



# GRA News

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE GHANA REVENUE AUTHORITY



## Citizen App And Data Interoperability Service Launched

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# Editorial



## Citizen App and Data Interoperability Service (CADIS) – Bridging Systems for Efficiency

The recent launch of the Citizen App and the Parliamentary Data Interoperability Service (CADIS) marks a pivotal moment for the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) and the broader landscape of Public Service delivery in Ghana. The CADIS innovation promises to enhance transparency, streamline operations, and empower citizens to engage more meaningfully with government services at their convenience.

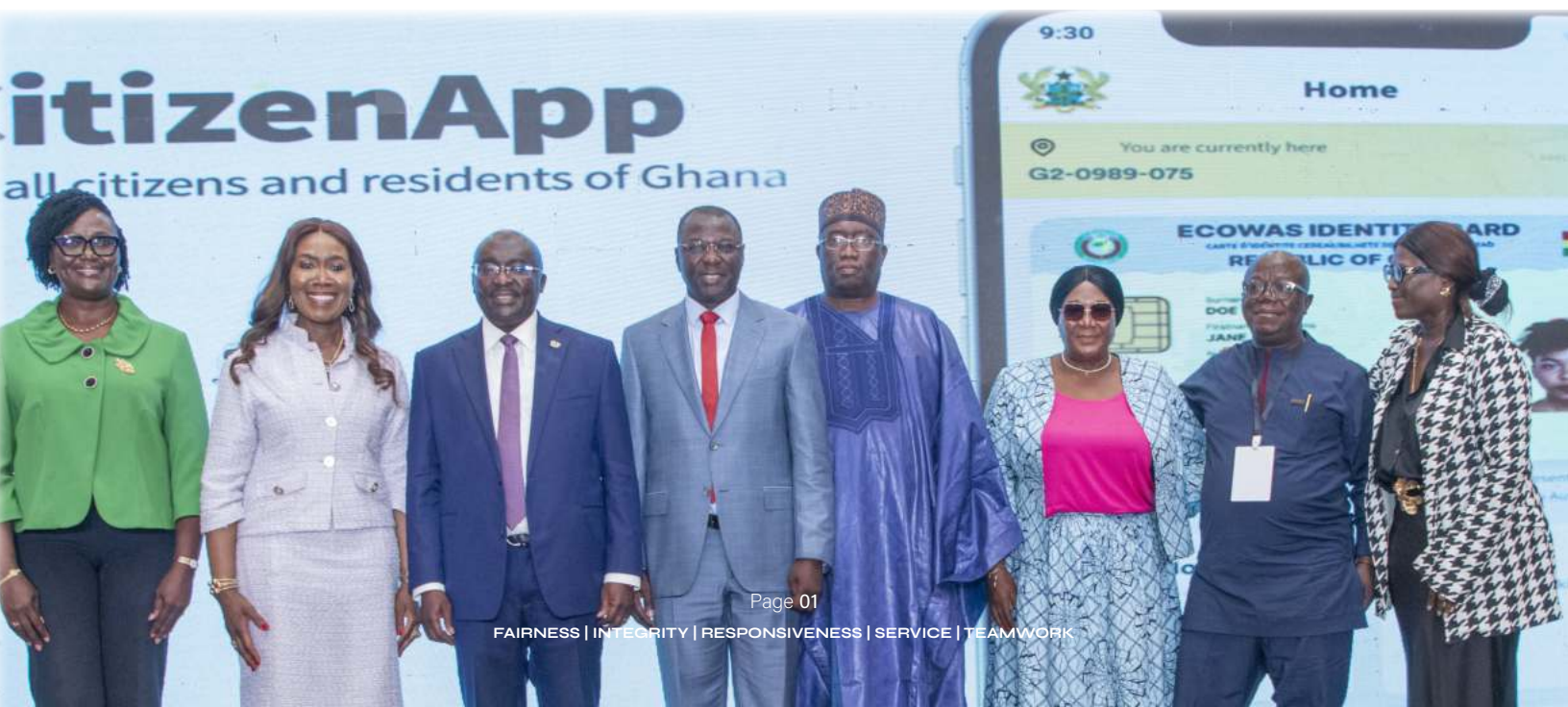
By establishing a framework for seamless data exchange between public service institutions, CADIS is serving as a bridge to bring essential services to citizens' convenience and drive efficiency in these institutions' operations.

From the perspective of tax administrators, CADIS will broaden the tax base, as more citizens register online to access government services, GRA's data on potential taxpayers will increase

thereby enhancing the Authority's ability to identify potential tax evaders, improving the accuracy of tax assessments and streamline tax audits. This will not only bolster revenue generation but also with improved data interoperability, GRA can also respond more swiftly to emerging trends and challenges on the tax landscape ultimately leading to more informed policy decisions.

For us to enjoy the benefits of CADIS and ensure its success and continuity, we are all encouraged to register on the App using our Ghana Card Identification Number. The App can be used to access public services like registering for the birth of a newborn baby, applying for a passport and driver's license, registering businesses, filing tax returns, searching for jobs and accessing death certificates.

Let us get onboard, register and enjoy the benefits of CADIS.



# Vision, Mission & Core Values



To be a world-class revenue administration recognised for professionalism, integrity and excellence.

To mobilise revenue for national development in a transparent, fair, effective and efficient manner.



The Authority in the discharge of its mandate is guided by the following Core Values:

<b>F</b>	<b>Fairness</b>	- To provide consistent and standardised services
<b>I</b>	<b>Integrity</b>	- To be fair and honest at all times
<b>R</b>	<b>Responsiveness</b>	- To react quickly and professionally to customers' needs
<b>S</b>	<b>Service</b>	- To provide timely and accurate assistance to our taxpayers through their preferred channel
<b>T</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>	- To work together to achieve our goals



► Ms. Julie Essiam

“*Don't be afraid to try something new. It might be the best thing you ever do.*  
- Anonymous

## Commissioner-General's Message

Dear Family,

I am excited to say that we are on a steady course to achieving this year's revenue target of GH¢145,992.38 billion due to measures we have introduced to encourage our taxpayers to voluntarily comply, file their tax returns and make necessary payments when they fall due.

The change in the nature of our tax education to tax dialogues is noteworthy, and it is the new way GRA will engage with our taxpayers. Additionally, the recent launch of the Citizen App, a user-friendly platform, would benefit the GRA by making it easier for taxpayers to access services, file tax returns, and stay compliant with tax regulations. The effectiveness of our tax system hinges on the trust and satisfaction of those we serve.

To enhance professionalism and provide critical skills to our staff, the Authority with assistance from the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and

Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) built and commissioned a state-of-the-art Information Technology (IT) Training Centre. This initiative is to enhance training in customer service, ethical behavior, etc. This initiative is about imparting knowledge and embedding a culture of excellence that will reverberate through every layer of our organisation.

As we implement the tax measures and other organisational initiatives, I wish to assure our customers, the trading public and all stakeholders that, the Authority will continue to exhibit integrity, fairness and service in our operations and interactions with everyone.

I entreat all taxpayers to pay their taxes timeously to help government undertake the necessary development activities.

Let us remember that, Our Taxes Our Future!



Front View Of GRA IT Training Centre, Tema C2

## Commissioning of I.T. Training Centre

The Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), in collaboration with its partners, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have commissioned a new IT Training Centre in Tema.

The modern two-storey facility is equipped with an advanced audiovisual system, media supply system, and smart boards, providing GRA staff with the skills needed to enhance service quality and this forms part of the Authority's vision to becoming a world-class revenue Authority with an emphasis on efficient tax administration and revenue mobilisation.

Madam Pearl Nana Ama Darko, Commissioner, Support Services Division, in her welcome address, emphasised the Authority's commitment to excellence and integrity. She highlighted GRA's dedication to enhancing efficiency and customer service through the use of cutting-edge technology and ethical training, and empowering staff to uphold the highest standards as public servants.

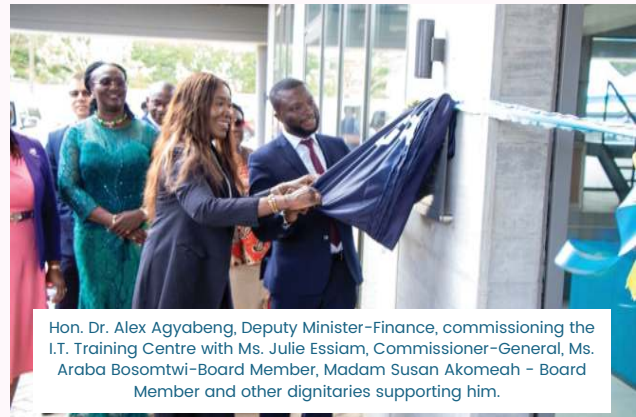
Ms. Julie Essiam, Commissioner-General, also underscored the significance of customer service in revenue collection and the beneficial impact of the training on the Authority. She tasked the first batch of trainees on "customer service and professional ethics" to take the training as a starting point, contributing to a GRA that surpasses the expectations of the people they serve.

On her part, Madam Susan Akomeah, a Board member, speaking on behalf of the Board Chairman, acknowledged Management and Staff for their hard work. She reiterated GRA's commitment to customer satisfaction and leveraging technology for improved service delivery. Madam Akomeah, said the Board's vision is for GRA to become one of Ghana's top public service organisations distinguished for exceptional customer service.

Hon. Dr. Alex Ampaabeng, Deputy Minister for Finance in charge of Revenue, and guest speaker at the event, commended the KfW, UNDP and FCDO for their invaluable assistance in strengthening

Ghana's efforts to raise income through the delivery of high-quality services. He also applauded GRA for its innovative approach to capacity building, equipping employees with professional ethics and IT knowledge required to meet the demands of contemporary tax administration.

Hon. Dr. Ampaabeng reaffirmed that the Finance Ministry's commitment to supporting the Authority to provide excellent customer service has led to the increase of significant collaboration with the World Bank on the Public Financial Management for Service Delivery project. He said among other projects, this one emphasises how crucial it is to raise taxpayer compliance and enhance revenue



Hon. Dr. Alex Agyabeng, Deputy Minister-Finance, commissioning the I.T. Training Centre with Ms. Julie Essiam, Commissioner-General, Ms. Araba Bosomtwi-Board Member, Madam Susan Akomeah - Board Member and other dignitaries supporting him.

mobilisation.

Representatives from the development partners KfW, FCDO and UNDP, reaffirmed their continued assistance in supporting the Authority to achieve its vision and mission.



Hon. Dr. Alex Agyabeng being interviewed by the Press while Top Management and dignitaries look on



Commissioner-General, Madam Julie Essiam with some dignitaries at the launch

## Citizen App And Data Interoperability Service Launched

His Excellency, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana recently launched the Citizen App Data Interoperability Service (CADIS) in Accra. The Citizen App is a central platform, which connect all public service institutions allowing a secure and seamless flow of data sharing across the agencies to create a unified digital service for citizens.

H.E. Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, said since 2017 government's goal has been to improve on the manual way of transacting government business by introducing a digital system which will transform the public service thereby providing timely services and accountability. He urged citizens to embrace the new App and share their feedback to help improve services.

Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam, Minister for Finance mentioned that the introduction of CADIS is the beginning of a new era of digital governance in the country. He elaborated that the Citizen App will enhance transparency in government transactions as all government transactions will

be fully traceable and accountable reducing financial mismanagement and corruption.

The Commissioner-General, Ms. Julie Essiam was delighted with the introduction of the CitizenApp, as it is a "real transformative initiative" making paying of taxes easy and fast, eliminating the hassle and complexity that previously came with it and ensuring that other public services can be obtained at the convenience of citizens.

Giving a brief background to the introduction of the CitizenApp, Mr. Richard Okyere Fosu, Director General of NITA said it has taken more than three years of hard work and collaboration between several government agencies to achieve this goal. He assured citizens that every piece of information had been shared in line with the Data Protection Regulations ensuring that citizen's personal information is secure at all times.

Mr. Opoku Afriyie Asante a member of the technical team and staff of GRA explained that citizens need to register on the CitizenApp to access all government



services. He provided the following process or steps to register;

A general outline of how users can register:

- **Download and Install the App:** Users can download the CitizenApp from app stores on their mobile devices.
- **Create an Account:** Users are prompted to create an account by providing basic personal information such as full name, date of birth, email address, and phone number.
- **Verification:** The app may send a one-time password (OTP) via SMS or email for identity verification.
- **Link with National ID:** For further validation, users are often required to link the app with their Ghana Card or another national ID to ensure secure, authenticated access to government services.
- **Set Up Security:** Users are encouraged to set up additional security, such as a PIN or biometric login, for future logins.
- **Access Services:** Once registered, users can access various services, including tax-related features from the GRA, directly from the app.

**By: Sarah Laryea**  
**CPA – NSP**



The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia addressing participants



Hon. Joe Ghartey, Board Chairman GRA addressing participants



Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam, Minister for Finance addressing participants



Lord Collins of Highbury flanked by Ms. Julie Essiam, Commissioner-General and H.E. Harriet Thompson, British High Commissioner to Ghana, Management of GRA and representatives from FCDO

## UK Minister For Africa, Lord Collins, Visits The Ghana Revenue Authority

The United Kingdom Minister for Africa, Lord Collins of Highbury, has led a delegation from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA). This high-level visit further cements the UK's continued investment and demonstrates the longstanding partnership between Ghana and the UK.

Commissioner-General, Ms. Julie Essiam, expressed deep appreciation for the constant support from the UK government through the FCDO. As she welcomed the delegation, she lauded the vital role Lord Collins and the British High Commissioner and Her Excellency Harriet Thompson, played in advancing Ghana's revenue modernisation and structural reforms saying that, since the inception of the Ghana Revenue Programme in 2015, the FCDO has been a crucial partner, investing about £15.1 million in various initiatives. "The FCDO has been an outstanding partner, and their investment has enabled impactful, structural transformation across GRA," she noted.

Ms. Julie Essiam, highlighted some key achievements through this partnership, such as online filing and payment, the implementation of the Microsoft

Smart Office 365, and the restructuring of the Domestic Tax Revenue Division (DTRD) which have revolutionised GRA's operations.

She also discussed initiatives, such as improving data analytics for compliance, identifying high-net-worth taxpayers, and bringing non-residents who provide digital services in Ghana under the tax net. As a result, assessments totalling GH¢267 million (£14.8 million) have been made, with GH¢214 million already collected, exceeding the target by 30%.

She further discussed the Special Voluntary Disclosure Programme (SVDP), which is expected to generate up to GHS2 billion from data on Ghanaians with foreign bank accounts, and the effective execution of the E-VAT policy initiative, which in its first phase onboarded over two thousand taxpayers.

Lord Collins, emphasised the UK government's continued commitment to ensuring that the Authority is provided with funding and support to achieve its goals. He acknowledged the Authority's critical work in collaboration with the FCDO and the successes chalked under the Exchange of

Information (EOI) and SVDP initiatives.

On her part, Her Excellency Harriet Thompson, the British High Commissioner to Ghana, also underscored the importance of building a strong and sustainable tax net in Ghana. She highlighted how a robust tax system is vital for long-term development and economic growth, stating the UK's support in achieving these goals.

Mr. Paul Ahey, Head of the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) Unit provided an overview of how the Authority's initiatives have contributed to revenue growth, specifically highlighting the successes of the SVDP.

Present were Madam Pearl Nana Ama Darko, Commissioner-SSD; Messrs. Edward Apenteng Gyamerah, Commissioner-DTRD; Daniel Edisi, Deputy Commissioner-DTRD Operations 1; Kwesi Eghan, Deputy Commissioner-DTRD Operations 2; Elorm Segbefia, HMRC Lead Adviser – Ghana Revenue Programme; Richard Sandall, Development Director-HMRC; Abdul-Kadir Osman, HMRC Strategic Adviser to the Ghana Revenue Authority; Matthew Yartey, HMRC – Communications; Cyril Otobil, HMRC – Communications; Madam Eileen Rafferty, HMRC – Regional Tax Adviser for West Africa and staff of GRA.



Ms Julie Essiam with the delegation from United Kingdom, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office



Maj. Gen. Thomas Oppong-Peprah, CDS, flanked by the Commissioner-General and management of GRA and the Ghana Armed Forces

## The Chief Of Defence Staff Visits GRA

The Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) of the Ghana Armed Forces, Major General Thomas Oppong-Peprah and other senior officers, recently paid a working visit to the management and staff of the Authority. The visit underscored the growing partnership between the two institutions in addressing multifaceted security challenges.

Ms. Julie Essiam, Commissioner-General with key members of Management, in a strategic meeting with the Chief of Defense Staff, discussed coastal security including combatting smuggling and illegal fishing along Ghana's vast coastline, establishing a Customs Marine Unit to strengthen Ghana's maritime borders and safeguard national revenue. She also touched on joint training programmes between the Customs Division and the Ghana Armed Forces for effective border protection.

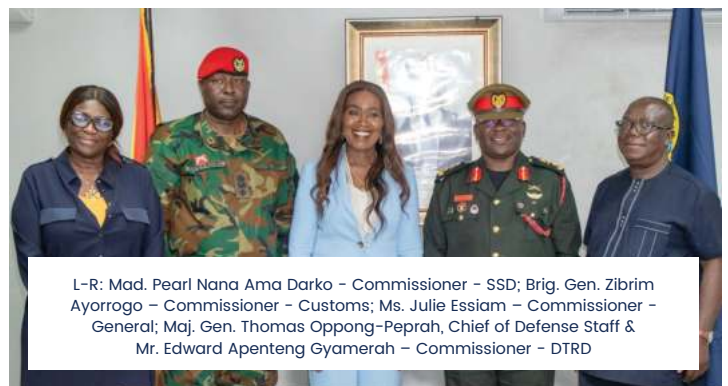
The Commissioner-General, noted that maritime smuggling has become a pressing issue that undermines national revenue. "this collaboration will not only enhance our operational capacity but will also protect our waters and support legitimate trade," she said.

Major General Thomas Oppong-Peprah emphasised the need for a unified approach to tackle the growing challenges posed by illegal trade and

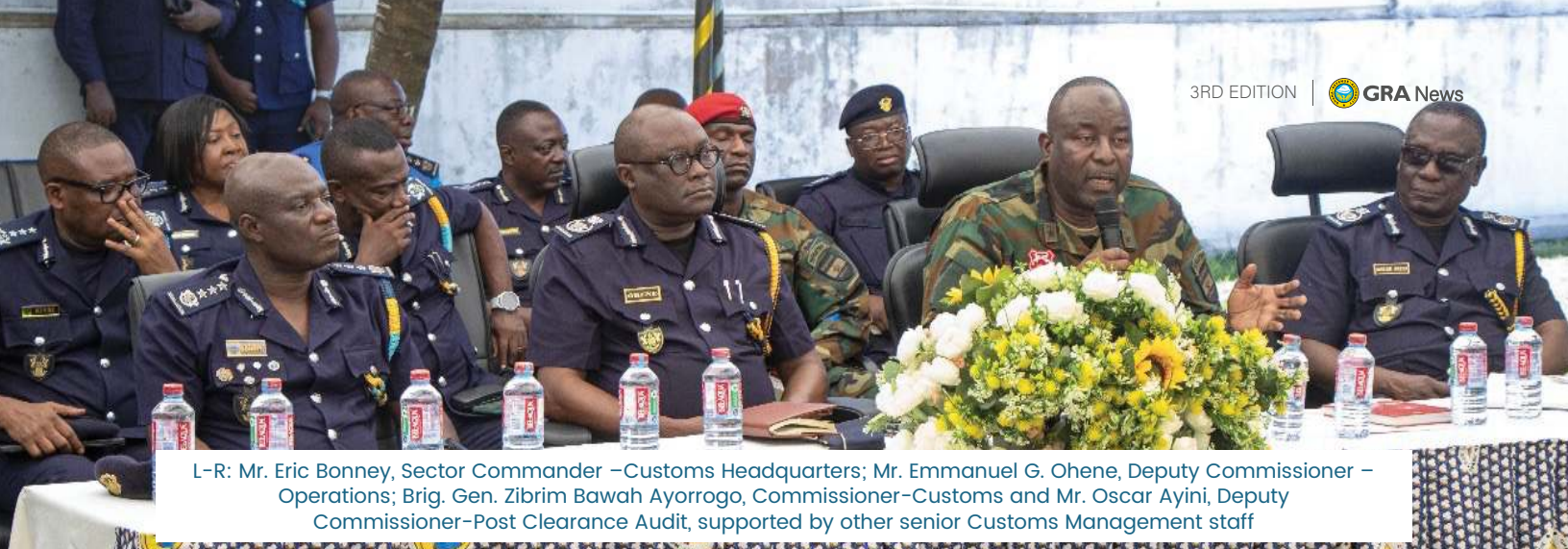
trafficking in the maritime domain. "This collaboration is a vital step toward ensuring the integrity of our maritime borders," he remarked.

Both leaders expressed optimism about the potential impact of the Customs Marine Unit on national security and economic stability and promised their commitment to making it happen.

The Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) was accompanied by key senior officers including Major General J.P. Osei Owusu (Chief of Staff), Air Vice Marshall F.A Asante (Deputy Chief of Staff, Administration), Rear Admiral S. Agyenim Boateng (Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics), Major General D.Y.A.Nyarko (Deputy Chief of Staff, Policy and Plans), Brig. Gen. W. Dzandu-Hedidor (Director General, Training), Brig. Gen. A. Asiamah (Director General, HR) Col. B.B. Pantoah (Military Assistant to the CDS), and Lt. Col. S. Affanyi (Protocol Officer to the CDS).



L-R: Mad. Pearl Nana Ama Darko - Commissioner - SSD; Brig. Gen. Zibrim Ayorrogo - Commissioner - Customs; Ms. Julie Essiam - Commissioner - General; Maj. Gen. Thomas Oppong-Peprah, Chief of Defense Staff & Mr. Edward Apenteng Gyamerah - Commissioner - DTRD



L-R: Mr. Eric Bonney, Sector Commander –Customs Headquarters; Mr. Emmanuel G. Ohene, Deputy Commissioner – Operations; Brig. Gen. Zibrim Bawah Ayorrogo, Commissioner–Customs and Mr. Oscar Ayini, Deputy Commissioner–Post Clearance Audit, supported by other senior Customs Management staff

## Customs Division Holds 4th Quarter Durbar

The Customs Division of the Authority organised its fourth quarter durbar on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at the Customs headquarters. The event served as a platform to review the Division's performance, assess progress toward revenue collection targets, and address challenges encountered during the quarter.

Brig. Gen. Zibrim Bawah Ayorrogo, Commissioner, Customs Division, stated that the Division has made good progress in revenue collection by raking in GHC 30.1 billion out of its annual target of a projected GHC41.33 billion which represents 76.23% of the projected revenue for 2024. This marked an improvement from the previous quarter's performance, which saw 66.66% of the target being met. He also commented on the performance review by encouraging all Customs officers to work extra hard to meet the target before the end of the year.

Brig. Gen. Ayorrogo emphasised the need to introduce training workshops and programmes to enhance the skills of Customs officers. These include collaboration with the University of Cape Coast (UCC) to offer programmes in Customs operations. He also hinted at using experts from the Retired

Customs Officers Association (RECOA) as training officers to provide advanced training in Customs operations and procedures. Cadet Officers will also undergo specialised training programmes, which include weapon handling sessions and driving courses, to prepare them for the challenges on the job.

Brig. Gen. Ayorrogo informed officers of the plan to set up a Customs Marine Unit to enhance security along the coastal belt in Ghana, extend the current K9 Unit and add a currency detection Unit that will help in the fight against illicit financial flows. Another key plan already in the pipeline is the provision of a Customs Police Unit to enhance law enforcement within the Division.

Among the issues discussed were capacity building and training, including the absence of mandatory training courses for officers, which is one of the critical drawbacks for career development. He assured officers that efforts were underway to re-introduce structured training programmes to address these gaps and the establishment of a Customs hospital to improve access to health care for staff and their families.

**By: Lynus Annang & Nana Akwasi Mfum (CPA)**



## In Focus



Madam Rosemary Addo Parker, Assistant Commissioner-CTSB

# The Role Of Customs Technical Services Bureau In Revenue Collection

Ghana Customs has revised and improved techniques and employed advanced technologies in conformity with World Customs Organisation (WCO) best practices, transitioning from the manual way of verifying documents, Bill of Entries (BOEs), and classifying goods and vehicles. These measures have helped expedite clearing processes at the various entry points across the country.

### The journey of CTSB

The journey of Customer Service Technical Service (CTSB) began with the government's use of the former Destination Inspection Companies (DICs) in 2000 for price and quality verification of imports. However, after operating for approximately twelve (12) years, the government terminated the agreement with the DICs. A technical committee was set up to oversee the establishment of CTSB and the key among the activities was; to collaborate with West Blue Consulting Limited to develop software, acquire and equip the Classification and Valuation Centre, and train officers on valuation and classification in line with WCO standards.

These restructuring activities culminated in the full assumption of classification and valuation unit by the Customs Division. In 2015, CTSB became operations using the Integrated Customs

Management System (ICUMS).

### Operations

The CTSB is led by an Assistant Commissioner supported by a dedicated team of 182 staff. The Bureau consists of several specialised units, each playing a vital role in Customs operations for revenue mobilisation. These are the; help desk Administration Officers, Classification, Valuation and Appeals, Risk Management Unit and CTSB Management liaison officers at Tema Port.

The CTSB runs a shift programme from 6am to 2pm, and 2 pm to 10 pm from Monday to Friday. Apart from Classification, Valuation and Help Desk units that run the shift system, all other units work from 8 am to 5 pm and provide services to importers, stakeholders and the public at any given time.

### Functions of CTSB

The CTSB performs several pivotal tasks to facilitate smooth customs operations. Some of the functions are;

- **Assessment of Duties and Taxes:** Calculating duties and taxes payable on goods and vehicles (in international trade) that come into the country.
- **Tariff Classification:** Applying appropriate tariff classifications based on the HS codes and regional tariff schedules to determine duty rates.

- **Valuation and Compliance:** Ensuring the accurate valuation of goods, vehicles and compliance with valuation principles under international standards.
- **Origin Verification:** Determining the origin of products to ascertain eligibility for preferential tariff treatment under trade agreements, promoting fair and equitable trade practices.
- **Risk Management:** Utilizing statistical methodologies and risk assessment techniques to objectively evaluate compliance with customs laws and regulations, enhancing efficiency and transparency in customs clearance processes.

It is also important to note that, the CTSB role is paramount in the three main phases of clearing a shipment; Pre- Clearance, Clearance and Post-Clearance.

The CTSB collaborates with various stakeholders to facilitate trade, including:

- **Importers/Exporters:** Provide guidance on Customs procedures
- **Customs Brokers:** Assisting with accurate documentation
- **Government Agencies:** Streamlining trade procedures and enforcing regulations
- **International Organisations:** Harmonizing Customs practices with other Customs organisations (Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Gambia, Congo) and international organisations (WCO, GIZ, DANIDA, USAID, IMF, World Bank, JICA, WTO)
- **Industry Associations:** Addressing industry-specific challenges and promoting best practices in Customs compliance and clearance

CTSB also maintains communication with national trade facilitation offices and conducts industry visits to support smooth trade operations.

### Achievements:

The Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB) has achieved several successes among which are:

- **Implemented Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting System (PAARS) and ICUMS;** streamlining customs processes
- **Built a data repository;** improving accuracy and continuity
- **Developed a Reference Price List;** standardizing valuation practices
- **Enhanced PAARS with a vehicle module;** this improvement enhances assessments
- **Trained officers;** increases expertise and efficiency
- Reduced processing time for importers, from 48 hours to under 24 hours
- Generates approximately 70% of customs revenue
- Decentralised functions and trained officers at border stations

These achievements highlight CTSB's commitment to improving customs operations through technology, capacity building, and strategic initiatives.

### Challenges

Considering its significant role in revenue mobilisation, CTSB is faced with insufficient number of staff, lack of sponsorship to attend international conferences and verification of genuine invoices from some importers.

Despite these and other challenges, CTSB staff are committed to their revenue mobilisation efforts to promote economic growth.



Section of CTSB officers at work

## Why Customer Service Charters Matter In Tax Administration: A Key Sign Towards Customer Centricism

A Customer Service Charter is a short publication that describes the service experience that can be expected from an Institution. It is an undertaking or covenant made to stakeholders by an organisation about the services they should expect to receive.

A Customer Service Charter is particularly essential for tax administrations such as the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) for several reasons. These include; Improved Citizen Experience, Enhanced Transparency, Increased Accountability, and Keeping Stakeholders informed.

Furthermore, tax administrations by launching a Customer Service Charter clearly outline expectations and standards for service delivery, provide clear information on services offered and how to access them, hold the tax administration e.g., GRA accountable for service quality, foster open communication between citizens (taxpayers) and the tax administration, as well streamline processes & reduce complaints.

As October each year is observed as Customer Service month, tax administrations are expected to demonstrate goodwill in action. It is therefore commendable to find the GRA as part of its customer centricism approach launched the CitizenApp which is a major practical highlight of customer centricism. The CitizenApp which is a one-stop shop for everything tax, will deliver convenience, and trigger voluntary compliance as complications associated with Ghana's tax administration is partly resolved by the launch of the CitizenApp.

For a Customer Service charter of any given tax administration to be effective, the document of intent must be articulated by the tax administration, informing service takers about the tax agency (GRA), what it does, how it does it, how to access its services, to whom the charter is targeted, and grievance redress mechanism in case of service failure.

Producing a service charter means the tax administration is already placing the customer (taxpayer) first in its activities.

The main purpose of having a Service Charter is to define the service experience the client will have with that institution, and the responsibilities of both the tax agency and the client. This experience is described through the key standards of service. It is imperative to emphasize that Customer service standards must be developed with the customer in mind and should be designed to meet the customer expectations.

It must be noted that Service Charters are public documents and must be accessible, widely circulated and displayed at strategic locations and public domains within the institution.

To this end, tax administrations must endeavor to apply the service charter in the service delivery process and ensure strict compliance with set standards as promised the customers. This will require the total buy-in and commitment of the C-Suite executive (Commissioner-General & her commissioners) of the tax administration to approve and fully implement it. An implementable Service Charter guides management of the institution



towards achieving the mandate, vision and mission of the institution.

The impact of an implementable Service Charter will demonstrate commitment to citizen (Taxpayers) satisfaction, foster citizen engagement and feedback, identify areas for improvement, enhance the reputation of the tax administration and promote transparency, accountability and responsiveness.

A typical Service Charter in a public sector organization is not without challenges. Some notable challenges that can stifle progress of a Service charter in tax administration include:

- **Bureaucratic Barriers:** Complex processes and regulations challenges
- **Limited Resources:** Insufficient funding, staffing, or infrastructure.
- **Citizen Expectations:** Managing diverse citizen needs and expectations.
- **Technological Integration:** Leveraging technology to enhance service delivery

- **Performance Measurement:** Tracking and evaluating service quality.

For an effective Service Charter in tax administration, the responsible department such as the Marketing or Customer Experience department must endeavour to:

- **Conduct Citizen Surveys:** Gather feedback to inform service improvements.
- **Establish Service Standards:** Clear, measurable, and achievable standards.
- **Provide Multichannel Access:** Offer various channels for citizens engagement.
- **Train Staff:** Equip staff with skills to deliver excellent customer service.
- **Monitor and Evaluate:** Regularly assess service performance.

By implementing a Customer Service Charter, tax administrations can demonstrate their commitment to citizen satisfaction, improve service delivery, and enhance overall governance.

**By: Christopher K. Beyereh, CPA**



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## GRA Dialogues With The Business Community

GRA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance has organised series of tax dialogues to engage members of the business community and Chambers of Commerce. The dialogues aim to build a more collaborative, customer-centric relationship between the GRA and business community while addressing concerns and challenges that hinder effective tax compliance and revenue mobilisation.

The engagements were held with the Chinese and Lebanese Business Communities, top 100 Importers, and Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to facilitate open dialogues on tax policies, challenges, and strategies to enhance the business climate.

### **Chinese and the Lebanese Communities:**

Mr. Daniel Edisi, Deputy Commissioner OPS I welcomed the participants, emphasising that the dialogue was part of GRA's ongoing commitment to engage taxpayers. He reiterated that the purpose of the engagements was not just to collect taxes, but to support businesses in navigating government policies, growing their operations, and ensuring they can contribute effectively to the nation's economic growth. He said the interaction reflected GRA's customer-centric approach to meeting with its

stakeholders to offer guidance and support.

Hon. Dr. Alex Ampaabeng, Deputy Minister of Finance, assured participants that the government sees the tax-paying community as a critical partner in nation-building. He highlighted that business taxes are vital to national development. He also discussed the government's efforts to stabilise the economy and improve the value of the cedi, noting that last year, the cedi recorded a growth of 2.9%.

Dr. Ampaabeng encouraged participants to keep engaging with the Ministry and GRA, reassuring them that the government is committed to reducing tax-related disputes, which do not augur well for businesses and often delay revenue collection.

Members of the Chinese and Lebanese business communities raised several concerns, which included challenges with tax exemptions, particularly on income tax and VAT, the need for increased sensitisation on new tax policies, and language barriers that make it difficult for some business owners to stay informed about regulations. Participants also expressed concerns about the overall tax burden on businesses and called for more education on withholding taxes.

### Top 100 Importers in Ghana:

In a similar effort to strengthen relationships with key contributors to the national economy, Hon. Dr. Alex Ampaabeng dialogued with the top 100 importers in Ghana, to improve customer service, maximise revenue, and address specific challenges they encounter in their businesses.

Mr. Robert Gbadegbe Deputy Commissioner Large Taxpayer Office (LTO), welcoming participants, acknowledged their significant contributions to revenue mobilisation and national development. He encouraged importers to leverage their entrepreneurial skills to foster bilateral trade relationships and build a thriving business environment in Ghana. He highlighted GRA's digital transformation efforts aimed at simplifying tax processes, urging participants to take advantage of this innovation and to freely discuss their business challenges during the dialogue. This open communication, he noted, would enable the Ministry of Finance and GRA tailor tax policies and initiatives to better suit the needs of their business sector.

Hon. Dr. Ampaabeng also addressed the importers, emphasising government's revised approach to tax administration. He explained that GRA has shifted its focus from enforcement and audits to a more collaborative "you and us" approach, where businesses and the Authority work together to find solutions. This shift aims to foster voluntary tax compliance and build trust between the GRA and the business community. He reassured the importers that their concerns would be taken seriously and assured them of more engagements to ensure tax policies support business growth.

The importers raised some pertinent issues, including the need for the Ministry of Finance to maintain consistent exchange rates at the ports, challenges related to VAT and import duties, and

the disruptive impact of multiple task forces operating at the ports. They also emphasised the need for improved systems to track goods through the Integrated Customs Management System (ICUMS) and advocated for the expansion of the GRA's digital tax procedures to streamline compliance.

### Oil Marketing Companies (OMC)

Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) also met with GRA and the Hon. Dr. Ampaabeng, Deputy Minister for Finance in another meeting to talk about tax compliance and issues peculiar to the sector.

Mrs. Florence Asante, Deputy Commissioner – Communication and Public Affairs, encouraged the OMC representatives to share their concerns, especially about operational challenges and financial limitations that affect their tax obligations.

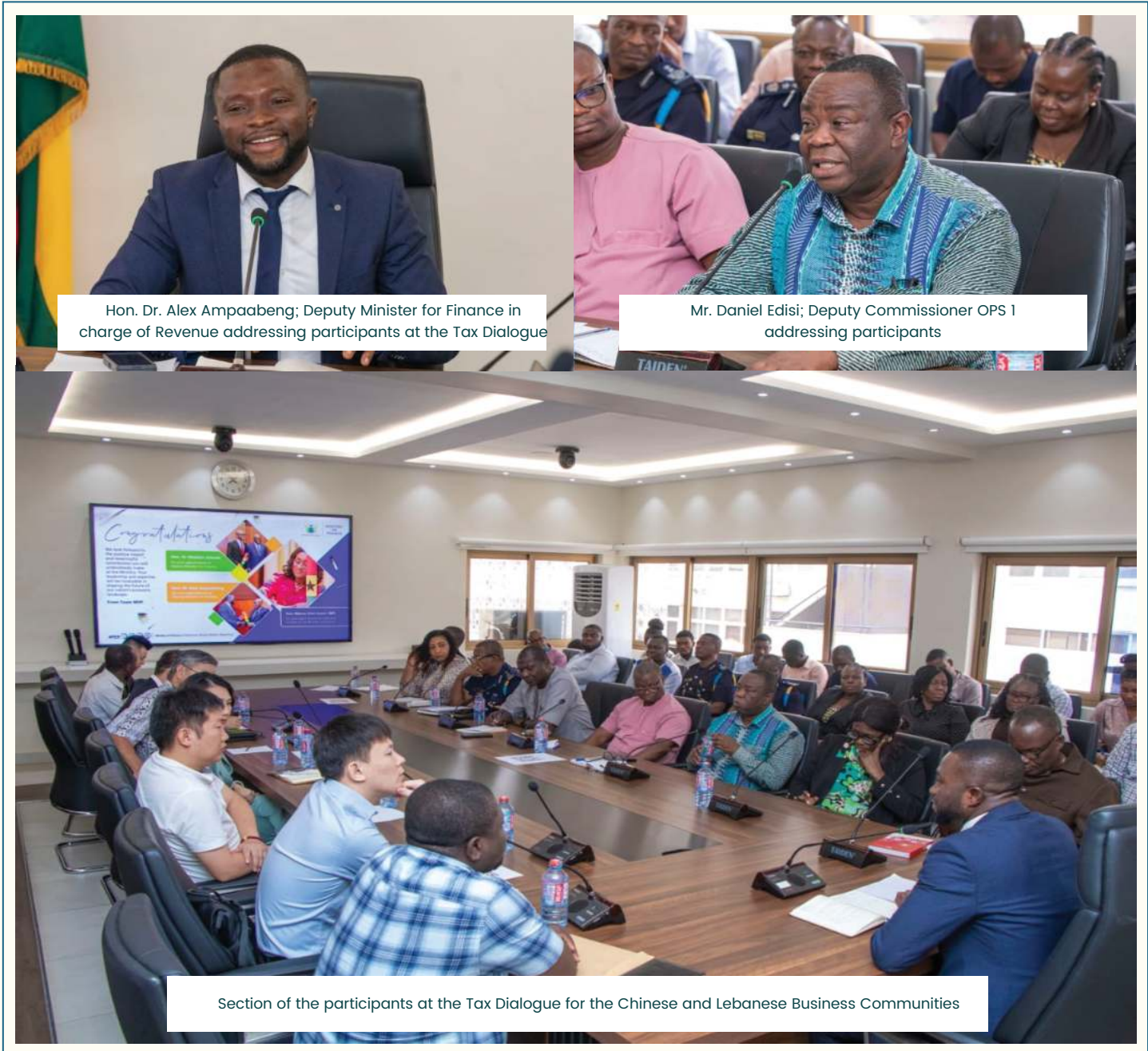
Hon. Dr. Alex Ampaabeng reassured the OMCs of government's support, emphasising that the goal of the dialogue was to build trust and transparency. He called for greater collaboration between businesses and the GRA, to establish systems that stabilise business growth and enhance revenue mobilisation. He reiterated that the GRA should be seen as a partner, not an adversary, and encouraged the OMCs to use the platform to provide constructive feedback that could lead to positive policy changes. He assured the OMCs that the Ministry would take steps to prevent license revocations and work towards establishing a more supportive tax environment for businesses.

Issues raised by the OMCs include financial constraints which have led to layoffs of their employees, challenges with debt repayment schedules, and concerns about the potential revocation of their licenses. They urged the Authority to be more lenient with debt payment conditions and to offer manageable payment

schedules to help struggling companies. They also called for better synergy between GRA and OMCs to improve business operations.

The dialogue ended with participants expressing

satisfaction and optimism that government and GRA would follow through on its commitment to improve the business environment and enhance revenue mobilisation.



Hon. Dr. Alex Ampaabeng; Deputy Minister for Finance in charge of Revenue addressing participants at the Tax Dialogue

Mr. Daniel Edisi; Deputy Commissioner OPS 1 addressing participants

Section of the participants at the Tax Dialogue for the Chinese and Lebanese Business Communities



Dr. Kenneth Ashigbey, CEO of Telecom Chamber, addressing the business community

Mrs. Florence Asante addressing participants

Mr. Dominic Naab, Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Programmes addressing participants

## Tema Collection Dialogues with Local and International Businesses

The Authority also hosted a tax dialogue at the Oak Plaza Hotel in Accra, bringing together members from the International Bureau of Chambers of Commerce and the Indigenous Business Chamber of Commerce to discuss tax legislation and customs processes to promote tax compliance through a customer-centric approach.

Mrs. Christiana Odi Adjei, the Tema Sector Commander, emphasised the significance of the tax dialogues and urged companies to keep up with GRA's changing regulations. She emphasised that strengthening partnerships and addressing business challenges are the main objectives of the tax dialogue, while also acknowledging the substantial contributions made by foreign companies to Ghana's economic progress. "This programme reflects GRA's commitment to fostering economic growth and improving the business climate", she said. She emphasised that to promote a culture of cooperation and development, the GRA seeks to gather inputs and provide customised solutions for the business community.

Participants were taken through key areas relating to domestic tax and customs, including taxpayers' rights and obligations, tax audits, VAT refunds, and customs procedures.

Mr. Dominic Naab, Assistant Commissioner Policy and Programmes, emphasised GRA's purpose to promote trade and foster a flourishing business climate in the country.

Dr. Kenneth Ashigbey, CEO of the Telecoms Chamber and a member of the Indigenous Business Chambers of Commerce welcomed the tax discussion as a vital platform for the sharing issues and solutions between taxpayers and GRA.

Key topics discussed were; Taxpayer rights, tax filing processes, and the introduction of modified taxation for those working in the informal sector.

Participants at the forum raised concerns about the invoicing system, HS codes, and intimidation by GRA officials.

Mrs. Florence Asante, Deputy Commissioner, Communication and Public Affairs, reassured participants that their feedback would be taken into consideration and urged participants to invite GRA to future meetings to ensure continued collaboration.

Mrs. Asante said the recent tax dialogues reflect GRA's ongoing efforts to improve customer service delivery, enhance tax compliance, simplify tax processes, and strengthen its relationship with the business community, ultimately contributing to Ghana's economic growth.



A section of participants at the tax dialogue event



## Effective Management Skills: Stepping Up The Game

Effective managers aim to inspire, motivate, and guide their teams toward achieving results. However, some Managers struggle to align their teams' efforts with the broader goals of their organisation. True management is the careful coordination and organisation of activities within a business environment to achieve planned objectives. Unfortunately, organisations/businesses, led by ineffective managers often suffer from high employee turnover, low productivity, cash flow issues, and annual losses. The result is a weakening organisation that struggles to attract partners and customers, gain shareholder and stakeholder confidence, and maintain stability.

Many assume that effective leaders possess charismatic, "all-knowing," or omnipotent qualities; however, these are not the true attributes required for successful management. Shareholders and stakeholders alike prioritise skills that directly impact organisational health and performance over personality traits.

Effective management is rooted not in showmanship but in a commitment to achieving organisational goals. A truly effective management style engages the entire organisation and its staff, demonstrating a commitment to responsibility and accountability. Effective managers focus on ensuring that every team member, unit, and department achieves results and meets their targets.

Effective management, therefore, requires a

combination of talent and skill. It is the key to "stepping up the game" when leading an organisation. This can be achieved by addressing specific challenges and embracing the responsibilities that come with management. Some ways to cultivate effective management and leadership skills include:

### **Enhancing Interpersonal Skills:**

Successful managers build strong personal relationships with their team members. They know when to motivate and challenge staff to complete tasks and inspire them to go the extra mile. Trust, confidentiality, value, and recognition become evident when managers genuinely show concern. This fosters a sense of unity and teamwork, or "esprit de corps," resulting in maximum productivity.

### **Encouraging Personal Growth:**

Effective managers recognize their own limitations and actively seek to improve. They engage in self-development through interpersonal experiences, workshops, seminars, and short courses. Learning from experienced colleagues can also provide valuable insights that help managers stay ahead.

### **Developing Strong Communication Skills:**

Managers with solid communication skills know how to listen while giving clear instructions. They can identify and address communication barriers, ensuring a smooth flow of information. This ability enables them to quickly process information and relay it effectively to departments, teams, and units, facilitating the achievement of objectives.

**Embracing Adaptability:**

Effective managers are prepared to handle the unexpected. They make room for unforeseen changes and guide their teams through alternative plans when necessary. This skill enables managers to think on their feet and find quick solutions to unexpected problems, ensuring smooth operations even in uncertain situations.

**Being Accessible and Open:**

Accessibility is crucial for effective management. Managers should be available and open to their teams, encouraging employees to share concerns, ask questions, and provide feedback. Being open creates an environment of trust and support, embodying the idea of “leadership by example.”

**Providing Constructive Criticism:**

Effectiveness requires the ability to give professional, constructive feedback. As a manager, you may encounter tasks that fall below expectations or notice attitudes that could hinder team cohesion.

In these situations, it is essential to address issues professionally, guiding employees on how to improve for the benefit of the organization.

**Clarifying Goals and Expectations:**

Making targets and rewards clear can simplify a manager’s role. When employees understand goals and are provided with the resources needed to achieve them, they can work more efficiently. Delegating authority and responsibility while acknowledging efforts through rewards can significantly boost productivity and morale.

Remember, effective management skills do not come automatically; they require determination, practice, and the will to excel. It is essential to continually develop these skills and deepen one’s understanding of management principles to meet the demands of leadership and achieve organisational success

**By: Dr. Justice Ebo Crentsil**  
Head, Winneba Sub Office.

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GRA



  
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GRA officials in a group picture with the Parliamentary Press Corps

## GRA Engages Parliamentary Press Corps

The Ghana Revenue Authority has organised a seminar for members of the Parliamentary Press Corps at the Best Western Hotel Nungua with the aim of promoting improved cooperation between GRA and the Parliamentary Press Corps. This event provided journalists with in-depth insights into general taxation, Customs procedures and processes and GRA's mandate.

Mrs. Florence Asante, Deputy Commissioner – Communication and Public Affairs (CPA) department, highlighted the importance of educating the public on tax compliance and other GRA initiatives. She emphasised the seminar's goals of promoting transparency, strengthening partnerships and enhancing the media's understanding of the Authority's activities.

Mr. Daniel Edisi, Deputy Commissioner – Operations 1 – DTRD, assured the business community of

significant reforms in GRA's revenue mobilisation efforts. He noted that the previous "rambo style" tax collection methods are no longer used, instead, the Authority is employing a customer-centric approach. He urged the media to collaborate in disseminating credible information to boost compliance, stressing that taxes are crucial for national growth and it is a collective responsibility.

The training was facilitated by Mr. Lawrence Hotsonyame, Assistant Commissioner – Training and Development, Mr. Alphonse Quainoo, Assistant Commissioner of Training and Development, (Customs), Mr. Edward Bagyiri, Assistant Commissioner – Import and Export Unit and Mr. Justice Njornan Magah Yadjayime – Chief Revenue Officer, Vehicle Valuation Unit (Customs Headquarters).

**By: Afia Serwaa Bonsu-Assibey (CPA)**





Ms. Julie Essiam (CG), 2nd from left, working out with officers, emphasising the vital link between wellness and productivity

## Customs Promotes Fitness Walk And Health Screening

The Commissioner-General, Ms. Julie Essiam has urged officers to prioritise their health and well-being, stressing that good health is essential for effective revenue mobilisation. She said this at the 2nd Customs Technical Services Bureau (CTSB) and Preventive Department fitness walk and health screening, where officers participated in aerobics and health checks to promote healthy habits and early disease detection, aligning with the event's theme: 'A healthier workforce for Revenue Mobilisation'.

Ms. Essiam said, "As an Authority, the health of our staff is paramount in revenue mobilisation and today CTSB and Preventive wing of Customs have demonstrated the depth of love, teamwork and collaboration by organising this great initiative." She said collaboration among the various units of Customs is important as it brings unity and creates an atmosphere to enhance productivity at work.

In an impressive display of endurance, officers and some partners who joined in the walk covered a distance of 8000 miles (8km) through some principal streets of Accra.

Madam Rosemary Addo Parker, Assistant

Commissioner-in charge of CTSB, intimated that the Welfare Association of the Bureau decided to promote the well-being of officers and their families in an atmosphere of entertainment and network with officers from other units and departments.

She said, the complex nature of the work coupled with parenting responsibilities does not allow officers to exercise and do basic health screening hence the essence of organising the event to help officers know their health status and detect diseases early to prevent complications. She further urged officers and other patrons to take care of themselves, eat healthy and have regular medical checkup.

Officers went through checks such as blood pressure, eye, body mass index (BMI), fasting blood sugar (FBS), kidney diseases and cardiovascular diseases. There was a diet and detoxification talk, blood group check-ups and body massages. Officers and patrons were also taken through a cognitive exercise to check their memory function.

This year's fitness walk and health screening was crowned with a jamboree featuring the Customs Band in a captivating live performance.



Madam Sally Abbey – Makola TSC Head, in a picture with members of the Cosmetics Association

## Makola Taxpayer Service Centre (TSC) And Cosmetic Dealers Association Donate To The Radiotherapy Unit, Korle-Bu

Every year in October, the world unites for Breast Cancer Awareness shedding light on the pressing need for early detection and prevention of the disease.

The global theme for this year is “No one should face breast cancer alone”. In solidarity with this cause, management and staff of the Makola Taxpayer Service Centre (TSC) partnered with members of the Cosmetic Dealers Association of Ghana–Makola branch, to visit the Korle–Bu Teaching Hospital’s Radiotherapy and Oncology Unit and commiserate with patients, while encouraging and commending healthcare givers for the good work they are doing.

Mrs. Sally Abbey, Head of the Makola TSC, on behalf of the group presented a cash amount of GHC40,000 with provisions and cosmetic items to patients and staff of the unit.

She said the group decided to put a smile on the faces of patients, breast cancer survivors and staff of the Radiotherapy unit, saying “the sick need our love and care for complete healing”.

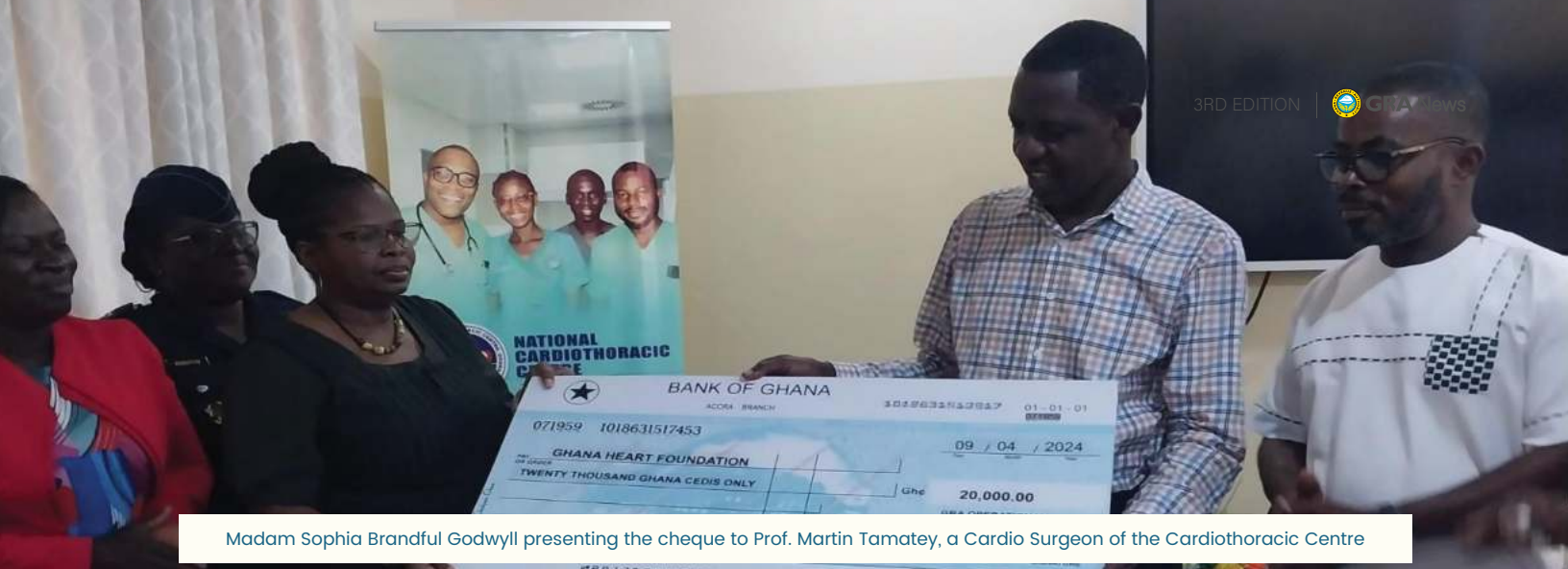
Madam Sally Abbey, commended the doctors and nurses for their dedication and compassion to patients within their care.

In addition to the donation, members of the Cosmetic Association applied make-up on the faces of patients and medical staff to make them look good. This act of kindness, Madam Abbey said, demonstrates the Makola TSC and the Cosmetic Dealers Association’s commitment to corporate social responsibility for good healthcare.

Madam Jennifer Botwe, head of Radiotherapy and Oncology Unit, expressed her sincere appreciation to the GRA and the Cosmetic Dealers Association for their kind gesture. She promised to put the funds to good use while thanking the Cosmetics Association for devoting their time to making patients look good by making them up. Madam Botwe said the joint donation would go a long way to enhance the Unit’s healthcare delivery, improving the lives of those affected by breast cancer.



Mrs. Sally Abbey, Head of the Makola TSC, on behalf of the group presented a cash amount of GHC40,000 with provisions and cosmetic items to patients and staff of the unit.



Madam Sophia Brandful Godwyll presenting the cheque to Prof. Martin Tamatey, a Cardio Surgeon of the Cardiothoracic Centre

## GRA Donates to The Ghana Heart Foundation

The Authority, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has donated an amount of GH¢20,000.00 and some items to the Ghana Heart Foundation. The items donated were:

- Ten pieces of thermometer guns,
- Eight gallons of sanitiser and
- Three boxes of nose masks.

Presenting the cheque, on behalf of Management and staff, Madam Sophia Brandful Godwyll, Chief Revenue Officer with the Communication and Public Affairs Department said, ‘GRA is glad to support the cause of the Foundation, and we are here to reaffirm our commitment to a noble cause. “GRA has consistently demonstrated its commitment to the Ghana Heart Foundation through our donations and support and today the tradition continues,” she stated.

Receiving the cheque and items, Prof. Martin Tamatey, a Cardiothoracic Surgeon and Consultant at the Cardiothoracic Centre of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, said the Centre is grateful to the Authority for GRA’s consistent gesture, support and commitment to healthcare delivery. He used the opportunity to assure the Authority that they will do their best to provide

patients with quality healthcare. He also encouraged other organisations to emulate the efforts of GRA to support the Centre and the Korle-Bu Hospital in general.

Present were: Ms. Maureen Doudo; Head of Nursing at the Cardiothoracic Centre, Ms. Anastasia Hemans; Administrator of the Ghana Heart Foundation, Mr. Kenneth Lamptey; Administrator of the Centre, Madam Antoinette Kwoffie, Madam Justina Asiamah Wiafe, with the Communication and Public Affairs (CPA) Department.



Some items donated to the Ghana Heart Foundation



Assorted sanitary pads donated by the Sunyani Area Office Ladies Club to the Bono Municipal Education Directorate

## Sunyani Area Office Ladies Club Supports National Menstrual Hygiene Day

The Ladies Club Association of the Sunyani Area Office threw their weight behind the National Menstrual Hygiene Day, by donating sanitary pads to the Bono Municipal Education Directorate. The items donated were to be distributed to needy female students within the municipality.

Presenting the items to the organisers of the National Menstrual Hygiene Day, Mrs. Ruth Ameyaw, Sunyani Ladies President said: “We saw the need to support such a worthy cause as this, because many children cannot afford a basic need as a sanitary pad and to ensure that no girl-child misses out on her education or any other opportunity due to menstruation”. She emphasised that access to sanitary products is not a luxury but a necessity.

Madam Rosemond Appiaa Kodom, Municipal Girls Officer, who received the items on behalf of the Municipal Education Directorate, acknowledged the Authority for supporting this celebration. She stressed that this would go a long way in supporting girls, who could not afford sanitary pads.



A rep from Sunyani Area Office in a picture with sanitary pads ready to be donated to the Bono Municipal Education Directorate



A banner displaying the event programme



Mr. Kwaku Odoi Yemoh (GRA cloth), presented the tyres to Mr. Emmanuel Teye Nartey

## Somanya TSC Donates New Tyres to Yilo Krobo National Ambulance Service

As part of efforts to give back to the community, the Somanya Taxpayer Service Centre (TSC) has donated four brand-new automobile tyres to the Yilo Krobo Municipality's National Ambulance Service.

Mr. Kwaku Odoi Yemoh, Somanya TSC Manager, took advantage of the opportunity to restate that the office's purpose in the community is not limited to tax collection but also includes community development.

Mr. Yemoh said his office felt compelled to contribute to the tyres as part of GRA's corporate

social responsibility to help the government's community service initiatives.

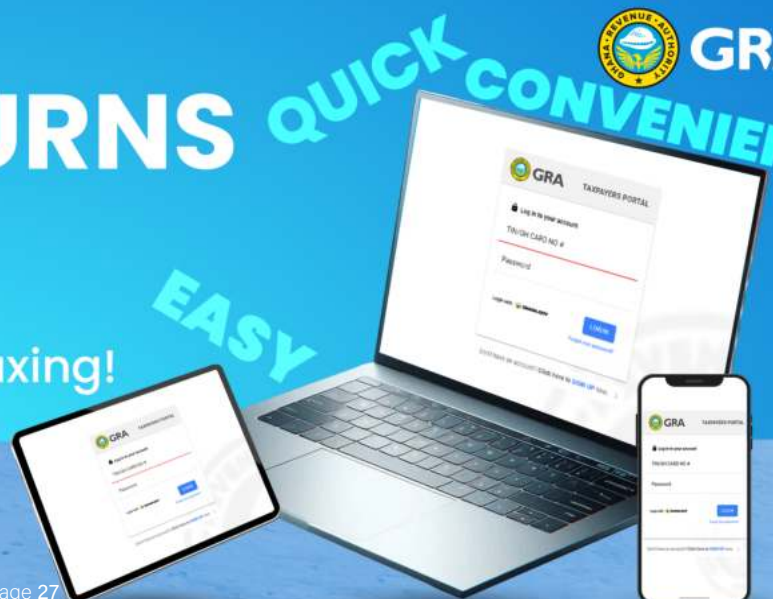
Mr. Emmanuel Teye Nartey, Principal Emergency Medical Technician - National Ambulance Station, Yilo Krobo District, received the items on behalf of the Somanya Ambulance Station and expressed the Station's profound gratitude for the swift intervention from the Somanya TSC. He gave the TSC his word that the Ambulance Station would use the tyres wisely to save lives and serve the community better.

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Madam Sophia Brandful Godwyll, CPA, GRA presenting the cash donation to Ms. Caroline Afum, Donor and Member Relation Office of the Bible Society of Ghana (BSG) while the Very Rev. Supt. Augustine Kyereh, of the Methodist Church, Nyankumasi Ahentro Circuit, Central Region and others looked on

## GRA Christian Fellowship Donates To The Bible Society Of Ghana

The GRA Christian Fellowship has donated an amount of GHc 7,000 Cedis to the Bible Society of Ghana (BSG). The donation is to support the Society's mission of translating the Bible into various local languages to encourage more Christians to read the Bible.

Presenting the cash amount, Madam Sophia Brandful Godwyll, a member of the Fellowship, underscored the importance of Bible reading saying that, reading the Bible with understanding creates a sense of accountability and shared values, and the GRA Christian Fellowship is happy to collaborate with the BSG to provide these Bibles

to help spread the Gospel.

Ms. Caroline Afum, BSG - Donor and Member Relations Officer, receiving the donation on behalf of the Bible Society of Ghana expressed appreciation, saying the gesture by the Fellowship is commendable, and would help translate the original Bible into the local languages.

In attendance were, Mr. Victor Akogo, Chief Revenue Officer DTRD Ops I, Dr. Elizabeth Nadah Sarpy, Chief Revenue Officer, C-G's Secretariat, Madam Annette Kwoffie and Rev. Daniel Quist - Mobilisation Officer, Bible Society Ghana and other GRA staff.

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"

**2 Corinthians 9:7**



# HEALTH Corner

Mpox (Monkeypox virus) is an infectious disease that can occur in humans and animals. The virus is usually mild but can be severe in children, pregnant women, or people with compromised immune systems. Mpox is endemic in Central and Western Africa, where several species of mammals are suspected to act as a natural reservoir of the virus.

The first human cases were diagnosed in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then, the frequency and severity of outbreaks have significantly increased, possibly because of declining immunity since the cessation of routine smallpox vaccination.

Between 2022 and 2023, there was global Mpox outbreak outside Africa. It was the first incidence of widespread community transmission and was initially identified in the United Kingdom in May 2022, with subsequent cases confirmed in 111 countries as of May 2023. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) between 23 July 2022 and 10 May 2023.

The spread of Mpox cases, with particular relevance to Africa, is believed to be due to:

- **Declining immunity:** Since the stopping of routine smallpox vaccination, immunity to poxviruses has decreased in exposed populations
- **Animal reservoir:** The natural reservoir of the Monkeypox virus has not been conclusively determined, although small rodents are considered the most likely carriers.

- **Evolution of the virus:** There is evidence that the virus is evolving to be more transmissible among humans

- **Poor healthcare infrastructure:** Outbreaks are rarely documented in areas with poor healthcare infrastructure. Well-resourced healthcare infrastructure is sparse in most African countries

#### Mode of Transmission:

Transmission of the Mpox virus, from person to person can be through close contact with an infected person, sexual contact or kissing, sharing food/drinks, breathing close to each other, mother to fetus during pregnancy, mother to infant and respiratory droplets. The virus can spread from animals to humans through bites or scratches from infected animals (such as monkeys or rodents, pets) and touching or eating undercooked infected animal meat. Mpox is contagious until all sores have healed and a new layer of skin has formed (usually 2-4 weeks). The virus enters the body through broken skin or the respiratory tract. It easily spreads to other members of the household and sexual partners especially people with multiple sexual partners. People can also contract the virus from contaminated objects such as clothing or linens, through sharps injuries in health care, or in community settings such as tattoo parlours.

The virus can survive on surfaces and objects for some time and spread through touch. High-risk groups include pregnant women, children, and those with weakened immune systems such as individuals with untreated HIV.

# HEALTH Corner



## Symptoms:

Identified common symptoms include:

- Rash (blister-like sores) lasting 2-4 weeks
- Fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen glands
- Sores can appear on the face, hands, feet, groin, genital, and anal areas, as well as in the mouth, throat, anus, rectum, vagina, or eyes in severe cases

Most people recover within a few weeks with supportive care such as pain or fever medication. However, severe cases can lead to complications and death, especially in high-risk groups. Severe symptoms may include widespread lesions, secondary bacterial infections, lung, heart or brain infections and eye problems. In severe cases, hospitalisation, supportive care, and antiviral medication may be necessary.

## Prevention:

It is important to practice good hygiene by washing hands frequently, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, and avoiding close contact with affected patients to reduce the risk of transmission.

To prevent the spread of Mpox to others, infected individuals should isolate at home, or in a hospital if needed, for the duration of the infectious period (from the onset of symptoms until lesions have healed and scabs fall off). Covering lesions and wearing a medical mask when in the presence of others may help prevent spread. It is recommended for people at high risk to be vaccinated to prevent infection with Mpox, especially during an outbreak.

According to data from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the death rate for Mpox varies between 0.1% and 10%, depending on factors like access to healthcare and underlying health conditions.

## Culled from:

**World Health Organisation (WHO),  
Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),  
National Institutes of Health (NIH)**





# FOOD BASKET

## WAAKYE

Waakye is a popular Ghanaian dish made from rice and beans. It is commonly eaten in the morning as breakfast or lunch. However, others eat it for supper. It is relished by all communities in Ghana and has even gained international recognition. The rice and beans, usually black-eyed peas or cow beans, are cooked together, along with red-dried sorghum leaf sheaths or stalks.

### Ingredients: to feed five (5)

- 2 cups of rice
- 1 cup of beans (black-eyed peas cowpea)
- Dried leaves (waakye leaves or sorghum leaves) for colour (optional)
- Salt to taste
- Water

## How to prepare Waakye

If necessary, soak the beans overnight. Drain the soaked beans and pour them into a clean pot. Add water and set on fire to cook until a bit tender adding salt to taste. While cooking, add the required quantity of the red-dried sorghum leaf sheaths or stalks to give it colour and flavour. When the beans are almost cooked, add the washed rice, cover, and let it cook on low heat until the rice is fully cooked and fluffy for about 20 minutes.

Remove the leaves, serve the Waakye with your choice of side dishes, like fried ripe plantain, spaghetti, tomato stew and or shito with your preferred protein (fried fish, boiled or fried egg, meat, mushrooms etc).

**Enjoy your delicious Waakye!!!**



# FOOD BASKET

## COLESLAW

Coleslaw is a popular side dish made from shredded or chopped vegetables, typically cabbage, bell pepper and carrots, mixed with a dressing. It is creamy (traditional), rich and tangy with mayonnaise. Coleslaw dressing can vary, but common ingredients include:

### Ingredients:

4 cups green cabbage (shredded)  
1 cup carrots (grated)  
1 big bell pepper (sliced)  
1/2 cup salad cream/mayonnaise  
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice)  
1 teaspoon sugar (optional)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Optional – onions, garlic, mustard, or celery seed  
/parsley/mint

### Preparation:

Combine the shredded cabbage, grated carrots and sliced green pepper in a large bowl. In a separate bowl whisk together the mayonnaise, apple cider vinegar, sugar (optional), salt, and pepper. Pour the dressing over the mixed vegetables. Mix well with a dessert until all the vegetables are coated.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavours to Blend.

**Serve:** Stir again before serving and enjoy your coleslaw. Coleslaw is often served alongside barbecued meats, burgers, sandwiches, grilled chicken or fish

Coleslaw is a refreshing and crunchy condiment that adds flavour and texture to various dishes

# JOKERS CORNER



1. I just realised that people are prisoners of their phones. That's why it's called a "cell phone".
2. Remember, if we get caught, you're deaf and I don't speak English.
3. Today at the bank, an old lady asked me to help her check her balance so I pushed her over.
4. Three years ago, my doctor told me I was going deaf, I haven't heard from him since.
5. The other day, my wife asked me to pass her lipstick but I accidentally passed her a glue stick. She still isn't talking to me.
6. My boss told me to have a good day so I went home.
7. Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool, so I gave him a glass of water.
8. I am going to stand outside, if anyone asks where I am, tell them I am outstanding