

## TRADE AND BUSINESS FACILITATION

The Ministry of Energy, Small Business and Entrepreneurship (MESBE) has responsibility for trade facilitation and coordinating trade facilitation reforms in Barbados. The MESBE through the ambit of Barbados' National Trade Facilitation Committee, *the "National Task Force on Trade and Business Facilitation"*, have been monitoring and coordinating trade facilitation reforms. The Committee had devised a [National Trade Facilitation Implementation Road Map 2019-2023 \(pdf\)](#) which have been informed by the urgent policy directives of Government.

Such reforms include operationalizing an Electronic Single Window (ESW), the piloting of the Trusted Trader Program and seeking capacity building and donor assistance in building out Barbados' trade facilitation infrastructure.

The Government of Barbados has set an ambitious target of improving Barbados' trading across borders ranking to 100<sup>th</sup> and the country's overall ease of doing business ranking by the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. Barbados currently ranks 128<sup>th</sup> out of 190 countries in the ["Doing Business", 2020 pdf](#).

### WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

Barbados has ratified the [Trade Facilitation Agreement \(TFA\) pdf](#) at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), on 31 January 2018. The TFA provides for the self-designation of implementation commitments for developing and least developed countries.

Barbados has self-designated the forty technical measures contained in the TFA. It has identified those provisions which will be implemented upon entry into force of the Agreement (**Category A** Commitments); those which require additional time for implementation (**Category B**) and those which require additional time and technical assistance (**Category C**).

### National Task Force on Trade and Business Facilitation

Developing countries were required to establish National Trade Facilitation Committees as a prerequisite to accessing technical assistance and capacity building support from the World Trade Organization (WTO) under the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

In June 2009, under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce and Trade, the National Task Force on Trade Facilitation was first established and was reconstituted in 2019. The Task Force comprises representatives from governmental, private sector and the requisite border agencies. See [Composition of the National Task Force \(pdf\) and Terms of Reference of National Task Force \(pdf\)](#).

## **DID YOU KNOW.....**

The TFA is the first Agreement to be concluded at the WTO by all its members.

The TFA entered into force on 22 February 2017.

151 out of 164 countries have ratified the TFA.

## **Relevant Links**

WTO Trade Facilitation website: <https://www.tfafacility.org>

Customs website: [www.asycuda.customs.gov.bb](http://www.asycuda.customs.gov.bb)

World Bank: [www.doingbusiness.org](http://www.doingbusiness.org)