

OVERVIEW OF TRADE FACILITATION

In December 2013, WTO members concluded negotiations on a Trade Facilitation Agreement at the Bali Ministerial Conference, as part of a wider Bali Package.

The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) contains provisions for expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. It also sets out measures for effective cooperation between customs and other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues. It further contains provisions for technical assistance and capacity building in this area.

National Initiatives and modernization projects

The Customs and Border Control Department is continually reforming and modernizing its operations. As Kenya Customs, we have several projects/initiatives to support TFA implementation.

These include:-

- Automated processes and procedures, e.g Simba 2014 system, ECTS, CAMIS, COSIS and now ICMS.
- One Stop Border Posts (OSBP) -
- Single Customs Territory (SCT)
- Coordinated Border Management
- Integration with the National Single Window (KENTRADE System)
- Continuous engagement with stakeholders e.g bilateral/multilateral meetings & engagements, Port Charter
- Availability of information on the internet (KRA website)

- Customs enquiry point – Customs Help desk & Complaints Information Centre (CIC)
- Taxpayer recourse through the Tax Appeals Tribunal or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Risk Management and Post Clearance Audit (PCA),
- Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programme, Time Release Studies, Pre-arrival amongst others.

In addition, the Department employs WCO tools and instruments, such as the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC), Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Trade (SAFE), Risk Management Compendium etc.

The World Trade Report 2015, states that, by some estimates, full implementation of the TFA has the ability to reduce members' trade costs by an average of 14.3 per cent. Further, it states, full implementation of the TFA also has the ability to reduce time to import by over a day and a half (a 47 per cent reduction over the current average) and time to export by almost two days (91 per cent reduction over the current average).

Full implementation of TFA is to enable countries increase their competitiveness and enhance economic growth and development.

Kenya has ratified and notified its Category A Measures to the WTO Secretariat and undertaken categorization of its B & C Measures. It has established National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) that will oversee implementation of the agreement.

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