs Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan are presented.

I.Introduction

As a result of in-depth analysis of complex global processes and stages of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the "Strategy for the Development of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" was approved [1]. One of the goals of this Strategy is to "Identify areas and sectors prone to corruption, improve the effectiveness of the system for preventing corruption factors, and develop an irreconcilable attitude towards corruption in society" (Goal 84). The main tool for achieving this goal is defined as: "introduction of modern information technologies, including artificial intelligence, in combating corruption".

The "Law on Countering Corruption" of the Republic of Uzbekistan defines the need for scientific research in the field of corruption. At the same time, scientific research includes scientific studies on anti-corruption issues, development of scientific methods and recommendations, their rational introduction into practice, forecasting and scientific analysis of the effectiveness of forms and methods used in combating corruption [2].

Customs services play a vital role in the economic well-being of every country. At the same time, the level of corruption in the activities of customs services in the world shows the need for close attention to this issue [3]. Corruption of customs officials affects international trade in terms of economic damage due to reduced revenue to the state budget, unfair price competition, undervaluation or misclassification of imports and some exports. In addition, corruption in customs authorities jeopardizes the well-being of the country's population and contributes to the expansion of the shadow economy.

The history of the fight against corruption in Customs at the international level officially begins with the "Declaration of the Customs Cooperation Council on Good Governance and Combating Corruption in Customs" adopted in Arusha, Tanzania on July 7, 1993 and updated in June 2003 (Arusha Declaration). [4]. This declaration defines the conditions for the manifestation of corruption risks as follows: «*Corruption usually occurs when outdated and inefficient practices are used and when clients are motivated to try to avoid a slow*

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or cumbersome procedure by offering bribes and paying gratuities for assistance».

Based on this definition, the declaration pays special attention to the digitalization of customs functions. In particular, the Automation section emphasizes that: «*Automation or computerization of Customs functions can improve efficiency and effectiveness and eliminate many opportunities for corruption. ... automated systems should be configured to minimize the possibility of ... personal contact between Customs personnel and customers.*».

Customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan actively continue to work on digitalization of all processes. To date, more than 50 integrated customs information systems have covered the entire life cycle of customs administration. Of these, 39% are information systems for external management of customs procedures, 35% are information systems for internal management of customs procedures, and 26% are information systems for internal administration of customs authorities [5].

At the same time, the consolidation of artificial intelligence elements of these systems against corruption in customs authorities, the study of corruption risk models and the development of the information system "Corruption Risk Management" of the Customs Service is an urgent task.

1. Information model of corruption risk management in the customs sector

In order to strictly fulfill the tasks set before the customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the normative-legal base regulating the activities of customs authorities has been formed and is constantly being developed. The conducted analysis of the Database of the national legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan (https://lex.uz/) showed that by the beginning of the second half of 2023 there were more than 2216 normative-legal documents, more or less related to the regulation of the activities of customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Table 1).

Table 1.

Information on normative-legal documents related to the regulation of the activities of customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Type of normative document	*quantity*
Laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*57*
Codes of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*12*
Decrees of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*322*
Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*767*
Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*1011*
Orders of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*11*
Regulatory legal acts registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan	*36*
Total	*2216*

Despite the fact that there is such an extensive legal framework regulating customs activities, the main tasks and functions of the customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and not only the Republic of Uzbekistan, are focused on the following two main tasks:

1. control and management of foreign trade operations;
2. management of the human resource potential of customs authorities.

At first glance, these tasks seem to be more independent, but in practice they are largely interrelated and it is impossible to perform one of them in isolation from the others.

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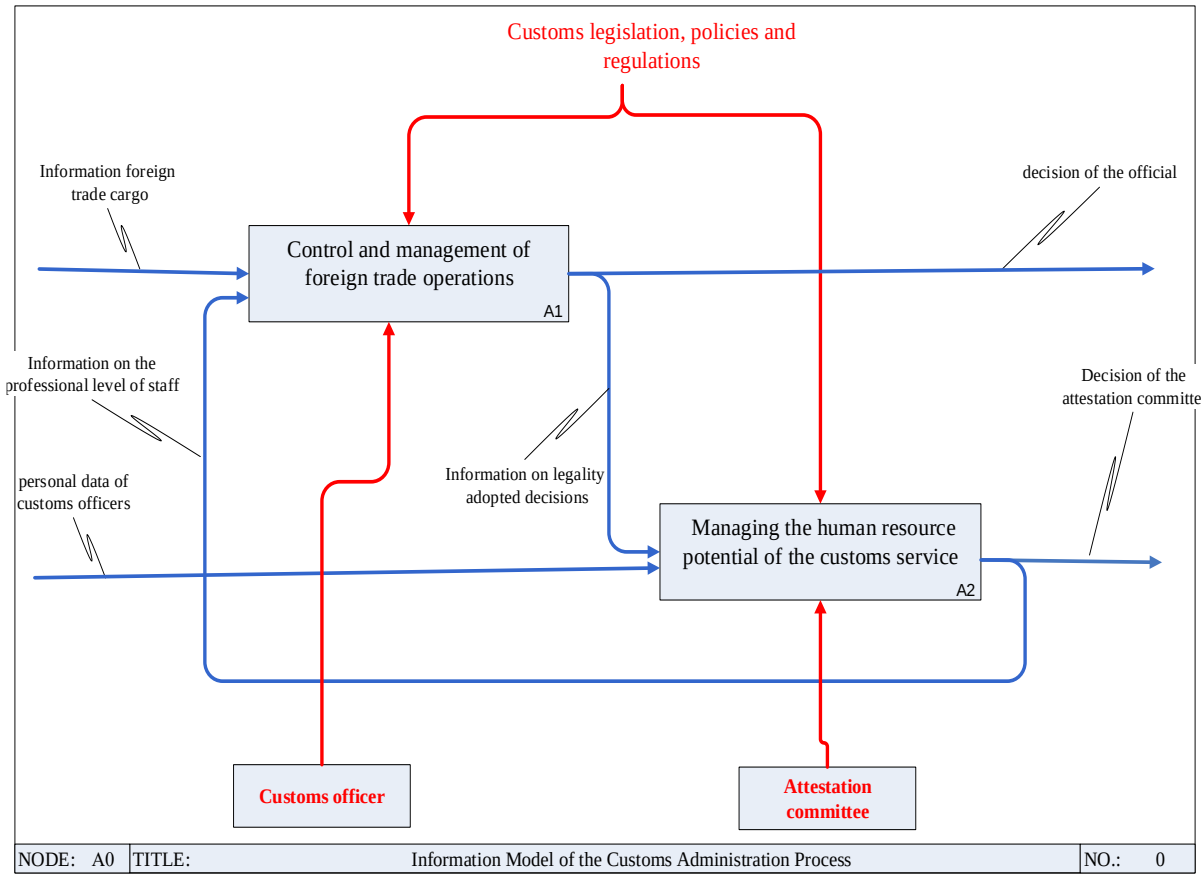


Fig.1. Information model of the customs administration process *(source: [6])*

On the one hand, when managing customs personnel, the certification commission takes into account the performance of each employee in managing foreign trade operations. Every appointment of an employee to a particular position, submission for reward, promotion or demotion, administrative punishment up to and including dismissal from Customs depends entirely on the decisions made on his/her part in the process of managing foreign trade operations. Fig. 1. presents an information model of the interrelation of these tasks.

If an employee shows high professionalism in decision-making in the process of managing foreign trade operations, literacy, knowledge of world languages, initiative to improve the organization of the customs service, conscientious performance of his/her duties, his/her career will certainly be strengthened and included in the personnel reserve for senior positions.

If a customs officer makes unprofessional decisions in the process of managing foreign trade operations, showing illiteracy, dishonest attitude to official duties, and temptation to corruption risks, it is necessary to take measures to improve his professionalism, organize training courses to enhance his potential, and conduct preventive talks to eradicate his temptation to corruption risks.

On the other hand, the high professionalism of a customs officer necessarily affects the quality of his/her decisions in the process of managing foreign trade operations and improving the level of customs services to participants in foreign economic activities. The clear fulfillment of the tasks set for the customs authorities as a whole and the rating of the national customs service in the international arena depend on it.

Despite the fact that today the entire life cycle of the customs administration of the Republic of Uzbekistan is covered by complex information systems, the organization of interaction of these tasks in an automated mode remains relevant. To solve this problem it is necessary to automate the following processes:

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- automatic registration and record keeping of erroneous or not illegal decisions made by the customs officer resulting in incorrect customs payments in the process of customs clearance of foreign trade goods;
- creating a reliable list of customs officials who have repeatedly made errors during customs clearance;
- automatic generation of the list of employees who showed low performance and did not achieve efficiency in the process of customs inspection of foreign trade goods;
- supporting decision-making on the application of effective and preventive measures against customs officers who make mistakes in the process of customs clearance of foreign trade goods;
- promote compliance with the principles of fairness in the rotation, remuneration and appointment of employees to higher positions;
- creation of an information and technical platform to identify hidden corruption schemes and facilitate their elimination;
- contribute to the elimination of corrupt elements in the ranks of customs authorities and increase the level of a healthy social environment;
- information support for the development of measures aimed at eliminating identified corruption risks and preventing them in the future;
- to create an information technology platform for the optimal use of the available forces and means of customs authorities.

The solution of the above tasks justifies the need to create an information system "Corruption risk management", an explanatory scheme of functionality, which is shown in Fig. 2.

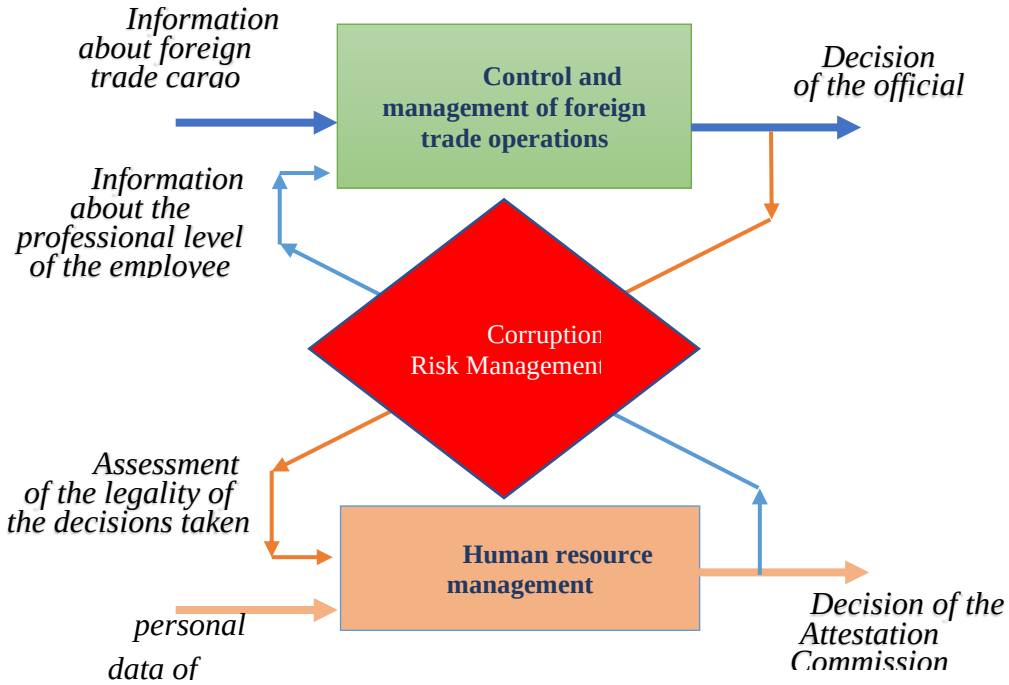


Fig.2. Explanatory scheme of corruption risk management in the customs sphere

2. Main tasks and functional model of interaction of the "Corruption risk management" system with other information systems of the Customs Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan

In order to digitalize the processes of customs clearance and system monitoring of the activities of employees holding positions in customs authorities with high corruption risks, an information system "Corruption risk management" has been developed and implemented in the activities by a special order of the Customs Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The information system of "Corruption risk Management" consists of the following subsystems:

- assessment of corruption risks;
- reports;
- criteria of corruption risks.

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The subsystem of "corruption risk assessment" allows you to constantly monitor the activities of employees by directly connecting to the database of customs authorities and classifying their actions in accordance with the criteria established by the system.

The subsystem "Reports" allows you to graphically display the levels of corruption risks in the context of all structural divisions and employees of the customs service. At the same time, based on the criteria of corruption risks included in the system database, reports are displayed in the form of red, yellow and green tracks in the context of structural divisions.

The subsystem "Damage risk criteria" allows you to create new criteria for corruption risks, edit and archive in an interactive mode.

The information system of "Corruption Risk Management" is integrated with the following databases of customs authorities through direct connection (Fig.3).

- database of cargo customs declaration;
- database of personal data of employees of the customs service;
- database of results of customs inspection of foreign trade goods;
- database of the results of the transportation of foreign trade goods by road;
- database of the results of the transportation of foreign trade goods by rail;
- database of accounting of facts of violation of customs legislation.

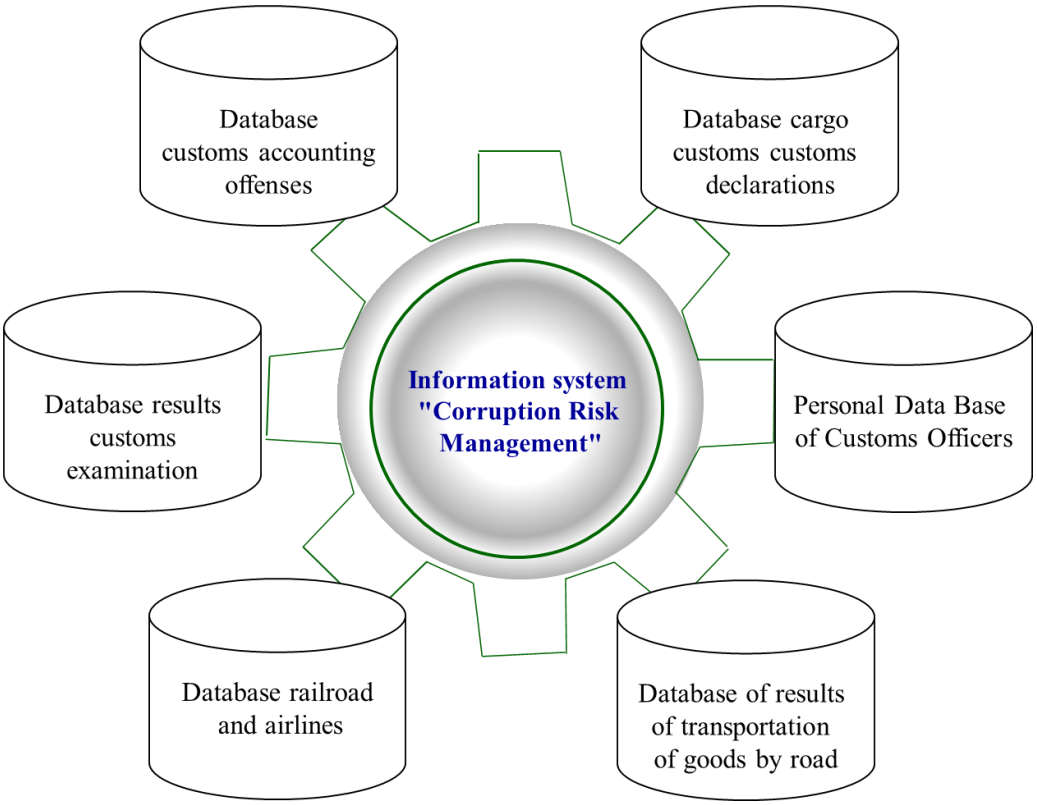


Fig.3. Functional model of interaction of information systems of the Customs Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan

II.Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that in accordance with the requirements of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-81 "On measures to implement a system of rating evaluation of the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities" dated January 12, 2022, a system for evaluating the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities of ministries and departments of the Republic of Uzbekistan was introduced in the republic.

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When assessing the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities of ministries and departments of the Republic of Uzbekistan, special attention is paid to the level of digitalization and the existing information systems of state institutions.

Information systems of the customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan have been introduced over the past few years in stages. The concept and technical platform of these systems were developed by customs specialists based on the experience of developed countries.

The information systems of the customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including the Corruption Risk Management system, play a crucial role in creating a customs service without corruption.

According to the results of the evaluation of the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities of ministries and departments of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2022, conducted by the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the State Customs Committee took 1st place, gaining 91 points out of 100 [7].

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