



SAINT LUCIA

**GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA**  
**Ministry of Commerce, Manufacturing, Business Development,**  
**Cooperatives and Consumer Affairs**

Communications on this subject  
Should be addressed to:

Fourth Floor, Heraldine Rock Building  
Waterfront Castries  
Saint Lucia

THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**January 26, 2023**

### **Saint-Lucia successfully completes its 2022 Time Release Study at Castries Seaport.**

**Castries, January 26, 2023;** Saint Lucia embarked on the undertaking and completion of a Time Release Study (TRS) in 2022 as part of its endeavours to improve its trading environment as well as to meet its international obligations under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WTO TFA), specifically Article 7.6 which encourages WTO Members to measure and publish their average release time of goods periodically and in a consistent manner, using tools such as, inter alia, the Time Release Study of the World Customs Organization (WCO).

Saint-Lucia is pleased to present the finding of the Time-Release Study (TRS) conducted at the Castries Seaport in 2022, the main commercial port of the country representing over 80% of the volume of importation and exportation.

The Time Release Study allows countries to measure the time taken by all involved stakeholders in the clearance of goods' process to release cargo. The TRS undertaken at the Castries Seaport in Saint-Lucia focused its attention on the importation of all commodities, excepting personal effects importation, non-commercial petroleum products and ozone depletion linked commodities. In terms of the processes measured, the TRS concentrated its efforts on the Customs and Excise Department (CED) and Saint-Lucia Air and Sea Port Authority (SLASPA).

The TRS found that the average time:



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- From arrival to release from SLASPA for sea cargo is approximately 10 days and 15 hours and 45 mins;
- From the submission of the customs declaration to the actual release of the cargo from SLASPA is 4 days and 7 hours and 50 mins;
- From the payment of all duties and fees to the release of physically inspected goods from Customs is under 24 hours.

Besides providing the international and national trading community with the average clearance times at the Port of Castries, the TRS also enabled Saint-Lucia to undertake initial process mapping related to the Customs and Port clearance processes. This process mapping will prove useful for future business process optimization and digitization efforts such as the establishment of the planned Saint-Lucia National Single Window Platform. Based on the findings of the TRS, the stakeholders involved in the clearance of goods' process will turn their attention to the implementation of the following prioritized TRS recommendations:

- Fast-tracking the roll-out of electronic payment, pre-arrival processing and the establishment of the National Single Window Platform;
- Introduce and/or enhance the roll-out of trade predictability and risk-based facilities such as advance rulings, post-clearance audit and authorized operators programme;
- Strengthen Customs' risk management framework;
- Consider the expansion of working days at the Port of Castries, to at least 6 days and to consider also 24 hours operations, at least for part of the working week;
- Enhance trade-related border agency cooperation and public-private partnership.

The Comptroller of Customs as well as the General Manager of SLASPA would like to acknowledge the efforts of the national TRS working group members as well as the support of the experts mobilized by the Investment Climate Reform (ICR) Facility. The ICR Facility is co-funded by the European Union (EU), the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) under the 11th European Development Fund



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(EDF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the British Council for the successful undertaking of the 2022 TRS at the Port of Castries and commit to implementing the key recommendations as well as undertaking regular TRS in the future.

Media and other enquiries: The full TRS report can be accessed on the Ministry of Commerce, SLASPA and Customs and Excise's websites.

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