

Committee on Import Licensing

NOTIFICATION OF REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPORT LICENSING
PROCEDURES UNDER ARTICLE 7.3 OF THE AGREEMENT¹

Questions from NEW ZEALAND to BULGARIA²

The following questions were posed by the delegation of New Zealand at the meeting of the Committee held on 22 April 1997, concerning the notification provided by Bulgaria under Article 7.3 of the Agreement¹.

1. Bulgaria's reply to Question 1 states that non-automatic licences are required for the importation of products with a view to preventing the shortages of foodstuffs and products essential to the economy in transition. However Bulgaria has notified a number of food products as subject to automatic licensing for monitoring purposes (Part II of Annex I). Are these products in fact subject to non-automatic import licensing? If so, what is the justification for such a measure? Bulgaria has undertaken to, from the date of accession (1 December 1996) eliminate and not to introduce non-tariff measures such as licensing (WT/ACC/BGR/5, page 20).

2. In replying to Question 12 Bulgaria notified that there is a licensing fee depending on the value of goods. This is inconsistent with the statement in WT/ACC/BGR/5, page 19 that "No fees are charged for the issuing of licences". Could Bulgaria please clarify? In addition, Article VIII of GATT 1994 states that fees in connection with importation, including those relating to licensing, shall be limited in amount to the approximate cost of services rendered and shall not represent an indirect protection to domestic products or a taxation of imports. We would like Bulgaria to explain why it considers that a fee depending on the value of goods is consistent with Article VIII of GATT 1994.

3. The situation as regards tobacco is unclear. WT/ACC/BGR/5, page 19 states that manufactured tobacco and tobacco products are subject to non-automatic import licensing. However, G/LIC/N/3/BGR/1 lists unmanufactured tobacco as subject to non-automatic import licensing whereas tobacco products are subject to automatic licensing. We would be grateful for clarification of licensing as applied to tobacco and tobacco products.

¹G/LIC/N/3/BGR/1.

²See Understanding reached by the Committee on Import Licensing (G/LIC/4).