



Chirundu One-stop Border Post Initiative Monitoring Project

Stakeholders Briefing Note

First Draft Report



July 2007

1 Introduction

With the first three interim reports (9 months of the project) completed, we now enter the final stages of the pre one-stop border post monitoring, with this being the first of the two draft reports before we conclude with the final report at the end of September. The overall objective of the initiative was to collect data that can be used to improve the efficiency of transit transport services, by applying agreed performance indicators. The data collected can also be used to justify improvements to corridor infrastructure and transit regimes.

This Briefing Note gives a summary of the main findings from the monitoring that is currently under way at the Chirundu border post. The report highlights a few key issues that pertain to the project. This is the first of the two draft reports, which give indicative data pending full analysis of the data collected. Approximately 83% of the possible data has now been captured and processed, while this only amounts to +/- 1.2% of all commercial traffic passing through Chirundu, it is extremely representative, with more than 150 different transporters in five different categories (B/Bulk, Consolidated, Refrigerated, Tankers & Containerised) being represented in the monitoring process. The data is clearly identifying emerging trends, enabling us to draw conclusions and lobby for action to be taken to reduce transit times at Chirundu border post.

1.1 Monitoring Arrangements

The monitoring at Chirundu started in November 2006 and will continue till the end of September 2007. The Federation of Road Transport Associations of Eastern and Southern Africa (FESARTA), one of the SSATP's regional partners, are supervising it. The actual monitoring is through a private company called Transport Logistics Consultants (TLC). TLC has an office at the border, manned by a fulltime staff. The office is responsible for data capturing from customs, drivers, agents, etc on both sides of the border. The data is then presented as a spreadsheet report. TLC also carried out the monitoring at the Beit Bridge border post.

1.2 The Chirundu Border Post

The Chirundu Border Post is between Zambia and Zimbabwe. It straddles the Zambezi River. Two bridges link the border facilities across the Zambezi, an old bridge, which opened in 1939, and a new one, which opened in 2002. The old bridge is a single lane bridge, which used to operate with traffic moving in alternating directions. This contributed to congestion hence the justification of the new bridge. The new bridge carries two lanes of traffic. It was funded by JICA. In the recent past the new bridge has been used for northbound freight traffic while the old bridge was still being used for southbound traffic. However, the old bridge is presently not being used. After the completion of the new bridge, both Zambia and Zimbabwe started work to improve their respective border facilities. Zimbabwe is building a completely new integrated border

post while Zambia is constructing a new clearance and accommodation facilities. The construction of the facilities has experienced some delays but both are expected to become operational in late 2007.

2 Monitoring Data

2.1 Traffic Volumes

The Chirundu border post currently handles more than 6,000 trucks each month, with an average of 222 trucks per day, both directions (Table 1). There are more trucks that use the route going northwards (120 average per day) than southwards (102 average per day). This reflects the availability of alternative routes linking South Africa and Zambia. The North-South Corridor, on which Chirundu lies, offers several traffic assignment possibilities. The road from Lusaka to Chirundu is in poor condition but currently under construction. As a result, some loads have been lost going down the escarpment to the Zambezi. Consequently, some drivers use the route through Livingstone when going south. However, as can be seen in Table 1, the southbound traffic through Chirundu picked up from Jan through to April, but there has been a steady decline from May onwards, as has the northbound traffic dropped sharply in the month of July. However this can be attributed to the rapid decline in the Zimbabwe economy and the inability of transporters to source diesel/spares whilst in transit through Zimbabwe.

Table 1. Traffic Volumes Through Chirundu Border Post

Month	Northbound	Southbound
November 2006	3641	1717
December 2006	3467	2430
January 2007	3330	3305
February 2007	3250	3182
March 2007	3775	3973
April 2007	3775	3802
May 2007	3658	3082
June 2007	4159	3097
July 2007	3251	2948
Average	3632	3077
Daily average	120	102

Source: TLC Monitoring Reports 1, 2, 3 and 1ST Draft, for SSATP.

The Chirundu border post is congested, with more than 50 trucks parked on each side of the approach roads in both directions. Space in the area between the border posts is very limited, and trucks that have been cleared through Customs are often held back for hours because of traffic gridlocks. As the bridge is no longer a contributory factor, the delays can be attributed to the control operations at the two border facilities.

2.2 Nationality of Trucks Passing Through Chirundu

Data on the nationality of trucks going through the border post is captured. Almost 80% of the trucks monitored are registered in South Africa and Zimbabwe, each of them making an almost equal contribution. However, South African transporters dominate the refrigerated and tanker markets while Zimbabwean truckers have a larger presence in the break-bulk/consolidated freight markets. This could be explained by the capital requirements for refrigerated trucks and also the stricter requirements for licensing of tankers in South Africa. As transporters registered in that country are more competitive in the market for such freight, while Zimbabwe Transporters are able to offer better rates in the latter loads.

Figure 1. Nationalities of Trucks Passing through Chirundu Border Post

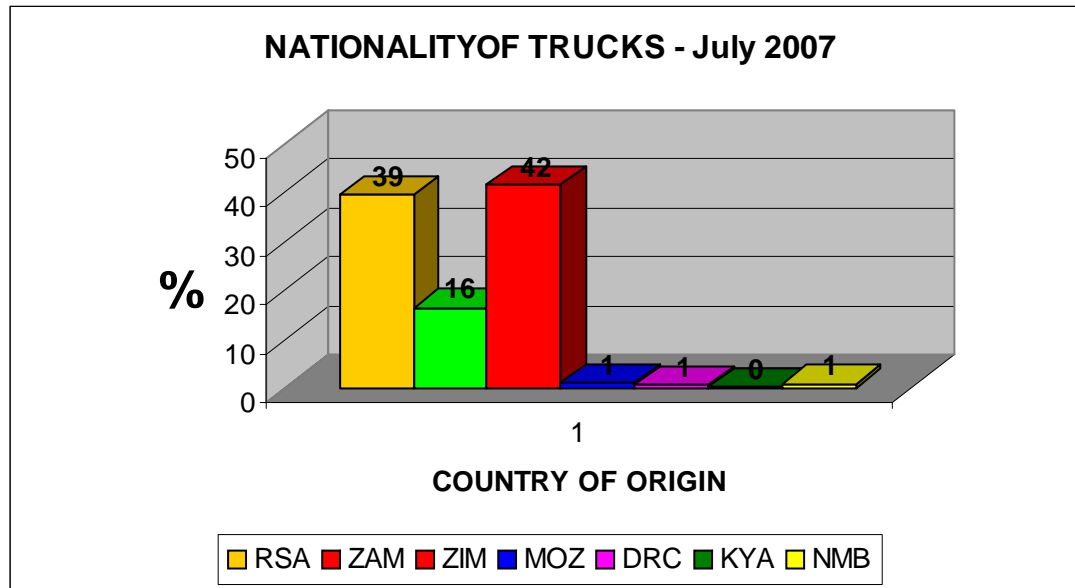
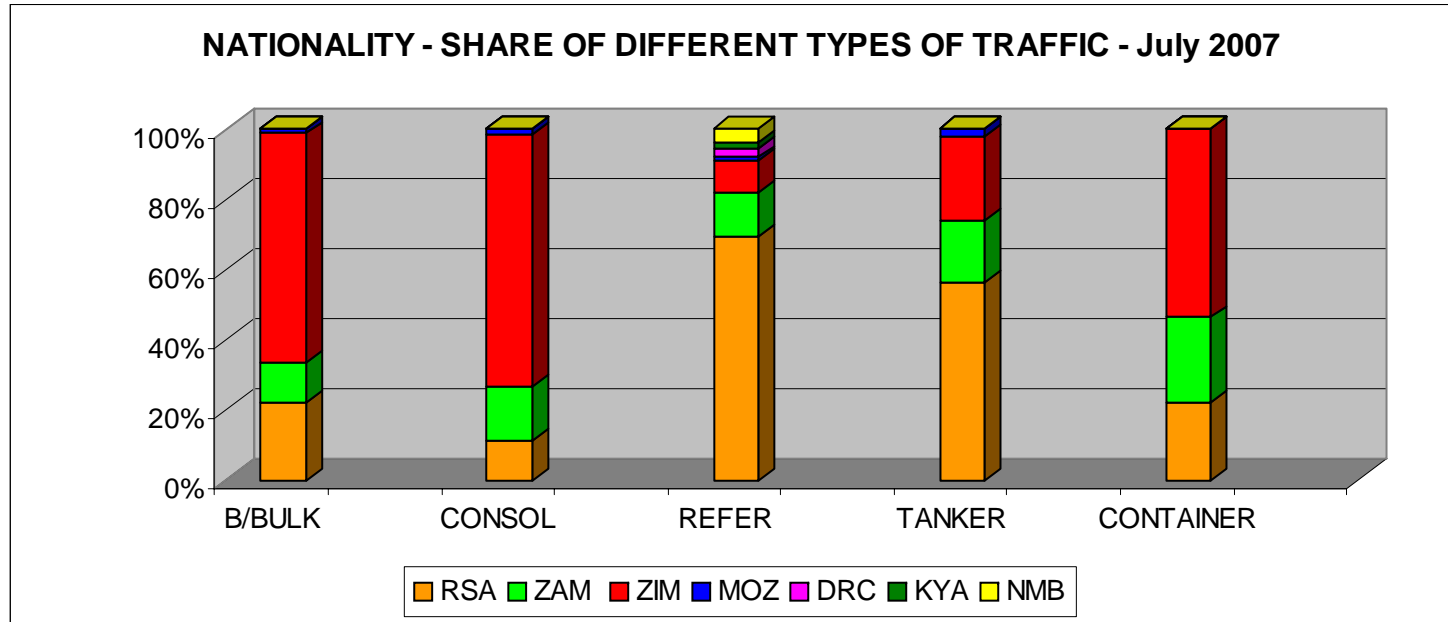


Figure 2. Share of Different Types of Traffic passing through Chirundu



2.3 Border Transit Times

Long border crossing times are often cited as one of the main impediments to the competitiveness of African industry. However, for the most part, there are no recent data to quantify the magnitude of the delays that are experienced. The monitoring exercise is producing some indicative data on the size of the delays and the contributing factors.

The data shows several significant patterns:

- a) The **border transit times** faced by northbound traffic from Zimbabwe to Zambia are larger than those for southbound traffic in reverse direction. In July 2007 the average for border transit time for northbound trucks dropped from 41 to 36 hours, southbound trucks also dropped from 17 to 14 hours (Estimates are still to be made of the cost of such delays, to the transport sector and to industry). Part of the

explanation of the difference lies in the fact that duty has to be paid for commodities entering Zambia whereas those going southwards are in transit through Zimbabwe and no duty has to be paid. The formalities are therefore faster going south.

Table 2 Average Border Crossing Times in Hours

	NOV 06	DEC 06	JAN 07	FEB 07	MAR 07	APRIL 07	MAY 07	JUNE 07	JULY 07
NORTHBOUND	37.99	38.33	35.28	36.41	33.76	40.57	48.35	40.81	36.03
SOUTHBOUND	10.79	12.32	11.18	13.43	13.60	16.06	16.50	16.71	13.16

Refrigerated trucks and tankers are generally processed faster than break-bulk, consolidated and container traffic. Tankers, which are processed faster than other types of traffic, on average, spent 37 hours at the border in July 2007 and are now spending almost the same time at the border as **B/bulk and containerised**. This is cause for concern as these should be considered high priority loads and consideration must now be given to pre-clearance of these loads as is done at Beitbridge where the average for these loads is under 10 hours.

Figure 3. Shows comparative transit times for all categories northbound

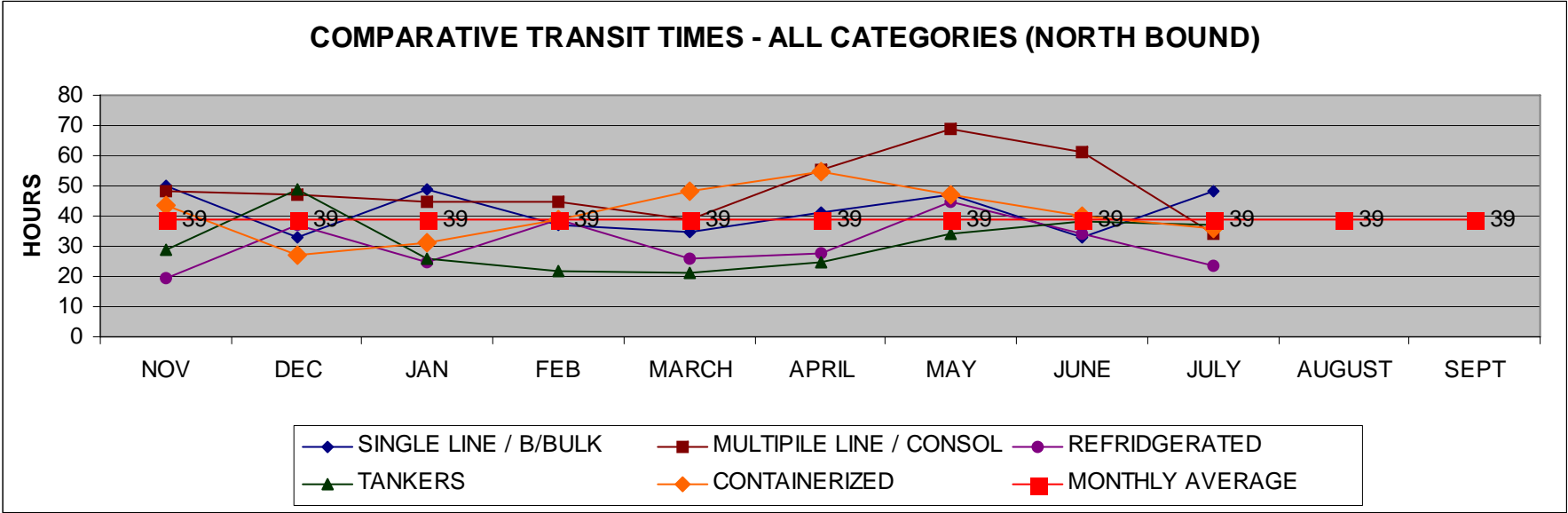
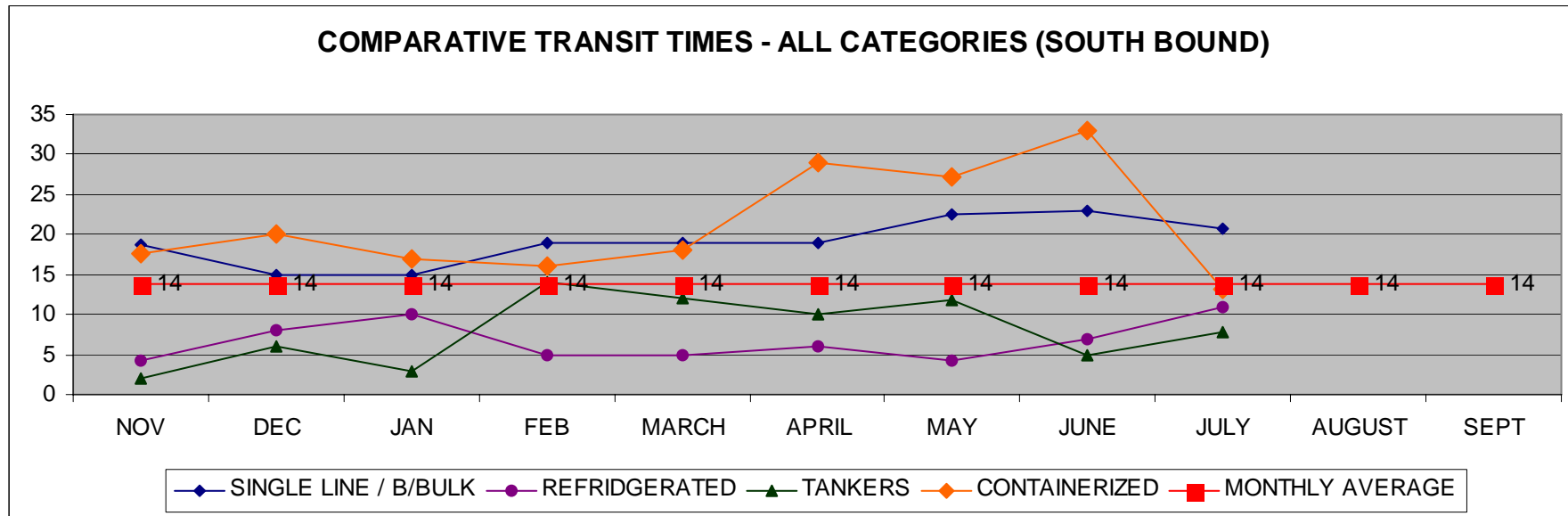
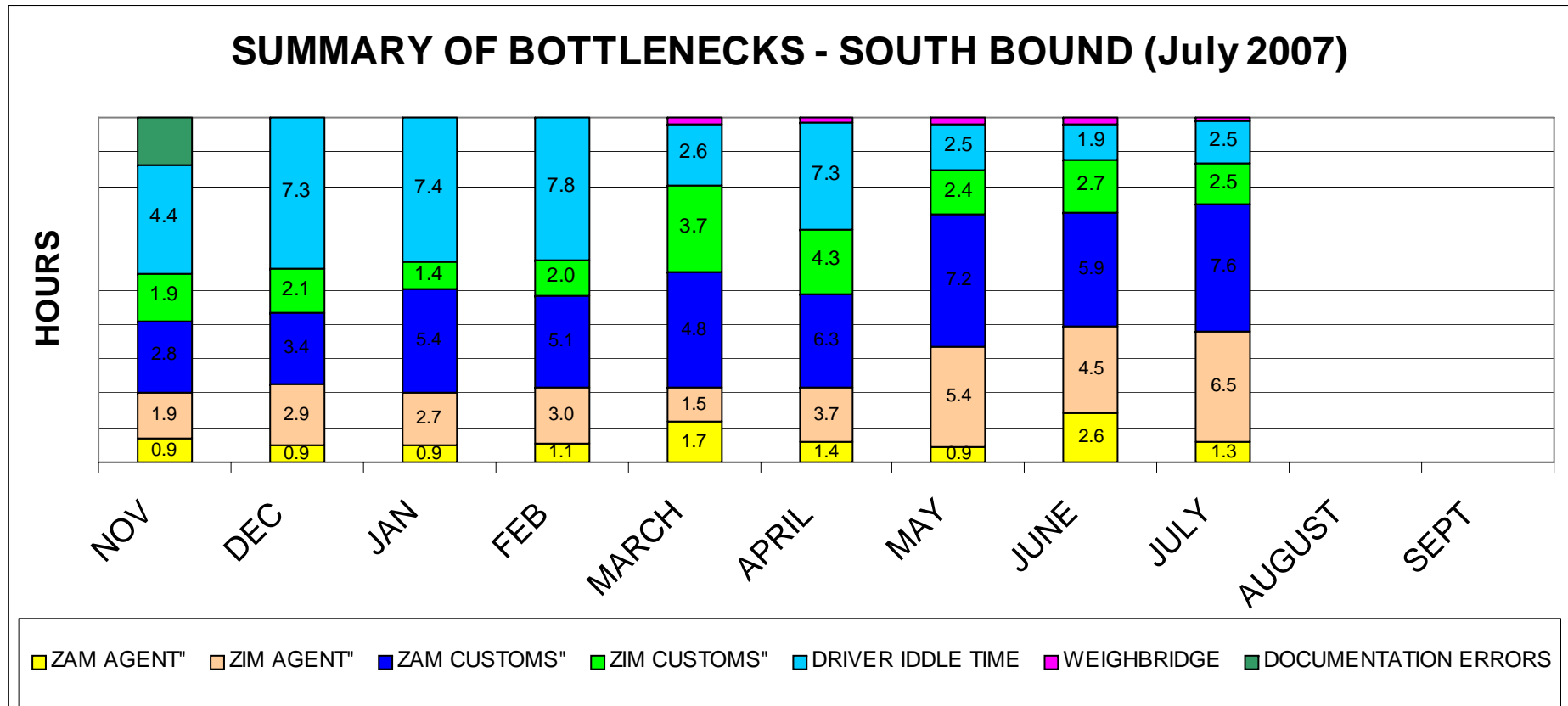


Figure 4. Shows comparative transit times for all categories south bound



- b) The **customs authorities** of the two countries account for more than **sixty percent of the total** border transit time at Chirundu. Zambia Revenue Authority on its own accounts for more than half the border time for northbound traffic and more than a third of the time for southbound traffic (Annex A).
- c) Traffic can be delayed for long periods while awaiting **payment of duties**. This only affects northbound traffic, and in particular consolidated loads, containerized and sometimes breaks bulk loads, with tankers/refrigerated duties are usually settled in advance as they are considered to be high priority loads.

Figure 6. Contribution of different Agencies/delays to Border Crossing Times – Southbound Traffic



2.4 Weighbridges

It is apparent from the data collected (Figure 5/6) that the weighbridges have been taking up very little or no time during the border crossing process, this is mainly because the weighbridges on the Zimbabwe side have been under construction and were only officially commissioned on the 1st of March. However during the month of June and July the north bound traffic experienced some delays, but this was largely due to trucks

crossing in the late afternoon and only being able to transit the weighbridge the following day due to the border closing at 18h00. There are two weighbridges, on the Zimbabwe side for both North and South bound traffic and situated opposite each other using one control room. North bound traffic is weighed on entering the Customs yard, while south bound traffic is weighed before leaving the Customs yard on departure. Zimbabwe is therefore basically controlling axle loads entering Zambia.

3 Emerging Issues

There are several issues that are emerging from the monitoring exercise which require attention:

- **Customs Processing Time.** It is apparent from the data that ZRA contributes the greatest amount of time to the total border crossing time, this was further complicated in April with a Customs go slow which affected border transit times and there was no improvement in May where several documents were delayed in customs for no apparent reason. The data from the monitoring exercise should contribute to the on-going border reform efforts under the Zambia Millennium Challenge Account Threshold Project (MCATP). One of the objectives of the project is to half border transit times.
- **Pre-clearance:** There has in the past been no pre-clearance of goods at Chirundu. The customs authorities have insisted on the vehicle being physical within their control area before it is cleared. More recently, ZRA have relaxed this and are allowing some south bound pre-clearances where they know the client/transporters etc. and on average southbound pre-clearances have increased to 50% plus and this is improving southbound transit times. With the introduction of the one-stop border post, consideration will have to be given to doing the same for north bound loads especially for refrigerated/tanker loads as has been done in Beitbridge and where the average transit time is less than 10 hours for both categories.
- **Waiting for Duties:** This only affects north bound traffic, but is a major contributing factor to consolidated loads where more than one importer is responsible for payment of duties and often more than one clearing agent will be responsible collecting those duties for payment to revenue authorities. As a result duties are seldom paid simultaneously and this causes delays in customs processing the documentation.
- **Driver Idle Time:** Is time which the driver is directly in control of i.e. from the time he arrives at the border to when he hands over all border documents to the relative clearing agents, from the time he is released on one side to when he crosses over to the other side and after being released on the other side to when he actually departs the border. We calculate it in this manner because from the monitoring process we have picked up that the driver often delays submitting his docs to the agents, also he will often delay crossing over especially if it is late afternoon or he will take his lunch first before crossing and often on departure he will wait for a mate that he may be travelling in convoy with, but not yet cleared. Some of these arrangements may be sanctioned by the transporters, like travelling in convoy with

other trucks, but it is our intention to highlight these times for the transporters attention so that he may take action should they deem it necessary.

- **Parking Facilities:** At present, both sides of the border do not have adequate well-developed parking facilities. This has led to vehicles queuing along the approach roads and blocking them at times. The new facilities that are nearing completion are expected to address this constraint, as there is provision for increased parking space. This situation can also be a contributing factor to driver idle time, as there are no controls or restrictions being placed on the driver, whereas in a truck park, trucks are situated closer to all amenities and entrance/exits are controlled through one point.

Axle load controls: There are two issues surrounding axle load control/axel load limits and location of weighbridges. It is important to harmonize the axle load limits across the region. If Zimbabwe continues weighing both incoming and outgoing vehicles then the weighbridge in Zambia could remain at Kafue. Otherwise Zambia would require a weighbridge at the border post. The Kafue weighbridge needs upgrading to one that accommodates multiple axles.

Annexure A – Average Transaction Times: Chirundu Border Post

SUMMARY OF BOTTLENECKS - NORTH BOUND												
Report Status	Interim Report	Interim Report Two				Interim Report Three			Draft Report		Final Report	AVERAGE HOURS ACCUMALITIVE
	AVERAGE HOURS - MONTHLY											
ALLOCATION	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT	
ZIM AGENT	4.4	3.1	2.6	1.1	1.6	1.0	1.5	1.7	1.1			2.0
ZAM AGENT	6.2	2.2	4.3	1.9	3.7	5.0	5.7	4.1	3.8			4.1
ZIM CUSTOMS	8.6	4.5	3.2	3.8	4.0	4.7	3.4	4.6	2.5			4.4
ZAM CUSTOMS	18.5	22.1	12.0	18.7	18.2	20.0	21.4	19.8	17.2			18.6
DRIVER IDDLE TIME	11.9	15.1	15.6	15.7	12.4	16.9	7.8	8.8	5.0			12.1
WEIGHBRIDGE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.5	0.7	4.5	4.6			1.2
WAITING FOR DUTIES	9.5	9.1	0.0	1.7	3.9	4.1	2.0	6.3	1.3			4.2
DOCUMENTATION ERRORS	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.0	0.0			0.7
TRANSPORTER DELAYS	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			0.6
VEHICLE BREAKDOWN	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	1.2	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0			0.7

SUMMARY OF BOTTLENECKS - SOUTH BOUND												
Report Status	Interim Report		Interim Report Two			Interim Report Three			Draft Report		Final Report	AVERAGE HOURS ACCUMALITIVE
	AVERAGE HOURS - MONTHLY											
ALLOCATION	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT	
ZAM AGENT	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.7	1.4	0.9	2.6	1.3			1.3
ZIM AGENT	1.9	2.9	2.7	3.0	1.5	3.7	5.4	4.5	6.5			3.6
ZAM CUSTOMS	2.8	3.4	5.4	5.1	4.8	6.3	7.2	5.9	7.6			5.4
ZIM CUSTOMS	1.9	2.1	1.4	2.0	3.7	4.3	2.4	2.7	2.5			2.6
DRIVER IDDL TIME	4.4	7.3	7.4	7.8	2.6	7.3	2.5	1.9	2.5			4.8
WEIGHBRIDGE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2			0.2
DOCUMENTATION ERRORS	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			0.2