

**REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES**

Notification under Article 7.3 of the  
Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures<sup>1</sup>

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

The following communication, dated 28 October 1998, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago.

Outline of system

1. The import licensing system is regulated by the Imports and Exports Control Regulations 1941 which is scheduled as part of the Trade Ordinance No. 19 of 1958.

Purposes and coverage of licensing

2. With the liberalization of the economy, only the undermentioned goods require a licence to be imported into the country:

A. Imports subject to automatic licensing:

- (i) Live poultry, rearing or breeding live poultry, other than rearing or breeding; fish, fresh (live or dead) chilled or frozen; (a) shrimp (prawn) fresh (live or dead) chilled or frozen; (b) lobster, fresh (live or dead) chilled or frozen; (c) crabmeat, fresh, chilled or frozen.
- (ii) The following oils and fats of CARICOM origin: coconuts in all forms including coconut seedlings, copra, dessicated coconut, coconut milk and coconut cream, but excluding coconut oil; oilseed cake, meal and other vegetable residues; copra; oilseed, beans, nuts etc.; animal oils, fats and greases, unrefined; fatty acids and solid residues from the treatment of oils and fats; vegetable fats; and ships and boats (under 250 tonnes).

B. Imports subject to non-automatic licensing:

- (i) The following oils and fats of non-CARICOM origin: coconuts in all forms including coconut seedlings, copra, dessicated coconut, coconut milk and coconut cream, but excluding coconut oil; oilseed cake, meal and other vegetable oil residues; copra; oilseed, beans, nuts etc.; animal oils, fats and greases, unrefined; fatty acids and solid residues from the treatment of oils and fats; vegetable fats.

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<sup>1</sup> See document G/LIC/3, Annex, for the Questionnaire.

- (ii) Road motor vehicles of the following descriptions (reason: public safety):
    - (a) left-hand drive vehicles imported under Section 45(2)(4) of the Customs Act Chapter 78:01 as amended; and
    - (b) used right-hand vehicles excluding used garbage compactors – not exceeding 15 tons (15,000 kg.) MGW.
  - (iii) Paper for wrapping tobacco or cigarettes (reason: national security).
  - (iv) The following pesticides: Parathion, ethyl; dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT); chlordime form; dibromochloropropane (DBCP); ethylene dibromide (EDB); pentachlorophenol (PCP); lead arsenate; thallium and its salts; aldrin, dieldrin and endrin; 2,4,5-trichlorophenyl (2,4,5-T).
3. The system applies to goods originating in and coming from all countries with the exception of oils and fats.
4. Automatic import licensing is for statistical purposes. Non- automatic import licensing is for the purpose of administering import restrictions maintained pursuant to: bilateral/regional trade agreements; environmental concerns; national security; and health concerns.
5. The licensing system is a statutory requirement, published as Legal Notice No. 103 – Notice to Importers No. 1 of 1997 as amended vide Legal Notice No. 180 of 1998 (attached as Annex I<sup>2</sup>). Authority exists to suspend the system whenever it is determined that such action is appropriate. Notice to such action is published in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette.

#### Procedures

6. There are no quantitative restrictions.
7. For all goods requiring an import licence:
- (a) Application for a licence must be made at least one week in advance of importation. Licences may be obtained within a shorter time-limit or for goods arriving at the port without a licence, however the law stipulates and applicants are encouraged to obtain licences before goods arrive in the country.
  - (b) A licence may be granted immediately on request in instances where goods arrive without prior knowledge of the applicant.
  - (c) There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which application for licence and/or importation may be made.
  - (d) An importer has to approach only one administrative organization with an application, however consideration of all licence applications is not always effected by a single administrative organization. The following applications must be passed on to other administrative organizations for recommendations: Live poultry (rearing and breeding and other); fish, crustaceans, molluscs – Ministry of Agriculture Land, and Marine Resources; left-hand drive road motor vehicles – Ministry of Works and Transport; and ships and boats – Ministry of National Security.

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<sup>2</sup> Available for consultation in the Secretariat (Market Access Division) (English only).

8. If the Ministry's policy does not allow, the reasons for refusal are written on the application form. The applicant has a right to appeal to a higher authority, i.e. Permanent Secretary or Minister.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. All persons, firms and institutions are eligible to apply for licences.

Documentational and other requirements for application for licence

10. A sample form is attached as Annex II<sup>3</sup>. An importer is required to submit the following documents with the application: covering letter explaining need for the imported item – non-automatic licences; identification; Board of Inland Revenue Certificate; Registration of Business; Pro-forma invoice if available; and one \$1.00 TT stamp.

11. Upon actual importation, an importer is required to submit the Customs copy of the approved import licence.

12. There is a licensing fee of \$1.00 TT in stamps on acceptance of the application and a fee of \$10.00 TT in stamps for the approved licence.

13. There is no deposit or advance payment requirement associated with the issue of licences.

Conditions of licensing

14. A licence is valid for one year from the date of issue unless otherwise stated. The validity can be extended if the applicant so requests.

15. There is no penalty for the non-utilization of a licence or a portion of it.

16. Licences are not transferable between importers.

17. Conditions are attached to licences for road motor vehicles.

Other procedural requirements

18. Apart from import licensing prior to importation other administrative procedures may entail: certification from Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources for live poultry, fish, shrimp, lobster and crabmeat.

19. Foreign exchange is automatically provided by the banking authorities for goods to be imported. No licence is required as a condition for obtaining foreign exchange. Import documents must be provided to the banking authorities.

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<sup>3</sup> Available for consultation in the Secretariat (Market Access Division) (English only).