Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft

TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Note by the Chairman
(Mr. Ph. Douglas - Canada)

The Technical Sub-Committee met on 27 October 1981. It addressed the two points under its terms of reference.

Point 1

1.1 Statistical reporting of trade data

At the previous meeting the Technical Sub-Committee had noted a number of short-comings in Signatories' statistical reporting, in terms of degree of coverage and comparability. Signatories had been invited to consider the feasibility of altering their systems to work towards comparability. It was recognized that technical difficulties were encountered by some countries. The importance of statistical trade data on aircraft concessions was stressed by one delegation, which attached particular importance to the statistical separation of civil and military imports. One delegation stated that the matter of altering the statistical collection system was under consideration. Some Signatories felt there was a clear lack of progress on this matter. In view of this, the Technical Sub-Committee requested the Aircraft Committee to provide instructions on whether the matter of statistical reporting should be pursued.

1.2 Tariff classification matters

The representative of the United States suggested that Signatories could usefully discuss and compare, in the Technical Sub-Committee, the different ways of translating their aircraft concessions into the Harmonized Systems Code (HSC), with a view to arriving at a common treatment. It was thought generally useful to have an exchange of views, on the basis of a paper to be submitted by the United States delegation. This would not prejudice Signatories' final decisions on the way they would transpose their commitments into the HSC nomenclature.
1.3 End-use systems

It was noted that, to date, no notifications had been received on problems encountered with other Signatories' end-use systems. The Sub-Committee concluded that there did not appear to be any problem with end-use systems at present; however, it would be prepared to consider any notification submitted to it in the future.

1.4 National tariffs

The Sub-Committee reviewed the different ways Signatories reproduced, in their respective national tariffs (as opposed to their GATT Schedules), the duty-free treatment of items in the Annex to the Agreement. Some Signatories had provided specific break-outs in the main body of their national tariffs, with a mention of "for use in civil aircraft". Other Signatories had grouped the duty-free aircraft ex-items in an appendix or annex to their national tariffs, with or without some form of reference attached to the corresponding tariff items, which would draw attention to the relevant appendix or annex. It was recognized that this second approach is not fully transparent in those cases where there is no specific footnote, asterisks, annotation or cross-reference to the appendix or annex under the relevant tariff items. It was felt that a clear guide to the duty-free treatment should be provided to all users of national tariffs. The Signatories concerned agreed to consider what action could be taken by them to achieve clarity, and to report on their progress to the Sub-Committee.

Point 2

2.1 Proposals for modification of product coverage

The Technical Sub-Committee examined the Supplementary Information supplied by Japan (AIR/TSC/W/18) in response to the request by the Committee (AIR/TSC/W/17). It also noted the additional information supplied to the secretariat by the EEC (AIR/TSC/W/20). It had a discussion on the extent of the detail required and whether the products described should be exhaustive or illustrative. The delegation of the EEC proposed a common format for submitting new information. It was agreed that all product descriptions would be illustrative. Members of the Sub-Committee agreed that they would submit the additional information requested in AIR/TSC/W/17 according to an agreed format. This information, which could include new proposals, was to reach the secretariat no later than the end of January 1982.

Members of the Technical Sub-Committee also undertook to send their comments to the secretariat on the draft lists prepared in response to the Chairman's suggestion in document AIR/TSC/W/17. These amended lists would be examined at the next meeting.

Other

3. Date of next meeting

The Chairman would consult with interested parties to fix the date of the next meeting, the aim being to meet some four or five weeks after circulation of the additional information due by the end of January 1982.