

Green corridor available for onward movement

Some spheres would hardly exist without active international collaboration and interaction with foreign partners

Among them is the customs service, explains the Deputy Chairman of the State Customs Committee, Sergey Borisyyuk, answering our questions.

Last year, Customs Union legislation was prepared. By July 1st, all issues relating to customs regulation of economic activity will have been settled and, on January 1st, 2012, the Single Economic Space will come into force. Are the customs services of our three countries already working in a united fashion?

Customs services' teamwork within this union is vital. Customs legislation of the Customs Union is ready. In line with the Customs Code of the Customs Union and other international agreements of member-states, about 45 regulations of the Customs Union's commission have been adopted. We are now working together to eliminate the irregularities which occurred due to the quick formation and, then, implementation, of Customs Union legislation. The normal working process is underway.

The Customs Union has given our Belarusian Customs Service greater responsibility, since it is the entry gate to two unions: that of the Customs Union and the EU. A year ago, the Belarusian Customs Committee stressed that greater volumes of counterfeit goods and illegal smuggling were being seen through the Belarusian border. Is that still the case?

Sadly, yes. Illegal organisations are making money from smuggling, so they



At Kamenny Log-Medininkai border checkpoint

perfect their methods. Drug trafficking is among the most dangerous crimes detected on the border. In 2010, seventy one attempts were detected, with 948kg of drugs and psychotropic substances confiscated. Tobacco is another 'popular' product for smuggling, with precious metals and goods made from these also prevalent. Smuggling of foreign currency, computers, mobile phones, perfumery, cosmetics, footwear and clothes is also profitable, with criminals bringing these products into Belarus without paying customs duties.

Even customs officials are surprised by the forms which smuggling can take. For example, at Benyakoni

border checkpoint, they arrested a man travelling from Lithuania who had hidden over 22kg of African Bush in airbags of his car. Vitebsk customs officials once found a batch of eight million cigarettes concealed in a railway carriage, placed in trays and covered in a layer of packaged peat. Grodno Regional Customs Service, in turn, confiscated clothes worth over \$1m, being imported as 'steel piping'. I could go on and on with tales of criminal invention.

The country's safety — not only economic — depends on the attentiveness and professionalism of our customs offices. How will the directive 'On De-

veloping Entrepreneurial Initiative and Stimulating Business Activity in the Republic of Belarus' influence the State Customs Committee's work? It envisages the simplification of administrative-control procedures...

Our partner relations with business have been developing and becoming more liberalised for some time: the past five years. This directive should allow us to strengthen the process. Companies are being informed countrywide of the major avenues of the customs service's planned development until 2015, with various viewpoints considered. Our personnel are visiting each region, meeting

all those keen on aiding the process, listening to their ideas. We aim to eliminate excessive administrative barriers in the customs service's work, while forming partner relations with entrepreneurial structures. This should result in more comfortable and competitive conditions for business in Belarus.

Of course, some criminal groups will use the new legislation as a chance for infringement so some adjustments are likely; criminals are ever changing their strategies so we must do the same. The Customs Service aims to react to new threats and challenges at the border in good time.

By Tatiana Vlasova

Invitation to hunting tours

By Tatiana Minaeva

New hunting rules to attract more foreigners and hunting enthusiasts

According to the new document, wild boar can now be hunted in Belarus almost all year round, with just one month respite. In addition, beavers can be hunted and license sales have been simplified, with 'open cage hunt' and 'falconry' licenses introduced. These are new types of hunting in the Republic, expected to be popular with domestic and foreign hunters. Rifle rental is now being discussed, which is a service expected to be especially popular among foreign tourists.

Hunting farms plan to conduct ecological and excursion tours. In particular, Molodechno hunting farm familiarises tourists and hunters with wild animals kept in open air cages: deer, roe deer and wild boar, as well as pheasants, ostriches and exotic ducks.

Modern approach to rural needs

By Olga Nabokova

Rural ambulance station in Minsk Region is the equal of any in the capital

The donation of a new ambulance car was the major event of the opening ceremony at the two storey rural ambulance station. The vehicle has been donated by Snov Agro-combine, personally presented by Nikolay Radoman, Chairman of the Board. The new station is equipped with the latest medical technology, built by the agro-combine (as general contractor). It took five years to complete the project, with the station now serving over 4,000 local residents, including almost 880 children. Around 23,000 visits are expected annually.

A special lift has been installed for taking those unable to walk to the upper floor. The station's clinical and diagnostics laboratory is equipped with microscopes, photometers and other equipment, enabling doctors to conduct a wide range of laboratory investigations. A separate room is dedicated to children, while the station boasts therapeutic and procedure rooms, offering physiotherapy and massage, and a balneological and hydro-massage bath. There is also an outpatient facility, designed to be welcoming and comfortable: a true sanatorium for the village.

Final countdown has at last begun

By Irina Yemelyanova

Sample electronic display being installed at public transport stops

Electronic information panels are soon to appear at public transport stops throughout the Belarusian capital, releasing passengers from the guessing game of when the next transport vehicle might arrive. LED display will show the number of the vehicle's route and its final destination, as well as time remaining until arrival of the next and following bus, trolley bus or tram.

Transport vehicles are being equipped with special navigational equipment to allow their progress

to be tracked. Currently, around 2,000 such buses and trolley buses operate on Minsk's streets, so the innovation requires some organisation.

The time and date are to be shown on screens, with air temperature recorded and essential information conveyed via scrolling messages, with the display readable in any weather from a distance of up to 20m. Screens will be protected from dust and moisture and will even be vandal-proof.

The installation of such devices at public transport stops is part of a new automated dispatcher control system, aiming to manage urban public transport via a satellite



Information boards soon to appear at capital's stops

navigation system. Displays will be manufactured by Minsk's Electromechanical Plant.

"A trial sample has been created, ready for mass production in the near future. Of 2,000 transport

stops in the Belarusian capital, around 200 will be equipped with electronic panels initially," notes Alexander Boglov, the Head of Minsk's Electromechanical Plant's Design Department.