

Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA)
28 April 2020

Initiatives and Actions taken by the Customs in response to COVID-19 pandemic

1. Measures aiming to Facilitate the Cross-border Movement of Relief and Essential Supplies

- 1.1. Providing Direct Delivery facilities (deferred document processing and payment) for COVID-19 Relief and Essential Supplies;
- 1.2. Twenty-four hour cross border Customs services for essential goods and services for COVID-19.

2. Measures aiming at Supporting the Economy and Sustaining Supply Chain Continuity

- 2.1. The use of Risk Management and increased profiling of passengers and goods across all borders (differentiating between relief supplies and profit-making related goods) and encouraging pre arrival processing;
- 2.2. Promote the use of Coordinated Border Management;
- 2.3. Extended Trade Facilitation Measures and given privileges to Importers;
- 2.4. Enhance the use of emails between Customs and Shipping Agencies and allowing manifests to be attached as PDF (Portable Document Format) file;
- 2.5. Extended all Customs Claims and Appeals until June 2020;
- 2.6. Suspended periodic Customs Audit or Inspections during 2020 COVID-19 period, as a result of limited commercial activities due to Government giving "opening" and "closing" time for different types of businesses and also, to put in place the social distancing and interaction between Officers, Auditors and Traders;
- 2.7. Availability and encouraging the use of remote access to ASYCUDA to facilitate all Customs Procedures and Processes at every border with minimum contact with Cross Border Traders.

3. Measures aiming at Protecting Customs administrations' Staff

- 3.1. Using staggering shifts to reduce number of staff at work and increase physical distance between workers;

3.2. Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (hand gloves and face masks) and Sanitizers to frontline staff;

3.3. Working towards the provision of transportation to and from work for staff without private vehicles;

3.4. Emergency Hotline for staff enquiries on preventive measures and reporting on COVID-19 symptoms.

4. Measures aiming at Protecting Society

4.1. Providing logistical support and participating in the Joint Security Operation for Combating COVID-19 in The Gambia and surveillance along the porous borders for undocumented persons;

4.2. Being a member of the Essential Commodity Control Committee, Customs actively participate in curbing hoarding and exportation of essential commodities;

4.3. The use of Thermometers to check temperature level of staff and other stakeholders;

4.4. Providing the use of handwashing facilities for traders and visitors at all Customs Offices;

Spacing sitting arrangements for at least one meter between staff and among stakeholders to comply with the social distancing WHO advise.

5. Other Measures.

5.1. Establishment of a COVID-19 Crisis Management Committee;

5.2. Suspension of staff loan repayments for an initial period of three months;

5.3. Payment of one month basic salary to all staff to purchase essential commodities;

5.4. Weekly meetings on COVID-19 enforcement matters.

