

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International trade is critically important for creation of wealth, economic growth and development. Sri Lanka Customs plays a major role in efficiency of international trade as it processes all import, export and transshipment consignments to ensure national and international laws and other regulatory requirements. Customs have the responsibility of revenue collection, social protection and trade facilitation to safeguard the supply chain and enhance trade.

Different units of Customs are placed at various places in the trade line to fulfil these responsibilities. Megaport unit of Sri Lanka Customs is one such unit which is established to monitor radiation levels of import, export and transshipment containers. Objective of this unit is to protect the society from smuggling of radioactive sources which could be used to build weapons of mass distraction.

This layer of protectionism comes at a cost. For clearance of a radioactive material containing container it takes two to three minutes. However evidence showed that this time goes up to one hour in some cases. As a result trade got delayed resulting considerable financial losses to consignees. This delay also caused financial and none financial losses to Sri Lanka Customs and other related authorities. Total financial loss due to this abnormal delay resulted approximately Rs. 275,000 per month.

Objective of this project was to reduce occurrences of massive delays in container release process from a count of 50 per month to 5 per month. By interviewing different stakeholders and brainstorming the results, it was understood that lack of knowledge management is the cause for irregular delays. It was noted that knowledge of experienced officers did not get transferred to new officers. Therefore a decision support system was implemented to store previous records so that it could be used as a support when making a new decision. Similarly a training session was conducted to increase awareness of officers.

This project was implemented for Megaport unit of Sri Lanka Customs. Project implementation period was from December 2016 to February 2017. After project implementation results for three months were analysed. It was observed that number of

delays has come down from an average of 50.67 per month to 6.67 per month resulting a financial saving of Rs. 270,000 per month.

The writer was the leader of the project. He managed the human resources required for implementation of different project components by forming different sub teams for each task and monitoring project progress and delivery on time. He was also an active team member of the project. Through this project the writer improved his technical skills on software development and project management. The project helped the writer to develop his communication skills through various interviews and training sessions conducted during the project. His conceptual skills were developed through integration of different project components and by analysing the impact of each component for overall performance improvement.