Outline of systems

1. Imports into Israel may be classified under three categories:

   (a) **Free imports** - goods for the importation of which the importers are not required to obtain an import licence. The list of free imports is published by ordinance and is constantly enlarged.

   (b) **Automatically approved imports** - in this category import licences are automatically issued without delay and without restrictions. The aim in this case is to examine the effect of imports on the local production of goods which have been liberalized. The licences serve as an additional source of information regarding the level of home demand.

   (c) **Restricted imports** - import licences are issued at the discretion of the "Competent Authorities" who are officials designated by the Ministers of Commerce and Industry, Agriculture, Transport, Health, Labour, Post and Finance.

   In fact, only the third category is relevant to the questionnaire.

Purpose and coverage of licensing

2. The licensing of restricted imports covers the following groups of products:

   (a) Products in regard to which the Public Advisory Council for the Protection of Local Industry has not as yet completed its examination regarding liberalization.

   (b) Products which remain under administrative protection for security reasons; this category includes explosive materials and weapons.
(c) Products which remain under administrative protection due to reasons of Kashruth (Jewish dietary law).

(d) Essential basic foodstuffs imported by the Government.

(e) Products of infant industries requiring protection in the light of the large initial investment remain under administrative protection according to the decision taken by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

3. The foreign trade policy of Israel is based on the principle of non-discrimination and imports are treated on a most-favoured-nation basis. The "Competent Authorities" do not interfere in the choice of the source of supply.

5. The legal basis for the control and regulation by the Government of Israel of the commercial and financial aspects of the country's foreign trade is the Import, Export and Customs Powers (Defence) Ordinance 1939 and Defence Regulations (Finance).

Under Article 3 of the Ordinance, the High Commissioner - since the Independence of the State of Israel, the Minister of Commerce and Industry - is empowered to regulate by ordinance imports into Israel.

An ordinance regulating imports by which all imports into Palestine were forbidden unless accompanied by an import licence delivered by the "Competent Authorities" was first published in 1939.

Since then there have been radical changes whereby imports have been liberalized to a large extent: by the Free Import Ordinance, 1968, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry exempts a substantial part of imports from the need for an import licence.

The Government may abolish the system without legislative approval.

Procedures

6. The list of products under restriction may be found in the "basic document" for Israel's most recent consultations within the framework of the Balance-of-Payments Committee of GATT (document BOP/114 of 25 February 1971).

There are no quotas and there is no discrimination against any country.

Details of all import licences granted are published in the press.

7. (a) Licences are usually obtained within two weeks from the date of application. The validity of the licence is usually eight months but the period can be extended. As for goods arriving at the port without a licence, each case is brought before the "Import Committee" (comprising officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and the Customs Administration) which decides on the merits of each case.

(b) No. See above, answer to question 1(c).
(c) None.

(d) Import licences are issued by the "Competent Authorities" and are countersigned by the Foreign Exchange Division of the Ministry of Finance. The importer has to approach the "Competent Authorities" only, which obtains itself the counter signature of the Ministry of Finance.

8. Import licences for restricted imports are granted as stated above (see 6). In case of refusal reasons are stated and the applicants have a right to appeal to higher instances, up to the minister in the ministry concerned. If the applicants are not satisfied with the decision, they may, and do, apply to the High Court of Justice.

Eligibility of importers to apply for licences

9. All persons, firms and institutions, duly registered as importers, are eligible to apply for licences.

Documentational and other requirements for application of licence

10. The documentational requirements are:

- An application form (enclosed herewith) asking for information on the following points:

  (a) ETN of goods
  (b) Name of the importer
  (c) Importer's registration number
  (d) Full address of importer
  (e) Full description of goods
  (f) Description of packaging
  (g) Economic purpose: Marketing/Production for export/Commercial sample/Private use
  (h) Value in purchasing currency
  (i) Value f.o.b.
  (j) Value c.i.f./c.& i./c.& f.
  (k) Unit
  (l) Price of unit f.o.b.
  (m) Quantity
  (n) Means of transport (parcel post/other)

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1 This application form, which is not reproduced in this document, is available for consultation i.e. the secretariat.
(o) Country of production
(p) Country of purchase
(q) Exporting country
(r) Port of entry into Israel: airport/seaport
(s) Supplier's name
(t) Supplier's address
(u) Declaration regarding the truthfulness of the above details
(v) Date of the application
(w) Identity card No. of the applicant
(x) Signature of the applicant

- Pro forma invoice
- Catalogues and/or samples (not always required)

11. The following documents are required upon actual importation:

(a) Delivery order from the shipping company
(b) Suppliers' invoice
(c) Certificate of origin
(d) Insurance policy
(e) Import licence where required
(f) Import declaration to be approved by the Customs Administration
(g) "Form 34" (declaration by the bank)

12. None.

13. None.

Conditions of licensing

14. The period of validity of a licence is generally about eight months. The validity of a licence can be extended on application.

15. None.

16. Licences are not transferable.

17. None.
Other procedural requirements

18. None.

19. Foreign exchange is automatically provided by approved commercial banks for goods which are imported under the "Free Import" ordinance. Where import licences are required the banks will provide the foreign exchange automatically upon presentation of the licence.