



EFFECTIVE USE OF THE NOTIFICATION FORMAT

EIGHTH TRIENNIAL REVIEW

Submission from Japan

The following submission, dated 8 May 2018, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Japan.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1. Transparency is one of the most important elements under the TBT agreement, and TBT notification plays a central role in this context. Japan is of the view that sharing information in notification is beneficial to all Members in the understanding of the purpose and structure of notified measures.

1.2. The TBT Committee has been engaged in discussing the types of information recommended to be contained in the TBT notification at an early stage since the TBT agreement entered into force (see G/TBT/1/Rev.1, 10 August 1995, Section C).

1.3. For instance, in 2006, with a view to facilitating the implementation of transparency procedures under the Agreement, and with regard to texts of notified technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures, the Committee agreed to encourage each Member to provide the website address where Members can download the full text of the notified measure (see G/TBT/1/Rev.13, 8 March 2017, Section 5.6.2.1.a.i).

1.4. With regard to the box 8 "relevant documents" in the notification format, which relate to notified technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures, the Committee agreed to encourage members to include information on the following 4 types of documents; (1) Publication where notice appears, including date and reference number; (2) Proposal and basic document (with specific reference number or other identification) to which proposal refers; (3) Publication in which proposal will appear when adopted; (4) Whenever practicable, give reference to relevant international standard.

1.5. In accordance with the above (2), many notifications include the names or identification numbers of "relevant documents" to which notified technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures refer. Furthermore, some Members voluntarily provide website addresses of the "relevant documents". Searching "relevant documents" through Members' websites is generally burdensome for stakeholders mainly due to language barriers, thus, Japan is of the view that including the website address of the "relevant documents" in the notification enables Members and stakeholders to reach the document quickly and easily.

1.6. In addition, recently the Committee has encouraged Members, whenever possible and on a voluntary basis, to indicate in box 8 of the notification format whether or not they consider that a relevant international standard exists and, if appropriate, to provide information about deviations (see G/TBT/26, 13 November 2009, para. 36). Japan considers some additional information could be useful to further enhance transparency.

1.7. For instance, when a notified measure deals only with imported products, providing information of the relevant laws and regulations applicable to domestic products might be useful to better understand the purpose or structure of the notified measure and to examine the WTO consistency of the notified measure as well.

1.8. Therefore, Japan considers that it is definitely beneficial for all Members to further discuss through thematic session, etc., on the necessity to update the scope of box 8 of the notification format and types of documents Members are encouraged to provide in box 8 of the notification format.

2 PROPOSALS

2.1. In light of the above, we propose that Members are encouraged to provide a website address, where Members can find the text of the "relevant documents" in box 8 of the notification format.

2.2. We propose that Members are encouraged to discuss through thematic sessions, etc. on the necessity to update the scope of box 8 of the notification format and the types of documents Members are encouraged to provide in box 8.
