Customs Accredited Client Questions

Introduction
The MCC, a US government donor agency, is currently conducting an evaluation of the Zambia Threshold Project (ZTP) which it funded from 2006-2008. One objective of the ZTP was to reduce congestion and waiting times at the borders. The Customs Accredited Client Program (CACP) was created during the program as one way to speed customs processing. ZRA has shared a list of the companies enrolled in the CACP and your company is included. We would like to ask you some questions about your experience with the CACP to help us understand whether or not the program has been of benefit. Please note that the answers are confidential and will be reported in an aggregated manner to inform the evaluation as whole. We appreciate your time and candid responses to the questions.

Part I. General Background
1. Name of firm: ____________________________________________________
2. Type of Industry: __________________________________________________
3. Value of Exports (annual): __________________________________________
4. Value of Imports (annual): __________________________________________
5. Primary border crossing(s) used (tick all that apply):
   __ Chirundu
   __ Kazungula
   __ Nakonde
   __ Lusaka International Airport
   __ Other [______________________________]
6. Primary destination/source country:
   __ SADC
   __ Other African countries
   __ Europe
   __ Asia
   __ Other

Part II. Enrollment Procedures
7. Have you been invited to enroll in the Customs Accredited Client Program?
   __ yes, my company is currently enrolled
   __ was invited but process hasn’t been completed
   __ was enrolled but currently suspended
8. What year was your firm enrolled in the Customs Accredited Client program? 200_

9. Would you describe the enrollment process as:
   __ efficient __ acceptable __ difficult ___ no opinion
   Please explain: ___________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

10. Did Customs perform an audit of your company at the time you enrolled?
    __ yes __ no __ performed audit after we enrolled __ don’t know

11. Did ZRA clearly communicate the requirements of the audit? __ yes __ no __ don’t know

12. Did your audit consist of (tick all that apply):
    __ physical inspection/visit by customs agent
    __ paperwork and provision of financial information
    __ other [Describe:_______________________________________________________]

13. How many days did it take to comply with the **application** process to join the Customs Accredited Client program? ___ days ___ months __ don’t know ___ don’t remember

14. How many days did it take to comply with the **audit** required to join the Customs Accredited Client program? ___ days ___ months ___ still not concluded

15. How many days did it take after the audit for ZRA to give you **clearance** to join the Accredited Economic Operator program? ___ days ___ months ___ still not have received clearance

16. Did you have to pay a fee for the enrollment process? __ yes  __ no
   If so, what was the amount? ________________________________

17. Has your company been suspended from the program at any point since enrollment? __ yes__ no  [If no, advance to question 21]
18. If yes, were the reasons communicated clearly? __ yes __ no
   __ Financial controls were considered inadequate
   __ Inventory controls were considered inadequate
   __ Past problems with customs payments
   __ Other [Describe: ______________________________]

19. Have you been given clear instructions on what you need to do to re-enroll? __ yes __ no

20. Will you try to re-enroll? __ yes __ no ___ not decided
   Please explain: __________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

Part III. Impact of Preferential Treatment
21. Before the CACP, how many days did it take for your cargo to clear the border on average: _____ days ___ weeks ___ don’t know

22. Since the CACP, how many days does it take for your cargo to clear the border on average: _____ days ___ weeks ___ don’t know

23. Compared to before you were enrolled in the program, is your cargo subject to:
   __ Fewer inspections
   __ Same number of inspections
   __ More inspections
   __ Don’t know

24. How do you pay your VAT and customs duties:
   __ Cash at the border
   __ Line of credit from ZRA
   __ Other (Describe: ________________________________________________)

25. Have you experienced problems with the payments of your VAT and customs duties?
   __ yes, more than once a month
   __ yes, but rarely
   __ no problems (skip to Question 28)
26. If yes, what is the cause of the problem?
   ___ We pay the duties late
   ___ We pay on time but Bank of Zambia does not post the payment on time
   ___ Customs does not register the payment in their system even though it was paid on time
   ___ Other [Describe:____________________________________________________]

27. If yes, has this slowed the clearance of goods through customs?
   ___ yes ___ no ___ don’t know.
   If yes, how long are the delays on average _____ days ___ weeks

Comment: ___________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________

28. Has joining the program benefited your company?
   ___ Very much ___ Somewhat ___ no ___ don’t know

Please explain your response: ______________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________

Part IV. Efficiency and Transparency at the Borders

29. Are you familiar with the Zambia Threshold Program? ___ yes ___ no [if no, skip to question 31]

30. If yes, were the activities relevant to reducing congestion and corruption at the borders?
   ___ very relevant ___ moderately relevant ___ relevant ___ not very relevant ___ irrelevant

Please explain: ___________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________

31. Since 2006 has congestion at the border:
   ___ improved ___ stayed the same ___ gotten worse ___ don’t know

Please explain: ___________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
               ____________________________________________________________________________
32. Since 2006 has corruption at the border:  
   __ improved __ stayed the same __ gotten worse ___ don’t know  
Please explain: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

33. Since 2006 has customer service at the border:  
   __ improved __ stayed the same __ gotten worse ___ don’t know  
Please explain: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

34. Since 2006 have fees at the border:  
   __ increased __ stayed the same __ decreased ___ don’t know  
Please explain: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

35. Some government offices have a poor reputation of requiring extra payment (speed money) to obtain service. Do you think ZRA suffers from this problem?  
   _____ a great deal _____ sometimes _____ never _____ no opinion  
Please explain: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

36. Some border crossings have a poor reputation of demanding extra payments during physical inspections. Do you think your firm is impacted by from this problem?  
   _____ a great deal _____ sometimes _____ never _____ no opinion  
Please explain: ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

37. Do you transship goods across Zambia? __ yes __ no (skip to question 39).

38. If you trans-ship goods, do you find that repayment of bonds is:  
   __ Faster than before  
   __ Same as before  
   __ Slower than before  
   __ Don’t know
39. Are you familiar with ZRA’s Customer Standards Charter for processing time at the border and refunds of VAT? __ yes __ no (skip to Question 41)

40. If yes, do you think the Charter has been helpful to you in better understanding your rights as a client? __ yes __ no __ no opinion

41. Have you ever contacted ZRA to complain about: (check all that apply)
    __ Delays in customs clearance
    __ Demand for speed money or other irregular payment
    __ Delays in posting the VAT and duties payments
    __ Delays in repayment of your bond or VAT refund
    __ Other (Describe: ________________________________________________)
    __ No. Never contacted them

42. If you did contact them, were they responsive to your concern? __ yes __ no
    __ They contacted/met me to discuss the problem
    __ The problem was resolved although they didn’t contact me
    __ Other [_______________________________________________________]

Comment: ___________________________________________________________________________
    __________________________________________________________________________
    __________________________________________________________________________

43. Do you have additional comments you would like to share? Please explain:
    _______________________________________________________________________________
    _______________________________________________________________________________
    _______________________________________________________________________________