



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Information for Traders (importers & Exporters) and Clearing Agents using Maputsoe Bridge**

**Maseru, June, 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014:** On the Customs front, massive changes are to be introduced under the Customs Modernisation programme currently being implemented. New procedures and processes for the management of imports and exports are to be introduced as a pilot from the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2014 at Maputsoe Bridge. These changes are intended to improve the efficiency of the border management and reduction of costs for business. The changes are also in line with the international standards of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) and standardisation within the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU).

The major changes to the processes will initially be:

- Simplification of Procedures
- Introduction of Computerised Declarations and documentation
- Advanced clearance

The changes will be introduced in stages over the next 24 months to ensure that they can be effectively absorbed by the business community. In preparation for the introduction of the changes a general information and final consultation programme was done in May 2014. This is followed up by an education programme for importers, exporters and clearance agents giving priority to the commercial border users at Maputsoe Bridge border post as it will be the first port to be piloted. The education programme will be supplemented by open meetings for commercial border users.

Further information will be issued through the LRA Website: [www.lra.org.ls](http://www.lra.org.ls) and the Lesotho Trade Portal: [www.lesothotradeportal.org.ls](http://www.lesothotradeportal.org.ls)



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