

# Ghana National Single Window Newsletter

*Strengthening Ghana's trade and economic competitiveness*



## WELCOME

support@ghanastradinghub.com | 0242435663

www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh



**W**elcome to the Second Edition of the Ghana National Single Window (GNSW) quarterly Newsletter, which presents highlight of the main achievements over the last three months. These include the launch of the electronic Import Declaration Form (IDF) Payment in May 2016 and approval by government of the GNSW Strategy and Roadmap on June 15th, 2016. Updated statistics on the use of PAARS are also provided as well as an interview with one of our core users.

We were delighted with the positive response to our first newsletter and we hope you will find the 2nd Edition equally interesting. Please continue to provide your feedback, comments and suggestions to support@ghanastradinghub.com

Remember to visit [www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh](http://www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh) for the latest news!

**Valentina Mintah, CEO West Blue Consulting.**

## GHANA NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW (GNSW) STRATEGY APPROVED BY GOVERNMENT

**T**he Ghana National Single Window (GNSW) Strategy and Roadmap was approved by government on 15 June 2016. Speaking at the launch of the Strategy, the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Seth Terkper, said "The Ghana National Single Window Strategy and Roadmap presents a far-reaching set of initiatives that have the potential to transform the regulatory and procedural dimensions of international trade in Ghana. This will have a major, long-term and sustainable impact on the competitiveness of Ghanaian export, import and transit businesses and thus on the overall economic performance of the country".

The Honourable Minister went on to say that "this is an urgent and pressing matter for the wellbeing of the country as a whole and it was with great satisfaction that I announce today the approval of this strategy in its entirety. I now look forward to a rapid and successful implementation of the Strategy and I pledge the full support of the government to this reform programme".

It is estimated that implementation of the Strategy will save the Ghanaian economy over US\$ 120 million annually, will dramatically reduce the time and complexity for doing international trade, increase government revenue, enhance the

potential for foreign direct investment in the country, and will strengthen the standing of Ghana in the international community in terms of its ranking in global economic performance indicators. The programme will also have a positive impact on the environment through the reduction in paper usage and travel of traders to and from government agencies.

Based on a thorough Business Process Analysis and in-depth meetings with all key trade related agencies and organizations in Ghana, the Strategy compiled a series of key actions for the development and implementation of the GNSW programme in the coming years. These include:

- ⚙️ Automation of Internal Workflow for Each Government Agency
- ⚙️ Implementation of Electronic Payments
- ⚙️ Automation of the Customs Long Room
- ⚙️ Establishment of an Integrated Risk Management System and Coordinated Inter-Agency Inspection.
- ⚙️ Implementation of the Single Submission concept within the GNSW
- ⚙️ Introduction of paperless exchange control form
- ⚙️ Establishment of Integrated and Automated Business and Product Registrations systems
- ⚙️ Introduction of Integrated Permits / Certificates/Declarations Workflow Automation

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE.

### APPROVED GNSW ROADMAP

The Ghana National Single Window (GNSW) Strategy and Roadmap was approved...

Pg. 1

### DECLARANT INTERVIEW

The implementation of the single window will bring about trade reforms and improve...

Pg. 2

### GNSW PROJECT UPDATE

With the ongoing modernization process, several innovations and...

Pg. 3

### IMF MISSION VISIT

A mission from the International Monetary Fund

Pg. 4



Left - Right Ms. Valentina Sowu Mintah, CEO WestBlue Consulting; Amb. Ntow Boahene, Rep. Of Chief of Staff; Hon. Seth Terkper, Minister of Finance; Mr. George Blankson, Commissioner General G.R.A.; Mr. John Vianney, Ag. Commissioner Customs Division; Mr. Tony Dzadzra Special Adviser to the Minister of Finance.



# ONE STOP SHOP FOR CLEARANCE & DELIVERY

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
**LINDA VASNANI**  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER(CONSHIP)

Continued from page. 1

- ☼ Integration of the Port Community System with the GNSW
- ☼ Introduction of Paperless Manifests and BAPLIEs

The GNSW will adopt the model of a Single Automated System for integrating existing systems and creating new facilities where required and cost effective. This will include collecting, disseminating and integrating information and data relating to cross border trade. It will facilitate both an interfaced and integrated approach where a Partner Government Agency (PGA) could either process data through the central GNSW platform or directly with their own systems inside the agency.

Change management will be a critical component of the GNSW implementation programme, and the human and organizational changes necessary to support the introduction of the GNSW will be addressed as a matter of priority. A full training programme for the GNSW is planned, along with a comprehensive communications plan to keep stakeholders up to date. A fully functional Help Desk will be set up to assist users in the initial phases of the programme.

## Phased Implementation Approach

As the establishment of the GNSW is a long-term integrated programme, the above actions will be implemented in a phased approach in the coming years. Specifically:

### Phase 1: Short Term Phase (2016-2017)

— This phase covers the development of all top priority “quick win” projects that can deliver a high impact and can be implemented within the first eighteen months.

**Phase 2: Medium Term Phase (2018-2020)**—This is the consolidation phase, where the key performance indicators will be achieved through the full operationalization of all the main projects within the scope of the GNSW programme.

The specific activities that will be undertaken in the coming years to achieve the goals in each of these Phases are detailed in the GNSW Strategy and Roadmap, which is available on the GNSW website at [www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh](http://www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh).

**Thank you for agreeing to this interview Linda, can you kindly tell us more about yourself and your company?**

I am the Chief Operating Officer of Consolidated Shipping Agencies Limited (Conship), a solely owned Ghanaian logistics and freight forwarding company.

This company was established in 1996 as a limited liability company, primarily focusing on Ocean freight customs brokerage. Over the years, Conship diversified its operations into other areas of the Freight forwarding and logistics Industry, namely Airfreight, Marine Services, Husbandry, Logistics and Projects.

The discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the Western Region (Offshore) of Ghana brought with it enormous opportunities for the Logistics and Supply Chain Industry. In this regard, Conship is currently recognized as a leading offshore and onshore logistics services company.

Conship is not only a giant in the Oil and Gas industry, but shows its versatility by providing logistics services to other vertical markets such the Telecommunication, Retail and Manufacturing industry.

In liaison with International Global Forwarders, we also coordinate cargo to and from 2000 destinations with most of the volume imported from Singapore, United States, Scotland, The Netherlands, Japan, South Africa and the United Kingdom

As a Certified Member of the Anti-Bribery and Corruption global institute TRACE, Conship has set the pace for standards in Ghana in this area. Conship is also proudly ISO 9001:2008 certified.

The company has 4 branches located in Tema, Takoradi, Accra and Aurora, Illinois with over 170 employees.

**How has the introduction of PAARS affected your business?**

The introduction of the PAARS has enhanced the efficiency in our processes tremendously. Some of the ways the PAARS has improved our operations are:

- ☼ Prompt receipt of the CCVR's - this has reduced the turn-around time for clearance and the costs clients incur in storage/demurrage charges. Conship receives CCVR's within a few hours of submitting the IDF. Previously, it took up to 2 weeks to receive Inspection reports with the DIC's, however under the PAARS, we are receiving CCVR's even before the cargo arrives at destination
- ☼ Real time progress updates of IDF'S - In the past, Customs brokers were not privy to the step by step progress of the IDF for the inspection report. With the PAARS, the progress of processing the IDF to issuance of the CCVR is clearly indicated in real time. This has drastically reduced the movement of our staff from one DIC to another for updates and has added value to our service,

as the information provided on the PAARS is also used to update our in-house software which is accessible to all our clients.

- ☼ Quick resolution to technical issues – when issues arise (as is the case with every software), the accessibility of Customs through the Chat portal is very convenient and efficient. Our issues are always addressed promptly.

- ☼ Information flow - I would also like to commend PAARS for constantly providing information on new events or changes in procedures related to PAARS/GRA-Customs. Ultimately, this information is also passed on to our clients and staff for planning purposes.

**How would you assess the potential of the Ghana National Single Window for your business?**

I believe that the implementation of the single window can bring about trade reforms and improve economic development, leading to a serious increase in competitiveness in the global economy.



The single window will go a long way to reducing cost and time of doing business in the import and export industry over a period of time. This will lead to a strong economic growth performance and making Ghanaian businesses very competitive in international trade. It will also attract foreign investment and position Ghana as the hub of choice for International Entities wanting to expand their operations in the West African sub-region.

**In your own view what should the GNSW team do to improve on the modernization and reform project being done currently in Ghana?**

I would like all the stake holders such as the MDA's, the warehouse operators and the banks all integrated into the GNSW and make this one stop shop for clearance and delivery. The System should also be designed in a way to facilitate filtering and generation of reports for review by all stake holders.



## INTRODUCING IDF DIRECT ON PAARS

Following the mandate to reduce time and cost of doing business and ensuring a smooth importing experience for companies, we are pleased to announce that the Import Declaration Form (IDF) can now be processed directly on the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System (PAARS).

The IDF on PAARS allows users to directly submit and generate their IDFs directly and seamlessly for the issuance of CCVR

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# THE GNSW PROJECT



## FEATURE/FUNCTIONALITY

- ⚙ Appeal Module
- ⚙ IDF Direct
- ⚙ Electronic Payment
- ⚙ Trade Finance Module (Payment)
- ⚙ Used Car Valuation Examination (Mobile)
- ⚙ Manifest / Baplie Integration with PAARS

## TERMS TO KNOW

PAARS- Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System  
 GTH- Ghana's Trading Hub  
 CCVR- Customs Classification & Valuation Report  
 IDF- Import Declaration Form  
 WTO- World Trade Organisation  
 WCO- World Customs Organisation  
 CTSB- Customs Technical Services Bureau  
 TF- Trade Facilitation

## PRE-ARRIVAL ASSESSMENT REPORTING SYSTEM PERFORMANCE FROM INCEPTION TO JUNE, 2016.



**139,364**  
IDFs submitted by declarant to date

**136,389**  
Total CCVRs completed (98%)

**27,389**  
Number of Appeals received

**370**  
Number of Appeals pending (1.4%)

"Service Delivered; Quality Assured, as we embark on the National Single Window".



# THE IMF MISSION VISIT

A mission from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), led by the Chief Mission, Mr. Joel, visited the Customs Technical Services Bureau to know more about Ghana National Single Window and the latest developments since the introduction of the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System. PAARS

The mission met with the team of Customs Officers and their technical partners: West Blue Consulting. The visit, which came as part of the IMF annual visit to Ghana, was aimed at reviewing latest developments in trade facilitation.

Chief Revenue Officer for Customs; Julius Kantum briefed the IMF mission team on how the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System has brought about the reduction in time and cost of doing business in Ghana.

The IMF mission team were also briefed by Customs Technical Partner- West Blue Consulting about the vision and objectives of the Ghana National Single Window and its advantages once achieved



## GHANA PORTS AND HARBOUR AUTHORITY (GPHA) VISITS CUSTOMS TECHNICAL SERVICES BUREAU (CTSB).

The Director-General of Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), Mr. Richard Anamoo has paid a one-day working visit to the Customs Technical Services Bureau.

The Director-General was accompanied by Mr. Jacob Adorko, Director of Tema Ports, Mr. Paul Asare Ansah; Corporate Affairs Marketing and Public Relation Manager, Mrs. Abena Serwah Opoku-Fosu; Public Relations manager and Mr. David Boison, I.T Manager.

The purpose of the visit was to familiarise the team with the operations of CTSB and see how the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System functions.



## TESTIMONIALS

If I had my own way, I would give the system a 100%. Infact, everything is perfect and I am very pleased with what the system is doing for us. Previously, there were several delays that hindered the flow of business. This system is effective and I am very happy with the way processes are being handled. In fact, kudos to customs for working tirelessly to ensure that our line of business and goods are moved smoothly. The introduction of PAARS is an excellent innovation to boost trade.

**"MR AMPADU - BAMSON COMPANY LIMITED"**

PAARS has been a smooth ride so far even though, there has been a couple of hitches. These hitches are expected obviously because it is an introduction of a new system but so far, so good. This system is faster thus you can actually clear your goods in 2 days unlike previously when the clearing of goods could take up to 2 weeks. This system is also cost effective and saves time. I believe this system is good and therefore it is important that we give it time to fully evolve. This system will eventually fix itself as a result of upgrades here and there. **"AWURABA APALOO-SAM SHIPPING AGENCY"**

Initially, when PAARS started in September, we use to get out CCVRs in a day, sometimes within some few hours. On the average, 2 days which is still very positive. The Ghana National Single Window Helpdesk has been of great help with respect to their swift assistance. They never say no or I cannot assist, rather they take ownership and escalate any challenge through the right channels for effective feedback. I also advice that there is a system back up and upgrade in place because declarants increase everyday hence pressure on the system and workload. I believe these system backups and upgrades will alleviate delays in the system.

**"MADAM MABEL- DAMCO LOGISTICS GHANA LIMITED"**

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