



**NORTHERN CORRIDOR
TRANSPORT
OBSERVATORY**

RELIABLE PERFORMANCE DATA

Biannual Report

January to June 2026

Northern Corridor
Transport
Observatory



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1 VOLUME AND CAPACITY AT THE PORT OF MOMBASA

This section presents an analysis of cargo volumes and handling capacity at the Port of Mombasa and the Northern Corridor during the period January to June 2026. It examines trends in total port throughput, cargo composition, and distribution to the Northern Corridor Member States, while comparing performance with the corresponding period 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.

Cargo Throughput

22.27 Million MT

+5%

Imports

85%

+13%

Transshipment

893,269 MT

-57%

Total throughput at the Port of Mombasa grew by 5% to 22.27 million metric tonnes (MT) during the first half of 2026 compared to a similar period in 2025. The growth was driven primarily by imports, which rose by 2.13 million MT, accounting for 85% of total throughput. All cargo categories registered positive growth except exports and transshipments. Dry bulk recorded the highest increase, growing by 1.15 million MT, followed by containerized cargo that grew by 626,813 MT. Conversely, transshipment volumes declined sharply by 1.18 million MT as a result of designation of Lamu port as the main transshipment hub¹.

The growth in cargo throughput is largely attributable to growing general consumer demand within the Northern Corridor region and enhanced operational efficiency at the Port of Mombasa from investments in port infrastructure and equipment, and improved vessel and cargo handling processes. Cargo throughput at the port of Mombasa for the period January to June 2026 is presented in Table 1.

1

KPA-KRA press release January 2026



Table 1: Port Throughput in Metric Tonnes in January to June 2026

Type of Cargo	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total 2026	Total 2025	Volume Change	Growth %	% Share 2025	% Share 2026
Dry Bulk	877,987	901,081	1,006,141	799,421	786,016	819,467	5,190,113	4,036,357	1,153,756	29%	19%	23%
Liquid Bulk	897,017	722,941	940,720	996,627	1,126,442	918,638	5,602,385	5,506,243	96,142	2%	26%	25%
Conventional	183,935	241,674	215,993	240,987	246,274	293,491	1,422,354	1,202,777	219,577	18%	6%	6%
Containerized	1,338,212	1,547,392	1,617,627	1,531,363	1,503,767	1,536,295	9,074,656	8,447,843	626,813	7%	40%	41%
TOTAL	3,297,151	3,413,088	3,780,481	3,568,398	3,662,499	3,567,891	21,289,508	19,193,220	2,096,288	11%	90%	96%
Imports	2,976,804	3,008,209	3,319,281	3,142,908	3,271,909	3,119,074	18,838,185	16,704,701	2,133,484	13%	79%	85%
Exports	320,347	404,879	461,200	425,490	390,589	448,817	2,451,322	2,488,518	-37,196	-1%	12%	11%
Transshipment	194,987	106,844	159,450	127,238	195,923	108,827	893,269	2,071,922	-1,178,653	-57%	10%	4%
Restows	20,809	11,403	20,382	12,415	10,133	10,998	86,140	84,465	1,675	2%	0%	0%
Total Throughput	3,512,947	3,531,335	3,960,313	3,708,051	3,868,554	3,687,716	22,268,916	21,265,141	1,003,775	5%	100%	100%

Source: Kenya Ports Authority Jan-June 2026

1.2 Container Traffic in TEUs

Container Throughput

976,792 TEUS

-3.6%

Full import containers

97.6%

+11%

Full export containers

23.3%

-7.5%

Container throughput at the Port of Mombasa declined by 3.6% to 976,792 TEUs in the first half of 2026 from 1.01 million TEUs during the corresponding period in 2025. The decline was primarily driven by a sharp reduction in transshipment traffic. Overall, full container throughput decreased by 5.9% and accounted for 61.7% of total container traffic, while empty containers accounted for 38.3%, reflecting a continued trade imbalance. Despite the overall decrease, full import containers increased by 11%, indicating stronger import demand through the Port. In contrast, full export containers declined by 7.5%, while empty export containers increased by 12.3%. Notably, 76.7% of export containers were empty. Table 2 presents container traffic at the port of Mombasa.

Table 2: Container Traffic at the Port of Mombasa

		2025	2026	Volume Change	% Change	Proportion 2026
IMPORTS	Full	399,109	442,970	43,861	10.99%	97.63%
	Empty	13,027	10,750	-2,277	-17.48%	2.37%
	Total	412,136	453,720	41,584	10.09%	
EXPORTS	Full	108,121	99,991	-8,130	-7.52%	23.32%
	Empty	292,766	328,717	35,951	12.28%	76.68%
	Total	400,887	428,708	27,821	6.94%	
T/MENT	Full	127,537	54,165	-73,372	-57.53%	61.98%
	Empty	66,233	33,227	-33,006	-49.83%	38.02%
	Total	193,770	87,392	-106,378	-54.90%	
RESTOWS	Full	5,542	5,504	-38	-0.69%	78.94%
	Empty	614	1,468	854	139.09%	21.06%
	Total	6,156	6,972	816	13.26%	
TOTAL	Full	640,309	602,630	-37,679	-5.88%	61.69%
	Empty	372,640	374,162	1,522	0.41%	38.31%
	Total	1,012,949	976,792	-36,157	-3.57%	

Source: Kenya Ports Authority, 2025 and 2026

1.3 Transit Volume through the Port of Mombasa

Transit cargo through the Port of Mombasa increased by 13%, to record 8.34 million MT in the first half of 2026 from 7.37 million MT in the corresponding period in 2025. Uganda remained the leading transit destination, accounting for 71% of total transit throughput and recording the highest growth of 819,969 MT. This was followed by DRC, which increased by 295,205 MT, Rwanda (109,591 MT), and Burundi (32,319 MT). In contrast, transit cargo destined for South Sudan declined by 332,180 MT. This reduction was partly attributed to contraction of South Sudan economy and changes in the tax regime at the port of entry leading to some cargo owners initially declaring consignments to neighboring countries and subsequently requesting change of destination to South Sudan while the cargo is already in transit². Table 2 presents biannual transit cargo volume trends from 2024 to 2026.

Transit Throughput

8.34 million MT

+13%

Uganda's Share

71%

+819,969 MT

DRC

+295,205 MT

Rwanda

+109,591 MT

Burundi

+32,319 MT

South Sudan

-332,180 MT

Table 3: Transit Cargo Throughput at the Port of Mombasa Jan-Jun 2026

COUNTRY	2024	2025	2026	Volume Change	% Change	% Share 2026
BURUNDI	25,213	35,809	68,128	32,319	90%	1%
D.R.C.	885,138	810,838	1,106,043	295,205	36%	13%
RWANDA	314,364	365,582	475,173	109,591	30%	6%
SOUTH SUDAN	956,101	778,982	446,802	-332,180	-43%	5%
UGANDA	3,857,498	5,112,422	5,932,391	819,969	16%	71%
TANZANIA	236,458	243,036	277,010	33,974	14%	3%
ETHIOPIA	82,567	22,959	29,862	6,903	30%	0%
SOMALIA	97	446	573	127	28%	0%
OTHERS	1,327	2,813	1,807	-1,006	-36%	0%
TOTAL	6,358,763	7,372,887	8,337,789	964,902	13%	100%

Source: Kenya Ports Authority Jan - June 2024-2026



2 MARITIME INDICATORS

Maritime performance indicators provide a measure of the operational efficiency, productivity and competitiveness of a seaport by assessing how effectively vessels are received, serviced and dispatched. This chapter presents an analysis of the key maritime performance indicators at the Port of Mombasa for the period January to June 2026. The assessment focuses on ship turnaround time and vessel waiting time before berthing, highlighting trends in operational efficiency and comparing performance against corresponding periods and established targets where possible. The Port of Mombasa continues to implement measures to improve maritime performance, including Fixed Berthing Windows (FBWs) to guarantee vessel scheduling certainty, alongside infrastructure expansions at Berths 19B, 23, and 24, gate automation, modern equipment acquisitions, and the rollout of the Maritime Single Window System (MSWS) for streamlined information flow.

Delays during the review period were occasioned by a continued influx of vessels following Red Sea shipping disruptions which led to port congestion, occasional system downtimes and a backlog of empty containers that slowed cargo handling operations.

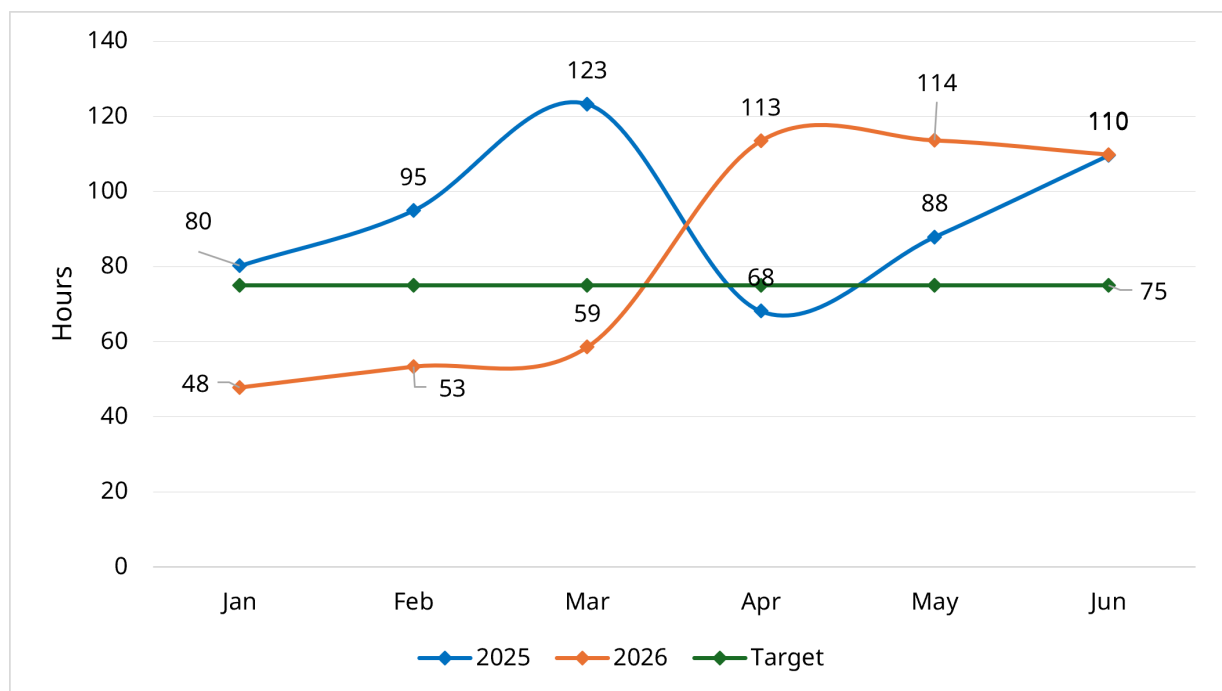
2.1 Ship Turnaround Time

Ship turnaround time measures the period from a vessel's arrival at the port area marked by the Fairway Buoy to its departure from the port area. It includes both the time spent receiving services at berth and any waiting time before docking or departure.

Ship turnaround time at the Port of Mombasa improved during the first half of 2026, averaging 83 hours compared to 94 hours in the corresponding period of 2025. Performance was relatively stable between January and March but increased from April, when turnaround time exceeded 110 hours and remained high through June. Figure 1 compares ship turnaround time at the Port of Mombasa during the first half of 2026 with the corresponding period in 2025.

Ship Turnaround Time
83 Hours
▼ **11** Hours (**12%** improvement)

Figure 1: 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 is the average time vessels spend waiting from arrival at the port area (demarcated by the Fairway Buoy) until they berth. Waiting times are influenced by berth availability, vessel scheduling, adverse weather, and operational constraints.

Vessel Waiting Time Before Berth

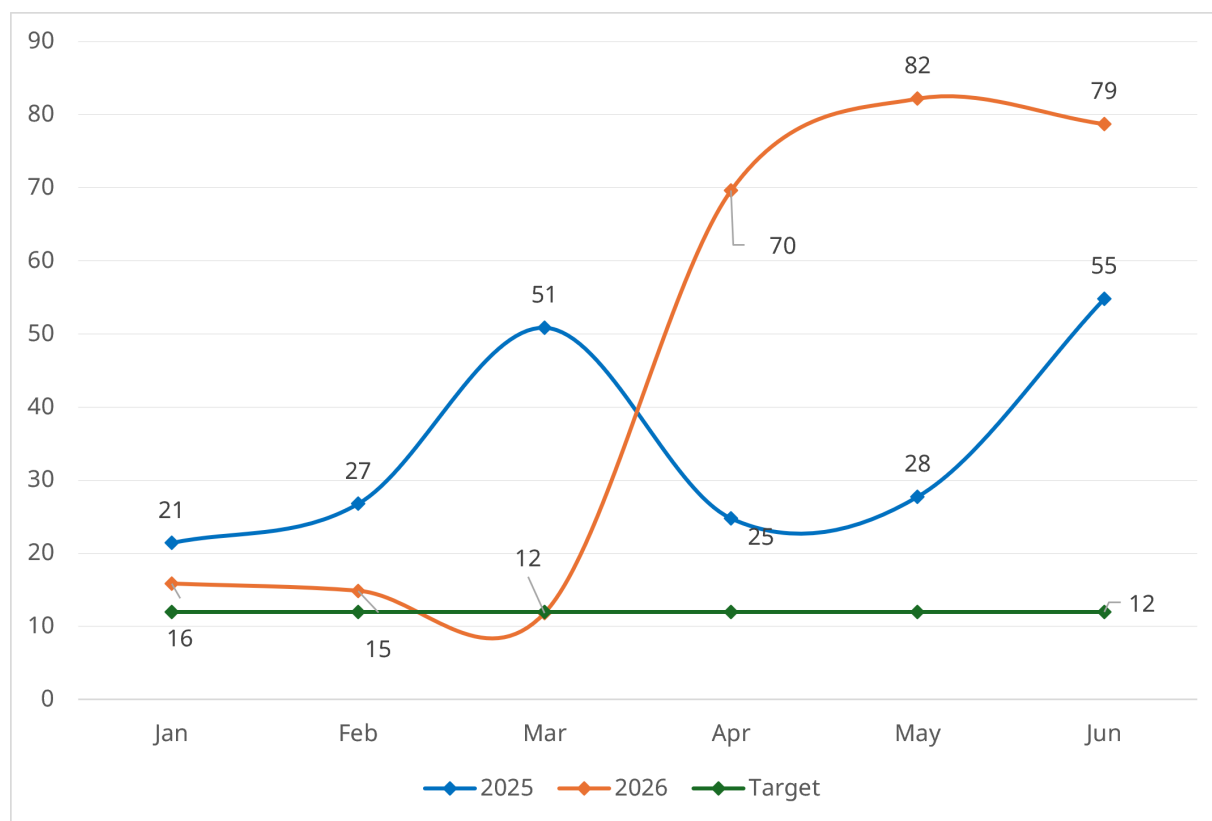
46 Hours

▲ 15 Hours

(48% increase)

Vessel waiting time before berth increased during the first half of 2026, averaging 46 hours (1.9 days) compared to 31 hours (1.3 days) during the corresponding period in 2025. Significant delays were recorded from April to June when waiting time increased to between 70 and 82 hours. Figure 2 presents the vessel waiting time before berth at the port of Mombasa.

Figure 2: Vessel Waiting Time before Berth in hours at the port of Mombasa



Source: Kenya Ports Authority



3 PORT INDICATORS

Port performance indicators provide an assessment of the efficiency, productivity and capacity of a port in facilitating cargo movement and supporting regional trade. This chapter analyses containerized import cargo dwell time and cargo clearance time and delays at the Port of Mombasa.

To enhance operational efficiency and port competitiveness, the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) continued implementing several modernization initiatives during 2025 and the first half of 2026. These included the introduction of Smart Gates at Gates 23 and 24 to expedite truck processing, upgrades to the Terminal Operating System (TOS) to improve operational coordination, establishment of a dedicated Empty Container Yard to decongest operational areas, enhanced coordination with revenue authorities to accelerate cargo clearance, acquisition of additional cargo handling equipment, and continued expansion of Berths 19B, 23 and 24 to increase vessel handling capacity, among other initiatives.

3.1 Containerized Import Cargo Dwell Time at the Port of Mombasa

Containerized import cargo dwell time measures the average period from when a container is offloaded from a vessel until it exits the port gates (excluding consignments held over 21 days due to compliance or legal issues).

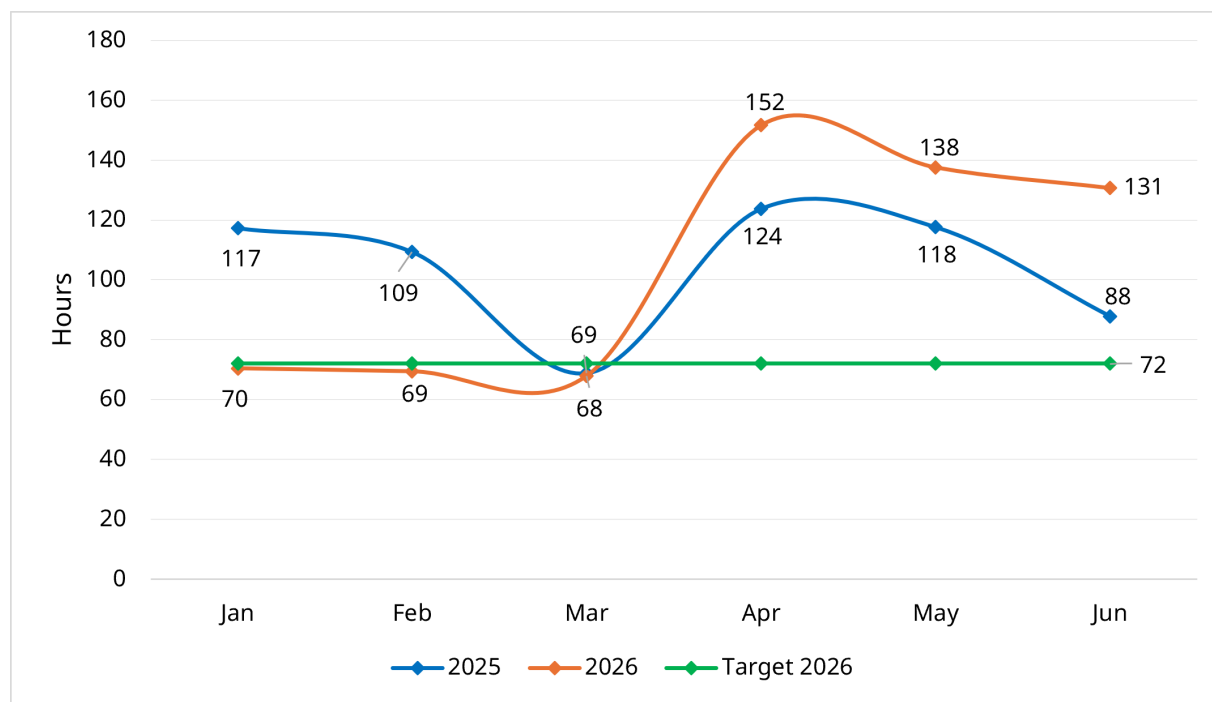
Import Container Dwell Time

105 Hours

▲ 1 Hour

During the first half of 2026, containerized import cargo dwell time averaged 105 hours compared to 104 hours in a similar period in 2025. Key contributing factors to the increase in dwell time included delays by shippers in collecting cargo after customs release, congestion-related gate access bottlenecks, and occasional downtime in cargo clearance systems.

Figure 3: Containerized Import Cargo Dwell Time at the Port of Mombasa



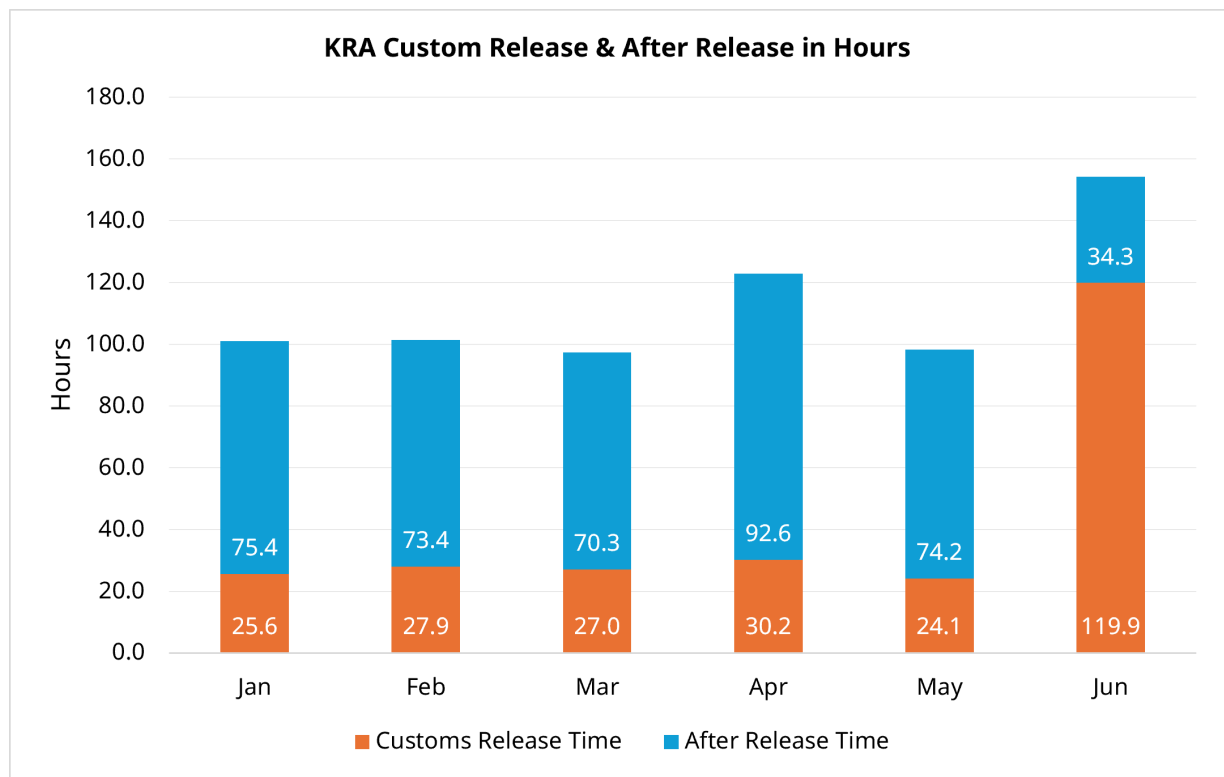
Source: Kenya Ports Authority

3.2 Custom Clearance Time and Delays at the Port of Mombasa

3.2.1 Kenya Revenue Authority Custom Release and After Release Time

The Kenya Revenue Authority tracks the custom release time by measuring the duration it takes to process and approve cargo declarations and other relevant cargo interveners (from acceptance to release), and the After Release time which is the duration it takes to remove cargo after it has been released by customs. Figure 4 presents time taken from Custom Release and After Release time at the Port of Mombasa from January to June 2026.

Figure 4: KRA Customs Release Times and Delays in hours



Data Source: KRA Jan-June 2026

Customs Release Time (January–May)

27 Hours

▲ **120** Hours in June

After Release Time (January–May)

70–93 Hours

▼ **34** Hours in June

In the first five months of 2026, Customs Release Time averaged 27 hours, with a drastic surge to 120 hours in June. In contrast, After Release Time averaged between 70 and 93 hours from January to May before improving significantly to 34 hours in June. Customs Release Time is mainly influenced by the completeness of documentation, cargo validation and payment processes, while After Release Time is affected by transporter availability, truck appointment systems, cargo evacuation efficiency, cargo free storage period, and congestion within the Port.

3.2.2 Rwanda Revenue Authority Customs Release Time and Delays

*Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) customs performance indicators at the Port of Mombasa include **Customs Release Time** (average time from customs entry registration to issuance of the release order), **Delay Processing Time** (average time from entry lodgment to payment by the clearing agent), and **After Release Time** (average time from release order issuance to physical exit of goods from the port).*

Delay Processing Time

37.9 Hours

Customs Release Time

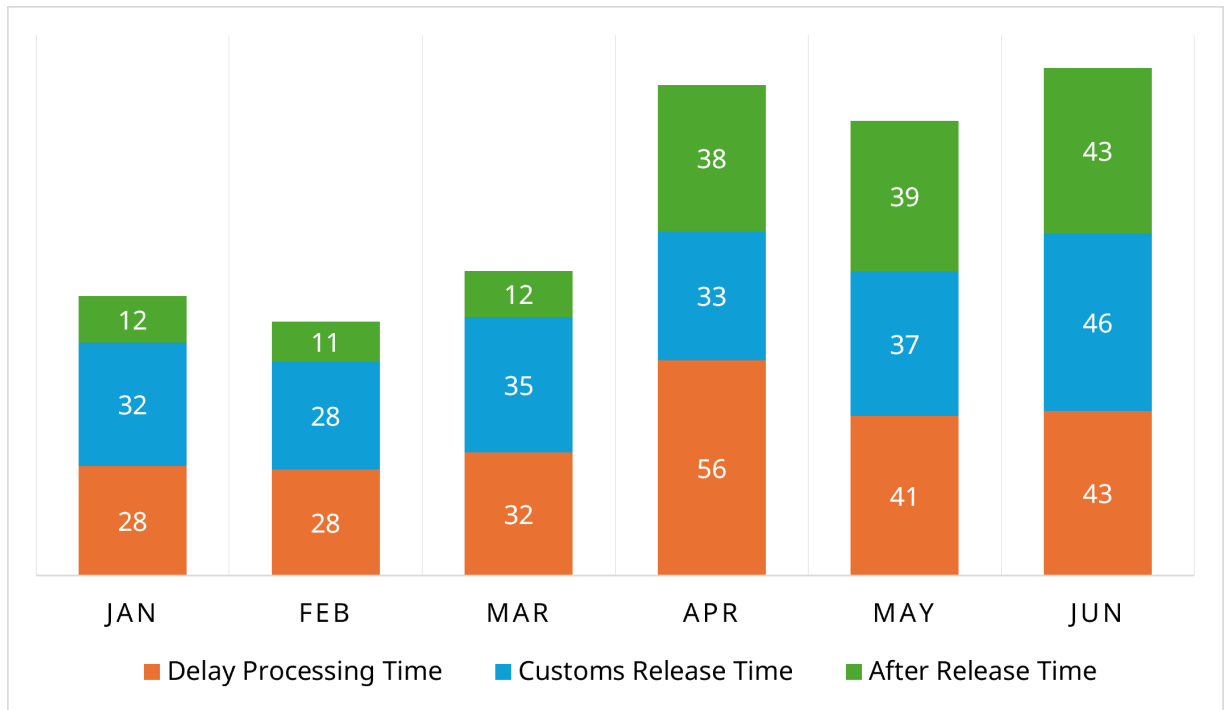
35.2 Hours

After Release Time

25.8 Hours

During the reporting period, RRA recorded 37.9 hours for Delay Processing Time, 35.2 hours for Customs Release Time, and 25.8 hours for After Release Time. While customs release and delay processing times remained consistent, delays after release doubled from April to June. Figure 5 presents the average Customs Release Time and Delays during the review period.

Figure 5: RRA Custom Release Time and Delays in hours



Data Source: RRA Jan-June 2026



4 CORRIDOR INDICATORS

Corridor indicators provide a measure of the efficiency and reliability of the Northern Corridor. They assess how effectively cargo moves from the Port of Mombasa through inland transport networks, border crossings and transit countries to its final destination. This chapter focuses on cargo transit time along selected Northern Corridor routes.

Transit time measures the total duration taken for cargo to move from the point of release at the Port of Mombasa to its destination, including both actual travel time and delays experienced at weighbridges, border posts, roadblocks, rest stops and other transit points. Transit time is influenced by infrastructure quality, vehicle condition, driver behaviour, traffic, efficiency of logistics coordination and Non-Tariff Barriers like roadblocks, among others. To provide a benchmark for performance monitoring, the NCTTCA has established a target average transit time of 60 hours for every 1,000 kilometers under normal operating conditions. This target assumes an average travel speed of 40 km/h, with drivers observing mandatory two-hour rest breaks after every four hours of driving and an eight-hour rest period after two driving shifts, consistent with safe driving practices.

4.1 Transit time in Kenya

Transit time on road in Kenya is measured as the time from origin/entry point to when cargo arrives at destination/ exits point.

4.1.1 Transit Time in Kenya to the Main Borders

The average transit time in Kenya showed delays of between half a day and 1.5 days compared to the target. In the upward direction, delays per 100km varied between 2 hours (Mombasa–Malaba) and 5 hours (Mombasa–Taveta). Downward direction recorded delays of 3 hours per 100 km. Deference in transit time between Mombasa–Malaba and Mombasa–Busia is majorly caused by the status of infrastructure between Mau-Summit and Busia. Overall, cargo experienced moderate to significant delays across all major routes. Table 4 presents the transit time along the Northern Corridor in Kenya.

Table 4: Transit time in Kenya to the borders in Jan-June 2026

Origin	Destination	Distance (Km)	Average Hrs Jan – June	Delays per 100Km(hrs)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)
Upward Direction					
Mombasa	Busia	949	92	4	57
Mombasa	Malaba	921	75	2	55
Mombasa	Taveta	267	29	5	16
ICD Nairobi	Busia	466	42	3	28
ICD Nairobi	Malaba	442	46	4	27
Downward Direction					
Malaba	Mombasa	921	84	3	55
Busia	Mombasa	949	81	3	57

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2026

4.1.2 Transit time from Kenya to various destinations

Based on RECTS data, transit times varied significantly. Routes to Rwanda (Mirama Hills and Katuna) were fastest recording the lowest delays, while ICD Nairobi to Kampala recorded the highest delays of 8 hours per 100km. Major causes included border procedures, weighbridge checks, rest breaks, police stops, and company checkpoints. All routes exceeded the 60-hour per 1,000 km target as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Transit time in Kenya from the port to various destinations

Origin	Destination	Distance	Average Hours	Delays per 100Km(hrs)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)
Mombasa	Elegu	1430	145	4	86
Mombasa	Mpondwe	1611	169	4	97
Mombasa	Kampala	1169	118	4	70
Mombasa	Katuna	1601	147	3	96
Mombasa	Mirama Hills	1537	119	2	92
ICD Nairobi	Elegu	949	101	5	57
ICD Nairobi	Katuna	1120	92	2	67
ICD Nairobi	Kampala	688	98	8	41
ICD Nairobi	Mirama Hills	1054	92	3	63

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2026

4.2 Transit time in Rwanda

Although the distances in Rwanda are relatively short, the transit times are relatively high. As shown in Table 6, Cyanika–Rubavu and Gatuna–Kigali recorded comparatively higher delays of 30 hours and 37 hours per 100km stretch respectively despite their shorter distance. Long-haul routes from Mombasa to Rusizi and Rubavu registered the longest transit durations with the lowest delays of 3 hours and 2 hours per 100km respectively.

Table 6: Transit time in Rwanda

Origin	Destination	Distance	Average Hours	Delays per 100Km(hrs)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)
Cyanika	Rubavu	79.6	28.3	30	5
Kagitumba	Rusumo	207	21.0	4	12
Kagitumba	Rusizi	498	39.3	2	30
Gatuna	Rusizi	422	40.0	3	25
Gatuna	Kigali	80	34.3	37	5
Mombasa	Kigali	1645	131.2	2	99
Mombasa	Rubavu	1706	136.4	2	102
Mombasa	Rusizi	1856	160.5	3	111

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2026



4.3 Transit time in Uganda

4.3.1 Transit time in Uganda from Kampala to the borders

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

Relative to distance, transit times from Kampala to various border points remained relatively high. The Kampala–Elegu and Kampala–Mirama Hills routes recorded the lowest delays, while the Kampala–Mpondwe (DRC) and Kampala–Malaba routes experienced the highest delays per 100 km, as presented in Table 7. These delays were primarily attributed to multiple drivers stops, border procedures, transporters operational issues, and administrative bottlenecks along the corridor.

Table 7: Transit time in Uganda from Kampala to the borders

Origin	Destination	Distance	Average Hours	Delays per 100Km(hrs)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)
Kampala	Gatuna	432	40	3	26
Kampala	Elegu	457	29	0	26
Kampala	Cyanika	490	42	3	29
Kampala	Vurra	443	35	2	26
Kampala	Mirama Hills	367	25	1	22
Kampala	Oraba	523	38	1	31
Kampala	Mpondwe	462	49	5	26
Kampala	Goli	387	34	3	23
Kampala	Malaba	236	24	4	26

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2026

4.3.2 Transit time in Uganda from borders to borders

During the January–June 2026 period, transit times in Uganda remained relatively high relative to distance travelled. High-traffic routes of Malaba–Kampala and Busia–Mpondwe recorded average transit times of 23 hours and 51 hours respectively. While most routes exceeded the NCTTCA target of 60 hours per 1,000 km, the Malaba–Mpondwe route posted the lowest delay at 1 hour per 100 km. Significant delays were observed on several corridors, notably Elegu–Mpondwe (6 hours per 100 km) and Katuna–Kampala (5 hours per 100 km), as presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Transit time in Uganda from borders to borders

Origin	Destination	Distance	Average Hours	Delays per 100Km(hrs)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)
Upward Direction					
Busia	Mpondwe	626	51	2	38
Busia	Katuna	657	56	3	39
Malaba	Kampala	217	23	5	13
Malaba	Mpondwe	565	42	1	34
Malaba	Katuna	664	67	4	40
Malaba	Elegu	515	53	4	31
Downward Direction					
Elegu	Malaba	515	51	4	31
Elegu	Kampala	436	48	5	26
Elegu	Mpondwe	659	81	6	40
Katuna	Busia	650	51	2	39
Katuna	Malaba	645	57	3	39
Katuna	Elegu	822	80	4	49
Katuna	Kampala	430	48	5	26
Katuna	Mombasa	1574	116	1	94
Katuna	Mpondwe	260	28	5	16

Source: RECTS Jan-June 2026

4.4 Weighbridge Performance

Weighbridge performance indicator assesses the average number of trucks weighed per day at the various weighbridges. Weighbridge performance is evaluated using three key indicators: weighbridge crossing time, average daily traffic, and compliance with prescribed vehicle weight limits.

4.4.1 Average Weighbridge Daily Traffic

The average daily traffic represents the mean number of vehicles weighed at each weighbridge over a 24-hour period. It serves as an indicator of cargo flow volumes along the Corridor and road capacity utilisation.

Weighbridge traffic along the Northern Corridor increased markedly in the half-year of 2026, reflecting stronger freight movement and higher corridor utilization. Athi River recorded the highest average daily traffic, rising from about 2900 trucks per day in January–June 2025 to about 8,115 in January–June 2026, while Mariakani remained consistently busy, increasing from about 3,221 to 3,615 trucks per day. Webuye registered the most substantial growth, with average daily traffic rising from about 1,085 to 4,239 trucks per day, indicating a sharp increase in transit cargo flows, while Gilgil remained relatively stable at about 1,041 trucks per day in 2026 compared to about 1,055 in 2025, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Weighbridge traffic through selected Kenyan weighbridges

Weighbridge	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Mariakani	2025	3045	2864	3401	2938	3397	3680
	2026	3675	3477	3892	2975	3790	3885
Athi River	2025	2580	3665	2487	2813	3378	2491
	2026	7704	7895	8548	9845	6798	7899
Gilgil	2025	1045	956	876	1288	976	1189
	2026	987	1826	1239	997	1144	1096
Webuye	2025	940	1492	786	-	-	1121
	2026	3897	4044	4135	4865	3987	4509

Source: KeNHA data January to June 2025 and 2026

4.4.2 Weighbridge Compliance

Weighbridge compliance indicator measures the percentage of trucks that comply with the gross vehicle weight and axle load limits, as stipulated in the East Africa Community Vehicle Load Control Act 2016 relative to the total number of trucks weighed.

Overloading remains a major contributor to premature road deterioration along the Corridor, and weighbridges play a critical enforcement role through penalties for bypassing stations and exceeding maximum axle load limits.

Weighbridge compliance levels along the Northern Corridor in Kenya remained consistently high during the period under review, averaging above 96% across all reported stations. Mariakani recorded the highest average compliance at 98.1%, closely followed by Athi River at 98.0%, while Webuye improved slightly from 95.5% in 2025 to

96.8% in 2026 despite much higher traffic volumes. Gilgil recorded a marginal increase from 96.6% to 97.1% over the same period, remaining within acceptable compliance levels, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Weighbridge compliance at the Kenyan weighbridges (Percentage)

Weighbridge	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Mariakani	2025	98.5	98.7	97.3	98.0	96.4	97.7
	2026	98.6	96.5	99.0	97.5	98.8	98.4
Athi River	2025	96.5	97.2	95.5	97.8	97.8	98.0
	2026	98.5	99.7	97.9	98.1	99.0	98.7
Gilgil	2025	97.4	95.3	98.5	94.7	97.3	96.6
	2026	98.5	95.8	97.0	98.6	96.7	97.9
Webuye	2025	94.7	97.3	96.4	95.9	97.8	94.9
	2026	95.8	97.3	98.0	96.4	94.8	96.5

Source: KeNHA data January to June 2025 and 2026.



**Northern Corridor
Transit and Transport
Coordination Authority**



1196 Links Road, Nyali

P.O. Box 34068-80118

Mombasa, Kenya



Telephone: +254 729 923574



E-mail: ttca@ttcanc.org

www.ttcanc.org