

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

G/78

1 March 1954

General Distribution

IMPORTATION OF COMMERCIAL SAMPLES AND ADVERTISING MATERIAL

Use of Customs Triptyque for the Traffic in Samples between Austria and Switzerland

During the meetings of the Seventh Session Working Party, which prepared the text of the International Convention to Facilitate the Importation of Commercial Samples and Advertising Material, some consideration was given to the possibility of introducing a system of triptyques or carnets for samples of value carried by commercial travellers. It was suggested that such a system would alleviate the financial burdens and administrative formalities imposed upon firms sending representatives abroad. The Working Party was informed that a scheme for duty-free admission of commercial travellers' samples under cover of a customs triptyque had been worked out for operation on a bilateral basis between Austria and Switzerland though it had not yet been put into force. The Working Party considered that such schemes were of the greatest interest in the development of trade and that their introduction should be encouraged. (cf. G/33 paras. 29 to 31).

The Austrian Government has now informed the Executive Secretary that on 1 February 1954 the scheme for the duty-free admission of commercial travellers' samples was put into effect by the Customs Administrations of Austria and Switzerland. In accordance with this agreement commercial travellers and agents are permitted to import commercial samples from Switzerland into Austria, and conversely, temporarily duty-free under cover of a commercial samples triptyque without the deposit of import duties. The guarantees for the import duties are given by an Austrian insurance company for imports into Austria, and by a Swiss company for the imports into Switzerland. The application of this system is limited to samples not exceeding in value 60,000 Austrian schillings or 10,000 Swiss Francs. The period allowed for re-exportation is one year.

The International League of Commercial Travellers and Agents has also written to the Executive Secretary in this connection and has remarked that the triptyque has the following advantages:

1. One document only is required for presentation to the customs of the two countries.
2. The importer is freed from giving any personal guarantee or deposit.
3. No special declaration is needed for re-importation.

4. The triptyque can be used for four two-way crossings of the frontiers within a year provided that the composition of the collection remains the same.

The League has furnished specimen copies of the triptyque in German. One copy is being sent with this document to each contracting party. The League intends to watch this experiment closely and, if it proves successful, efforts will be made to secure its use by other countries.