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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **SARS in consultation with LRA sets new dates for Customs Modernisation Programme implementation at Maputsoe Border Post and Maseru Bridge**

**Maseru, 24 May 2012:** The South African Revenue Services (SARS) in consultation with the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) made a decision to delay the implementation of Customs Modernization Programme at the Ficksburg/Maputsoe and Maseru Bridge which was scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2012 respectively.

The decision follows a meeting between the LRA Commissioner General Mr. Thabo Letjama and his SARS counterpart Commissioner Mr. Oupa Magashule in Pretoria, South Africa on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The new dates for the implementation of the Customs Modernized Systems and Processes at the two border posts will now take place on June 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> respectively.

SARS Customs Modernization introduces the principles of electronic processing of Customs declarations coupled with automated risk assessments to differentiate between low-risk and high-risk trade. These changes are aimed at facilitating trade by speeding up the movement of trucks through the border posts, replacing stamps and paper with electronic processing and using resources more effectively by centralizing declaration processing.

The LRA and the SARS will in the meantime facilitate a process of registering Lesotho business entities and licensing as Customs Agents in South Africa.

Customs concessions at non designated border posts will still apply subject to certain conditions such as that trader must submit manifest and declaration information electronically in advance.

The new dates will therefore afford the SARS and LRA as well as the traders to finalize their preparation while they brace for the new systems.

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