

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Non-Tariff Measures"

Sub-Group "Quantitative Restrictions"

IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES

Informational Note by the Secretariat

1. At its March 1977 meeting the Sub-Group "Quantitative Restrictions" agreed that the secretariat, drawing on available GATT documentation should examine, in consultation with delegations, the feasibility of preparing an informational note that described by way of example and explanation the types of import licensing systems that would be covered by the two draft texts and endeavour to submit such a note before the next meeting of the Sub-Group (MIN/NTM/30, paragraph 12).
2. According to the Sub-Group's instruction the present note has been prepared by the secretariat in consultation with delegations. It is based on information contained in COM.IND/W/55-COM.AG/W/72 and addenda, revisions and corrigenda, COM.IND/W/118-COM.AG/W/95 and L/4458.
3. The following considerations are brought to the attention of the Sub-Group:
 - (a) as the Sub-Group agreed at its April 1975 meeting that the two draft texts reproduced in pages 15-19 of MIN/NTM/W/2 should be the starting point for the Sub-Group's continuing work (MIN/NTM/2, paragraph 9(i)), these texts were taken as a reference point for the information extracted from the above-mentioned GATT documentation;
 - (b) the available information was not in all instances sufficient to cover all points raised in the two draft texts, the reason being that it was supplied for other purposes than the present one. Examples for the illustration were chosen from among those countries where the information was relatively complete. The countries whose systems have been described in Table I are not necessarily the same as those in Table II;
 - (c) no attempt has been made to interpret, reclassify or comment on the information supplied by delegations and reproduced in this paper.

LICENSING TO ADMINISTER IMPORT RESTRICTIONS SYSTEMS

Draft text's requirements	Developing country A	Developing country B	Developed country C	Developed country D	Developed country E	Developed country F
<p>Purpose of the system</p>	<p>The system is applied to the importation of goods subject to quota and its purpose is to ensure respect for foreign exchange control regulations.</p>	<p>The purpose of the system is, on the one hand, to control imports, and on the other hand to reduce the quantity thereof in order not to disrupt internal markets.</p>	<p>The licensing is intended to restrict the quantity and value of imports.</p>	<p>The licensing is intended to restrict the quantity of imports.</p>	<p>The main purposes of the licensing are to limit and to provide a means to supervise imports of certain goods.</p>	<p>All licensing restrictions are imposed as a protection to domestic industries.</p>
<p>1. Licensing systems to administer import restrictions shall not be designed nor operated in such a manner as to prohibit imports from certain sources or discriminate between sources of imports, unless otherwise permitted under the General Agreement.</p>	<p>Import licensing is applied to the importation of goods originating from countries outside the franc area or the EEC.</p>	<p>The system is applied to the importation of goods originating from all countries.</p>	<p>The system does not distinguish between sources of supply.</p>	<p>The system is applied to range of products from state-trading countries and to some products from all countries.</p>	<p>The system is applied to range of products from state-trading countries, to some products from Japan, South Korea to some textile products from India, Pakistan and Malta and to certain products from all countries.</p>	<p>The system is applied to the importation of goods originating from all countries.</p>
<p>2. The foreign exchange necessary for the payment of imports subject to licensing shall, where required, be made available to import licence holders on the same basis as to the importers of goods that do not require import licences.</p>	<p>Foreign exchange is automatically provided by the banking authorities for goods to be imported on mere production of the import licence. The necessary foreign exchange is always available up to the total amount of the licence issued.</p>	<p>Foreign exchange is automatically provided when the payment conditions indicated on the licence are complied with. In addition all guarantees of solvency must be presented to an approved bank.</p>	<p>Foreign exchange is automatically provided by the banking authorities provided that an import licence is produced. Foreign exchange is always available to cover licences issued. The formalities to be fulfilled comprise the completion of an application form at a commercial bank.</p>	<p>There are no restrictions on the provision of foreign exchange.</p>	<p>Payments for imports may be made through authorized banks without specific permission in each case and without the formality of presenting an import licence provided that the conditions for current payments as defined in the exchange control regulations are met.</p>	<p>There are not normally any restrictions on payment for imports. It is not necessary for an import licence to be produced before payment is authorized.</p>
<p><u>Information and publication</u></p> <p>3. All useful information concerning formalities for filing applications for licences shall be published by the government which imposes or maintains the licensing requirement, as far in advance as possible of any opening date for submission of applications for licences.</p>	<p>Information concerning the formalities for filing applications for licences is given in Notices to Importers which are published in the press and broadcast.</p>	<p>All necessary information is published in the official Gazette.</p>	<p>All necessary information is published in the Government Gazette.</p>	<p>All conditions required and any other information needed by importers is published in an official journal.</p>	<p>The Board of Trade issues a periodical information which contains rules on the formalities for the submission of licence applications.</p>	<p>Detailed explanation on the formalities is given through public notice.</p>
<p>4. All relevant information shall be provided to governmental authorities, upon the request, concerning the administration of import restrictions, the import licences granted over a recent period, and the distribution of such licences among supplying countries, including wherever possible names of importing enterprises on a confidential basis.</p>	<p>The names of recipients of licences may be made known to governments and to export promotion bodies who so request.</p>	<p>No information available.</p>	<p>The names of importers to whom licences have been granted are not made known to governments or export promotion bodies, as such allocations are treated on a confidential basis in order to avoid unfair competition.</p>	<p>The names of importers cannot be revealed. However, in cases where this is justified, ways and means are sought of putting exporters and importers into contact.</p>	<p>The names of importers who have obtained licences are not revealed to authorities and exporting organizations in the exporting country.</p>	<p>Names of licensed importers are not publicized domestically or overseas; such information is regarded as confidential.</p>
<p>5. In the case of licences for import restrictions involving fixed quotas the overall amount of quotas, by quantity or value, including revisions during the quota period, of goods that could be imported during that specific period, dates of opening of quotas and, where applicable, the amount allocated by country, shall be published.</p>	<p>Information concerning the total amount of quotas and their allocation are published in the press and broadcast. The size of quotas is determined on the basis of importers' forecasts and with due regard to the country's genuine needs. Each quota is determined for one year.</p>	<p>Products under restriction as to the quantity or value of imports are generally notified to those concerned by means of "Notices to importers" published in the Official Gazette, posted in the offices of the ministerial departments and organizations concerned, and by announcements in the daily press. The amount of global quotas is fixed on a yearly basis. No period is fixed for bilateral quotas.</p>	<p>Neither the overall amount nor the maximum amount allocated to each importer is published. Amounts are not allocated to goods from each country.</p>	<p>Import possibilities are published in an official journal in the form of invitations to submit tenders. These specify, <i>inter alia</i>, the total quantity or total value of the quota, the amount that can be ordered from each country, and where necessary the maximum amount an importer's application will cover.</p>	<p>The Board of Trade issues a periodical information, where regulations are published concerning goods that are subject to licence requirements and the countries of origin. Neither the total amount for licensing nor the amount released for each country is in general published in the review. Each importer is informed in writing about the amount at his disposal for licences during a certain period.</p>	<p>Licensing imposition is announced by ministerial press followed by detailed explanation through public customs notice. The overall quota quantity to be admitted is published unless publication would inhibit associated bi-lateral negotiations. There is no mandatory allocation of quotas between different origins. Allocations to individual importers are not published.</p>

Draft text's requirements	Developing country A	Developing country B	Developed country C	Developed country D	Developed country E	Developed country F
<p><u>Procedure for licence applications and distribution of licences</u></p> <p>6. Any person, firm or institution which fulfils the legal requirements shall, to the extent possible, having regard to the provisions of paragraph 14 below, be equally eligible to apply for licences and to get their applications considered accordingly.</p>	<p>Any person, firm or institution may apply for the grant of a licence. In the case of imports of a commercial nature, however, production of an importer's certificate will be required. There is no system of registration of persons or firms permitted to engage in importation but merely, at the level of the customs service, a code number identifying each importer. There is no published list of authorized importers.</p>	<p>Physical persons and corporate bodies under private or municipal law are eligible to apply for licences provided they are engaged in a commercial, industrial or agricultural activity. They must first obtain a customs code number as it gives them importer status and furnish appropriate documents to the Trade Directorate. No fee is charged in respect of the customs code number.</p>	<p>All persons, firms and institutions are eligible to apply for licences.</p>	<p>In principle, anyone is eligible to apply for a licence. However, licensing can, if necessary be made subject to conditions of substance or withheld on personal grounds. Applicants who are hampered by import restrictions in carrying on their business can be given preferential treatment.</p>	<p>All persons, firms and institutions domiciled in the country are eligible to apply for licences and entitled to expect considerations within the framework of normal procedures.</p>	<p>There is no restriction on who may apply for a licence.</p>
<p>7. A reasonable period shall be allowed for submission of applications for licences.</p>	<p>Application for licences may be submitted in the first days of the year, even before the official opening of quotas.</p>	<p>The time allowed for submission of applications for licences varies according to the period of validity of the quota. In principle it runs from the date of issue of the notice to importers to the date on which the quota is exhausted.</p>	<p>When the opening of quotas is announced, no period of time is stipulated for the submission of applications for licences.</p>	<p>The time limit for submitting applications is fixed in different ways according to circumstances. In the case of large quotas applications may be submitted immediately and continually until the quota is exhausted. If in the case of small quotas an apportionment has to be made, as a rule a time-limit of two or three weeks is allowed.</p>	<p>The amount allocated is available to the importer for three quarters of the period in respect of which the total allocation is granted.</p>	<p>Generally 21 days are allowed for application for quota licences following imposition announcement, but late applications are not automatically refused.</p>
<p>8. Application forms and procedures for application and, where applicable, renewal shall be as simple as possible.</p>	<p>The information which has to be given in an application relates to the importer, to the goods to be imported, to the supplier, to the conditions of settlement and lastly to the time likely to be taken in completing the transaction. Only pre forms or definitive invoices need to be attached to the application for a licence.</p>	<p>Importer has to submit an application on a special form accompanied by five-copy set of pro-forma invoices and a varying number of import documents.</p>	<p>Application forms are required for capital goods and raw materials. Otherwise no forms are prescribed but the usual information is required.</p>	<p>Applications must be submitted on the printed import licence form. Where the import possibilities are restricted a contract subject to a firm order is required to ensure that the quota will be used.</p>	<p>Applications should contain the usual information. A sales contract should be attached to the application.</p>	<p>Application form is generally not required for goods under quota control; detail obtained from submission of evidence of base period performance. When required it should contain the usual information.</p>
<p>9. The period for processing of applications shall be as short as possible.</p>	<p>The length of time for processing applications may not exceed twenty-four hours. The interval may be shortened in the light of the urgency of certain applications.</p>	<p>The length of time for processing applications varies from one to three weeks.</p>	<p>The length of time for processing applications is dependent on the volume of work involved, but in general applications are dealt with immediately upon receipt.</p>	<p>In the event of possible large-scale imports, licences are often granted immediately. In other instances time limits up to three weeks are necessary.</p>	<p>Usually the time required for the handling of licence applications is four to ten days.</p>	<p>Applications can be processed in a minimum of 24 hours, the maximum is indefinite although generally it is not in excess of three weeks from closing of applications.</p>

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10. In the event refusal of an application, the applicant shall be given on request the reasons for such refusal and shall have the right of appeal.	In every case the importer is informed of the reasons for refusal and he has a right to appeal but only to the organ which is responsible for the granting of licences.	In general the reasons for refusal are not given to an applicant and he has no right of appeal.	No applications for licences meeting the ordinary criteria are refused.	The reasons for the refusal are communicated to the person concerned. He has the right to appeal for reconsideration and can complain to the administrative tribunal.	Reasons for the refusal are always communicated to the applicant. In the event of refusal applicant has the right of appeal through written application to the government.	Applicants are advised of the reasons for any refusal. There is a right of appeal to the minister.
11. The validity of the licence shall be of reasonable duration, and in no case, except in special cases where imports are necessary to meet unforeseen short-term requirements, so short as to prevent imports from countries situated at a distance, taking into account transport and communications conditions.	The period of validity of a licence is 6 months. This period may be extended by two further periods of three months each. A request for extension must be sought at least 3 weeks before the expiry of the period of validity. Such request must be accompanied by the necessary evidence, in particular the supplier's justification for delay. The total period of validity may not exceed one year.	The period of validity of the licence is six months. If it is not used during the period of validity the importer must so inform the administration. In some cases there is possibility of extension.	Quotas are determined on a yearly basis, but licences are valid for a period of fifteen months, an overlapping period being allowed to maintain continuity of supplies. Normally the validity of a licence is not extended, but exceptions are made in case of factors beyond the control of the importer.	The period of validity of a licence is as a rule 6 months. It can be reduced exceptionally, and where necessary it frequently covers a longer period. Upon request it can be extended by the competent authorities.	An import licence is in general valid for 6 months. The validity can be extended by submitting the licence to the licensing authority with a request for extension.	Generally the period of validity is 6 months and there is a tolerance of 30 days following specified expiry date of licence. Consideration is given to further extension of validity upon request.
12. When administering quotas, the authorities of the importing country shall take all possible steps to ensure that licences will be issued and importation can be effected within the period prescribed for this purpose and to facilitate the full utilization of the quotas.	No information available.	No information available.	No information available.	No information available.	Licences are only issued for immediate purchases which have to be certified by a sales contract. Licence amounts not utilized by one importer are generally reallocated to other importers which are believed to be able to utilize the licence/.	No information available.
13. The administrative authority issuing the licence shall take into account <u>inter alia</u> whether licences issued to the applicant in previous periods have been utilized or not.	No penalty is levied for the non-utilization of a licence or a portion of a licence.	No penalties are applied towards importers who fail to utilize a licence or part of a licence. However the administration reserves the right to take this into account when considering applications.	There is no penalty for the non-use of a licence or a portion of a licence.	There are no penalties for the non-utilization of a licence.	There is no penalty for the non-utilization of a licence.	There is no penalty for non-utilization of a licence or part thereof.
14. Licences should not be issued to importers for goods in such small quantities as to make imports uneconomical and, so far as consistent with this, should not be allocated to an unduly small number of importers. 15. Consideration shall be given to ensuring a reasonable distribution of licences to new importers, taking into account the desirability of issuing licences for goods in economic quantities.	All applications for licences are granted in general, except where no foreign exchange is available or in any case where the importation of a given product is prohibited. While foreign currency is available even new importers will receive licences.	Import licences are allocated on the basis of certain clearly defined criteria. First of all, on a first come, first-served basis. According to the size of the undertaking, priority being granted to those of overriding significance for the national economy and according to the category of activities here, manufacturers and farmers have a considerable advantage over other applicants.	Licences are equitably distributed on a basis of past import performance, and the amount allocated to each applicant is based on such performance in relation to turnover growth. New importers receive a "kick off" allocation on the understanding that further allocations will be made depending on growth. Applications are not dealt with simultaneously, but on the merits of each individual case.	Applications are examined simultaneously. In apportioning amounts either the import operations effected over a reference period are taken as a basis, or the quantities requested by importers are reduced in an equal proportion, or each applicant receives the same quantity irrespective of the amount he wishes to import. In some cases maximum time-limits are fixed for applications from a particular importer. They must be economically justified. Newcomers are also considered.	If the amounts for licences applied for are greater than available total amounts or quantities, allocation is made on the basis of the applicant's imports during an earlier base period. There is no upper limit for such allocations. New importers are granted a minor share of the total amount or quantity. Applications from such importers are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.	The allocation is on basis of past import performance. Quota applications are considered simultaneously.

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<p>16. In the case of quotas administered through licences which are not allocated among supplying countries, licence-holders shall be free to choose the sources of imports.</p>	<p>No information available.</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>Licences are valid for the importation of goods from any country, the choice of the country of supply being left entirely to the importer.</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>Except when control applies against a particular origin, importers are free to nominate sources.</p>
<p>17. In the case of quotas allocated among supplying countries, the licence shall clearly stipulate the country or countries from which imports must be made.</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>	<p>No information available</p>
<p>18. Imports of goods under restrictions should, wherever practicable, be allowed on the basis of normal customs procedures, or in accordance with procedures worked out in agreement between exporting and importing countries, on the basis of export permits issued by the exporting countries.</p> <p>19. Where export permits are issued by exporting countries according to a procedure worked out in common agreement with an importing country, but where the importing country for certain purposes requires import licences, the latter shall be issued automatically, within the limit of the quotas, in accordance where appropriate with the provisions of Annex I.</p>	<p>Import authorizations are not dependent upon the production of export permits.</p>	<p>In the case of export permits an import licence is required, the issue of which is automatic only to the extent that the goods are urgently needed or intended for vital sectors of the national economy.</p>	<p>There are no cases where imports are allowed on the basis of export permits only.</p>	<p>If a supplier country applies export restrictions, as a rule there is no need for an import licence. In some cases a dual control (export licence and import licence) is agreed bilaterally. In such cases an import licence is granted automatically on production of the export licence from the supplier country.</p>	<p>The surveillance licensing requirements on the importation of certain textile products are applicable also to such products as those subject to export restraint arrangements. In such cases licences are granted upon application and presentation of the relevant export document.</p>	<p>Only importers of certain goods from certain sources are required to produce export permits on importation. Overseas authorities advise the country's authorities on a monthly basis of the quantities permitted exportation. The export restraint arrangements have been complemented by parallel import restraints dependent on production of export permits.</p>

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<p>Automatic import licensing is defined as licensing which is not used to administer import restrictions such as those employed pursuant to the relevant provisions of <u>inter alia</u> Articles XI, XII, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX and XXI of the General Agreement and when foreign exchange is granted automatically. The term "automatic licensing" covers technical visa requirements, surveillance systems, exchange formalities related to imports, and other administrative reviews of an equivalent kind effected as a prior condition for entry of imports.</p>	<p>The purposes of the system are: -to evaluate real value -to make possible the the right use of taxes -to avoid commercial restrictive practices Foreign exchange is granted automatically. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>	<p>Generally, the purpose of the system is not to restrict the quantity or value of imports. Licensing has been imposed for statistical and study purposes and does not include any control or quantity or value of imports. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>	<p>The system is not restrictive but merely implies supervision for statistical reasons in respect of products which are, or will become, particularly important for the country's economy. Foreign exchange is granted automatically. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>	<p>When applied the system is applied in the absence of quantitative restrictions. Its purpose is to obtain the necessary experience to move over to a non-licensing system. Foreign exchange is granted automatically. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>	<p>The goods covered by the system are imported without any restrictions. The purposes of the system vary with products e.g. to protect public health, to provide statistical details of imports. Foreign exchange is granted automatically. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>	<p>The system is not intended to restrict the quantity or value of imports. It serves a variety of purposes such as: to follow trends in imports of products concerned, ensure certification of prices of certain textiles. Foreign exchange is granted automatically. Normally no other conditions than those characterized below are attached to the issue of a licence.</p>
<p>3. The rules governing presentation of applications for automatic licences and the lists of products subject to automatic licensing shall be published, with a specific indication as to the purposes and character of the system and in such a manner as to enable governments and traders to become acquainted with them. Any changes in either the rules governing automatic licensing or the lists of products subject to automatic licensing shall also be promptly published in the same manner.</p>	<p>The licensing system is maintained under the national legislation. Most products are covered by the system.</p>	<p>Licensing is done on a legal basis. Goods subject to licensing are gazetted by an administrative organ.</p>	<p>The relative regulations are maintained under circulars issued by the National Bank.</p>	<p>The licensing system is maintained under the External Trade Act. The competent authorities publish in an official journal the points to be observed in making an application. The lists of products subject to AL are also published in the journal.</p>	<p>Import licensing arrangements operate under various legislative measures, all of which are duly published.</p>	<p>The conditions concerning the submissions of applications are published in the national legislation. The products subject to AL are indicated in the national customs tariff. Only few agriculture and industrial products are subject to AL.</p>
<p>4. Automatic licensing systems shall not be designed nor operated in such a manner as to discriminate between sources of imports.</p>	<p>The system is applied to all countries.</p>	<p>The system generally applies to specific goods originating in and coming from all countries and for the time being to all goods from socialist countries and certain goods from Japan.</p>	<p>The system is applied to all countries without distinction.</p>	<p>The system is applied to a range of products from state-trading countries.</p>	<p>The system is applied to all countries.</p>	<p>AL, where applicable, applies without discrimination to all countries. The only exception to this rule is the price certificate system for certain textile products.</p>
<p>5. All persons, firms and institutions which fulfil the legal requirements for engaging in import operations involving products subject to automatic licensing shall be equally eligible to apply for and to obtain licences.</p>	<p>Any person, firm or institution can apply for an import licence independently of any registration to this purpose.</p>	<p>All persons, firms or institutions are eligible to apply for licences.</p>	<p>Any person, firm or institution provided that it is registered with the National Bank; registration is free of charge.</p>	<p>In principle, anyone is eligible to apply for a licence. However, licensing can if necessary, be made subject to conditions of substance or withheld on personal grounds.</p>	<p>All persons, firms and institutions provided that they are residents in the country, are eligible to apply for a licence.</p>	<p>As a general rule, all individuals or corporate bodies domiciled in the country are eligible to apply for a licence.</p>
<p>6. Application forms shall be as simple as possible. No document shall be required on application other than a <u>pro forma</u> invoice or, where strictly indispensable, other document necessary to determine the nature and composition of the product.</p>	<p>Usual information is required. In addition catalogues or price lists and in some cases proof of authenticity of prices are to be supplied with the application form.</p>	<p>Only usual information is required. No documents to be supplied. There is a licensing fee of \$10. No advance deposit.</p>	<p>Usual information is required. In addition a pro-forma invoice should be presented. No fee and no advance deposit.</p>	<p>Only usual information is required. Application must be submitted on the printed import licence form. No other documents required. There is no licensing fee or administrative charge. No deposit or advance payment.</p>	<p>Only usual information is required. Other supporting information may be required in certain cases. There is no licensing fee or advance deposit.</p>	<p>Only usual information is required. There is a modest fee for issuing the licences, except in certain cases which are free of charge.</p>
<p>7. No application shall be refused for minor errors in documentation easily rectifiable.</p>	<p>Applications are not refused except if requirements of price verification are not fulfilled and/or goods originate from countries with which there are no trade relations.</p>	<p>Applications are not refused except for reasons other than failure to meet the ordinary criteria.</p>	<p>Applications are refused for articles prohibited for import (reasons of public order and morality).</p>	<p>Applications are not refused for reasons other than failure to meet the ordinary criteria.</p>	<p>Applications are not refused for reasons other than failure to meet the ordinary criteria.</p>	<p>Applications are not refused for reasons other than failure to meet the ordinary criteria.</p>

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8. The applicant shall have to approach only one administrative organ for a licence.	Applicants have to approach only one administrative organ.	Applicants have to approach only one administrative organ.	Applicants have to approach only one administrative organ.	The applicant has to approach only Industrial Economy Office in case of industrial products and Agriculture and Forestry Office in case of agricultural products.	Applicants have to approach only one administrative organ.	Applicants have to approach only one administrative organ.
9. Applications for licences may be submitted at any time.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications may be made.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications may be made.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications may be made.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications for licence and/or importation may be made.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications may be made.	There are no limitations as to the period of the year during which applications may be made.
10. Applications for licences shall be granted immediately on receipt or if this is not administratively feasible within a maximum of five working days from the date of receipt of the application.	In exceptional cases a licence can be granted immediately, however, in general, traders are required to apply for licences before placing firm orders.	The licence can be granted immediately however, in general traders are required to apply for licences before placing firm orders.	The licences are granted within 48 hours, in exceptional cases immediately on request.	Licences are as a rule granted immediately.	There are no set rules for the delay when applications for licences should be made. There is no objection to granting a licence immediately on request, but there are cases where immediate issue is impossible.	The licence can be granted immediately. Sometimes however it is advisable to submit a licence application 3-4 days before importation.
Other conditions attached	None	None	None	None	In a few cases (e.g. requirements about the date of shipment, the purpose for which the goods will be used).	In a few cases (e.g. establishment of compulsory stocks, taking over of like domestic products, certain health requirements).