GATT today published complete lists of the purchasing agencies or entities covered by the Agreement on Government Procurement (also known as the Government Procurement Code).

The loose-leaf publication contains updated Annexes I-IV of the Code, which is one of the multilateral agreements resulting from the 1973-79 Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations in GATT. The Code entered into force at the start of this year.

The lists will be kept up-to-date on a continuing basis, and should serve as a useful guide to governments as well as to the international business community.

In most countries the government, and the agencies it controls, are the largest purchasers of goods, ranging from farm products to simple manufactures and high technology equipment. The Government Procurement Code aims to secure greater international competition in those parts of the government procurement market which signatory governments to the Code have agreed to liberalize. So far, 19 countries are participating in the Agreement and have submitted agreed lists of their agencies or entities covered by it.

Agreement on Government Procurement, Annexes I-IV (Loose-Leaf sets in English, French and Spanish), GATT, Geneva, 1981. Available from the GATT secretariat, Centre William Rappard, 154 rue de Lausanne, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland. Price Sw.Fr. 30.00 (includes replacement pages for five years until end March 1986). The text of the Agreement on Government Procurement is not included, but may also be ordered from the GATT secretariat. Price Sw.Fr. 4.00.

Austria, Canada, Finland, Hong Kong, Japan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, and the European Community (except Greece).
The Code covers individual government contracts worth more than SDR 150,000 (about US$200,000); it applies to products rather than to services, which are covered only to the extent that they are incidental to the supply of products and cost less than the products. The Code is designed to make laws and practices regarding government procurement more transparent, and to ensure that they do not protect domestic products or suppliers, or discriminate among foreign products or suppliers. The Code contains detailed rules on the way in which tenders for government purchasing contracts should be invited and awarded, as well as international procedures on notification, consultation, surveillance and dispute settlement. It also provides for special and differential treatment for developing countries, including the least-developed among them, to take into account their particular development, financial and trade needs.

While this new loose-leaf publication has no legal status as such, it will be kept up-to-date as a conveniently-available guide. The four Annexes it reproduces are the following:

ANNEX I: List of entities covered by the Agreement.

ANNEX II: Publications used by Parties for the publication of notices of proposed purchases.

ANNEX III: Publications used by Parties for the publication annually of information on permanent lists of suppliers in the case of selective tendering procedures.

ANNEX IV: Publications used by Parties for the prompt publication of laws, regulations, judicial decisions, administrative rulings of general application and any procedure regarding government procurement covered by the Agreement.