



**NIGERIAASYCUDA++
PROJECT**

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
NIGERIA CUSTOMS SERVICE
DESTINATION INSPECTION PROJECT
DIRECT TRADER INPUT
DTI POLICY**

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**POLICY FOR THE USE OF ASYCUDA++
DIRECT TRADER INPUT (DTI)
Final Proposed Version – October 2007**

I. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the policy that the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) will operate in processing imports and exports documentation (declaration), where the goods are declared to Customs electronically by means of Direct Trader Input.

DTI is one of the most versatile tools that ASYCUDA++ System offers in the field of Trade Facilitation. This facility not only reduces Customs clearance time, but also enables the trade community to play a more significant role in the clearance of goods.

For Trade Facilitation, the use of DTI by shipping companies and declarants symbolizes the launch of a series of steps that NCS decided to take in quest of modernizing clearance procedures.

With the introduction of DTI, NCS will realize the following benefits:

- a. Reinforce customs controls, secure collection of revenue and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs operations;
- b. Strengthen the Government's capacity in the formulation and implementation of effective economic and fiscal policy through provision of accurate and timely data;
- c. Facilitate trade by significantly reducing the cost and time of clearance;
- d. Introduce e-Government as a tool for improving public service delivery.

II. DTI POLICY OBJECTIVES

Main objectives of the DTI Policy are:

- a. To define DTI actors and regulate the use of DTI;
- b. To ensure the trade community uses DTI in submitting declarations to Customs Offices;
- c. To minimize declarations processing errors;
- d. To standardize procedures and controls on declarations at all Customs Offices; and
- e. To encourage declarants to keep proper records of their declarations.

III. DEFINITIONS

There shall be two types of DTI operators:

a. DTI users:

DTI users are Carriers, Traders and Customs Agents, hereinafter also referred as Declarants, who wish to capture and submit electronic manifests or declarations directly from their premises.

b. DTI cafés

DTI cafés are private companies acting as encoding centres or online self-service to Carriers and Traders for the preparation and submission of manifests and declarations.

IV. PURPOSE OF DTI Cafés

DTI cafés, which may also be referred as “Data Entry Bureaus”, shall be assisting Agents in keying-in declarations.

DTI cafés will provide two main services:

- a. Full service on data capture of declarations on behalf of the Agent; and
- b. Self service facility offering declarants direct access to Customs’ Information System.

The system is provided with front-end credibility checks (local checks), which means that during data capturing at DTI Cafes, declarations shall only be rejected whenever the information is not complete or where HS and other relevant codes are not valid. It shall consequently be the Agent’s responsibility to identify and solve all errors or missing data, and fulfil all requirements for completion of declarations.

DTI Cafés shall be managed by the private sector. Data entry personnel shall be trained and certified as shown further in this Policy.

V. ORGANIZATION OF DTI Cafés

It is a requirement that DTI Cafés have solid administration structures. For the purpose of this Policy, the structure shall comprise:

a. *Café Manager.*

In charge of: i) acting as intermediary between the DTI Café and Customs; ii) monitoring and collate daily statistics on the number of declarations processed; and iii) being responsible for maintaining DTI cafés in conformity with best practices

b. *System Administrator.*

In charge of: i) resolving all technical, hardware and system issues; ii) acting as intermediate between the DTI cafés and Customs Technical Support partner; and iii) maintaining the ASYCUDA modules up-to-date

c. *Data Entry/Customer Care staff.*

They shall: i) be a point of contact for users; ii) resolve errors; iii) assist users with the use of ASYCUDA; and iv) advice users on DTI Café policies and procedures

V. PROCEDURES USING DTI

DTI will be set up to allow Agents operating before and after arrival of goods, as it is established in the Customs Clearance Procedures (see Annex #).

VI. ROLE OF DTI USERS

The implementation of DTI comes with important changes in the role of Stakeholders as follows:

a. Carriers

With the implementation of this Policy all transport companies shall use DTI facilities from their premises or from DTI cafés. All processes related to the Manifest shall be determined in the Manifest Procedure (see Annex d.).

b. Agents / Declarants

With the implementation of this Policy, all declarants shall use one of the following valid options:

- i) DTI at their own premises; or
- ii) DTI Cafés.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation of this Policy will be gradual and progressive as required conditions are met. In addition, as International Trade may change, guidelines and procedures may be appropriately amended or even replaced, always aimed at responding to new challenges.

VIII. TRAINING

All DTI users will be given the necessary training to acquire knowledge and develop skills to submit declarations via DTI.

Training shall consequently cover the following subjects:

- a. An overview of DTI-based clearing processes
- b. An overview of the DTI System features
- c. Use of the DTI System to partially fill and save a declaration locally
- d. Retrieval and amendment of a locally saved declaration
- e. Use of the DTI System to electronically submit a declaration
- f. Checking the progress of a declaration

Customs shall provide "User Guides" to effectively make use of the system. The User Guide shall be designed to provide support for users in all aspects of the day-to-day tasks.

Induction training shall be given to all new users in order to familiarize with the system (see XIV. Costs and Fees)

On successful completion of training, an assessment of skills shall be carried out.

Successful attendees will be issued a 'Certificate of Proficiency' and a user name/password. A digital photograph together with the user name of the declarant shall be saved on the system for identification purposes.

Training courses are designed to cover, within four days (24 working hours in total), the following subjects:

- a. Six hours on the use of Computers.
- b. Six hours on Customs Clearance Procedures
- c. Twelve hours on DTI (ASYCUDA++)

Attendees representing DTI Café Operators shall be computer literate. Attendees representing Agents shall be computer literates and Customs Licence Agents.

Trainers shall be Customs' ASYCUDA certified trainers. During the initial stage, training will be conducted by UNCTAD trainers.

IX. REGISTRATION

Before Agents and Private DTI Cafés are registered to benefit from DTI, they shall be required to successfully attend DTI training. In addition, they shall also obtain the approval to operate as DTI Café Operator. Customs will also validate the installation of equipment and proper connectivity with Customs Information System. Finally the Café Operators will sign undertaking to use the system in line with best practices.

All proposed user names per Agents' company as well as per DTI Cafés, will be submitted to Customs. Likewise DTI Cafes will submit the number of branches.

The following procedure will apply for the appointment and registration of DTI operators:

- a. Application process

Applicants shall send a Letter of Intention, addressed to the Comptroller General of Customs. The letter shall include the following information:

For DTI Cafés operators:

- i. The name and address of the company;

- ii. The name of the café manager;
- iii. The mane and number of Data Entry and customer care staff;
- b. Approval process

Customs shall issue a Final Approval which shall be in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by both parties.

X. CONNECTIVITY AND OTHER TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Technical requirements are aimed at ensuring standardization and regular operations.

On behalf of Customs, the NCS Technical Support Partner shall be dealing with all technical and network security issues.

The DTI operators shall meet the following technical requirements:

- a. Connection to Customs’ Information System
 - DTI operator shall provide and support appropriate means to be connected to the NCS information system. Several types of connections may be proposed, depending on the location and foreseen volume of the DTI Operator, i.e.:
 - i. Internet access with a static IP address
 - ii. Internet access through a Virtual Private Network
 - iii. LAN access via radio link
 - iv. LAN access via VSAT
 - v. LAN access via cable when distance to a particular Customs Area Command.
- b. Software to access NCS Information System
 - For security reasons, DTI operators shall access the system solely using programs and tools provided by Customs.
- c. Hardware to access NCS Information System

Workstation minimum specifications

Intel® Pentium® 4, minimum 2.4 GHz (or equivalent performance).
 Min 1 GB RAM capacity, expandable to 2GB.
 Min 60 GB internal storage HDD Enhanced IDE.
 High performance 128MB integrated graphics certified for Java™ working environment.
 CD-ROM
 Keyboard 102-key, adapted for Arabic fonts
 Optical Mouse system and Mouse pad
 10/100 10 Base-T Ethernet Card

I/O ports: min PS2 mouse, PS2 keyboard, 2 USB, CRT, serial, parallel, audio in, audio out, microphone
17" Colour Monitor.

Note: *The hardware system must be certified on the OS and RDBMS environments.*

d. NCS access to operators' DTI related systems

DTI operators shall provide free access to relevant Customs information held in their offices (and to those other computer systems which are linked to the DTI system and on which the data is held and which can provide automatic status interrogation facilities for Customs)

e. Security and Internal Control Systems

DTI operator shall comply with Customs standards in regards to internal controls which shall be sufficient to prevent abuse, fraud or damage.

There must be effective password and other security controls.

DTI operators shall also supply all levels of access security deemed necessary by Customs. The system shall be documented and the documentation kept up to date.

Customs shall be informed in advance about any system change affecting customs requirements

XI. OTHER ISSUES

a. Fallback operation

Customs will issue all necessary fallback procedures to be followed when either ASYCUDA++ and/or DTI systems become unavailable.

b. Audit

Facilities for Customs or other national authorities to audit DTI systems shall be made available when required.

c. Informing DTI users of latest developments

DTI systems' are normally updated through the replication mechanism of ASYCUDA++. However, there will always be a need to disseminate some information regarding the use of the system to perform newly added features. In order to comply with this, there shall be a central unit at Customs Headquarters.

Agents' and Private DTI Cafés' are responsible for the maintenance and smooth operation of their equipment.

d. Maintaining accessibility to Customs servers

Customs Technical Support Partner will ensure that capabilities of the telecommunication at Customs end are up to the level at which the DTI service is provided in an optimum manner.

XII. MONITORING

a. DTI operators

The use of the system shall be limited to users who are willing to abide by the rules set by Customs in order to ensure that the ASYCUDA++ System continues to deliver the desired results.

Users who attempt to abuse the system shall be identified and adequately sanctioned.

The Customs IT System has sufficient reporting capabilities, which will help Customs to monitor the behaviour of Agents and Private DTI Cafés as far as using the DTI part of the system.

b. Complaints

The following procedure shall be followed whenever a user is dissatisfied with any of the service(s) received at a DTI Café:

- i. Complaints shall be put in writing to be examined initially by the DTI Café administrative staff. They shall try to resolve the issues directly and quickly. A response should be made to the complainant in the shortest possible period;
- ii. If the above does not resolve the matter, the complaint can be escalated to the DTI Café Manager for consideration;
- iii. Complaints that are not resolved by the Manager shall be referred to Customs who shall use appropriate means to make sure the DTI Cafe is carrying out its published policies fairly and efficiently.

XIII. COSTS AND FEES

The DTI services shall be financed in order to ensure that they are provided in a satisfactory and timely manner. Costs related to the implementation of DTI are described below.

a. Fees

Some fees shall be steadily collected from the users. The sources of such fees are described below:



- i. Training fees: Agents and data capture staff of DTI café operators shall follow a four-day training session delivered by Customs certified ASYCUDA trainers.
- ii. Connectivity fee: DTI direct users and DTI café operators must be connected to the Customs Telecommunication network in order to perform DTI activities. DTI users and DTI café operators shall contact the Customs System Technical Support Partner, for further details.
- iii. Use of DTI Café' services: Private DTI Cafés shall determine how much their clients shall be charged for the various services provided. In order to regulate prices proposed by DTI Cafés, Customs may define, at a later stage, price limits for various services.

b. Customs' approved folders

Agents shall use Customs-approved folders for placing the ASYCUDA print-out of the declaration and all attached documents in a tidy and orderly manner. A folder will be needed per transaction. Such folders are meant to protect documents from getting lost and to allow a secure filing method.

The ASYCUDA print out declaration shall replace the pre-printed declaration (manual SGD).

XIV. LIST OF ANNEXES

- a. Memorandum of Understanding
- b. Additional technical specifications
- c. DTI form
- d. Customs Procedures