



## PRESS STATEMENT

### TAMING THE LONG QUEUES AT FORBES BORDER POST

*10 October 2023*

The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) confirms that there have been long queues forming at Forbes Border Post in the past week.

ZIMRA is working in conjunction with other state agencies, partners, stakeholders and authorities to clear the vehicles and trucks at the border.

The long queues stemmed from an accident at the Forbes border Post on 3 October 2023 involving four trucks leading to the temporary closure of exit channel and sharing of the entry channel for all traffic resulting to traffic build up.

The lane has since been cleared and from 5 to 7 October 2023, an average of 360 outbound trucks were cleared per day and on 8 and 9 October 2023, 592 and 656 outgoing trucks were cleared respectively.

The operating hours for Forbes Border Post were extended to stretch from 0600 hours to 2200 hours.

However, commercial traffic accumulates overnight and during the day leading to queue build up each morning. This means that the entry point has to deal with long queues as soon as it opens.

Other reasons that might contribute to the increase in traffic at the Forbes Border Post could be the following:

1. The refurbished road network from Harare to Mutare then to Beira is enticing transporters to use the Forbes route creating congestion.
2. The Port of Beira is nearer as compared to Durban Port, which means there are less transport costs and turnaround times for both transporters and businesses. This has resulted in a surge in traffic to Beira via Forbes.
3. Beira Port has also increased its capacity and has become a preferred port for Africa's imports and exports to the Far East.
4. An increase in fuel tankers (both Zimbabwean and foreign) exiting to Beira to get fuel for onward transportation to countries in the north. Some transporters have significantly increased their fleet size due to increased demands and business contracts.
5. The region's sudden boom in the mining industry could be leading to increased exports of various minerals through Forbes Border Post.

6. The Beira Corridor is a critical feeder into and out of the North South Corridor and the shift preferences have led to an increase in its use.

However, the current border post infrastructure was not designed to handle high volumes of commercial traffic as there is hardly any parking space for commercial trucks. This has overstretched the spatial capacity for the handling of the commercial traffic influx. Its location is within constricted terrain which requires significant civil engineering for expansion.

The narrow bridge on the Munene River between the Mozambican Border and the Zimbabwe Border (Forbes) on the Mozambican side only allows one truck to cross at a time and has a major bottleneck effect on traffic flows.

ZIMRA has been engaging their counterparts from the Mozambican side to give preference at the Munene River Bridge to trucks entering in their territory from Forbes Border Post. These arrangements are however inadequate as the same requests are also coming from the Mozambican side for Zimbabwe bound traffic.

Meanwhile, clearing agents, importers, exporters and transposers are urged to collectively take full advantage of the pre-clearance facility in order to shorten the waiting time within the border.

The Authority appreciates the understanding attitude of all affected stakeholders and take note of the suggestions coming through from all stakeholders.

ZIMRA is confident that traffic will return to normal levels by no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 while other long term measures are being considered to increase the border post's traffic capacity to handle the current dynamics.

*Issued on behalf of ZIMRA by:*

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