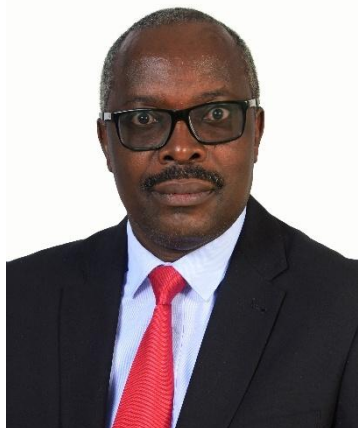




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1. CEO's Message



Dear Members and Partners, on behalf of the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA), I extend my deepest appreciation to you for your continued support and trust. Your active engagement ensures that SCEA remains a strong and credible voice in advocating for efficient and competitive trade logistics in our region.

Over the past quarter, we actively addressed issues raised by members through structured engagements with government agencies. On 6th August 2025, SCEA participated in the Presidential Private Sector Roundtable. Discussions focused on streamlining regulations, ensuring predictable tax policies, and reinforcing public-private dialogue to foster a conducive business environment.

Our committees also advanced key advocacy priorities. The Regulatory, Tax & Budget Committee raised and addressed concerns on VAT refunds, KenTrade fee regulations, and KRA's COO requirement. The Advocacy & Lobbying Committee focused on KPA tariff reviews, COO exemptions, and IDF amendment processes. The Export & Airfreight Committee addressed challenges including dynamic freight pricing, port delays, and reefer rail logistics.

Our trend analysis shows that the next three months are typically the peak season at the port. Port throughput has continued to increase, and delays in berthing and railage are expected. We therefore urge all members to plan their imports and exports early to minimize the risk of delays. As always, we are here to support you, please do not hesitate to reach out in case of any challenges.

Looking ahead, we will undertake the Logistics Performance Survey (LPS) 2025 to assess the cost, time, and complexity of logistics in the region. We will also review the Mombasa Port & Northern Corridor Community Charter (MPNCCC) to strengthen public-private coordination, support exports, embed accountability, and integrate green logistics, and inclusivity.

As SCEA, our mandate is clear: to advocate, to influence, and to deliver solutions that lower the cost of doing business for our members. Together, we will continue to build a logistics environment that supports exporters and importers, advances regional competitiveness, and fully leverages opportunities under the AfCFTA framework.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support.

Agayo Ogambi

Chief Executive Officer, SCEA

Steering Committee Chair, MPNCCC

2. SCEA Annual General Meeting

2.1. Highlights from the 2025 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 15th July 2025, bringing together 95 participants from government agencies, private sector including manufacturers, importer, exporters, logistics service providers and the insurance sector.

The event commenced with a breakfast meeting themed “Facilitating Seamless Trade – Focusing on Efficiency and Risk Management,” setting the tone for an engaging day of dialogue and collaboration.

We were honored to host Mr. Godfrey Kiptum, CEO of the Insurance Regulatory Authority, as Chief Guest, who delivered insightful remarks on the role of regulatory frameworks in enhancing trade efficiency. In addition, Mr. David Ngarama, CEO of KenTrade, joined as Special Guest and shared updates on the draft regulations aimed at reducing UCR charges for exports by 50%, a move expected to ease the cost burden for exporters.

Representatives from KRA, KEPHIS, and AFA were also present, actively engaging with members and addressing critical concerns raised around cargo clearance and port operations. Their contributions provided much-needed clarity.

SCEA extends its heartfelt appreciation to all members who attended and actively participated in the discussions, making the AGM a true platform for solution-driven dialogue.

We also appreciate our sponsors, whose generous support made the AGM a success.

2.2. SCEA Welcomes New Board Member

Following the Election during the AGM held on 15th July 2025, we are pleased to welcome Mr. Alex Kariuki to the Board of the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa. Mr. Kariuki is the Group Logistics & Administration Manager for Eastern Produce Regional Services Ltd (EPRS).

With over 26 years of experience in supply chain and logistics, he has been an active member of our Advocacy & Lobbying Committee as well as the Export & Airfreight Committee.



We are confident that his wealth of experience, deep industry knowledge, and networks will add significant value to the Board and further strengthen SCEA’s mission of advancing the interests of shippers in the region.

3. Structured Engagement

3.1. SCEA Engagement with KRA on Minimum Fixed Freight Costs on September 19, 2025

The Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA) held a meeting with representatives from the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), led by the Commissioner's Office, to deliberate on the contested proposal to set minimum fixed freight costs.

During the engagement, SCEA strongly presented its position against the introduction of a minimum freight rate, emphasizing the potential negative impact such a policy would have on trade competitiveness and cost efficiency. Following the discussions, KRA confirmed that the implementation of the notice has been suspended pending further review.

As part of the next steps, KRA requested SCEA to submit a formal memorandum outlining the issues and arguments raised during the meeting. The Council has committed to providing the document to ensure its members' concerns are adequately considered in the policy review process.

3.2. Engagement with Kenya Revenue Authority on held August 5th, 2025.

On 5th August 2025, the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA) engaged the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) to address concerns following the removal of the "Draft" icon from the Integrated Customs Management System (iCMS). The industry had raised alarm over increased risks of errors, reduced transparency, and longer processing times.

KRA explained that the decision was driven by the misuse of the feature, which led to revenue leakages, and its negative impact on system performance. To address industry concerns, KRA announced plans to introduce a new Single Administrative Document (SAD) Draft feature by September 2025. This tool will allow importers and agents to review, edit, and share draft declarations before submission, ensuring accuracy and compliance. Members recommended inclusion of truck details for transit entries and motor vehicle identifiers to strengthen checks.

The meeting concluded with key resolutions: flexibility on error-related penalties during transition, enhanced training for agents and importers, stricter enforcement to curb revenue leakages, reaffirmation of voluntary disclosure protections, and close monitoring of iCMS stability.

3.3. Engagement with The Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) held on 24th July 2025

The Chief Executive Officer of the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA), Mr. Agayo Ogambi, paid a courtesy call to the Managing Director of the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), Ms. Esther Ngari. The meeting focused on enhancing collaboration between the two institutions and addressing pressing concerns raised by shippers.

During the discussions, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to working together through structured engagements. KEBS confirmed it will designate staff to join the SCEA–KEBS Technical Committee, which will meet quarterly to resolve member concerns. The two institutions also agreed to convene another member forum following the high turnout and critical issues raised in the last engagement.

Key issues addressed included the Pre-Export Verification of Conformity (PVoC) programme, where SCEA called for increased sensitization on compliance requirements. KEBS also pledged to onboard more members into the programme. On the issue of fatty acid analysis, KEBS confirmed that waivers for spaghetti importation had been approved through the Ministry, pending amendments to the EAC policy on fatty acid content.

SCEA further raised concerns over delays in destination inspection, urging KEBS to streamline testing and clearance processes to avoid costly disruptions for shippers. In addition, KEBS committed to participate in discussions on developing a mutual recognition framework for Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs), while noting that full mutual recognition of Certificates of Conformity (CoCs) across the EAC remains a challenge due to varying national



Ms. Ngari, MD KEBS with Mr. Ogambi, CEO at SCEA and Ms. Ukwalu Policy Advocacy & Monitoring & Evaluation Officer at SCEA

1. High Level Engagements

1.1. Presidential Round Table- 6th August, 2025

On 6th August 2025, the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA) joined other private sector bodies at the Presidential Private Sector Roundtable presided over by H.E. President Dr. William Samoei Ruto. The Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry coordinated the session, with KEPSA leading preparations on behalf of Business Membership Organizations (BMOs).

The private sector raised critical issues including high and duplicative county fees, multiple regulatory levies, inadequate capacity at JKIA, proliferation of illicit trade, non-adherence to the 2023 National Tax Policy, and taxation of local raw materials.

In response, the Presidency directed that ministerial roundtables be reinstated to address escalated concerns, with the next Presidential Roundtable scheduled for December 2025.

SCEA's participation reinforced its role as a key advocate for efficient trade logistics and predictable policy frameworks that support competitiveness and regional integration.



1.2. EABC CONSULTATIVE FORUM- 14th & 15th August ,2025

The Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA), participated in the East African Business Council (EABC) Consultative Forum held on 14th–15th August 2025.

Discussions highlighted persistent challenges across the region’s logistics ecosystem. These included inconsistent enforcement of axle load regulations, partial rollout of the Single Customs Territory, poor road conditions, fragmented road user charges, high and unharmonized aviation fees, restrictive air service licensing, inadequate cold chain and airfreight capacity, and under-resourced ports.

SCEA proposed policy measures to tackle these challenges, including harmonized regulations, expansion of transport and logistics infrastructure, adoption of weigh-in-motion technology, and integrated weighbridge systems.

The forum reinforced SCEA’s position as a regional leader in logistics advocacy. By advancing solutions to reduce costs and enhance efficiency, SCEA continues to play a central role in strengthening East Africa’s competitiveness in international trade.



2. Port Insights

2.1. Global and Domestic Shifts Shape Port of Mombasa Performance in 2025

The Port of Mombasa, East Africa's premier gateway, continues to feel the ripple effects of global economic and geopolitical disruptions, even as domestic policy shifts offer a silver lining for trade growth.

According to recent sector insights, the global economy is expected to grow by just **2.3% in 2025**, down from **3.3% in 2024**, marking the weakest trajectory since the 2008 recession and the COVID-19 downturn. Analysts attribute the slowdown to trade policy uncertainty, tighter financial conditions, and declining investor confidence.

Conflict-driven supply chain disruptions remain a critical challenge for global trade.

- The **Russia-Ukraine war** has forced importers to source wheat from Argentina, a costly shift compounded by higher insurance premiums (+35%) and longer shipping routes (+15 days).
- The **Iran-Israel conflict** threatens to choke off 30% of global seaborne oil through the Strait of Hormuz, with crude oil prices already up 18% this year.
- Meanwhile, **Houthi attacks in the Red Sea** continue to disrupt Suez Canal routes, pushing vessels to reroute via the Cape of Good Hope — a development that has brought Opportune gain in transshipment traffic to Mombasa.

The recently enacted Finance Bill 2025 signals support for Kenya's export competitiveness. Key provisions include:

- Duty reliefs on imported packaging material for tea and coffee.
- Exemptions on ICT and leather product components to encourage local assembly.

These measures are expected to stimulate growth in agricultural and manufactured exports, potentially boosting volumes through the Port of Mombasa.

While external shocks continue to pose risks for the global shipping industry, Kenya's domestic reforms and the Port of Mombasa's strategic location position it to capture new trade opportunities.

As Say's Law of Markets observes, *"supply creates its own demand."* To remain competitive, we must prioritize creating supply capacity ahead of demand. This means ensuring that the Port of Mombasa is well-prepared, in terms of infrastructure, technology, and operational efficiency, to handle the projected throughput of 47 million tonnes by 2030.

2.2. Port Performance

a) Throughput Traffic (MT) January - June 2025 against 2024

The Port handled **21.34 million tons** compared to **19.74 million tons** in the same period of 2024, reflecting an **8.1% growth** (1.6 million tons). Containerized cargo remained nearly flat (**+0.4%**), reducing its share from **53.5% in 2024 to 49.7% in 2025**, while conventional cargo's share grew significantly. Imports rose strongly (**+15.6%**) while exports grew modestly (**+3.0%**). **Transshipment traffic fell sharply (-25.1%)**, highlighting utilization of Lamu port.

Type of Cargo	2024	2025	Volume Change	Growth %	% Share of Total	% Share of Total
Non - Container						
Dry Bulk	3,608,826	4,027,736	418,910	11.6%	18.3%	18.9%
Liquid Bulk	4,738,443	5,505,206	766,763	16.2%	24.0%	25.8%
Conventional	831,263	1,202,777	371,514	44.7%	4.2%	5.6%
Sub- Total	9,178,532	10,735,719	1,557,187	17.0%	46.5%	50.3%
Containerized	10,559,246	10,604,228	44,982	0.4%	53.5%	49.7%
TOTAL	19,737,778	21,339,947	1,602,169	8.1%	100.0%	100.0%
IMPORT/EXPORT						
Imports	14,439,507	16,696,081	2,256,574	15.6%	73.2%	78.2%
Exports	2,415,066	2,487,480	72,414	3.0%	12.2%	11.7%
Transshipment	2,764,867	2,071,922	-692,945	-25.1%	14.0%	9.7%
Restows	118,338	84,464	-33,874	-28.6%	0.6%	0.4%
TOTAL	19,737,778	21,339,947	1,602,169	8.1%	100.0%	100.0%

b) Container Traffic (TEUs) January – June 2025 Against 2024

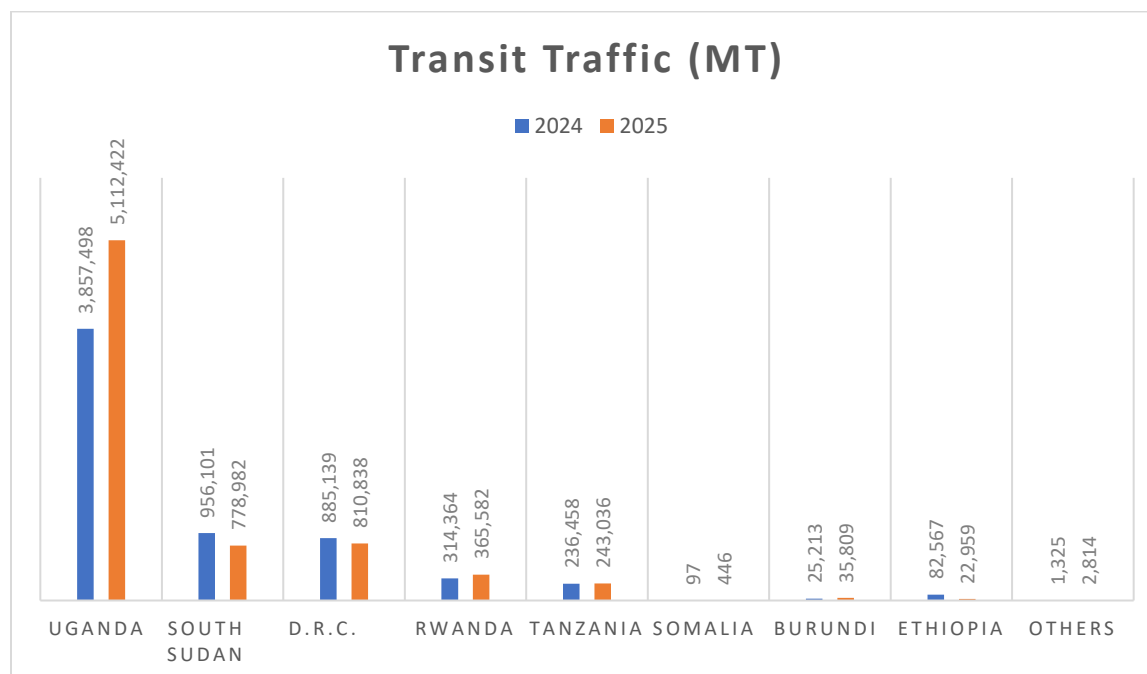
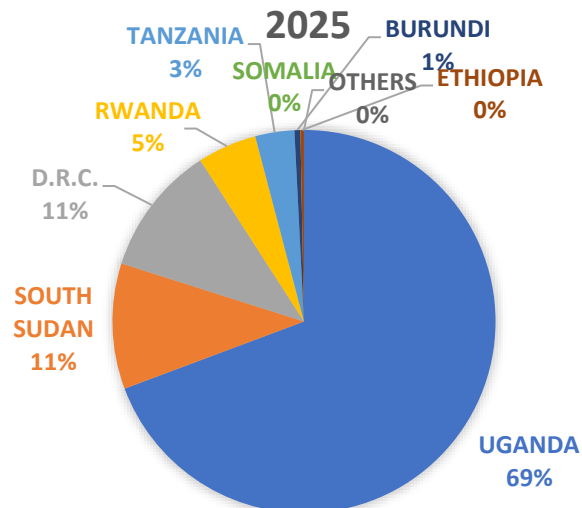
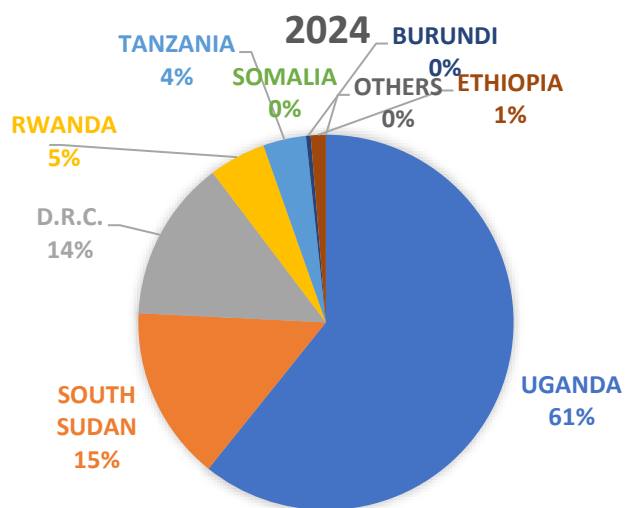
The Port handled **1,012,949 TEUs**, up from **948,983 TEUs** in 2024, registering a **6.7% growth**. Growth was mainly in **domestic trade flows (imports/exports)**, confirming strong regional demand. The rise in empty exports (**+17.1%**) shows repositioning trends.

		2024	2025	V. Change	% Change
IMPORTS	Full	352,229	399,109	46,880	13.3%
	Empty	11,114	13,027	1,913	17.2%
	Total	363,343	412,136	48,793	13.4%
EXPORTS	Full	100,343	108,121	7,778	7.8%
	Empty	249,972	292,766	42,794	17.1%
	Total	350,315	400,887	50,572	14.4%
T/MENT	Full	172,160	127,537	-44,623	-25.9%
	Empty	54,975	66,233	11,258	20.5%
	Total	227,135	193,770	-33,365	-14.7%
RESTOWS	Full	7,658	5,542	-2,116	-27.6%
	Empty	532	614	82	15.4%
	Total	8,190	6,156	-2,034	-24.8%
TOTAL	Full	632,390	640,309	7,919	1.3%
	Empty	316,593	372,640	56,047	17.7%
	Total	948,983	1,012,949	63,966	6.7%

c) Transit Traffic (Mt) January– June 2025 Against 2024

Transit traffic grew by **15.9%**, reaching **7.37 million tons** (up from 6.36 million tons).

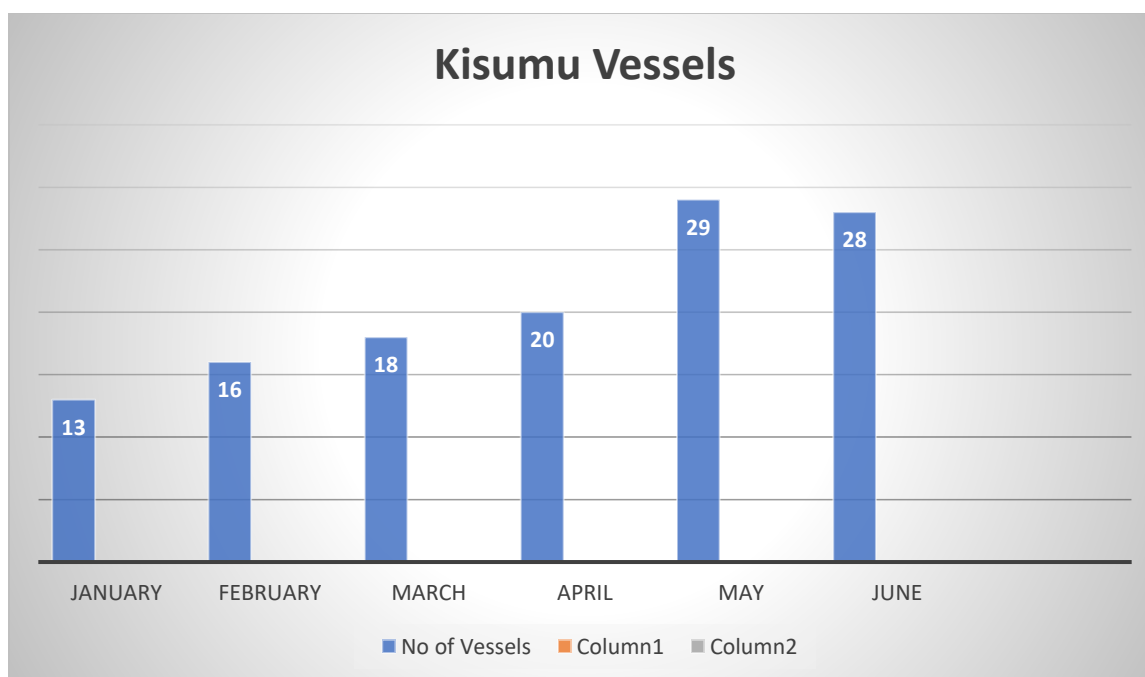
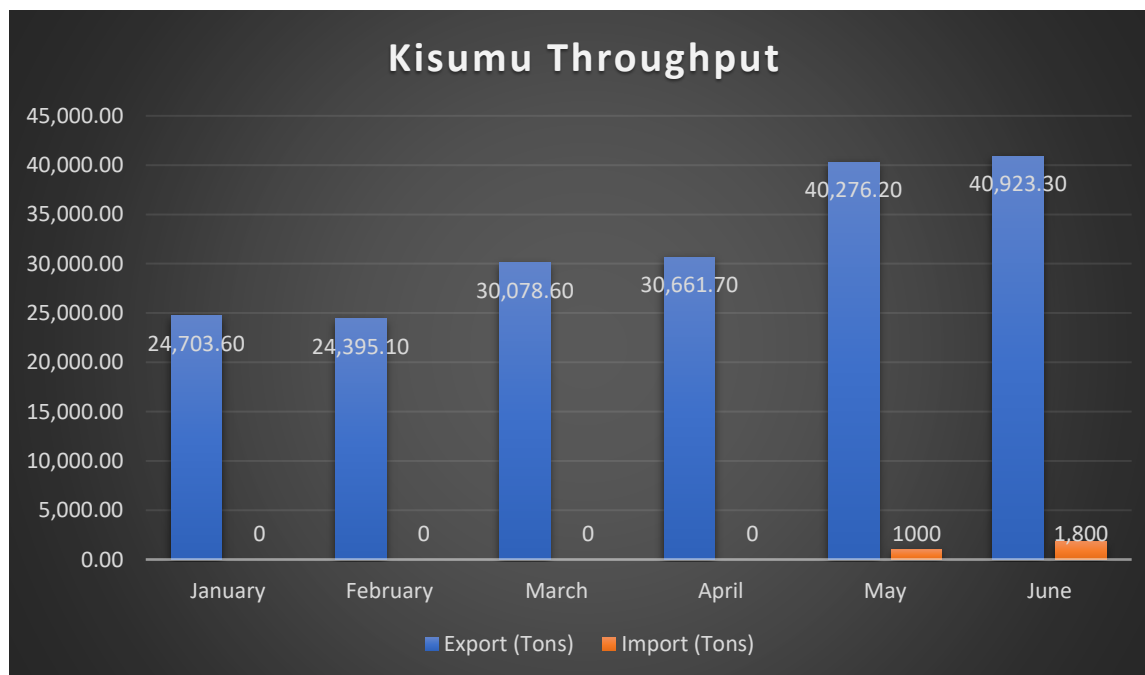
Uganda strengthened its dominance, raising its share from **60.7% in 2024 to 69.3% in 2025**. The contraction in South Sudan and DRC volumes points to logistics or political challenges along their corridors. Ethiopia’s steep decline signals a possible shift to Djibouti port or inland logistical bottlenecks.



d) Kisumu Lake Port Performance January - June 2025

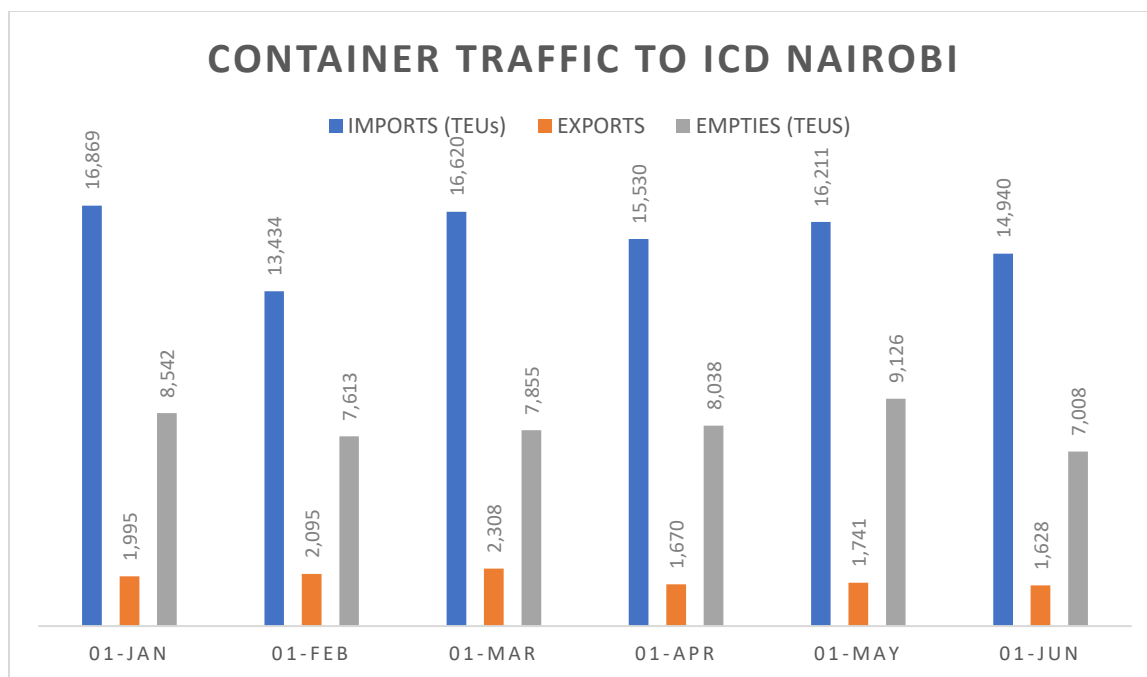
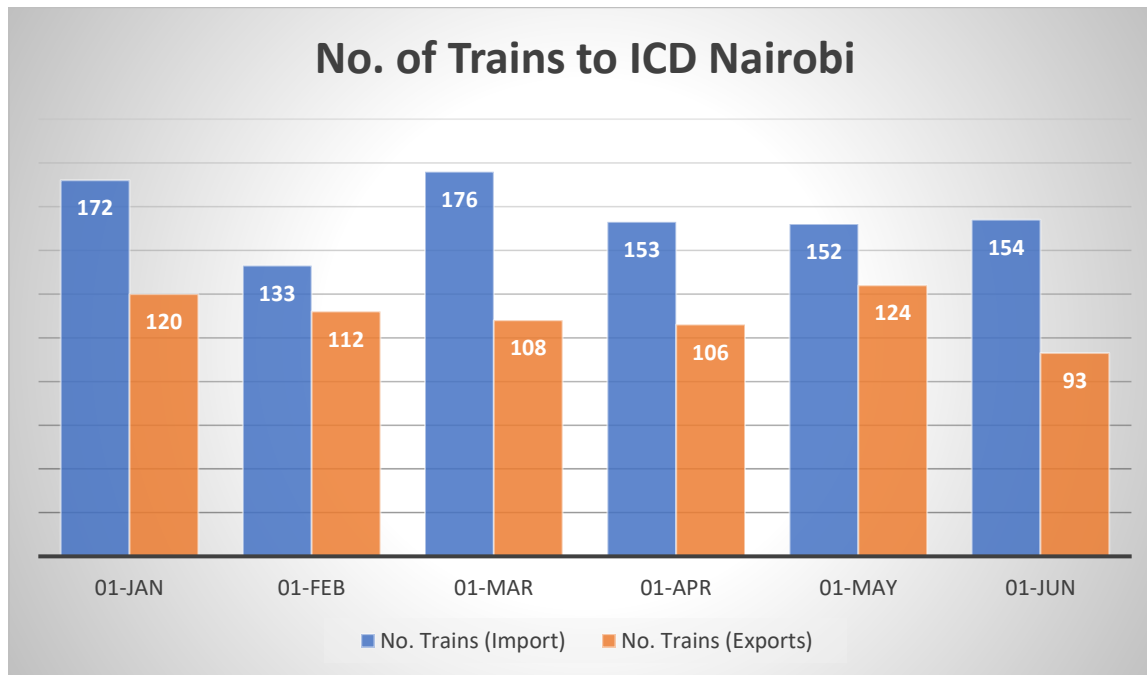
The port handled **193,838.5 tons**, largely driven by exports (**191,038.5 tons**) with limited imports (**2,800 tons**). Activity was consistent month-on-month, with May and June posting the strongest throughput.

The dominance of exports underscores Kisumu’s growing role in regional trade via Lake Victoria, though import uptake remains minimal.



e) Inland Container Depot (ICD) Nairobi Performance Jan-June 2025

The ICD handled a total of **153,223 TEUs** transported on **1,603 trains**. Imports continue to dominate ICD operations, showing Nairobi’s central role in last-mile logistics.



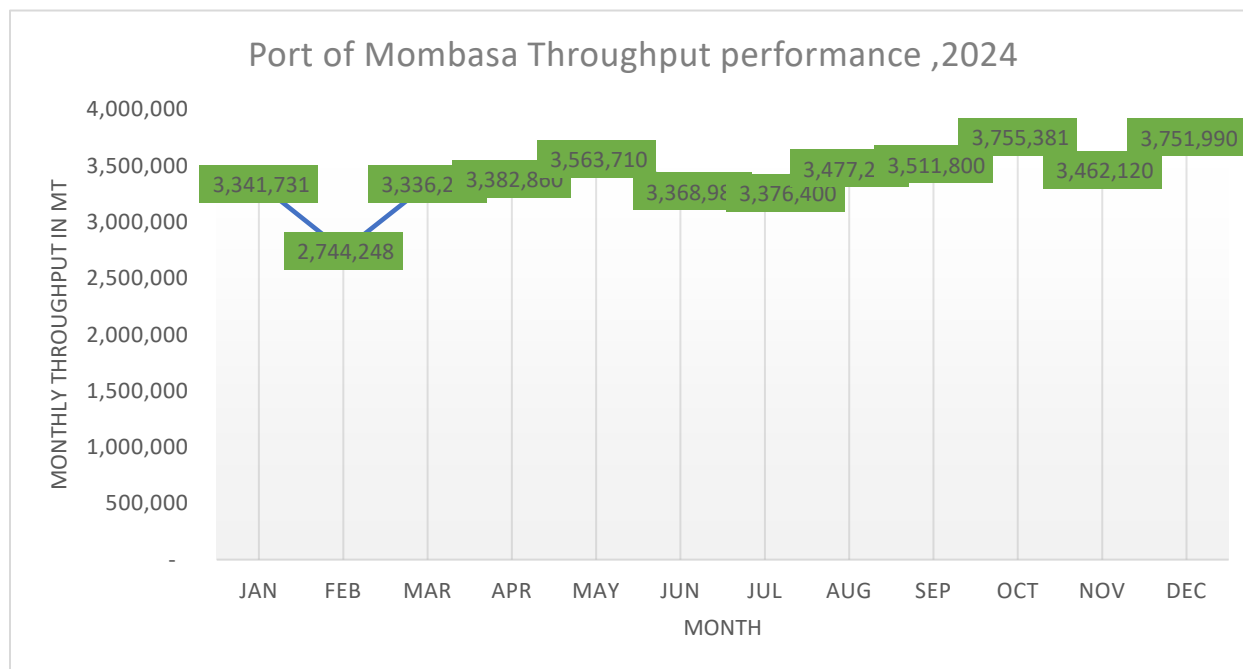
f) Key Performance Indicators

No.	Action Item/KPI	AVERAGE [JUNE] 2024	AVERAGE [JUNE] 2025	Target as per KPA Strategic Plan	Actual – Target	Remarks
1.	Cargo Dwell Time (Hrs.)	102.2	100.8	48	-52.8	Target not achieved mainly due to the residual effects of handling large consignments of transshipment traffic destined for the port of Dar-esalam which has affected normal operations in the port of Mombasa, with vessels being bunched, and slow uptake of transshipment exports caused by delayed vessel nomination by agents.
	Days	4.3	4.2	2	-2.2	
2.	Vessel Productivity (Gross Moves per Hour)	30	34	48	-14	Target not achieved due to delays in cargo consolidation for export operations, congestion in the yards occasioned by transshipment cargo for the port of Dar-esalam.
3	Crane productivity(STS moves/Hr)	14	15	24	-9	
4	Ship Waiting Time for containerized ships (Hrs)	33.1	48.8	10.8	-38.0	Target not met due to the bunched arrivals of vessels as a result of diversions from the congested ports of Dar-esalam and Durban.
5	Truck Turnaround Time (Hrs)	13.6	6.2	2	4.2	Awaiting of RECTs over the period causing long queues along roads thus affecting truck turnaround time. - Delay in relaying messages from scanners slowed down evacuation thus affecting turn round time
VESSEL TURNAROUND TIME(DAYS)						
	All Vessel	4.2	4.0	2.8	-1.2	Performance slightly below target, caused by slow cargo consolidation, and delayed vessel nomination of transshipment exports.
	Container ship	3.3	3.4	2.2	-1.2	
	Roro ship	0	0.7	1.0	0.3	Target achieved
	General Cargo ship	7.7	6.7	4.0	-2.7	Target not achieved
	Bulk ship	5.2	5.8	7.0	1.2	Target achieved
	Car carrier	1.0	2.3	1.0	-1.3	Target not achieved
	Tanker	4.6	3.2	4.7	1.5	Target achieved

5. CONTAINER TERMINAL OPERATIONS						
	i) MCT Container Terminal	90.0	94.8	70	-25.1	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 16	81.9	91.0	70	-23.8	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 17	90.1	96.8	70	-26.7	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 18	88.4	95.6	70	-26.8	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 20	88.2	94.8	70	-26.5	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 21	95.6	96.3	70	70.0	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
	B 22	95.6	94.4	70	-28.8	Berth occupancy of 60 -70 is desirable
CONVECTIONAL CARGO OPERATIONS						
	Conventional Cargo	56.6	98.8	70	-28.8	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B1	12.8	59.2	70	10.8	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 3	82	82.3	70	-12.3	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 4	93.2	92.1	70	-22.1	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 5	73.2	94.5	70	-24.5	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 7	70.2	97.7	70	-27.7	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 9	92.0	95.5	70	-25.5	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 10	0	98.9	70	-28.9	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 11	60.4	98.2	70	-28.2	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 12	61.9	73.4	70	-3.4	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 13	31.4	97.8	70	-27.8	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	B 14	18.9	98.1	70	-28.1	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	KOT2-1	55.2	36.6	70	33.4	New berth
	KOT2-2	12.4	60.6	70	9.4	New berth
	KOT2-3	12.1	16.1	70	53.9	New berth
	SOT	53.7	30.0	70	40.0	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable
	MBARAKI	71.8	41.9	70	28.1	Berth occupancy of 55 - 70 is desirable

Season Analysis

THROUGHPUT PERFORMANCE MONTH BY MONTH, 2024



Kenya Ports Authority, data

The Port of Mombasa is entering its busiest months of the year, with throughput trends from 2024 showing that **July to December (Q3 and Q4)** represent peak cargo activity. According to our analysis this period typically records heightened volumes, driven by seasonal agricultural exports, holiday-season demand, and businesses stocking up inventories.

In 2024, **October and December each recorded over 3.7 million metric tons**, making them the strongest months of the year. By contrast, the first quarter (January–March) was the slowest, weighed down by a post-holiday trade slump and reduced imports from China during the Lunar New Year holiday.

With September marking the onset of peak season, SCEA advises shippers to:

- **Book early:** Secure vessel space and port services in advance for shipments.
- **Plan for delays:** Incorporate buffer time to account for congestion and clearance.
- **Leverage Q1:** Use the low season for non-urgent shipments and cost savings.
- **Ship smart in Q2:** April–June offers a balance between speed and cost, making it an opportune window.
- **Optimize documentation:** Utilize PAP program to minimize clearance delays.

3. The Charter

MPNCCC Steering Committee Charts the Future of Regional Trade and Logistics

The Steering Committee of the **Mombasa Port and Northern Corridor Community Charter (MPNCCC)** convened in Nairobi on 7th August 2025 to deliberate on the future of the Charter and reaffirm its commitment to enhancing efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability in regional trade and logistics.

The meeting brought together the steering committee inclusive of private sector, public sector and representatives from the State Departments of Transport; Shipping and Maritime Affairs; East African Community; National Treasury; and Trade.

Since its signing in 2014 (and revision in 2018), the Charter has been a cornerstone of trade facilitation in the region. Recent impact assessment findings confirmed its continued relevance and highlighted significant milestones, including:

- **83% increase in cargo throughput**, from 22.3 million metric tons in 2013 to 41 million in 2024.
- **Reduced port dwell time** from 5.0 to 4.0 days at the Port of Mombasa, and to 3.0 days at the Nairobi Inland Container Depot.
- **Expanded port capacity**, with Gate 18 and Berth 22 Phase II increasing container handling capacity to 2.1 million TEUs.
- **Improved freight efficiency**, with Standard Gauge Railway reducing Mombasa–Nairobi transit time from 15 hours to 9 hours, and rail cargo share rising from 4% in 2017 to 28% in 2023.

These achievements underscore the Charter's tangible role in driving performance and accountability in the logistics ecosystem.

Towards a Renewed Charter

The assessment also identified areas for improvement, including a results framework that is too broad (with over 180 indicators) and limited coverage of export-oriented and green logistics metrics. With the current Charter nearing its end, stakeholders agreed on the need for a renewed framework for the next ten years.

Speaking at the meeting, **Mr. Agayo Ogambi**, Chair of the MPNCCC Steering Committee and CEO of SCEA, emphasized aligning the Charter's structure to current realities and future aspirations.

Representing the State Department of Transport, **Ms. Beatrice Nyamoita** stressed the need for an inclusive and data-driven approach:

“As we embark on the review process, let us be guided by the lessons of the past decade, the evolving trade landscape, and the urgency to deliver more inclusive, sustainable, and data-driven logistics solutions.”

Ms. Lilian Mwai, Country Director of TradeMark Africa (Kenya), reaffirmed support through the EU-funded **Business Environment for Exports Programme**, noting:

“Trade is growing, but so are the expectations around sustainability, digitalization, and inclusion. The Charter must evolve accordingly.”

Next Steps

To ensure a structured review, the Steering Committee has commissioned a Project Implementation Committee to oversee the review process, coordinate stakeholder inputs, and provide technical guidance to the consultant tasked with preparing the third edition of the Charter.



4. Notices

Treasury Proposes 80% Excise Duty Remission for Alcohol Made from Local Crops on the Draft Excise Duty (Remission of Excise Duty) Regulations, 2025

The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) has announced that it is seeking public views on the Draft Excise Duty (Remission of Excise Duty) Regulations, 2025. KRA has urged the public, professionals, and relevant stakeholders to review the proposed changes and submit their feedback by September 26, 2025.

The National Treasury has released draft regulations proposing an 80% remission of excise duty on beer, spirits, and wine manufactured from locally grown crops such as sorghum, millet, and cassava.

The Excise Duty (Remission of Excise Duty) Regulations, 2025 seek to promote the use of local raw materials, support farmers, reduce reliance on imports, and curb illicit trade in alcoholic products.

For more information

<https://www.kra.go.ke/news-center/public-notices/2297-draft-excise-duty-remission-of-excise-duty-regulations,-2025>

KenTrade Invites Public Participation on Draft Single Window Fee Regulations

The Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade) has invited public participation on the Draft National Electronic Single Window System (Fee Reduction and Exemption) Regulations, 2025, which propose a 50% reduction of fees on exports processed through the system.

The regulations are aimed at lowering trade costs, improving competitiveness for exporters, and enhancing the efficiency of Kenya's electronic single window platform.

The secretariat will submit recommendations welcoming the initiative but urging broader reforms to maximize impact. SCEA calls for:

- **Clarity on exemptions**, to avoid inconsistent application.
- **Extension of reductions and exemptions** to cover humanitarian consignments, essential imports not available locally, and raw materials for manufacturing, noting this would strengthen humanitarian response, food and health security, and industrial growth.

- **Cost-sharing by government agencies**, recommending that state agencies using the Single Window System should also pay user fees, to ease the financial burden currently borne almost entirely by importers.

SCEA emphasized that while the proposed 50% reduction for exporters is a positive step, comprehensive reforms are needed to ensure the regulations fully support Kenya's trade competitiveness and the region's economic resilience.

KMA Invites Public Feedback on Draft Merchant Shipping Fees Regulations 2025

The Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA) has released the Draft Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations, 2025 and is calling on stakeholders and the public to provide their input during the public participation process.

The Draft regulation has consolidated and updated charges previously scattered across multiple instruments, including the 2011 Fees Regulations, the 2015 Maritime Security Regulations, the 2022 Seafarers Identity Document (SID) Regulations, and the 2024 Maritime Transport Operators (MTO) Regulations.

Key Highlights of the Draft Regulations

- **Shippers' Cargo Fees:** Proposes increases in cargo fee structure Across-the-board in per-ton rates (USD 0.05–1.00/ton for most categories), with a minimum charge of USD 5 per shipment.
- **Overtime Charges:** Higher, explicit USD-based rates for KMA services outside working hours. Inspections requested on evenings, weekends, or holidays will attract USD 225–500 per hour, with waiting time billed separately. This was previously USD 200
- **Cabotage Fees:** New provisions introducing application, approval, renewal, and variation fees for cabotage licenses or exemptions for foreign vessels.
- **Maritime Transport Operators Licensing:** Licensing and registration fees for local and foreign shipping lines, clearing agents, cargo consolidators, CFSs, and port facility operators have been consolidated into the draft.

SCEA noted that while alignment of maritime charges into a single framework improves clarity, the increases in Shippers Cargo fees are cost burden to importers and exporters.

Kenya Maritime Authority is currently undertaking stakeholder engagement on the regulation and has invited comments by 10th October 2025. You are invited to submit any comments to SCEA secretariat for consolidation and presentation as SCEA's position.

NACADA Shifts Alcoholic Drinks Import and Export Licensing to Kenya TradeNet Platform

The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) has announced a new development that will affect all stakeholders in the alcoholic beverages sector.

Effective October 1, 2025, the processing of import and export licenses as well as consignment documents/permits for alcoholic drinks and related products will now be handled through the Kenya National Electronic Single Window System (Trade Facilitation Platform – TFP), which is managed by the Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade).

This transition aims to streamline licensing processes, enhance efficiency, and promote transparency in the regulation of alcoholic drinks trade.

As stipulated under Section 7(1)(c) and (d) of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act, No. 4 of 2010, any person or business seeking to import or export alcoholic drinks must obtain a valid license before engaging in the activity.

Applications will now be completed online via nacada.ecitizen.go.ke and must be supported with key documents.

Once applications and documents are submitted, the Licensing Committee will review and communicate its decision. Successful applicants will then pay the requisite fees before being issued a license valid for 12 months.



5. Partner spotlight

Container Guarantees in Kenya — what importers & exporters need to know

Kenya is undergoing a significant shift in its container handling procedures by moving away from large upfront cash deposits toward a more flexible and efficient container guarantee system. This new model introduces a third-party surety mechanism that allows importers to secure containers without tying up substantial working capital. Instead of paying cash deposits to shipping lines, traders can now use digital or letter-based guarantees issued by approved guarantors such as Viaservice's Container Guarantee Solution which are accepted by participating carriers and terminals. While this system eases financial pressure and accelerates cargo clearance, importers remain responsible for returning containers in good condition and on time. Any failure to meet these obligations may trigger charges that the guarantor will recover from the importer.

What exactly is a container guarantee?

A container guarantee is a form of surety: instead of paying the shipping line a cash deposit to cover potential demurrage, damage or non-return of a container, an approved third party issues a guarantee (a letter of indemnity / digital surety) to the shipping line. The guarantor promises to settle demurrage, damage or total-loss claims in accordance with agreed terms; the importer/agent pays a fee to the guarantor rather than tying up a large cash deposit. The model is similar to customs bonds and bank guarantees used in other trade operations, offering a more dynamic and scalable solution for container management.

Why Kenya is moving to guarantees (and what changed)

Kenya's adoption of container guarantees is largely market-driven, with digital platforms and strategic partnerships paving the way. Kenya (and neighbouring Tanzania) have begun implementing guarantee schemes to remove the heavy cash-deposit barrier that handicapped especially smaller traders. Viaservice and other providers introduced digital/container-guarantee platforms and signed partnerships/MoUs with shipping lines and local associations to operationalise the model at Mombasa and inland depots reducing the need for immediate cash deposits.

How it works?

1. **Confirm shipping line acceptance.** Not every carrier accepts every guarantor; check whether your carrier (e.g., Maersk, MSC, CMA CGM) recognises the chosen guarantee provider. Shipping lines typically require a signed container guarantee form or an accepted digital guarantee.

2. **Register with the guarantor.** Create an account with the guarantor (e.g., Viaservice). Provide company documents, KRA PIN, C&F licence details and trade references as required.
3. **Request a guarantee for the container(s).** Supply voyage/BL/container numbers and pay the guarantor's fee (usually a percentage/flat fee rather than the full cash deposit). The guarantor issues the guarantee digitally or on paper to the shipping line or its agent.
4. **Clear cargo and collect.** Present required documents to Customs/terminal; shipping line accepts guarantee in lieu of cash deposit; cargo released per normal delivery order procedures.
5. **Return the empty container on time and in acceptable condition.** This is the importer/agent's operational obligation. If the container is late, damaged or dirty beyond permitted standards, demurrage/cleaning/damage charges apply and the guarantor will be called to pay per the guaranteed terms and then recover from the importer.

What this means for importers & exporters

- **Cash flow:** You no longer need to block large cash sums (often hundreds to thousands of US\$ per container) at the port; instead you pay a smaller guarantee fee a major relief for SMEs and seasonal traders.
- **Speed:** Digital guarantees reduce administrative delays that previously occurred when arranging cash deposits, speeding cargo release and reducing demurrage risk.
- **Accountability:** Operational discipline becomes more important timely return and condition of empties, accurate documentation, and adherence to carrier booking/return rules.

Container guarantees represent a transformative step in Kenya's logistics landscape. By replacing rigid cash deposit systems with flexible, digital alternatives, the country is enhancing trade efficiency, supporting SME growth, and aligning with global best practices. As adoption grows, stakeholders must remain informed and vigilant to ensure smooth implementation and sustained benefits across the supply chain.

6. SCEA in the Media

The star

Kenyans to pay more for goods on increased shipping charges



CONSUMERS are staring at a rise in commodity prices as shipping lines move to recover extra inspection charges by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (Kephis) from traders, amid protests by importers and exporters.

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/business/2025-06-12-kenyans-to-pay-more-for-goods-on-increased-shipping-charges>

Multiplicity of state agencies and port delays hurting trade through Mombasa – shippers

The multiplicity of government agencies in cargo clearance and additional levies is threatening trade in Kenya and the region, shippers now say.

This, coupled with system downtimes for permits and cargo clearance in addition to the rise in the number of permits required for imports and exports, is adding to the pain being felt by traders already saddled by the cost of doing business, including storage and demurrage charges.



<https://www.the-star.co.ke/business/2025-07-17-multiplicity-of-state-agencies-and-port-delays-hurting-trade-through-mombasa-shippers-1>

The Business Daily

Certificate of origin rule to hit hard SMEs, consolidators and revenues

Kenya's importers are facing trade uncertainty ahead of the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) rolling out new rules that require a mandatory Certificate of Origin (CoO) for all imports.



The directive is constructed as a measure to safeguard or boost revenue, its full impact on imports transactions and the economy remains uncertain. Implementation could slow down access to raw materials, raise imports costs and delay cargo clearance.

<https://shipperscouncilea.org/2025/09/01/certificate-of-origin-rule-to-hit-hard-smes-consolidators-and-revenues/>


7. Upcoming Activities

SCEA CALENDER OF EVENTS			
DATE	EVENT	VENUE	TIME
25th September 2025	Stakeholders' workshop on proposed merchant shipping (fees) regulations, 2025	Shimoni	9.00 am
30th September 2025	SCEA-KPA structured engagement	Inland Container Depot, Nairobi (ICDN)	10:00 AM
2nd October 2025	SPECIAL SESSION ON SCIENCE SUPPORT TO PORTS & SHIPPING IN THE WIO REGION.	Pridelnn Resort, Mombasa.	14:00 to 17:3
7th Oct to 6th November 2025	KENTRADE Stakeholder Engagement on on Draft NESWS (Fee Reduction & Exemption) Regulations, 2025,	1. Nairobi - College of Insurance (7th Oct 2025). 2. Mombasa - KSG, Mombasa (24th Oct 2025). 3. Taita/Taveta - Satoo Social Hall (22nd Oct 2025). 4. Moyale - KWS (6th, November 2025)	8.00 am
28th November 2025	Member's Cocktail	TBC	TBC
	Shippers Roundtable on Green Logistics	TBC	TBC

Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA)

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