

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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## **Report Name:** Kenya Implements Destination Inspection for US Goods

**Country:** Kenya

**Post:** Nairobi

**Report Category:** Trade Policy Incident Report, Trade Policy Monitoring, FAIRS Country Report, Policy and Program Announcements

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### **Report Highlights:**

U.S. products arriving to Kenya now face mandatory conformity inspection on arrival to port. The Kenyan Bureau of Standards (KEBS) shifted U.S.-origin products from pre-shipment inspection to destination inspection following the expiration of their Pre-Export Verification of Conformity (PVoC) contract with the Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS). As of February 9, 2026, SGS no longer serves as KEBS's inspection agent for U.S. exports, leaving those functions to KEBS inspectors. With the change, KEBS also updated the inspection fee to 0.6 percent of the customs value (minimum \$300, maximum \$3,500). This change alters established compliance procedures for U.S. exporters and is likely to increase clearance times, documentation requirements, and port-related costs. The change was not notified to the World Trade Organization.

### **Previous Policy: Pre-Export Verification of Conformity**

Previously, KEBS administered the PVoC program to verify that imported goods complied with Kenyan standards before shipment. In countries with appointed inspection agents, exporters had to obtain a certificate of conformity (CoC) prior to shipment. In the United States, KEBS relied on SGS to conduct pre-shipment inspections and issue certificates. Exporters paid inspection and testing fees in the United States that were broadly comparable to the new 0.6 percent destination inspection charge and related minimum and maximum limits.

Under the previous program goods shipped *without* a certificate of conformity faced destination inspection at a higher rate of five percent of the approved customs value. Further, KEBS could require a security bond or order re-export or destruction of non-compliant goods. The SGS contract in the United States expired on February 8, 2026. Requests submitted by that date may still be processed, provided the certification decision was complete and CoC issued by February 28, 2026.

### **New Policy: Destination Inspection for U.S. Shipments**

Effective February 9, 2026, KEBS requires destination inspection for U.S.-origin shipments at the port of entry. KEBS charges an inspection fee of 0.6 percent of the approved customs value, subject to a minimum of \$300 and a maximum of \$3,500. The higher five percent inspection fee is no longer applicable to U.S. products. U.S. exporters to Kenya should expect increased clearance times and additional port costs associated with those delays.

KEBS requires shipments to be accompanied by laboratory test reports, certification permits, and related technical records issued by recognized certification bodies, accredited laboratories under ISO/IEC 17025:2017, national standards bodies, or government-designated laboratories. To facilitate efficient clearance of goods at the ports of entry, U.S. exporters are advised to use the existing pre-arrival processing framework and ensure the documents below are submitted in advance through the KENTRADE single window system:

- Commercial invoice
- Import Declaration Form
- Packing list
- Bill of Lading or Airway Bill
- Free Sale Certificate

KEBS issues a local CoC after inspection and generally takes samples for laboratory testing. When sampling occurs, KEBS may release consignments conditionally, subject to an affidavit from the importer that the goods will not be distributed until final conformity is confirmed.

### **Impact on U.S. Exporters**

The immediate shift from pre-shipment inspection to destination inspection changes compliance planning for U.S. exporters. Exporters now face a higher risk of port delays, additional documentation checks, added sampling and testing, and higher transaction costs at the ports of entry. The new process also increases uncertainty around clearance timelines, particularly for time-sensitive or perishable goods.

The abrupt implementation raises concern under the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, which encourages advance notice and reasonable transition periods for new technical measures affecting trade.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.