



# Trade **O**bstacles **A**lert **M**echanism

22 October 2015



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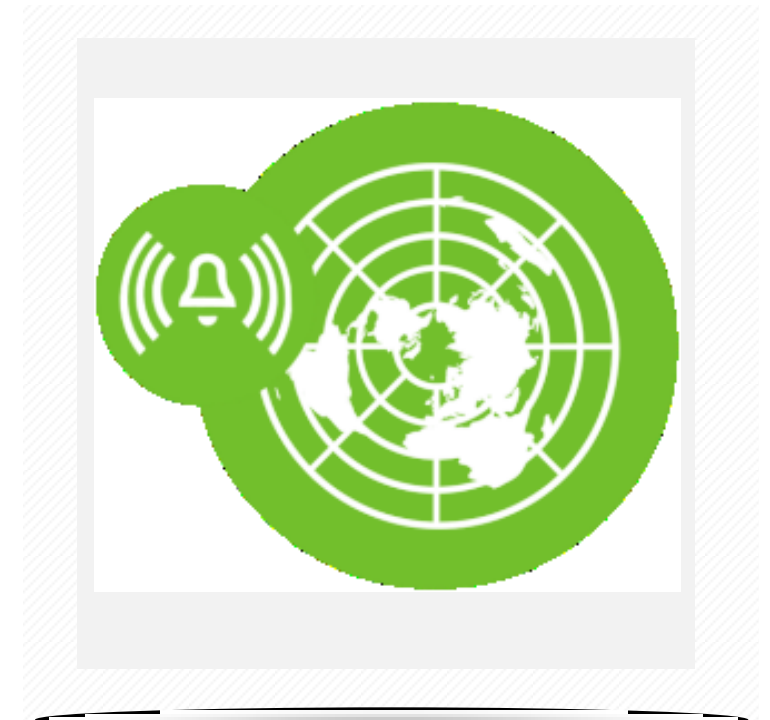
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http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm/Mauritius/ Mauritus: Company Perspe... x

Exporters Trade support institutions Policymakers



International Trade Centre



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## Publication

**PUBLICATIONS**

- About ITC publications
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**Mauritius: Company Perspectives - An ITC Series on Non-Tariff Measures**

Mauritian exporters claim to be less affected by trade barriers than many other countries that have participated in the ITC business surveys on non-tariff measures. Among the 400 Mauritian firms surveyed, 27% of exporters were adversely affected by non-tariff measures; 36% of importing firms reported they were affected by non-tariff measures.

# Non-Tariff Measures



## Defining Non-Tariff Measures: What are they?

- **Policy measures that act as ‘structural bottlenecks’ on export and import, other than customs tariffs, - import bans, restrictive import licenses, unreasonable product labelling and standards.**
- **Mandatory requirements, rules or regulations legally set by the government of the exporting, importing or transit country**
- **Restrictive and distorted effects on international trade.**

# Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism

- **Online platform for reporting Trade Obstacles**
- **Accessible to all operators**
- **All Government Agencies linked**
- **Formal mechanism for following-up and addressing reported obstacles**

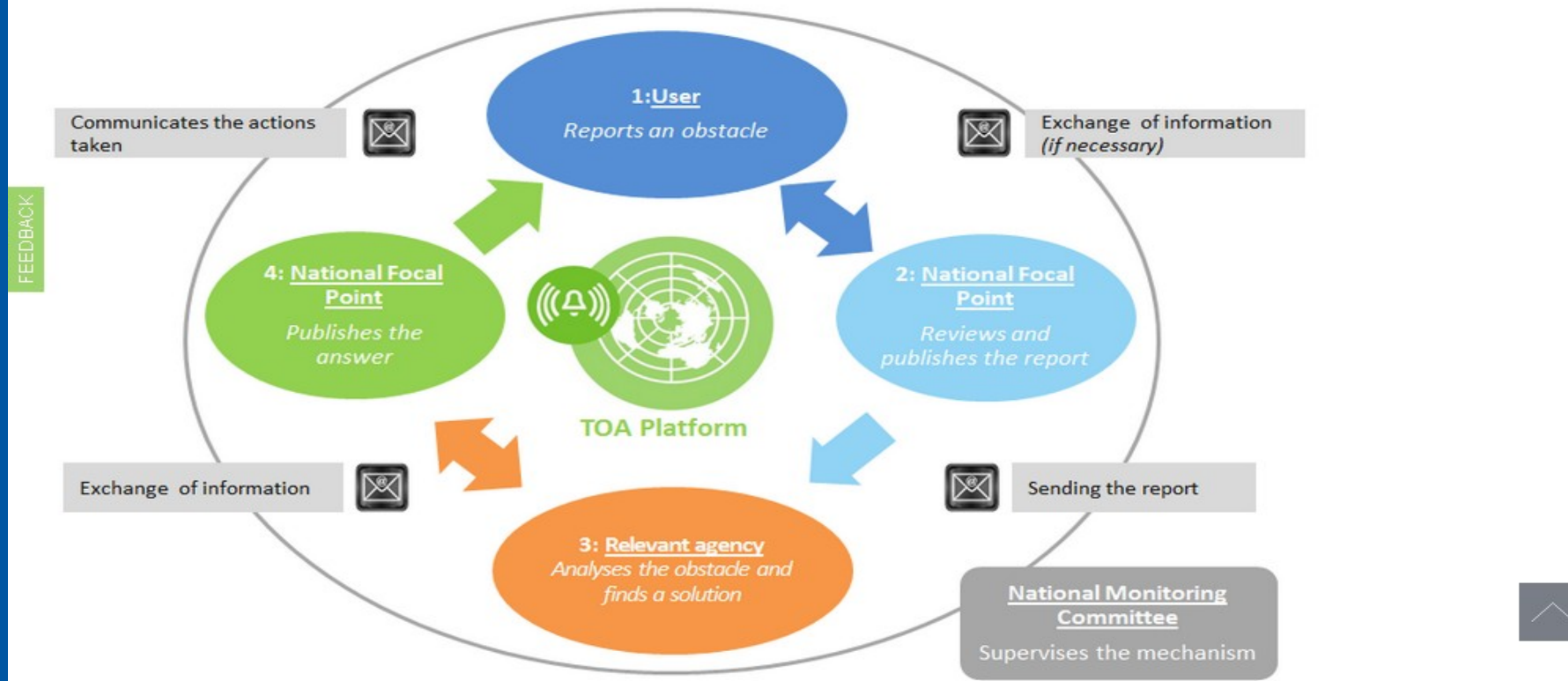
[www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius](http://www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius)

## 3 main functionalities

1. **Report a trade obstacle:** allows user to describe the details of the problem faced. The user must be registered to be able to send a report.
2. **Receive trade alert:** allows users to get email alerts on the obstacles reported by other users and solutions provided by the authorities according to different criteria.
3. **Analyse the trade obstacles:** allows users to see all trade obstacles reports created as well as summary statistics.

# The Institutional Mechanism

When a report is valid, the agency concerned has to submit a response to the NFP who will then publish it online as a part of the obstacle report. Any update concerning the status of the report and/or the actions taken by the concerned agency will be communicated by email to the user who reported the obstacle. Additionally, all registered users will be notified of any modification or update in those reports that concern the products and the markets of their interest. The chart below illustrates how the mechanism works.



# Objectives of the TOA Mechanism

- Provide a **new communication channel** for public-private dialogue on trade obstacles
- Contribute to the **identification and removal** of trade obstacles
- Assist national authorities in the **development and implementation** of trade facilitation policies
- Provide companies and TSIs with **relevant and up-to-date information** on trade rules and procedures
- **Improve** the business environment



# TOAM in Mauritius

- **Chair of National Monitoring Committee (NMC)**
  - **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (International Trade Division)**
- **National Focal Point (NFP)**
  - **MCCI**
- **Inter-Agency Protocol**
  - **NMC, NFP and all agencies have signed an inter-agency Protocol (approx. 26 agencies)**

# List of Agencies (1)

- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade Division (ITD)**
- **Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)**
- **Division of Veterinary Services (DVS)**
- **National Plant Protection Office (NPPO)**
- **Food Import Unit (MOH)**
- **Dangerous Chemicals and Control Board (DCCB)**
- **Pharmacy Board**
- **Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development**
- **Attorney General's Office**
- **Commerce Division (MICCP)**
- **Industry Division (MICCP)**

## List of Agencies (2)

- **Ministry of Technology**
- **Customs Department, Mauritius Revenue Authority**
- **Board of Investment**
- **Enterprise Mauritius**
- **Mauritius Standards Bureau**
- **Mauritius Ports Authority**
- **SMEDA**
- **Competent Authority – Seafood**
- **Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance**
- **Ministry of Tourism and External Communications**
- **Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities**
- **Ministry of Business and Enterprise**

# MCCI: National Focal Point

- **Responsible for administration and management of the website**
  - **Validation of reported trade obstacles in collaboration with NMC**
  - **Ensure prompt transmission of information to relevant agencies to maintain confidentiality**
  - **Updating users on the status of their reported obstacles (through the TOAM)**
  - **Posting updated trade information in news section of the website**

# MCCI: National Focal Point

- **Communication and Promotion Campaign**
  - **Dissemination of brochures to exporters, importers, business associations and trade support institutions**
  - **100% Challenge TV Programme**
  - **Press Campaign**
  - **Awareness Workshops**

# The Pilot Phase: Training of Operators



## Testing the Platform

- 3 focus groups interviews
- Present the TOA platform
- Training operators how to use the platform
- Help them register as a user and report an obstacle



## Evaluation of the TOAM Website

- Obtaining comments on website from operators by filling in questionnaires
- Provide feedback and suggestions to ITC

# Training Sessions for Evaluating the Platform

## 3 Focus Groups



14 Exporters

8 Importers

4 Business Associations

# Official Launch: 10 September 2015





# Results in Numbers (as at 22 October 2015)

30 Operators  
Trained

> 50 Registered  
Users



12 Obstacles  
Reported / 3  
Solved

# Thank you!

[www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius](http://www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius)



# PART II: Contents

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How to Register as a User?

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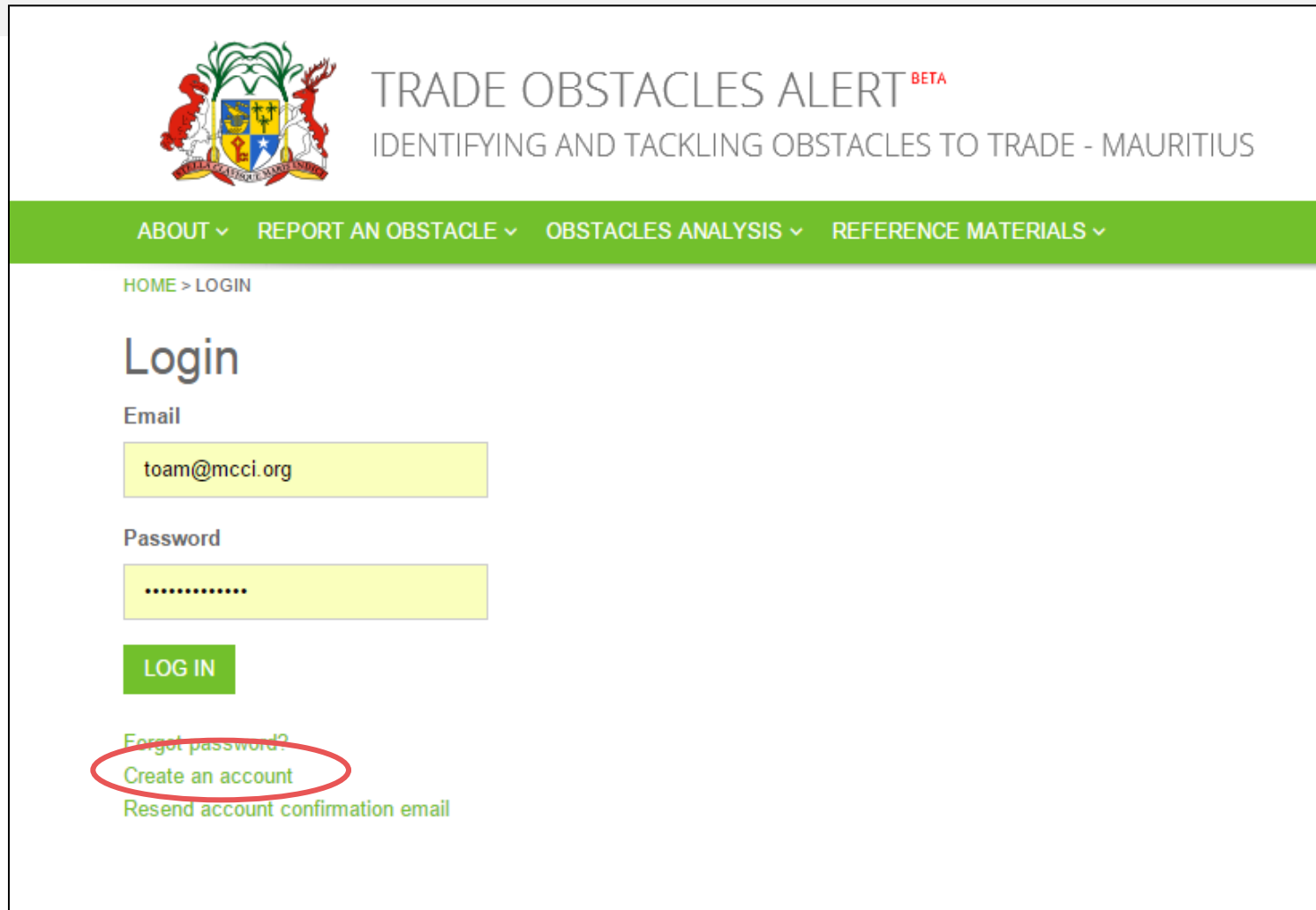
Updates & Obstacles Analysis


The screenshot shows the homepage of the Trade Obstacles Alert website for Mauritius. The URL is www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius/Home.aspx. The page features the Mauritian coat of arms and the text 'TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT BETA IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING OBSTACLES TO TRADE - MAURITIUS'. There are language options for English, Français, and Español, and a 'LOG IN' button. A navigation menu includes 'ABOUT', 'REPORT AN OBSTACLE', 'OBSTACLES ANALYSIS', and 'REFERENCE MATERIALS'. The main content area has a banner for 'LEARN HOW TO IDENTIFY TRADE OBSTACLES' with a 'READ MORE' button. Below the banner are three call-to-action boxes: 'Report an obstacle', 'Set up your alerts', and 'View the reports'. On the right side, there are sections for 'Latest obstacles' (dated 01/06/2015), 'Statistics' (7 Obstacles registered, 2 Obstacles solved, 5 Obstacles ongoing resolution), and 'News & documents' (dated 17/10/2014).

# How to Register as a User?

[www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius](http://www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius)

 LOG IN



 TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT <sup>BETA</sup>  
IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING OBSTACLES TO TRADE - MAURITIUS

ABOUT ▾ REPORT AN OBSTACLE ▾ OBSTACLES ANALYSIS ▾ REFERENCE MATERIALS ▾

HOME > LOGIN

## Login

Email

Password

[LOG IN](#)

[Forgot password?](#)  
[Create an account](#)  
[Resend account confirmation email](#)

# How to Register as a User?



## Required Fields

- Title, Name, Email, Password, Notification Language, Country of Residence, Organisation Type



## Optional Fields

- Telephone Number, Organisation, Job Title

HOME > REGISTER A NEW ACCOUNT

## Register a new account

### User profile

**Title \***

Mr.  
 Ms.

**Name \***

**Last name \***

**Email ⓘ \***

**Password ⓘ \***  
*Minimum 8 characters*

**Password confirmation \***

**Notification language ⓘ \***

English

# The Alert System



## Alerts

▪ Receive email notifications of obstacles faced by operators in sectors and markets of interest to you

▪ You can, at any time, modify the alerts' settings or decide not to receive anymore alerts from the page **Edit my alerts** (within the module **MY ACCOUNT**).

MY ACCOUNT ▾
View my reports
Manage reports
Edit my profile
<b>Edit my alerts</b>
Manage my TOA mer
Log out

### Alert system

Do you wish to receive alerts about the trade obstacles reports? ⓘ

- Yes  
 No

Please select the products for which you wish to receive alerts

- All product classifications  
 Live animals and animal products  
 Vegetable products (including fats, oils and waxes)  
 Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco  
 Mineral products  
 Chemical products  
 Plastic and rubber products  
 Raw hides, skins, leather, furs and articles thereof  
 Wood, wood products and paper  
 Textiles and other apparel articles  
 Stone, ceramic and glass products  
 Metals and articles thereof  
 Machinery, electronic equipment and consume electronics  
 Transportation and associated equipment  
 Miscellaneous manufacture

Please select the markets for which you wish to receive alerts

- All countries  
 COMESA/SADC ⓘ

# Reporting a Trade Obstacle



## Context of the Obstacle

- When and Where?
- Is it a recurring problem?



## Type of Obstacle

- Stringent regulation, administrative burdens, transparency issues, discriminating behaviour of officials, time constraints, high costs amongst others



## Affected Product & Additional Information

### Report a new obstacle

Please, fill in the form below referring to only one obstacle and one product at a time (if the obstacle affects multiple products, please identify only the main product affected).

1. Context of the obstacle      2. Type of obstacle      3. Affected product

4. Additional information

**You faced an obstacle when \***

Importing  
 Exporting

**Towards (from) which country? \***

Please select ▼

**Describe the context of the obstacle ⓘ \***

Describe the trade obstacle context

# What Happens after Submission of the Report?



## Validation

- The National Focal Point and Chair of the National Monitoring Committee validate the obstacle jointly.



## Obstacle Published on TOAM Platform

- After validation, the obstacle becomes public but details of the company remain confidential at all stages of the process.



## Request for Information sent to Relevant Agencies

- The National Focal Point then sends the report to the relevant agencies and requests for clarifications/action to be taken.



# Status Updates

Obstacles status	Accessibility	Description	Colour code
New	Confidential (NFP and NMC)	The obstacle report has been submitted by the registered user and has to be reviewed by the NFP.	
Under review	Confidential (NFP and NMC)	The obstacle report has been reviewed by the NFP but further details are needed in order to validate it.	
Not valid	Confidential (NFP and NMC)	The obstacle report has been reviewed and rejected by the NFP because its content is inappropriate or the problem reported does not correspond to an obstacle as defined in the TOA platform.	
On-going resolution	Public	The obstacle report has been reviewed and validated by the NFP. The obstacle has been communicated to the relevant agencies.	
Solved	Public	The obstacle has been removed by the relevant agencies.	
On-going resolution (Special Case)	Public	The obstacle cannot be removed in the short term as it represents a special case. Discussions on how to solve the obstacle will continue within the NMC.	

# Online Updates Increase Transparency

## Report's updates

07/08/2015 **New**

22/09/2015 **Ongoing resolution <14d** Update - Public [Details](#)

Dear User, Thank you for using the TOAM platform. The reported trade obstacle has been validated. We have sent details of the problem to the relevant agency and we shall keep you updated on the progress made to resolve this issue. Best Regards, The National Focal Point

22/09/2015 **Ongoing resolution <14d** Request for info (Valid) - Public [Details](#)

**Message sent by the NFP on 22/09/2015**

Dear Sir, Please find attached a reported trade obstacle falling under the purview of your Agency. We would be grateful if the necessary actions can be taken to resolve this issue. Relying on your usual collaboration. Thanks and Best Regards, The National Focal Point

**Response from the competent agency on 30/09/2015**

Thank you for your query. Please note that the Mauritius Standards Bureau has a documented set of procedures with regards to GN No. 43 of 1994 - Toys (Safety) Regulations 1994; the information is accessible online on the MSB Website: [msb.intnet.mu/English/Documents/MSB/update2015/Procedure%20for%20Toys.doc](http://msb.intnet.mu/English/Documents/MSB/update2015/Procedure%20for%20Toys.doc)

30/09/2015 **Solved** Update - Public [Details](#)

Dear User, According to the new procedures at the the Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB), importers of toys are no longer required to submit applications for 'Certificate of Conformity' through the Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU). They can now apply directly to the MSB. As indicated in the reply above, the new guidelines are available on the website of the MSB. Best Regards, The National Focal Point

FEEDBACK

# Obstacles Analysis



## View Obstacles Reported by Other Users

- Click on Obstacles Analysis → View the Reports

The screenshot shows the header and navigation menu of the 'TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT' website. The header includes the Mauritian coat of arms, the title 'TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT', the subtitle 'IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING OBSTACLES TO TRADE - MAURITIUS', and a notification bell icon next to a globe. The navigation menu is a green bar with the following items: ABOUT, REPORT AN OBSTACLE, OBSTACLES ANALYSIS, REFERENCE MATERIALS, CONTENT MANAGEMENT, and MY ACCOUNT. Below the menu, the breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME > VIEW THE REPORTS'. The 'OBSTACLES ANALYSIS' menu item is expanded, showing two sub-options: 'View the reports' (highlighted) and 'Statistics'. The main content area features a large heading 'View the reports'.

# Notify the same obstacle

»	26	16/09/2015	Importing	Mauritius	Other	Informal or unusually high payment	Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco	21/09/2015	0	Ongoing resolution 14-60d	
»	23	03/09/2015	Exporting	Mauritius	Government institution	Administrative burden	Chemical products	21/09/2015	0	Ongoing resolution 14-60d	
FEEDBACK	»	22	20/08/2015	Importing	Mauritius	Government institution	Regulatory problem	Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco	21/09/2015	0	Ongoing resolution 14-60d
»	21	20/08/2015	Importing	Mauritius	Government institution	Delay or time related problem	Live animals and animal products	30/09/2015	0	Ongoing resolution 14-60d	
»	19	07/08/2015	Importing	Mauritius	Government institution	Delay or time related problem	Miscellaneous manufactory	30/09/2015	0	Solved	
»	18	06/08/2015	Importing	Mauritius	Government institution	Informal or unusually high payment	Textiles and other apparel articles	21/09/2015	0	Ongoing resolution 14-60d	
The fee of MUR 500 payable to customs for ruling on HS codes classification is considered unfair.										VIEW »	
<a href="#">Notify the same obstacle</a>											
Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries										← Previous 1 Next →	

# Other Useful Resources

The screenshot displays the MCCI website interface. At the top, a green navigation bar contains the following menu items: ABOUT, REPORT AN OBSTACLE, OBSTACLES ANALYSIS, REFERENCE MATERIALS, and MY ACCOUNT. A dropdown menu is open under 'REFERENCE MATERIALS', listing: User guide, Trade obstacles classification, FAQ, News and documents, Useful links, and Visit the demo site. Below the navigation is a large banner for 'JOIN THE TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT MECHANISM' with a 'READ MORE' button. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'Report an obstacle' (with a pencil icon), 'Set up your alerts' (with an envelope icon), and 'View the reports' (with a magnifying glass icon). On the right side, there are sections for 'Latest obstacles' (dated 09/10/2015), 'Statistics' (showing 10 registered, 1 solved, and 9 ongoing obstacles), and 'News & documents' (dated 12/10/2015, featuring an article about the E-Procurement in the Public Sector System (e-PS)).

ABOUT ▾ REPORT AN OBSTACLE ▾ OBSTACLES ANALYSIS ▾ REFERENCE MATERIALS ▾ MY ACCOUNT ▾

User guide  
Trade obstacles classification  
FAQ  
News and documents  
Useful links  
Visit the demo site

JOIN THE TRADE OBSTACLES ALERT MECHANISM  
READ MORE

**Report an obstacle**  
Report the obstacles you face when exporting or importing your products and let the responsible authorities find a solution.

**Set up your alerts**  
Get timely updates on the problems faced by other trade operators in the markets and product categories you are interested in.

**View the reports**  
See the obstacle reports submitted to date and understand what the main concerns are for trade operators.

**Latest obstacles**  
09/10/2015  
Vessel to Reunion was planned to depart on Tuesday 06.10. On Friday 02.10 morning, we are informed that departure of vessel would be delayed to Thursday 8.10. In the afternoon, we learn that the vesse... [read more](#)

**Statistics**  
10 Obstacles registered  
1 Obstacles solved  
9 Obstacles ongoing resolution

**News & documents**  
12/10/2015  
**E-Procurement in the Public Sector System (e-PS)**  
The Government e-Procurement System (e-PS) was launched on ... [read more](#)

# Thank you!

[www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius](http://www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius)

