NORTHERN CORRIDOR TRANSPORT OBSERVATORY

RELIABLE PERFORMANCE DATA

Biannual Report

Northern Corridor Transport Observatory

January to June 2025

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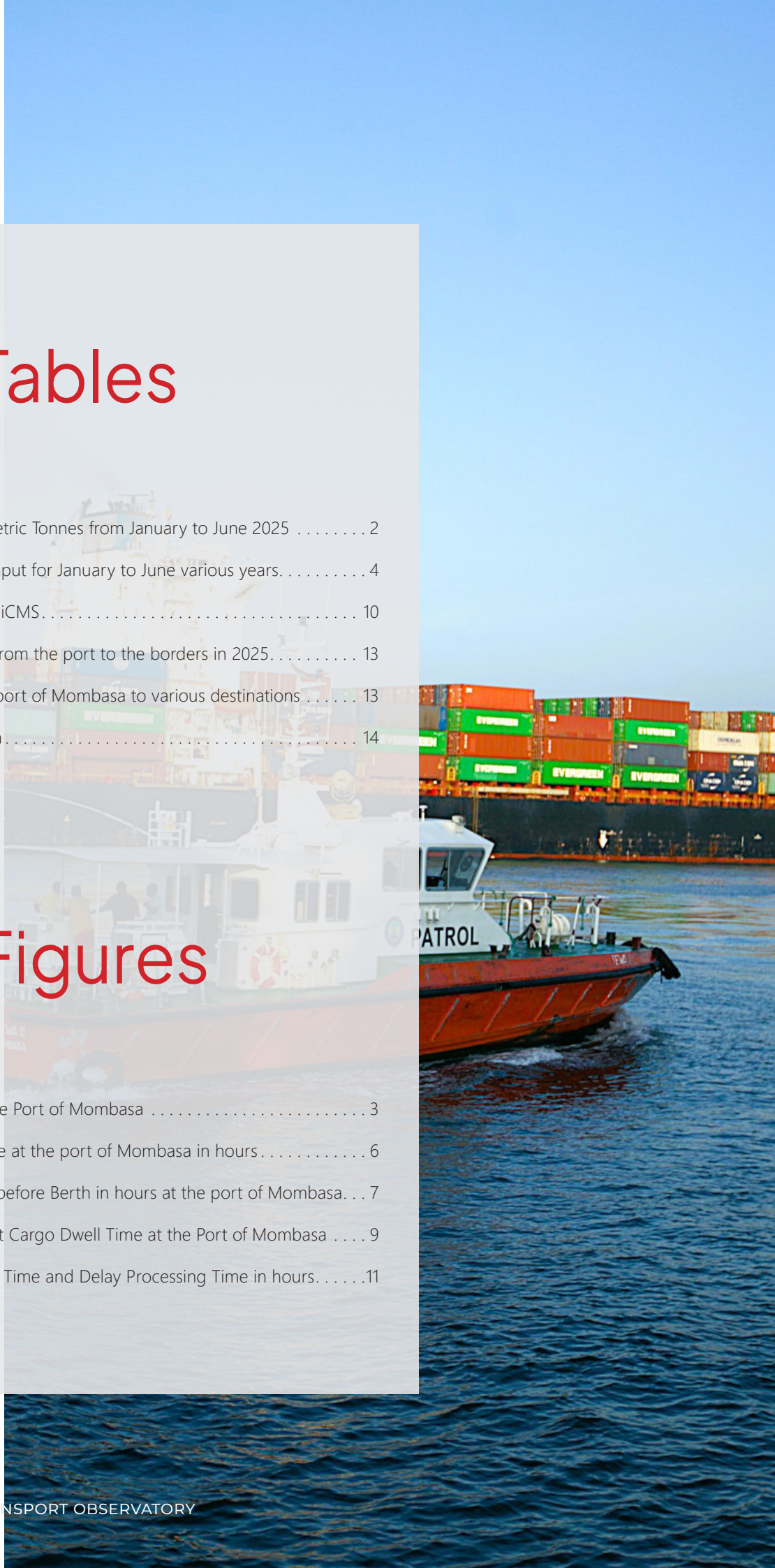


1. Volume and Capacity at the Port of Mombasa

This section examines cargo volume and handling capacity at the Port of Mombasa and along the Northern Corridor during the first half of 2025 from January to June. It assesses port throughput, cargo distribution by destination country, and comparative trends against corresponding periods in previous years.

1.1 Cargo Throughput

Cargo throughput measures the total volume of cargo discharged and loaded at the port. It includes liquid bulk, dry bulk, containerized cargo, transit cargo, and transshipment.

Table 1 shows that the total cargo throughput at the Port of Mombasa in the first half of 2025 reached 21.3 million metric tonnes (MT), an 8.1% growth compared to 19.8 million MT in a similar period in 2024. This is mainly attributed to a 13% growth in imports and a 3% growth in exports, with imports accounting for 79% of the total throughput. Dry bulk, liquid bulk, and conventional cargo increased by 9%, 12%, and 46% respectively while containerized cargo declined by 9% and transshipment cargo volumes dropped by 19%. The overall improved performance is partly attributed to an influx of vessels due to ongoing global shipping disruptions especially along the Red Sea route, enhanced port infrastructure and faster cargo handling processes implemented at the port of Mombasa.

8.1%

Total cargo throughput at the Port of Mombasa in the first half of 2025 reached 21.3 million metric tonnes (MT)

Table 1: Port Throughput in Metric Tonnes from January to June 2025

Type of Cargo	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total 2025	Total 2024	Volume Change	Growth %	% Share 2024	% Share 2025
Dry Bulk	563,687	806,856	821,366	362,666	978,119	503,663	4,036,357	3,711,395	324,962	9%	18.7%	19%
Liquid Bulk	913,919	763,989	869,982	1,111,802	920,042	926,509	5,506,243	4,928,950	577,293	12%	24.9%	26%
Conventional	194,252	222,975	127,018	237,434	152,553	268,545	1,202,777	821,857	380,920	46%	4.1%	6%
Containerized	1,343,398	1,335,274	1,458,768	1,370,880	1,487,286	1,452,237	8,447,843	9,276,055	-828,212	-9%	46.8%	40%
TOTAL	**3,015,256**	**3,129,094**	**3,277,134**	**3,082,782**	**3,538,000**	**3,150,954**	**19,193,220**	**18,519,443**	**673,777**	**4%**	**93.4%**	**90%**
Imports	2,632,154	2,710,677	2,804,126	2,703,196	3,123,832	2,730,716	16,704,701	14,760,706	1,943,995	13%	74.4%	79%
Exports	383,102	418,417	473,007	379,586	414,168	420,238	2,488,518	2,423,320	65,198	3%	12.2%	12%
Transshipment	472,227	356,595	335,566	303,792	269,845	333,897	2,071,922	2,555,501	-483,579	-19%	12.9%	10%
Restows	13,772	5,707	12,820	11,326	23,596	17,244	84,465	92,219	-7,754	-8%	0.5%	0%
TOTAL	**3,501,255**	**3,491,396**	**3,625,519**	**3,397,900**	**3,831,441**	**3,502,095**	**21,349,606**	**19,831,746**	**1,517,860**	**8.1%**		

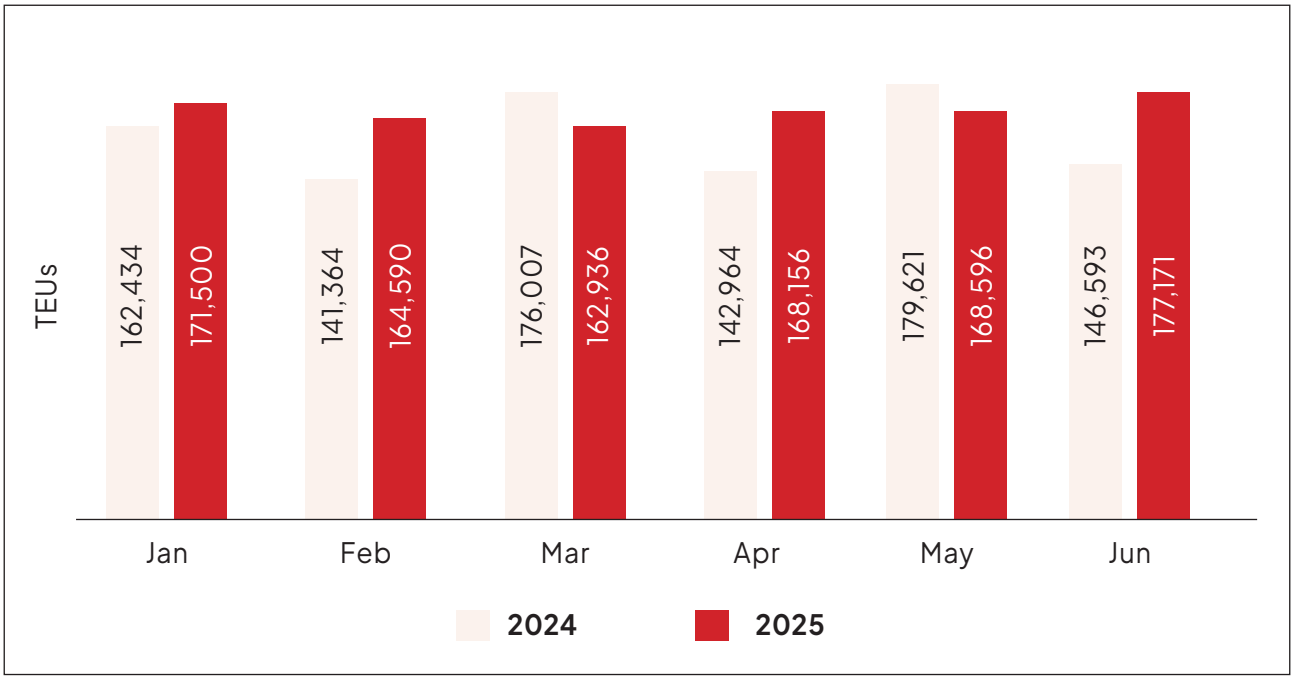
Source: Kenya Ports Authority

1.2 Container Traffic in TEUs

The Port of Mombasa recorded a 6.7% increase in container throughput in the first half of 2025, handling a total of 1,012,949 containers compared to 948,983 during a similar period in 2024. This increase in container traffic despite a drop in containerized cargo volume by weight is as a result of an increase in empty containers. Figure 1 presents container traffic at the port of Mombasa.

Increase in export of empty containers signifies trade imbalance in the region

Figure 1: Container Traffic at the Port of Mombasa



Source: Kenya Ports Authority

Transit cargo through the Port of Mombasa grew to 7.37 million tons in the first half of 2025

1.3 Volume per Country Destination through the Port of Mombasa

Transit cargo through the Port of Mombasa continued in an upward trajectory, growing by 16% from 6.36 million tons in 2024 to 7.37 million tons in the first half of 2025. Within the Northern Corridor, Uganda remained the dominant destination, accounting for over two-thirds (69.34%) of the total volume, with a 33% volume increase to 5.1 million MT. Burundi and Rwanda volumes grew by 42% and 16%, respectively, while volumes to South Sudan and DRC reduced by 19% and 8%, respectively. Table 2 presents biannual transit cargo volume trends from 2023 to 2025.

Table 2: Transit Cargo Throughput for January to June various years

COUNTRY	2023	2024	2025	Volume Change	% Change	% Share 2025
BURUNDI	7,068	25,213	35,809	10,596	42%	0.49%
D.R.C.	778,238	885,138	810,838	-74,300	-8%	11.00%
RWANDA	239,714	314,364	365,582	51,218	16%	4.96%
SOUTH SUDAN	939,378	956,101	778,982	-177,119	-19%	10.57%
UGANDA	3,284,810	3,857,498	5,112,422	1,254,924	33%	69.34%
TANZANIA	153,967	236,458	243,036	6,578	3%	3.30%
ETHIOPIA	8,302	82,567	22,959	-59,608	-72%	0.31%
SOMALIA	168	97	446	349	360%	0.01%
OTHERS	477	1,327	2,813	1,486	112%	0.04%
TOTAL	**5,412,122**	**6,358,763**	**7,372,887**	**1,014,124**	**16%**	

Source: Kenya Ports Authority

2. Maritime Indicators

Maritime indicators are critical metrics for evaluating port performance, providing insights into the efficiency and effectiveness of port operations. These metrics not only help ports identify operational strengths and weaknesses but also enable stakeholders to make informed decisions, optimize resource allocation, and enhance overall maritime logistics.

This section discusses the performance of vessel movements at the Port of Mombasa for the first half of 2025, ending in June. It presents an analysis of indicators on ship turnaround time and vessel waiting time before berth.

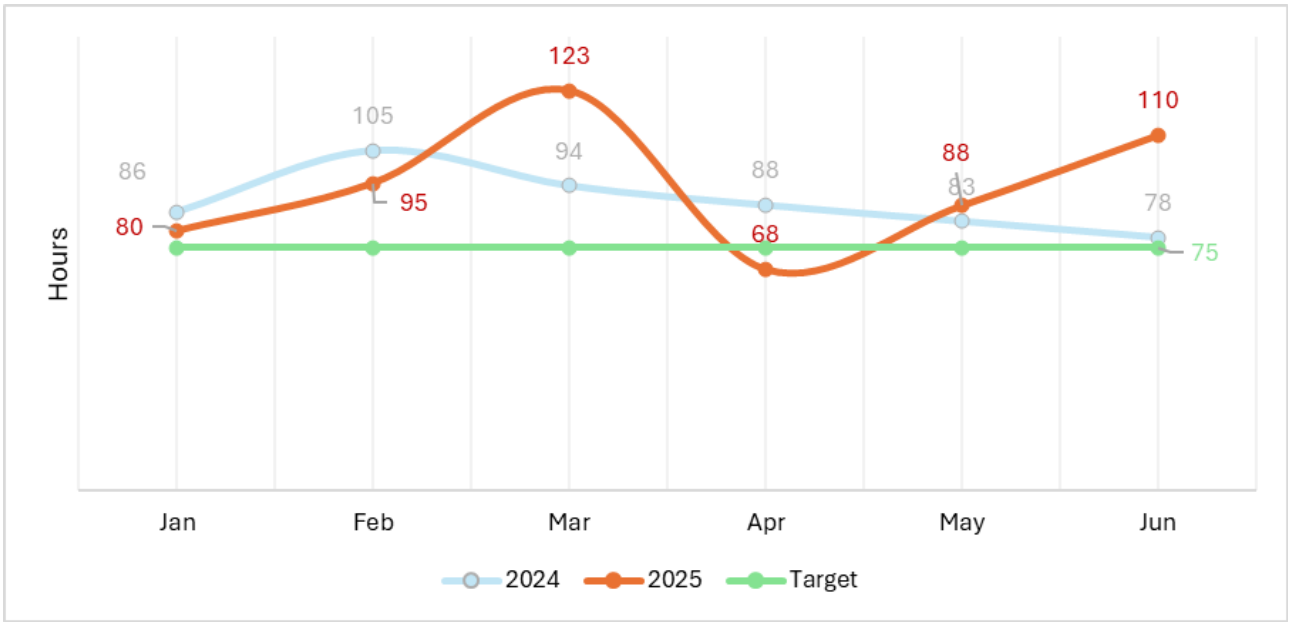
2.1 Ship turnaround time

Ship turnaround time measures the duration from when a ship enters the port area (marked by the fairway buoy) until its departure from the port area.

Ship turnaround time at the port of Mombasa for the period under review deteriorated to 94 hours from 89 hours for a corresponding period in 2024. Trends within the half year show increase in delays with the exception of the month of April which was within the 75-hour port charter target. The delays in ship turnaround time are partly attributed to an influx of vessels at the Port of Mombasa due to ongoing global shipping disruptions especially along the Red Sea route. Figure 2 compares the half-year performance of the Ship Turnaround Time indicator in 2024 and 2025.

Ship turnaround time at the port of Mombasa for the period under review deteriorated to 94 hours

Figure 2: Ship turnaround Time at the port of Mombasa in hours



Source: Kenya Ports Authority

2.2 Vessel waiting time before berth at the port of Mombasa

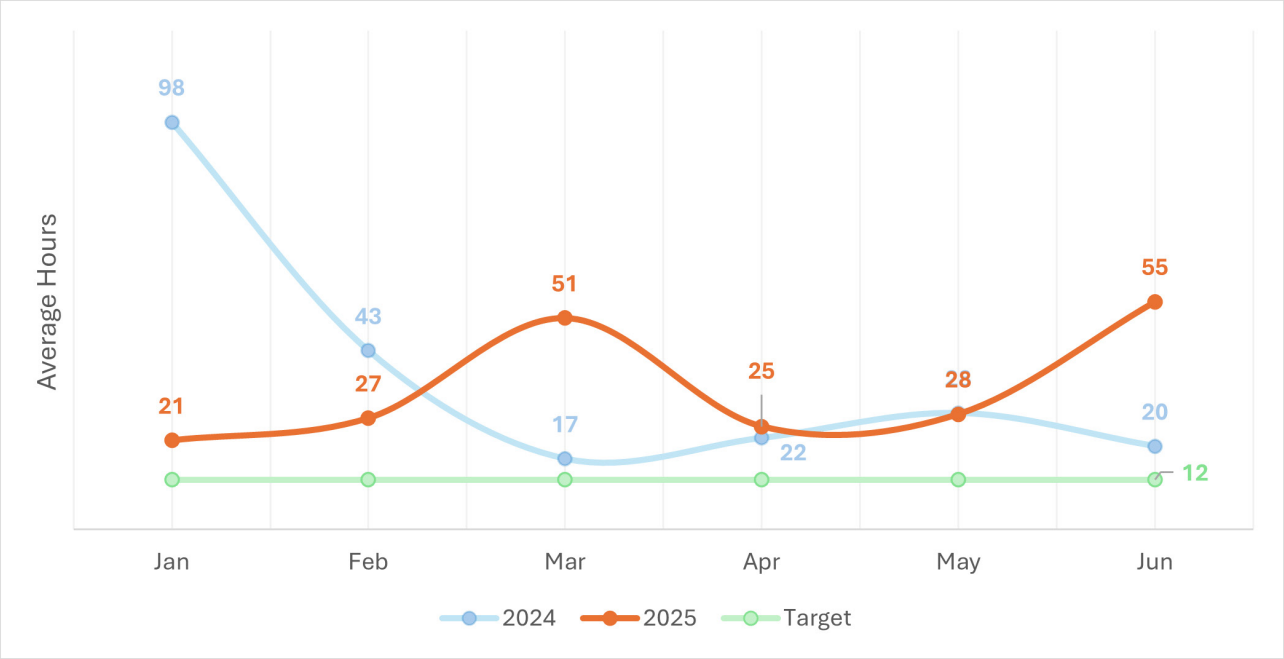
Vessel waiting time before berth for all the months was almost or more than double the set target of 12 hours

Vessel waiting time measures the duration from a ship's arrival at the fairway buoy until its first berthing, including any operational holds such as waiting at their own convenience.

In the period January to June 2025, vessel waiting time before berth for all the months was almost or more than double the set target of 12 hours, with the highest delays recorded in March and June, averaging above 50 hours.

To address inefficiencies and vessel delays, the port of Mombasa is implementing key operational improvements including the fixed berthing window, operationalization of three Berthing Aid Systems at Kipevu Oil Terminal, development of a Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMIS), and commencement of feasibility studies for redeveloping Berths 7–10. Figure 3 presents the vessel waiting time before berth at the port of Mombasa.

Figure 3: Vessel Waiting Time before Berth in hours at the port of Mombasa



Source: Kenya Ports Authority

3. Port Indicators

Port indicators are essential tools for measuring the performance, productivity, and efficiency of port operations, enabling continuous improvement through data-driven decision-making. This section presents an analysis of indicators on containerized cargo dwell time and cargo clearance time at the Port of Mombasa.

In 2025, the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) has prioritized modernization at the Port of Mombasa through automation, digital transformation, and major infrastructure investments aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, reducing delays, and supporting seamless trade integration. Key initiatives include upgrades to Terminal Operating Systems, acquisition of new cargo handling equipment, redevelopment of Berth No. 1 at Dongo Kundu, and road expansions.

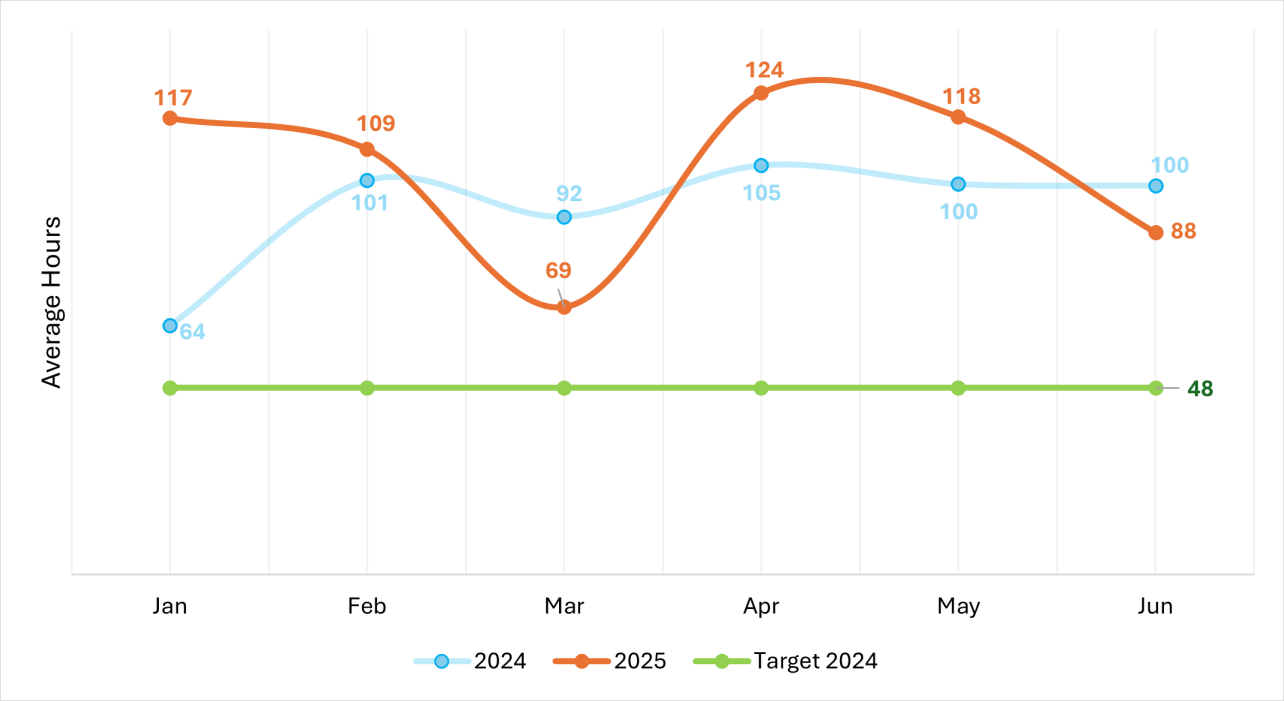
Containerized cargo dwell time averaged 104 hours compared to 94 hours in 2024

3.1 Containerized Cargo Dwell Time at the Port of Mombasa

Containerized Cargo Dwell Time is the measure of time that elapses from the time a container is offloaded at the port to the time it leaves the port premises.

In the first half of 2025, containerized cargo dwell time averaged 104 hours compared to 94 hours in 2024 surpassing the Port Charter target of 48 hours in 2024 and 2025. Key contributing factors included increased vessel traffic due to Red Sea crisis diversions around the Cape of Good Hope, delays in Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS) seal availability and capacity constraints during peak arrival periods.

Figure 4: Containerized Import Cargo Dwell Time at the Port of Mombasa



Source: Kenya Ports Authority

3.2 One Stop Centre Clearance Time at the port of Mombasa

The Integrated Customs Management System (iCMS) was implemented to address key operational challenges, including lengthy clearance times, subjective administration of trader applications, revenue leakages from misdeclaration, and low adoption of preclearance processes. By simplifying procedures and enabling pre-arrival processing, iCMS has significantly improved efficiency.

The system automates manifest submissions in real time to KWATOS, eliminating the delays of the previous Simba 2005/2014 system, which required multiple authentication steps and depended on vessel arrival. With iCMS, the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) can process goods declarations before ships dock, accelerating verification and reducing dwell times. The Mombasa Port and Northern Corridor Community Charter set a baseline clearance time of 2.3 hours in December 2018, measured from duty payment to customs approval under iCMS. The following table presents the latest clearance time performance under this system.

Table 3: Clearance time under iCMS

Performance Indicator	Unit of Measure	Baseline 2018	Jan-Jun 25
Average time to submit manifests (under iCMS)	Minutes	60	Instant
Average time elapsed from the time duties are paid by freight forwarders until the entry is passed or rejected by customs (under iCMS)	Hours	2.3	Instant
Automation of DPC process (Under iCMS)	Instant	Instant	Instant

Source: KRA data (iCMS)

38.9 Hrs

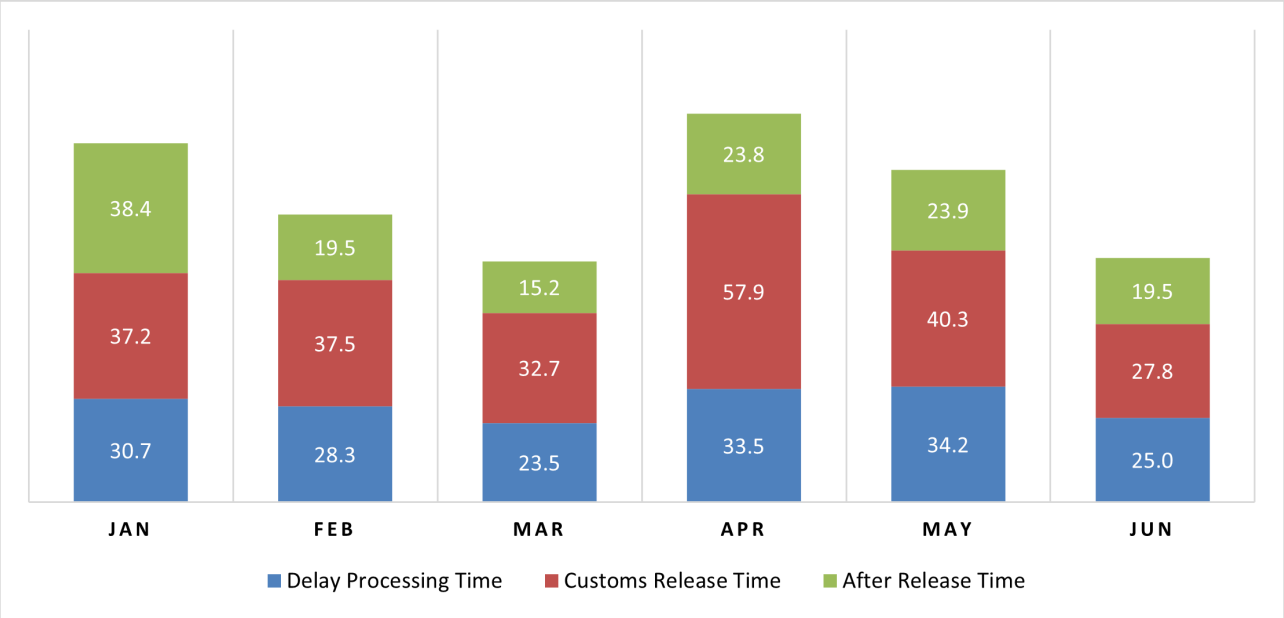
Delay Processing Time recorded 29.2 hours and Customs Release Time averaged 38.9 hours

3.3 Rwanda Revenue Authority Customs Release Time and Delays

The Transport Observatory monitors the Customs Release Time and Delay Processing for Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) at the port of Mombasa. Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) Delay Processing Time (Document Passing) is the average time from customs entry declaration/registration to when payment is made by the clearing agent while Customs Release Time is the average time between payment/acceptance of customs entry registration and the issuance of the customs release order. After release time is the average time between the issuance of the Customs release order and the physical exit of goods from the Port.

From the analysis, Delay Processing Time recorded 29.2 hours and Customs Release Time averaged 38.9 hours on in the reporting period. Figure 5 illustrates the average Customs Release Time, Delay Processing during the review period.

Figure 5: RRA Custom Release Time and Delay Processing Time in hours



Data Source: RRA 2025

4. Corridor Indicators

Corridor indicators are key metrics used to assess the efficiency and reliability of transport corridors, particularly in the movement of goods from ports through border crossing to final destinations. This encompasses actual travel time, time spent at various stop locations and border crossing time. The corridor indicators help identify bottlenecks and inefficiencies that may delay the movement of goods, impacting overall trade flow. This chapter presents an analysis of transit times and delays in the Northern Corridor Member States of Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda. Efficient transit times contribute to lower logistics costs, improved supply chain predictability, and greater attractiveness of the corridor for international trade.

4.1 Transit time in Kenya

Transit time on road in Kenya is measured as the time from when cargo enters or exits the port gates to the time truck lodges customs clearance documents at the entry/exit borders for entry or exit. Malaba and Busia borders are the main exit borders for Kenya using RECTS data.

4.1.1 Transit Time in Kenya from the Port to the Main Borders

The median transit time from Mombasa to Malaba and Mombasa to Busia during the six-month period between January to June of 2025, was 70 and 63 hours, respectively while the median transit times from Mombasa to Taita Taveta border was 23 hours. Table 4 presents the transit time along the Northern Corridor in Kenya.

Table 4: Transit time in Kenya from the port to the borders in 2025

Route	Median Hrs Jan – June	Distance (Km)	Km/Hr
Mombasa - Busia	63	941	14.9
Mombasa - Malaba	70	933	13.3
Mombasa - Taveta	23	265	11.5
Nairobi - Malaba	41	452	11.0

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2025

4.1.2 Transit time from Mombasa port to various destinations

From the RECTS data, the fastest routes from January to June were to Rwanda and South Sudan borders while routes to DRC borders were the slowest. Although there were delays along different routes, upgraded road transport infrastructure across different route sections of the Northern Corridor contributed to consistent transit times. The most prevalent causes of delays along the routes were personal reasons, border crossing, food and rest, weighbridge crossing, police stops, and company check points. Table 5 presents transit time in Kenya from the port to various destinations.

Table 5: Transit time from the port of Mombasa to various destinations

Route	Median Hrs Jan – June	Distance (Km)	Km/Hr
Mombasa - Goli	163	1454	8.9
Mombasa - Elegu	111	1430	12.9
Mombasa - Cyanika	146	1651	11.3
Mombasa - Gatuna	117	1601	13.7
Mombasa - Mirama Hills	101	1528	15.1
Mombasa - Vurra	191	1508	7.9
Mombasa - Mpondwe	159	1611	10.1
Mombasa - Ntoroko	167	1534	9.2
Mombasa - Padea	153	1470	9.6
Mombasa - Kigali	128	1682	13.1
Mombasa - Rubavu	153	1712	11.2
Mombasa - Rusizi	149	1930	13.0

Source: RECTS and RRA data Jan-June 2025

1.2 Transit time in Uganda

Transit time in Uganda is the time it takes to move cargo from border to border or between Kampala and borders between Uganda and other Northern Corridor Member States.

Compared to the distances covered, transit times in Uganda were relatively high. The slowest routes were Malaba–Kampala, Kampala–Ntoroko, and Kampala–Goli. These extended transit times are mainly due to frequent driver stops, border delays, operational inefficiencies, and administrative bottlenecks along the corridor, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Transit time in Uganda

Route	Median Hrs Jan – June	Distance (Km)	Km/Hr
Busia - Kampala	15	198	13.2
Busia - Elegu	26	524	20.2
Malaba - Kampala	44	236	5.4
Malaba - Elegu	27	520	19.3
Kampala - Cyanika	46	490	10.7
Kampala - Gatuna	38	432	11.4
Kampala - Mirama Hills	28	367	13.1
Kampala - Mpondwe	50	462	9.2
Kampala - Goli	48	387	8.1
Kampala - Elegu	30	457	15.2
Kampala - Ntoroko	52	373	7.2
Kampala - Oraba	46	523	11.4
Kampala - Vurra	38	443	11.7

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2025

5 Recommendations

i). Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) to accelerate the implementation of the Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMIS) to reduce vessel waiting times and ship turnaround time at the Port of Mombasa.

ii). KPA and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) to enhance cargo dwell time reduction strategies, including automation, faster allocation and ensuring adequate RECTS seals, implementation of vehicle appointment system and extended gate hours to decongest the port.

iii). Member states to work towards the implementation of smart gates at the border points to reduce truck border crossing time.

iv). Burundi and DRC to fully implement, and South Sudan to adopt, the Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS) for real-time cargo tracking improving transparency and determining transit times.

v). Northern Corridor Member States to implement policies and strategies that promote intraregional trade and increase exports, to reduce export of empty containers.

vi). NCTTCA to strengthen collaboration with Member States in monitoring and resolving existing/ emerging NTBs, to reduce delays along the corridor.

vii). Mombasa Port and Northern Corridor Community Charter (MPNCCC) to fasttrack review of indicators, baselines and targets to support efficient corridor performance monitoring.

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Biannual Report

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