

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/403
9 November 2000

(00-4738)

REPORT (2000) OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

1. The Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures (the Agreement) which entered into force on 1 January 1995, establishes disciplines on users of import licensing systems with the principal objective of ensuring that the procedures applied for granting import licences do not in themselves restrict trade. It aims to simplify, clarify and minimize the administrative requirements necessary to obtain import licences.
2. The Committee on Import Licensing (the Committee) was established to afford Members the opportunity of consulting on any matters relating to the operation of the Agreement or the furtherance of its objectives. The Committee's Rules of Procedure, which were approved by the Council for Trade in Goods, are contained in document G/L/147.
3. All Members of the WTO are *ipso facto* members of the Committee. Observer governments in the General Council of the WTO have observer status in the Committee. In addition, representatives of the IMF, UNCTAD and the World Bank are invited to attend meetings of the Committee in an observer capacity.
4. The Committee held two meetings on 11 April and 11 October 2000 (G/LIC/M/11 and 12, to be issued). The Committee at its meeting in October 2000 elected Mr. Albert Wright of Denmark as Chairman and Ms. Fonny Shek of Hong Kong, China as Vice-Chairperson for 2000.
5. Pursuant to Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b) of the Agreement, all Members are required to notify their laws, regulations and administrative procedures relevant to import licensing. Since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, 66 Members (the European Communities and its member States counted as one) have notified their legislation and/or publications under these provisions. During the period covered by this report, the Committee dealt with notifications from the following ten Members: Bangladesh, Chad, the Czech Republic, Estonia, the European Communities, Guatemala, Hungary, the Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar and Singapore. It also received notifications from Jordan, Liechtenstein and Switzerland which will be taken up at the next formal meeting. All these notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/1/-.
6. Article 7.3 of the Agreement requires all Members to provide replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures¹ by 30 September each year. Since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, 67 Members (the European Communities and its member States counted as one) have made notifications under this provision. This includes replies to the Questionnaire from 11 Members in 1995, 22 Members in 1996, 25 Members in 1997, 25 Members in 1998, 20 Members in 1999 and 26 Members in 2000. During the period covered by this report, the Committee dealt with notifications from Canada, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Chad, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Jamaica, the Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, Namibia, Norway, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates. The Committee also received notifications from Estonia; the European Communities; Hong Kong, China; India; Jordan; Liechtenstein; Singapore; South Africa; Switzerland; United States

¹ Annexed to document G/LIC/3.

and Zimbabwe which will be taken up at the next formal meeting. These notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/3/-.

7. The Committee also received, pursuant to Article 5 of the Agreement, notifications relating to the institution of new import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures from Liechtenstein, Singapore, Switzerland and Venezuela. These notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/2/-.

8. At the meeting on 11 April 2000 and again on 11 October 2000, the European Communities reiterated their concerns regarding the compatibility with the Agreement of certain modifications introduced by Brazil in August 1998 to its non-automatic import licensing (G/LIC/M/11, paragraph 2 and G/LIC/M/12 to be issued). At that meeting and again on 11 October 2000, Brazil stated that replies had been sent directly to the EC; they concerned issues subject to bilateral consultations under the Dispute Settlement Understanding of the WTO and would therefore not be circulated at this stage to the Committee. Since 1998 its non-automatic import licensing system has been under review by the Brazilian authorities.

9. The Committee has provided a regular forum for the discussion of specific notifications submitted by Members and of concerns regarding notifications. As evident in the Annex of this report, there is a lack of compliance with the mandatory notification requirements under Articles 1.4(a), 8.2(b) and 7.3 and with the voluntary notification obligation under Article 5. In light of this situation, the Chairperson, recognizing the importance of notifications for the effective implementation and functioning of the Agreement, urged Members to fulfil their notification obligations.

10. At the 11 October meeting, the Committee discussed the matter of the lack of compliance with notification obligations. The Chairman stated that, in spite of numerous reminders and urging from the Committee, the situation had not improved. Several Members suggested possible ways of remedying the problem. One proposed that all Members, which had not done so yet, make a special commitment to bring themselves fully up to date regarding the notification of their legislation as requested under Article 1 of this Agreement. For the annual questionnaire, the option of making a single "best efforts" notification covering all of the time periods for which a notification was due could be envisaged. Another Member suggested that the Secretariat and other Members provide assistance to the newest Members of the Committee and those that had never notified to encourage compliance for the next meeting. In particular, Members that used licensing to operate tariff rate quotas on agricultural goods should be encouraged to comply. Also, Members should participate more fully in reviewing the notifications that were made. A third Member encouraged those who had difficulties in notifying to inform the Committee or the Secretariat to see how assistance could be provided. Finally, a fourth Member drew a parallel with the situation regarding the integrated databases where great efforts had been made to enable countries to comply with their obligations. Perhaps it would be necessary to give new impetus in the area of import licensing by being more proactive, for example, by sending letters to delegations indicating what their notification obligations were. The Committee took note of the suggestions and agreed that the item would be on the agenda at its next meeting with a view to agreeing how to ensure full compliance with all Members' obligations to notify import licensing procedures.

11. At its meeting on 11 October 2000, the Committee conducted its third biennial review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement under Article 7.1 on the basis of a factual report prepared by the Secretariat (G/LIC/W/14).

ANNEX

Notifications

Member	Footnote 5 to Article 2.2 Two-year delayed application (date of WTO Membership)	Articles 1.4.(a)/8.2.(b) Publications/legislation – First notification upon WTO Membership, ad hoc thereafter (date of latest communication)	Article 7.3 Replies to Questionnaire - Annual (date of latest communication)	Article 5 - Ad hoc (date of latest communication)
Albania		Not notified	Not notified	
Angola		Not notified	Not notified	
Antigua & Barbuda		Not notified	Not notified	
Argentina		G/LIC/N/1/ARG/1-2 (19.12.97)	G/LIC/N/3/ARG/1 + Corr.1 & ARG/2 (19.12.97)	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/1-6 + ARG/2/Rev.1 (26.11.99)
Australia		G/LIC/N/1/AUS/1 & Add.1 (28.4.97)	G/LIC/N/3/AUS/1 & Rev.1 (28.4.97)	
Bahrain		G/LIC/N/1/BHR/1 (27.5.97)	G/IC/N/3/BHR/1 (5.9.00)	
Bangladesh	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/BGD/1 (31.3.00)	G/LIC/N/3/BGD/1 (31.3.00)	
Barbados		G/LIC/N/1/BRB/1 (4.10.96)	G/LIC/N/3/BRB/1 (15.9.95)	
Belize		Not notified	Not notified	
Benin		G/LIC/N/1/BEN/1 (18.12.96)	Not notified	
Bolivia	G/LIC/1/Add.2 (13.9.95)	G/LIC/N/1/BOL/1 (29.5.97)	G/LIC/N/3/BOL/1-2 + Corr.1, BOL/3 (20.6.00)	
Botswana		Not notified	Not notified	
Brazil	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/BRA/1 (24.4.98)	G/LIC/N/3/BRA/1 (24.4.98)	G/LIC/N/2/BRA/1 (24.4.98)
Brunei Darussalam		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/BRN/1 (4.3.97)	
Bulgaria		G/LIC/N/1/BGR/1 (20.3.97)	G/LIC/N/3/BGR/1 (20.3.97)	
Burkina Faso	G/LIC/1/Add.1 (3.6.95)	G/LIC/N/1/BFA/1 (8.1.97)	G/LIC/N/3/BFA/1 (8.1.97)	
Burundi		Not notified	Not notified	
Cameroon	G/LIC/1/Add.3 (13.12.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Canada		G/LIC/N/1/CAN/1 (29.1.96)	G/LIC/N/3/CAN/1-3 (2.9.99)	
Central African Rep.		Not notified	Not notified	
Chad		G/LIC/N/1/TCD/1-2 (18.7.00)	G/LIC/N/3/TCD/1 (18.7.00)	
Chile		G/LIC/N/1/CHL/1 (16.7.96)	G/LIC/N/3/CHL/1 & Adds.1-2 (3.2.99)	
Colombia	G/LIC/1 (30.4.95)	G/LIC/N/1/COL/1 (12.1.96)	G/LIC/N/3/COL/1 & Add.1 (2.11.96)	
Congo		Not notified	Not notified	
Congo, Dem. Rep. of		Not notified	Not notified	
Costa Rica	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/CRI/1 (21.11.95)	G/LIC/N/3/CRI/1-2 (7.5.98)	
Côte d'Ivoire	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Cuba		G/LIC/N/1/CUB/1 (11.1.96)	Not notified	
Cyprus		G/LIC/N/1/CYP/1 (30.5.96)	G/LIC/N/3/CYP/1+ Rev.1 & CYP/2 (28.8.98)	
Czech Republic		G/LIC/N/1/CZE/1 + Add.1 (24.1.00)	Not notified	
Djibouti		Not notified	Not notified	
Dominica		Not notified	Not notified	
Dominican Rep.	G/LIC/1/Add.2 (9.3.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Ecuador		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/ECU/1 (1.8.95)	
Egypt		Not notified	Not notified	
El Salvador	G/LIC/1 (7.5.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Estonia		G/LIC/N/1/EST/1 + Add.1 (10.5.00)	G/LIC/N/3/EST/1 (5.10.00)	

Member	Footnote 5 to Article 2.2 Two-year delayed application (date of WTO Membership)	Articles 1.4.(a)/8.2.(b) Publications/legislation – First notification upon WTO Membership, ad hoc thereafter (date of latest communication)	Article 7.3 Replies to Questionnaire - Annual (date of latest communication)	Article 5 - Ad hoc (date of latest communication)
European Communities		G/LIC/N/1/EEC/1/Rev.2 &Add.s.1-2 & EEC/2 + Add.s.1-2 (10.1.00)	G/LIC/N/3/EEC/1 + Add.1; EEC/2 + Add.s.1-27 EEC/3 + Add.s.1-26 (6.10.00)	G/LIC/N/2/EEC/1-2 (4.7.97)
Fiji		G/LIC/N/1/FJI/1 (30.7.97)	G/LIC/N/3/FJI/1 (1.4.97)	
Gabon	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Gambia		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/GMB/1 (31.10.97)	
Georgia		Not notified	Not notified	
Ghana		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/GHA/1 (28.4.99)	
Grenada		Not notified	Not notified	
Guatemala	G/LIC/1/Add.1 (21.7.95)	G/LIC/N/1/GTM/1-2 (20.1.00)	G/LIC/N/3/GTM/1 (20.1.00)	
Guinea		Not notified	Not notified	
Guinea Bissau		Not notified	Not notified	
Guyana		Not notified	Not notified	
Haiti		G/LIC/N/1/HTI/1 (8.10.99)	G/LIC/N/3/HTI/1-2 (27.4.00)	
Honduras	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/HND/1 (31.10.96)	Not notified	
Hong Kong, China		G/LIC/N/1/HKG/1-4 (20.4.98)	G/LIC/N/3/HKG/1 + Rev.1-2, HKG/2-3+Corr.1 & HKG/4 (29.9.00)	G/LIC/N/2/HKG/1-2 (27.1.98)
Hungary		G/LIC/N/1/HUN/1-3 (7.3.00)	G/LIC/N/3/HUN/1-3 (7.3.00)	G/LIC/N/2/HUN/1 (19.1.98)
Iceland		G/LIC/N/1/ISL/1 (8.1.99)	G/LIC/N/3/ISL/1-2 (5.6.00)	
India		G/LIC/N/1/IND/1/Rev.1 + IND/2 (6.9.99)	G/LIC/N/3/IND/1-4 (24.10.00)	G/LIC/N/2/IND/1-2 (6.9.99)
Indonesia	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/IDN/1 (27.10.98)	G/LIC/N/3/IDN/1 (27.10.98)	
Israel		Not notified	Not notified	
Jamaica		G/LIC/N/1/JAM/1 (1.7.96)	G/LIC/N/3/JAM/1 + Add.1 (14.3.00)	
Japan		G/LIC/N/1/JPN/1 & JPN/2/Rev.1 (7.1.97)	G/LIC/N/3/JPN/1 + Corr.1 (2.4.98)	G/LIC/N/2/JPN/1-2 (18.8.98)
Jordan		G/LIC/N/1/JOR/1 (2.10.00)	G/LIC/N/3/JOR/1 (2.10.00)	
Kenya	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/3/KEN/1 (10.11.97)	G/LIC/N/3/KEN/1 (10.11.97)	
Korea		G/LIC/N/1/KOR/1-3 (3.4.98)	G/LIC/N/3/KOR/1-2 (6.4.98)	
Kuwait		Not notified	Not notified	
Kyrgyz Republic		G/LIC/N/1/KGZ/1 (6.1.00)	G/LIC/N/3/KGZ/1 (11.4.00)	
Latvia		G/LIC/N/1/LVA/1 (18.5.99)	G/LIC/N/3/LVA/1 (18.5.99)	
Lesotho		Not notified	Not notified	
Liechtenstein		G/LIC/N/1/LIE/1-2 (17.10.00)	G/LIC/N/3/LIE/1 + Add.1-LIE/2 (17.10.00)	G/LIC/N/2/LIE/1-2 (17.10.00)
Macau, China		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/MAC/1-2 (16.11.99)	
Madagascar		G/LIC/N/1/MDG/1-2 (31.3.00)	Not notified	
Malawi		G/LIC/N/1/MWI/1 (10.5.99)	G/LIC/N/3/MWI/1 (10.5.99)	
Malaysia	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/MYS/1 (4.12.97)	G/LIC/N/2/MYS/1-2 (21.7.99)
Maldives		Not notified	Not notified	
Mali		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/MLI/1 (9.5.97)	
Malta		G/LIC/N/1/MLT/1 (29.5.96)	G/LIC/N/3/MLT/1-2 + MLT/2/Corr.1 + Add.1 (6.6.00)	

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Mauritania		Not notified	Not notified	
Mauritius		G/LIC/N/1/MUS/1 & Adds.1-3 (4.5.98)	G/LIC/N/3/MUS/1 (2.11.95)	
Mexico		Not notified	Not notified	G/LIC/N/2/MEX/1 (16.10.98)
Mongolia		Not notified	Not notified	
Morocco		G/LIC/N/1/MAR/1 (3.7.96)	G/LIC/N/3/MAR/1-2 + MAR/2/Add.1 (18.2.99)	
Mozambique		Not notified	Not notified	
Myanmar	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Namibia		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/NAM/1-3 (30.3.00)	
New Zealand		G/LIC/N/1/NZL/1 (2.8.96)	G/LIC/N/3/NZL/1 + Add.1 (24.3.98)	
Nicaragua		G/LIC/N/1/NIC/1 (18.7.96)	Not notified	
Niger		G/LIC/N/1/NER/1 (10.12.97)	Not notified	
Nigeria		G/LIC/N/1/NGA/1 (16.2.98)	G/LIC/N/3/NGA/1-2 (16.2.98)	G/LIC/N/2/NGA/1-2 (16.2.98)
Norway		G/LIC/N/1/NOR/1-2 (3.11.97)	G/LIC/N/3/NOR/1 + Corr.1 & NOR/2 + Adds.1-2 (7.4.00)	
Pakistan		G/LIC/N/1/PAK/1 (6.5.96)	Not notified	G/LIC/N/2/PAK/1 (6.5.96)
Panama		G/LIC/N/1/PAN/1-2 (19.10.98)	G/LIC/N/3/PAN/1 (22.1.99)	G/LIC/N/2/PAN/1 (21.7.98)
Papua New Guinea		Not notified	Not notified	G/LIC/N/2/PNG/1 (6.2.98)
Paraguay		Not notified	Not notified	
Peru		G/LIC/N/1/PER/1 (13.2.96)	G/LIC/N/3/PER/1-2 + Add. 1 (4.10.99)	
Philippines		G/LIC/N/1/PHL/1 (6.4.98)	G/LIC/N/3/PHL/1-3 + PHL/3/Corr.1 (11.1.00)	
Poland		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/POL/1 (7.10.97)	
Qatar		G/LIC/N/1/QAT/1 (24.3.98)	G/LIC/N/3/QAT/1 (24.3.98)	
Romania		G/LIC/N/1/ROM/1-2 (1.3.99)	G/LIC/N/3/ROM/1-2 (6.7.99)	G/LIC/N/2/ROM/1-2 (6.7.99)
Rwanda		Not notified	Not notified	
St. Kitts & Nevis		G/LIC/N/1/KNA/1 (17.7.98)	Not notified	
St. Lucia		Not notified	Not notified	
St. Vincent & Grenadines		Not notified	Not notified	
Senegal		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/SEN/1 (20.1.97)	
Sierra Leone		Not notified	Not notified	
Singapore		G/LIC/N/1/SGP/1-3 (23.2.00)	G/LIC/N/3/SGP/1-3 (13.10.00)	G/LIC/N/2/SGP/1 (2.11.98)
Slovak Republic		Not notified	Not notified	
Slovenia		G/LIC/N/1/SVN/1 (27.11.96)	G/LIC/N/3/SVN/1 (6.6.97)	
Solomon Islands		Not notified	Not notified	
South Africa		Not notified	G/LIC/N/3/ZAF/1-3 (16.10.00)	G/LIC/N/2/ZAF/1 (9.7.97)
Sri Lanka	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Suriname		Not notified	Not notified	
Swaziland		G/LIC/N/1/SWZ/1 (19.8.96)	Not notified	
Switzerland		G/LIC/N/1/CHE/1-2 (21.9.00)	G/LIC/N/3/CHE/1-3 (21.9.00)	G/LIC/N/2/CHE/1-2 (21.9.00)
Tanzania		Not notified	Not notified	

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Thailand	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	
Togo		Not notified	Not notified	
Trinidad & Tobago		G/LIC/N/1/TTO/1 (28.10.98)	G/LIC/N/3/TTO/1-2 (28.10.98)	
Tunisia	G/LIC/1 (29.3.95)	G/LIC/N/1/TUN/1 + Add.1 (21.1.99)	G/LIC/N/3/TUN/1-3 (23.11.99)	
Turkey	G/LIC/1 (26.3.95)	G/LIC/N/1/TUR/1, TUR/2/Rev.1 & TUR/3 (29.6.99)	G/LIC/N/3/TUR/1-2 + TUR/2/Corr.1 & TUR/3 (29.6.99)	
Uganda		G/LIC/N/1/UGA/1 (16.8.96)	G/LIC/N/3/UGA/1 (17.6.97)	
United Arab Emirates	G/LIC/1/Add.3 (10.4.96)	G/LIC/N/1/ARE/1 (19.3.97)	G/LIC/N/3/ARE/1 (11.4.00)	
United States		G/LIC/N/1/USA/1 & Rev.1 (1.10.96)	G/LIC/N/3/USA/1-3 (6.11.00)	
Uruguay	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	G/LIC/N/1/URY/1 (4.9.96)	G/LIC/N/3/URY/1 + Add.1 (27.1.99)	
Venezuela	G/LIC/1 (1.1.95)	Not notified	Not notified	G/LIC/N/2/VEN/1 (28.2.00)
Zambia		Not notified	Not notified	
Zimbabwe		G/LIC/N/1/ZWE/1-2 (21.9.98)	G/LIC/N/3/ZWE/1 + Add.1 (22.9.00)	
TOTAL MEMBERS = 123²	24	66	67	19

² The European Communities and its member States counted as one Member.