

Liberia Time Release Study **REPORT**

Freeport of Monrovia **July, 2026**

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FOREWORD

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY / LNTFC CHAIR

It is my distinct honor to present the Time Release Study (TRS) Report for the Freeport of Monrovia, a landmark assessment that underscores Liberia's continued commitment to advancing trade facilitation, improving market access, strengthening inter-agency coordination, and enhancing the efficiency of border management systems.

As the lead government institution responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies that promote commerce, trade, and private sector development, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry recognizes that efficient trade processes are fundamental to Liberia's economic transformation and integration into regional and global markets.

Facilitating the smooth movement of goods across borders is essential to reducing the cost of doing business, increasing competitiveness, attracting investment, and expanding economic opportunities for Liberian businesses and consumers alike.

Given Liberia's heavy reliance on international trade, reducing delays, administrative burdens and uncertainties associated with cargo clearance remains a national priority. The Time Release Study provides an evidence-based assessment of the average time required for cargo to move through the port clearance process and identifies operational and procedural bottlenecks that hinder trade efficiency. The findings and recommendations contained in this report will therefore serve as an important tool for informed decision-making and targeted reform implementation.

This study comes at a critical time as the Government of Liberia intensifies efforts to modernize trade and customs procedures in line with international and regional obligations, including the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). These commitments are central to Liberia's broader agenda of promoting trade competitiveness, expanding regional market access, and creating a more enabling environment for private sector growth and industrial development.

The results of the study clearly demonstrate that trade facilitation is a shared responsibility requiring effective collaboration among multiple public and private sector institutions. Cargo clearance involves coordinated actions among customs authorities, port operators, regulatory agencies, logistics service providers, customs brokers, transport operators, and the wider trading community. I am therefore pleased that this study was undertaken through a multi-stakeholder approach that reflects the spirit of partnership necessary to achieve sustainable and impactful reforms.

The Government of Liberia remains fully committed to improving cargo clearance performance through sustained institutional reforms and coordinated implementation efforts. The recommendations outlined in this report provide a practical roadmap for strengthening inter-agency coordination, enhancing automation and digitalization, improving port and border infrastructure, streamlining procedures, and promoting transparency and predictability within the trade environment. Collectively, these reforms will contribute significantly to reducing trade costs, facilitating access to markets, and improving the overall efficiency of Liberia's trade and transport systems.

As Chair of the National Trade Facilitation Committee, I reaffirm the Government's commitment to ensuring the effective implementation of the recommendations of this Time Release Study. Through its Secretariat, the Committee will coordinate, monitor, and track implementation efforts across all relevant institutions. The Secretariat will continue to engage implementing agencies and stakeholders from both the public and private sectors to ensure timely follow-up on agreed actions, strengthen accountability, and sustain the momentum of ongoing reforms.

On behalf of the Government of Liberia, I extend sincere appreciation to the World Customs Organization (WCO) Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme, as funded by the United Kingdom's His Majesty's Revenue & Customs, for its technical guidance, capacity building support, and continued partnership throughout the implementation of this study. I also commend the Liberia Revenue Authority, the National Trade Facilitation Committee, participating government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and development partners whose commitment and collaboration made this important exercise possible. It is my firm belief that this Time Release Study will serve as a catalyst for deeper reforms and contribute meaningfully to Liberia's journey toward becoming a more efficient, competitive, and trade-driven economy.

Hon. Magdalene Ellen Dagoseh
Minister of Commerce & Industry
Chair, National Trade Facilitation Committee



FOREWORD

COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS LIBERIA REVENUE AUTHORITY

It is with great satisfaction that I present the report of Liberia's Second Time Release Study (TRS), conducted at the Freeport of Monrovia in accordance with the methodology prescribed by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The TRS is one of the WCO's most important performance measurement and diagnostic tools, enabling Customs administrations and border agencies to objectively measure cargo release and clearance times, identify bottlenecks in cross-border trade processes, and formulate targeted reforms that facilitate legitimate trade while maintaining effective customs controls and revenue assurance.

The conduct of this second TRS demonstrates the Liberia Revenue Authority's unwavering commitment to modernizing Customs operations, improving border governance, and implementing evidence-based reforms that strengthen supply chain efficiency, enhance transparency and predictability, foster closer partnership and collaboration with stakeholders and improve Liberia's competitiveness in regional and global trade. The study builds on the gains and lessons derived from Liberia's inaugural TRS completed in March 2022.

Recognizing the importance of periodically measuring and benchmarking border performance, I engaged the World Customs Organization, through its Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme, as funded by the United Kingdom's His Majesty's Revenue & Customs, to support the conduct of this second TRS. Following bilateral discussions held on the margins of the WCO Council Sessions in June 2025, the WCO graciously provided technical assistance, including virtual and in-country capacity-building programmes for the National TRS Working Group, culminating in the official launch of the study on November 4, 2025.

The success of this study is attributable to the strong collaboration and commitment of the TRS Technical Working Group, comprising Customs and key stakeholders across the border clearance ecosystem, including government agencies and private-sector institutions. Their participation reaffirms an important reality that trade facilitation is a shared responsibility. This TRS therefore provides a holistic assessment of the end-to-end import clearance process, encompassing documentary requirements, information flows, physical inspections, financial transactions, and inter-agency coordination.

The study sought to measure the average time required for the release and clearance of imported goods at the Freeport of Monrovia, identify procedural, institutional, and operational bottlenecks affecting cargo movement, assess the impact of recently introduced or modified policies and technologies on border performance, establish a robust baseline for monitoring trade facilitation reforms, and identify priority intervention areas aimed at enhancing the predictability, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of border clearance operations.

The findings and recommendations contained in this report are therefore of strategic importance. They provide empirical evidence to guide policy decisions and operational reforms and will serve as an important benchmark for measuring progress over time. Liberia remains committed to improving its trade environment and strengthening its position as a competitive destination for investment and commerce.

In pursuit of these objectives, the Customs Department has embarked on an ambitious modernization agenda that includes the upgrade of ASYCUDA, the development of the Liberia National Electronic Trade Single Window, enhanced Customs Risk Management, the establishment of the Centralized Assessment Unit, the deployment of electronic services, and the strengthening of Customs security and enforcement programmes. These reforms are anchored on internationally recognized principles of trade facilitation, coordinated border management, risk-based controls, and digital transformation.

I am confident that the recommendations emanating from this study, once implemented, will contribute significantly to reducing cargo release times, lowering trade transaction costs, improving regulatory compliance, and strengthening Liberia's integration into regional and global supply chains.

I wish to express my profound appreciation to the World Customs Organization for its invaluable technical assistance and continued partnership. I also extend sincere gratitude to Assistant Commissioner Edwin F. Kendema, the members of the TRS Technical Working Group, and all stakeholders whose dedication and professionalism made this study a success.

Together, we reaffirm our commitment to building a Customs administration that is modern, efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of government, the trading community, and the people of Liberia.

Saa Saamoi

Commissioner of Customs
Liberia Revenue Authority



FOREWORD

COMMISSIONER GENERAL / CEO LIBERIA REVENUE AUTHORITY

It is my pleasure to present the Liberia Time Release Study (TRS) Report for the Freeport of Monrovia. This report represents an important milestone in strengthening evidence-based customs administration and advancing Liberia's trade facilitation and border modernization agenda.

Trade facilitation and effective revenue administration remain central to Liberia's economic transformation agenda, the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID). As the nation's principal revenue institution, the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) is firmly committed to modernizing customs processes in ways that promote economic growth, enhance compliance, and improve the ease of doing business. In furtherance of this commitment, the LRA conducted a Time Release Study (TRS) at the Freeport of Liberia, which handles over 90 percent of the country's international trade. The study provides an objective assessment of the movement of goods through the clearance process and identifies systemic constraints that affect efficiency, predictability, and

The study findings reveal notable variations in clearance times (**culminating in average of 12 days and 19 hours**) across different stages of the process and among key stakeholders. While progress is evident in certain areas as a result of ongoing reforms, the results also highlight persistent operational and coordination bottlenecks that continue to affect the speed and predictability of cargo clearance.

These insights provide a strong empirical basis for targeted reforms aimed at improving overall trade facilitation performance. Its findings provide the LRA senior management and policymakers with a sound analytical basis for reforms as enshrined in the WTO-TFA, aimed at reducing clearance times, lowering transaction costs, and strengthening revenue performance, while ensuring compliance with national legislation and international best practices.

This study forms an integral part of the LRA Corporate Strategic Plan (2025–2029), which sets out a comprehensive reform agenda focused on institutional efficiency, improved service delivery, and digital transformation. Within this framework, the LRA has embarked on several high-impact initiatives designed to modernize customs administration and facilitate legitimate trade. A major infrastructure reform under this agenda is the construction of a modern and spacious Destination Inspection (DI) Facility at the Freeport of Liberia, equipped with non-intrusive inspection technologies. The facility will co-locate Customs and other key stakeholders involved in the clearance process, thereby strengthening inter-agency coordination, reducing duplication, and minimizing delays associated with fragmented operations.

Beyond physical infrastructure, the LRA has prioritized nationwide automation and connectivity. In the past, limited internet access – particularly in rural Customs Business Offices – constrained the full deployment of ASYCUDA World. To address this challenge, the LRA has successfully deployed Starlink connectivity across all Customs Business Offices, enabling full nationwide rollout of ASYCUDA.

With this implementation, importers and clearing agents can now submit declarations and make payments electronically without the need for physical presence at Customs offices, thereby improving efficiency, transparency, and compliance.

In parallel, the LRA is advancing the implementation of the National Single Window (NSW) as a cornerstone of its trade facilitation reforms. The upgrade of ASYCUDA World, combined with the introduction of the NSW, is expected to significantly reduce trade barriers and streamline regulatory processes through the electronic submission and exchange of trade-related information among all stakeholders. To support this process, a UNCTAD technical team is currently in the country to upgrade ASYCUDA World, which will serve as the core platform for the NSW implementation.

I wish to commend the Customs Department, partner government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and development partners for their continued collaboration and commitment to these reforms. The findings and recommendations of this Time Release Study will guide ongoing and future interventions aimed at building a modern, efficient, and responsive customs administration.

It is my conviction that the successful implementation of the recommendations contained in this report, together with the broader reform initiatives underway, will significantly enhance trade facilitation, improve revenue outcomes, and contribute meaningfully to Liberia's national development objectives.

James Dorbor Jallah

Commissioner General / CEO
Liberia Revenue Authority

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The need to facilitate international trade in this 21st century cannot be overemphasized. One of the most effective paths toward this goal is through the rigorous implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA). As part of Customs reform and modernization initiatives, the TRS has been identified as a key driver for trade facilitation. The Commissioner of Customs formally constituted a Technical Working Group (TWG) to conduct Liberia's second TRS, and, with hard work and dedication, the TRS report has been finalized.

The TWG first and foremost extends its profound gratitude to **Mr. Saa Saamoi**, Commissioner of Customs, for the confidence he reposed in the working group to embark upon this noteworthy venture and for his unwavering support and guidance to the team. Special thanks to the Technical Working Group and all major stakeholders, including the Liberia Revenue Authority, the Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee, the Liberia Sea-port Police, the Liberia National Truckers Association, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Liberia Medicines Health Regulatory Authority, the National Customs Broker Association of Liberia, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Liberia Chamber of Commerce, the National Port Authority, APM Terminals, the Liberia Standards Authority, the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Shipping Lines, for their involvement and invaluable contributions towards this project.

Lastly and most importantly, the TWG would like to extend thanks and appreciation to the following WCO experts: Mr. Arman Zhalitov (Lead Technical Expert of the WCO Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme), Mrs. Agatha Munyaka (Accredited WCO TRS Expert from Kenya Revenue Authority), and Mr. Jean Pierre Mwizerwa (Accredited WCO TRS Expert from Rwanda Revenue Authority) who conducted training, capacity building and technical advice to the National TRS Technical Working Group and were also instrumental in providing guidance and support throughout the TRS exercise. This TRS project could not have been successful without

United Kingdom for supporting this project, through WCO Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme, from its inception to its completion.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

APMT	: APM Terminals Liberia
ARREST	: Agriculture, Roads and Transportation, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, Tourism
CAU	: Centralized Assessment Unit
COM 4	: Entry for Home Use Consumption within the Community – Destination Inspection
DI	: Destination Inspection
ECOWAS	: Economic Community of West African States
HMRC	: His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (United Kingdom)
IM 4	: Entry for Home use Consumption – Destination Inspection
LNTFC	: Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee
LRA	: Liberia Revenue Authority
MoCI	: Ministry of Commerce and Industry
NCBAL	: National Customs Brokers Association of Liberia
NPA	: National Port Authority
NSW	: National Single Window
OGAs	: Other Government Agencies
PCA	: Post-Clearance Audit
SRC 4	: Special Release for Goods from ECOWAS Community
SRI	: Special Release for Goods from Outside ECOWAS Community
TDO	: Terminal Delivery Order
TFA	: Trade Facilitation Agreement
TRS	: Time Release Study
TWG	: Technical Working Group
WCO	: World Customs Organization
WTO	: World Trade Organization
WTO-TFA	: World Trade Organization – Trade Facilitation Agreement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Liberia, through the coordination of the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and in collaboration and under the umbrella of the Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee (LNTFC), successfully conducted the second national Time Release Study (TRS) at the Freeport of Monrovia. The study was undertaken with technical guidance from the World Customs Organization (WCO) under the WCO Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme, funded by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of the United Kingdom. The TRS forms part of Liberia's broader trade facilitation reform agenda and reflects the Government's commitment to modernizing with international trade obligations.

The study represents an important milestone in Liberia's implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA), which Liberia ratified on 29 April 2021. In accordance with Article 7.6 of the WTO-TFA, WTO Members are encouraged to measure and publish the average release time of goods using internationally recognized methodologies such as the WCO Time Release Study. The conduct of this study therefore demonstrates Liberia's enhanced alignment with the WTO TFA Article 7.6, commitment to transparency, evidence-based reform, and the continuous improvement of trade facilitation performance.

The overarching objective of the study was to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of cargo clearance procedures at the Freeport of Monrovia and identify practical opportunities for reducing delays and improving the predictability of trade processes. Specifically, the study sought to measure the average time required for cargo to move through the clearance process, identify operational and procedural bottlenecks, assess coordination among stakeholders, and develop recommendations to strengthen trade facilitation and border management efficiency.

The study adopted the World Customs Organization's Time Release Study methodology and covered the complete cargo clearance process from the arrival of goods at the Freeport of Monrovia to their final physical exit from the port. Unlike traditional approaches that focus only on Customs processing, the study examined the entire cargo clearance ecosystem involving shipping lines, terminal operators, Customs authorities, commercial banks, customs brokers, transport operators, other government agencies, and security institutions. Data were collected through a combination of electronic system records and manually administered questionnaires. A total of 670 import declarations/containers were analyzed, exceeding the original sample target of 543 declarations and thereby enhancing the reliability and representativeness of the results.

The findings reveal that the average time required for cargo to move from vessel arrival to final/physical exit from the Freeport of Monrovia is 12 days, 19 hours, and 42 minutes. While Liberia conducted its first TRS in 2020 (published in 2022), direct comparison of the two studies is limited due to significant differences in methodology, scope and data collection.

The earlier study, undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic, relied primarily on Customs electronic data and a limited sample of 112 import declarations, whereas the 2025 TRS analyzed 670 valid import declarations using the full WCO TRS methodology and standardized electronic and manual time stamps across the entire cargo clearance process.

Nevertheless, three key indicators are comparable. The overall cargo release time from vessel arrival to physical exit from the Freeport decreased from 12 days, 22 hours and 8 minutes to 12 days, 19 hours and 42 minutes. The average exit gate clearance time remained broadly stable at approximately 34 minutes. While the 2022 study measured only the duration of the Customs physical examination, the 2025 TRS measured the Joint physical examination conducted by Customs and other Government Agencies, reflecting Liberia's progress towards coordinated border management.

As the 2025 study distinguishes the waiting time before examination from the examination itself, the results are not directly comparable; however, the actual joint examination averaged 57 minutes. More importantly, the 2025 TRS establishes Liberia's comprehensive WCO-compliant baseline using the standardized TRS Data Dictionary, providing a robust framework for measuring future improvements.

Although several stages of the clearance process in 2025 demonstrated relatively efficient performance, significant delays continue to exist across multiple operational areas. The study identified several key bottlenecks contributing to prolonged cargo dwell times.

These include late submission of manifest by shipping lines, delays between vessel arrival and commencement of cargo discharge operations, prolonged declaration preparation and submission by importers and their agents, delays in customs assessment and control processes, weak integration between banking systems and ASYCUDA World, manual Terminal Delivery Order (TDO) procedures, terminal congestion, lengthy truck turnaround times, and limited coordination among stakeholders. In contrast, physical examination activities conducted by Customs and other government agencies were found to be relatively efficient, demonstrating that inspections themselves are not the primary source of delays.

The study further revealed that Liberia has made important progress in customs modernization through the deployment of ASYCUDA World, risk management systems, post-clearance audit programs, and ongoing efforts toward the implementation of a national single window. The findings indicate that the ASYCUDA World system possesses the technical capacity to process declarations rapidly; however, operational practices, manual interventions, and institutional coordination challenges significantly limit the realization of these efficiency gains.

To address the identified bottlenecks, the study recommends a comprehensive package of reforms aimed at strengthening trade facilitation and reducing cargo clearance times.

Key recommendations include enforcing mandatory pre-arrival electronic manifest submission, improving berth allocation and vessel scheduling, strengthening Customs and other border agencies' risk management and automated selectivity, reducing manual interventions in declaration processing, digitizing Terminal Delivery Order issuance, improving integration between ASYCUDA World and banking systems, implementing real-time payment confirmation, enhancing inter-agency coordination through joint inspection management and the adoption

of electronic systems, improving terminal and yard operations, expanding the use of electronic systems, strengthening transparency and performance monitoring, procuring additional cargo handling equipment, and accelerating the implementation of the national single window.

The study also emphasizes the importance of capacity building for customs officers, customs brokers, port operators, and other border agencies to ensure effective utilization of automated systems and adherence to modern trade facilitation practices. In addition, targeted investments in infrastructure, information technology, cargo handling equipment, and non-intrusive inspection technologies will be necessary to support sustained improvements in cargo clearance performance.

Successful implementation of the TRS recommendations will require a structured and coordinated approach involving all stakeholders in the cargo clearance ecosystem. The report therefore proposes the formal adoption of the National Implementation Plan and the establishment of a multi-agency TRS Implementation Task Force under the leadership of the Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee to oversee implementation, monitor progress, and ensure accountability.

A time-bound action plan, supported by measurable performance indicators and a TRS monitoring dashboard, has been developed to track improvements in clearance times, manifest compliance, vessel turnaround times, payment processing, and terminal operations. Regular stakeholder consultations and quarterly performance reviews are essential to sustaining reform momentum and ensuring continuous improvement.

Overall, the findings of this Time Release Study provide a strong empirical foundation for future trade facilitation reforms in Liberia. The successful implementation of the recommendations contained in this report will contribute to reducing trade costs, improving cargo clearance efficiency, strengthening revenue administration, enhancing private sector competitiveness, and positioning Liberia as a more attractive destination for trade and investment.

The study therefore serves not only as a performance measurement exercise but also as a strategic roadmap for achieving a more efficient, predictable, transparent, and competitive trade environment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Geography and Economic Background

The Republic of Liberia is situated along the West African coast and maintains an open, trade-dependent economy characterized by significant reliance on maritime transport for both imports and exports. The country's economic structure is largely driven by the movement of essential consumer goods, fuel products, construction materials, and primary commodity exports, making the efficiency of border clearance processes a critical determinant of economic performance, revenue mobilization, and private sector competitiveness.

Within Liberia's trade logistics network, the Freeport of Monrovia serves as the principal maritime gateway and the country's busiest commercial port. The port operates under a landlord port model administered by the National Port Authority (NPA), with major concession arrangements involving APM Terminals Liberia and other relevant stakeholders.

The harbor is protected by two rock breakwaters measuring approximately 2,300 meters and 2,200 meters respectively, enclosing about 300 hectares of sheltered water. The main marginal wharf extends approximately 600 meters and is capable of berthing three to five vessels simultaneously depending on vessel size. However, there are three active berths. In addition, the Port complex includes two finger piers - Liberia Mining Company (LMC) 265-meter-long, and Bong Mines Company (BMC) 270-meter-long - which historically supported mineral exports and continue to form part of the broader Port infrastructure.

Given the Freeport's dominant role in handling the majority of Liberia's seaborne trade, any inefficiencies in cargo clearance procedures at this gateway have significant implications for trade costs, supply chain reliability, government revenue performance, and Liberia's competitiveness within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sub-region and global markets. It is against this backdrop that this Time Release Study (TRS) was undertaken. Figure 1 depicts the geographical map of the Freeport of Monrovia along the Atlantic Ocean.



Figure 1: Geographical Map of the Freeport of Monrovia

1.2 International Commitments

Liberia, having ratified the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) on April 29, 2021, has formally committed to implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which entered into force globally in February 2017. The Agreement seeks to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods, including goods in transit, and promotes effective cooperation between Customs and other appropriate authorities.

Article 7.6 of the TFA specifically encourages WTO Members to measure and publish the average release time of goods periodically using internationally recognized tools such as the World Customs Organization (WCO) Time Release Study (TRS). The conduct of the present TRS therefore represents a concrete step by the Government of Liberia toward fulfilling its international obligations under the TFA.

Furthermore, the study supports the mandate of Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee (LNTFC), which serves as the national coordination platform for trade facilitation reforms. By generating empirical performance data, the TRS strengthens evidence-based decision-making and enhances Liberia's transparency and credibility in the implementation of international trade commitments.

1.3 Trade Facilitation Reform Context

In recent years, the Government of Liberia has implemented several institutional and technological reforms aimed at modernizing Customs administration and improving the overall trade environment. Key among these reforms are:

- Deployment and continuous enhancement of the ASYCUDA World automated Customs management system;
- Strengthening of risk management and selectivity frameworks to support targeted inspections;
- Expansion of Post-Clearance Audit (PCA) capabilities;
- Continuous efforts to improve inter-agency coordination at the Freeport of Monrovia; and
- Broader public sector reforms under national development strategies aimed at improving the business climate.

Notwithstanding these achievements, stakeholders – including the trading community, Port operators, and partner Agencies – have emphasized the need for objective and data-driven measurement of cargo clearance performance. While administrative data provide useful operational insights, a comprehensive TRS offers a more robust end-to-end assessment of the actual time taken for the release of goods.

The present TRS was therefore conceived as a diagnostic and performance measurement tool to identify process bottlenecks, quantify delays, evaluate the impact of structural enhancements introduced since the 2022 Time Release Study, and support targeted trade facilitation reforms across Liberia.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE TIME RELEASE STUDY

2.1 General Objective

The general objective of the Liberia TRS is to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of cargo clearance procedures at the Freeport of Monrovia and to identify practical opportunities for improving the speed and predictability of cross-border trade processes.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the TRS are to:

- Measure the overall performance of Customs and other Border Agencies involved in the clearance of goods processes;
- Determine the average duration between the physical arrival of cargo and its physical release from the seaport;
- Identify documentary, procedural, and operational bottlenecks affecting cargo clearance process;
- Quantify the time consumed at each key intervention point in the supply chain;
- Assess the level of coordination among border agencies and private sector actors; and
- Provide evidence-based recommendations to strengthen trade facilitation and border management efficiency.

2.3 Significance of the Study

The findings of the Liberia TRS are expected to serve as a strategic evidence base for targeted trade facilitation reforms. Specifically, the results will:

- Evaluate the impact of structural enhancements introduced since the 2022 Time Release Study;
- Establish a national baseline for cargo release performance;
- Establish the TRS Data Dictionary, a comprehensive standardized list of electronic and manual time stamps measuring the port efficiency that will be taken as a basis for future studies and serve for comparative analysis;
- Identify bottlenecks in the cargo clearance process;
- Support policy and procedural reforms within the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and partner Agencies;
- Enhance inter-agency coordination and border governance;
- Improve transparency and predictability for the trading community; and
- Strengthen Liberia's compliance with WTO TFA commitments.

Over the medium to long term, effective implementation of the TRS recommendations is expected to contribute to reduced cargo dwell times, lower transaction costs for traders, improved revenue assurance, and enhanced national and regional competitiveness.

2.4 Initiation of the TRS

After conducting Liberia's first-ever TRS and publishing its result in 2022, the second national TRS was formally initiated by the LRA in partnership with other national stakeholders in September 2025 as part of a strategic commitment to strengthen cargo clearance performance measurement and comply with WTO TFA obligations. The initiative was undertaken in collaboration with the WCO under the WCO Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme, as funded by His Majesty's Revenue & Customs of the United Kingdom. Following internal consultations within the LRA and engagement with key stakeholders, executive approval was obtained to proceed with the study.

A detailed project charter, work plan, and calendar of activities were subsequently developed covering the implementation period from November 2025 to June 2026.

The study builds on Liberia's earlier trade facilitation efforts and reflects the Government's continued focus on improving border efficiency, enhancing revenue assurance and reducing the cost of doing business.

2.5 Project Governance and Supervision

The TRS was implemented under a structured project governance framework designed to ensure strong institutional ownership, accountability, and technical rigor.

- The Commissioner General (CG) of the LRA served as Project Sponsor, providing overall strategic direction and institutional support.
- The Commissioner of Customs served as Project Owner, ensuring operational oversight and alignment with Customs modernization priorities;
- The Assistant Commissioner for Ports Operation worked as Project Manager who coordinated the day-to-day implementation of the study;
- A Technical Working Group, comprising of all key stakeholders was formed to carry out the actual Study;
- Technical guidance and methodological support were provided by the WCO Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme which is sponsored by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of the United Kingdom.

This governance arrangement facilitated effective coordination among participating Agencies and ensured adherence to international TRS standards.

2.6 National TRS Technical Working Group

A multi-agency National Time Release Study Technical Working Group (TWG) was established to oversee the technical execution of the study. The Working Group brought together representatives from:

- Liberia Revenue Authority (Customs Department and relevant technical units);
- Key Other Government Agencies (OGAs), including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Liberia Medicines Health Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Liberia Standards Authority, the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency, and the National Port Authority;
- Liberia Seaport Police;
- The National Trade Facilitation Committee; and
- Private sector stakeholders, including AMP Terminals Liberia, National Customs Brokers Association of Liberia (NCBAL), the Liberia National Truckers Union, and Liberia Chamber of Commerce.

The TWG was responsible for business process mapping, questionnaire design, collection of data, validation of results, and formulation of the report. The inclusive composition of the Working Group helped ensure technical and data accuracy, transparency, and broad stakeholder ownership of the study outcomes.

2.7 Scope of the Study

The TRS was conducted at the Freeport of Monrovia, Liberia's primary maritime gateway. The study focused on commercial cargo subject to Customs control and examined the end-to-end clearance process from arrival of the vessel to physical release of the container from the port. The preparation stage started in September 2025 with online training of the TWG members for six weeks. This was followed by a one-week in-country training in November of 2025. Both data collection test-run and the actual TRS data were collected between November and December of 2025. Between January and June 2026, all datasets were processed, cleaned, analyzed, and final report was developed. The scope covered:

- Imported commercial cargo handled at the Freeport;
- Shipments processed under applicable Customs regimes (COM4, IM4, SRI, and SRC);
- Clearance procedures involving Customs and relevant border agencies, as well as shipping lines and APM Terminal Liberia Liberia;
- Both electronic time stamps and manually captured process steps; and
- Selected clearance channels based on risk management outcomes (i.e. red, yellow, and blue lane declarations).

The scope of the current TRS covered all cargo types for import procedures. In particular, the study included all shipments classified as dutiable cargo, non-dutiable cargo, and duty-free cargo processed on a commercial basis, irrespective of their specific Customs regime. The study measured the time interval between the arrival of goods at the Port and their physical release from Customs control and final gate out/exit from the Freeport of Monrovia for imported goods only.

2.8 Stakeholders Involved

The successful conduct of the TRS depended on close collaboration among multiple public and private sector stakeholders involved in Liberia's border management ecosystem. Key participating institutions included:

- Liberia Revenue Authority (Customs Department and relevant technical units);
- National Port Authority;
- APM Terminal Liberia Liberia;
- Other Government Agencies operating at the Freeport of Monrovia;
- National Customs Brokers Association of Liberia and freight forwarders;
- Importers / consignees;
- The National Trade Facilitation Committee;
- The Liberia National Truckers Union;
- Commercial Banks; and
- Shipping Agencies.

Active stakeholder engagement was critical to ensuring the reliability of data collected and the practical relevance of the study's recommendations.

3.0 STUDY METHODOLOGY

TRS, as a tool to measure the efficiency of the clearance processes, encompasses four phases that are to be carried out in sequential order as recommended by the WCO. The four phases include, Preparation of the study; Data collection and recording; Data analysis and conclusion, and Monitoring & Evaluation.

The TRS conducted at the Freeport of Monrovia is a strategic and comprehensive analysis of clearance and release processes of imported cargo, and is aligned with the latest international standards.

The study adopts the comprehensive measurement framework prescribed by the WCO Time Release Study Guide (Version 4, 2025), moving beyond the traditional metric of solely measuring the time from declaration submission to final customs release.

It encompasses the entire end-to-end journey of the consignment, specifically measuring the duration from the arrival of goods (Mark-for-Arrival) at the Freeport of Monrovia to their physical exit (Mark-for-Exit) from the Freeport of Monrovia. This expansive measurement scope is crucial because it acknowledges that the efficiency of the clearance process is a collective responsibility of all participants in the cargo-clearance chain.

This approach accurately captures all potential points of friction and delay. By exploring the complete cargo-clearance timeline, the study illustrates the roles which both public and private entities play, allowing for a nuanced, evidence-based evaluation of the overall efficiency and effectiveness of clearance procedures. Figures 2 and 3 show diagrams of the TRS circle and phases, as adopted by the TWG.



Figure 2: WCO TRS Circle (Extracted from the WCO TRS Guide,

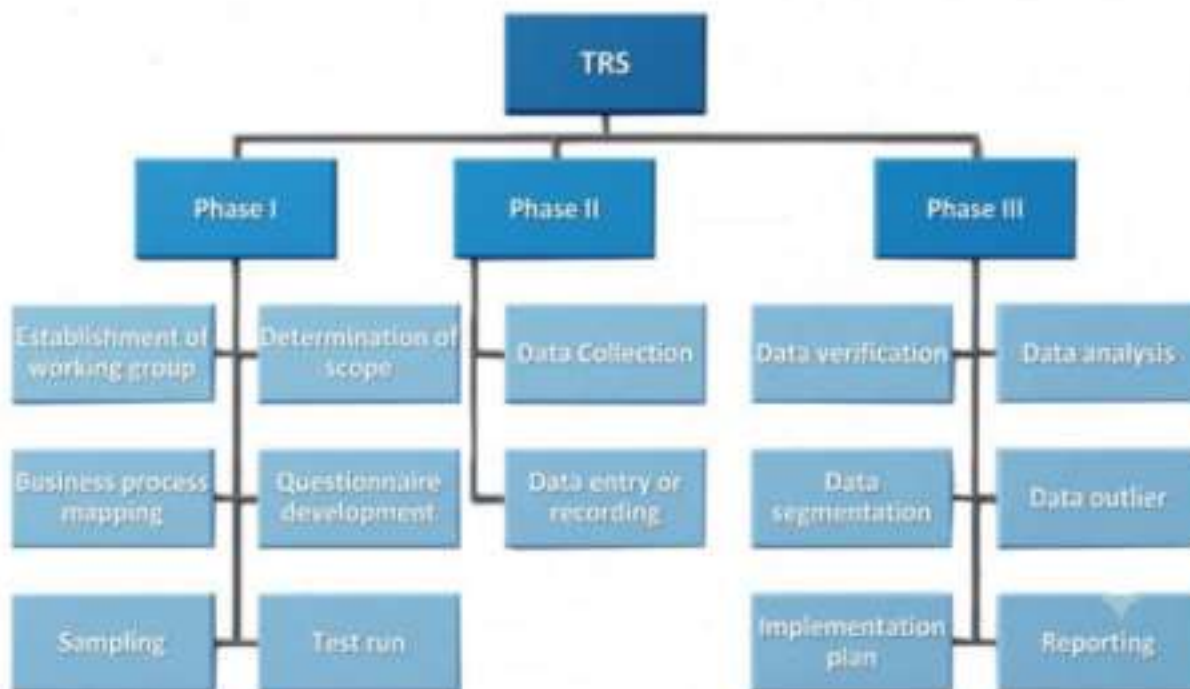


Figure 3: TRS Work Breakdown Structure (Extracted from the WCO TRS Guide, 2025)

3.1 PHASE 1: Preparation of the Study

3.1.1 Site Visits

The TWG carried out a site visit in order to conduct an “Environmental Scanning” at all stakeholders associated with the clearance process of imported goods into Liberia. They visited actors including the shipping Lines, Customs Brokers/Declarants, APM Terminals, National Port Authority & Other Governmental Agencies (OGAs), Banks, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Department of Customs/LRA.

The essence of conducting an environmental scanning was to understand the processes and procedures at each of the entities involved in the clearance process. Following the conclusion of the environmental scanning, the TWG developed a consolidated process flow/map for imported goods into the territory of Liberia. They also developed a data dictionary and questionnaire in line with the findings from the site visits.

3.1.2 Process mapping for Import Procedure

The cargo clearance process in Liberia involves multiple stakeholders, such as shipping lines, declarants (importers or their agents), Customs, terminal operator, banks, and OGAs. The Government of Liberia ensures that imported goods are properly declared, assessed, and released in line with national revenue laws and procedures. The clearance process for imported goods can be broken down into the following sequential steps as depicted through the import process map presented in Annex 1 of this document.

Step 1: Manifest Submission by Shipping Lines/Agents

- Shipping lines submit the electronic manifest simultaneously to APM Terminals Liberia and Customs prior to vessel arrival;
- Issue arrival notice to importers or their agents – thus providing advance cargo information which enables Customs and APM Terminals Liberia to prepare for vessel discharge and declaration processing.

Step 2: Arrival of Vessel and Container Discharge - (APM Terminals Liberia):

- Receives electronic manifest;
- Discharges containers;
- Sends release order notification message;
- Raises invoice for payment;
- Issues cargo release and terminal delivery order (TDO) to importers or their agents;
- Gate out container(s).

Step 3: Importers / or their agents:

- Receive arrival notice and proceed to make payment for shipping charges;
- Submit declaration to Customs;
- Receive and respond to query where applicable;
- Receive assessment notice from Customs;
- Proceed to make payment of Customs duties.

Step 4: Compliance Check by Customs

ASYCUDA selectivity generally operates in four lanes/channels as indicated in Figure 4. However, there are three lanes/channels that are functional at the Freeport of Monrovia. Once the declaration is completed and validated by the importer or their agent, the system automatically assigns a risk channel (Blue, Yellow or Red) based on Customs' risk management parameters and selection profiles.



Figure 4: Customs Risk Parameters

- Green lane/channel: All Green lane declarations are released automatically;
- Blue lane/channel: The Centralized Assessment Unit (CAU) validates declarations for payment and immediate release subject to Post Clearance Audit;
- Yellow lane/channel: Documentary verification by CAU;
- Red lane/channel: Documentary verification by CAU followed by physical examination either at the Port facility or delivery point;
- Conformed declarations are validated and electronic assessment notices are issued to importer or their agent for payment;
- Non-conformed declarations are queried for the importer/agent's attention and response;
- Upon confirmation of payment, ASYCUDA updates the declaration status to "Paid," and an electronic release order is simultaneously sent to the AMP Terminals for release.

Step 5: Joint Physical Inspection

A joint inspection is conducted by Customs and other governmental agencies to ensure that goods comply with health, safety, security, and environmental standards in addition to Customs regulations. OGAs involved in the joint inspection / examination process include: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Executive Protection Service, Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency, MedTech Scientific Limited, Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, and Liberia Standards Authority. After the inspection, if Customs finds discrepancy, an examination report is made in the ASYCUDA system, for re-assessments and payment of additional taxes and penalties where applicable.

Step 6: Final Cargo Release (Exit Gate)

At the Exit Gate of the Freeport of Monrovia, importers or their agents are required to show hard copies of their clearance documents, including payment receipts of all taxes and fees. Those documents are verified by Customs Exit Officers and Port Gate Officers consistent with the declaration(s) made. Once the documents are verified, the goods are finally allowed to exit the Freeport of Monrovia. This marks the completion of the clearance process for imported goods.

3.1.3 Data Dictionary

During the second phase of the TRS (which is data collection and recording), the TWG developed a clear and concise business-process map, which enabled the creation of the Data Dictionary. In the Data Dictionary, all necessary data elements that were to be manually and electronically collected were systematically listed. In this way, the TWG determined which elements would be collected manually using the TRS questionnaire and which elements would be extracted from electronic or automated systems.

The manual data elements served as the direct input for developing the final TRS questionnaire for imported goods using the WCO TRS Software; while the electronic data elements were collected directly from core automated systems, such as the ASYCUDA for Customs declaration start and end time; the N4 Sparcs Billing and N4 Sparcs Navis for APM Terminals start and end time; and the Shipping lines manifest submission time was extracted from the Easy Ship system. After all of the data elements were gathered (both manually and electronically), they were cleaned and merged into a final dataset. This final dataset was analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

3.1.4 Questionnaire Design

Based on the site visits that were conducted, and in line with the import process map and the data dictionary, the TWG developed a comprehensive questionnaire, using the WCO TRS Software, that captured all of the stakeholders and stages involved in the clearance of cargo at the Freeport of Monrovia. The questionnaire is presented in Annex 2 of this document.

3.1.5 Sample Size and Methodology

The sampling methodology was based on an analysis of the average monthly declaration volumes to ensure that the collected data was statistically representative of regular and normal trade flows during the study period (November – December 2025).

The TWG considered a total monthly population of 5,429 import declarations (with an average of 1,357 import declarations per week), a minimum sample size of 543 declarations was calculated using a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of $\pm 4\%$. Rather than limiting the study to the minimum sample size, the TWG adopted an approach by collecting data from all import declarations processed during the observation period, regardless of declaration regime or selectivity channel.

Only declarations with incomplete or insufficient information were excluded from the analysis. This approach resulted in a final dataset of 670 valid import declarations, exceeding the minimum sample size and enhancing the representativeness and reliability of the study findings.

3.1.6 Test-Run

In order to ensure the validity of the developed business process maps and the study questionnaire, the TWG conducted a test-run before collecting the actual data. Conducting a test-run is a best practice supported by the WCO Time Release Study Guide (Version 4, 2025). It helps to identify shortcomings in the design of the questionnaire, explain to stakeholders on how to fill in the survey questionnaires to ensure data quality, accuracy, and integrity.

During the test-run, it was discovered that most of the respondents were unable to properly fill out the questionnaire form. Additionally, it was discovered that some pieces of information were missing on the questionnaire form. To this end, the TWG modified the questionnaire to account for all relevant information and also provided training/awareness to the respondents on how to fill out the questionnaire form. Members of the TWG were assigned to each stage of the clearance process to ensure that the respondents properly fill out the questionnaire forms, so as to ascertain data quality.

3.2 PHASE 2: Data Collection and Recording

3.2.1 Data Collection Methodologies

The TRS data was collected using both manual and electronic time stamps. For the manual data collection technique, questionnaires were given to key stakeholders involved in the clearance process (i.e. Customs Brokers, Truckers, Exit Officers, etc.) and were filled out with the necessary information.

To ensure quality control, the TWG was fully involved in the data collection process, ensuring that stakeholders properly filled out the survey questionnaire forms. During the data collection stage, the sample size of 543 was surpassed by 141 duly completed import questionnaire forms, thereby generated 670 questionnaires which were compiled, cleaned, and inputted into WCO TRS Software for analysis, and further analyzed using the MS Excel application.

This approach represents a significant advancement compared to the 2022 study, as it enabled the use of a broader and more diverse range of data sources and expanded the coverage of declarations, thereby improving the overall quality, reliability and representativeness of the findings. Table 1 and Figure 5 present the distributions of the sample size based on selectivity lanes/channels and declaration regimes respectively.

Table 1: Selectivity lanes/channels and their performances

Selectivity Lane	Amount of Declaration	Percentage
Red lane	35	5%
Yellow Lane	493	74%
Blue Lane	142	21%
Green Lane	0	0%
TOTAL	670	100%

Source: LRA, 2026 (extract from ASYCUDA-World system)

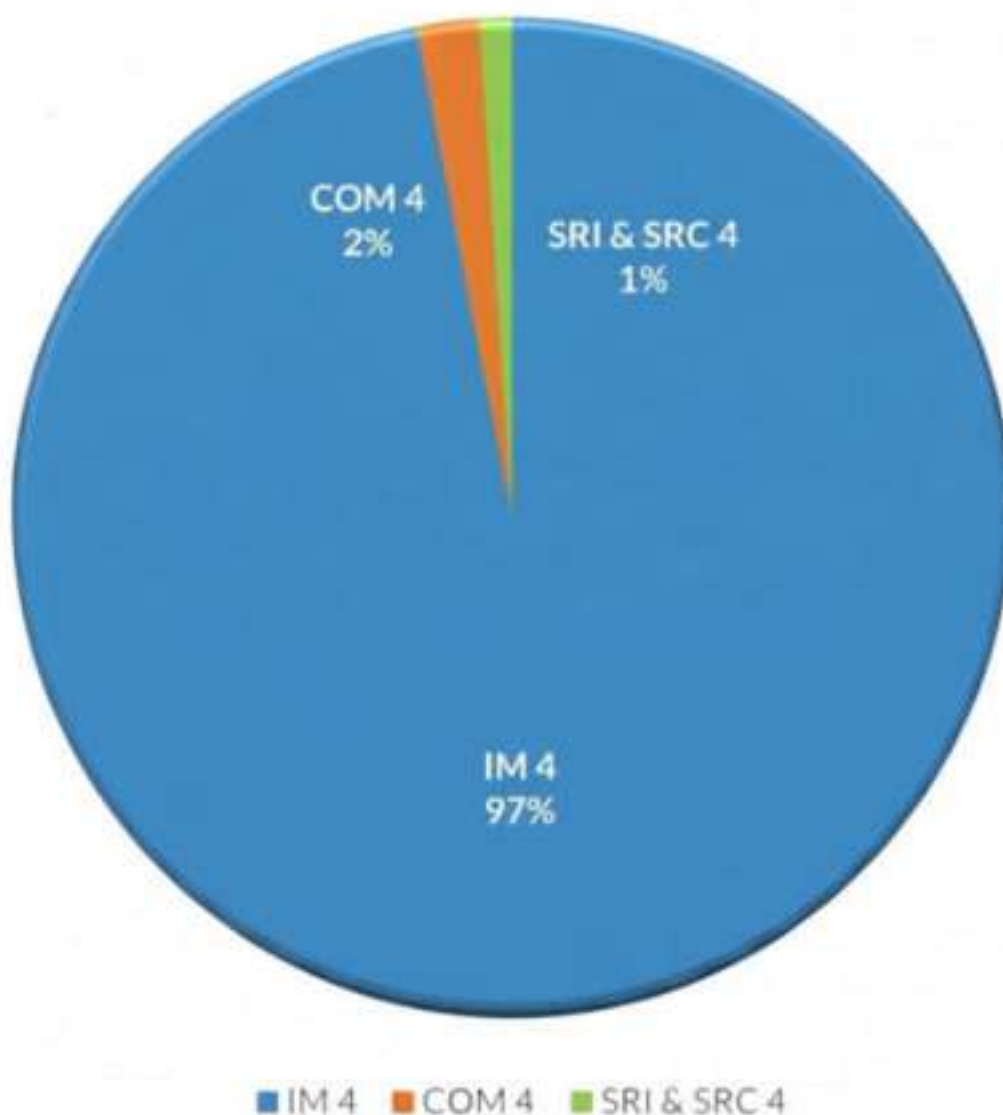


Figure 5: Customs declaration regimes

From the analysis of table 1 and figure 5, yellow and blue lane declarations accounted for 74% and 21% of the total data collected respectively. At the same time, IM 4 declarations accounted for 97% of the total sample size. IM 4 declarations are declarations entered for home use consumption (with Destination Inspection), COM 4 declarations are declarations entered for home use consumption within the ECOWAS community (with Destination Inspection); SRI 4 declarations are declarations of special release for Goods from outside the ECOWAS Community; and SRC 4 declarations are declarations of special release for Goods from the ECOWAS Community.

3.2.2 Data Input

The completed questionnaires retrieved by the TWG were manually captured into the WCO TRS Software. On the other hand, the electronically extracted datasets were merged with the manually collected dataset. This method produced a master data file that consisted of both manually and electronically collected datasets. It was this master data file that was analyzed using Microsoft Excel tool.

3.3 PHASE 3: TRS Data Analysis and Reporting

The findings of the TRS conducted at the Freeport of Monrovia provide important insights into the performance of the cargo clearance chain involving shipping lines, port operator, Customs, banks, terminal operator, brokers, importers and security agencies. While some operational stages are functioning efficiently, the study reveals significant delays, inconsistent processing times, administrative bottlenecks, and weak coordination across several stages of the clearance process.

The large variation between minimum, average, and maximum processing times highlights the ***lack of predictability and consistency*** within the cargo clearance process, which adversely affects the smooth clearance of goods from the Freeport of Monrovia and the ease of doing business. Table 2 presents the minimum, average, and maximum time recorded at each operational stage of the cargo clearance process.

Table 2: Minimum, Average, and Maximum Processing Time

S/N	Stakeholder/ Responsible Entity	Operation	Minimum Duration	Average Duration	Maximum Duration
1.	Entire Port and Clearance Ecosystem	Vessel Arrival – Final Exit End Time (Liberia Seaport Police)	16 hours, 23 minutes	12 days, 19 hours, 42 minutes, and 27 seconds	81 days, 6 hours, 13 minutes
2.	Shipping Lines / Shipping Agents	Manifest Submission Time – Vessel Arrival Time	0 days, 4 hours, 47 minutes	3 days, 1 hour, 21 minutes, and 19 seconds 3 days, 1 hour, 21 minutes	39 days, 10 hours, 23 minutes
3.	APM Terminals / Port Operators	Vessel Arrival Time – First Lift Discharged Time	0 days, 49 minutes	1 day, 6 hours, 51 minutes, and 13 seconds	52 days, 22 hours, 14 minutes
4.	APM Terminals / Port Operators	First Lift Discharged Time – Last Lift Discharged Time	1 minute	41 minutes, 20 seconds	1 day, 2 hours, 15 minutes
5.	Shipping Lines / Shipping Agents	Last Lift Discharged Time – Shipping Line Invoice Insurance Time	1 hour, 33 minutes	1 day, 10 hours, 56 minutes, and 42 seconds	2 days, 20 hours
6.	Importers / Declarants / Brokers	Customs Declaration Modify Stored – Assess Stored	55 seconds	4 days, 23 hours, 23 minutes, and 21 seconds	71 days, 22 hours, 44 minutes, 20 seconds
7.	Importers / Declarants / Brokers	Customs Declaration Assess Stored – Released Order (Selectivity)	25 seconds	23 minutes, and 27 seconds	22 hours, 35 minutes, 31 seconds
8.	Customs	Customs Released Order (Selectivity) – Post Entry	34 seconds	13 hours, 53 minutes, and 23 seconds	10 days, 23 hours, 55 minutes, 15 seconds
9.	Customs Officers / Declarants / Brokers	Request Query from Officer – Post Entry	11 minutes, 29 seconds	1 day, 10 hours, 57 minutes, and 45 seconds	5 days, 23 hours, 45 minutes, 51 seconds
10.	Customs	Release Order Selectivity – Control Result	2 minutes, 28 seconds	16 hours, 56 minutes, and 50 second	23 days, 18 hours, 53 minutes, 41 seconds

S/N	Stakeholder/ Responsible Entity	Operation	Minimum Duration	Average Duration	Maximum Duration
11.	Commercial Banks	Queue Processing Start Time (Managers Cheque Commercial Bank) – Queue Processing End Time	2 minutes	52 minutes, and 34 seconds	1 day, 1 hour, 20 minutes
12.	Central Bank / Banking System	Queue Payment Start Time (Central Bank) – Customs Duty Payment End Time	1 minute	2 hours, 51 minutes, and 30 seconds	30 days, 2 hours, 13 minutes, 20 seconds
13.	Customs / Banking System / ASYCUDA	Customs Duty Payment End Time (Central Bank) – Payment Reflected in ASYCUDA World	1 second	3 hours, 54 minutes, and 49 seconds	14 days, 0 hours, 43 minutes, and 51 seconds
	Physical examination / Customs and OGAs	Joint Customs/OGAs Physical Examination Start Time – Joint Customs/OGAs Physical Examination End Time	2 minutes	57 minutes	3 hours 43 minutes
14.	APM Terminals / Shipping Lines	TDO Start Time – TDO End Time	1 minute	7 hours, 7 minutes, and 51 seconds	30 days, 1 hour, 17 minutes
15.	Transporters / APM Terminals	Truck Enters Terminal Time – Truck Exit Terminal PF Time	3 minutes	11 hours, 11 minutes, and 21 seconds	5 days, 4 hours, 11 minutes
16.	Liberia Seaport Police / Port Security / Customs	Approval to Proceed to Exit Gate Clearance Start Time – Exit Gate Clearance End Time	1 minute	34 minutes, 31 seconds	1 day, 19 hours, 25 minutes

The overall average time between vessel arrival and final cargo exit from the Freeport is **12 days 19 hours and 42 minutes** while the maximum recorded delay exceeded 81 days. Such prolonged cargo dwell times have significant implications for trade competitiveness, business costs, government revenue administration, and investor confidence. Delays of this magnitude increase demurrage charges, storage fees, transport costs, financing costs, and ultimately consumer prices within the domestic economy.

They also reduce the attractiveness of Liberia as a trade and investment destination compared to more efficient regional ports. However, the prolonged delay can be attributed to documentary compliance, and the size of the vessel, Length Overall (LOA). For example, the port facility has a maximum of 200-meter berthing space. If a chartered vessel that has a size of more than the available berthing space berths, all other proceeding vessels are required to wait.

The first operational stage measured is the time difference between manifest submission and vessel arrival. This stage recorded a minimum processing time of 4 hours and 47 minutes, an average of **3 days, 1 hour, 21 minutes**, and a maximum delay time of more than 39 days.

This indicator is particularly important because cargo manifests constitute the foundational document upon which Customs risk assessment and advance cargo processing depend. International best practice under modern Customs administration requires manifests to be submitted electronically before vessel arrival so that Customs authorities can conduct advance risk analysis, identify high-risk consignments, and expedite the release of compliant cargo immediately upon arrival.

The average lead time of slightly more than three days suggests that manifests are generally submitted in advance of vessel arrival. However, the extremely large variation between the minimum and maximum times indicates inconsistent compliance by shipping lines and weak enforcement of pre-arrival reporting requirements. The existence of instances where manifests were submitted only a few hours before vessel arrival undermines the ability of Customs and other border agencies to undertake effective advance risk management.

At the same time, the exceptionally high maximum delay of 39 days may indicate retroactive manifest amendments, delayed data entry, procedural irregularities, or system-related inefficiencies. These inconsistencies suggest that manifest management controls require substantial strengthening. Inefficient manifest submission weakens Customs preparedness, delays cargo profiling, increases inspection uncertainty, and contributes to downstream congestion throughout the clearance chain.

The second stage measures the time difference between vessel arrival and the commencement of cargo discharge operations, specifically the first lift discharged. This stage recorded an average delay of **1 day, 6 hours, and 51 minutes**, with a maximum delay exceeding 52 days. This stage reflects the operational efficiency of the port itself, including berth allocation, vessel scheduling, availability of cargo handling equipment, labor coordination, and terminal readiness. In modern port operations, vessels should ideally begin discharge shortly after arrival in order to minimize berth occupancy costs and avoid congestion.

The findings reveal that vessels entering the Liberian port environment often experience significant idle waiting periods before unloading operations commence. The average delay of more than one day suggests structural inefficiencies within port operations and terminal management. These delays may arise from limited berth availability, equipment shortages, operational congestion, labor limitations, administrative approval requirements, or inadequate coordination among port stakeholders.

The maximum delay of more than 52 days is particularly alarming and points to severe operational disruptions in some cases. Such delays have substantial economic consequences because shipping lines incur demurrage and waiting charges that are often passed on to importers and ultimately consumers. Moreover, delays in cargo discharge reduce port output capacity and increase congestion within terminal yards.

Interestingly, the next stage measuring the time between the first lift discharged and the last lift discharged shows a relatively efficient operational performance. The average unloading duration is 41 minutes, while the maximum delay is 26 hours. This suggests that once discharge operations begin, the actual physical unloading process is generally handled efficiently.

The implication is that the core operational weakness does not lie in the physical unloading process itself but rather in the delays preceding discharge commencement. This distinction is important because it demonstrates that improvements in vessel scheduling, berth management, and pre-discharge coordination could substantially reduce overall port delays without necessarily requiring major changes to unloading procedures.

The stage measuring the time difference between the last **lift discharged and the issuance of shipping line invoice** and insurance documentation recorded an average delay of **1 day, 10 hours and 56 minutes**. This stage represents the period required for shipping lines to process documentation necessary for cargo release and importer settlement obligations. In efficient trade environments, these processes are increasingly digitized and automated. However, the findings suggest that shipping documentation processes in Liberia still experience significant administrative delays.

The average delay of more than one full day indicates that importers often wait an additional day after cargo discharge before obtaining the necessary documentation to proceed with customs clearance. These delays may be linked to manual invoice preparation, delayed payment reconciliation, weak electronic systems, or staffing constraints within shipping agencies. Delays at this stage contribute directly to increased cargo dwell time and additional storage charges.

One of the most critical findings of the TRS relates to the Customs declaration assessment process. The time difference between “Customs Declaration Modify Stored” and “Released Order (Selectivity)” recorded an average delay of **5 days, 10 minutes**, with a maximum delay of approximately 72 days.

This stage represents the period during which importers or their agents review declarations, verify classifications, amend errors, save their final declarations before releasing / submitting them to Customs for assessment purposes. During this stage, the average time of the sub-stage in ASYCUDA, which is time between “Assess stored” and “Release order” (Selectivity), was recorded with an average of 23 minutes, with a maximum time taken at 22 hours 35 minutes.

Under modern automated Customs systems such as ASYCUDA World, revision and modification of declarations should be processed within minutes through automated declaration system. The huge delays in this stage can be attributed to lack of knowledge on the part of importers (or their agents), and limited knowledge in using the ASYCUDA World system.

The time difference between “**Customs Released Order Selectivity**” and “**Post Entry**” recorded an average duration of 13 hours and 53 minutes. This stage reflects additional verification and compliance processes by Customs following submission of declaration (release order selectivity) by the importer or their agent. Although the average delay is moderate relative to other stages, the maximum delay of approximately 11 days demonstrates substantial delay in Customs compliance check. Such delay may result from workflow bottlenecks (i.e. over and under assignment of workload by the system), delays in obtaining additional approvals, or frequent downtime of the ASYCUDA World system.

The TRS also measured the time difference between **officer queries and post-entry processing**. The average delay of **1 day 10 hours and 57 minutes** indicates that most officers’ queries are addressed relatively efficiently. However, the maximum delay exceeding 5 days indicates that certain queries remain unresolved for prolonged periods, possibly due to importers/brokers response delays, missing documentation, valuation disputes, or delay in response time between Customs and declarants.

Another major operational bottleneck is observed in the stage measuring the time difference between **release order selectivity and control result**. This stage recorded an average delay of **16 hours and 56 minutes**, with a maximum delay exceeding 23 days. This stage represents the period during which Customs officers review declarations, verify classifications, assess customs values, compute duties and taxes, conduct documentary verification, and apply risk management procedures.

Under automated Customs systems such as ASYCUDA World, compliant low-risk declarations should be processed within minutes through automated selectivity and risk management systems. However, these delays may arise from frequent downtime of the ASYCUDA World system, workflow bottlenecks, or delays in obtaining additional approvals from stakeholders. Importantly, the minimum processing time of less than three minutes demonstrates that the ASYCUDA World system itself is technically capable of rapid processing. Therefore, the delays may be primarily operational and administrative rather than technological in nature. It is worth noting that the average time difference between **Post-entry and Control result** (which is **3 hours, 9 minutes and 49 seconds**) measures the actual time taken by the Compliance Officer to complete assessment of the declaration after it was submitted by the importer or their agent.

The banking and payment processing stages are manual, thereby resulting to delays. The queue processing time for commercial banks recorded an average duration of **52 minutes and 34 seconds**, suggesting that commercial bank processing itself is relatively efficient. However, the time difference between payment initiation at the Central Bank and completion of Customs duty payment recorded an average delay of **02 hours and 51 minutes**, with maximum delays extending up to 30 days. Furthermore, the time required for payment confirmation to be reflected in ASYCUDA World recorded an average delay of **03 hours and 54 minutes**, with maximum delays exceeding 14 days.

These findings point to limited systems integration between Customs, commercial banks, the Central Bank, and ASYCUDA World. Additionally, the delays in payment of customs duty may be attributed to the importers or their agents. For example, the importers or their agents will wait for bills on customs duty to be raised before acquiring the money to pay. In some instances, they do not get the money on time. However, in electronic payment environments, payment confirmations should be transmitted automatically and in real time. Delays in payment reflection create unnecessary cargo release delays, in-

that significant improvements are required in electronic banking integration, automated reconciliation systems, and interconnectivity among financial institutions and Customs systems.

Similarly, the Terminal Delivery Order (TDO) process recorded an average delay of 07 hours and 7 minutes, with maximum delays extending to slightly over 30 days. This is another major procedural bottleneck because TDO issuance is a prerequisite for cargo release. In modern port systems, TDOs are increasingly processed electronically within minutes. The lengthy delays observed in Liberia suggest continued reliance on manual processing, lack of documentation compliance, and automation failure.

The analysis of terminal and truck processing stages reveals additional operational challenges for port facility (PF) transactions. The time difference between truck entry into the terminal and truck exit from the terminal recorded an average delay of 11 hours and 11 minutes, with maximum delays exceeding 5 days. This indicates significant traffic congestion within terminal yard operations. Delays of this magnitude may result from trucks not leaving terminals after Destination Inspection (DI) site is closed, APM Terminals yard traffic congestion due to overnight trucks, equipment shortages, limited space at the DI

operators and transporters.

Long truck turnaround times increase transport costs, reduce trucking fleet productivity, and contribute to broader supply chain inefficiencies.

One of the most revealing findings of the TRS concerns the physical examination process itself. The time difference between the start and end of DP Cargo Enters PF for physical examination at the DI site recorded an average duration of 03 hours and 33 minutes. Of this, the actual time taken for the Joint Customs and OGAs physical examination recorded an average of 57 minutes, with the highest delay recorded at 3 hours 43 minutes. This time duration can be attributed to lack of coordination among OGAs, lack of non-intrusive inspection devices, and delay of importers or their agents to turn out for inspection.

The last stage measuring approval to proceed to exit gate start time and exit gate clearance end time recorded an average clearance duration of 34 minutes, with a maximum delay exceeding 43 hours. This is the stage at which the Liberia Seaport Police, Customs and OGAs verify the importer's documents and ensure that they conform to their declarations and other formalities, after which final exit is allowed. At this stage of the clearance process, the stakeholders show some level of efficiency along the clearance process – thereby facilitating international trade.

Finally, the stage measuring the overall time difference between vessel arrival and final cargo exit recorded an average clearance duration of 12 days 19 hours and 42 minutes, with a maximum delay exceeding 81 days. This overall performance reflects the cumulative effect of inefficiencies across the entire cargo clearance chain. While some individual operational stages perform relatively well, the combined impact of delays in manifest processing, cargo discharge commencement, customs assessment, payment confirmation, TDO issuance, and terminal operations results in prolonged cargo dwell times.

From a policy perspective, the TRS findings demonstrate that Liberia's trade facilitation challenges are not attributable to a single institution but rather reflect systemic inefficiencies across the broader port and border management ecosystem. The findings reveal inadequate interagency coordination, excessive manual intervention, duplication of controls, limited automation of supporting processes, and insufficient integration of electronic systems across institutions.

The results further indicate that the ASYCUDA World system possesses the technical capability to process declarations rapidly, as evidenced by the very low minimum processing times recorded in several stages. However, operational practices, administrative procedures, institutional coordination failures, and manual controls significantly undermine the potential efficiency gains from automation.

The implications for trade competitiveness are substantial. Prolonged clearance times increase the cost of doing business, reduce supply chain predictability, discourage investment, weaken Liberia's regional trade competitiveness, and increase the final cost of imported goods to consumers. Furthermore, inefficient clearance systems may encourage informal practices, reduce transparency, and undermine voluntary compliance.

To address these challenges, comprehensive reforms are required across multiple dimensions of the cargo clearance ecosystem. These reforms should include strengthening advance cargo information requirements, enforcing mandatory pre-arrival manifest submission, improving automated risk management systems, reducing manual interventions, improving ASYCUDA World integration with banking systems, digitizing TDO processes, modernizing port operations, improving berth allocation systems, enhancing interagency coordination, including the through documented standard operating procedures, implementing performance monitoring frameworks, and implementing the electronic single window system. Additionally, Customs should strengthen trusted trader programs and operationalize green lane/channel processing for compliant importers to reduce unnecessary interventions.

Figure 6 presents the minimum, average and maximum duration for clearance at the Freeport of Monrovia, while the average processing time by operational stages is presented in Figures 7 and 8, ranked from highest to lowest. Overall, the TRS results provide strong evidence that while Liberia has made important progress in Customs automation and trade facilitation; significant institutional, procedural, and operational reforms are still required to achieve a more efficient, predictable, transparent, and competitive cargo clearance environment.

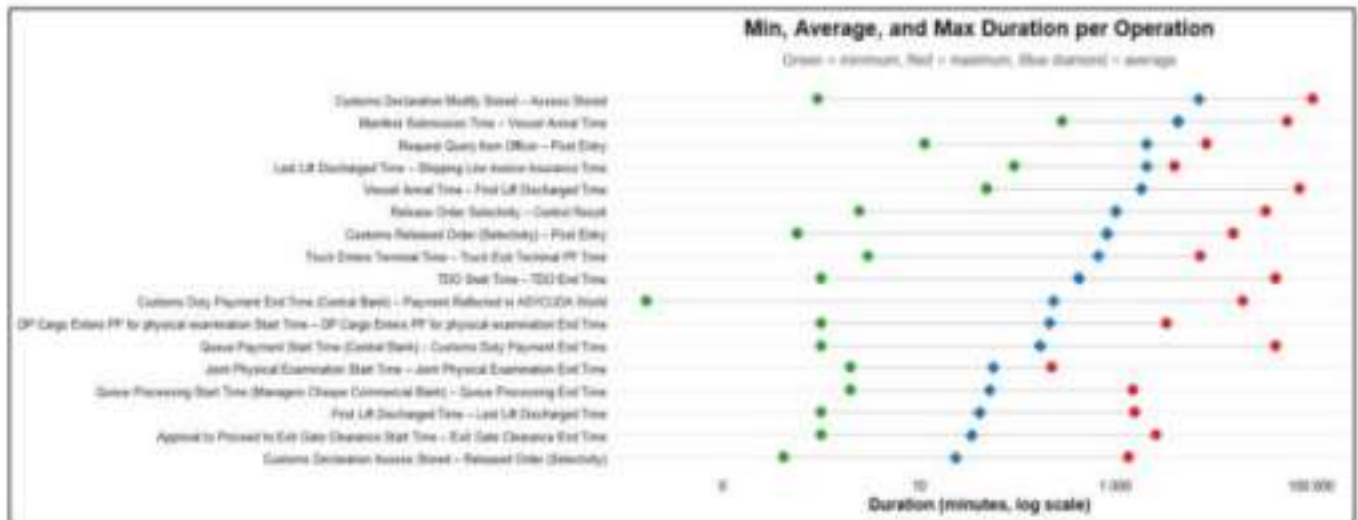


Figure 6: Minimum, average and maximum time duration

Figure 7 presents the average processing times for key port clearance activities in the exact sequence in which they occur within the cargo clearance process. This visualization maintains the operational flow of activities from vessel arrival through Customs processing, banking activities, cargo examination, terminal operations, and final cargo exit. It provides the chronological progression of the clearance process and identify where delays occur along the clearance process.

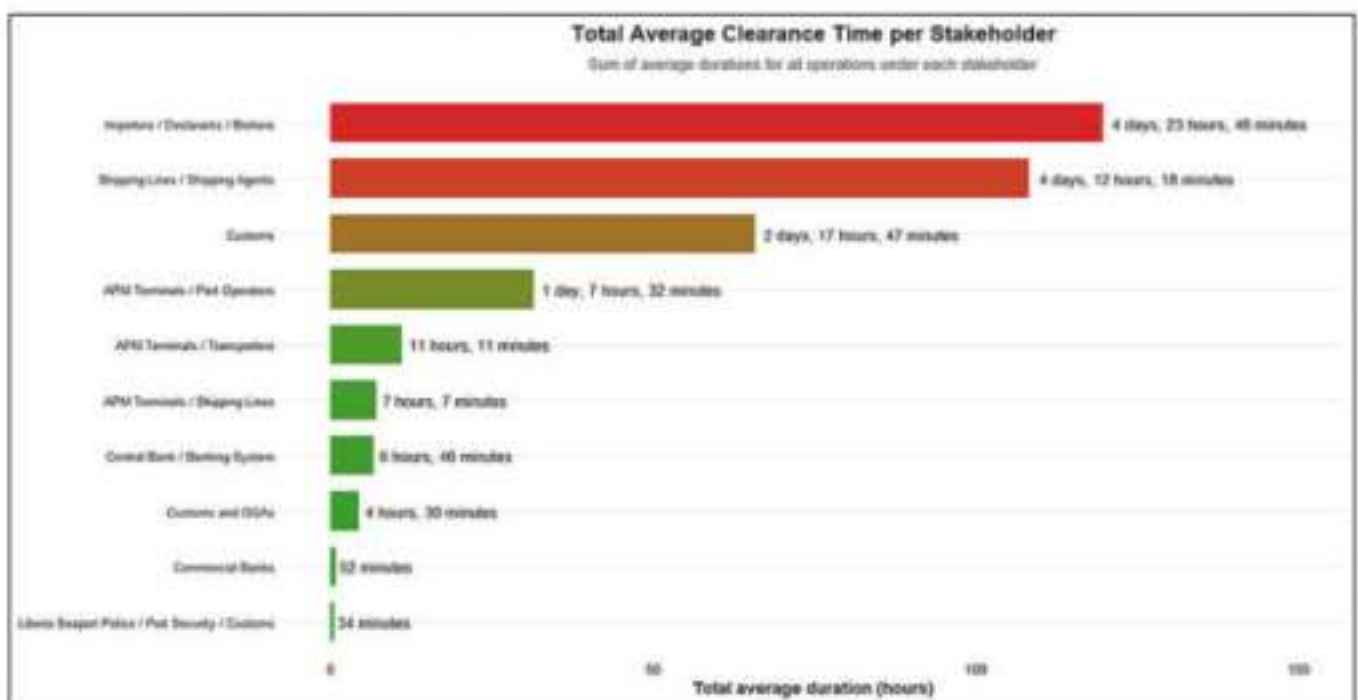


Figure 7: Average processing times for Stakeholders

Figure 8 presents the average processing times in ranked order, from the longest to the shortest duration, while also displaying the exact average processing time labels on each bar. This ranking approach allows for a clearer identification of the most time-consuming stages within the port and cargo clearance process. By arranging the operations according to processing duration, the figure highlights the areas contributing most significantly to cargo delays and overall dwell time.

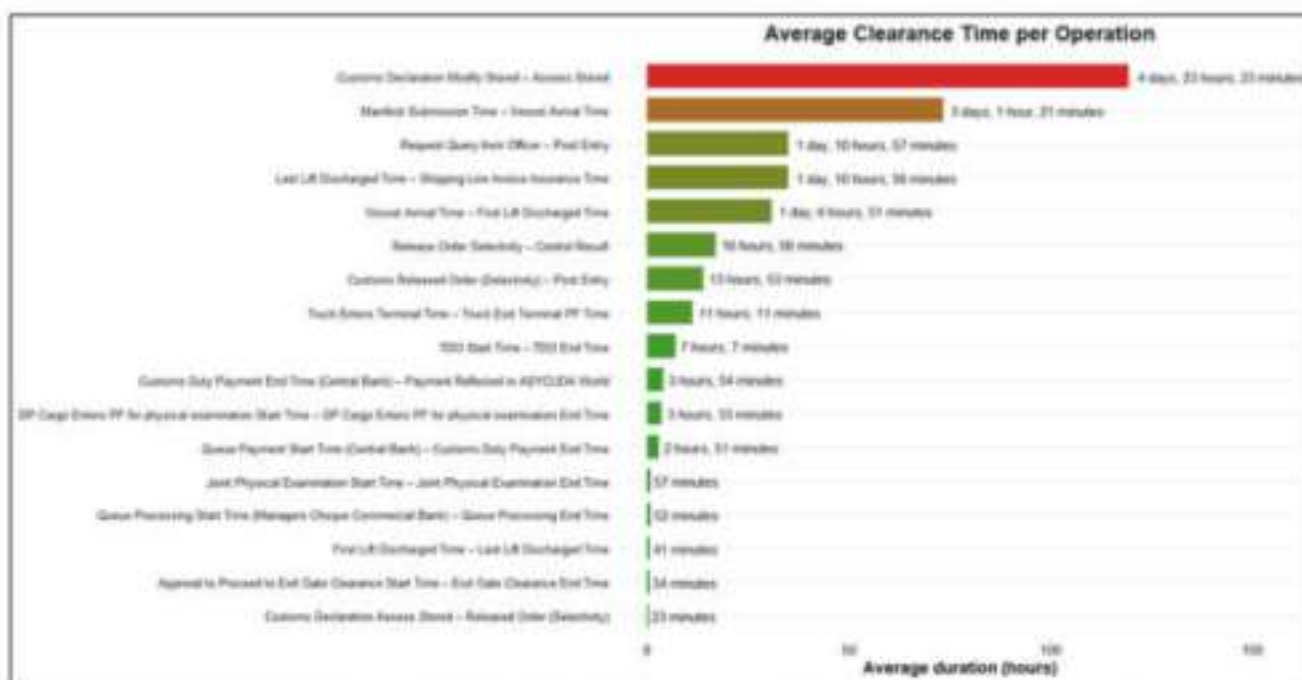


Figure 8: Ranked order of average processing times

Comparability with the Previous Time Release Study

Liberia conducted its first Time Release Study in November 2020, with the report published in 2022. Although both studies assessed cargo clearance performance at the Freeport of Monrovia, direct comparison of the detailed findings is limited due to differences in methodology, scope and data availability.

The first study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and relied primarily on electronic data extracted from ASYCUDA World, supported by a limited sample of 112 import declarations. Several operational stages involving shipping lines, terminal operators, commercial banks and other border agencies could not be comprehensively measured because standardized time stamps were either unavailable or could not be integrated across stakeholders.

The 2025 TRS was conducted in full accordance with the WCO TRS methodology and analysed 670 valid import declarations, integrating standardized electronic and manual time stamps across the entire cargo clearance process, from vessel arrival to the physical exit of cargo from the port. The application of the TRS Data Dictionary enabled the measurement of all major clearance stages involving Customs, other Government Agencies and private sector stakeholders, providing a significantly more comprehensive assessment of cargo release performance. Consequently, only a limited number of indicators are directly comparable between the two studies.

Comparable indicator	2022 TRS (average time)	2025 TRS (average time)	Observation
Vessel arrival to Physical exit	12 days, 22 hours, 8 minutes	12 days, 19 hours, 42 minutes	Modest improvement in overall cargo release time
Physical examination	Customs examination: 1 day, 14 hours, 15 minutes	Joint Customs – OGA examination: 57 minutes*	Methodological differences limit direct comparison
Exit gate clearance	34 minutes	34 minutes, 31 seconds	Performance broadly maintained

* The 2022 TRS measured only the duration of the Customs physical examination. In contrast, the 2025 TRS assessed the joint physical examination conducted by Customs and other Government Agencies, reflecting improvements in coordinated border management. In addition, the 2025 methodology separately measured the waiting time before cargo entered the physical examination area (average 3 hours and 33 minutes) and the duration of the actual joint examination (average 57 minutes). The earlier study did not distinguish between these stages; therefore, the physical examination results should be interpreted as in-

Overall, while the reduction in the overall cargo release time is modest, the principal achievement of the 2025 TRS is the establishment of Liberia's comprehensive WCO-compliant performance baseline. By adopting the standardized TRS Data Dictionary and measuring the complete cargo clearance process across all key stakeholders, future studies will produce directly comparable results and provide a robust mechanism for monitoring the implementation and impact of trade facilitation reforms over time.

3.4. PHASE 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

3.4.1 Implementation of Recommendations

Effective implementation of the TRS recommendations requires a structured, multi agency approach anchored in clear responsibilities, defined timelines, and measurable performance indicators. Given that the TRS findings highlight systemic inefficiencies across shipping lines, terminal operator, Customs, banks, and other border agencies – such as prolonged vessel idle time, inconsistent manifest submission, delays in Customs assessment, and inadequate systems integration; implementation must be coordinated and sequenced to address both immediate bottlenecks

proposed:

3.4.1.1 Establishment of a TRS and Coordinated Border Management Implementation Task Force

A dedicated multi agency task force should be constituted under the leadership of the Liberia National Trade Facilitation Committee, with representation from:

- Customs
- National Port Authority
- APM Terminals Liberia
- Shipping Lines
- Commercial Banks and Central Bank
- Other Government Agencies (OGAs)
- Brokers and Private Sector Associations

This body will oversee implementation, ensure accountability, and coordinate cross agency reforms.

3.4.1.2 Development of a Time Bound Action Plan

The National Trade Facilitation Committee should translate each of the recommendations into:

- Specific actions
- Responsible institution(s)
- Required resources
- Implementation timeline
- Performance indicators

This ensures structured execution and measurable progress.

3.4.1.3 Monitoring of Activities

Monitoring is essential to ensure that the TRS recommendations translate into measurable improvements in clearance times and operational efficiency.

3.4.1.4 Establishment of a TRS Monitoring Dashboard

The National Trade Facilitation Committee should ensure that a dashboard is developed to track:

- Average clearance time
- Vessel waiting time
- Manifest submission compliance
- Assessment processing time
- Payment reflection time
- TDO issuance time
- Truck turnaround time

This dashboard should be updated in real time using ASYCUDA World, APMT, and banking system data.

3.4.1.5 Quarterly Performance Review Meetings

The TRS Implementation Task Force (LNTFC) should convene quarterly to:

- Review performance indicators
- Identify emerging bottlenecks
- Recommend corrective actions
- Document progress, and
- Make reports to the heads of institutions involved with the clearance process at the Freeport of Monrovia.

3.4.1.6 Stakeholder Feedback Mechanism

A structured feedback channel should be established to gather insights from:

- Brokers
- Importers
- Shipping lines
- Truckers, and
- Other concerned parties in the supply-value chain

This will help validate whether reforms are producing real improvements on the ground.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Policy Recommendations

Based on the TRS findings and observations, the TWG recommends the followings to enhance the clearance time of goods at the Freeport of Monrovia and facilitate legitimate international trade:



Table 3: TRS Recommendation Matrix

	Activities	Recommendations
1.	Strengthening of Pre-Arrival Processes	• Enforcement of mandatory electronic manifest submission before vessel arrival, as required by laws/regulations; • Introduction of penalties for late or incomplete manifest submissions; and • Improvement of advance cargo information sharing among stakeholders.
2.	Improvement of Port Operations and Vessel Scheduling	• Enhancement of berth allocation planning to reduce vessel idle time; • Procurement of additional cargo-handling equipment; • Introduction of Electronic Queue Management System for vessels and trucks.
3.	Prioritization of High-Impact Reforms	• Improving berth allocation and vessel scheduling • Automating TDO request and issuance process • Strengthening ASYCUDA World-banking system integration • Reducing manual interventions in Customs assessment by adopting joint technical and business requirements; • Addressing Customs staffing constraints at all fronts; • Enhancing interagency coordination for inspections through documented inter-agency SOP; • Expansion of the three piers to increase space at the port facility; • Expansion of the designated truck parking area. • Implementation of the National Single Window platform for trade facilitation purposes. • The Customs authorities should address the frequent downtime of ASYCUDA World to make the system more stable. • Customs/LRA should procure non-intrusive inspection equipment. • Customs/LRA should procure heavy-duty equipment for unstuffing and stuffing containers at the DI site; • Importers or their agents should submit all required documents during the clearance process • Importers or their agents should respond to CAU's queries in a properly and timely manner • Customs/LRA should continually enhance brokers' capacity in the proper use or application of ASYCUDA World
4.	Enhance Customs Assessment and Risk Management	• Strengthen automated selectivity to fast-track low-risk cargo. • Improve Customs compliance management to support risk-based processing.

		• Implement immediate/automated release of goods for AEO and compliant traders based on integrated risk management system. • Implement Integrated Risk Management system in ASYCUDA for CBM purposes: 1) implement data harmonization and standardization between Customs and other Border agencies for inter-connectivity purposes. 2) Initiate the IT integrations between LRA and OGAs for Integrated Risk Management purposes. 3) Consider providing access to selected Border Agencies to LRA clearance systems to upload the Licenses, Permits and Certificates to ASYCUDA World with varying levels of access to streamline the border checks and procedures.
5.	Improve Payment and Banking Integration	1. Digitize all payment-related documentations. 2. Expand the Use of Deferred Payment Accounts • Encourage wider adoption of deferred payment arrangements for compliant and AEO traders to minimize delays associated with on-the-spot cash payments. 3. Promote Electronic Payment Solutions: • Introduce or expand electronic payment systems that allow real-time settlement of Customs duties and taxes, linked directly to the declaration system. • Integrate e-payment options across all major banks and mobile money platforms to improve accessibility and reduce manual handling time. 4. Enhance Trader Awareness and Compliance Support • Conduct targeted outreach and training sessions to inform traders and clearing agents about available payment options and the benefits of non-cash methods. 5. Integrate Payment Data into Customs Systems • Implement instant payment confirmation processes to reduce delays. Ensure that payment status and verification are automatically reflected in the Customs management system to enable faster release decisions.
6.	Digitize Terminal Delivery Order (TDO) Processes	• Transition to fully electronic TDO issuance. • Integrate TDO systems with ASYCUDA World and APM Terminals Liberia platforms.

7.	Enhance Transparency and Accountability. Establish a sustainable mechanism for the regular measurement, analysis, and publication of the average release time of goods at Liberia's borders, in line with the TRS methodology	• Publish quarterly clearance performance indicators. • Ensure that service-level standards for all stakeholders are fully upheld. • Reduce manual processes in the ASYCUDA World system. 1. Identification and Standardization of Time Stamps: • NTFC to define and agree on the key time stamps across all border management processes (both electronic and manual) to ensure consistency and comparability across border posts based on Freeport TRS Data Dictionary. 2. Integration into National Performance Measurement Systems by NTFC and All engaged Border Agencies: • Incorporate the identified time stamps into national performance monitoring frameworks and the operational systems of all border management agencies (Customs, Police, Immigration, Port Health, SPS, Vet. Service, etc.). • Establish clear data collection and reporting responsibilities within each agency to ensure regular data retrieval. 3. Automation and Data Interoperability: • Explore integration of TRS data requirements into existing ICT systems (e.g., ASYCUDA or other border management systems) to automate data capture and reduce manual reporting. • Promote inter-agency data exchange protocols to support comprehensive and real-time measurement of clearance times. 4. Regular TRS Implementation and Methodology Review: • Conduct comprehensive Time Release Studies at defined intervals (e.g., every two-three years) to review progress, validate the data collection methodology, and identify process improvements. Utilize the findings to inform trade facilitation reforms and strengthen Coordinated Border Management (CBM) initiatives
8.	Capacity Building and Change Management	Training programs should be rolled out for: • Customs officers • Brokers and declarants • Port operators • OGAs inspectors
9.	Strengthening ICT and Systems Integration	• Full digitization of supporting documents; • Introduction of e-payment system; • Improve system uptime and redundancy; • Integration of port, banking, and Customs systems;

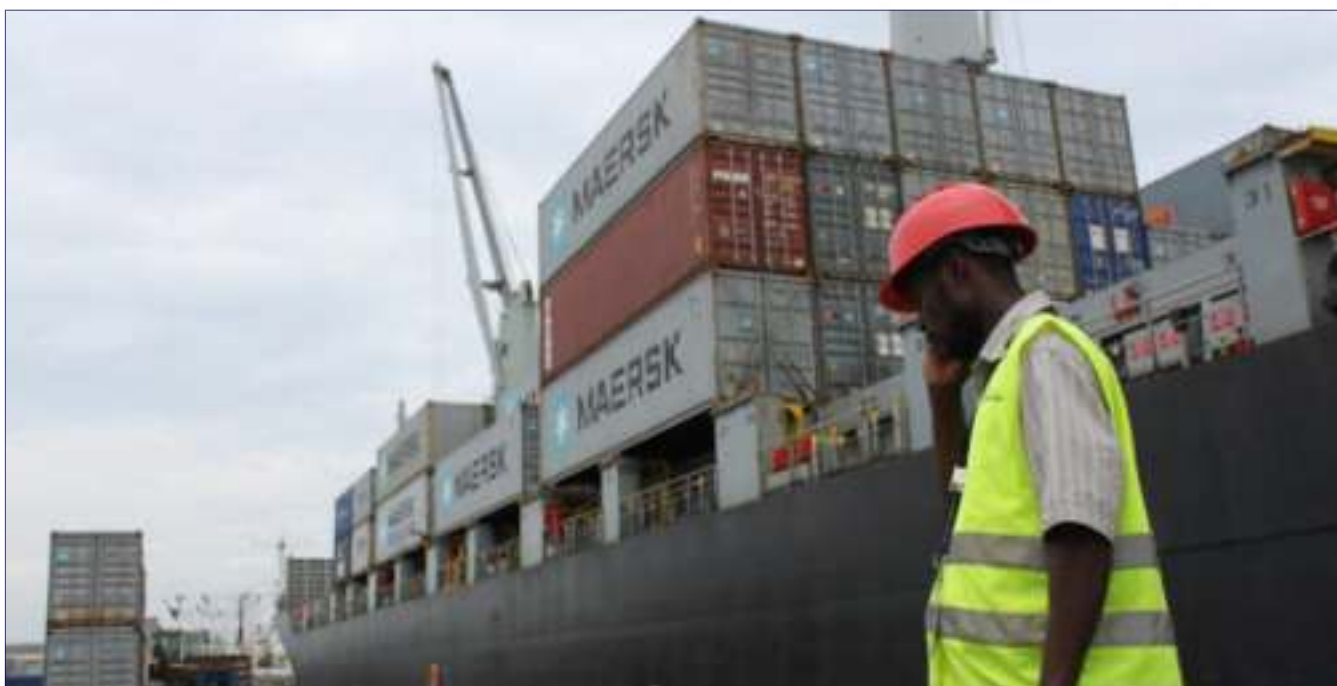
		providing access to selected Border Agencies to LRA clearance systems to upload the Licenses, Permits and Certificates to ASYCUDA World with varying levels of access to streamline the border checks and procedures.
10.	Policy and Regulatory Adjustments for Coordinated Border Management (CBM) enhancement	1) Revision and harmonization of SOPs by all stakeholders; 2) Enforcement of clearance compliance standards by all stakeholders; 3) Engage private sector partnerships for equipment leasing or capacity expansion. 4) Develop and adopt the mandatory Inter-Agency Standard Regulation for Coordinated Border Management which would set the framework for SOP adoption by each port of entry and exit – NTFC to submit the draft to the Cabinet for approval within 1 year after publication of the report. 5) Develop and adopt the Inter-Agency Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each port of entry and exit on all modes of transports based on the Inter-Agency Standard Regulation/Framework on CBM – within 1 year after adoption of the framework.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Time Release Study provides a comprehensive and evidence based assessment of the cargo clearance environment at Customs ports. This TRS marks Liberia's second successfully completed TRS project. As part of the trade facilitation initiatives, the Department of Customs in partnership with other national stakeholders, conducted Liberia's second TRS at the Freeport of Monrovia, the largest Customs port in Liberia. The data for the study was collected both manually and electronically between November and December 2025 and analyzed using the WCO TRS software and Microsoft Excel tool.

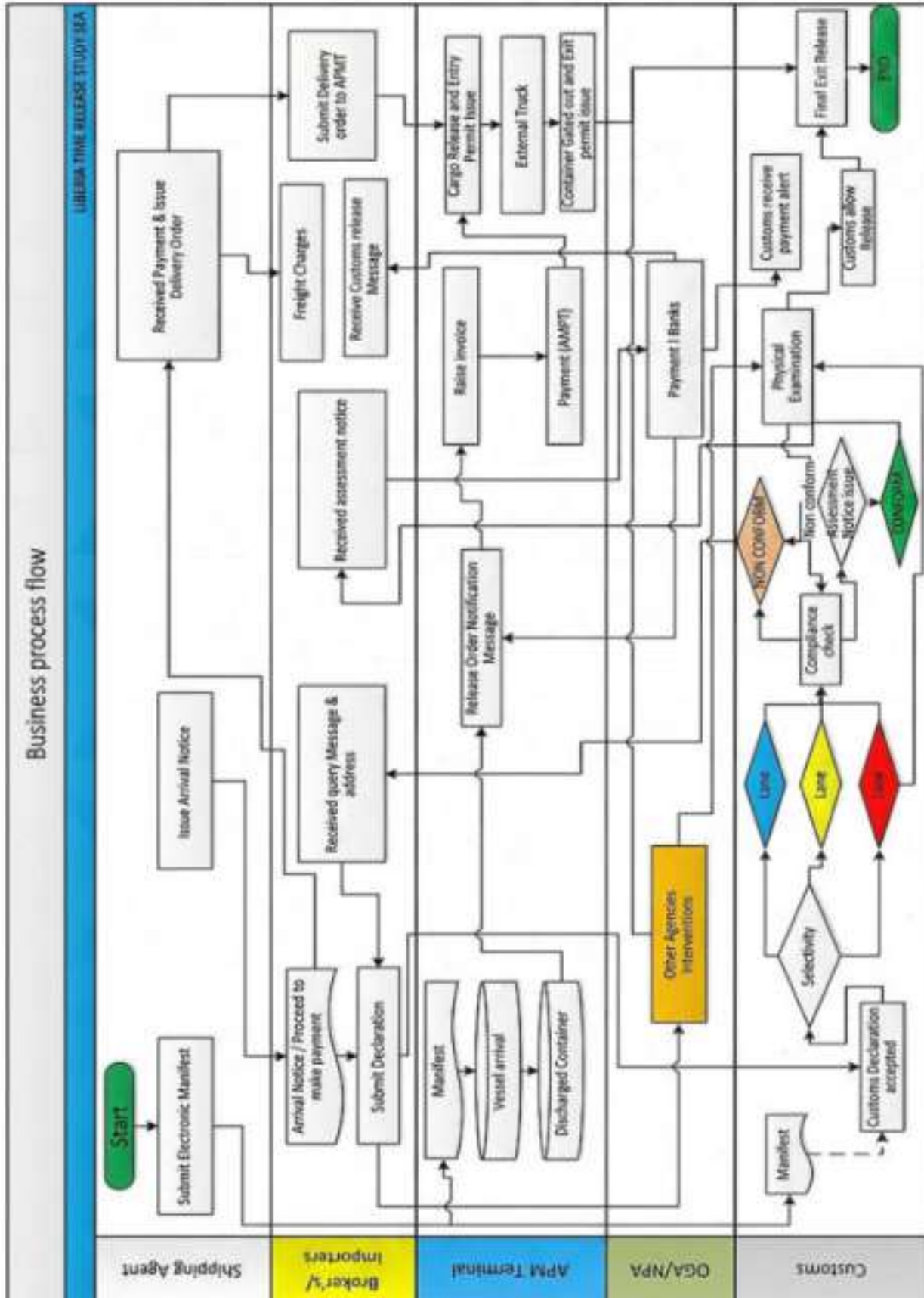
The TWG adopted an approach by collecting data from all import declarations processed during the observation period, regardless of declaration regime or selectivity channel. Declarations with incomplete or insufficient information were excluded from the analysis. This approach resulted in a final dataset of 670 valid import declarations, exceeding the minimum sample size and enhancing the representativeness and reliability of the study findings.

The findings clearly demonstrate that while certain operational stages—such as physical examination—are efficient, significant systemic delays persist in the clearance process. These delays stem from late manifest submission, prolonged vessel idle time, manual documentation processes, congested terminal yard, limited systems integration, and inadequate interagency coordination. The study reveals that importers or their agents also contribute to delays in the clearance process. Consistent with these findings, the TWG recommends several measures that are necessary to address the delays and improve the clearance process at the Freeport of Monrovia.



6.0 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Import Process Map



Annex 2: TRS Survey Questionnaire

Print Preview

SECTION A - GENERAL INFORMATION	
1. Customs Declaration Reference Number (*)	
2. Taxpayers Identification Number (*)	
3. Container Number	
4. Customs Regime (*)	IM4 ☐ COM4 ☐ PSI4 ☐ SRI4 ☐ SRC4 ☐ IM5 ☐ COM5 ☐ IM6 ☐ COM6 ☐ IM7 ☐
SECTION B - IMPORT CLEARANCE PROCESSES	
5. Queue/processing start Time(Managers Cheque Commercial bank) (*)	day mth - hr min
6. Queue/processing End Time(Managers Cheque Commercial bank) (*)	day mth - hr min
7. Queue/payment start Time(Central bank) (*)	day mth - hr min
8. Customs duty payment End Time (Central Bank) (*)	day mth - hr min
9. Physical examination by Other Government Agencies (*)	If Yes: please answer relevant questions 10 to 25 ☐ If No: please go to question 26 ☐
10. Start time of the physical examination by MOCI	day mth - hr min
11. End time of the physical examination by MOCI	day mth - hr min
12. Start time of the physical examination by MoA	day mth - hr min
13. End time of the physical examination by MoA	day mth - hr min
14. Start time of the physical examination by LMHRA	day mth - hr min
15. End time of the physical examination by LMHRA	day mth - hr min
16. Start time of the physical examination by LDEA	day mth - hr min
17. End time of the physical examination by LDEA	day mth - hr min
18. Start time of the physical examination by LISA	day mth - hr min
19. End time of the physical examination by LISA	day mth - hr min
20. Start time of the physical examination by LSP	day mth - hr min

21. End time of the physical examination by LSP	day mth - hr min
22. Start time of the physical examination by FDA	day mth - hr min
23. End time of the physical examination by FDA	day mth - hr min
24. Start time of the physical examination by LACRA	day mth - hr min
25. End time of the physical examination by LACRA	day mth - hr min
26. Physical examination by Customs (*)	Yes ☐ No ☐
27. Customs physical examination start time	day mth - hr min
28. Customs physical examination end time	day mth - hr min
SECTION C - CARGO EXIT PROCESSES	
29. Truck Queue to enter NPA start time (*)	day mth - hr min
30. Truck enters Terminal time (*)	day mth - hr min
31. Truck exit terminal/DP	day mth - hr min
32. Truck exit terminal/PF	day mth - hr min
33. Exit gate clearance start time (*)	day mth - hr min
34. Exit gate clearance end time (*)	day mth - hr min
35. Final Exit Start time - Liberia Seaport Police (*)	day mth - hr min
36. Final Exit End time - Liberia Seaport Police (*)	day mth - hr min

Annex 3: List of TRS Technical Working Group Members

No	Name	Institution
01	Edwin F. Kendema	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
02	Abraham F. Siafa	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
03	William Gegeh	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
04	Genesis B. Kollie	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
05	Roosevelt S. Prowd	PSSPD/Liberia Revenue Authority
06	Bazzie Akoi	Functional Team /Liberia Revenue Authority
07	Teddy S. Swaray	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
08	Justina M. Brooks	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
09	Zechariah G. Munford	Customs/Liberia Revenue Authority
10	Sylvester K. Selekpoh	EDAD / Liberia Revenue Authority
11	Othello Jean Pierre	Liberia Seaport Police / National Port Authority (NPA)
12	Abraham S. Keita	National Customs Broker Association of Liberia
13	Alex S. Wuo	Ministry of Commerce & Industry
14	Richard J. Pratt	Ministry of Commerce & Industry
15	Leamon P. Gluaseay	LNTFC Secretariat / Ministry of Commerce & Industry
16	Thomas A. Moore	APM Terminals Liberia
17	Arthur O. Moore	APM Terminals Liberia
18	Abdallah Deazie	Liberia National Truckers Union
19	Emmanuel T. Grimes	Liberia Medicines Health Regulatory Authority
20	Jeremiah Matthew Swinteh	Ministry of Agriculture
21	Narian Peace Binde	Liberia Standards Authority (LiSA)
22	Nathaniel Ejiogu Kelvin	Liberia Chamber of Commerce
23	Yeadou Kabia	Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency
24	Zod A. Nyanama	Maersk Line Liberia

Annex 4: Action plan for implementing the TRS recommendations – LNTFC

S/N	Specific actions	Responsible institution(s)	Implementation timeline	Budget Requirement	Resource Mobilization	Performance indicators
1	Establish TRS Task Force; conduct quarterly reviews; develop TRS dashboard	LNTFC Secretariat	2026	Low	GOL, LNTFC	Task Force operational; quarterly reviews conducted
2	- Enforcement of mandatory electronic manifest submission before vessel arrival, as required by laws/regulations; - Introduction of penalties for late or incomplete manifest submissions; and - Improvement of advance cargo information sharing among stakeholders.	LRA Customs	2026	Low	LRA	Increased manifest compliance rate
3	- Enhancement of berth allocation planning to reduce vessel idle time; - Procurement of additional cargo-handling equipment; - Introduction of digital queue management for vessels and trucks.	NPA & APMT Liberia	2026 - 2028	High	NPA, APMT, Development Partners	Increase in number of berths. Increase in number of cargo-handling equipment. Digital Queue management system developed and operational.
4	- Improving berth allocation and vessel scheduling - Automating TDO request and issuance process - Strengthening ASYCUDA World and banking system integration	LRA, NPA, APMT, Banks	2026 - 2028	High	LRA, NPA, APMT, Development Partners	Number of Commercial

	- Reducing manual interventions in Customs assessment; - Addressing Customs staffing constraints at all fronts; - Enhancing interagency coordination for inspections; - Expansion of the designated truck parking area.	LRA LRA LNTFC, LRA & OGAs NPA	2026 - 2027 2026 - 2027 2026 - 2027 2026 - 2027			Banks Integrated. Reduction in manual intervention in Customs assessment. Number of additional staff deployed. Reduced inspection delays Designated Truck parking area provided.
5	The Customs authorities should address the frequent downtime of ASYCUDA World to make the system more stable.	LRA	2026 - 2027	Medium	LRA	Reduction in System downtime.
6	- Procure non-intrusive inspection equipment. - Procure heavy-duty equipment for unstuffing and stuffing containers at the DI site;	LRA/Customs	2026 - 2027	High	GoL	Non-intrusive inspection and heavy-duty equipment procured and operationalized.
7	Importers or their agents should submit all required documents during the clearance process.	LRA Customs and National Customs Brokers Association of Liberia.	2026	Low	LNTFC, LRA, NCBAL	Improved submission of required documents and Customs declarations.
8	Importers or their agents should respond to CAU's queries in a	Declarants	2026	Low	LNTFC, NCBAL	Number of Proper and

	properly and timely manner.					timely response to CAU's queries.
9	Continuous enhancement of importers and their agents' capacity in the proper use or application of ASYCUDA World.	LRA Customs	2026 – 2027	Low	LRA	Number of Trainings conducted.
10	Transition to fully electronic TDO issuance.	APMT Liberia	2026 - 2027	Medium	APMT, Development Partners	Number of TDOs issued electronically.
11	Publish quarterly clearance performance indicators.	LNTFC Secretariat.	2026 - 2027	Low	LNTFC	Number of measured performance indicators published.
	Ensure that service-level standards for all stakeholders are fully upheld.	All Stakeholders	2026 - 2027			Performance evaluation report by the LNTFC.
	Reduce manual processes in the ASYCUDA World system.	LRA Customs	2026 - 2027		LRA	Number of manual processes reduced.
12	Conduct Capacity building for: - Customs officers - Brokers and declarants - Port operators - OGAs inspectors	All Stakeholders	2026 - 2027	Medium	LNTFC	Capacity building and Change Management Report.
13	- Revision and harmonization of SOPs by all stakeholders; - Enforcement of clearance compliance	All Stakeholders	2026 - 2027	Low	GoL, Development Partners	Stakeholder engagement report. Revised procedures adopted.

	standards by all stakeholders; 3) Engage private sector partnerships for equipment leasing or capacity expansion.					
14	4) Implement and operationalize the National Single Window	LRA, MoCI, LNTFC	2026 – 2028	High Low	GoL, Development Partners	National Single Window platform established and fully operational.
15	Regulatory Framework for CBM enhancement: 1) Develop and adopt the mandatory Inter-Agency Standard Regulation for Coordinated Border Management which would set the framework for SOP adoption by each port of entry and exit – NTFC to submit the draft to the Cabinet for approval within 1 year after publication of the report. 2) Develop and adopt the Inter-Agency Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each port of entry and exit on all modes of transports based on the Inter-Agency Standard Regulation/Framework on CBM – within 1 year after adoption of the framework	LRA, MoCI, LNTFC LRA, MoCI, LNTFC Heads of regional border agencies	2026 – 2027 2027 – 2028	High Low High	GoL, Development Partners	Draft CBM Inter-Agency Framework developed and submitted to the Cabinet for Approval. Draft SOPs for each port of entry and exit developed and approved by the Border agencies and submitted to NTFC

Annex 5. TRS Data Dictionary for Freeport of Monrovia (Import) – 2025

TRS Data Dictionary for Freeport of Monrovia (IMPORT) - 2025								
No.	Field Name	Definition	Data Type	Data Format	Data Attribute	Data Provider	Data Source	Remarks
1	Vessel Name	Vessel reference	Alpha Numeric		Mandatory	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
2	Vessel Voyage Number	Vessel Voyage reference	Alpha Numeric	Min. 4 digits	Mandatory	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
3	Bill of Landing	Bill of Landing reference	Numeric	9 digits	Mandatory	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
4	Customs declaration reference	Automatically generated unique number assigned to every consignment to be used as reference	Alpha Numeric	Six digits	Mandatory	Customs	Manual	Electronic
5	Taxpayers Identification Number	Automatically generated unique number assigned to every taxpayer	Numeric	9 digits	Mandatory	LRA	Manual	Electronic
6	Container Number	Container reference	Alpha Numeric	13 digits	Optional	Customs	Manual	Electronic
7	Truck plate number	Number plate reference	Alpha Numeric	6 digits	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
8	Truck BAT number	Registration number issued by the Trucker's association	Numeric	3 digits	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
9	Manifest submission time	It serves as a master record for customs authorities, port operators, and shipping agents to verify and process	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Shipping agent	Terminal Operating System	Electronic

		shipments efficiently						
10	Vessel arrival time	The shipping line notified the consignee upon receipts of the manifest	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Shipping agent	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
11	Vessel berth time	Exact time the vessel arrived/berthed	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
12	Discharge start time (First lift)	First lift discharged time - EC-in	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
13	Discharge end time (Last lift)	Last lift discharged time - Time-in	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
14	Shipping line invoice issuance time	Invoice issuance time	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Shipping agent	Shipping line system	Electronic
15	Shipping line payment time	Proof of payment to consignee delivery order	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Shipping agent	Shipping line system	Electronic /Manual
16	Shipping delivery order issuance time	Delivery order issuance time	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Shipping agent	Shipping line system	Electronic
17	Declaration submission time (Customs Declaration Modify Stored)	Declare to customs of LRA consistent with revenue code and customs code	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
18	Customs declaration Assess Stored	Assess stored time in ASYCUDA	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
19	Release order	Selection of lane base on risk profile	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.2	Electronic

	(Selectivity)							
20	Post-entry time	Provided details information in the inspection act on the file	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
21	Request Query Time from Officer	Address comment or Concern	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
22	Control Results Time	Comment for the compliance officer	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
23	Manual Assessor Assignment	Manual Assessor Assignment	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
24	Re-route to red	Re-route to red	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
25	Manual Examiner Assignment	Manual Examiner Assignment	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	optional	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
26	Queue/processing start Time (Managers Cheque Commercial bank)	Agents prepare Managers Cheque at Commercial bank	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
27	Queue/processing End Time (Managers Cheque Commercial bank)	Agents finalise preparation of Managers Cheque at Commercial bank	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
28	Queue/payment start Time (Central bank)	Agents pay duty at the central bank	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual

29	Customs duty payment End Time (Central bank)	Agents pay duty at the central bank	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
30	Customs duty Payment received Time (reflected in ASYCUD A)	payment reflected in ASYCUDA	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
31	Physical examination by OGAs	MOCI, MOA, LMHRA, LDEA, and other	Description	Description	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Electronic
32	Joint Physical Examination start time	Customs and other OGA conduct examination	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
33	Joint Physical Examination end time	Customs and other OGA conduct examination	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
34	Customs release time (Totally exited)	Customs allow release in ASYCUDA	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs	ASYCUDA World 4.3.1	Electronic
35	APM Terminal Liberia release TDO start time	All cargoes must meet release and terminal delivery order (loading slip) requirements before delivery - that is complete shipping line and Customs	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic

		processes, make terminal payment and get authorization						
36	APM Terminal Liberia release TDO end time	All cargoes must meet release and terminal delivery order (loading slip) requirements before delivery.	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
37	Truck appointment booking time	Allowed external trucking on APM Terminal Liberia premises	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
38	Truck Queue to enter NPA start time	Allowed external trucking on NPA premises	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Trucker	Manual	Manual
39	Truck enters APM Terminal Liberia time	Allowed external trucking on APM Terminal Liberia premises to load	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
40	Truck exit terminal/DP	External truck leave APM Terminal Liberia premises	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	APM Terminal Liberia	Terminal Operating System	Electronic
41	DP cargo enters PF start time	DP cargo re-routed to PF	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
42	DP cargo enters PF end time	DP cargo re-routed to PF	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
43	Truck exit terminal/PF	External truck leave APM Terminal	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual

		Liberia premises						
44	Approval to proceed to exit gate clearance start time	exit documents checks by OGA	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
45	Exit gate clearance end time	Exit documents checks by OGA	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Optional	Customs broker	Manual	Manual
46	Final Exit End time - Liberia Seaport Police	Completely gated outside of the port in the presence of joint security.	Date and Time	dd/mm/yyyy 00:00	Mandatory	Customs broker	Manual	Manual

