



Looking Forward:

L-R Outgoing Commissioner-General of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), Mr. George Blankson handing over the Staff of Office to the New Commissioner-General; Mr. Kofi Nti

Welcome

Welcome to the Fourth Edition of the Ghana National Single Window (GNSW) quarterly Newsletter. Since the last edition, we have been very busy rolling out new deliverables as per the GNSW Strategic Plan and Roadmap and particularly the outputs identified in Phase 1 of the Programme (2016-2017). Principle amongst these are the launch of the On-line Single Registration System for Export Declaration, the introduction of the Sea and Air e-Manifest System, the establishment of the eCourier Module, and the delivery of a range of training and change management workshops.

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Test your Knowledge and win a great prize!

We have also focused on briefing the new Government on the purpose and expected impact of the GNSW on the Ghana Economy, and in particular on its capacity to enhance international trade through the removal or reduction of regulatory barriers to trade. These impacts well complement the new Government's emphasis on international trade growth by making trade easier, faster and less expensive for traders.

The main focus for the coming months will be enhancing the further development of features to support the engagement of Participating Government Agencies in the GNSW Programme. These will include the launch of the GNSW Integrated Risk Management System, automation for Ghana maritime internal operations, further integration with the Scanning Modules, and launch of the Helpdesk for GUTA. We will also deliver a comprehensive package of training and Change and Transition Management support to ensure that the new services are sustainably embedded within the Agencies and that individual

managers and officers are fully trained in their delivery.

We want to encourage your full participation in the GNSW and we believe that this starts with a good knowledge and understanding of the detailed Programme elements. To this end, we have included in this Edition a short Quiz to test your knowledge of the articles contained in both this and previous issues of the Newsletter. Please participate actively – you may be one of the lucky winners of some great prizes!

As usual, I would welcome your comments and feedback on this Newsletter and the overall work under the GNSW Programme, by emailing us at support@ghanastradinghub.com. I also encourage you to visit the Ghana Trading Hub Portal (www.ghanastradinghub.gov.gh) for the latest news on GNSW activities!

Valentina Mintah,
CEO, West Blue Consulting.

The Ghana National Single Window and the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement



Launch of the Exporter On-Line Single Registration System for GEPA

The GNSW On-line Single Registration System for export declaration was launched with the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) in March. This platform enables exporters to lodge the GEPA Registration Certificate, GNCC Certificate of Origin, invoices, customs declarations and other export permits electronically, all at a single location. This information can then be accessed electronically by all regulatory and trade agencies.

Introduction of the new System means that exporters will no longer be required to submit the same documents to different agencies. Instead, information can now be submitted and re-used electronically, saving time and effort in the process. This is the first implementation of the Single Submission concept under the GNSW and more application of this approach are currently under development.

In a speech read on his behalf at the launch of the new facility, the Honourable Alan John Kyeremanteng, Minister of Trade and Industry said the new platform is truly important, not just for exporters to be part of the National Single Window system, but also for Ghana, to be integrated into the global trading system through adoption of trade facilitation measures. He commended West Blue Consulting and GEPA for their demonstrable commitment to the Single Window Programme.

Mr James Tiigah, Chief Executive of GEPA echoed these remarks and said that the implementation of the system will reduce the time and cost of going through the different processes required for making export declarations. "This system is an answer to your perennial concerns about having to visit different agencies to collect permits and certificates needed for your products. What it means is that your registration with the GEPA will now be electronic and will be automatically connected with all other steps in the chain, thus making the registration process easy and more effective". Mr. Tiigah expressed appreciation to West Blue Consulting for their invaluable collaboration that has made the service possible.

West Blue Introduces Sea and Air e-Manifest System

In line with the GNSW objective of ensuring seamless trade and enhance competitiveness for the Ghanaian Economy, West Blue Consulting has introduced the Electronic Manifest System. The e-Manifest System will assist shipping lines and their agents in submitting their cargo information electronically, 24 Hours before the ship loads from the Port of Origin, thus eliminating the tedious tasks of having to submit manifest on various platforms to different stakeholders. With the e-Manifest solution, shipping agents will submit the manifest just once and the system will take care of the distribution, hence, creating significant convenience for them. The Air Manifest will be submitted directly by the Airlines to Customs.

At a workshop organized to acquaint the agents with the new system, the Deputy Commissioner, Ghana Revenue Authority-Customs Division, Mr. Gavor Frederick said the electronic Manifest will enable Customs to know the danger or risks of any consignment in advance, thus giving them enough time to make decisions about the consignments even before they arrive in Ghana for clearance.

eCourier Module Introduced

The GNSW has introduced an eCourier Module to allow for easy duty calculation, enhanced classification and proper record keeping for courier transactions. Previously, Customs Officers had to manually go through each of the clearance processes by sorting, classifying, valuating and examining each package, a tedious process that negatively affected the drive to make business easy. The new Module, which is used by Express Carriers ARAMEX, DHL, FEDEX and UPS, facilitates the clearance of packages in 15 – 30 minutes. The Ghana Post Courier module is scheduled to GO LIVE in May 2017. The Courier module has been integrated into the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System (PAARS).

WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement enters into force

The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) entered into force on 22 February 2017 after the number of countries ratifying the agreement reached 110 members, the required two thirds of WTO membership. This is the first multilateral deal to be concluded in the 21-year history of the WTO.

The Agreement sets out a series of measures to significantly reduce the regulatory and procedural barriers to international trade. WTO estimates that the Agreement will reduce trade transaction costs by up to 15% and generate benefits of up to 1 trillion US dollars each year - a greater impact than the elimination of all existing tariffs around the world. It expects that the majority of these benefits will accrue to developing countries.

Speaking after the entry into force of the Agreement, Valentina Mintah, CEO of West Blue Consulting and a member of ICC Ghana, said "the Ghana National Single Window plays a key role in the execution of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, with up to 15 Sub Articles covered by the programme. With the entry into force of the TFA, we are confident of achieving a further reduction in time and cost of doing business in Ghana, whilst providing a level playing field for all trade participants".



West Blue Consulting Commended by the World Customs Organization at International Customs Day

Date: Thursday, 26th January, 2017
Time: 9:00 AM
Venue: World Trade Centre, Accra



World Trade Centre, Accra
Ghana Maritime Authority
GCNet
NMIA



Celebrating International Customs Day on 26 January in Accra,

The World Customs Organization (WCO) commended West Blue Consulting for making exceptional contributions to successful customs operations internationally. This is the second time that West Blue Consulting has been recognised by the WCO for their Customs related work

International Customs Day is celebrated by the WCO on 26th January every year to recognise the role of customs officials and agencies in enhancing Customs operations. The theme for 2017 announced by the WCO is "Data Analysis for Effective Border Management." This includes the collection and analysis of cargo release times at customs and other government agencies and the development of tools to better analyse trade statistics gathered by Customs. The

work of West Blue in the automation of the submission and assessment of international trade regulatory data will greatly support this theme.

Dignitaries attending the event included the Past Commissioner-General of the Ghana Revenue Authority, Mr. George Blankson, the Commissioner- Customs Division, Mr. John Vianney Kuadannuru, and Officers from the Ghana Revenue Authority- Customs Division.



New Commissioner-General of the Ghana Revenue Authority Appointed

The Government of Ghana has appointed Mr. Kofi Nti as the new Commissioner General of the Ghana Revenue Authority. Mr. Nti, a banker, economist, statistician, accountant and tax expert with experience spanning over thirty (30) years, takes over the activities of the Organization from the immediate past CG of GRA, Mr. George Blankson

served as a Consultant Economist and Tax Expert at the World Health Organisation (WHO) Africa Region, working from the WHO Office in Kampala, Uganda and then as resident consultant in Ghana.

At his inauguration, Commissioner-General Nti called on all staff and stakeholders to work on improving the government revenues, so that the ambitions of the State in this regard may be achieved.

Mr Nti held various senior level positions at the Ministry of Finance and until recently

Change and Transition Management

West Blue ran a cutting-edge Change and Transition Management (CTM) Leadership Workshop in December 2016. The workshop provided participants with direct experience in change and transition management techniques through a series of highly interactive in-class instructions and exercises. These included sessions on building collaborative approaches to change and transition, open communication techniques, active listening, change styles assessment, and identifying and understanding areas of resistance to change. Based on positive feedback from participants, West Blue will run a repeat CTM programme in the second quarter of 2017.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE GUTA PRESIDENT BARIMA OFORI AMEYAW



Q: Kindly tell us more about yourself and the operations of Ghana Union of Traders Association (GUTA)?

A: My name is Barimah Dr. Ofori Ameyaw, president of GUTA and a business man. I was recently installed as a chief. I am also a councilor to the chief in my hometown.

Coming to GUTA, GUTA consists of mainly private sector business men.

The association was established in 1991, I was the general secretary and went through the ranks, and I became the acting president after the association's former president retired as a result of old age. There was an election, and I emerged the president.

The Ghana Union of Traders' Association (GUTA) is an umbrella organization representing the interest of traders in the country. It was almost impossible for an individual to solely negotiate with any government. Therefore, GUTA was formed as a result of some of these objectives such that matters concerning trade and commerce could be discussed and promptly.

Q: What significant benefits can you mention since the introduction of the Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System under the Ghana National Single Window Project, in 2015?

A: Changes do not happen overnight. However, a journey of a 1000 miles begin with a step. There has been an improvement in our trade transactions. We do not have to travel for hours to agencies to retrieve and seek approvals for documents. With PAARS, in the comfort of your homes and office as well as in the palm of your hand, you can log unto the system to start your trade transaction. In addition, this is a one stop shop and has helped traders save the time and cost of doing business. Trade has been made easy.

Q: How would the upcoming e-Zones at the GUTA (Abossey Okai and Accra Head Offices) help your members?

A: Once these e-Zones can be assessed, traders will be largely assisted. The benefit of the single window program which is to ease business and reduce the time and cost of doing business as well as facilitating compliant trade will be achieved. Traders can transact their businesses without any hassle. Also, enquiries can be made easily once these facilities are fully operational.

Q: What priority deliverables will your members require from the GNSW Programme?

A: As a trader, an importer or exporter, we are always linked to the activities of the Ghana national single window program, hence every activity area must be encouraged. GUTA expects that the GNSW team/secretariat to be proactive in their task execution to make sure priority is placed on every area of their business activities to reduce the stress placed on traders.

Q: What are your final words to the Government of Ghana in enhancing the GNSW performance in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report?

A: We entreat the government of Ghana to define agency roles properly. This is so because some of our roles overlap with the other agencies.

The government must make our ports as attractive as possible to attract investors into the country to foster trade relations. These investments will enhance job creation and ease the rate of unemployment in the country.

Rigidity must be reduced to bring about competition within the trading community and the country as a whole. As referred to the World Bank ease of doing business report, Ghana will improve immensely.

The government of Ghana must support the GNSW program effectively to maximize revenue generation and collection for the country.

TRAINING

The recent period has been very active from a training perspective with several important programmes being delivered. These include:

- Training for Customs House Agents and Declarants on the new functionalities and features introduced in the enhanced Pre-Arrival Assessment and Reporting System (PAARS)

- Training for Export Declarants on the features of the Exporter On-line Single Registration System. The workshop was organized by the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) in collaboration with West Blue Consulting.
- Training for Agents on how to submit sea and air manifests electronically to

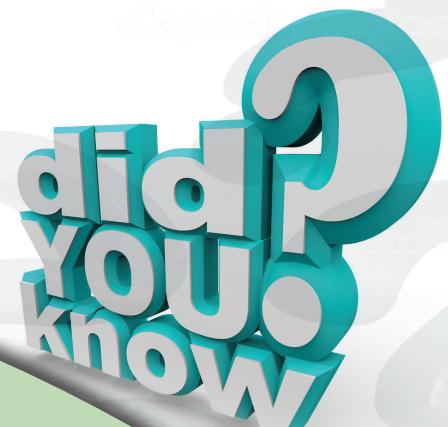
the new GNSW eManifest System, in compliance with the revised Customs Act.

- Training for Declarants on the full features of **Microsoft Office Suite**.

Training activities will continue over the coming period and information on all training programmes is available on the GhanaTradeHub at <https://www.ghananationalsinglewindowevents.com>

Ghana National Single Window

TRIVIA



We trust you have studied and digested the material in GNSW Newsletters Issues 1, 2, 3 and 4. Answer this quiz below based on this material and stand a chance to win big.

- When was the Ghana National Single Window Project Officially launched?
- What are the main objectives of the GNSW, as articulated in the GNSW Strategic Plan and Roadmap?
- What are the major tasks given to West Blue Consulting by the Government of Ghana in the Ghana National Single Window Programme?
- What are the three Phases detailed in the GNSW Strategic Plan and Roadmap?

- When and by whom was the GNSW Strategy and Road Map approved by government?
- List 3 of the “Quick Wins” detailed in Phase 1 of the GNSW Roadmap?
- Kindly provide the full wording for the following acronyms:
 - CCVR
 - PAARS
 - GTH
 - GNSW
 - IDF
 - WTO
 - WCO
 - CTSB
- State the 2017 Ranking for Ghana from the World Bank Trading Across Border Report.
- On what date did Ghana's Parliament ratify the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- Name at least 3 locations for the Ghana National Single Window eZones

All entrants should send their answers to: trivia@ghanatradinghub.com



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