

ZIMRA team tours Zimbabwe Leaf Tobacco



ZIMRA team touring Zimbabwe Leaf Tobacco

By Musasiyashé Kufakunesu

The stance by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) to engage different economic sectors to appreciate their operations saw a team of senior managers carry out a familiarisation tour of one of Zimbabwe's biggest tobacco processors – Zimbabwe Leaf Tobacco company – an entity which is situated in the Aspindale Industrial Area.

The tour was at the behest of the company and other associated partners in the tobacco processing industry.

The main purpose of the tour was to enable ZIMRA to have an appreciation of the operations of the tobacco processing industry, with a view to ensure that tax issues relating to the industry are dealt with both parties having a common understanding of the industry's dynamics.

The half-day tour commenced with a presentation about precautions that one has to take in order to stay safe during the tour, since the premises are heavily mechanised with forklifts and vehicles milling around the 30-hectare premises. Soon after, the touring party, which was now made up of ZIMRA, players in the tobacco processing industry and ZLT staff, was taken to the tobacco receiving sheds to appreciate what happens there.

The group was taken through the tobacco processing value chain all through to the finished product, which then gets exported.

Throughout the whole value chain, the ZIMRA team was given an opportunity to appreciate the work, which gets into tobacco processing, chief among them being the separation of the leaf from the midrib.

The team also had an opportunity to see the packaged tobacco ready for export.

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Business warms up to ZIMRA engagement workshops



Proceedings at the Mutare breakfast meeting

By Musasiyashe Kufakunesu

The business community seems to be taking seriously the ZIMRA client education initiatives, if numbers which attended the Mutare Breakfast meeting are anything to go by. The breakfast meeting was convened by the ZIMRA management team in Mutare to explain contents of the 2019 National budget and how it impacts on business operations. The meeting was attended by players in the Mutare business community, Small and Medium Enterprises representatives, and a number of associations in the freight and forwarding industry.

Speaking during the event, Mr Innocent Chikuni – the Regional Manager for Customs and Excise at Forbes Border Post – highlighted the role that ZIMRA is playing in ensuring the successful implementation of the Transitional Stabilisation Programme (TSP). He said ZIMRA's role required a taxpayer base with full knowledge on taxation, hence the holding of workshops periodically.

"I would just want to emphasise that the Transitional Stabilisation Programme (TSP) has one of its important pillars of taxpayer education. This is the reason why you are gathered here so that you are abreast with developments which are being brought forth by the 2019 budget statement,"

he said.

He also highlighted the importance of periodically holding workshops to enable clients to make informed decisions. Mr Chikuni also highlighted that the Authority was taking seriously the government's call to achieve an upper middle class economy by 2030.

Speaking during the same occasion, the Guest Speaker, Mr Terence Machocho was standing in for the Minister of State for Manicaland Province – Dr Ellen Gwaradzimba – hailed government and ZIMRA for the breakfast meetings, which he said, helped people to know their obligations to the state.

"This engagement is also very significant since it helps improve on voluntary compliance. Our people need to be educated on the importance of paying taxes. Business needs to embrace voluntary compliance which is being preached by ZIMRA," he said.

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Tourism Sector meets Region 2



ZIMRA Region 2 host a breakfast meeting with the Tourism sector

By Lovemore Mandiopera

Players from the tourism sector took some time to meet with ZIMRA Region 2 to discuss challenges being faced in the industry and how to improve the modalities of doing business in the sector.

ZIMRA also took the opportunity to highlight to the sector, some legislation changes that resulted from the 2019 budget statement announced by the minister of Finance in November last year.

In doing so, ZIMRA furnished the Tourism sector with presentations on domestic taxes done by Idah Tawonezvi, customs done by Xolisile Zililo and lastly on the finance side (payments procedures) by Aldous Mangadza.

Topical issue was that the sector felt the government needed to come up with a comprehensive list of capital goods that qualify for tourism rebate among others.

The breakfast meeting was held on 14 February 2019 at Cresta Churchill Hotel, Bulawayo and was graced by different players in the tourism sector from Safaris, Lodges, Hotels, Online bookings, adventure parks to car rentals.

Business warms to ZIMRA engagement

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He also condemned smuggling, which he said was rampant in the Manicaland areas because of the porous borderline between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. He highlighted that cooperation among stakeholders was important to fight smuggling.

"I would also want to condemn corruption, a cancer which has ravaged our society. My solution to the corruption scourge is summed up in three "Rs", which are reject, resist and report corruption. This, if done religiously will redeem our society from this disease which has afflicted society," he said.

The meeting ended with a presentation by Mr Succeed Barangwe of Customs and Mrs Matilda Nyahumbi – a presentation which highlighted changes to the taxation regime brought forward by the 2019 budget statement.

Clients on their side, had an opportunity to ask questions with the burning one being the issue of the reporting currency, considering that Zimbabwe is using a basket of currencies, both local and foreign. Clients also demanded to have officials from the Ministry of Finance attending to breakfast meetings so that they answer to issues relating to policy.

ZIMRA exceeds January target

By Tanaka Chitongo

The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) continued on a positive trajectory in fulfilling one of its core duties for the government- revenue collection, as it exceeded the gross and net collections targets by 16,97% and 13,48% respectively.

A total of US\$532,88 million was collected during the month against a target of US\$455,57 million thus translating to a positive variance of 16,97%. After deducting refunds of US\$15,89 million, the Authority collected net revenue of US\$516,99 million against a target of US\$455,57 million resulting in collections of 13,48% above target.

ZIMRA implemented key revenue enhancement strategies in January which can be taken as major contributors to this positive revenue collection performance.

The strategies include data matching, training on IDEA where staff were trained on Interactive Data Extraction and Analysis (IDEA) as part of capacity building so as improve the auditing of specialised sectors and the Authority also carried out intensive debt follow-ups on those who had made payment plans and owing the Authority.

Other strategies adopted include the ongoing risk based audits, the electronic cargo tracking system which enhanced compliance in trade facilitation and resulted in revenue collections improving as revenue leakages were minimised.

The Authority also ensured that as tax clearance certificates were issued, clients were adhering to their payment plans and those who were defaulting were made to pay an instalment before being issued the tax clearance.

ZIMRA is set to continue implementing its resource mobilisation strategies and improving compliance.

In line with the efforts to expand the tax base, taxpayer education will be rolled out as part of the wider voluntary compliance campaign while a lot of efforts will be also channelled towards closing revenue leakages through fighting corruption and prosecuting those involved in tax evasion.

The Authority will continue the lifestyle audits and using the whistle blower programme to nab tax offenders and smugglers.



Commissioner General, Ms Faith Mazani during an interview with ZBC TV



ZIMRA Head Office participates in the National Clean up Campaign

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The tour concluded with a presentation where tobacco processors raised issues which they want addressed by ZIMRA, some of which include the treatment of tobacco for VAT, rebates on fuel for used for production, the 2% intermediary money transfer tax, and the issues of currency of trade when it comes to foreign currency and RTGs.

Zimbabwe Leaf Tobacco is one of the biggest tobacco processors in the country and it boasts of one of the biggest tobacco processing machines in Africa.

They are part of Universal Leaf Tobacco – which is an American tobacco processing conglomerate with subsidiaries in Malawi, Tanzania, South Africa among other SADC countries.

ZIMRA collaborative compliance drive moves a gear up

By Taungana Ndoro

The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) held an intensely interactive breakfast meeting with clients in the Midlands region on 27 February 2019 at a local hotel here.

Held under the theme “ZIMRA Partnering with Stakeholders for Sustainable Economic Development” the meeting robustly discussed an array of fiscal and monetary policy concerns.

While the ZIMRA Regional Manager for Region 3 Ms Regina Chinamasa emphasized the cooperative compliance hashtag #My Taxes, My Duties – Building My Zimbabwe and that ZIMRA had an open door policy with clear imprints from the IMF performance outcome area of dispute resolution, anxious clients still wanted to know why there were system challenges within the Authority and why tax amnesty awards had not been effected.

Other clients lamented the disparity of the implementation of the 2% tax policy that affected companies serviced by different banks.

Nevertheless, Ms Chinamasa remained resolute that tax obligations of clients were to be matched by the service they expect from the Authority.

“Even though we are working flat out to align the monetary policy to the fiscal policy we still expect massive collaborative compliance from our valued clients,” she said.

ZIMRA revenue officers Mr Tasiyana Siyavhundu and Ms Faith Matsongoni also buttressed the clarion call for voluntary compliance by reminding them to adhere to due dates for PAYE, VAT and QPD as well as customs duty.

Amongst those in the meeting were representatives of the President’s department, the Mayor of Gweru as well as vital clients within Gweru and surrounding areas.



ZIMRA hosts Midlands clients in Gweru



IMF second visit as ZIMRA tadadises



ZIMRA staff during the National Clean up

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