

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. We are here today because of the general dissatisfaction with our port operations. From government as the owner of the port to users of the port (shipping lines, exporters, importers, terminal operators), we are dissatisfied because of the overall procedures, inexplicable charges, delays, lack of transparency and the complexity in port operations.
2. Part of the problem has been the inadequate oversight by the owner of the port, the Government of Ghana. Ladies and Gentlemen, this is going to change. We are moving away from a system of applying unnecessary complex and expensive procedures at the port to a system which meets international standards. The port is a national asset. We need value for money, and we are going to insist on it.
3. Our port operations have not lived up to international standards. Nana Akufo-Addo government is determined to change that so we can serve this country well, making the best of technology.
4. On the 17th of May this year, I announced 3 measures to take effect from the 1st of September God willing. These were:
 - a. **The removal of customs barriers within the country;**
 - b. **Mandatory Joint Inspections; and**
 - c. **A paperless port.**
5. To achieve these 3 targets by September 1st, we worked closely with the stakeholders with the aim of automating and streamlining the services they provide while avoiding duplication of efforts.
6. I will like to thank the Committee headed by Hon. Carlos Ahenkora, Ghana Revenue Authority, Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, Ship Owners and Agents Association of Ghana, Terminal Operators, Regulatory Agencies, the National Risk Management Committee among others. Our consultations with

stakeholders revealed that the only papers which should be allowed at the port are the **Waybill** and the Bill of lading and so we have made an exception for only these two.

Goal

7. Our goal within the next six months is to have a robust risk engine which will grant customs clearance in a maximum of 4 hours. Dubai customs is able to grant customs clearance in 1 and ½ seconds and so Ghana can definitely aim for 4 hours.
8. In the short term, we will begin the implementation of a risk clearance system at the pre-arrival stage and this will make it possible for complaint importers to sit in the comfort of their offices and get customs clearance. Every activity will be fed into the risk engine to enable us keep records of importers.
9. Furthermore, we intend to introduce **the first port rule in Ghana**. This provides the avenue for the duty of goods destined for countries like Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to be paid here in Ghana. This should provide a check on the dumping of goods destined for our neighbouring countries in Ghana.
10. We will push for the introduction of **intelligent 3D scanners**. This would be an improvement over the 2D scanners we currently have at the port.
11. To achieve our short and medium term goals of port efficiency, we sought the opinions of independent 3rd parties with international experience to conduct a gap analysis and recommend solutions. Dubai Customs are collaborating with Ghana customs to conduct a gap analysis with the aim of raising our customs service delivery to a world class one. Ghana Ports will collaborate with Dubai Ports on a government to Government level to improve services in our ports.

12. We expect the cooperation of all stakeholders to ensure port efficiency. All of you have been engaged and must aim to do your part to make our port paperless. We will not accept any excuses.
13. Agencies or service providers who are not ready to go paperless by September 1st will not be allocated any cargo.
14. **On the removal of internal customs barriers**, these barriers will be redundant in the long term with the introduction of the first port rule in Ghana. Duties will be paid on goods destined for re-export and with the new automated gate opening system at the port which will be linked to the risk engine. No vehicle will be able to leave the port without paying their duty. In the short term, they will be replaced with occasional patrols.
15. **On Mandatory Joint Inspections**, From the 1st of September, this year, we are not going to physically open and inspect all containers. We are introducing a risk engine which will assign risk levels to importers based on their level of compliance. When the need arises for inspections, the agencies needed for the inspections will be informed about the inspection time and place for joint inspections and they will have to sign in on an electronic device at the inspection shed to confirm their participation.

On going paperless at the port:

16. With the help and cooperation of all the stakeholders at the port, we have mapped out a process flow which will take effect from the 1st of September 2017. Agencies and stakeholders presented paperless process flows which we merged into a process flow that will enable compliant importers to sit in the comfort of their offices or homes and get customs clearance.
17. Terminals which are not ready for automation by 1st September will be left behind and people who do not comply will be

sanctioned. Every activity by importers will be fed into the risk engine as we build risk profiles for importers and exporters.

18. The highlights of the new process flow are as follows:

PRE-CLEARANCE

1. All entities will be registered electronically on a shared platform on the Customs Pre-Arrival System, in accordance with existing regulations. Validation will be made with the TIN database and the National Identification System when it is rolled out.
2. All Products requiring registration with Regulatory Agencies will be registered electronically in a shared platform on the Customs Pre-Arrival System, in accordance with existing agency regulations.
3. Traders will obtain required Licenses, Permits and Certificates pre-arrival of goods via eMDA platform. These Licenses, Permits and Certificates will be mandatory for the issuance of a Customs Classification Valuation Report (CCVR). Copies will be seamlessly transferred from the eMDA platform to the Pre-Arrival System.
4. An enhanced Valuation Database will be introduced.

IMPACT

This new shared database of trading entities will ensure adequate risk profiling to enable expedited clearance of compliant consignments and strict sanctioning of non-compliant consignments. This will replace manual applications.

This new shared database of the registration and management of regulated products will ensure effective risk management practices. This will replace manual applications.

All regulatory permits, licenses and certificates will now be presented at Pre Arrival and not at arrival. This will ensure compliance checks of documents, reconciliation and effective risk management for a clearance release decision to be made before the arrival of goods.

An enhanced version of the Valuation Database will ensure credible and consistent values for assessment.

5. Air and Sea Manifest will be submitted electronically at pre-arrival by Airlines and shipping lines to the Customs Pre-Arrival System with real time onward transmission to the GICCS.

Air and Sea Manifest will be shared in real time with all necessary entities/agencies. Manifest administration will be conducted on the same platforms with amendments/changes shared real time.

6. Customs Compliance will be embedded in the Customs Technical Services Bureau to ensure a holistic management of all document checks.
7. The CCVR declaration will be enhanced with a declaration statement and electronic signature by the declarant

Manifest now presented at Pre Arrival and not at arrival will ensure compliance checks of documents; reconciliation and effective risk management for a clearance release decision to be made before the arrival of goods.

This combined team of officers will ensure the holistic management of all documentary checks with a central Customs decision point on outcomes. This means that, the famous long room will be scrapped.

This new feature will provide enhanced document security and legal position which will include the 2 strike rule: a punitive fine and a complete ban.

8. The concept of a single submission of data will be applied where all data from the Pre-Arrival system with West Blue will be seamlessly and electronically transferred to the Ghana Customs Management System (GCMS) GCNET for onward processing of Bill of Entry, duties and fees calculation, bonded warehouse, free zone, transit management and cargo release to ensure there is no duplication of functions.

9. Payment of duties and fees may be made electronically via existing modes of payment or on Ghana's Trading Hub which accepts mobile money, visa cards, GH link cards online and in branch payments.

10. Fees and Duties payment will be made electronically with duty payments made available via all banks in addition to Ecobank and GCB.

The seamless integration of Pre Clearance data with Clearance data, will reduce the time and cost of administering documents, whilst minimising data errors. We will be moving from pdf uploads to real data.

The introduction of electronic payment modes will provide more options for traders; reduce the time and cost involved in manual payments whilst eliminating the falsification of payment documents.

Extending payment services to all trade finance banks will provide convenient banking to traders. GhIPSS will interface with GCNET and Ghana's Trading Hub for secured options for extended duties and fees payment.

11. A National Risk Clearance System will be introduced to include Pre-Clearance, Clearance and Post Clearance Processes, fed by data from all systems.

This new Risk clearance System will form the backbone of all our trading activities, to enable us release compliant goods within hours, with the effective management of non-compliant transactions.

12. High Risk Importer

If the risk level is high, all the relevant agencies will be notified about the time for joint inspection via the Joint Inspection Management System, a component of the National Risk Management System

The new Joint Inspection regime will significantly reduce the time and cost of clearance, by effectively coordinating regulatory examination officers for risk management.

13. Strict sanctions will be imposed on declarants presenting falsified documents. This will be a 2-strike rule of first a punitive fine and second a complete ban.

Strict sanctions will be imposed on customs and regulatory agency officers involved in fraudulent practices.

CLEARANCE

14. On goods in customs bonded warehouses, we are introducing a system which will link the number of warehousing days to an importer's bond or confirmed LC. Once the warehousing days expire, the system will automatically call on the confirmed LC or bond based on how much duty is owed government. We will not accept the practice of allowing goods to overstay in bonded warehouses.

15. The Terminal Operators/Shipping Line Systems will integrate seamlessly with GICCS on GCNET to ensure effective storage management, Container Management and Shipping Line Release.

IMPACT

This new electronic Bonded Management Warehouse System will assist with effective tracking/management of bonded goods, whilst safeguarding government revenue.

The new Online and integrated port processes will reduce the physical presence of people at the ports; ensure expedited goods release whilst reducing the traders' time and cost.

16. The Port Terminal Operating System (TOS) will integrate seamlessly with GICCS for effective port management – notifications, container positioning and opening, way bill management, examination, customs release, delivery release and port access.

17. The Ghana Standards Authority will be responsible for all inspection and testing activities at the ports except for products regulated by the Food and Drugs Authority, which include food, drugs (medicines), cosmetics, household chemical substances, medical devices and tobacco and tobacco products where the FDA will undertake inspection and testing and share data with the appropriate agencies.

The new Joint Inspection and testing regime will significantly reduce the time and cost of clearance, by effectively coordinating regulatory examination officers for risk management.

18. Joint Inspection by regulatory agencies will be managed as part of the National Risk Management System supported by an HS Code Management System and Task Manager for coordination.

19. The Scanned Images will be made available to GICCS on GCNET and the Risk Management System on West Blue to assist Physical Examinations and Post Clearance Audits.

Integration of scanned images in relevant systems will aid better decisions and risk outcomes.

CLEARANCE PROCESS FOR GPHA/TERMINALS

- 20.** Importer/agent submits a request electronically to the shipping lines for the delivery of the consignment with the original electronic bill of lading via GICCS on GCNET. Importer presents the Bill of Lading to the shipping line to confirm title to goods (legally required to be paper).
- 21.** Shipping Line issues an invoice to the customer for payment (Invoices cover freight, container deposit, demurrage and administrative charges as necessary).
- 22.** Agent pays invoice value. Fees and charges maybe paid using existing modes of payment or electronically via Ghana's Trading Hub Portal using Mobile Money, Visa; MasterCard, Gh-Link, Online Banking or In-branch payment.

23. After payment to shipping line account, the Shipping line will issue the delivery order via GICCS and GCNET to the terminal and the consignees.
24. Importer makes a request to GPHA/Terminal to take delivery of the consignment via GICCS on GCNET.
25. GPHA assesses shipping Line Release status and ability to provide service by required date in the Terminal Operating System. GPHA generates an invoice via Ghana's Trading Hub.
26. Importer/Agent will make payment online or in branch. Receiving banking will send the electronic payment receipt to GPHA-TOS/Terminal.
27. GPHA receives the payment, the container is positioned for delivery and an SMS will be sent to the importer to pick up the container.
Regulatory entities will be notified via the Joint Inspection Management System for Scanning and Joint Physical Inspection where anomalies are detected

28. GPHA issues a Delivery Allow and an electronic notification is sent to Importer/Agent
29. GPHA will issue a way a bill and the importer can leave the port.

POST CLEARANCE

30. The Post Clearance Audit Unit of Customs will be upgraded and integrated with all systems for data access.

The upgraded Post Clearance Unit will ensure expedited release for Trusted Traders; minimise congestion at the port and enhance the Risk Management System.

All stakeholders including but not limited to Shipping Lines, Terminal Operators, Service Providers and other stake holders should educate the general public about the details of their new paperless process flows. These can be printed and distributed as soon as possible like we have here done today.

Thank you again for your efforts to go paperless from the 1st of September.