Circular No. 51/2011-Customs

F.No.520/25/2008-Cus.VI (pt.)
Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Revenue
Central Board of Excise & Customs

227-B, North Block,
New Delhi -110001.

11th November, 2011.

To,

All Chief Commissioners of Customs / Customs (Prev.).
All Chief Commissioners of Customs & Central Excise.
All Commissioners of Customs / Customs (Prev.).
All Commissioners of Customs (Appeals).
All Commissioners of Customs & Central Excise.
All Commissioners of Customs & Central Excise (Appeals).
All Directors General under CBEC.

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Subject: Location of Foreign Exchange Counters at International airports -regarding

Sir / Madam,

References have been received in the Board from field formations seeking clarification on the issue of location of Foreign Exchange Counters in departure / arrival hall of international airports.

2. It is reported that, Foreign Exchange Counters located after immigration and before Customs (green / red channel) in the arrival hall and after Customs in the departure hall, are posing problems in enforcement of FEMA regulations / RBI guidelines in regard to import and export of Indian Currency by Indian resident passengers as well as well as non resident passengers / foreign tourists.

3. The matter has been examined in consultation with RBI. RBI vide letter No. RBI/2011-12/234, [A.P. (DIR Series) Circular No. 38] dated Oct 25, 2011, in respect of Foreign Exchange Counters (full-fledged branches / extension counters) opened by

Authorised Dealer Category-I banks, Authorised Category-II and Full Fledged Money Changers beyond the Domestic Tariff Area in international airports in India, has clarified that:

(**a**) Foreign Exchange Counters in the arrival halls in international airports in India shall ideally be established after the Customs Desk (Green Channel/Red Channel). However, Foreign Exchange Counters may also be established between the Immigration Desk and the Customs Desk in international airports in India, subject to the condition that these counters shall only purchase Foreign currency and sell Indian Rupees (INR) and 'Encashment Certificates', shall invariably be issued by the money changers to the customers.

(**b**) Similarly, Foreign Exchange Counters in the departure halls in international airports in India shall be established only before the Customs Desk or the Immigration Desk, whichever comes first. Putting up suitable display at these counters, reminding the passengers that the area is the last point for non-residents to possess Indian Rupees (INR) may be followed up with the Airport Authorities.

(**c**) The Foreign Exchange Counters of Authorised Dealers Category-I banks, Authorised Dealers Category-II and Full Fledged Money Changers, not conforming to the above, should be relocated in accordance with the above instructions, latest by **31.12. 2011**.

4. All Commissioners in charge of International airports are directed to ensure that the directions contained in the said Circular are complied with scrupulously.

5. Wide publicity may be given to the above directions of the RBI for compliance by all concerned.

Yours faithfully

(R. P. Singh)
Director (Customs)

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