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Committee on Import Licensing

Original: English

REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES¹

NOTIFICATION UNDER ARTICLE 7.3 OF THE AGREEMENT ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

The following communication, dated 16 April 2015, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

1 COMMERCE

Outline of system

1. The Import and Export (Control) Regulation Statutory Rules and Orders (SR&O) came into effect on the 20th November 1990. This was subsequently amended by a series of SR&O with the most recent being SR&O No. 55 of 2008.

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. The regulation consists of 3 schedules. The importation of any good listed in the 1st schedule is prohibited from any place outside the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and Belize. They may only be imported if a license is obtained from the Minister of Trade.

The importation of any goods listed in the second schedule is prohibited from any place outside the Caribbean community. They may only be imported if a license is obtained from the Minister of Trade.

The exportation of any goods listed in the third schedule is prohibited except under license from the Comptroller of suppliers.

3. The licensing procedures apply to all countries.

4. Both systems are now used for administrative and statistical purposes.

5. The Import and Export (Control) Regulations No.55 of 2008.

Procedures

6. Not applicable.

7.(a) A minimum forty eight (48) hours is required for processing of applications prior to importation. However, under certain circumstances /conditions (inadvertency) applications are processed within a shorter time limit.

(b) The automatic licenses can be fast tracked based on the circumstances.

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

- (c) There are no limitations as to the period of the year for importation.
- (d) Application for the products below must be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural transformation, Forestry, Fisheries and Industry before submission to the Trade Department.
- Fish (live, fresh, frozen, processed products)
 - Meat products (live, fresh, frozen, processed)
 - Fruits and vegetables

8. Generally, there are no circumstances other than failure to meet ordinary criteria under which a licence may be refused.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. All persons, firms and institutions in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are eligible to apply for licences.

Documentational and other requirements for application for licence

10. The information required in the application are: Name and address of applicant, the name, quantity and value of items, country of origin, name and address of the exporting firm, signature of applicant and date of application. See application attached.²

11. For agricultural products copies of certificates issued by the Veterinary Division and the Ministry of Agriculture respectively should accompany the import licence; for fish product a stamp from the Fisheries Department must be affixed to the import licence application form.

12. An Eastern Caribbean five dollar stamp (\$5.00) EC must be affixed to the application form.

13. No deposit or advancement required.

Conditions of Licensing

14. All licences are valid for three months.

15. There are no penalties for the non-utilization of a license or a portion of it.

16. Licences are not transferable between importers.

17. There are no conditions attached to the issuance of a licence.

Other procedural requirements

18. There are no other administrative procedures required prior to importation.

19. Not applicable.

2 ANIMAL AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Outline of system

1. To control the movement of animals, animal products (including meat, meat products, eggs, etc.) and animal related materials (including veterinary biological, litter, fodder, refuse, equipment, containers and utensils) into and from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to prevent the introduction and spread of animal diseases within the State and other Member states of the Caribbean Community, and to ensure the safe and humane movement of animals from the State and other related and connected issues.

² Available for consultation in the Secretariat (Market Access Division) (in English only).

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. Permits are required for the following:

- Domesticated livestock (including but not exclusive to horses, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry).
- Wildlife (including but not exclusive to monkeys, birds and other exotics).
- Pets (including but not exclusive to dogs, cats, and any of the above-mentioned species kept as pets).
- Animal products (including but not exclusive to meat, eggs, meat products).
- Veterinary biological products (including but not exclusive to vaccines, semen, embryos, tissues, blood, specimens and samples).
- Animal related materials (including but not exclusive to litter, fodder, refuse, equipment, containers and utensils).

3. This system applies to animals and animal related items originating in and coming from all countries regardless of species, product or disease status of the country of origin.

4. This system is not intended to restrict the quantity or value of imports but to protect the animal and human population of the country.

5. This system is governed by the Animals (National and International Movement and Disease Prevention) Act. Act Number 7 of 1994.

Procedures

6. Not applicable.

7.(a) The regulation does not indicate a specified amount of time in advance required for the application for an import permit. According to the regulations, any person who imports an animal or animal related item into the state without a an import permit commits an offence and the animal or animal related item may be seized, forfeited for retention, destruction or disposal.

(b) A permit cannot be granted immediately upon request as the application must be reviewed, processed and approved.

(c) There are no limitations to the period of the year during which application for licence and/or importation may be made.

(d) The licensing process is affected by the Ministry of Trade and the Animal Health and Production Division (AHPD) in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Trade regulates licensing (provides the application form, collects fees, etc.) while the AHPD provides the permit, which indicates the conditions under which the animals or animal related items may be imported.

8. An application may be refused if the animal or animal related product does not comply with the conditions outlined in the Act and its regulations or it is known that they will not be able to comply with the conditions. Once a permit is refused, the importer is notified and the reasons for refusal are provided. There is no provision for appeal in the Act or its regulations.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. All persons, firms and institutions are eligible to apply for licences. There are no restrictions.

Documentational and other requirements for application for licence

10. The information required can be found in the attached application form for live animals (except day old chicks). The following information must be provided for animals:

- Name and address of Importer;

- Name and address of Exporter;
- Number of animals;
- Species;
- Breed;
- Sex;
- Colour.

The following information must be provided for animal related items and day old chicks and can be found in the attached application for import licence:

- Name and address of Importer;
- Name and address of Supplier;
- Name/Description of items;
- Quantity of items;
- Value of items;
- Country of Origin.

Additional information required for different specific items:

- Veterinary Biologicals;
- Name of Product;
- Official Batch Number assigned in country of manufacture (if any);
- Official Mark assigned in country of manufacture (if any);
- Name and address of manufacturer;
- Name and address of shipper.

Additional information required for semen for artificial insemination of animals:

- Details of animal from which semen was collected and premises where animal is kept;
- Name and address of collection agency in country of origin;
- Official Batch Number assigned in country of origin (if any).

11. The importer must furnish the original import permit accompanied by an original health certificate issued by the official veterinary authority from the exporting country or country of origin (as applicable). Further documentation to be provided for animal related items include the invoice, bill of lading and a copy of the Customs entry for verification.

12. There is a five dollar (\$5) licensing fee paid through the purchase of a revenue stamp.

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

Conditions of Licensing

14. A licence and permit are valid for a period of three (3) months. A permit may be revoked if any of the conditions or terms have not been or can no longer be complied with.

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

16. Licences are not transferable between importers.

17. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the information provided is correct and comply with the conditions outlined in the permit.

Other procedural requirements

18. Importers are required to inform the Veterinary Authority, at least 24 hours, before the arrival of the shipment.

19. Not applicable.

3 PLANT PROTECTION AND QUARANTINE

Outline of system

1. In order to import agricultural commodities and regulated articles into Saint Vincent and the Grenadines a permit is required. The application for an import permit (IP) must be made well in advance of the shipment. In instances where the particular case has been considered and or a pest risk analysis already conducted the IP will be issued within 48 hours. However, for new cases of when the Phytosanitary conditions at the country of origin have changed, requiring the conduct of a new Pest Risk Analysis (PRA), the time of issuance will depend on the quality of information received to undertake the PRA.

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. Permits are required for:

- All categories of Plants, plant products and cut flowers;
- Fruits and vegetables;
- Quarry products.

3. The permit applies to all countries.

4. The measure is geared towards the protection of the territory against exotic pest introductions and invasive species.

5. The legislation which governs importation is the Plant Protection Act No. 15 of 2005.

Procedures

6. . Not applicable.

7.(a) Application must be made at least two weeks in advance of procurement. The time could be substantially reduced if it's a commodity that has been regularly imported and poses no threat to the territory.

(b) In exceptional circumstances consideration can be given, once it's a commodity that has already been given the clearance from the origin country before and its phytosanitary situation has not changed. However, we do require at least a day to process.

(c) There is no restriction in the time of the year that application can be made.

(d) The application is processed by one entity: the Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit, in the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry, Fisheries and Industry.

8. The reason for refusal is based only upon phytosanitary consideration. There is no appeal process.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. All nationals have the privilege to apply and there is no application fee.

Documentational and other requirements for application for licence

10. The information relative to application is set out in the plant protection and quarantine operational manual. All forms for completion is also found as appendix in this manual.

11. The documents required a copy of the invoice of the commodities and accompanying phytosanitary certificate.

12. No fee is charged.

13. There is no deposit or advance payment.

Conditions of Licensing

14. Permits are valid only for the particular consignment.

15. There is no penalty for not using the permit.

16. The permits are non-transferable between importers.

17. There are no other conditions attached to the issuance of the license.

Other procedural requirements

18. There are no other administrative procedures necessary for prior importation.

19. Not applicable.

4 FISH AND FISH PRODUCTS

Outline of system

1. Import licenses are required for the importation of fish and fish products.

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. A licensing system is maintained for the importation of: Fish products (live, fresh, frozen, and processed).

3. The licensing system applies to all countries.

4. The main purpose of the licensing is to restrict some undesirable fish species from entering the country (e.g. Piranhas).

5. The laws under which the licensing is maintained are as follows:

- Fisheries Act of 1986;
- Fisheries (Fish and Fish Products) Regulations of 2006.

It is not possible for the government to abolish the system without legislative approval.

Procedures

6. Not applicable.

7. (a) Application for a licence must be made at a minimum of 48 hours for fish and fish products.

(b) A license can be granted immediately on request, providing this request is made in writing.

(c) There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which application for licence and/or importation may be made.

(d) License applications are not affected by a single administrative organ. Applications must be passed on to Ministry of Trade for a second approval after they come to Fisheries Division for a first approval. The importer walks the document through the necessary organs.

8. Applications are not generally ever refused. In the event that an application for a licence is refused, the reason(s) will be given to the applicant.

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. The attached copy² of import licence shows the information required in applications. The importer is not required to supply any other document with the application.

11. The following documents are to be presented upon importation: Health certificate.

12. An Eastern Caribbean five dollar stamp (\$5.00 EC) is affixed to the application form.

13. Not applicable.

Conditions of Licensing

14. A licence is valid for three (3) months.

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

16. Licences are not transferable between importers.

17. There are no other conditions attached for the issue of a licence.

Other procedural requirements

18. Procedures related to customs brokerage are required to be completed prior to importation. Forty-eight (48) hours advance notice is to be given to Fisheries Division prior to arrival date of fish products, to facilitate inspection.

19. Not applicable.

5 FIREARMS

Outline of system

1. The Firearms licencing board established by section 2 A of the Firearms Act No. 11 of 1 2010.

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. Under the act "firearm" means:

- Any legal barrelled weapon capable of discharging any shot, bullet or missile;
- Any restricted or prohibited weapon;
- Any component part of a weapon described at paragraph (a) or (b);
- Any accessory to any weapon described at paragraph (a).

3. The licensing procedure applies to all countries.

4. No. Generally, the licencing system prevents the granting of licence to restricted persons "Restricted person" means a person who, within five years immediately preceding the date of his application, has been declared under section 7.

5. Laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Revised edition Fire arms Act chapter 386. Act No. 12 of 1995. Licensing is statutorily mandated and cannot be abolished without legislative action.

Procedures

6. Not applicable.

7.(a) A Firearms licence is issued within of a properly completed application. Any person wishes to import a firearm into Saint Vincent and the Grenadines must first file with the Ministry of National Security and obtain approval of the application and Permit for the importation of Firearms.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(d) Yes, the application is considered by a single administrative organ.

8. Applications are not generally ever refused. In the event that an application for a licence is refused, the reason(s) will be given to the applicant.

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. Applications: Fire Arms Act 1995 application Form and 1 passport size photo.

11. Proof the customs department.

12. Yes. A license fee of EC \$250.00.

13. Not applicable.

Conditions of Licensing

14. The license is valid for a period of 1 year from issuance. The validity of a license can be extended by renewal application for license and new application for import permit.

15. No.

16. No.

17. No.

Other procedural requirements

18. No.

19. No.
