

**IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGREEMENT
ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE**

Communication from Belize

Addendum

The following communication, under Article 15.2 of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade has been received from Belize.

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1. Belize as a signatory to the WTO Agreement has taken the following measures to ensure compliance with the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement.
 2. The Belize Bureau of Standards (hereafter referred to as the Bureau) was established in 1992 under the Standards Act Chapter 295, Revised Edition 2000 as at 31 December 2000. The Bureau is also responsible for Metrology as prescribed by the Metrology Act 23 of 2003;
 3. The Bureau is a government department which collaborates with partners in establishing standards, technical regulations or codes of practices in a particular field(s), through a coordinated mechanism. Such collaboration includes but is not limited to departments such as the Belize Agriculture Health Authority (BAHA), the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Customs Department and the Ministry of Health.
 4. Written Public Notices of draft documents in the development stage are published in at least two local newspapers and at least one media as prescribed by the law; thereafter, subject to public comment. Copies of the draft standards or technical regulations can be requested via softcopy or hardcopy from the address provided in the Public Notice or from the WTO/TBT Enquiry Point.
 5. A period of three months from date of notice in local newspapers and media channels are given for Public Comments on draft documents. The comments are then disposed of at a technical sub-committee which amends that draft document if necessary. The final draft is then sent to the Standards Advisory Council for approval. The final document is then sent to the Minister responsible for the Bureau for final approval. Currently, Belize does not request public comments on conformity assessment procedures as there are no certified testing facilities in place for verification; however as may be necessary the Bureau accepts third party certification from an accredited body until such time when conformity assessment can be conducted in country.

6. The Bureau's main responsibility lies in the preparation, promotion and implementation of standards to ensure a better quality of life for all Belizeans. The Bureau also serves as the National Enquiry Point for Technical Barriers to Trade.

Ministry of Works Compound
P.O. BOX 430
Belize C.A.
Tel.: +(501) 822-0446/47
Fax: +(501) 822-2571
Email: tbtenquiry-belize@bbs.gov.bz

7. The Directorate for Foreign Trade under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the Notification Point that is responsible for overseeing all trade matters and taking lead in the functioning of trade agreements along with other domestic partners.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
Directorate for Foreign Trade
Director
Notification Point
2nd Floor, Sir Edney Cain Building
Belmopan City
Belize C.A.
Tel.: +(501) 822-2832 or +(501)822-3263
Fax: +(501) 822-2837
Email: foreigntrade@btl.net
