

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED
TBT/W/173
21 July 1993
Special Distribution

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

DISTRIBUTION OF GATT/TBT NOTIFICATIONS

Note by the Secretariat

1. At the Sixth Meeting on Procedures for Information Exchange on 2 November 1992, it was proposed that the Committee should consider requesting the GATT secretariat to send out notifications in a double system to provide Parties with more time to work on the notifications, using telefax in addition to the regular system of circulation (TBT/W/167).
2. At its forty-fifth meeting on 11 May 1993, the Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a paper giving information on different alternatives for the distribution of documents with a comparison of the time Parties would gain by different alternatives and the cost, so that the Committee could have a more solid base for discussion of this matter at its next meeting (TBT/M/44). This Note responds to that request.
3. The Annex to this paper gives information on the current distribution method with its improvement since 1 June 1993 and the alternatives, using telefax or both mail and telefax, taking into account also the number of copies of telefaxes sent out and the different choices of destinations. It provides estimates of the cost to GATT, including the personnel involved, of using different alternatives.
4. If the Committee wishes to have notifications distributed by telefax, delegations in Geneva would gain one to two days depending on how often they collect mail from the GATT boxes. Agencies in capitals would gain two to five days depending on the time it takes for them to receive notifications by priority mail.
5. The cost per year with the current system is minimal. Depending upon which alternative is chosen (see Annex), the cost would range from SwF 13,200 to SwF 38,640. In addition, in most cases there would be costs of creating a new G-staff position to operate the telefax machine.
6. One element of uncertainty is the increase in the number of notifications and of national government agencies due to receive the notifications after completion of the Uruguay Round. Based on a simple linear extrapolation, the number of notifications could increase threefold.

ANNEXDifferent Alternatives for Sending Out TBT NotificationsCurrent situationDistribution: (for each notification)

344 copies go to	-	55 addresses in Geneva
30 copies go to	-	4 addresses in Berne
<u>96</u> copies go to	-	<u>21</u> addresses outside Switzerland (within Europe)
Total: 470	-	80
===		==

Of these 470 copies, some delegations receive copies in English, some in English and French, some in all three GATT languages.

Cost:

The copies which go to addresses in Geneva are put in the boxes in GATT and delegations can collect them on the same day. There is no cost to the GATT.

The copies mailed outside Geneva were, until recently, grouped together with other GATT documents and, once a substantial quantity of documents destined for one address had accumulated, were sent at a cheap "package rate" through the post. Since 1 June 1993, the Secretariat has treated TBT/Notifications as "priority" and mailed them out to delegations by priority mail. It is difficult to estimate the mailing cost because the TBT/Notifications make up only a small part of the GATT daily postage, but it is estimated to be negligible.

Possible alternatives

Roughly 400 notifications are circulated each year under the existing TBT Agreement. Assuming that each notification is only one page long without corrigenda and addenda, and that the average time to pass one sheet of paper is one minute, the cost of sending each notification by telefax would be:

within Switzerland:	SwF 0.20
within Europe (average):	SwF 1.10
worldwide (average):	SwF 2.10

In addition, the GATT would most probably have to employ an additional G-staff member to handle the work and purchase an extra telefax machine.

Alternative I - By telefax to all destinations

- (1) distribution to existing destinations, but limited to one copy per language required:

There will be 107 copies per notification. The cost would be:

SwF 0.20 x 77 copies inside Switzerland = SwF 15.40

SwF 1.10 x 30 copies outside Switzerland = SwF 33.00
(within Europe)

Total: SwF 48.40

Total cost per year would be:

SwF 48.40 x 400 notifications = SwF 19,360

=====

- (2) distribution to delegations in Geneva and to one address in each capital, one copy per destination:

There will be 84 copies per notification. The cost would be:

SwF 0.20 x 42 copies in Geneva = SwF 8.40

SwF 2.10 x 42 copies worldwide = SwF 88.20

Total: SwF 96.60

Total cost per year would be:

SwF 96.60 x 400 notifications = SwF 38,640

=====

Alternative II - By mail in Geneva and telefax elsewhere

If we continue to use the boxes in GATT to distribute all notifications to addresses in Geneva and send notifications by telefax to addresses outside Geneva;

- (1) distribution to the existing 25 addresses outside Geneva, limited to one copy per language required:

There will be 30 copies per notification. The cost would be around:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \text{SwF } 1.10 \times 30 \text{ copies outside Switzerland} & = & \text{SwF } 33.00 \\ \text{(within Europe)} & & \end{array}$$

Total cost per year would be:

$$\text{SwF } 33.00 \times 400 \text{ notifications} = \text{SwF } 13,200$$

=====

- (2) distribution to capitals, one copy each:

There will be 42 copies per notification. The cost would be around:

$$\text{SwF } 2.10 \times 42 \text{ copies worldwide} = \text{SwF } 88.20$$

Total cost per year would be:

$$\text{SwF } 88.20 \times 400 \text{ notifications} = \text{SwF } 35,280$$

=====