Jamaica Customs Department
Time Release Study 2009

Prepared by:
Dr. Lloyd Waller
Centre for Leadership and Governance
University of the West Indies
Kingston, Jamaica
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Executive Summary

Introduction and Context

This Time Release Study (TRS) was commissioned by the Jamaica Customs Department to measure its trade facilitation performance. It forms part of the overall objective of the Government of Jamaica to improve efficiency and service delivery in the Public Sector.

It is the first time a TRS is being undertaken in the Customs Department and provide meaning insights into its operations and possible solutions to make the Department more efficient in its processes.

The key objectives of the TRS are to:

a) Calculate the average time taken for the release of goods for import and export;
b) Determine where in the procedures problems exist and the nature of such problems; and
c) Develop corrective measures and recommendations.

Scope and Methodology

Guidelines of the World Customs Organization (WCO) were applied to determine scope and methodology.

The scope of the study included cargo arriving by sea over the period June 24 -July 24, 2009.

The methodology recommended by the WCO has been applied to identify the timing of key events in the import process to allow measurement of:

The arithmetic mean between the arrival of the goods and their release into the economy via a standardised system. Measurement was based on data from all suitable transactions in the sample period (approximately 239 sea cargo transactions). It was anticipated that the sample would have been larger but there were a number of incomplete entries which could not be inputted into the database and some were rejected.

TRS Phases

The study was conducted over three (3) main phases:

- **Design:** A TRS Working Group was established to scope, plan and design the study in accordance with WCO guidelines.

  The various procedures in the import process cycle were identified, along with the data required to measure the elapsed times for key intervals including the primary measure, from arrival to release.

- **Data extraction and measurement:** All the data required for TRS were collected during the normal course of business through a manual process - completion of questionnaire since the goods clearance process is not fully automated. The Study therefore provides a snapshot of activities. Time gaps for required intervals were measured and averaged.

- **Analysis and reporting:** The results were analysed to determine the bottlenecks in the entire goods clearance process with a concentration on imports.

The results were segmented based on various dimensions such as the type of process i.e. regular, fast track and risk related. This demonstrated the effect of different variables on the time it takes for goods to be released.

Key findings were identified and where they indicated
opportunities for improvement, recommendations were developed to address them.

**Results**

The interval from Arrival to Release is the primary TRS measure. The average time it takes for the clearance of imports is 8d 7h 48m whilst the time for exports is 1d 17h 55m. The TRS results for Jamaica are shown below in the Results Table.

**Key Findings**

It is important to view the following in context of a report put out by the World Bank “Trading Across Borders 2008” Panama (which takes 9 days to import goods and 9 days to export goods), is considered a regional leader in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.1 Panama is ranked as number 1 out of 32 countries.2 Jamaica, which according to WB funded study takes 21 days for export and 22 days for import3 is ranked at 20.4 The TRS however, revealed that the average time it takes to clear imports is 8 days and for export it takes 1 day.

The differences in the findings may be due to the methodology used and the activities captured.

**TABLE 1.0: Average time for release**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>8d 21h 25m</td>
<td>7d 12h 21m</td>
<td>8d 23h 14m</td>
<td>7d 15h 36m</td>
<td>6d 19h 54m</td>
<td>8d 15h 19m</td>
<td>8d 21h 59m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>5d 13h 42m</td>
<td>4d 16h 22m</td>
<td>5d 6h 36m</td>
<td>5d 7h 23m</td>
<td>4d 6h 38m</td>
<td>5d 10h 32m</td>
<td>5d 12h 41m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest deviation</td>
<td>29d 18h 0m</td>
<td>27d 6h 46m</td>
<td>29d 18h 0m</td>
<td>27d 6h 46m</td>
<td>23d 4h 12m</td>
<td>29d 18h 0m</td>
<td>27d 6h 46m</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of the results produced by the TRS and the factors underpinning them identified the following key findings

1. The time it takes for the release of imports does not compare favourably with international standards. The average time it takes to clear goods is 8 days 7 hours and 48 minutes. The minimum time it takes is 54 minutes whilst it takes a maximum of 29 days and 18 hours.

2. The time it takes for exports compares more favourably with international standards. The average time is 1 day 17 hours and 55 minutes. The minimum time it takes is 1 day and 10 minutes whilst it takes a maximum of 2 days 2 hours and 7 minutes.

3. The shortest process in the goods clearance process is payment taking an average of 10 minutes.

4. Entry processing takes the longest time with an average of 1 day 1 hour and 19 minutes.

5. The entities and variables which contribute to and influence trade facilitation performance are numerous, inter-dependent and span several organisations.

6. Whilst the goods clearance process is documented, it is not followed and is interpreted on an ad hoc basis e.g. manifesting and verification.

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1. See [http://www.doingbusiness.org/economyrankings/?direction=Asc&sort=9&regionid=3](http://www.doingbusiness.org/economyrankings/?direction=Asc&sort=9&regionid=3)
2. Globally, Panama is ranked 8th out of 181 countries and Jamaica 100. Singapore is the world leader. In Singapore it takes 5 days for export and 3 days to import. See [http://www.doingbusiness.org/exploretopics/tradingacrossborders/](http://www.doingbusiness.org/exploretopics/tradingacrossborders/)
Acknowledgements

The efforts and expertise of many have contributed to this study. Particular acknowledgment and thanks go to:

The World Customs Organization (WCO) for guidance and technical expertise especially Robert Struthers

Members of the internal TRS Working Group who gave their expertise and effort

Customs staff especially Anneke Rousseau and Cebert Mitchell for their commitment, enthusiasm and sustained effort which was critical to the project

Members of the Customs Brokers fraternity who cooperated and guided the research team

The Research Team for undertaking this groundbreaking study at a crucial time in the transformation of the Customs Department

Lloyd Waller (PhD.)
Head - Research Team

5. The author is a Lecturer at the University of the West Indies, Mona. Dr. Waller is also the Strategic Polling and Survey Manager in the Research Unit of the Centre for Leadership and Governance as well as the Logistic Survey Manager for the Boxill Polls
Introduction

The enhanced efficiency of the Customs Department is of concern not just to the trading community but also to the Government of Jamaica (GOJ). The GOJ has expressly stated its commitment to making the Customs Department more efficient and business friendly especially in light of its importance to the treasury and investment.

The clearance of goods involves various national authorities such as port, health, veterinary, and agriculture. Additionally it includes brokers, freight forwarders and shipping agents, carriers, banks and other intermediaries. Despite this, delays in the release of goods are very often attributed to the procedural and documentary requirements of Customs since they are the primary agency at the border.

At the same time much of the evidence on the trade facilitation performance of Customs has been anecdotal except for the World Bank's Doing Business Report 2008 (DBR). According to the Report it takes twenty one (21) and twenty two (22) days for export and import respectively. It must be observed that the methodology in this report is distinct from a Time Release Study hereby undertaken. Nevertheless the TRS reveals that the actual time is far less than stated in the DBR 2008.

This Time Release Study (TRS) breaks new ground in measuring efficiency in the Jamaica Customs Department. Furthermore the findings serve as a baseline for the reform agenda as the Department seeks to become more efficient and effective. Importantly, the Department must move with dispatch to initiate measures for faster clearance and for monitoring the release time for goods through frequent review.

Scope and Methodology

- The study will measure the time from arrival of the commercial goods at the seaports in Kingston until they are released from Customs control.
- Type of Goods: Imports and exports
- Geographical scope: Kingston Marine Operations

Data were sourced from the Customs Cargo Management System through the completion of questionnaires owing to the fact that the goods clearance process is not fully automated.

Duration and Timing of the Study:

In keeping with the WCO's recommendation that the sample period chosen should be one of 'normal' traffic, avoiding seasonal variations, the study coincides with season of normal traffic over a one month period June 24 - July 24, 2009.
Sample Size
The aim was to capture as many transactions as possible and not a specific sample size because the number of entries processed is not finite. A total of 389 entries were tracked.

The WCO's TRS measure
The WCO's TRS measure is:
*The arithmetic mean between the arrival of the goods and their release into the economy via a standardised system.*

WCO TRS Definitions
In the WCO's TRS Guide the terms 'Release' and 'Clearance' are defined as follows:

**Release:** The action by Customs to permit goods undergoing clearance to be placed at the disposal of the person concerned.

**TRS Equivalent**
**Release:** This is equivalent in Jamaica to a cargo status of OK. This is the point at which the consignment is clear of any Customs impediments, has been paid, and may be removed from control (i.e. is placed at the disposal of the persons concerned). Once Release status is given, the timing of actual removal or delivery is at the discretion of the importer or their service provider.

Results
The interval from Arrival to Release (or 'Release OK') is the primary TRS measure. Using the WCO standard

### TRS Table 1.1: Intervals measured

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core</th>
<th>Second Tier</th>
<th>Third Tier</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival of Conveyance</td>
<td>Arrival at Berth</td>
<td>Unloading Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargo Reporting</td>
<td>Electronic Manifest Submitted</td>
<td>Presentation of Final Breakdown Manifests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal Notes</td>
<td>Documents Submitted to Deposits Unit</td>
<td>Goods Move Through Gate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warehousing</td>
<td>Arrival at Warehouse</td>
<td>Stowing Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Processing</td>
<td>CEK # Assigned</td>
<td>Hard Copy of Entry Returned to Broker's Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuation</td>
<td>Document submitted to Valuation Verification</td>
<td>Value Verification Complete \ Importer Advised of Completion of Appeal</td>
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<td>• Advanced Rulings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Appeals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>Type of Payment</td>
<td>Cashier - Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification and Manifesting</td>
<td>Start of Verification</td>
<td>Customs Release Printed (FCL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement of Goods</td>
<td>Locating Goods</td>
<td>Goods identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs Examination</td>
<td>Breaking of Seal</td>
<td>Release Issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit of Goods</td>
<td>Release Presented to Delivery Officer</td>
<td>Goods Exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Procedures</td>
<td>Exporter Books Container</td>
<td>Vessel Cleared to Sale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. For results see Figure 1.1 Average times for intervals on page 9
measure for Release, the results of this study can be found below in Diagram 1 and further explained in Table 1.2:

Statistics for 148 correct intervals:
- Average: 8d 7h 48m (11,988.14 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes: 54 mins.
- Maximum time it takes: 29d 18h 0m (42,840.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 5d 6h 24m (7,584.50 mins.)
- Largest deviation: 29d 18h 0m (42,840.00 mins.)

**Figure 1.0: Arrival to Release of Goods**

**TABLE 1.2: Average time for cargo from arrival to release**

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

SECTION B - ARRIVAL OF CONVEYANCE

[5. Arrival at Berth] -

Statistics from 163 correct intervals
- Average: 0d 15h 50m (950.62 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 1d 23h 4m (2,824.29 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes: 1h 10m (70 mins.)
- Maximum time it takes: 25d 3h 35m (36,215 mins.)

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 100 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 10h 49m (649.86 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 8h 1m (481.07 mins.)
- Largest deviation: 1d 7h 58m (1,918.00 mins.)

Based on the Figure 1.1 above:
- The shortest process in the goods clearance process is payment taking an average of 10 minutes.
- This is followed by the movement of goods which takes almost 14 minutes.
- The time it takes for goods to exit is 15.56 minutes.
- The examination of goods takes approximately 1 hour and 27 minutes.
- Verification and Manifesting takes 2 hours and 9 minutes.
- The time it takes to warehouse cargo is 15 hours and 15 minutes.
- The process of unloading takes an average of 15 hours and 50 minutes.
- Entry Processing takes the longest time with an average of 1 day 1 hour and 19 minutes.

Figure 1.2 Unloading
For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 62 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 23h 51m (1,431.21 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 3d 2h 56m (4,496.59 mins.)
- Largest deviation 25d 3h 35m (36,215.00 mins.)

For Break Bulk
Statistics for 100 intervals:
- Average: 0d 10h 37m (637.43 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 7h 36m (456.28 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 7h 58m (1,918.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 56 intervals:
- Average: 1d 1h 9m (1,509.91 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 3d 6h 44m (4,724.01 mins.)
- Largest deviation 25d 3h 35m (36,215.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 43 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 11h 46m (706.09 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 8h 42m (522.30 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 8h 5m (1,925.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 80 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 19h 24m (1,164.36 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 2d 18h 21m (3,981.28 mins.)
- Largest deviation 25d 3h 35m (36,215.00 mins.)

For Risk Goods
Statistics for 37 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 13h 17m (797.16 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 9h 50m (590.62 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 15h 35m (2,375.00 mins.)

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 30 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 0m (0.00 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)

For Break Bulk
Statistics for 30 intervals:
- Average: 0d 16h 10m (970.97 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 1d 0h 43m (1,483.12 mins.)
- Largest deviation 4d 1h 55m (5,875.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 1 correct interval:
- Average: 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 0m (0.00 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)

For Break Bulk
Statistics for 30 intervals:
- Average: 0d 16h 10m (970.97 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 1d 0h 43m (1,483.12 mins.)
- Largest deviation 4d 1h 55m (5,875.00 mins.)

Figure 1.3: Warehousing
For FCL
Statistics for 1 interval:
- Average: 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 0m (0.00 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 9 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 16h 33m (993.89 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 1d 5h 38m (1,778.14 mins.)
- Largest deviation 4d 1h 55m (5,875.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 19 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 17h 9m (1,029.68 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 23h 8m (1,388.35 mins.)
- Largest deviation 4d 1h 31m (5,851.00 mins.)

For Risk Goods
Statistics for 4 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 3h 16m (196.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 1h 21m (81.47 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 4h 43m (283.00 mins.)

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 35 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 11h 20m (680.14 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 12h 28m (748.46 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 23h 33m (2,853.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 25 correct intervals:
- Average: 1d 20h 14m (2,654.60 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 5d 21h 39m (8,499.37 mins.)
- Largest deviation 30d 0h 15m (43,215.00 mins.)

For Break Bulk
Statistics for 38 intervals:
- Average: 0d 10h 51m (651.26 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 12h 5m (725.35 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 23h 33m (2,853.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 32 intervals:
- Total correct intervals: 22
- Average: 0d 16h 48m (1,008.55 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 1d 6h 59m (1,859.62 mins.)
- Largest deviation 5d 2h 9m (7,329.00 mins.)

SECTION H: ENTRY PROCESSING
[58. Hard Copy Entry Package Lodged] - [83. Hard Copy of Entry Returned to Broker's Box (Documentation Inspection complete)] General

Statistics for 65 correct intervals:
- Average: 1d 1h 19m (1,519.43 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 3d 18h 14m (5,414.62 mins.)
- Largest deviation 30d 0h 15m (43,215.00 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes - 9 mins.
- Maximum time it takes - 43215 mins.

Figure 1.4: Entry processing
For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 17 correct intervals:
• Average: 2d 4h 9m (3,129.18 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 7d 1h 20m (10,160.33 mins.)
• Largest deviation 30d 0h 15m (43,215.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 32 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 8h 15m (495.47 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 8h 44m (524.55 mins.)
• Largest deviation 1d 4h 59m (1,739.00 mins.)

For Risk Goods
Statistics for 16 correct intervals:
• Average: 1d 6h 57m (1,857.00 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 1d 8h 56m (1,976.38 mins.)
• Largest deviation 5d 2h 9m (7,329.00 mins.)

SECTION I: PAYMENT
Statistics for 65 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 10m (10.06 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 10m (10.09 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 55m (55.00 mins.)
• Minimum time it takes - less than a mins.
• Maximum time it takes - 55 mins.

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 37 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 9m (9.62 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 8m (8.34 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 34m (34.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 25 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 10m (10.72 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 12m (12.45 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 55m (55.00 mins.)

For Break Bulk
Statistics for 41 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 9m (9.80 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 8m (8.14 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 34m (34.00 mins.)

For FCL
• Statistics for 23 intervals
  • Average: 0d 0h 10m (10.43 mins.)
  • Standard deviation: 0d 0h 13m (13.00 mins.)
  • Largest deviation 0d 0h 55m (55.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 20 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 7m (7.40 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 5m (5.28 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 26m (26.00 mins.)

Figure 1.5: Payment
For Regular Goods
Statistics for 26 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 11m (11.73 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 12m (12.93 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 55m (55.00 mins.)

For: Risk Goods
Statistics for 19 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 10m (10.58 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 8m (8.86 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 30m (30.00 mins.)

For Cash Payment
Statistics for 13 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 8m (8.85 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 6m (6.87 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 21m (21.00 mins.)

For Cheque Payment
Statistics for 50 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 10m (10.46 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 10m (10.91 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 55m (55.00 mins.)

For Credit/ Debit Card Payment
Statistics for 2 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 8m (8.00 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 2m (2.00 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 10m (10.00 mins.)

For E-Payment
0 correct intervals, hence no statistics

SECTION J: VERIFICATION AND MANIFESTING
Statistics for 65 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 2h 9m (129.77 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 4h 16m (256.56 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 23h 8m (1,388.00 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes - 19 mins.
- Maximum time it takes - 0d 23h 8m (1,388.00 mins.)

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 5 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 59m (59.60 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 37m (37.53 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 2h 13m (133.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 44 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 2h 13m (133.32 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 4h 12m (252.47 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 23h 8m (1,388.00 mins.)

Figure 1.6: Verification
For Break Bulk
Statistics for 3 intervals:
- Average: 0d 1h 7m (67.33 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 35m (35.98 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 50m (110.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 51 intervals:
- Average: 0d 2h 29m (149.59 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 4h 46m (286.20 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 23h 8m (1,388.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 18 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 1h 6m (66.06 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 32m (32.49 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 2h 13m (133.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 31 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 2h 17m (137.97 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 4h 41m (281.35 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 21h 37m (1,297.00 mins.)

For Risk Goods
Statistics for 16 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 3h 5m (185.56 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 5h 24m (324.10 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 23h 8m (1,388.00 mins.)

SECTION K: MOVEMENT OF GOODS
Statistics for 176 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 13m (13.91 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 17m (17.91 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 53m (113.00 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes - less than 1 mins.
- Maximum time it takes - 113 mins.

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 96 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 20m (20.32 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 20m (20.32 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 53m (113.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 62 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 5m (5.39 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 6m (6.32 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 34m (34.00 mins.)
For Break Bulk
Statistics for 96 intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 20m (20.32 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 20m (20.32 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 53m (113.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 67 intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 4m (4.01 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 3m (3.36 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 23m (23.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 46 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 15m (15.24 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 19m (19.37 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 27m (87.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 88 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 13m (13.33 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 16m (16.07 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 53m (113.00 mins.)

For: Risk Goods
Statistics for 40 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 12m (12.48 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 19m (19.17 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 17m (77.00 mins.)

SECTION L: CUSTOMS EXAMINATION
[122. Breaking of Seal] - [140. Release Issued (paperwork complete)] General
Statistics for 86 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 1h 27m (87.29 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 4h 0m (240.40 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 0h 37m (1,477.00 mins.)
- Minimum time it takes - 3 mins.
- Maximum time it takes - 1d 0h 37m (1,477.00 mins.).

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 75 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 1h 12m (72.83 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 3h 37m (217.92 mins.)
- Largest deviation 1d 0h 37m (1,477.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 9 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 3h 34m (214.11 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 6h 12m (372.08 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 20h 45m (1,245.00 mins.)

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**Figure 1.8: Examination**

![Graph showing breaking of seal to release issued](image-url)

- **Time it takes (minutes)**:
  - 0 to 1600
  - 200 intervals

- **# of intervals**
  - 1 to 169

- **Legend**
  - Questionnaire #
  - Section L Only

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For Break Bulk
Statistics for 78 intervals:
• Average: 0d 1h 12m (72.69 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 3h 33m (213.64 mins.)
• Largest deviation 1d 0h 37m (1,477.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 6 intervals:
• Average: 0d 4h 57m (297.33 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 7h 12m (432.23 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 20h 45m (1,245.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 24 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 2h 27m (147.71 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 5h 39m (339.43 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 21h 12m (1,272.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 42 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 41m (41.79 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 26m (26.59 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 2h 40m (160.00 mins.)

For: Risk Goods
Statistics for 40 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 2h 0m (120.28 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 5h 31m (331.03 mins.)
• Largest deviation 1d 0h 37m (1,477.00 mins.)

SECTION M: EXIT OF GOODS

Statistics for 163 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 15m (15.29 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 27m (27.81 mins.)
• Minimum time it takes - less than 1 min.
• Maximum time it takes - 0d 3h 39m (219.00 mins.)

For Kingston Wharves
Statistics for 86 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 25m (25.66 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 34m (34.94 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 3h 39m (219.00 mins.)

For Kingston Container Terminals
Statistics for 60 correct intervals:
• Average: 0d 0h 4m (4.07 mins.)
• Standard deviation: 0d 0h 4m (4.31 mins.)
• Largest deviation 0d 0h 20m (20.00 mins.)

Figure 1.9: Exit of Goods
For Break Bulk
Statistics for 88 intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 25m (25.82 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 34m (34.37 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 3h 39m (219.00 mins.)

For FCL
Statistics for 64 intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 2m (2.95 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 3m (3.52 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 0h 18m (18.00 mins.)

For Fast Track Goods
Statistics for 41 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 14m (14.63 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 29m (29.73 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 2h 40m (160.00 mins.)

For Regular Goods
Statistics for 81 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 14m (14.19 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 19m (19.48 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 1h 39m (99.00 mins.)

For Risk Goods
Statistics for 39 correct intervals:
- Average: 0d 0h 16m (16.56 mins.)
- Standard deviation: 0d 0h 36m (36.96 mins.)
- Largest deviation 0d 3h 39m (219.00 mins.)

EXPORTED GOOD(S)

Statistics for 4 correct intervals:
- Average: 01d 17h 55m (2,515 mins)
- Minimum: 01d 0h 10m (1,450 mins.)
- Maximum: 02d 02h 07m (3,007 mins)
Discussion of the Findings

Berth Six

The unloading of items from ships seems to be the smoothest process throughout this Time Release Study. However, ships arrive at the port on the basis of an estimated time and the downside to this is that ships tend to operate off schedule. The possible problems that arise from this situation have not been accounted for via observation.

Poor warehouse management

Warehousing is very time consuming and can account for significant delays in the process in general. Delays from time to time can be caused by the untimely malfunction of a forklift or the replacement of gas for the said machine. Without any untimely interruptions the process occurs relatively smoothly. Additionally the warehouse has only one scanning machine which makes the process of scanning a lengthy one.

There is also evidence of problems between the storage of goods in the warehouse and the difficulty cargo handlers have in locating such items upon retrieval or clearance by brokers/importers.

In terms of the presentation of documents to locate goods there are evident weaknesses in the system. It appears that location of goods does not go in line with the time an individual presents his/her documents to the security at the warehouse. As such, persons may show their documents early and individuals who present the same time or at a later stage can flow through the process before the former individual.

There is also evidence that brokers/agent/clerks seem to follow a different procedure, where as they can accompany warehouse locators to retrieve their respective goods. There is evidence that indicates that some brokers offer money to locators as a means of speeding up the locating process. Such practice is primarily in response to the fact that there is a poor warehouse management system which makes the retrieval of goods a lengthy process as warehouse personnel do not know exactly where to find the goods.

Berth Seven

The verification process is generally smooth at this Berth. In the early part of the morning (8-9:30) the traffic is generally slow. As the day progresses, especially during the lunch period to the evening, the queue is generally long and individuals are rather impatient as they do not want to wait.
Numbers of entries presented
At times, one person may have up to five entries verifying, which slows down the process. Additionally, each entry has its own unique situation and so sometimes the Supervisor has to leave his desk to see the goods in order to make a decision (whether to verify or not). Depending on the type of entry, one entry takes one to five minutes to be verified, but the time in the queue contributes to them spending a longer time for the process.

Manifesting
Manifesting needs to be streamlined. Although entries should not be manifested until the container is stripped, several instances have been noted in which entries are manifested and the breakdown manifest had not yet been submitted (because the container was not yet stripped).

Additionally, the queue for manifesting is generally long (depending on the time of day). It takes two to five minutes to verify an entry, because at times it is at this point that individual are told that they need to go to Kingport to have an amendment, because information that is on the entry is not what is on the main manifest.

There are usually three Clerks at the manifest window, and two computers that are ‘fashionably slow’. There is also no service system and so it is not fair in terms of which customer is serviced first.

Poor warehouse management
Another weakness, similar to Berth 6 is that of locating goods. Locating, may take a mere minute to over an hour depending on whether or not the persons who stored the packages are present.

Furthermore, although locating should follow verification and manifest, many brokers get their goods located before engaging in the Customs procedures. This is because Brokers are rather familiar with the workers and so upon entering the wharf, their goods are located at a small fee after which the Broker would then proceed to the next step (verification and manifesting).

Entry Processing
There are two persons who mainly deal with the lodgement of entries. These persons enter the CEK number on the system and check to see the type of entry. It is then sent to the unit or officer dealing with that type of entry.

Weak entry processing procedures
There is one person who carries the entries to the respective unit/ officer. The distribution of the entries is done periodically. The two officers who receive the lodged entries also distribute them as well. It is important to note that the lodgement area is about a two minute walk from the Processing Unit. This can be tedious as the walk involves climbing stairs. While there is a rush on the fast track entries there is no strict deadline on the others and this may take up to a day or more before the entry is processed. This also depends on whether or not the entry goes to risk management and or valuation branch which would extend the amount of time the entry is spent at customs house. The entry can be failed for different reasons which would also extend the amount of time the entry spends at Customs House. This means that the entry will have to be re-logged and will have to go through the whole process again. If there are no errors on the part of the broker/agent/clerk then this will lessen the amount of time the process takes.

When the entry is passed/ failed then the person from the lodgement office collects it and puts it in the broker’s box. This again is done periodically. This means that the entry might not be returned to the broker’s box immediately after it is finished processing. An entry can also be put on hold if there is further check/evaluation to be made. This again will lengthen the amount of time the entry spends in the Processing Unit.
When the entry is passed then the payment can be made. However, the broker/agent/clerk might not make the payment immediately after getting back the entry. In some cases the broker makes the payment for the importer then waits for reimbursement before he goes to the respective berth to collect the goods. In other cases the broker waits for the importer to provide the money to make the payment.

**Berth 11**

**Lack of procedure for resubmission of failed entries**

For the verification process at this location, entries are recorded in a book then taken upstairs to be verified by an officer. The person who records the entry into the book is the one who takes it to be verified and is also the person who returns it for the most part. Normally there isn't a line to drop off the entry in the verification box. Then entry takes about 15-20 minutes (or less) to be verified and given back to the broker. This also depends on the number of entries to be verified at the same time. In some cases the broker leaves and does not come back until the next day for the entry. The entry can be turned out at verification section for different reasons. Most times the fault is on the broker's end. In this case the problem has to be corrected and resubmitted for verification a second time. When the entry is verified the broker may decide to get it manifested and release at the same time or he may decide to return to do so the next day. Normally the broker decides to manifest at the same time. The manifest area is in the same section; however, it is down stairs. Again normally there is no queue at this section because most of the time there are about four persons working at this section. If an agent has to wait to submit his/her entry at the manifest area it is no more than ten minutes.

**Ad hoc printing of release process**

After manifesting the entries are taken upstairs to be released periodically. It is at this point that the process slows down as sometimes it takes hours for a release to be printed. Other times it takes half an hour to forty five minutes. These entries are returned down stairs periodically. The release might be printed or there might be a problem that the broker has to correct and the resubmitted entry is taken back upstairs for the release to be printed. Once the release is printed the broker can pay the wharf fees and then get the gate pass for the truck to collect the container. Sometimes the broker is not present when the release is ready or sometimes he may return the next day to pick up the release. They might also decide to collect the container early in the morning from 7 am to as late as 5:30 pm.

The broker then goes to the cashier at Berth 11 to pay the wharf fees. This might take up to twenty minutes depending on whether there is a long line or whether they are paying for more than one entry.

**Container Freight Station**

The request for the container to be put on bay has to be made 24 hours in advance as stipulated by KCT. The time that it takes for the container to go on bay depends on the availability of bays and the traffic as well. It must be noted that the container freight station is most of the times cramped for space.

The stripping of the container can take hours or days depending on the contents. For example, a container that is packed with tyres of different sizes will take longer to strip as it has to be unloaded manually because of how they are packed. This can take about 3 hours and another 3 to repack. Goods that are palletised can be removed by a forklift and takes about 20-25 minutes.

The examination process is fairly efficient.

**Cashiers - Customs House**

The level of service lacks consistency and proper supervision. The level of professionalism needs to be raised especially among cashiers and supervisors to ensure that customers are served efficiently and with the highest level of customer service consistently.
Recommendations

The following recommendations are not exhaustive. In collection of the data, the following needs to be highlighted:

1. Establish interface with all key players in the cargo clearance system such as a port community system. Such a system must not duplicate those functions where efficient systems already exist and it must, from the very beginning, provide for the electronic exchange of data, including manifest information.

2. Develop and communicate process/business flows and ensure these are followed. Brokers, agents and clerks must be specially communicated with to ensure adherence to procedures.

3. The Department needs to expedite its plans for full automation of the clearance procedures.

4. Streamline the verification/manifesting process at Berth 11 to make it shorter.

5. Despite the fact that the examination of cargo seems fairly efficient, the process could be enhanced if Customs inspectors are able to conduct inspections on behalf of all regulatory Agencies and given the appropriate powers under the relevant Acts instead of simply advising the relevant agencies that an importation needs their approval.

6. The valuation process must be made more efficient and transparent. Appeals/reviews take too long and whereas persons can pay the deposit re the disputed amount and clear the goods, they opt to await the outcome of the review.

7. Entry processing as a formal process for fast track brokers must be reviewed. Such brokers should be ‘fast-tracked’ through the system and as such should not need to await the approval of entry processing. They could possibly make payment once their entries are complete and then submit the entries after their goods are cleared.

KINGSTON WHARVES

Customs

1. Improved timetabling of personnel on the part of Customs to manage situation when the system
comes under extreme stress due to a large number of customers

2. Increased personnel to fill gaps (e.g. examination) or wherever necessary

3. Increased number of PCs in supervisor's office to support additional supervisors as a means of enhancing the verification process.

Kingston Wharves
1. A proper warehouse management system which will ensure efficient retrieval of goods

2. Increased personnel to fill gaps where necessary, which could help to reduce location time

3. An additional scanning machine to get a better flow of goods immediately after a container has been stripped

4. Adequate equipment e.g. forklift

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Brokers/Importers
1. Better cooperation with the system in place

2. Increased knowledge about the operations on the wharf

3. Efficiency in paperwork transactions (elimination of amendment by presenting correct information)

Cashiers
1. Cashiers be given a float as very often customers have to leave to get change

2. More money counters at the Cashier's Section for purposes of efficiency and transparency. At present there is one money counter. Customers complain that they cannot see when the money is being placed in the counter and so has to rely on the honesty of the Cashier.

3. Proper supervision of Cashiers to ensure the section is always adequately staffed
Appendices

Appendix A

Terms of Reference

BROAD OBJECTIVE
The broad objective is to determine where are the bottlenecks in the goods clearance process, the type of problems, the reasons for these problems, and possible solutions. The study will influence policy decisions to be undertaken in the Department in keeping with its continued modernization agenda.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
In particular, the study will:

a. Measure the time taken between arrival and release of goods.

b. Calculate the average time required for the clearance of goods by Customs clearance points, type of traffic (sea, rail, road and air) and customs regime.

c. Calculate the average time taken for release of goods requiring the intervention of other agencies

d. Calculate the average time taken for release of goods for import, export and trans-shipment

e. Determine where in the procedures problems exist and the nature of such problems

f. Develop corrective measures and recommendations.
Appendix B

TRS Working Group

The working group responsible for the management of the Time Release Study will be organized as follows:

Leader: Deputy Commissioner- Operations
Consultant: WCO

Core members:
- Specialists in Customs procedures operations
- Customs Broker
- Statistician
- Data Management
- Research Analyst
- Public Relations
- Legal

Branch Managers or Liaison Officers from selected stations
- APM
- Kingston Wharves
- Public-bonded warehouses
- Free-zones
- Site Inspection Unit
Appendix C

Issues in conducting the TRS especially incomplete questionnaires

REASONS FOR INCOMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRES

1. Brokers may decide to stop the process at Customs House - because they have not yet being compensated or reimbursed by the importer for paying up front hence no wharf information.

2. Entry passed but broker has not yet paid the requisite duties necessary to clear goods.

3. CEK numbers changed

4. Valuation Appeal (time consuming)

5. Goods seized by CET

6. Goods exit between (7 a.m. - 8 a.m.) KCT (Researchers working hours 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

7. Broker decide not to cooperate with researchers

8. Custom officers not entering the time information on the tags

9. The officers in removing the tags destroy the CEK number

10. Brokers decide not to follow the establish legitimate system (corrupt broker)

11. No vessel name or date of report given or recorded