

NORTHERN CORRIDOR TRANSPORT OBSERVATORY

RELIABLE PERFORMANCE DATA

QUARTERLY REPORT

NORTHERN CORRIDOR TRANSPORT OBSERVATORY

July - September 2026

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1. Volume and Capacity

This section reviews cargo volumes handled through the Port of Mombasa during July–September 2026, focusing on total cargo throughput, container traffic and transit cargo by country of destination. Comparisons with the corresponding periods in previous years highlight changes in cargo composition and demand across the Northern Corridor hinterland.

The analysis covers cargo throughput, container traffic and transit cargo by country. The port handles containerized, dry bulk, liquid bulk and conventional cargo, serving Kenya and the wider Northern Corridor hinterland. The container cargo operations comprise two terminals with a combined annual handling capacity of 2.2 million TEUs.

Kenya Ports Authority (KPA is continuously advancing capacity and digital projects. During the quarter, the development of Berth 19B, with a planned addition of 300,000 TEUs of annual handling capacity was reported at 40% completion. Additionally, KPA is developing Dongo Kundu Free Port Berth 1, designed to handle both containerized and conventional cargo. Planned investments also include the rehabilitation of Berths 1–5, 7–10, and 11–14, as well as the development of Berth 23. These infrastructure projects alongside Terminal Operating System upgrades, gate automation, and acquisition of new handling equipment, continue to enhance port capacity and efficiency.

1.1 Cargo Throughput through the Mombasa Port

Cargo throughput represents the total amount of cargo (comprising break-bulk, liquid bulk, dry bulk, containerized, transit, and transshipment cargo) discharged and loaded at the Port of Mombasa over a given period.

Total cargo throughput during the quarter grew marginally by 0.8% reaching 11.6 million metric tonnes (MT), up from 11.5 million MT in a similar quarter in 2025. Imports increased by 8.0% to 9.7 million MT and exports by 11.6% to 1.4 million MT. Imports accounted for 83.7% of the total, exports 12.2%, transshipment 3.7% and restows 0.4%. Transshipment traffic declined by 64.0% to 427,617 tonnes.

In terms of cargo classes, dry bulk grew by 10.1%, conventional cargo by 9.2% and containerized cargo by 13.6%. However, liquid bulk declined by 1.0%. Table 1 presents cargo throughput at the port of Mombasa.

Table 1: Cargo throughput at the Port of Mombasa in metric tonnes

Cargo class	2024	2025	2026	Volume Change 2026–2025	Growth	% Share 2026
Non-Containerized						
Dry Bulk	1,520,375	2,177,701	2,397,032	219,331	10.07%	21.54%
Liquid Bulk	2,767,495	2,871,455	2,842,115	-29,340	-1.02%	25.54%
Conventional	564,683	766,740	837,607	70,867	9.24%	7.53%
Sub-Total	**4,852,553**	**5,815,896**	**6,076,754**	**260,858**	**4.49%**	**54.61%**
Containerized	5,433,546	4,445,093	5,051,559	606,466	13.64%	45.39%
Cargo-class subtotal	**10,286,099**	**10,260,989**	**11,128,313**	**867,324**	**8.45%**	**100.00%**
IMPORT/EXPORT						
Imports	7,593,423	8,993,224	9,713,598	720,374	8.01%	83.72%
Exports	1,324,985	1,267,765	1,414,714	146,949	11.59%	12.19%
Transshipment	1,334,068	1,188,654	427,617	-761,037	-64.03%	3.69%
Restows	33,622	61,062	46,843	-14,219	-23.29%	0.40%
TOTAL	**10,286,099**	**11,510,705**	**11,602,772**	**92,067**	**0.80%**	**100.00%**

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2024-2026



1.2 Container Traffic at the Port of Mombasa

Container traffic during the quarter ending September 2026 increased by 18.0% from 479,520 TEUs in a corresponding quarter in 2025 to 565,843 TEUs in 2026. Imports grew by 15.7% and exports by 23.3%. Containerized transshipment traffic increased by 7.1%, even though transshipment tonnage declined.

Full containers increased by 13.6% to 339,908 TEUs, while empty containers increased by 25.2% to 225,935 TEUs. Empty units represented 39.9% of total container movements and 77.4% of export TEUs as shown in Table 2. This shows a significant trade imbalance and the need to improve reverse logistics and promote exports.

Table 2: Container traffic through the Port of Mombasa in TEUs

Cargo class	Status	2024	2025	2026	Change	Growth
IMPORTS	Full	193,137	220,386	252,721	32,335	14.7%
	Empty	6,490	4,939	8,008	3,069	62.1%
	Total	**199,627**	**225,325**	**260,729**	**35,404**	**15.7%**
EXPORTS	Full	56,345	47,262	57,748	10,486	22.2%
	Empty	138,181	159,533	197,232	37,699	23.6%
	Total	**194,526**	**206,795**	**254,980**	**48,185**	**23.3%**
TRANSHIPMENT	Full	73,148	28,082	26,273	-1,809	-6.4%
	Empty	29,379	15,280	20,147	4,867	31.9%
	Total	**102,527**	**43,362**	**46,420**	**3,058**	**7.1%**
RWSTOWS	Full	2,124	3,384	3,166	-218	-6.4%
	Empty	222	654	548	-106	-16.2%
	Total	**2,346**	**4,038**	**3,714**	**-324**	**-8.0%**
TOTAL	**Full**	**324,754**	**299,114**	**339,908**	**40,794**	**13.6%**
	Empty	**174,272**	**180,406**	**225,935**	**45,529**	**25.2%**
	Total	**499,026**	**479,520**	**565,843**	**86,323**	**18.0%**

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2024-2025

1.3 Volume per Country of Destination through the Port of Mombasa

During the quarter under review, transit cargo increased by 7.4% to record 4.36 million MT. Uganda remained the largest transit market, with 2.89 million MT and a 66.3% share. Among the Northern Corridor Member States, DRC and Rwanda recorded growth of 30.2% and 35.8%, respectively; together contributing 227,768 tonnes of the increase. In contrast, South Sudan's transit cargo declined by 28.9% to 277,336 tonnes and Burundi's by 19.0% to 34,765 tonnes. Transit movements remained import-dominated, with imports recording 92.6% share as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Volume per Country of Destination through the Port of Mombasa

Country	2024	2025	2026	Change	Growth	Share 2026	Import share	Export share
Burundi	18,910	42,915	34,765	-8,150	-19.0%	0.8%	99.4%	0.7%
DRC	365,212	456,403	594,437	138,034	30.2%	13.6%	93.4%	6.6%
Rwanda	191,234	250,505	340,239	89,734	35.8%	7.8%	96.9%	3.1%
South Sudan	339,455	389,828	277,336	-112,492	-28.9%	6.4%	98.3%	1.7%
Uganda	2,438,791	2,850,489	2,892,414	41,925	1.5%	66.3%	91.7%	8.3%
Tanzania	110,825	130,325	160,447	30,122	23.1%	3.7%	83.6%	16.4%
Somalia	465	340	169	-171	-50.3%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Ethiopia	8,152	9,538	64,387	54,849	575.1%	1.5%	99.1%	0.9%
Others	1,380	438	546	108	24.7%	0.0%	97.1%	2.7%
TOTAL	**3,474,425**	**4,130,781**	**4,364,739**	**233,958**	**5.7%**	**100%**	**92.6%**	**7.4%**

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2024-2026



2 Maritime Indicators

This chapter assesses maritime performance at the Port of Mombasa during July–September 2026 through two indicators: vessel waiting time before berth and vessel turnaround time. Together, these indicators show how quickly vessels access berths and complete their port calls. Comparisons with corresponding periods in previous years highlight changes in service efficiency, while assessment against established targets identifies performance gaps.

Efforts to improve maritime efficiency at the Port of Mombasa include Fixed Berthing Windows (FBWs) to make vessel schedules more predictable, capacity expansion at Berths 19B, 23 and 24, gate automation and investment in modern cargo-handling equipment. The rollout of the Maritime Single Window System (MSWS) is intended to streamline information exchange and strengthen coordination among agencies involved in vessel clearance and port operations.

2.1 Vessel Waiting Time before Berth

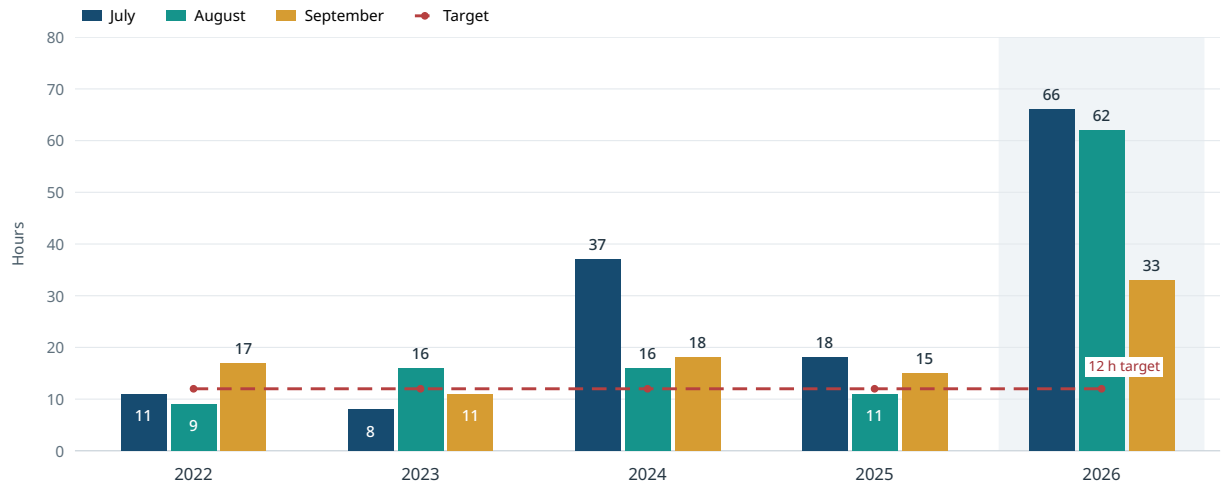
Vessel waiting time before berth is calculated from the time a vessel arrives at the fairway buoy to the time it reaches its first berth, including any waiting at the vessel's own convenience.

Figure 1 illustrates vessel waiting time before berth in the third quarter of 2026.

FIGURE 1

Average vessel waiting time before berth at the Port of Mombasa in hours

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2022-2026



Vessel waiting time before berth tripled in the quarter under review compared to the corresponding quarter in 2025. In comparison to the first half of 2026 which recorded an average of 46 hours, the quarter's performance shows an increase of 8 hours on average.

In July 2026, KPA commissioned a new Vessel Traffic Management and Information System with functions such as vessel tracking, radar surveillance, marine communications and weather monitoring to improve vessel planning and handling.

2.2 Vessel Turnaround Time at the Port of Mombasa

The Vessel Turnaround Time measures the duration from when a vessel enters the port area at the fairway buoy to the time it departs.

Figure 2 below shows the ship turnaround time performance in the period under review.

FIGURE 2

Average Ship Turnaround Time at the Port of Mombasa in hours

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2022-2026



Vessel turnaround time during the quarter under review recorded significant increase compared to the corresponding quarter in 2025. The quarter average of 107 hours shows a significant average delay of additional 23 hours compared to the performance in the first half of 2026 (83 hours).



3 Port Indicators

This chapter examines the efficiency of cargo clearance and evacuation at the Port of Mombasa through containerized import cargo dwell time, customs clearance time and associated delays. These indicators highlight operational bottlenecks affecting the timely movement of goods and the reliability of trade along the Northern Corridor.

3.1 Containerized Import Cargo Dwell Time at the Port of Mombasa

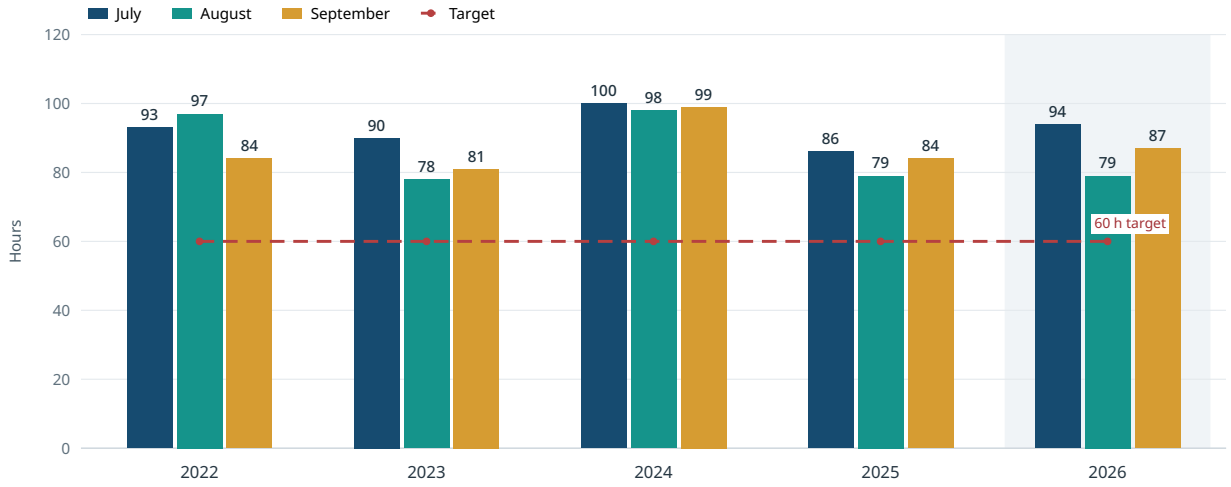
Dwell time measures the period between container discharge and exit from the port. The supplied methodology groups containers by month of arrival and excludes consignments held beyond 21 days for compliance or legal reasons; the indicator therefore does not describe all long-stay cargo.

Figure 3 presents import cargo dwell time indicator performance in the review period.

FIGURE 3

Average Containerized Import Cargo Dwell Time in Hours

Source: KPA DATA JUL-SEPT 2022-2026



Containerized Import Cargo Dwell time during the quarter increased marginally to 87 hours, compared with 83 hours in a similar period in 2025, an increase of 4.4%.

KPA has continued to modernize port infrastructure and processes to improve efficiency and competitiveness. Initiatives implemented and planned during the year include installation of smart gates at Gates 23 and 24 to speed up truck processing, Terminal Operating System upgrades to strengthen operational coordination, and a dedicated Empty Container Yard to ease congestion. These measures were complemented by closer coordination with revenue authorities on cargo clearance, acquisition of additional cargo-handling equipment and expansion of Berths 19B, 23 and 24 to increase vessel-handling capacity.

3.2 Customs Clearance Times at the Port of Mombasa

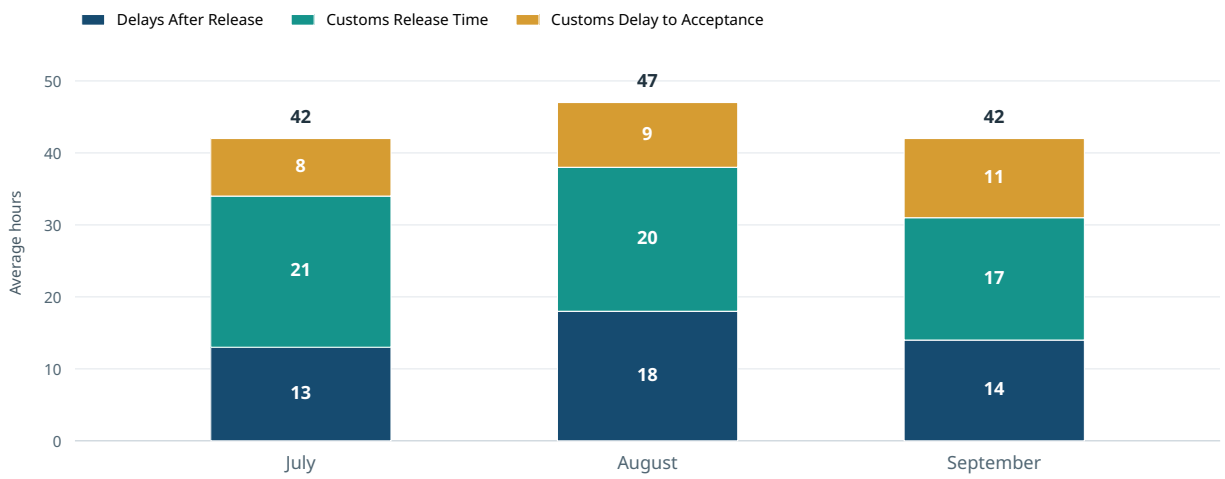
3.2.1 Kenya Revenue Authority Customs Time and Delays

The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) monitors customs release time and after-release time at the Port of Mombasa. Customs release time measures the period from acceptance of a cargo declaration to customs release, including processing and interventions by relevant agencies. After-release time measures the period between customs release and the cargo's physical exit from the port. Figure 4 presents these indicators for July–September 2026.

FIGURE 4

KRA Customs Release and Delays in Hours

Source: KRA DATA JUL-SEPT 2026



During the quarter, customs release time averaged 19 hours, customs delay to acceptance 9 hours and delays after release 15 hours. Delays after release reduced significantly compared to the first 2 quarters of 2026 where delays after release averaged between 70 and 93 hours.

Customs release time depends largely on complete documentation, timely cargo validation and payment of applicable charges. After-release time is influenced by transporter availability, truck scheduling, cargo evacuation arrangements, free storage periods and congestion within the port.

3.2.2 Rwanda Revenue Authority Customs Time and Delays

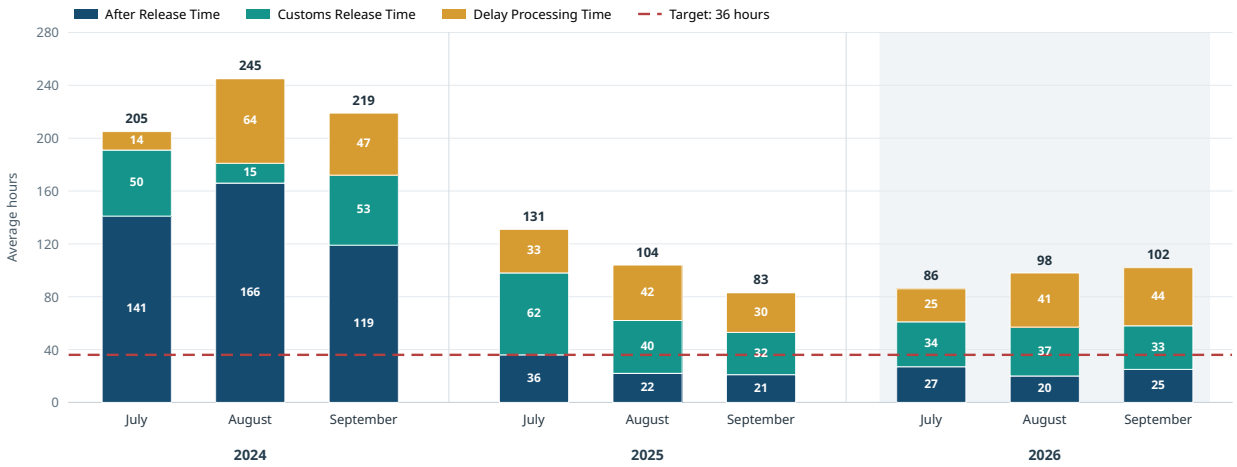
Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) customs performance indicators at the Port of Mombasa include Customs Release Time (average time from customs entry registration to issuance of the release order), Delay Processing Time (average time from entry lodgment to payment by the clearing agent), and After Release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

Figure 5 presents the average Customs Release Time and Delays during the review period.

FIGURE 5

RRA Customs Release and Delays in Hours

Source: RRA DATA JUL-SEPT 2024-2026



Customs release time improved from 45 hours in 2025 to 35 hours in 2026. Delays after release declined from 26 to 24 hours, while delay processing time increased from 35 to 37 hours.



4 Corridor Indicators

Corridor indicators assess the efficiency and reliability of cargo movement along the Northern Corridor, covering inland transport networks, border crossings and transit routes linking the Port of Mombasa to regional destinations. This chapter examines transit times on selected routes to identify performance gaps and delays affecting freight movement.

Transit time measures the elapsed period between the recorded origin and destination, including travel and stops at weighbridges, border posts, roadblocks, rest areas and other transit points. Performance is influenced by road conditions, vehicle reliability, driver behaviour, traffic congestion, logistics coordination and non-tariff barriers.

The NCTTCA applies a benchmark of 60 hours per 1,000 kilometres under normal operating conditions. This benchmark incorporates an assumed driving speed of 40 km/h and allowances for rest, including two-hour breaks after four hours of driving and an eight-hour rest period after two driving shifts.

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

Mombasa - Malaba recorded approximately 4 hours of delay per 100 km, compared to 2 hours on Mombasa - Busia. Table 4 presents the principal border movements within Kenya.

Table 4: Transit Time in Kenya to the Main Borders

Origin	Destination	Transit Time (hours)	Distance (km)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)	Delays per 100 km (hours)
Mombasa	Busia	79	949	57	2
Mombasa	Malaba	94	921	55	4

Source: URA RECTS DATA JUL-SEPT 2026.

Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km) = distance × 60/1,000, rounded to the nearest whole hour.

Delays per 100 km (hours) = (Transit Time (hours) - Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)) / (Distance (km)/100), rounded to the nearest whole hour.



4.1.2 Transit time from Kenya to various destinations

From Table 5, delays on routes from Mombasa ranged from approximately 2 to 8 hours per 100 km. Vurra recorded the highest delay intensity at 8 hours, followed by Goli and Paidha/ Padea at 6 hours each. Routes serving DRC border crossings generally experienced greater delays relative to distance, particularly Vurra, Goli and Paidha/Padea.

Table 5: Transit time from Kenya to various destinations

Origin	Destination	Transit Time (hours)	Distance (km)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)	Delays per 100 m (hours)
Mombasa	Cyanika	155	1,651	99	3
Mombasa	Elegu	140	1,430	86	4
Mombasa	Gatuna	134	1,601	96	2
Mombasa	Goli	176	1,465	88	6
Mombasa	Kampala	116	1,169	70	4
Mombasa	Mirama Hills	128	1,537	92	2
Mombasa	Mpondwe	168	1,611	97	4
Mombasa	Paidha/ Padea	177	1,487	89	6
Mombasa	Vurra	206	1,504	90	8

Source: URA RECTS DATA JULY – SEPT 2026.

4.2 Transit Time in Uganda

4.2.1 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.

Kampala - Goli and Kampala - Mpondwe recorded the highest delays, at approximately 12 hours per 100 km each. Paidha/Padea followed at 11 hours and Vurra at 10 hours, making the DRC border routes the slowest relative to distance.

Cyanika and Malaba each recorded approximately 9 hours of delay per 100 km, while Mirama Hills recorded 8 hours. Kampala to Busia and Elegu performed comparatively better, each recording 2 hours per 100 km as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Transit time in Uganda from Kampala to the borders

Origin	Destination	Transit Time (hours)	Distance (km)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)	Delays per 100 km (hours)
Kampala	Busia	15	198	12	2
Kampala	Cyanika	73	490	29	9
Kampala	Elegu	36	457	27	2
Kampala	Goli	68	387	23	12
Kampala	Malaba	32	217	13	9
Kampala	Mirama Hills	51	367	22	8
Kampala	Mpondwe	82	462	28	12
Kampala	Paidha/ Padea	70	412	25	11
Kampala	Vurra	71	443	27	10
Katuna	Kampala	50	430	26	6

Source: URA RECTS 2026

4.2.2 Transit time in Uganda from borders to borders

Relative to distances, Malaba - Goli recorded the highest delay at 11 hours, followed by Malaba - Mpondwe, Malaba - Paidha/Padea and Mpondwe - Goli at 10 hours each. Other routes recorded between 1 and 8 hours per 100 km. Katuna - Malaba and Mirama Hills - Busia performed best, with minimal or no delays. Table 7 presents transit time and delays in Uganda from border to border.

Table 7: Transit time in Uganda from borders to borders

Origin	Destination	Transit Time (hours)	Distance (km)	Target Transit Time (60hrs/1000km)	Delays per 100 km (hours)
Katuna	Busia	47	650	39	1
Katuna	Elegu	71	822	49	3
Katuna	Goli	123	897	54	8
Katuna	Malaba	40	645	39	0
Katuna	Mpondwe	26	260	16	4
Katuna	Paidha/ Padea	89	842	51	5
Katuna	Vurra	103	873	52	6
Malaba	Cyanika	71	707	42	4
Malaba	Elegu	36	515	31	1
Malaba	Goli	93	543	33	11
Malaba	Mpondwe	91	565	34	10
Malaba	Paidha/ Padea	103	629	38	10
Malaba	Vurra	80	584	35	8
Mirama Hills	Busia	34	566	34	0
Mirama Hills	Malaba	44	604	36	1
Mirama Hills	Mpondwe	30	276	17	5
Mpondwe	Goli	76	466	28	10
Mpondwe	Vurra	90	905	54	4

Source: URA RECTS 2026



4.3 Weighbridge Performance

Weighbridge performance is assessed through three indicators: crossing time, average daily truck traffic and compliance with prescribed vehicle weight limits. Together, these indicators measure processing efficiency, traffic volumes and adherence to vehicle loading requirements.

4.3.1 Average Weighbridge Daily Traffic

The average daily traffic represents the mean number of vehicles weighed at each weighbridge over a 24-hour period.

Table 8 shows that Mariakani recorded the highest daily traffic during July–September 2026. Reported volumes at Mariakani, Gilgil and Busia were substantially higher than in the corresponding months of 2025. Within the quarter, traffic declined in September at Mariakani, Gilgil and Webuye, while Busia recovered from its August decline.

Table 8: Average Weighbridge Daily Traffic in Kenya

Weighbridge	Year	July	August	September
Malaba	2024	2,879	3,110	2,968
	2025	2,695	2,501	2,720
	2026	9,066	9,184	7,954
Gilgil	2025	988	1,004	1,084
	2026	2,435	2,661	1,706
Busia	2024	596	466	568
	2025	857	761	760
	2026	2,703	2,439	2,598
Webuye	2026	2,241	2,207	2,005

Source: KeNHA DATA JULY- SEPT 2025 and 2026

4.3.2 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 contributes to premature road deterioration along the Corridor. Weighbridges help protect road infrastructure by monitoring compliance with vehicle weight limits and supporting enforcement against excess axle loads and weighbridge bypassing.

Table 9 indicates consistently high weight compliance across the four weighbridges, exceeding 97% throughout July–September 2026. Mariakani, Gilgil and Busia improved compared with the corresponding months of 2025. Mariakani maintained the highest compliance, despite a slight decline during the quarter, while Busia recorded steady improvement. Webuye also maintained high compliance.

Table 9: Weight compliance at select Kenyan weighbridges

Weighbridge	Year	July	August	September
Malaba	2024	96.03	98.78	98.56
	2025	95.76	96.02	97.87
	2026	99.87	99.23	99.08
Gilgil	2025	96.54	93.04	95.53
	2026	98.56	99.01	98.67
Busia	2024	90.11	91.05	89.29
	2025	96.72	94.32	95.74
	2026	97.78	97.84	98.34
Webuye	2026	98.56	99.47	98.01

Source: KeNHA DATA JUL – SEPT 2025 and 2026



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