Outline of systems

With very few exceptions, imports into Greece are not subject to quantitative restrictions. However, each transaction is subject to an administrative procedure of registration and to control regulations designed to furnish data on receipts and expenditure as well as on external financial commitments.

Purpose and coverage of the licensing

1-5. Detailed replies to these questions are to be found in document BOP/111 dated 21 September 1970, in particular under the headings "Legal and administrative basis of the restrictions" and "Methods used in restricting imports".

Products under restriction - procedures

6.(a) In addition to notices in the Chamber of Commerce bulletins, published at their headquarters, the specialized press gives more extensive publicity to quota allocations, in particular regarding quantities, countries of provenance and the objective criteria applied.

(b) Quotas are fixed on a yearly basis, but for a shorter period in respect of seasonal goods, in particular agricultural products.

In the latter case, licences are valid only for the period specified, with the possibility of extension if the objective is not reached.

(c) The licences are issued in respect of specified products to the trade in general, without discrimination, and on the basis of objective criteria. The imports allowed under the licences are carried out in the name of the importer who holds the licence. Unused allocations are sometimes reallocated, in the light of market conditions.

The names of importers holding licences are published in the press and notified to the appropriate Chamber of Commerce, from which anyone desiring information can enquire.
(d) The parties concerned are requested to submit licence applications, with relevant supporting documents, within one to two months from the date of opening of the quota.

(e) The length of time for processing applications and supporting documents varies from twenty to forty days.

(f) The maximum time between the grant of a licence and actual importation is six months.

(g) Licence applications, filed together with an invoice certified by an appropriate committee, are examined by one competent authority. The invoice formality is also applied in the case of goods imported under the non-restrictive system.

(h) The specified import quantity for goods subject to quantitative restriction is allocated to interested importers on the basis of their imports during an earlier period. To the extent possible, account is also taken of new importers.

Applications are examined simultaneously, within a reasonable period, after the deadline fixed for submission.

(i) In the case of export restraint arrangements, licences are granted automatically.

(j) Information is obtained through diplomatic channels.

(k) Not applicable.

Products not subject to restrictions

7. (a) Except in cases where procedure D, as described in the aforementioned GATT document, is applicable, authorization is granted automatically upon application by the party concerned to any commercial bank.

For products imported subject to future settlement, the authorization may be obtained even after the goods have been disembarked in a Greek port.

(b) The licence is generally granted immediately.

(c) Licences are not issued for certain periods when like domestic production is sufficient, as in the case of meat and slaughtered animals.

(d) The licence is granted by the commercial bank selected by the party concerned. It should be noted that the applicant must attach to his application an invoice indicating the price of the goods and certified by the appropriate committee.
8. There is no refusal if the applicant meets the required conditions. In case of unjustified refusal, the applicant can appeal to the Council of State.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licence

9. Any person, company or institution is entitled to import, without discrimination and regardless of the treatment applicable to the product concerned. Nevertheless, persons professionally engaged in trade must be inscribed in the Register of the Chamber of Commerce at the place of their headquarters.

The registration fees are as follows: (1) Initial registration fee, which varies in amount from Dr 150 to Dr 500, depending on the legal constitution of the undertaking. (2) Annual subscription varying in amount from Dr 60 to Dr 5,000 depending upon the potential and the legal constitution of the undertaking.

Documentational and other requirements for licence applications

10. Application form, pro forma invoice certified by the appropriate Chamber of Commerce, import licence for products included in lists A and B as described in the aforementioned GATT document.

11. Invoice and bill of lading - in certain cases with withdrawal voucher delivered by the agency - certificate of origin - customs clearance permit.

12. Depending on the value indicated in the invoice, the following charges are made: A. By the appropriate Chamber of Commerce, a charge at the rate of 1 per mil, the minimum and maximum amount of which vary between Dr 40 and Dr 2,500. B. By the commercial bank, a charge in the amount of 0.5 per cent with a minimum and maximum varying from Dr 40 to Dr 5,000.

13. A prior deposit, held for a period of not more than two to four months, varying from 28 to 140 per cent ad valorem on the product, reimbursable after expiry of the above-mentioned time-limit, is required in certain cases at the time when the licence is issued, in the context of the monetary policy.

Conditions of licensing

14. A licence is valid for six months for loading plus three months for transport. It may be extended without difficulty. For equipment, the licence is valid for twelve months for loading plus three months for transport.

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

16. Licences are transferable between importers, with the exception of licences issued under the allocation system.
17. There are no other conditions attached to the issue of a licence in addition to those mentioned above.

Other procedural requirements

18. Yes, with respect to specific regulations designed to protect consumers for reasons of public health or security.

19. If the applicant holds a licence, foreign exchange is automatically made available without any other formality.