

**GENERAL AGREEMENT
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

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REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES

LESOTHO

Addendum

The following notification has been received from the Permanent Mission of Lesotho in response to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures annexed to document L/5640/Rev.9.

Import Restrictions Regulations 1988 govern procedures for granting import permits. Import permits are issued to residents of Lesotho who import for personal use, to bona fide traders/manufacturers and to Government Ministries and organizations who wish to buy commodities outside Lesotho.

Applications should be submitted in triplicate to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) for approval. This requirement is not entrenched in the Regulations; it is merely a directive given by the Director of Customs on 5 March 1982 that consultations should be made with the appropriate control authorities concerned for subsequent approval.

In this case, the MTI is the appropriate control authority since it is responsible for considering and granting trading and manufacturing licences. As long as the MTI is convinced that an applicant is a bona fide trader/manufacturer and has satisfied all the requirements, the application is approved at once.

The approved application is forwarded to the Director of Customs who in terms of Regulation (5) has the power to issue or refuse to issue the permit. Practice has shown, however, that once the MTI has approved an application it is very seldom that the Director of Customs can reject it.

No preference is given to local investors as opposed to foreign investors in issuing import permits and allocating foreign exchange.