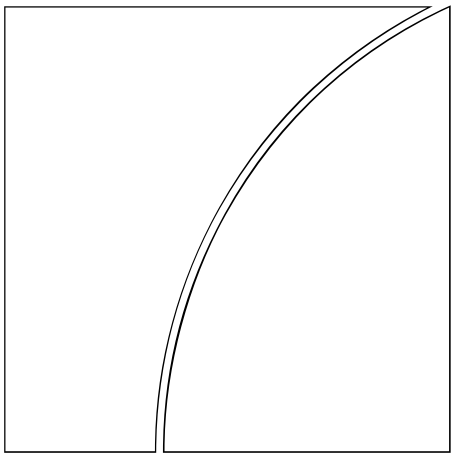
Basel Committee
on Banking Supervision



Customer due diligence for banks

October 2001

BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS

Working Group on Cross-border Banking

Co-Chairs:

Mr Charles Freeland, Deputy Secretary General, Basel Committee on Banking Supervision

Mr Colin Powell, Chairman, Offshore Group of Banking Supervisors, and Chairman, Jersey Financial Services Commission

Bermuda Monetary Authority	Mr D Munro Sutherland
Cayman Islands Monetary Authority	Mr John Bourbon Mrs Anna McLean
Banque de France/Commission Bancaire	Mr Laurent Ettori
Federal Banking Supervisory Office of Germany	Mr Jochen Sanio Mr Peter Kruschel
Guernsey Financial Services Commission	Mr Peter G Crook (until April 2001) Mr Philip Marr (since April 2001)
Banca d'Italia	Mr Giuseppe Godano
Financial Services Agency, Japan	Mr Kiyotaka Sasaki (until July 2001) Mr Hisashi Ono (since July 2001)
Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier, Luxembourg	Mr Romain Strock
Monetary Authority of Singapore	Mrs Foo-Yap Siew Hong Ms Teo Lay Har
Swiss Federal Banking Commission	Mr Daniel Zuberbühler Ms Dina Balleyguier
Financial Services Authority, United Kingdom	Mr Richard Chalmers
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System	Mr William Ryback
Federal Reserve Bank of New York	Ms Nancy Bercovici
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency	Mr Jose Tuya Ms Tanya Smith
Secretariat	Mr Andrew Khoo

Table of Contents

Customer due diligence for banks

I. Introduction

1. Supervisors around the world are increasingly recognising the importance of ensuring that their banks have adequate controls and procedures in place so that they know the customers with whom they are dealing. Adequate due diligence on new and existing customers is a key part of these controls. Without this due diligence, banks can become subject to reputational, operational, legal and concentration risks, which can result in significant financial cost.

2. In reviewing the findings of an internal survey of cross-border banking in 1999, the Basel Committee identified deficiencies in a large number of countries' know-your-customer (KYC) policies for banks. Judged from a supervisory perspective, KYC policies in some countries have significant gaps and in others they are non-existent. Even among countries with well-developed financial markets, the extent of KYC robustness varies. Consequently, the Basel Committee asked the Working Group on Cross-border Banking[1] to examine the KYC procedures currently in place and to draw up recommended standards applicable to banks in all countries. The resulting paper was issued as a consultative document in January 2001. Following a review of the comments received, the Working Group has revised the paper and the Basel Committee is now distributing it worldwide in the expectation that the KYC framework presented here will become the benchmark for supervisors to establish national practices and for banks to design their own programmes. It is important to acknowledge that supervisory practices of some jurisdictions already meet or exceed the objective of this paper and, as a result, they may not need to implement any changes.

3. KYC is most closely associated with the fight against money-laundering, which is essentially the province of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).[2] It is not the Committee's intention to duplicate the efforts of the FATF. Instead, the Committee's interest is from a wider prudential perspective. Sound KYC policies and procedures are critical in protecting the safety and soundness of banks and the integrity of banking systems. The Basel Committee and the Offshore Group of Banking Supervisors (OGBS) continue to support strongly the adoption and implementation of the FATF recommendations, particularly those relating to banks, and intend the standards in this paper to be consistent with the FATF recommendations. The Committee and the OGBS will also consider the adoption of any higher standards introduced by the FATF as a result of its current review of the 40 Recommendations. Consequently, the Working Group has been and will remain in close contact with the FATF as it develops its thoughts.

4. The Basel Committee's approach to KYC is from a wider prudential, not just anti-money laundering, perspective. Sound KYC procedures must be seen as a critical element in the effective management of banking risks. KYC safeguards go beyond simple account

---

[1] This is a joint group consisting of members of the Basel Committee and of the Offshore Group of Banking Supervisors.

[2] The FATF is an inter-governmental body which develops and promotes policies, both nationally and internationally, to combat money laundering. It has 29 member countries and two regional organisations. It works in close cooperation with other international bodies involved in this area such as the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the Council of Europe, the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering and the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force. The FATF defines money laundering as the processing of criminal proceeds in order to disguise their illegal origin.

opening and record-keeping and require banks to formulate a customer acceptance policy and a tiered customer identification programme that involves more extensive due diligence for higher risk accounts, and includes proactive account monitoring for suspicious activities.

5. The Basel Committee's interest in sound KYC standards originates from its concerns for market integrity and has been heightened by the direct and indirect losses incurred by banks due to their lack of diligence in applying appropriate procedures. These losses could probably have been avoided and damage to the banks' reputation significantly diminished had the banks maintained effective KYC programmes.

6. This paper reinforces the principles established in earlier Committee papers by providing more precise guidance on the essential elements of KYC standards and their implementation. In developing this guidance, the Working Group has drawn on practices in member countries and taken into account evolving supervisory developments. The essential elements presented in this paper are guidance as to minimum standards for worldwide implementation for all banks. These standards may need to be supplemented and/or strengthened, by additional measures tailored to the risks of particular institutions and risks in the banking system of individual countries. For example, enhanced diligence is required in the case of higher-risk accounts or for banks that specifically aim to attract high net-worth customers. In a number of specific sections in this paper, there are recommendations for higher standards of due diligence for higher risk areas within a bank, where applicable.

7. The need for rigorous customer due diligence standards is not restricted to banks. The Basel Committee believes similar guidance needs to be developed for all non-bank financial institutions and professional intermediaries of financial services such as lawyers and accountants.

II. Importance of KYC standards for supervisors and banks

8. The FATF and other international groupings have worked intensively on KYC issues, and the FATF's 40 Recommendations on combating money-laundering[3] have international recognition and application. It is not the intention of this paper to duplicate that work.

9. At the same time, sound KYC procedures have particular relevance to the safety and soundness of banks, in that:

- they help to protect banks' reputation and the integrity of banking systems by reducing the likelihood of banks becoming a vehicle for or a victim of financial crime and suffering consequential reputational damage;

- they constitute an essential part of sound risk management (e.g. by providing the basis for identifying, limiting and controlling risk exposures in assets and liabilities, including assets under management).

10. The inadequacy or absence of KYC standards can subject banks to serious customer and counterparty risks, especially ***reputational, operational, legal and concentration risks***. It is worth noting that all these risks are interrelated. However, any one

[3] See FATF recommendations 10 to 19 which are reproduced in Annex 2.

of them can result in significant financial cost to banks (e.g. through the withdrawal of funds by depositors, the termination of inter-bank facilities, claims against the bank, investigation costs, asset seizures and freezes, and loan losses), as well as the need to divert considerable management time and energy to resolving problems that arise.

11. ***Reputational risk*** poses a major threat to banks, since the nature of their business requires maintaining the confidence of depositors, creditors and the general marketplace. Reputational risk is defined as the potential that adverse publicity regarding a bank's business practices and associations, whether accurate or not, will cause a loss of confidence in the integrity of the institution. Banks are especially vulnerable to reputational risk because they can so easily become a vehicle for or a victim of illegal activities perpetrated by their customers. They need to protect themselves by means of continuous vigilance through an effective KYC programme. Assets under management, or held on a fiduciary basis, can pose particular reputational dangers.

12. ***Operational risk*** can be defined as the risk of direct or indirect loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from external events. Most operational risk in the KYC context relates to weaknesses in the implementation of banks' programmes, ineffective control procedures and failure to practise due diligence. A public perception that a bank is not able to manage its operational risk effectively can disrupt or adversely affect the business of the bank.

13. ***Legal risk*** is the possibility that lawsuits, adverse judgements or contracts that turn out to be unenforceable can disrupt or adversely affect the operations or condition of a bank. Banks may become subject to lawsuits resulting from the failure to observe mandatory KYC standards or from the failure to practise due diligence. Consequently, banks can, for example, suffer fines, criminal liabilities and special penalties imposed by supervisors. Indeed, a court case involving a bank may have far greater cost implications for its business than just the legal costs. Banks will be unable to protect themselves effectively from such legal risks if they do not engage in due diligence in identifying their customers and understanding their business.

14. Supervisory concern about ***concentration risk*** mostly applies on the assets side of the balance sheet. As a common practice, supervisors not only require banks to have information systems to identify credit concentrations but most also set prudential limits to restrict banks' exposures to single borrowers or groups of related borrowers. Without knowing precisely who the customers are, and their relationship with other customers, it will not be possible for a bank to measure its concentration risk. This is particularly relevant in the context of related counterparties and connected lending.

15. On the liabilities side, concentration risk is closely associated with funding risk, particularly the risk of early and sudden withdrawal of funds by large depositors, with potentially damaging consequences for the bank's liquidity. Funding risk is more likely to be higher in the case of small banks and those that are less active in the wholesale markets than large banks. Analysing deposit concentrations requires banks to understand the characteristics of their depositors, including not only their identities but also the extent to which their actions may be linked with those of other depositors. It is essential that liabilities managers in small banks not only know but maintain a close relationship with large depositors, or they will run the risk of losing their funds at critical times.

16. Customers frequently have multiple accounts with the same bank, but in offices located in different countries. To effectively manage the reputational, compliance and legal risk arising from such accounts, banks should be able to aggregate and monitor significant balances and activity in these accounts on a fully consolidated worldwide basis, regardless of

whether the accounts are held on balance sheet, off balance sheet, as assets under management, or on a fiduciary basis.

17. Both the Basel Committee and the Offshore Group of Banking Supervisors are fully convinced that effective KYC practices should be part of the risk management and internal control systems in all banks worldwide. National supervisors are responsible for ensuring that banks have minimum standards and internal controls that allow them to adequately know their customers. Voluntary codes of conduct[4] issued by industry organisations or associations can be of considerable value in underpinning regulatory guidance, by giving practical advice to banks on operational matters. However, such codes cannot be regarded as a substitute for formal regulatory guidance.

III. Essential elements of KYC standards

18. The Basel Committee's guidance on KYC has been contained in the following three papers and they reflect the evolution of the supervisory thinking over time. *The Prevention of Criminal Use of the Banking System for the Purpose of Money-Laundering* issued in 1988 stipulates the basic ethical principles and encourages banks to put in place effective procedures to identify customers, decline suspicious transactions and cooperate with law enforcement agencies. The 1997 *Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision* states, in a broader discussion of internal controls, that banks should have adequate policies, practices and procedures in place, including strict "know-your-customer" rules; specifically, supervisors should encourage the adoption of the relevant recommendations of the FATF. These relate to customer identification and record-keeping, increased diligence by financial institutions in detecting and reporting suspicious transactions, and measures to deal with countries with inadequate anti-money laundering measures. The 1999 *Core Principles Methodology* further elaborates the Core Principles by listing a number of essential and additional criteria. (Annex 1 sets out the relevant extracts from the *Core Principles* and the *Methodology*.)

19. All banks should be required to "have in place adequate policies, practices and procedures that promote high ethical and professional standards and prevent the bank from being used, intentionally or unintentionally, by criminal elements".[5] Certain key elements should be included by banks in the design of KYC programmes. Such essential elements should start from the banks' risk management and control procedures and should include (1) customer acceptance policy, (2) customer identification, (3) on-going monitoring of high risk accounts and (4) risk management. Banks should not only establish the identity of their customers, but should also monitor account activity to determine those transactions that do not conform with the normal or expected transactions for that customer or type of account. KYC should be a core feature of banks' risk management and control procedures, and be complemented by regular compliance reviews and internal audit. The intensity of KYC programmes beyond these essential elements should be tailored to the degree of risk.

---

[4] An example of an industry code is the "Global anti-money-laundering guidelines for Private Banking" (also called the Wolfsberg Principles) that was drawn up in October 2000 by twelve major banks with significant involvement in private banking.

[5] *Core Principles Methodology*, Essential Criterion 1.

1. Customer acceptance policy

20. Banks should develop clear customer acceptance policies and procedures, including a description of the types of customer that are likely to pose a higher than average risk to a bank. In preparing such policies, factors such as customers' background, country of origin, public or high profile position, linked accounts, business activities or other risk indicators should be considered. Banks should develop graduated customer acceptance policies and procedures that require more extensive due diligence for higher risk customers. For example, the policies may require the most basic account-opening requirements for a working individual with a small account balance. It is important that the customer acceptance policy is not so restrictive that it results in a denial of access by the general public to banking services, especially for people who are financially or socially disadvantaged. On the other hand, quite extensive due diligence would be essential for an individual with a high net worth whose source of funds is unclear. Decisions to enter into business relationships with higher risk customers, such as politically exposed persons (see section 2.2.3 below), should be taken exclusively at senior management level.

2. Customer identification

21. Customer identification is an essential element of KYC standards. For the purposes of this paper, a customer includes:

- the person or entity that maintains an account with the bank or those on whose behalf an account is maintained (i.e. beneficial owners);
- the beneficiaries of transactions conducted by professional intermediaries; and
- any person or entity connected with a financial transaction who can pose a significant reputational or other risk to the bank.

22. Banks should establish a systematic procedure for identifying new customers and should not establish a banking relationship until the identity of a new customer is satisfactorily verified.

23. Banks should "document and enforce policies for identification of customers and those acting on their behalf".[6] The best documents for verifying the identity of customers are those most difficult to obtain illicitly and to counterfeit. Special attention should be exercised in the case of non-resident customers and in no case should a bank short-circuit identity procedures just because the new customer is unable to present himself for interview. The bank should always ask itself why the customer has chosen to open an account in a foreign jurisdiction.

24. The customer identification process applies naturally at the outset of the relationship. To ensure that records remain up-to-date and relevant, there is a need for banks to undertake regular reviews of existing records.[7] An appropriate time to do so is when a transaction of significance takes place, when customer documentation standards change substantially, or when there is a material change in the way that the account is operated. However, if a bank becomes aware at any time that it lacks sufficient information about an

---

[6] *Core Principles Methodology*, Essential Criterion 2.

[7] The application of new KYC standards to existing accounts is currently subject to FATF review.

existing customer, it should take steps to ensure that all relevant information is obtained as quickly as possible.

25. Banks that offer private banking services are particularly exposed to reputational risk, and should therefore apply enhanced due diligence to such operations. Private banking accounts, which by nature involve a large measure of confidentiality, can be opened in the name of an individual, a commercial business, a trust, an intermediary or a personalised investment company. In each case reputational risk may arise if the bank does not diligently follow established KYC procedures. All new clients and new accounts should be approved by at least one person, of appropriate seniority, other than the private banking relationship manager. If particular safeguards are put in place internally to protect confidentiality of private banking customers and their business, banks must still ensure that at least equivalent scrutiny and monitoring of these customers and their business can be conducted, e.g. they must be open to review by compliance officers and auditors.

26. Banks should develop "clear standards on what records must be kept on customer identification and individual transactions and their retention period".[8] Such a practice is essential to permit a bank to monitor its relationship with the customer, to understand the customer's on-going business and, if necessary, to provide evidence in the event of disputes, legal action, or a financial investigation that could lead to criminal prosecution. As the starting point and natural follow-up of the identification process, banks should obtain customer identification papers and retain copies of them for at least five years after an account is closed. They should also retain all financial transaction records for at least five years after the transaction has taken place.

2.1 General identification requirements

27. Banks need to obtain all information necessary to establish to their full satisfaction the identity of each new customer and the purpose and intended nature of the business relationship. The extent and nature of the information depends on the type of applicant (personal, corporate, etc.) and the expected size of the account. National supervisors are encouraged to provide guidance to assist banks in designing their own identification procedures. The Working Group intends to develop essential elements of customer identification requirements.

28. When an account has been opened, but problems of verification arise in the banking relationship which cannot be resolved, the bank should close the account and return the monies to the source from which they were received.[9]

29. While the transfer of an opening balance from an account in the customer's name in another bank subject to the same KYC standard may provide some comfort, banks should nevertheless consider the possibility that the previous account manager may have asked for the account to be removed because of a concern about dubious activities. Naturally, customers have the right to move their business from one bank to another. However, if a bank has any reason to believe that an applicant is being refused banking facilities by another bank, it should apply enhanced diligence procedures to the customer.

---

[8] *Core Principles Methodology*, Essential Criterion 2.

[9] Subject to any national legislation concerning handling of suspicious transactions.

30. Banks should never agree to open an account or conduct ongoing business with a customer who insists on anonymity or who gives a fictitious name. Nor should confidential numbered[10] accounts function as anonymous accounts but they should be subject to exactly the same KYC procedures as all other customer accounts, even if the test is carried out by selected staff. Whereas a numbered account can offer additional protection for the identity of the account-holder, the identity must be known to a sufficient number of staff to operate proper due diligence. Such accounts should in no circumstances be used to hide the customer identity from a bank's compliance function or from the supervisors.

2.2 Specific identification issues

31. There are a number of more detailed issues relating to customer identification which need to be addressed. Several of these are currently under consideration by the FATF as part of a general review of its 40 recommendations, and the Working Group recognises the need to be consistent with the FATF.

2.2.1 Trust, nominee and fiduciary accounts

32. Trust, nominee and fiduciary accounts can be used to circumvent customer identification procedures. While it may be legitimate under certain circumstances to provide an extra layer of security to protect the confidentiality of legitimate private banking customers, it is essential that the true relationship is understood. Banks should establish whether the customer is taking the name of another customer, acting as a "front", or acting on behalf of another person as trustee, nominee or other intermediary. If so, a necessary precondition is receipt of satisfactory evidence of the identity of any intermediaries, and of the persons upon whose behalf they are acting, as well as details of the nature of the trust or other arrangements in place. Specifically, the identification of a trust should include the trustees, settlors/grantors and beneficiaries.[11]

2.2.2 Corporate vehicles

33. Banks need to be vigilant in preventing corporate business entities from being used by natural persons as a method of operating anonymous accounts. Personal asset holding vehicles, such as international business companies, may make proper identification of customers or beneficial owners difficult. A bank should understand the structure of the company, determine the source of funds, and identify the beneficial owners and those who have control over the funds.

34. Special care needs to be exercised in initiating business transactions with companies that have nominee shareholders or shares in bearer form. Satisfactory evidence of the identity of beneficial owners of all such companies needs to be obtained. In the case of entities which have a significant proportion of capital in the form of bearer shares, extra vigilance is called for. A bank may be completely unaware that the bearer shares have changed hands. The onus is on banks to put in place satisfactory procedures to monitor the

---

[10] In a numbered account, the name of the beneficial owner is known to the bank but is substituted by an account number or code name in subsequent documentation.

[11] Beneficiaries should be identified as far as possible when defined. It is recognised that it may not be possible to identify the beneficiaries of trusts precisely at the outset. For example, some beneficiaries may be unborn children and some may be conditional on the occurrence of specific events. In addition, beneficiaries being specific classes of individuals (e.g. employee pension funds) may be appropriately dealt with as pooled accounts as referred to in paragraphs 38-9.

identity of material beneficial owners. This may require the bank to immobilise the shares, e.g. by holding the bearer shares in custody.

2.2.3 Introduced business

35. The performance of identification procedures can be time consuming and there is a natural desire to limit any inconvenience for new customers. In some countries, it has therefore become customary for banks to rely on the procedures undertaken by other banks or introducers when business is being referred. In doing so, banks risk placing excessive reliance on the due diligence procedures that they expect the introducers to have performed. Relying on due diligence conducted by an introducer, however reputable, does not in any way remove the ultimate responsibility of the recipient bank to know its customers and their business. In particular, banks should not rely on introducers that are subject to weaker standards than those governing the banks' own KYC procedures or that are unwilling to share copies of due diligence documentation.

36. The Basel Committee recommends that banks that use introducers should carefully assess whether the introducers are "fit and proper" and are exercising the necessary due diligence in accordance with the standards set out in this paper. The ultimate responsibility for knowing customers always lies with the bank. Banks should use the following criteria to determine whether an introducer can be relied upon:[12]

- it must comply with the minimum customer due diligence practices identified in this paper;
- the customer due diligence procedures of the introducer should be as rigorous as those which the bank would have conducted itself for the customer;
- the bank must satisfy itself as to the reliability of the systems put in place by the introducer to verify the identity of the customer;
- the bank must reach agreement with the introducer that it will be permitted to verify the due diligence undertaken by the introducer at any stage; and
- all relevant identification data and other documentation pertaining to the customer's identity should be immediately submitted by the introducer to the bank, who must carefully review the documentation provided. Such information must be available for review by the supervisor and the financial intelligence unit or equivalent enforcement agency, where appropriate legal authority has been obtained.

In addition, banks should conduct periodic reviews to ensure that an introducer which it relies on continues to conform to the criteria set out above.

2.2.4 Client accounts opened by professional intermediaries

37. When a bank has knowledge or reason to believe that a client account opened by a professional intermediary is on behalf of a single client, that client must be identified.

38. Banks often hold "pooled" accounts managed by professional intermediaries on behalf of entities such as mutual funds, pension funds and money funds. Banks also hold

[12] The FATF is currently engaged in a review of the appropriateness of eligible introducers.

pooled accounts managed by lawyers or stockbrokers that represent funds held on deposit or in escrow for a range of clients. Where funds held by the intermediary are not co-mingled at the bank, but where there are "sub-accounts" which can be attributable to each beneficial owner, all beneficial owners of the account held by the intermediary must be identified.

39. Where the funds are co-mingled, the bank should look through to the beneficial owners. There can be circumstances where the bank may not need to look beyond the intermediary, for example, when the intermediary is subject to the same regulatory and money laundering legislation and procedures, and in particular is subject to the same due diligence standards in respect of its client base as the bank. National supervisory guidance should clearly set out those circumstances in which banks need not look beyond the intermediary. Banks should accept such accounts only on the condition that they are able to establish that the intermediary has engaged in a sound due diligence process and has the systems and controls to allocate the assets in the pooled accounts to the relevant beneficiaries. In assessing the due diligence process of the intermediary, the bank should apply the criteria set out in paragraph 36 above, in respect of introduced business, in order to determine whether a professional intermediary can be relied upon.

40. Where the intermediary is not empowered to furnish the required information on beneficiaries to the bank, for example, lawyers[13] bound by professional secrecy codes or when that intermediary is not subject to due diligence standards equivalent to those set out in this paper or to the requirements of comprehensive anti-money laundering legislation, then the bank should not permit the intermediary to open an account.

2.2.5 Politically exposed persons

41. Business relationships with individuals holding important public positions and with persons or companies clearly related to them may expose a bank to significant reputational and/or legal risks. Such politically exposed persons ("PEPs") are individuals who are or have been entrusted with prominent public functions, including heads of state or of government, senior politicians, senior government, judicial or military officials, senior executives of publicly owned corporations and important political party officials. There is always a possibility, especially in countries where corruption is widespread, that such persons abuse their public powers for their own illicit enrichment through the receipt of bribes, embezzlement, etc.

42. Accepting and managing funds from corrupt PEPs will severely damage the bank's own reputation and can undermine public confidence in the ethical standards of an entire financial centre, since such cases usually receive extensive media attention and strong political reaction, even if the illegal origin of the assets is often difficult to prove. In addition, the bank may be subject to costly information requests and seizure orders from law enforcement or judicial authorities (including international mutual assistance procedures in criminal matters) and could be liable to actions for damages by the state concerned or the victims of a regime. Under certain circumstances, the bank and/or its officers and employees themselves can be exposed to charges of money laundering, if they know or should have known that the funds stemmed from corruption or other serious crimes.

43. Some countries have recently amended or are in the process of amending their laws and regulations to criminalise active corruption of foreign civil servants and public officers in

[13] The FATF is currently engaged in a review of KYC procedures governing accounts opened by lawyers on behalf of clients.

accordance with the relevant international convention.[14] In these jurisdictions foreign corruption becomes a predicate offence for money laundering and all the relevant anti-money laundering laws and regulations apply (e.g. reporting of suspicious transactions, prohibition on informing the customer, internal freeze of funds etc). But even in the absence of such an explicit legal basis in criminal law, it is clearly undesirable, unethical and incompatible with the fit and proper conduct of banking operations to accept or maintain a business relationship if the bank knows or must assume that the funds derive from corruption or misuse of public assets. There is a compelling need for a bank considering a relationship with a person whom it suspects of being a PEP to identify that person fully, as well as people and companies that are clearly related to him/her.

44. Banks should gather sufficient information from a new customer, and check publicly available information, in order to establish whether or not the customer is a PEP. Banks should investigate the source of funds before accepting a PEP. The decision to open an account for a PEP should be taken at a senior management level.

2.2.6 Non-face-to-face customers

45. Banks are increasingly asked to open accounts on behalf of customers who do not present themselves for personal interview. This has always been a frequent event in the case of non-resident customers, but it has increased significantly with the recent expansion of postal, telephone and electronic banking. Banks should apply equally effective customer identification procedures and on-going monitoring standards for non-face-to-face customers as for those available for interview. One issue that has arisen in this connection is the possibility of independent verification by a reputable third party. This whole subject of non-face-to-face customer identification is being discussed by the FATF, and is also under review in the context of amending the 1991 EEC Directive.

46. A typical example of a non-face-to-face customer is one who wishes to conduct electronic banking via the Internet or similar technology. Electronic banking currently incorporates a wide array of products and services delivered over telecommunications networks. The impersonal and borderless nature of electronic banking combined with the speed of the transaction inevitably creates difficulty in customer identification and verification. As a basic policy, supervisors expect that banks should proactively assess various risks posed by emerging technologies and design customer identification procedures with due regard to such risks.[15]

47. Even though the same documentation can be provided by face-to-face and non-face-to-face customers, there is a greater difficulty in matching the customer with the documentation in the case of non-face-to-face customers. With telephone and electronic banking, the verification problem is made even more difficult.

48. In accepting business from non-face-to-face customers:

- banks should apply equally effective customer identification procedures for non-face-to-face customers as for those available for interview; and

---

[14] See OECD Convention on *Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions*, adopted by the Negotiating Conference on 21 November 1997.

[15] The Electronic Banking Group of the Basel Committee issued a paper on risk management principles for electronic banking in May 2001.

- there must be specific and adequate measures to mitigate the higher risk.

Examples of measures to mitigate risk include:

- certification of documents presented;
- requisition of additional documents to complement those which are required for face-to-face customers;
- independent contact with the customer by the bank;
- third party introduction, e.g. by an introducer subject to the criteria established in paragraph 36; or
- requiring the first payment to be carried out through an account in the customer's name with another bank subject to similar customer due diligence standards.

2.2.7 Correspondent banking

49. Correspondent banking is the provision of banking services by one bank (the "correspondent bank") to another bank (the "respondent bank"). Used by banks throughout the world, correspondent accounts enable banks to conduct business and provide services that the banks do not offer directly. Correspondent accounts that merit particular care involve the provision of services in jurisdictions where the respondent banks have no physical presence. However, if banks fail to apply an appropriate level of due diligence to such accounts, they expose themselves to the range of risks identified earlier in this paper, and may find themselves holding and/or transmitting money linked to corruption, fraud or other illegal activity.

50. Banks should gather sufficient information about their respondent banks to understand fully the nature of the respondent's business. Factors to consider include: information about the respondent bank's management, major business activities, where they are located and its money-laundering prevention and detection efforts; the purpose of the account; the identity of any third party entities that will use the correspondent banking services; and the condition of bank regulation and supervision in the respondent's country. Banks should only establish correspondent relationships with foreign banks that are effectively supervised by the relevant authorities. For their part, respondent banks should have effective customer acceptance and KYC policies.

51. In particular, banks should refuse to enter into or continue a correspondent banking relationship with a bank incorporated in a jurisdiction in which it has no physical presence and which is unaffiliated with a regulated financial group (i.e. shell banks). Banks should pay particular attention when continuing relationships with respondent banks located in jurisdictions that have poor KYC standards or have been identified as being "non-cooperative" in the fight against anti-money laundering. Banks should establish that their respondent banks have due diligence standards as set out in this paper, and employ enhanced due diligence procedures with respect to transactions carried out though the correspondent accounts.

52. Banks should be particularly alert to the risk that correspondent accounts might be used directly by third parties to transact business on their own behalf (e.g. payable-through accounts). Such arrangements give rise to most of the same considerations applicable to introduced business and should be treated in accordance with the criteria set out in paragraph 36.

3. On-going monitoring of accounts and transactions

53. On-going monitoring is an essential aspect of effective KYC procedures. Banks can only effectively control and reduce their risk if they have an understanding of normal and reasonable account activity of their customers so that they have a means of identifying transactions which fall outside the regular pattern of an account's activity. Without such knowledge, they are likely to fail in their duty to report suspicious transactions to the appropriate authorities in cases where they are required to do so. The extent of the monitoring needs to be risk-sensitive. For all accounts, banks should have systems in place to detect unusual or suspicious patterns of activity. This can be done by establishing limits for a particular class or category of accounts. Particular attention should be paid to transactions that exceed these limits. Certain types of transactions should alert banks to the possibility that the customer is conducting unusual or suspicious activities. They may include transactions that do not appear to make economic or commercial sense, or that involve large amounts of cash deposits that are not consistent with the normal and expected transactions of the customer. Very high account turnover, inconsistent with the size of the balance, may indicate that funds are being "washed" through the account. Examples of suspicious activities can be very helpful to banks and should be included as part of a jurisdiction's anti-money-laundering procedures and/or guidance.

54. There should be intensified monitoring for higher risk accounts. Every bank should set key indicators for such accounts, taking note of the background of the customer, such as the country of origin and source of funds, the type of transactions involved, and other risk factors. For higher risk accounts:

- Banks should ensure that they have adequate management information systems to provide managers and compliance officers with timely information needed to identify, analyse and effectively monitor higher risk customer accounts. The types of reports that may be needed include reports of missing account opening documentation, transactions made through a customer account that are unusual, and aggregations of a customer's total relationship with the bank.

- Senior management in charge of private banking business should know the personal circumstances of the bank's high risk customers and be alert to sources of third party information. Significant transactions by these customers should be approved by a senior manager.

- Banks should develop a clear policy and internal guidelines, procedures and controls and remain especially vigilant regarding business relationships with PEPs and high profile individuals or with persons and companies that are clearly related to or associated with them.[16] As all PEPs may not be identified initially and since existing customers may subsequently acquire PEP status, regular reviews of at least the more important customers should be undertaken.

[16] It is unrealistic to expect the bank to know or investigate every distant family, political or business connection of a foreign customer. The need to pursue suspicions will depend on the size of the assets or turnover, pattern of transactions, economic background, reputation of the country, plausibility of the customer's explanations etc. It should however be noted that PEPs (or rather their family members and friends) would not necessarily present themselves in that capacity, but rather as ordinary (albeit wealthy) business people, masking the fact they owe their high position in a legitimate business corporation only to their privileged relation with the holder of the public office.

4. Risk management

55. Effective KYC procedures embrace routines for proper management oversight, systems and controls, segregation of duties, training and other related policies. The board of directors of the bank should be fully committed to an effective KYC programme by establishing appropriate procedures and ensuring their effectiveness. Explicit responsibility should be allocated within the bank for ensuring that the bank's policies and procedures are managed effectively and are, at a minimum, in accordance with local supervisory practice. The channels for reporting suspicious transactions should be clearly specified in writing, and communicated to all personnel. There should also be internal procedures for assessing whether the bank's statutory obligations under recognised suspicious activity reporting regimes require the transaction to be reported to the appropriate law enforcement and and/or supervisory authorities.

56. Banks' internal audit and compliance functions have important responsibilities in evaluating and ensuring adherence to KYC policies and procedures. As a general rule, the compliance function should provide an independent evaluation of the bank's own policies and procedures, including legal and regulatory requirements. Its responsibilities should include ongoing monitoring of staff performance through sample testing of compliance and review of exception reports to alert senior management or the Board of Directors if it believes management is failing to address KYC procedures in a responsible manner.

57. Internal audit plays an important role in independently evaluating the risk management and controls, discharging its responsibility to the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors or a similar oversight body through periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of compliance with KYC policies and procedures, including related staff training. Management should ensure that audit functions are staffed adequately with individuals who are well-versed in such policies and procedures. In addition, internal auditors should be proactive in following-up their findings and criticisms.

58. All banks must have an ongoing employee-training programme so that bank staff are adequately trained in KYC procedures. The timing and content of training for various sectors of staff will need to be adapted by the bank for its own needs. Training requirements should have a different focus for new staff, front-line staff, compliance staff or staff dealing with new customers. New staff should be educated in the importance of KYC policies and the basic requirements at the bank. Front-line staff members who deal directly with the public should be trained to verify the identity of new customers, to exercise due diligence in handling accounts of existing customers on an ongoing basis and to detect patterns of suspicious activity. Regular refresher training should be provided to ensure that staff are reminded of their responsibilities and are kept informed of new developments. It is crucial that all relevant staff fully understand the need for and implement KYC policies consistently. A culture within banks that promotes such understanding is the key to successful implementation.

59. In many countries, external auditors also have an important role to play in monitoring banks' internal controls and procedures, and in confirming that they are in compliance with supervisory practice.

IV. The role of supervisors

60. Based on existing international KYC standards, national supervisors are expected to set out supervisory practice governing banks' KYC programmes. The essential elements as

presented in this paper should provide clear guidance for supervisors to proceed with the work of designing or improving national supervisory practice.

61. In addition to setting out the basic elements for banks to follow, supervisors have a responsibility to monitor that banks are applying sound KYC procedures and are sustaining ethical and professional standards on a continuous basis. Supervisors should ensure that appropriate internal controls are in place and that banks are in compliance with supervisory and regulatory guidance. The supervisory process should include not only a review of policies and procedures but also a review of customer files and the sampling of some accounts. Supervisors should always have the right to access all documentation related to accounts maintained in that jurisdiction, including any analysis the bank has made to detect unusual or suspicious transactions.

62. Supervisors have a duty not only to ensure their banks maintain high KYC standards to protect their own safety and soundness but also to protect the integrity of their national banking system.[17] Supervisors should make it clear that they will take appropriate action, which may be severe and public if the circumstances warrant, against banks and their officers who demonstrably fail to follow their own internal procedures and regulatory requirements. In addition, supervisors should ensure that banks are aware of and pay particular attention to transactions that involve jurisdictions where standards are considered inadequate. The FATF and some national authorities have listed a number of countries and jurisdictions that are considered to have legal and administrative arrangements that do not comply with international standards for combating money laundering. Such findings should be a component of a bank's KYC policies and procedures.

V. Implementation of KYC standards in a cross-border context

63. Supervisors around the world should seek, to the best of their efforts, to develop and implement their national KYC standards fully in line with international standards so as to avoid potential regulatory arbitrage and safeguard the integrity of domestic and international banking systems. The implementation and assessment of such standards put to the test the willingness of supervisors to cooperate with each other in a very practical way, as well as the ability of banks to control risks on a groupwide basis. This is a challenging task for banks and supervisors alike.

64. Supervisors expect banking groups to apply an accepted minimum standard of KYC policies and procedures to both their local and overseas operations. The supervision of international banking can only be effectively carried out on a consolidated basis, and reputational risk as well as other banking risks are not limited to national boundaries. Parent banks must communicate their policies and procedures to their overseas branches and subsidiaries, including non-banking entities such as trust companies, and have a routine for testing compliance against both home and host country KYC standards in order for their programmes to operate effectively globally. Such compliance tests will also be tested by external auditors and supervisors. Therefore, it is important that KYC documentation is properly filed and available for their inspection. As far as compliance checks are concerned, supervisors and external auditors should in most cases examine systems and controls and look at customer accounts and transactions monitoring as part of a sampling process.

[17] Many supervisors also have a duty to report any suspicious, unusual or illegal transactions that they detect, for example, during onsite examinations.

65. However small an overseas establishment is, a senior officer should be designated to be directly responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff are trained in, and observe, KYC procedures that meet both home and host standards. While this officer will bear primary responsibility, he should be supported by internal auditors and compliance officers from both local and head offices as appropriate.

66. Where the minimum KYC standards of the home and host countries differ, branches and subsidiaries in the host jurisdictions should apply the higher standard of the two. In general, there should be no impediment to prevent a bank from adopting standards that are higher than the minima required locally. If, however, local laws and regulations (especially secrecy provisions) prohibit the implementation of home country KYC standards, where the latter are more stringent, host country supervisors should use their best endeavours to have the law and regulations changed. In the meantime, overseas branches and subsidiaries would have to comply with host country standards, but they should make sure the head office or parent bank and its home country supervisor are fully informed of the nature of the difference.

67. Criminal elements are likely to be drawn toward jurisdictions with such impediments. Hence, banks should be aware of the high reputational risk of conducting business in these jurisdictions. Parent banks should have a procedure for reviewing the vulnerability of the individual operating units and implement additional safeguards where appropriate. In extreme cases, supervisors should consider placing additional controls on banks operating in those jurisdictions and ultimately perhaps encouraging their withdrawal.

68. During on-site inspections, home country supervisors or auditors should face no impediments in verifying the unit's compliance with KYC policies and procedures. This will require a review of customer files and some random sampling of accounts. Home country supervisors should have access to information on sampled individual customer accounts to the extent necessary to enable a proper evaluation of the application of KYC standards and an assessment of risk management practices, and should not be impeded by local bank secrecy laws. Where the home country supervisor requires consolidated reporting of deposit or borrower concentrations or notification of funds under management, there should be no impediments. In addition, with a view to monitoring deposit concentrations or the funding risk of the deposit being withdrawn, home supervisors may apply materiality tests and establish some thresholds so that if a customer's deposit exceeds a certain percentage of the balance sheet, banks should report it to the home supervisor. However, safeguards are needed to ensure that information regarding individual accounts is used exclusively for lawful supervisory purposes, and can be protected by the recipient in a satisfactory manner. A statement of mutual cooperation[18] to facilitate information sharing between the two supervisors would be helpful in this regard.

69. In certain cases there may be a serious conflict between the KYC policies of a parent bank imposed by its home authority and what is permitted in a cross-border office. There may, for example, be local laws that prevent inspections by the parent banks' compliance officers, internal auditors or home country supervisors, or that enable bank customers to use fictitious names or to hide behind agents or intermediaries that are forbidden from revealing who their clients are. In such cases, the home supervisor should communicate with the host supervisor in order to confirm whether there are indeed genuine legal impediments and whether they apply extraterritorially. If they prove to be

[18] See the Basel Committee paper *Essential elements of a statement of cooperation between banking supervisors* (May 2001).

insurmountable, and there are no satisfactory alternative arrangements, the home supervisor should make it clear to the host that the bank may decide for itself, or be required by its home supervisor, to close down the operation in question. In the final analysis, any arrangements underpinning such on-site examinations should provide a mechanism that permits an assessment that is satisfactory to the home supervisor. Statements of cooperation or memoranda of understanding setting out the mechanics of the arrangements may be helpful. Access to information by home country supervisors should be as unrestricted as possible, and at a minimum they should have free access to the banks' general policies and procedures for customer due diligence and for dealing with suspicions.

Annex 1

Excerpts from *Core Principles Methodology*

Principle 15: Banking supervisors must determine that banks have adequate policies, practices and procedures in place, including strict "know-your-customer" rules, that promote high ethical and professional standards in the financial sector and prevent the bank being used, intentionally or unintentionally, by criminal elements.

Essential criteria

1. The supervisor determines that banks have in place adequate policies, practices and procedures that promote high ethical and professional standards and prevent the bank from being used, intentionally or unintentionally, by criminal elements. This includes the prevention and detection of criminal activity or fraud, and reporting of such suspected activities to the appropriate authorities.

2. The supervisor determines that banks have documented and enforced policies for identification of customers and those acting on their behalf as part of their anti-money-laundering program. There are clear rules on what records must be kept on customer identification and individual transactions and the retention period.

3. The supervisor determines that banks have formal procedures to recognise potentially suspicious transactions. These might include additional authorisation for large cash (or similar) deposits or withdrawals and special procedures for unusual transactions.

4. The supervisor determines that banks appoint a senior officer with explicit responsibility for ensuring that the bank's policies and procedures are, at a minimum, in accordance with local statutory and regulatory anti-money laundering requirements.

5. The supervisor determines that banks have clear procedures, communicated to all personnel, for staff to report suspicious transactions to the dedicated senior officer responsible for anti-money laundering compliance.

6. The supervisor determines that banks have established lines of communication both to management and to an internal security (guardian) function for reporting problems.

7. In addition to reporting to the appropriate criminal authorities, banks report to the supervisor suspicious activities and incidents of fraud material to the safety, soundness or reputation of the bank.

8. Laws, regulations and/or banks' policies ensure that a member of staff who reports suspicious transactions in good faith to the dedicated senior officer, internal security function, or directly to the relevant authority cannot be held liable.

9. The supervisor periodically checks that banks' money laundering controls and their systems for preventing, identifying and reporting fraud are sufficient. The supervisor has adequate enforcement powers (regulatory and/or criminal prosecution) to take

action against a bank that does not comply with its anti-money laundering obligations.

10. The supervisor is able, directly or indirectly, to share with domestic and foreign financial sector supervisory authorities information related to suspected or actual criminal activities.

11. The supervisor determines that banks have a policy statement on ethics and professional behaviour that is clearly communicated to all staff.

Additional criteria

1. The laws and/or regulations embody international sound practices, such as compliance with the relevant forty Financial Action Task Force Recommendations issued in 1990 (revised 1996).

2. The supervisor determines that bank staff is adequately trained on money laundering detection and prevention.

3. The supervisor has the legal obligation to inform the relevant criminal authorities of any suspicious transactions.

4. The supervisor is able, directly or indirectly, to share with relevant judicial authorities information related to suspected or actual criminal activities.

5. If not performed by another agency, the supervisor has in-house resources with specialist expertise on financial fraud and anti-money laundering obligations.

Annex 2

Excerpts from FATF recommendations

C. Role of the financial system in combating money laundering

Customer Identification and Record-keeping Rules

10. Financial institutions should not keep anonymous accounts or accounts in obviously fictitious names: they should be required (by law, by regulations, by agreements between supervisory authorities and financial institutions or by self-regulatory agreements among financial institutions) to identify, on the basis of an official or other reliable identifying document, and record the identity of their clients, either occasional or usual, when establishing business relations or conducting transactions (in particular opening of accounts or passbooks, entering into fiduciary transactions, renting of safe deposit boxes, performing large cash transactions).

    In order to fulfil identification requirements concerning legal entities, financial institutions should, when necessary, take measures:

    (i) to verify the legal existence and structure of the customer by obtaining either from a public register or from the customer or both, proof of incorporation, including information concerning the customer's name, legal form, address, directors and provisions regulating the power to bind the entity.

    (ii) to verify that any person purporting to act on behalf of the customer is so authorised and identify that person.

11. Financial institutions should take reasonable measures to obtain information about the true identity of the persons on whose behalf an account is opened or a transaction conducted if there are any doubts as to whether these clients or customers are acting on their own behalf, for example, in the case of domiciliary companies (i.e. institutions, corporations, foundations, trusts, etc. that do not conduct any commercial or manufacturing business or any other form of commercial operation in the country where their registered office is located).

12. Financial institutions should maintain, for at least five years, all necessary records on transactions, both domestic or international, to enable them to comply swiftly with information requests from the competent authorities. Such records must be sufficient to permit reconstruction of individual transactions (including the amounts and types of currency involved if any) so as to provide, if necessary, evidence for prosecution of criminal behaviour.

    Financial institutions should keep records on customer identification (e.g. copies or records of official identification documents like passports, identity cards, driving licenses or similar documents), account files and business correspondence for at least five years after the account is closed.

    These documents should be available to domestic competent authorities in the context of relevant criminal prosecutions and investigations.

13. Countries should pay special attention to money laundering threats inherent in new or developing technologies that might favour anonymity, and take measures, if needed, to prevent their use in money laundering schemes.

Increased Diligence of Financial Institutions

14. Financial institutions should pay special attention to all complex, unusual large transactions, and all unusual patterns of transactions, which have no apparent economic or visible lawful purpose. The background and purpose of such transactions should, as far as possible, be examined, the findings established in writing, and be available to help supervisors, auditors and law enforcement agencies.

15. If financial institutions suspect that funds stem from a criminal activity, they should be required to report promptly their suspicions to the competent authorities.

16. Financial institutions, their directors, officers and employees should be protected by legal provisions from criminal or civil liability for breach of any restriction on disclosure of information imposed by contract or by any legislative, regulatory or administrative provision, if they report their suspicions in good faith to the competent authorities, even if they did not know precisely what the underlying criminal activity was, and regardless of whether illegal activity actually occurred.

17. Financial institutions, their directors, officers and employees, should not, or, where appropriate, should not be allowed to, warn their customers when information relating to them is being reported to the competent authorities.

18. Financial institutions reporting their suspicions should comply with instructions from the competent authorities.

19. Financial institutions should develop programs against money laundering. These programs should include, as a minimum:

    (i) the development of internal policies, procedures and controls, including the designation of compliance officers at management level, and adequate screening procedures to ensure high standards when hiring employees;

    (ii) an ongoing employee training programme;

    (iii) an audit function to test the system.