



# Memorandum

**To:** Member Chambers

**From:** Michel Barsalou

**Date:** June 22, 2010

**Re:** CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

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While the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is not the authority with regard to the certification of documents, and cannot in any way advise, direct or counsel any certifying chambers regarding policies, procedures and practices, we believe that it is nonetheless important for the Canadian Chamber to apprise its members of trends and developments with regard to certification activities.

Recently, foreign embassies, foreign customs authorities and the Canadian government (DFAIT, CBSA) have been much more diligent in reviewing and questioning documents on which a chamber's stamp and signature are affixed. Of particular concern to them is the basis on which the origin of goods is certified.

As a result, the Canadian Chamber, in consultation with its legal advisors, undertook a thorough review of its policies and procedures in order to ensure proper liability protection and limited financial exposure and appropriate alignment with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) guidelines.

Since local chambers' policies and procedures could potentially also be questioned, we thought it advisable to inform our members of the situation, giving all issuing chambers the opportunity to review their own practices, policies and procedures in place. The ICC guidelines may be consulted at [www.iccwbo.org/wcf/co/id9416/index.html](http://www.iccwbo.org/wcf/co/id9416/index.html). An ebook guideline is available for purchase and download from this same link. Given that most chambers of commerce are authorized to certify certificates of origin, the ICC has also published a guide (*International Certificate of Origin Guidelines, ICC publication no. 670*) that provides insight into the best practices of several national chambers on certifying documents. This publication is available to purchase through the Canadian Chamber – members receive a 10% discount. Contact Angela Roy at [aroy@chamber.ca](mailto:aroy@chamber.ca) or at 1.800.661.2930 (265) for more information on the publication and/or to place an order.

While the Canadian Chamber's objective, and those of local chambers, remains to assist Canadian exporters as best we can, we must all be conscious of any potential liability and financial exposure resulting from our actions and practices.

We trust that this information will prove helpful.