

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Special Distribution

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

REGIONAL STANDARDS-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

1. At its meeting of 20-22 October 1981, the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade agreed that the secretariat should transmit a number of agreed questions to regional bodies (TBT/M/8, paragraph 55). A list of agreed questions was circulated informally to signatories on 15 January 1982.

2. The following replies regarding INSTA (Nordic Certification System for Conformity with Harmonized Nordic Standards) have been received by the secretariat.

The Swedish Standards Institution replied as follows:

In general: INSTA is a forum for cooperation between the national standardization organizations in the nordic countries with the aim to avoid duplication of efforts and utilize the national resources more effectively. INSTA does not issue any nordic standards but the member countries aim at issuing identical national standards.

- Does INSTA adopt or use ISO standards? Answer: Adoption of ISO standards has the highest priority in the member countries of INSTA.

- Is there an index or catalogue of standards adopted by INSTA? Answer: In the national catalogues of standards in the four nordic countries standards identical with ISO standards are put in a special section, e.g. at present 430 Swedish national standards are identical with ISO standards. The corresponding figures of the other nordic countries are probably of the same size.

The Norwegian Standards Association replied as follows:

INSTA has no formal organization or secretariat. Representatives of the standards-writing bodies in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) meet every second or third year for exchange of information and experience. The meeting is organized by the country that hosts the meeting. The main aim is to avoid duplication of work and maximum use of the resources.

There is cooperation in the elaboration of some standards, in the sense that one tries to achieve that the technical content of a particular standard should be identical in as many of the countries as possible. The reference to the other identical standards are indicated on each national standard.

The technical cooperation is between the relevant standards-writing bodies or relevant technical committees and restricted to specific projects. The cooperation is done in one of the following ways:

- a) Common Nordic committee with secretariat in one of the organizations.
- b) A Nordic working group with representatives from the corresponding national technical committees.
- c) A national committee is extended by specialists from one or more of the other countries.
- d) The work is delegated to a technical committee in one of the national standards organizations.

There is a common policy in all the Nordic standards organizations to make maximum use of ISO International Standards. Some of the organizations issue ISO International Standards as national standards with or without translation.