

GHANA SHIPPERS' AUTHORITY

# Annual Report

20  
23

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## ► Organisational Background

The Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) was established in 1974 under the Ghana Shippers' Authority Act (NRCD 254), marking a significant stride towards empowering and advocating for the interests of shippers in Ghana. Over the years, GSA has played a pivotal role in shaping the shipping industry, consistently collaborating with both private and public stakeholders to enhance the quality and efficiency of shipping and logistics services.

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## ► Vision

Our vision at the Ghana Shippers' Authority is to be recognized as a world-class service organization. We strive to protect and promote the interests of shippers in Ghana, ensuring their operations are both competitive and efficient on a global scale.

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## ► Mission

Our mission is to protect and promote the interests of shippers in Ghana effectively and efficiently. We are committed to ensuring the quick, safe, and reliable delivery of import and export cargo by all modes of transport at optimum cost, fostering a robust and resilient shipping industry.

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## ► Corporate Objectives

1. **Deregulation and Liberalization:** Seek optimum deregulation and liberalization of shipping services in Ghana, creating a more competitive and flexible environment for shippers.
2. **Quality Improvement:** Continuously improve the quality of shipping services through effective stakeholder interaction and intensive training programs for shippers.
3. **Competitive Rates Advocacy:** Ensure the payment of competitive freight rates and other port and ancillary charges through vigilant monitoring and robust negotiation.
4. **Infrastructure Enhancement:** Assist in developing up-to-date infrastructure to align with current developments and technological advancements in the shipping industry.



## Board Chairperson's Remarks



**Ms. Stella Wilson**  
Board Chairperson

The year 2023 marked the conclusion of the Ghana Shippers' Authority's (GSA) five-year strategic plan which spanned 2019 and 2023. The strategic plan was developed around six strategic pillars, following a comprehensive engagement with stakeholders. The pillars were;

- I. Stakeholder Relations,**
- II. Organisational Structures and Systems,**
- III. Education,**
- IV. Infrastructure and Logistics,**
- V. Legal and Regulatory Framework, and**
- VI. Finance.**

GSA diligently focused on the attainment of the goals and objectives that flowed from the strategic plan, and I am pleased to present a summary of the achievements as well as the challenges encountered in the last year of the implementation of the five-year plan.

Throughout the past year, GSA continued to play a pivotal role in facilitating trade and other operational activities of the shipping and logistics industry in Ghana. This was despite the numerous challenges posed by the global economic landscape. The organization remained resilient in safeguarding and advancing the interests of Ghanaian shippers.

A notable highlight of the year was the hosting of the meeting of the Union of African Shippers' Councils (UASC), which brought together representatives of the Shippers' Councils from various African nations. The event underscored Ghana's commitment to playing a leading role in promoting trans-national trade and advancing the interests of shippers within the African region.

Through strategic partnerships and collaboration with key stakeholders, GSA implemented initiatives to streamline procedures and reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks at the ports.

GSA also prioritized capacity building and skill development of staff. By investing in equipping the workforce with the requisite tools and training, we bolstered our capabilities to effectively address the evolving needs of the shipping industry.

Advocating for the interests of Ghanaian shippers on both national and international platforms remained an activity that was undertaken proactively. Through active participation in various forums and engagements with policymakers, GSA ensured that the concerns and priorities of our stakeholders were duly represented and addressed.

Notwithstanding the above achievements, it is important to acknowledge that the journey was not without challenges. The dynamic nature of global trade, coupled with regulatory changes and economic uncertainties, presented significant hurdles for the shipping and logistics industry. Nevertheless, we remained steadfast in our commitment to overcoming these challenges and delivering value to our stakeholders.

Looking ahead, GSA remains steadfast in its vision to become a world-class service organisation, ensuring swift, safe, and reliable delivery of import and export cargo for Ghanaian shippers. We remain committed to driving innovation, fostering partnerships, and harnessing technology to further enhance our service delivery, and through that, contribute to the growth and development of the maritime sector in Ghana.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere appreciation to the dedicated team at GSA, our esteemed partners and stakeholders, and the government of Ghana for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we will continue to chart the course towards a brighter future for the Ghanaian shipping industry.



## Board Members

**Ms. Stella Wilson**  
Board Chairperson

**Ms. Benonita Bismarck**  
CEO/Member  
(2017 - November 2023)

**Mr. Kwesi Baffour Sarpong**  
CEO/Member

**Dr. Kwame Asamoah Adam**  
Member

**Dr. Ing. Michael Adjei Anyetei**  
Member

**Mr Derrick Amaning Kwateng**  
Member

**Mrs. Linda Dennis Boateng**  
Member

**Mr. Kwabena Adjare Danquah**  
Member

**Hon. Dr. Festus Awuah Kwofie**  
Member

**Alhaji Seidu Iddrisu Iddisah**  
Member

**Mr. Jawol Binapadam Abraham**  
Member

**Mrs. Esther Gyebi-Donkor**  
Member

**Dr. Yaw Adu-Agyei Gyamfi**  
Member

**Mr. Vincent Okyere Akomeah**  
Member

**Ms. Lawrencia Boahemaa Awuah**  
Member

**Mr Patrick Yaw Nimo**  
Member

**Mrs. Victoria Maami Ekua Hajar**  
Member

**Ms. Nana Ama Amponsah Ntim**  
Member

**Ms. Sheila Ofori-Diabene**  
Secretary

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Board Chairperson



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CEO/Member  
(2017 - November 2023)



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CEO/Member



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Member



**Dr. Ing. Michael Adjei Anyetei**  
Member



**Mr Derrick Amaning Kwateng**  
Member



**Mrs. Linda Dennis Boateng**  
Member



## ▶ Board Members



**Mrs. Victoria Maami  
Ekuah Hajar**  
Member



**Hon. Dr. Festus Awuah  
Kwofie**  
Member



**Alhaji Seidu Iddrisu  
Iddisah**  
Member



**Ms. Lawrence Boahemaa  
Awuah**  
Member



**Ms. Nana Ama Amponsah  
Ntim**  
Member



**Dr. Yaw Adu-Agyei  
Gyamfi**  
Member



**Mr. Vincent Okyere  
Akomeah**  
Member



**Dr. Kwame Asamoah  
Adam**  
Member



**Ms. Sheila Ofori-  
Diabene**  
Secretary



**Mr. Kwabena Adjare  
Danquah**  
Member



**Mr. Abraham Binapadam  
Jawol**  
Member



**Mr. Patrick Yaw Nimo**  
Member



## Management Team

**Benonita Bismarck (Ms.)**

Chief Executive Officer  
(2017 - November 2023)

**Mr. Kwesi Baffour Sarpong**

CEO/Member

**Sylvia A. Dauda Owu (Ms.)**

Director, Regional Operations

**Mr. Peter Mensah - Abrampah**

Director, Finance and Administration

**Mr. Isaac Tersiah Ackwerh**

Head, Internal Audit

**Monica Josiah (Mrs.)**

Head, Shipper Services and  
Trade Facilitation

**Mr. Emmanuel Arku**

Head, Research, Monitoring and  
Evaluation

**Mr. Godwin A. Biney**

Head, Management Information  
Systems

**Agnes Asamoah-Duku (Mrs)**

Branch Manager, Takoradi

**Ms. Boatemaa Manu-Antwi**

Head, Human Resources and  
Administration

**Mr. Fred Asiedu - Dartey**

Head, Freight and Logistics

**Bernice L. Natue (Ms.)**

Head, Public Relations

**Mr. Charles Sey**

Branch Manager, Tema

**Mr. John B. A. Glover**

Branch Manager, Kumasi

**Mr. Frederick Atogiyire**

Branch Manager, Tamale

**Mr. George Gyasi Adjei**

Head, Legal and Estates

**Mr. Joseph Assabil**

Head, Finance



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CEO/Member  
(2017 - November 2023)



**Mr. Kwesi Baffour Sarpong**  
CEO/Member



**Sylvia A. Dauda Owu (Ms.)**  
Director, Regional Operations



**Mr. Peter Mensah-Abrampah**  
Director, Finance and Administration



**Monica Josiah (Mrs.)**  
Head, Shipper Services and Trade Facilitation



**Mr. Isaac Tersiah Ackwerh**  
Head, Internal Audit



**Mr. Emmanuel Arku**  
Head, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation



**Mr. Joseph Assabil**  
Head, Finance

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**Mrs. Agnes Asamoah Duku**  
Branch Manager, Takoradi



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Head, Freight and Logistics



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Head, Management Information Systems



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Branch Manager, Tamale



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Head, Human Resources and Administration



**Mr. George Gyasi Adjei**  
Head, Legal and Estates



**Mr. Charles Sey**  
Branch Manager, Tema





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-  ETA/D of Vessels
-  Charges at the Ports
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[www.shippers.org.gh](http://www.shippers.org.gh)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





## ▶ Executive Summary



### 2023 Outlook for Ghana Shippers' Authority

The year 2023 presented a mixed bag of challenges and achievements for the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA). The global economic landscape, marked by a sustained decline in trade and adjustments in World Trade Organization's (WTO) projections, impacted GSA's operations significantly. The anticipated growth in the volume of global merchandise trade presently is 0.8% for 2023, a decrease from the earlier forecast of 1.7%.

Despite these challenges, GSA managed to make notable strides in various areas.

### Key Highlights of the Year:

**World Trade and Freight Rates:** The decline in global merchandise trade was mirrored in the downturn of international trade volumes in Ghana. This was compounded by the depreciation of the Ghana Cedi and high inflation. However, GSA successfully navigated these waters with a consistent decrease in freight rates until October 2023 due to instability in the Middle East resulting from the Israel–Hamas war.

### Cargo Volume at Tema Port:

The Tema Port experienced a

10.4% decline in cargo volume, handling 11.53 million metric tonnes from January to August 2023 according to the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority. This decline reflects the broader challenges in the global shipping industry. For the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA), some notable achievements for the review period were highlighted.

### Strategic Meetings and Negotiations:

The GSA hosted the Union of African Shippers' Councils (UASC) to address transportation costs in the shipping industry.

A crucial meeting with the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) led to significant proposals regarding tariff increments and unstuffing charges including,

- 50% increment on the GHS-indexed tariff,
- 2% increment on the USD-indexed tariff.
- Proposed implementation date revised to 1st October 2023, based on GPHA's response,
- Request for GPHA to reconsider the unification of unstuffing charges,







*The Chief Executive Officer of the GSA Ms. Benonita Bismarck was adjudged the "Outstanding Public Service CEO of the year at the Ghana Entrepreneurs and Corporate Executives Awards and Summit 2023."*

considering its negative impact on general cargo clients.

Sensitization initiatives on hazardous cargo transportation were launched, including the production of "Dangerous Goods" placards and developed an educational video.

**Freight Rate Data and Cocoa Freight Negotiations:** GSA initiated the preparation of pictographs illustrating freight rate trends and successfully negotiated freight rates for the 2023/24 cocoa season, maintaining competitive rates for Ghana's cocoa export.

**Seminars and Workshops:** Several seminars were organized for shippers across different regions, focusing on reducing costs, understanding new regulations, and leveraging opportunities under the AfCFTA.

**Judicial and Media Engagements:** The 14th Maritime Law Seminar and the 8th Media Seminar were conducted, enhancing knowledge

and awareness among key sectors about maritime law and shipping industry trends.

**Awards and Recognition:** GSA's efforts in trade facilitation and corporate social responsibility were recognized, with the organization achieving notable rankings in public enterprise evaluations and receiving several awards.

**Navigating Challenges:** Despite economic difficulties impacting operational activities, GSA successfully achieved most of its goals for 2023. These accomplishments have moved the organization closer to its vision of becoming a leading service provider in the shipping industry.

The Ghana Shippers' Authority remained committed to ensuring fast, secure, and reliable delivery of import and export cargo at optimum costs. While facing global and local economic challenges, the GSA continued to innovate and adapt, strengthening its position as a vital player in the maritime sector.



*A shipper expressing his opinion during the GSA's regular Greater Shipper Committee meeting.*

## Chapter 1: Service to Shippers

### 1.0 Service to Shippers

#### 1.1 Shipper Committees

In 2023, the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) ensured robust engagement with Shipper Committees operating in ten regions. These committees played a pivotal role in connecting the GSA's services with a diverse range of importers and exporters. Key discussions in the quarterly meetings included:

- Bank of Ghana Letter of Commitment
- Measures for reducing shipment costs.
- Management of Anthrax
- Registration with the Ghana Standards Authority
- Control of Aflatoxins
- The New Exemption Act 1083, 2022
- Implementation of AfCFTA and PAPSS
- Axle Load Regime and Sustainability of Ghana's Highways
- Leveraging cargo consolidation for importers and exporters
- Import and export modalities for exporting livestock
- Administration of Uncleared Cargo List (UCL) at the Port
- Restrictions placed on the export of rosewood & other endangered wood species
- Funding programmes for Medium, Small, and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs).



*Sensitization of the Eastern Importers Association on the benefits of the E-platform*



*Sensitization of shippers in the Ahsnati Region on Post Clearance Audit*

#### 1.2 Shipper Education

The GSA focused on shipper education to empower and inform stakeholders. Various programs addressed topics like

- I. Upfront Payment of VAT and Customs Post Clearance Audit
- II. The innovations, opportunities, and challenges within the operations of MPS
- III. "How to avoid Demurrage" organized in to sensitize importers and the trading public on how to avoid the payment of demurrage at the country's seaports.
- IV. Planning to Reduce the Cost of Export Shipments & Letters of Credit
- V. Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) for importers of used vehicles
- VI. Implementation of the ban on the import of used electronic appliances.
- VII. Train haulage truck drivers on protective measures to escape insurgent attacks.
- VIII. Customs procedures for processing imports and exports to enhance shippers' knowledge and operations.
- IX. Trained over 50 businesses operating in the shea industry.
- X. Sensitization workshop for the Mankessim Kako Dealers Association. These educational initiatives were critical in enhancing shippers' knowledge and operational efficiency.

##### 1.2.1 Sensitization/Education Programmes for Regional Shipper Committees include:

- The importance of continuous



familiarization with shipping processes to reduce needless costs for shippers in Bono, Bono East, and Ahafo held on Tuesday, 14th March 2023, in collaboration with the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

- Updates on AfCFTA and PAPSS for shippers in the Western and Western North Regions on Thursday, 9th March 2023.
- Sensitization on Axle Load Regime and the Sustainability of Ghana's Highways for shippers in the Eastern and Volta Regions on Tuesday, 21st, and Thursday, 30th March 2023.
- Importance of Cargo consolidation for importers and exporters at the 63rd Eastern Regional Shipper Committee meeting in Koforidua on 16th May 2023.
- Livestock import and export modalities at the 2nd quarter Upper East Regional Shipper Committee (UERSC) meeting held on 18th May 2023, in Bolgatanga.
- Understanding the twelve-point five percent (12.5%) upfront payment Amendment Act, 2023 (Act 1082), Growth and Sustainability Levy Act, 2023 (Act 1095), and Filing of Direct and Indirect Tax Returns were discussed at the 121st Greater Accra Regional Shipper Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 20th September 2023.



*Meeting with members of the Committee of Freight Forwarders Association (CoFFA) on the New Exemptions Act on Import Duties*

- Export restrictions on rosewood & endangered wood species to the Central and Western Regional Shipper Committee meetings held on Thursday, 28th September 2023, and Thursday, 14th September 2023
- Reducing shipment costs and adhering to the Bank of Ghana's Letter of Commitment to the Eastern Regional Shipper Committee on Tuesday, 28th November 2023.
- Strategies to minimize shipping costs held for the Volta Regional Shipper Committee on Thursday, 30th November 2023.
- The 177th Meeting of the Ashanti Regional Shipper Committee on 13th December 2023 featured a lecture on the Administration of Uncleared Cargo List (UCL) at the Port.



*Staff of the GSA providing assistance to a shipper who visited the GSA's head office to lodge a complaint*

### 1.3 Publication

The Shipping Review, GSA's flagship publication, provided valuable insights and updates on the shipping sector, supporting educational activities, and serving as a vital resource for stakeholders.

### 1.4 Assistance to Shippers

GSA effectively addressed queries and aided on various shipping-related issues through visits to the GSA's offices, telephone calls, emails, and social media. These included inquiries about import/export procedures, demurrage waivers, shipper registration, cargo tracking, and freight quotations. Others comprise, Expected Time of Arrival (ETAs) and Departure of vessels, export guidelines/processes for commodities, negotiated freight rates, recommendations for shipping lines and clearing agents, etc.



Meeting with members of the Transit Shipper Committee

#### 1.4.1 Resolution of Shipper Complaints

The Authority successfully resolved a significant number of shipper complaints, providing a reliable support system for shippers facing challenges in their operations. One Hundred and forty (140) complaints were received in the year, out of which one hundred and five (105) were resolved with an outstanding thirty-five (35) at various levels of resolution. The complaints included requests for refunds, high clearing charges, high handling charges, damaged cargo liabilities, undelivered cargo, re-calculation of CBM, requests for abandoned cargo, pilfering, exorbitant local charges, failure to refund for non-delivery of service, etc.

#### 1.4.2 Shipper Complaints and Support Units (SCSU)

The year 2023 witnessed a significant upsurge in activities at Ghana's borders, illustrating a robust environment for cross-border trading. This increase was not limited to mere buying and selling; it extended to heightened levels of communication and collaboration, fostering stronger connections and diverse projects between Ghana and other nations. This dynamic trading environment underscored the country's growing importance as a hub for regional trade and economic integration.

#### 1.5 Operations at Key Strategic Units

The Shipper Complaints and Support Units (SCSUs) at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) and Takoradi Port (Takoradi Container Terminal) continued their standard operations. These Units played a pivotal role in addressing real-time challenges faced by shippers, ensuring smoother and more efficient import and export processes.

#### 1.6 Challenges and Resolutions

Several key challenges were identified and addressed during the year, reflecting the GSA's commitment to resolving impediments to facilitate trade:

- i. **Security Challenges for Cross-Border Traders:** The year saw initiatives to bolster security for traders, emphasizing the GSA's focus on ensuring safe trading environments.
- ii. **Harassment of Truck Drivers:** Efforts were made to mitigate harassment faced by truck drivers, a crucial aspect of ensuring uninterrupted supply chains.
- iii. **Education on Alternative Routes:** In response to insurgency threats, the GSA provided education on alternative routes, enhancing the safety of truck drivers.
- iv. **Increased Charges for TVI:** The surge in charges for TVI (from 2000 CFA to 30,000 CFA) was a notable development, necessitating negotiations and adjustments.
- v. **Negotiations of KIA Terminal Handling Charges for 2024:** Proactive discussions were held to negotiate terminal handling charges at KIA, ensuring fair pricing and efficient operations for the upcoming year.
- vi. **Inadequate Resources During Peak Seasons:** The GSA addressed the lack of adequate manpower and machinery during peak seasons at some terminals, crucial for maintaining operational efficiency.
- vii. **High Duty on Imported Goods:** High duty charges on imports were a significant concern, with the GSA







working towards finding feasible solutions.

**viii. Lateness of Clearing Agents and Customs Officials:** The issue of tardiness among clearing agents and customs officials was addressed to enhance the efficiency of cargo clearance processes.

Through these initiatives, the GSA demonstrated its capacity to adapt and respond to the evolving needs of the shipping and trading community. The focus remained on enhancing the efficiency of cross-border trade and supporting the overall growth and development of Ghana's trade sector.

### 1.7 Engagement with Trade Associations

GSA's engagement with various trade associations facilitated the identification and redress of sector-specific issues. These associations spanned across different sectors, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the industry's needs. Associations engaged are:

Ghana Electrical Dealers Association (GEDA), Ship Owners and Agents Association of Ghana (SOAAG), Chamber of Automobile Dealership Ghana (CADEG), Ghana Chamber of Agribusiness (CAG), Ghana Assorted Foodstuff Exporters Association (GAFEA), Yam Exporters Associations, Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International, Ghana Union of Traders' Association (GUTA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), Coalition of Freight Forwarders Association (CoFFA), Federation of Association of Ghanaian Exporters (FAGE), Freight Forwarders Association of Ghana (FFAG), Food and Beverages Association of Ghana, Association of Custom House Agents Ghana (ACHAG), Cargo Insurance Committee,

Ghana Merchant Navy Officer Association (GMNOA), Vegetable Exporters & Producers Association of Ghana (VEPEAG).

Others comprised: Women in Cross-Border Trade, Ghana Enterprises Agency, Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GNCCI), GIZ Ghana Trade Hub, West African Association for Cross-Border Trade in Agro-forestry-pastoral, Mankessim Kako Dealers Association and Fisheries Products (WACTAF).

Some of the issues raised during the interactions with the Trade Associations include:

- Lack of funds, especially from Ghana Exim Bank and harassment by security personnel.
- Energy Commission's implementation of the ban on the import of used electronic appliances.
- Development of a Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) for importers of used vehicles.
- Reduction of shipping cost.
- Cross Border trade challenges.
- Removal of custodial sentence from the Insurance Act for noncompliance.
- New regulations for importation of electrical appliances importation.
- Import procedures for salted fish.
- High cost of doing business.
- AfCFTA's potential impact on businesses
- Upfront payment of VAT and the Customs Post Clearance Audit (PAC)
- Innovations, opportunities, and challenges within the operations of MPS.
- Unavailability of freighter capacity and high air cargo rates.

### 1.8 Shipper Registration

The GSA saw active shipper registration and renewals throughout 2023, indicating a robust engagement with the shipping community. The total number of newly registered shippers for the period under review was one hundred and four (104) and registration renewals stood at two hundred and seven (207). The figures are represented as follows:



**Table 1: Shipper Registration and Renewal for 2023**

Category	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
New	11	47	22	24	104
Renewal	9	111	59	28	207
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>317</b>

### 1.9 Outreach/Shipper Visitation

The outreach initiative enabled GSA to gain firsthand insights into shippers' challenges and concerns. Visits to 834 shippers were conducted, underscoring GSA's commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of its stakeholders.

- Concerns over the Ghana Standards Authority's procedure for acquiring a Certificate of Conformity (CoC) from the origin, particularly for plant components shipped by air.
- Concerns from yam exporters about non-compliance by some farmers and inappropriate planting procedures leading to spoilage of yams upon arrival at their destination. They requested more sensitization of farmers by Agricultural Extension Officers to address the issue.
- Delays in obtaining waivers on Customs duty and VAT components on imported poultry drugs following satisfactory exemption requirements,
- Delays in the clearance process for day-old chicks.
- Requests for advice on the procedure for auctioning abandoned cargo.
- No refund for DP Plate by DVLA.

- Need to appeal for further engagement regarding the ban on importation of used electrical appliances.
- High demurrage charges.
- Requests for advice on the procedure for auctioning abandoned cargoes.
- Engagement of Ghana Post (GP) to negotiate competitive rates for SME shippers' use of courier services.
- Assistance for SME shippers to participate in international trade fairs.
- Increase in payment of local taxes.
- Missing consignments at the Tema Port.
- Police harassment of cross-border traders.

During the visits, the GSA encouraged shippers to report their shipment challenges for redress.



*Routine visitation to shippers to educate them on emerging trends and policy updates*

## Chapter 2: Contribution to Maritime Infrastructure



*M.T. Adicco Conference Hall, Ghana Shippers' House - Accra*

### 2.0 Contribution to Maritime Infrastructure

#### 2.1 Boankra Integrated Logistics Terminal (BILT)

A significant milestone in 2023 was the progress on the BILT project. Securing a \$280 million loan from Afreximbank, the GSA, through its concessionaire Ashanti Ports Services Limited, moved closer to completing the first phase of this crucial infrastructure. This development is poised to significantly enhance logistics capacity in Ghana.

#### 2.2 Takoradi Shippers' Centre (TSC)

The TSC tenancy was occupied by notable entities like Exim Bank, Macro Shipping, Maersk Line, CMA CGM Gh., DHL Ltd, Zeal Environmental Company, and Comexas Energy Logistics. Despite renovation efforts, challenges like leakages and illumination issues were noted, indicating a need for further improvements.

##### 2.2.1 Conference Facilities

During the period under review, the conference facilities of the Takoradi Shippers' Centre (TSC) were patronized nineteen (19) times throughout the year.

#### 2.3 Ghana Shippers' House (GHaSH)

The GHaSH also saw significant use of its conference facilities, with 36 organizations

utilizing the space for various seminars and workshops.

#### 2.4 Tema Warehouse Monitoring

Monitoring activities at the seven warehouses at the Tema Port were conducted to ensure the security and safeguarding of properties. Plans for maintenance and repair works are to commence soon highlighting GSA's commitment to infrastructure integrity.



*GSA's warehouses at Tema*

## Chapter 3: Freight, Logistics and Research

### 3.0 Freight, Logistics and Research

#### 3.1 Cocoa Freight Negotiation 2023/24

The GSA effectively negotiated competitive freight rates for the 2023/24 cocoa season with twenty shipping lines. These negotiations, critical for maintaining Ghana's position in the global cocoa market, culminated in a comprehensive rate structure covering key destinations like the UK, North Continent, Estonia, Mediterranean Europe, Far East, and Brazil.

forwarders' concerns about GPHA's tariff revisions. The meeting, chaired by CEO of GSA Ms. Benonita Bismarck, underscored GSA's role as a mediator between different stakeholders in the maritime sector.

#### 3.1.3 Negotiation of Service Charges with Swissport

In negotiations with Swissport, the GSA successfully reviewed and agreed on service charges for 2024, ensuring fair pricing and service quality for shippers. GSA approved the

Summary of Negotiated Rates for the Shipment of Cocoa for the 2023/24 Season

Rates for 2023/24 Cocoa Season	Type	UK (€)	N. Continent (€)	Estonia (€)	Med. Europe (€)	Far East (\$)	Brazil (\$)
	Bagged	31.50	54.02	61.74	60.64	*100.44 / 106.09	*116.24
	Bulk	31.50	56.60	64.68	63.53		*121.77
	BAF	28%	30%	30%	30%	-	-

\* This includes BAF

The above is subject to other conditions which were expressly stated in the announcement of the rates to the Shipping Lines.

#### 3.1.1 Tariff Negotiation Meeting with GPHA

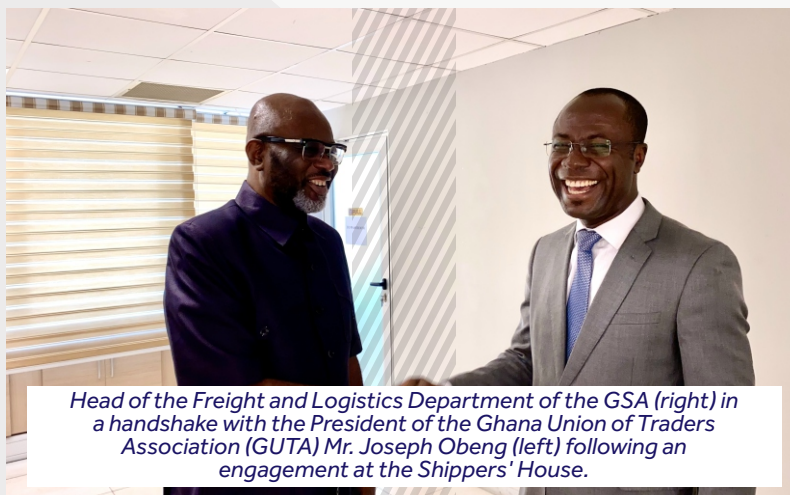
A pivotal meeting with GPHA led to significant proposals like a 50% increment on the GHS-indexed tariff, a 2% increase on the USD-indexed tariff, a revised implementation date and the unification of unstuffing charges. The GSA's proposition to implement tariff increments biennially was under GPHA's consideration, reflecting GSA's commitment to fair and sustainable tariff structures.

#### 3.1.2 Meeting with CoFFA on GPHA Tariff Revision

Engagement with CoFFA on Monday, 21st August 2023, highlighted the freight

implementation following the agreed conditions that:

- All minimums reflect same rate as 2023, apart from general cargo storage.
- 3.5% increase applied to per kilo rates.
- Pharma-specific rate removed.



Head of the Freight and Logistics Department of the GSA (right) in a handshake with the President of the Ghana Union of Traders Association (GUTA) Mr. Joseph Obeng (left) following an engagement at the Shippers' House.





- Data capture fee removed.
- Re-build rates reduced.

### 3.1.4 “No Duty No Exit” Committee Meeting

The GSA played a key role in the implementation of the “No Duty No Exit” policy, now renamed as “No pre-arrival Declaration No Exit,” ensuring a more efficient and secure import process.

The policy prescriptions would only apply after the initial seven (7) days of the arrival of the consignment, where the consignee is expected to have declared his/her intention regarding the consignment.

The GRA requested SOAAG for advance cargo information on consignments destined for Ghana, including names and addresses of the Shipper, Receiver, and Notifier, Container, Seal, and Booking Reference Numbers, Commodity Description, Country of Export, Port of Loading, Number of Packages, and Bill of Lading Type (Simple or Consolidated).

### 3.1.5 Information on Freight Rates to/from Ghana

GSA's initiative to create pictographs illustrating freight rate trends for the Port of Tema was a significant step towards providing shippers with clear and accessible rate information to selected ports in the United Kingdom, North Continent, Mediterranean, Far East, and North America. The information is based on data receipts obtained from Drewry Shipping and was published in the GSA's quarterly Shipping Review Journal.

### 3.1.6 Seizure of Used Fridges

The GSA's observation of the continued import of banned items like used fridges and air-conditioners underscores the need for stricter

enforcement and awareness creation of import regulations. During the period under review, over 400 used fridges/freezers and air conditioners were seized at the Takoradi Port.

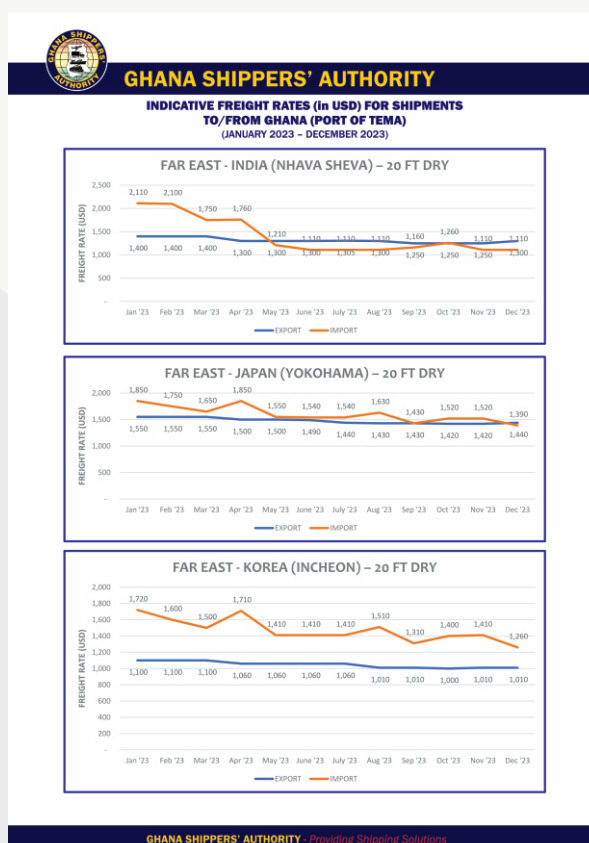
### 3.1.7 Container Demurrage, Storage Rent, and Dwell Time Reports

The compilation of these reports demonstrates GSA's commitment to ensuring transparency and efficient port operations during the year under review.

### 3.2 Port Survey and Reporting

Through comprehensive port surveys, GSA garnered crucial insights into operational challenges and stakeholder concerns at various port facilities, strengthening its role in ensuring efficient port operations.

Visits were carried out to the New Transit Terminal, Meridian Port Services (MPS) Terminal 3, APM, Meridian Shipping Company (MSC), Golden Jubilee Terminal (GJT), Safe Bond Car Terminal (SCTL), Wenco Truck Park, and Tema Tax Stamp Affixation Centre. Below are some shared concerns, observations and interventions made:





- The GSA engaged Antrak Ghana Ltd regarding the introduction of a "Demurrage Deposit" charge- **GIFF**.
- Dissatisfaction with TBT's use of manual entries for the gate-in of containers from Terminal 3, while other Inland Container Depots (ICDs) utilize the ICUMS system- **MPS**.
- Terminal 3's inability to retrieve older units or containers, resulting in delays in evacuation- **MPS/TBT**
- Trucks parking at the Terminal for extended periods upon Agent's instruction or unpreparedness of cargo owners to receive their cargo. - **MPS**
- Failure of the Ghana Standards Authority, the Food and Drugs Authority, and the Energy Commission for joint inspection. - **MPS**
- Monitoring of Traffic at Mediterranean Shipping Company's (MSC) Empty Container Depot. - **GSA**

### 3.3 Air Car Cargo Handling Operations

GSA's monitoring and engagement efforts at KIA with various stakeholders, including airlines and ground handlers, were crucial in understanding and addressing the challenges in air cargo operations.

In 2023, the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) demonstrated an unwavering commitment to enhancing the efficiency and security of Ghana's shipping sector including the aviation space, despite facing global economic challenges such as the closure of some airspaces. Some

of the engagements are captured as follows:

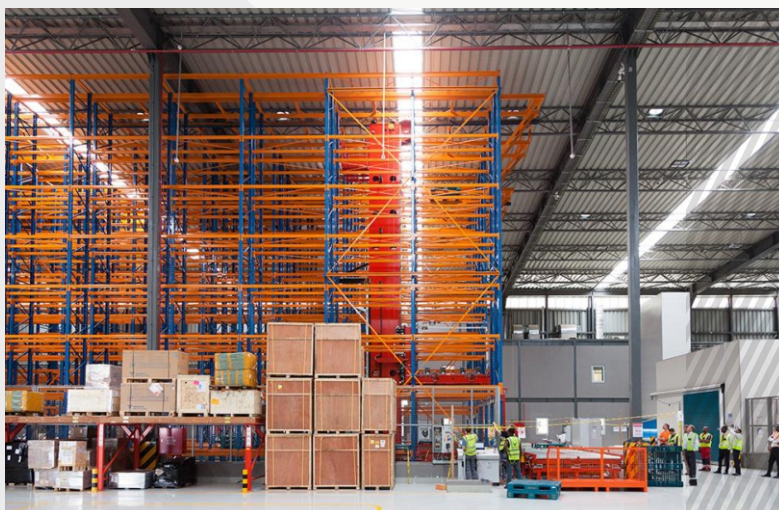
#### • Courier Service Providers

The year witnessed GSA's proactive engagement with prominent industry players such as the Postal and Courier Services Regulatory Commission (PCSRC), Aramex Ghana DHL, and UPS and Ghana Post. These interactions revealed the impact of global trade costs on air cargo services and its financial implications on freight costs. Highlighting GSA's role in navigating complex international trade dynamics, a standard operating procedure was developed for shippers for courier shipments.

The GSA also played a vital role in addressing operational challenges faced by courier companies, exemplified by our engagement with DHL and Ghana Post. These discussions highlighted the need for adaptive strategies to cope with fluctuating volumes and the importance of robust support systems for efficient mail processing and shipments.

#### • Ground Handlers

GSA's engagement with Aviance Ghana was another high point, offering insights into the air cargo handling and their adherence to industry standards underscores a new partnership with British Airways is a testament to their service quality and positions them as a significant player in the sector. Aviance Ghana stands out for its affordable air cargo handling charges and has maintained consistent fees for storage and handling. Charges are determined by cargo





weight, storage duration, and cargo type. The company adheres to industry standards, including the Standard Ground Handling Agreement (SGHA). Aviance Ghana is a leader in full-service airline ground handling, catering to eight customer airlines. They recently secured a deal with British Airways.

GSA's negotiations with Swissport Ghana regarding terminal handling charges for 2024 demonstrate dedication to fair pricing and mutual understanding in the industry.

#### • Regulatory Authorities

In matters of air safety, our interaction with the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) regarding Delta Airlines' emergency landing incident was crucial. This incident led to a strategic decision to disallow outdated aircrafts (767 Boeing) from calling the Ghana's airport, reinforcing our commitment to air travel safety particularly cargo. GCAA revealed plans for the construction of an ultra-modern air control tower for Kotoka International Airport in 2024. This initiative aims to improve flight coordination and symbolize the historical significance of the airport.

The year also captured collaborations with the Ghana Airport Company Ltd (GACL). Data on cargo throughput was facilitated by GACL and shared to the Shipper Complaint and Support Unit-KIA, including details for cargo variations. The information was useful for operational interventions where required. Mr. Kingsley Fiakyee-Amporful, the cargo manager of Ghana Airport Company Limited, disclosed the entry of ITA Airways, an Italian airline, to commence



*The Port and Infrastructure Committee of the GSA Board toured the Tema Port as part of efforts to improve shipper services at the MPS Terminal 3 harbour*

operations on June 6th, 2024. The airline plans to conduct three weekly flights connecting Rome and Accra, serving a network that spans over 70 scheduled domestic, European, and intercontinental destinations.

#### • Monitoring Activities

Throughout the year, the GSA carried out monitoring of service standards at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) and ensured the highest levels of operational excellence. We witnessed advancements in technology with the implementation of new scanners and the maintenance of critical temperature and humidity controls in cargo storage facilities, essential for preserving cargo quality.

Here are the key updates from the monitoring exercises conducted:

- All export scanners in KIA's warehouses are operational, providing clear imagery, except for Menzies Aviation scanner, which was not in operation due to low volumes.
- The import scanner (mobile van) functions effectively and produces clear imagery.
  - Installation of the new import scanner was in progress.
  - Aviance Ghana acquired a re-weighing machine to accurately determine cargo weight before airlifting.
  - Aviance Ghana renewed its Temperature and Humidity Mapping Certificate, ensuring compliance with Food Drug Service International (FSI) standards. The outfit has conducted and maintained temperature and humidity



mapping studies and protocols as required.

In essence, the GSA's endeavors in 2023 were a blend of rigorous enforcement, strategic collaborations, and forward-thinking initiatives, all aimed at elevating Ghana's prominence in the global shipping and aviation landscapes. These efforts not only safeguard our current operations but also pave way for a more dynamic and prosperous future in international trade and transportation.

### 3.4 BERTHING MEETING

The GSA participated in all the berthing meetings held at the Tema and Takoradi Ports and contributed to the planning of port operations to ensure safe and quick delivery of import and export cargoes at optimum cost. Some of the major port activities planned included the sailing and berthing of ships that called at the Tema and Takoradi Ports, allocation of vessels to stevedores, and declaration of Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) of import and export vessels.

### 3.5 RESEARCH

The GSA pursued its research agenda by investigating some challenges confronting and contributing to developing knowledge in Ghana's trade and transport sector as follows:

- The GSA is finalizing the report on the

Study on the Cost and Pricing of Sea Freight Consolidation / Deconsolidation Services in Ghana. The draft report is currently under review.

- A report on "The Impact of Numerous Road Barriers on Transit Trade" is being prepared by the GSA with inputs from fact-finding trips. The draft report is currently being finalized by the GSA.
- The GSA is finalizing the report on the Container Deposit Refund by Shipping Lines in Ghana following inputs from other Departments.
- GSA prepared the 1st quarter 2023 and 1st Half 2023 seaborne trade reports for the Maritime Trade Review. However, due to the unresolved discrepancies with data from GPHA, the reports have not yet been published.



## Chapter 4: Transit Trade Activities

### 4.0 Transit Trade Activities

Transit trade, vital for landlocked neighbors like Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, received focused attention from the GSA in 2023. GSA's initiatives significantly facilitated the movement of goods through Ghana to these countries, reinforcing Ghana's role as a key transit hub in the region.



### 4.1 Meetings and Engagements

- **Transit Shipper Committee Meetings:**

Quarterly meetings in Accra and Takoradi addressed critical issues such as insurgency attacks and axle load management in Aflao, Transportation of Hazardous Cargoes, Exchange Rates, CFA Trading, the need to harmonize readings from the GPHA and GHA weighbridges, and updates on the New Customs Software-SIGMAT.

- **Axle Load Working Group Committee Meeting:**

The meeting on Thursday, 7th December 2023 highlighted the challenges in axle load management and the steps being taken to improve this crucial area. It was disclosed that cameras have been installed at Tema, Akom, and Akatsi, and that axle load operators have been given an identification card for easy identification. Due to the road construction along the Pokuase stretch, the Doboro Mobile van has been moved to Kwafokrom. The challenges of axle load management were discussed, including the modification of trucks

and trailers (axles and dimensions), aging equipment/facilities, and deteriorating driveways. The request was made to assist with funding the mounting of instructional guide billboards at the axle load weighbridge stations, as the Ghana Highway Authority's budget will be unable to fund the project.

### 4.2 Engagements with Transit Shippers' Councils

A key meeting with Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger Shippers' Councils on Monday, 4th December 2023 focused on evaluating the year and projecting future trade activities. The following Issues were emphasized:

- High cost of doing business at the Port.
- More Cargoes passing through Lome Port
- VAT, COVID levy, and other taxes being

applied to Transit cargo.

- High Exchange Rate and standard of its application.

### 4.3 Sensitization and Education

- **Engagement with Volta Regional Police on Transit Trade:**

The sensitization seminar was held on Thursday, 9th November 2023 for Police Officers in the Volta Region. About sixty (60) senior officers were taken through the importance of the transit trade ecosystem to Ghana's economy, and the role of the Police Service in ensuring that the sector thrives. The officers were entreated to uphold the legislations, protocols, and agreements that govern the right of free access to the sea for landlocked countries.

- **Forum on TLA for Takoradi Port Truck Drivers:**

The GSA, in collaboration with the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) and the Takoradi Container Terminal Limited



(TACOTEL) held a seminar on Tuesday, 21st November 2023, at TACOTEL, aimed to increase awareness and enhance efficiency in loading operations at the Takoradi Port for members of the Joint Association of Port Transport Union (JAPTU) - Takoradi Chapter on Truck Loading Advice (TLA).

- **Stakeholder Meeting on Unauthorized Transformation of Truck Dimensions:**

GSA participated in a meeting organized by the Ghana Highway Authority (GHA) on Thursday, 15th June 2023. The meeting discussed measures to curb the unauthorized dimensions of trucks on the country's road network, resulting in damage to infrastructure, property, accidents, and loss of lives. A task force of stakeholders would be constituted to manage the situation, and GHA was tasked with developing an action plan.

Sensitization Workshop on the Ghana Railway Masterplan: Highlighting the importance of railway infrastructure for trade, the GSA participated in a sensitization workshop on the Ghana Railway Masterplan held at the Holiday Inn hotel on Wednesday, 15th March 2023. There were calls for consultation in the design of loading and discharging points, especially for patrons like the Ghana Manganese Company.

AfCFTA Meeting in Lome – Sensitization on NTB Mechanism: Focused on facilitating trade along the Abidjan – Lagos Corridor, the AfCFTA Secretariat organized a Non-Tariff Barrier (NTB) Awareness Raising Workshop for five (5) ECOWAS Member States along the Corridor in Lome, Togo, from Sunday, 29th January to



Thursday, 2nd February 2023. The objective of the workshop was to assist State Parties with targeted comprehensive outreach, visibility, and communication of the AfCFTA Non-Tariff Barriers Online Mechanism to enhance its uptake, usage, and stakeholder understanding of its benefits to the private sector.

- **Engagements with Police Command in the Northern Sector:**

Strengthening ties to enhance security on transit routes, GSA engaged the Northern, Savannah, and Northeast Regional Police Commands. The meeting was to build a working relationship with the top hierarchy of the Police in the northern sector of the country and to follow up on complaints of harassments and extortion of money by Police officers stationed along the transit routes.

- **Sensitization of Haulage Truck Drivers**

To effectively address the insurgent attacks on haulage truck drivers in the West African sub-region, the GSA collaborated with the security services to train haulage truck drivers on protective measures to treat such incidents. The event, held on Wednesday, 17th May 2023, saw over 100 haulage truck drivers in attendance.

- **Training of Trainers on Handling of Dangerous Cargo**

To further highlight the need for safety, especially with respect to the transportation of hazardous cargo along Ghana's highways and transit corridors, GSA, in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), produced "Dangerous Goods" placards and developed a





sensitization video for educational purposes. The activity was carried out during the Transit Stakeholders Meeting held on Tuesday, 11th July 2023.

#### 4.4 Fact-Finding Trips

The GSA conducted trips along key corridors like Tema-Hamile, Tema-Elubo, and Tema-Paga to gather vital data on challenges faced in transit trade seeks to engage stakeholders operating within the transit trade for possible resolution.

- **Tema-Hamile Corridor**

The GSA's trip along the Tema-Hamile corridor in the fourth quarter encountered 51 Police and MTTD stops of which thirty-eight (38) permanent barriers and thirteen (13) temporary barriers; Two (2) Forestry Commission posts, seven (7) Customs checkpoints, and three (3) Immigration checks. The truck went through four (4) Axle Load stations: Tema Motorway, Akom, a mobile axle weighbridge at Kwafokrom, and Sawla.

- **Tema-Elubo Corridor**

The trip along the Tema-Elubo corridor in the second quarter captured about sixty-eight (68) Police and MTTD stops, of which fifty-six (56) were permanent barriers and sixteen (16) were temporarily mounted; four (4) Forestry Commission posts, six (6) Customs checkpoints, and one (1) Immigration check. The truck went through three (3) Axle Load stations at Tema Motorway, Akom in Ashanti Region, and Jema in the Bono East Region.

- **Tema-Paga Corridor**

The Tema -Paga corridor trip undertaken in the third quarter

featured about sixty-eight (68) Police and MTTD stops, of which fifty-six (56) were permanent barriers and sixteen (16) were mounted or temporary barriers; four (4) Forestry Commission posts, six (6) Customs checkpoints, and one (1) Immigration check. The truck went through three (3) Axle Load stations at Tema Motorway, Akom in Ashanti Region, and Jema in the Bono East Region.

#### Resolution of Transit Problems

- **Multi-Stakeholders Meeting on Security Threats in Burkina Faso:**

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 13th September 2023, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Regional Integration, to address the security threats to Ghanaian truck drivers in Burkina Faso, the GSA indicated that the incidence of attacks on Ghanaian truck drivers in Burkina Faso had reduced since the introduction of the policy to provide escorts for Ghanaian trucks. However, the Ministry convened a follow-up meeting on the stranded Ghanaian drivers in Gaya and Malanville on either side of the Niger-Benin route. The meeting on Wednesday, 29th November 2023 assessed the status of affairs on the transit corridor to measure the impact of the earlier interventions of stakeholders.

- **Stakeholder Workshop on the Final Draft Feasibility Study Report on the Eastern Railway Line:**

Considering the viability of a major railway project impacting transit trade, GSA participated in a Stakeholder workshop organized by the Ministry of Railways Development (MORD) on the final draft feasibility study report on the Eastern Railway



*Meeting with representatives of Ecobank Ghana to deliberate on challenges faced by shippers from landlocked countries in making shipping related payments in Ghana.*



Line on Wednesday, 4th October 2023, at the African Regent Hotel, Accra. The purpose of the workshop was to validate the draft Feasibility Study Report submitted by the Consultant, which sought to:

- Assess the viability of the Eastern Railway Line specifically for Greenfield projects.
- Recommend the best approach for the government to execute the project.



*Engagement with representatives of the AfCFTA Secretariat to discuss the need to develop effective transport and logistics policies to drive intra-African trade.*

These activities underscore the GSA's commitment to improving transit trade, essential for regional integration and economic growth in West Africa.

#### • **Dialogue with Ecobank on CFA Usage to Facilitate Transit Trade**

The GSA followed up on the discussions with ECOBANK on CFA usage and was informed that management conceded to the concept of allowing drivers to use their respective national Driver's License ID cards for registration, instead of the mandatory Ghana Card as directed by the Bank of Ghana, for inbound drivers from landlocked countries who may opt

#### • **E-Platform system**

The E-platform system is a collaboration between the GSA and the Borderless Alliance established to identify, report, monitor and address Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) along Ghana's corridors.

During the period under review, the E-Platform received and resolved a total of thirty-four (34) cases reported by truck drivers. About 91% of the reported cases were related to the Police, 5% related to Axle load issues and 4% related to GRA-Customs.

Details can be found in the table below:

**Table 2: Truck driver complaints**

Institutions	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	Total
Police	12	3	3	5	23
Axle Load	1	0	0	0	1
Customs	0	3	0	4	4
Others	1	1	1	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>

to receive payment on prepaid cards. However, there would be the need to petition the Bank of Ghana (BOG) for this special consideration. The GSA has scheduled to complete this task within the first quarter of 2024.

2023 recorded a decrease in complaints, from forty-four (44) in 2022 to thirty-four (34). The decrease could be attributed to the Police sensitization campaigns undertaken by the GSA.



## Chapter 5: Stakeholder Engagements - Meetings, Workshops, and Seminars

### 5.0 Stakeholder Engagements

In 2023, the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) actively engaged with a wide array of stakeholders through meetings, workshops, and seminars, fostering collaborative efforts and addressing shared concerns.



*Sensitization of shippers in the Ashanti Region on the Post Clearance Audit regime by the Customs Division of the GRA.*

- **Meeting with CAG:**

Tackling challenges faced by agricultural produce exporters, the GSA engaged the Ghana Chamber of Agribusiness (CAG) on 7th February 2023.

This was part of efforts to deepen collaboration between the two bodies and develop programs to support exporters of plant-based products. It was also intended to reduce the cost of shipping through Ghana's ports.

- **Ghana Sez Policy Framework and Implementation Plan:**

During the period under review, the GSA participated in a two-day workshop organized by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) at the Eastern Premier Hotel, Koforidua.

The workshop held on the

development of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Policy for Ghana, under the Ghana Economic Transformation Project was to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to brainstorm and exchange views and experiences on Ghana's industrial development priorities within the framework of the SEZ policy options.

### 5.1 Trade Facilitation

- **Engagements with GAFFA and Yam Exporters Association**

Addressing operational challenges faced by these associations, The GSA engaged the Ghana Assorted Foodstuff Exporters Association (GAFFA) and Yam Exporters Association on Monday, 30th January 2023.

Lack of funds, especially from Ghana Exim Bank, and harassment by security personnel were key concerns listed during the interaction. A sector stakeholder consultative meeting was proposed to address their concerns.

- **Discussions with CADEG:**

The GSA and the Chamber of Automobile Dealership Ghana (CADEG) held discussions on Tuesday, 28th February 2023 on the possibility of developing a Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) for importers of used vehicles. The meeting followed complaints lodged by members of CADEG over imported vehicles alleged to be stolen, despite the payment of the required duties to the relevant Authorities.

- **AfCFTA Trade Facilitation Confab:**

The GSA participated in a four-day AfCFTA Trade Facilitation Conference for Transport and Logistics Services Providers held in Lomé, Togo, from Wednesday, 31st May to Saturday, 3rd June 2023. The event aimed to foster dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration among stakeholders in the transport and logistics industry. Participants used the occasion to update the Secretariat on measures being taken to contribute to the development and growth of the logistics and transport sector to support AfCFTA. The GSA also advocated for the development and operationalization of effective transport infrastructure programs to support the success of AfCFTA.

- **Education on Customs Procedures:**

The GSA on Thursday, 18th May 2023 enlightened importers and exporters in Tarkwa, Western Region on customs processes to improve their operations.

- **New Exemption Act Training:**

The GSA collaborated with the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF) to organize a one-day training on the New Exemption Act (2022) for its members, sister associations, and other shippers. The training, held at the GIFF KIA conference room on Wednesday, 17th May 2023, had over 70 participants in attendance.

- **Operators in Shea Industry Trained on AfCFTA:**

Empowering businesses in the shea industry to leverage AfCFTA, the GSA and the Global Shea Alliance trained over 50 businesses operating in the shea industry in the northern regions of the country. The training focused on the registration process under AfCFTA to enable these businesses to take advantage of the export market and benefit from duty-free and quota-free trade within Africa. The training, held on Tuesday, 18th April 2023, was the second in a series of capacity-building workshops on AfCFTA, following a successful event in Accra on Friday, 10th March 2023.

- **Meeting with Eastern Importers Association:**

GSA met with the Eastern Importers Association (EIA) at Makola in the Accra Central Business District (CBD) on Monday, 3rd April 2023. Participants, who primarily conduct trade via the Eastern corridor of Ghana, were sensitized about the mandate, services, and activities of the GSA, including education for shippers, negotiation of charges, and resolution of shipper complaints.

- **Sensitization Workshop for Mankessim Kako Dealers:**

Addressing challenges of kako (salted fish) importers, the GSA organized a sensitization workshop for the Mankessim Kako Dealers Association on Thursday, 1st June 2023. The workshop took place in Mankessim at the Market Complex building, in the Central Region of Ghana was to educate the members on import procedures for kako (salted fish) and address their shipment concerns.

- **Sensitization Workshop for Swedru Shippers:**

Focused on AfCFTA's impact and Pan-Africa Payment and Settlement System, GSA organized a sensitization workshop for shippers in Agona Swedru in the Central Region on Tuesday, 27th June 2023 to educate participants about the AfCFTA and its potential effect on their businesses, enhance their understanding of the Pan-Africa Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) and its benefits for cross-border transactions.

- **Seminar on Customs Post Clearance Audit:**

GSA, as part of its planned programs, organized a seminar with the theme: "Customs Post Clearance Audit: Avoiding Post Clearance Challenges." The seminar, held for importers and exporters in the Ashanti, Bono, and Bono East Regions, took place at the Golden Bean Hotel, Kumasi on Tuesday, 18th July 2023. The seminar seeks to educate shippers on how to navigate challenges they may encounter during Post Clearance Audits by the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (Customs).

- **CUTS/GIZ Public Dialogue**

Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International, a Civil Society Organisation into trade facilitation during its 40th anniversary on Tuesday, 15th August 2023 with a Public-Private Dialogue focused on advancing the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The event, held in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), brought together key stakeholders from trade, business, logistics, and transport sectors. The goals



Participation in the 2023 International Driver and Vehicle Innovations Conference.

included establishing Pan-African shipping lines, airlines, continental railway integration, harmonizing African Customs authorities and raising awareness for consumer rights to support AfCFTA implementation.

- **Forum on how to Reduce Cost of Export**

The GSA organized two (2) Regional Sensitization Fora for exporters in the Eastern and Volta Regions on Tuesday 28th November and Saturday 30th December, respectively aimed at reducing the cost of export shipments, with a special emphasis on 'Planning to Reduce the Cost of Export Shipments & Letters of Credit'. Participants included exporters, representatives from the Ghana Revenue Authority, the Ministry of Trade, the Customs Division, as well as business and trade groups, gathered in Koforidua.

- **Demurrage Seminar**

A seminar themed "How to avoid Demurrage" was organized on Wednesday, 13th December 2023 in Tema for shippers as part of activities to sensitise importers and the trading public on how to avoid the payment of demurrage at the country's seaports. The seminar forms part of efforts by the GSA to reduce the payment of demurrage and rent to reduce the cost of doing business at the ports.

Time With MPS

During the year under review, the GSA, as part of its planned programs, organized a Breakfast Meeting for the Greater Accra Regional Shipper Committee (GARSC), dubbed 'Time with MPS' on Thursday, 2nd November 2023.

Meeting highlighted the innovations, opportunities, and challenges within the operations of MPS and addressed the concerns of Terminal users. It was also attended by importers, exporters, as well as representatives of key Ministries, Departments, and Agencies.

- **Suame Open Forum**

The GSA organized an open forum for shippers at Suame Magazine on 8th November 2023 as part of efforts to promote responsible and compliant shipping practices.



*Participation in the maiden Herbal Fair organised by the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GNCCI) in Kumasi.*

Officials from the Customs Division and Domestic Tax Revenue Division (DTRD) of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) enlightened Shippers on the Upfront payment of VAT and the Customs Post Clearance Audit (PAC).

## 5.2 Exhibitions & Fairs

- **27th Ghana Trade Fair:**

Participation to enhance the GSA's visibility and interaction with potential shippers in the 27th edition of the Ghana International Trade Fair held at West Hills Mall, Weija from 1st to 7th March 2023. The week-long event themed "Strengthening SMEs; A Key to Economic Recovery" had over thirty (30) exhibitors and over one thousand (1000) patrons.

- **2023 Volta Regional Fair:**

The Fair Showcased GSA's services and engaged with regional stakeholders in the 6th Volta Trade and Investment Fair-2023. The week-long program commenced on Sunday 26th November 2023, at the Jubilee Park in Ho. Over 200 indigenous and foreign companies participated in the Fair.

- **2023 Civil Service Week:**

The GSA joined the Ministry of Transport (MoT) to participate in the 2023 Civil Service Week. The theme for the week was 'Enhancing Service Delivery and Economic Transformation in Ghana: The Civil Service in Focus'. The event consisted of a Clean-up Exercise, Exhibition and Food Bazaar, Health Screening, Public Lecture, among others.

- **Kumasi Herbal Fair and AGI Summit:**

Participation by GSA aimed to widen GSA's reach among diverse business sectors. The maiden Herbal Fair organized on Friday, 31<sup>st</sup>





March 2023 by the Ghana Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GNCCI) at the Dufie Tower Car Park in Adum also helped the GSA to gather data of herbal medicine producers who are into export

- **Three-Day Summit and Expo Organized by AGI**

GSA was invited to participate in the 2023 Association of Ghana Industries' (AGI) Ghana Industrial Summit and Exhibition on sustainable supply chain from Monday, 18th to Wednesday, 20th September at the Accra International Conference Centre.

The summit addressed industry challenges that hinder sustainable supply chain development and provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss Ghana's Industrialization Agenda, with emphasis on sustainable supply chain and green technology.

- **2024 Performance Contract Negotiation Technical Meeting**

The GSA engaged in a virtual meeting organized by SIGA for the negotiation of the 2024 Performance Contract on Tuesday, 5th December 2023. The meeting saw presentations on the Review of the Authority's Business Environment and the Review of Operational Performance for 2023, among others. The meeting also discussed extensively the 2024 draft Performance Contract between the GSA and the State Interests & Governance Authority and concluded by negotiating the weights for performance scoring indicators and targets.

### 5.3 Transport Sector Engagements

- **UASC Meeting on Transport Costs:**

The GSA hosted the Union of African Shippers'

Councils (UASC) Committee of Experts on Transport Costs on 25th and 26th April 2023, as part of ongoing efforts to address the increasing cost of transportation in the shipping and logistics industry. This cost escalation is primarily attributed to the high cost of doing business at African ports. The meeting, held at the Ghana Shippers' House in Accra, aimed to facilitate discussions, exchange ideas, share experiences, and explore ways to reduce the cost of international cargo transportation. Ultimately, these efforts aim to enhance the competitiveness of member states and benefit both port service providers and shippers in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). A report of the meeting will be submitted to the General Assembly of the UASC for consideration.

- **Eastern Corridor Inception Report Review:**

Contributing expertise to a study on trade and transport facilitation, the Ministry of Roads and Highways engaged the GSA to review an inception report titled "Assessment of Trade and Transport Facilitation Activities along the Eastern Corridor Road." Consultancy firms SPT- Studie Pianificazione Dei Trasporti s.r.l. and NET Engineering s.r.l. were engaged by the Ministry of Roads and Highways and the Ghana Highway Authority to provide consultancy services on this matter.

- **Ghana Enterprise Agency (GEA) Cargo Consolidation Meeting**

GSA discussed with the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA) the proposed Cargo Consolidation Concept on Wednesday, 30th August 2023. The meeting was presided over by the Acting Director of GEA's Women Entrepreneurship Development (W.E.D.). GSA is also working on designing a Management Information System (MIS) portal to facilitate the pooling of export products and the initiation of the process of moving them to an aggregating point.

- **National Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Committee Meeting:**

Considering trade and integration components under the Eastern Corridor Road Development Program, GSA participated in

the third-quarter National Road Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 27th September 2023 on the Akanu-Noepe Joint Border Post.

The Ministry of Roads and Highways undertook a monitoring inspection of the Akanu-Noepe Joint Border Post in August 2023, after the completion of the plumbing and wiring of the facility. The challenge remains the provision of water to the facility due to a lack of cooperation from the Togolese counterparts. An intervention from ECOWAS will be required if the issue remains unresolved. The new Customs Software (SIGMAT) went live with Togo. Mali and Burkina Faso expected to be added on.

### 5.5 Other Engagements

- **Maritime Law Seminar and Tema Port Educational Tour:**

To enhance legal and operational understanding among stakeholders, forty (40) Justices of the Superior Courts of Ghana attended the 14th Maritime Law Seminar held on Friday, 7th and Saturday, 8th July 2023. The seminar, organized by GSA in collaboration with the Judicial Training Institute (JTI), was held to upgrade the knowledge of the judges with respect to developments in the maritime, shipping and logistics industry. The topics espoused were:

- i) Carriage of Goods by Sea Law in Ghana: Time for Needed Change; The Legal Regime for the Arrest of Ships in Ghana.
- ii) Security in the Maritime Domain; and
- iii) Ghana's Criminal Law Regime.

To give them a firsthand experience of port operations, the judges were taken to the Tema

Port where they visited the GPHA and Jubilee terminals as well as the terminal 3 being operated and managed by the Meridian Port Services (MPS).

- **8th Media Seminar:**

The eighth (8th) Media Seminar for Journalists took place on Wednesday, 18th October 2023, at the Ghana Shippers' House in Accra. The seminar, organized by the GSA, was themed "Contemporary Trends and Developments in Ghana's Shipping Industry" aimed to update media actors of trends in the maritime space. With an audience of over 60 journalists drawn from both public and private media organizations, the seminar delved into topics on areas of interest to shippers and of relevance to the socio-economic development of the country. The discussions covered freight rates in the shipping and logistics sector, the significance of certificates of origin in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the benefits of local marine cargo insurance payment.

- **Maritime Stakeholders Forum:**

Identifying strategies to reduce operational costs at Takoradi Port, the GSA organized a maritime stakeholders forum in the Western Regional Capital, Takoradi. The theme for the forum was 'Reducing the Cost of Doing Business at the Takoradi Port: The role of strategic stakeholders.' The event took place on 22nd June 2023 and was attended by the Western Regional Minister, Hon. Okyere Darko, as the Guest of Honor and the Director of Takoradi Port, Mr. Peter Amo Bediako also graced the forum which aims to identify factors contributing to the high cost of doing business at the Port of Takoradi and discuss innovative strategies to reduce costs.

- **Sensitization on AfCFTA by the Ministry of Trade & Industry**

On 26th June 2023, the GSA participated in a program organized by the Ministry of Trade & Industry. The program involved a capacity-building workshop on the five (5) priority sectors under the AfCFTA protocol in Takoradi. The workshop was to enhance trade services for the effective implementation of the Agreement. Key stakeholders and other economic operators were



*The 14th Maritime Law Seminar*





sensitized on Ghana's commitments under the Agreement.

- **10th Borderless Alliance Conference**

GSA participated in the 10th Annual Borderless Alliance Conference held on Wednesday 25th October 2023. Participants at the conference drawn from Ghana, Nigeria, and Ivory Coast focused their discussions on the effects of global value chain disruptions on food supply and food security in Africa, to reflect the theme: "Strengthening Regional Agricultural Value Chain to Compete in a Global Market."

- **Meeting with Regional Maritime Authority (RMU)**

The Regional Maritime University (RMU) paid a courtesy visit to the GSA to enhance efforts in bridging the gap between academia and industry by engaging key stakeholders. The meeting was hosted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the GSA on 21st April 2023, attended by a team from the RMU, led by the Acting Vice Chancellor, Dr. Jethro W. Brooks Jr. Dr. Brooks Jr. mentioned that the RMU had developed courses focused on Port and Terminal Performance Indicators and other areas and expressed willingness to receive input from the Authority.

- **Meeting with National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) Unit - Tema**

The National Intelligence Bureau (Tema Unit) paid a courtesy call on the GSA on Thursday, 18th May 2023, to confirm reports regarding issues raised by the Burkina Shippers' Council. The issues discussed included extortion of money by police officers from drivers along the transit corridors, numerous police barriers and checkpoints, robbery attacks, language barriers between Ghanaian police officers and non-Ghanaian truck drivers, and the lack of

parking spaces along the transit corridor for drivers to rest and get truck repairs. The GSA organized a sensitization workshop for haulage truck drivers on Wednesday, 17th May 2023, at the new Transit Truck Park, to address the same issues.

- **National AfCFTA Stakeholders' Forum**

The National African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Stakeholders' Forum took place on Thursday, 3rd August 2023 at the Alisa Hotel at North-Ridge, in Accra under the auspices of the National Coordination Office. The primary objective of the Forum was to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&EF) for the National AfCFTA Policy Framework and Action Plan (NAPFAP). Key participants included representatives from thirty-one (31) Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), such as the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ghana Revenue Authority, the Ghana Export Promotion Authority, and the Ghana Shippers' Authority.

- **Trade Mission to Burkina Faso**

The GSA participated in a 5-day Trade Mission to Burkina Faso organized by the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) from Saturday 2nd to Wednesday 6th October 2023. The Mission focused on assessing the performance of the Ghanaian ports vis-a-vis the concerns of the shipping community/service users.

These engagements underscore the GSA's proactive approach in fostering strong relationships and open communication with various stakeholders, crucial for the advancement of Ghana's maritime sector.

## Chapter 6: Corporate Social Responsibility and Award

**"He who wishes to secure the good of others has already secured his own."**  
- Confucius.



### 6.0 Corporate Social Responsibility

In 2023, the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) embraced its social responsibility with significant contributions and support to various sectors of society, reflecting its commitment to social welfare and community development.

- **Donation to Accra Psychiatric Hospital:** The GSA demonstrated its commitment to mental health by donating GHC 40,000 worth of food items to the hospital, funded by staff contributions and offerings from the Annual Thanksgiving event.
- **Support to Hospitals:** The GSA extended its philanthropic reach to the Abrafo Women and Children's Hospital, Salaga Municipal Hospital, and Tarkwa

Municipal Hospital with donations of essential supplies to aid in patient care.

- **Support to Other Stakeholders:** GSA Contributed to the Annual General Meeting of the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF) and provided a scholarship to a female student at the Regional Maritime University, reinforcing its dedication to education and professional development within the maritime sector.

### 6.1 Awards

The year 2023 was marked by recognition and accolades for the GSA and its CEO, underlining the Authority's excellence in various domains:

- **Ghana Entrepreneurs and Corporate Executives Awards 2023:** CEO Benonita Bismarck was honored as the





*The items donated are worth GHC 40,000*

Outstanding Public Sector CEO of the Year.

- **Glitz Africa Awards 2023:** Recognition of Ms. Bismarck with the 'Excellence in Public Service' Award.
- **2023 Business Integrity Awards:** The GSA was celebrated as the Integrity-Driven Trade Facilitation Brand of the Year, along with the CEO receiving the Integrity-Driven CEO of the Year award.
- **2023 African Public Service Awards:** GSA was acknowledged for Innovation in Shipping Services, and Ms. Bismarck received accolades for her leadership.
- **2023 National Business Honours:** GSA was named the Innovative Government Agency of

the Year, and Ms. Bismarck received the Ultimate Woman of the Year award.

- **2023 Public Enterprises League Table (PELT) Awards:** GSA was recognized for its performance among public institutions and transport sector agencies.
- **2023 Ladies in Leadership Awards:** Ms. Bismarck was bestowed with the Distinguished Fellowship Award.

These accolades highlight the GSA's effective leadership, commitment to integrity, innovation in shipping services, and outstanding contributions to the public sector and maritime industry.



*The CEO of GSA Ms. Benonita Bismarck was bestowed with the Distinguished Fellowship Award*

## Chapter 7: Human Resources and Administration

### 7.0 Overview

The year 2023 was a pivotal year for the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) in terms of human resources and administration. The focus was on nurturing a work environment that promotes growth, satisfaction, and efficiency among its staff, ensuring the organization's continued success and adaptability in the dynamic maritime sector.

### 7.1 Staff Position

The year concluded with a total staff strength of 147, a diverse mix of 64 regular staff, 39 service personnel, 39 contract staff, and 5 temporary personnel, showcasing the GSA's commitment to creating inclusive employment opportunities.

### 7.2 Staff Training and Development

- A significant number of staff, totaling 110, participated in various forms of professional development. This focus on continuous learning and development is a testament to the GSA's investment in its human capital.
- The training spanned conferences, seminars, and workshops, both domestically and internationally, ensuring that the staff remains at the forefront of the maritime industry's evolving trends and practices.

### 7.3 Leadership Changes

- The year witnessed a notable change in leadership with Mr. Kwesi Baffour Sarpong assuming the role of CEO in December 2023, following the retirement of Ms. Benonita Bismarck. This transition marked a new chapter in the GSA's leadership dynamics.

### 7.4 Retirement

- The retirement of key staff members, including a Deputy Human Resource Manager, two

Principal Officers, and a Junior Officer, marked the end of an era for some and the beginning of new opportunities for others within the organization.

### 7.5 Staff Durbars

- The GSA maintained its tradition of holding Staff/Management durbars across its branches. These events fostered open communication, allowed for the airing of concerns, and provided a platform for Management to share insights and updates on the organization's direction, further cementing a culture of inclusivity and transparency.

In 2023, the GSA demonstrated a strong commitment to its workforce, understanding that an organization's success is deeply rooted in the well-being and professional growth of its employees. The strategic focus on training and development, coupled with the welcoming of a new leadership and honoring the contributions of retiring members, reflects the GSA's dedication to both its people and its mission. These efforts have not only bolstered the morale and capability of the GSA team but have also positioned the organization for continued success in the dynamic maritime sector.



Staff Happy Hour



## 8.0 Conclusion

The Ghana Shippers Authority (GSA) has demonstrated commendable resilience and adaptability in navigating the complex and often unpredictable waters of global shipping. Despite the headwinds of economic challenges that have inevitably impacted the industry at large, GSA has shown an unwavering commitment to achieving its corporate goals. Our ability to meet most of set targets in the year 2023 is a testament to our dedication and strategic agility.

The organization continued to prioritize the swift, secure, and reliable delivery of import and export cargo across all modes of transport at optimal costs, crucial in an era where global supply chains face unprecedented disruptions and uncertainties.

The inadequacy of the GSA Establishment Law persistently limits the Authority's ability to negotiate effectively with shipping service providers on local charges and service standards. This legislative bottleneck not only hinders operational efficiency but also impacts the overall competitiveness and attractiveness of Ghana's shipping sector.

Additionally, the directive from the Government of Ghana to slash budgeted expenditures by 30% to 50% has had a notable impact on the GSA's financial health, as seen in the variance in the Operational Surplus. This budgetary constraint underscores the need for innovative solutions and strategic partnerships to maintain and enhance service quality without escalating costs.

Despite these challenges, the GSA's dedication to excellence remains unshaken.

In a world where the dynamics of shipping are constantly evolving, GSA's role becomes ever more critical. By adapting with agility to the changing landscape, the GSA is not just navigating through challenges but is also paving the way for a more robust, efficient, and competitive shipping sector in Ghana.