Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism

29 March 2016
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2. Objectives and Institutional Mechanism
3. Role of MCCI as National Focal Point
4. Results in Figures
Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism

- **Online platform** for reporting Trade Obstacles
- Accessible to **all operators**
- **All government agencies** linked
- **Formal mechanism** for addressing reported obstacles

www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius
The TOA Platform allows.....

**Trade operators** to voice their concern and alert the competent authority

**National authorities** to get instantaneous information on the private sector’s problems and respond to the issues

**All users** to be alerted of the obstacles and corresponding answers/solutions
........ through 3 main functionalities

1. **Report a trade obstacle**: allows user to capture 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:

1: User
Reports an obstacle

2: National Focal Point
Reviews and publishes the report

3: Relevant agency
Analyses the obstacle and finds a solution

4: National Focal Point
Publishes the answer

TOA Platform

Exchange of information
(shall be necessary)

Communicates the actions taken

Exchange of information

Sending the report

National Monitoring Committee
Supervises the mechanism
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

• National Focal Point (NFP)
  ➢ MCCI

• Inter-Agency Protocol
  ➢ NMC, NFP and all agencies have signed an inter-agency Protocol (approx. 20 agencies)

• Official launch took place on 10 September 2015
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
  - Posting information in news section of the website
MCCI: National Focal Point

• Training Operators and Business Associations
  
  ➢ Assisting with the registration process
  
  ➢ Demonstrating the various features of the platform and helping to report obstacles online
  
  ➢ Collecting feedback on the platform and the mechanism
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
Training Sessions for Evaluating the Platform

3 Focus Groups

- 14 Exporters
- 8 Importers
- 4 Business Associations
Official Launch: 10 September 2015
Results in Numbers

- > 100 Registered Users
- 100 Operators Trained
- 18 Reported Obstacles
- 12 Obstacles Solved
PART II: Contents

1. How to Register as a User?
2. Reporting a Trade Obstacle
3. Updates & Obstacles Analysis
How to Register as a User?

www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius
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
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).
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
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacles status</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Colour code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>Confidential (NFP and NMC)</td>
<td>The obstacle report has been submitted by the registered user and has to be reviewed by the NFP.</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under review</td>
<td>Confidential (NFP and NMC)</td>
<td>The obstacle report has been reviewed by the NFP but further details are needed in order to validate it.</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not valid</td>
<td>Confidential (NFP and NMC)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-going resolution</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>The obstacle report has been reviewed and validated by the NFP. The obstacle has been communicated to the relevant agencies.</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solved</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>The obstacle has been removed by the relevant agencies.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-going resolution (Special Case)</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Gray</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online Updates Increase Transparency

30/09/2015  Ongoing resolution 16  Request for info (Response received) - Public

Message sent by the NFP on 30/09/2015
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. Relaying on your usual collaboration. Thanks and Best Regards,
The National Focal Point.

Response from the competent agency on 30/09/2015:
Import permits validity is three months which is sufficient for importation from Australia. A ship takes 14-19 days from Australia to reach Mauritius. Trans-shipment is not allowed for food materials. 3 months validity of permits is essential to have a regular flow of products in Mauritius. If this period is extended, importers will have the tendency to gather import permits and import in bulk. No importers have complained to this office so far. Sanitary condition is dynamic and may change at anytime, therefore a long validity is not advisable.

06/11/2015  Ongoing resolution 14.60d  Request for info (Response received) - Public

Message sent by the NFP on 06/11/2015
Dear Sir, Following the National Monitoring Committee meeting, we would be grateful if you could provide additional information on the procedures, documents required and time taken for the approval of import permits for meat. Best Regards,
The National Focal Point.

Response from the competent agency on 06/11/2015:
It takes one week to process an import permit for regular importers. As a matter of fact, the import committee, chaired by the DFS of the ministry, sits once weekly. The validity of the permit is 3 months from the date of issue.

16/11/2015  Ongoing resolution 14.60d  Request for info (Response received) - Public

Message sent by the NFP on 16/11/2015
Dear Agency, Thank you for your response. The operator has further reported that even if the permit is issued within one week, approval may take up to 10 days as the signature of the Chief Veterinary Officer is required. We would kindly request your comments on this issue. Best Regards,
The National Focal Point.

Response from the competent agency on 17/11/2015:
Yes the is right, the committee sits once a week, after the recommendation of the committee the approval of the permit is issued. However, the validity of the permit is 3 months and it starts on the day the permit is issued. Regular importers normally apply in advance.
### Obstacle: Delay in Obtaining Import Permit for Meat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Submission of documents by importer to Veterinary Services before 10 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Documents are sent by despatch to Ministry of Agro-Industry in Port-Louis for approval by PS/DPS in the weekly meeting of the Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>If approved: Documents are sent back by despatch to Reduit in a delay of 1-2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Issuance of import permit and approval (signature) by Chief Veterinary Officer (about 5 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total time taken = about 10 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Obstacles Analysis

View Obstacles Reported by Other Users

- Click on Obstacles Analysis → View the Reports
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Nature of Problem</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>18/08/2015</td>
<td>Importing</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Informal or unusually high payment</td>
<td>Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>03/09/2015</td>
<td>Exporting</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Government Institution</td>
<td>Administrative burden</td>
<td>Chemical products</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>20/08/2015</td>
<td>Importing</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Government Institution</td>
<td>Regulatory problem</td>
<td>Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>20/08/2015</td>
<td>Importing</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Government Institution</td>
<td>Delay or time related problem</td>
<td>Live animals and animal products</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>07/08/2015</td>
<td>Importing</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Government Institution</td>
<td>Delay or time related problem</td>
<td>Miscellaneous manufacture</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>06/08/2015</td>
<td>Importing</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Government Institution</td>
<td>Informal or unusually high payment</td>
<td>Textiles and other apparel articles</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fee of MUR 500 payable to customs for ruling on HS codes classification is considered unfair.

Notify the same obstacle

Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries
Other Useful Resources

Latest obstacles

09/10/2015
Vessel to Reunion was planned to depart on Tuesday 08 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 vessel... 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