The Handbook on Notification Requirements does not constitute a legal interpretation of the notification obligations under the respective Agreement(s) or relevant legal provision(s). It has been prepared by the Secretariat to assist Members in complying with their notification obligations.

DISCLAIMER

TECHNICAL COOPERATION HANDBOOK ON NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

AGREEMENT ON SUBSIDIES AND COUNTERVAILING MEASURES

REVISED 31 MAY 2019
This section of the Handbook on Notification Requirements covers the notification obligations under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures. It consists of the following five parts:

**PART 1**
Overview of Notification Requirements

**PART 2**
Listing of the Notification Obligations

**PART 3**
Relevant Document(s) Concerning Guidelines and Formats

**PART 4**
List of Notifications since 1995

**PART 5**
Text of the Agreement

For Members which acceded pursuant to Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement, their respective Protocols of Accession may contain notification obligations in addition to those set out in the WTO Agreements, and may govern the deadlines for the submission of their initial notifications.
PURPOSE OF NOTIFICATIONS IN THE AGREEMENT

The WTO Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) Agreement contains a number of notification requirements in the areas of subsidies and countervailing measures. In some cases, notification entitles the notifier to certain benefits that it otherwise would not enjoy. Generally, a Member failing to notify runs the risk that another Member will raise issues about its programmes, etc. in the Committee, and potentially could institute dispute settlement proceedings. Furthermore, all Members have an interest in the information provided by all other Members. Thus, Members should comply fully with all notification obligations under the Agreement, by the dates established in the Agreement or by the Committee. Even where no such dates exist, it is in the interests of all Members to make the required notifications at the earliest possible date.

WHAT MUST BE NOTIFIED?

NATURE OF THE NOTIFICATIONS

There are three basic areas for which notifications are required under the SCM Agreement:

• subsidies,
• authorities/procedures/legislation relating to countervailing measures; and
• countervailing measures-actions.

Subsidies

Subsidy notification provisions of indefinite duration (i.e., currently in effect)

(a) The basic subsidies notification requirement is contained in Article 25.2 of the SCM Agreement and in Article XVI:1 of GATT 1994. Article 25.2 requires notification of any subsidy as defined in the Agreement, which is specific, as also defined in the Agreement. Exempt from this requirement are non-specific subsidies (i.e., subsidies not covered by SCM Article 3 and not limited, in law or in fact, to specific sectors, industries, or regions, etc.). In addition, GATT Article XVI:1 requires notification of any subsidy (whether or not specific) that directly or indirectly causes trade effects.

The subsidy notifications are circulated in the G/SCM/N/... series. The Secretariat annually circulates a document containing information on each Member’s compliance with this obligation (G/SCM/W/546/*).

Members’ subsidy notifications are reviewed at special meetings of the Committee, generally held back-to-back with the Committee’s regular meetings. At such meetings, Members may raise questions regarding a notified programme, the failure to notify a programme, or the failure to submit any notification. The procedures followed by the Committee for such reviews, as contained in document G/SCM/117, were most recently re-adopted in April 2017, for the review of 2017 new and full notifications (G/SCM/M/101, para. 53). Written questions and answers concerning subsidy notifications are circulated in the G/SCM/Q2/... document series.

(b) Some special and differential treatment for developing Members is dependent on certain additional notification requirements.

• Privatization programmes (Article 27.13). If direct forgiveness of debt, subsidies to cover social costs, and/or other transfer of liabilities are granted within and are linked to a successful privatization programme of a developing country (i.e., the programme actually results in privatization of the enterprise concerned), and such subsidies are limited in time, Part III of the Agreement shall not apply. This means that such subsidies shall not be subject to multilateral challenge as provided for in Part III (however, this provision does not protect a Member from countervailing duty actions with respect to the subsidy).

• Export competitiveness (Articles 27.5 and 27.6). If a developing country Member achieves export competitiveness in a product, the phase-out period for its export subsidies to that product is shortened to 2 years (8 years for least developed countries). Export competitiveness is defined as having at least a 3.25% share of world trade in a product during 2 consecutive years. "Product" is defined as a section heading of HS nomenclature.

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Expired subsidy notification provisions

(a) Non-actionable subsidies (Article 8.3). (Article 8 expired 31 December 1999). While SCM Article 8 was in effect (through 31 December 1999) Members wishing to obtain non-actionable status for any programme meeting the criteria in Article 8.2 had to submit a notification before implementing the programme. Such notifications were subject to annual updating. The notification formats were in G/SCM/13 and G/SCM/14. All Article 8 notifications were subject to review by the Committee. No Member ever submitted an Article 8 notification.

(b) Higher de minimis subsidization rate in CVD investigations (Article 27.11). (Article 27.11 expired 31 December 2002.) If any developing Member eliminated export subsidies before the applicable 8-year transition period (which ended 31 December 2002), and notified the details thereof, it was entitled to a de minimis subsidization rate in CVD investigations of 3%, rather than the 2% rate to which it otherwise would have been entitled. The notification format was in G/SCM/16. No Member ever submitted such a notification.

(c) Seven-year transition period for otherwise prohibited subsidies of Members in transformation to market economies (Article 29.3) (Transition period expired 31 December 2001). A seven-year transition period from the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement (i.e. through 31 December 2001) was provided for then-existing subsidies falling within Article 3 (i.e., prohibited subsidies) of Members in transformation, if such subsidies were notified not later than 31 December 1996, or another date if the Committee so agreed. The notification format was in PC/IPL/11, Annex 5. These notifications were circulated in the G/SCM/N/9/* series.

(d) Existing prohibited subsidies (Article 28.1) (Transition period expired). A three-year transition period from the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for each Member (i.e., for most Members, through 31 December 1997) was provided for their subsidies inconsistent with the SCM Agreement in existence on the date that they signed the WTO Agreement. Such subsidies had to be notified not later than 90 days after the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for each such Member (for most Members this deadline was 31 March 1995). The notification format was in PC/IPL/11, Annex 4. These notifications were circulated in the G/SCM/N/2/* series.

Authorities/Procedures/Legislation relating to countervailing measures

(a) Domestic authorities and domestic procedures (Article 25.12). This Article calls for notification of (a) domestic authorities competent to initiate and conduct CVD investigations; and (b) domestic procedures governing the initiation and conduct of such investigations. Part (a) of this notification requirement can be fulfilled by providing to the Committee the name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses(s) of the investigating authority. There is no standard format. The notified information received from all Members is circulated in G/SCM/N/18/*.

See section (c) of Countervailing Measures - Actions, below, concerning one-time nil notifications.

(b) Laws and regulations (Article 32.6):
   - Members must notify the full integrated text(s) of their laws, regulations and administrative procedures in one of the WTO languages (English, French or Spanish).
   - Any modification to the laws, regulations or administrative procedures must be notified promptly.
   - A notification must be made even where a Member does not maintain such laws/regulations.

The invitation to submit notifications was circulated in G/SCM/N/1 and G/SCM/N/1/Suppl.1. Legislative notifications are reviewed at the regular meetings of the SCM Committee.

Countervailing Measures - Actions

(a) Preliminary and final countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11). All such actions taken shall be reported “without delay” to the Committee. Document G/SCM/3/Rev.1 identifies the agreed minimum list of such actions subject to this ad hoc notification requirement, as well as the minimum information that should be provided in such reports. If the official notice of the action, as published by the Member taking the action, contains such information and is in a WTO working language, the Member may submit the official notice. If not, the Member should provide the information described in the format. In either case, Members are encouraged also to submit electronic
versions of the publicly-available documents containing the notified decisions, in the original language even if not a WTO working language. The Article 25.11 notifications are kept on file in the Secretariat, for consultation by interested Members. Monthly lists of the notifications received are circulated to Members, in the G/SCM/N… series. These notifications are subject to review by the Committee at its regular meetings.

(b) Semi-annual report on all countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11). All Members must, twice per year, submit a semi-annual report of all countervailing duty-related actions taken within the preceding six months, regardless of whether they have taken any such actions. Members also must provide a list of all countervailing measures in force.

- Semi-annual reports are requested by the Committee twice each year. One request is issued in January, for the semi-annual report covering the period 1 July through 31 December of the previous year and establishing a February deadline for submission of those reports. The second request is issued in July, for the semi-annual report covering the period 1 January through 30 June of that same year and establishing an August deadline for submission of those reports.

- The reports are to be made using the agreed standard form (G/SCM/2/Rev.1).

- Nil notifications of no actions taken during a particular period and no measures in force can consist of a simple letter to that effect. See also section 2.3(c) below on one-time nil notifications.

The semi-annual reports are circulated in document series G/SCM/N/… They are subject to review at the Committee’s regular meetings.

For countries becoming Members after 1 January 1995, the first semi-annual report shall cover the most recent period (January-June or July-December) prior to the entry into force of the WTO Agreement for each Member. Document PC/IPL/11, Annex 7, reflects this understanding.

(c) One-time nil notifications under Articles 25.11 and 25.12 (competent authorities and actions taken).

Any Member that has not established an authority competent to initiate and conduct investigations within the meaning of SCM Article 25.12, and that thus has never taken any countervailing actions within the meaning of Article 25.11 of the Agreement and does not anticipate taking any such actions for the foreseeable future, is eligible to so notify the Committee, on a one-time basis, in lieu of submitting a nil notification of competent authorities, and in lieu of submitting a nil semi-annual report every six months. This standing notification is deemed, without any further action by the Member, to fulfill that Member’s obligation to notify its competent authority, as well as its obligation to provide semi-annual reports, until such time as the Member establishes a competent authority, and/or takes any countervailing action, all of which must be notified to the Committee without delay, pursuant to SCM Articles 25.11 and 25.12.

WHICH MEMBERS MUST NOTIFY?

All WTO Members.

WHEN TO NOTIFY?

Subsidies

Subsidy notification provisions of indefinite duration (i.e., currently in effect)

(a) The basic subsidies notification. On the basis of an understanding reached in the SCM Committee G/SCM/M/46, para. 43, and G/SCM/M/53, para. 3), Members are to submit new and full notifications by 30 June of every second year (the odd-numbered years), while “de-emphasizing” the annual updating notifications referred to in Article 25.6. In practice, this means that Members should submit a new and full notification every two years, and spend the intervening year reviewing other Members’ notifications.

(b) Some special and differential treatment for developing Members is dependent on certain additional notification requirements.

- Privatization programmes (Article 27.13). There are no time limits or timing provisions in the Agreement regarding submission of such notifications. However, by notifying as soon as possible, countries inoculate themselves against the possibility that other Members could seek a WTO dispute settlement panel against them with
respect to such programmes. Thus, prompt notification could save the notifying Member from having to defend against such actions by others. These notifications are circulated in the G/SCM/N/13/… series.

- Export competitiveness (Articles 275 and 276). If a developing country Member achieves export competitiveness in a product, the phase-out period for its export subsidies to that product is shortened to 2 years (8 years for least developed countries). Export competitiveness is defined as having at least a 3.25% share of world trade in a product during 2 consecutive years. "Product" is defined as a section heading of HS nomenclature.

Authorities/Procedures/Legislation relating to countervailing measures

(a) Domestic authorities and domestic procedures (Article 25.12). There is no time frame.

(b) Laws and regulations (Article 32.6). This notification is to be made once, upon entry into force of the WTO Agreement for the notifying Member, for its then-existing laws and regulations, and thereafter on an ad hoc basis, as and when laws/regulations are established, or changes effected.

Countervailing Measures – Actions

(a) Preliminary and final countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11). Ad hoc notification requirement.

(b) Semi-annual report on all countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11). All Members must, twice per year, submit a semi-annual report of all countervailing duty-related actions taken within the preceding six months, regardless of whether they have taken any such actions. Members also must provide a list of all countervailing measures in force.

- Semi-annual reports are requested by the Committee twice each year. One request is issued in January, for the semi-annual report covering the period 1 July through 31 December of the previous year and establishing a February deadline for submission of those reports. The second request is issued in July, for the semi-annual report covering the period 1 January through 30 June of that same year and establishing an August deadline for submission of those reports.

• Nil notifications of no actions taken during a particular period and no measures in force can consist of a simple letter to that effect. See also section (c) of Countervailing Measures -Actions below on one-time nil notifications.

(c) One-time nil notifications under Articles 25.11 and 25.12 (competent authorities and actions taken). Any Member that has not established an authority competent to initiate and conduct investigations within the meaning of SCM Article 25.12, and that thus has never taken any countervailing actions within the meaning of Article 25.11 of the Agreement and does not anticipate taking any such actions for the foreseeable future, is eligible to so notify the Committee, on a one-time basis, in lieu of submitting a nil notification of competent authorities, and in lieu of submitting a nil semi-annual report every six months. This standing notification is deemed, without any further action by the Member, to fulfill that Member’s obligation to notify its competent authority, as well as its obligation to provide semi-annual reports, until such time as the Member establishes a competent authority, and/or takes any countervailing action, all of which must be notified to the Committee without delay, pursuant to SCM Articles 25.11 and 25.12.

HOW TO NOTIFY?1

Subsidies

Subsidy notification provisions of indefinite duration (i.e., currently in effect)

(a) The basic subsidies notification: The format for subsidy notifications is contained in the questionnaire in G/SCM/6/Rev.1.

(b) Some special and differential treatment for developing Members: The format is dependent on certain additional notification requirements.

1 All notifications, regardless of their subject content or the requirement under which they are being submitted, must be directed to the administrator of the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN), as indicated in document WT/INF/25/Rev.1. Notifications may be submitted through online submission systems, as electronic attachments to emails, by fax or on paper. As it may be practice, a copy of the notification may be sent to the Secretariat unit substantially handling the notification.
• Privatization programmes (Article 27.13). To qualify for this exemption, any such privatization programme must be notified, following the format in G/SCM/15.

• Export competitiveness (Articles 27.5 and 27.6). Export competitiveness is established in one of two ways: (a) notification by the developing country Member that has achieved export competitiveness; or (b) calculation by the WTO secretariat at the request of any Member. Any such notification by a developing country Member is therefore voluntary. No standard format has been developed for such notifications, and to date, no such notifications have been submitted.

Authorities/Procedures/Legislation relating to countervailing measures
(a) Domestic authorities and domestic procedures (Article 25.12). There is no standard format. The notified information received from all Members is circulated in G/SCM/N/18/*.

(b) Laws and regulations (Article 32.6). There is no standard format.

Countervailing Measures - Actions
(a) Preliminary and final countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11). All such actions taken shall be reported “without delay” to the Committee. Document G/SCM/3/Rev.1 identifies the agreed minimum list of such actions subject to this ad hoc notification requirement, as well as the minimum information that should be provided in such reports. If the official notice of the action, as published by the Member taking the action, contains such information and is in a WTO working language, the Member may submit the official notice. If not, the Member should provide the information described in the format. In either case, Members are encouraged also to submit electronic versions of the publicly-available documents containing the notified decisions, in the original language even if not a WTO working language. The Article 25.11 notifications are kept on file in the Secretariat, for consultation by interested Members. Monthly lists of the notifications received are circulated to Members, in the G/SCM/N… series. These notifications are subject to review by the Committee at its regular meetings.

(b) Semi-annual report on all countervailing duty actions (Article 25.11).
• The reports are to be made using the agreed standard form (G/SCM/2/Rev.1).

• Nil notifications of no actions taken during a particular period and no measures in force can consist of a simple letter to that effect. See also section (c) of Countervailing Measures - Actions below on one-time nil notifications.

The semi-annual reports are circulated in document series G/SCM/N/… . They are subject to review at the Committee’s regular meetings.

For countries becoming Members after 1 January 1995, the first semi-annual report shall cover the most recent period (January-June or July-December) prior to the entry into force of the WTO Agreement for each Member. Document PC/IPL/11, Annex 7, reflects this understanding.

(c) One-time nil notifications under Articles 25.11 and 25.12 (competent authorities and actions taken). The format for one-time notifications is in G/SCM/129. These notifications are circulated in document series G/SCM/N/202/… . They are subject to review at the Committee’s regular meetings. Please see illustrative mock examples listing different situations and explaining when/how to notify depending on the situation.
### NOTIFICATION OBLIGATIONS

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<th>WHAT MUST BE NOTIFIED?</th>
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<th>WHEN TO NOTIFY?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Notification requirements</td>
<td>Type of measure</td>
<td>Periodicity</td>
<td>Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 25.1; GATT 1994, Article XVI:1.</td>
<td>Any subsidy as defined in ASCM Art.1:1 which is specific within the meaning of ASCM Art.2 as well as any other subsidy which causes increased exports or decreased imports within the meaning of GATT 1994, Article XVI:1.</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Regular – Biennial</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New and full notification (G/SCM/M/46, para. 43 and G/SCM/M/53, para. 35).</td>
</tr>
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# Listing of the Notification Obligations

## Subsidies and Countervailing Measures

### Technical Cooperation Handbook on Notification Requirements

#### Subsidies and Countervailing Measures

## PART 2

### Listing of the Notification Obligations

## Notification Obligations

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<td>Notification requirements</td>
<td>Type of measure</td>
<td>Members notifying</td>
<td>Periodicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 25.11 (Ad hoc).</td>
<td>Countervailing duty actions: (1) initiations, (2) preliminary determinations/ provisional measures; (3) final determinations/ definitive measures.</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 25.11 (Semi-annual).</td>
<td>Countervailing duty actions (taken within the preceding 6 months).</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Regular – Semiannual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>Type of measure</th>
<th>Members notifying</th>
<th>Periodicity</th>
<th>Comments on Periodicity</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>To whom?</th>
<th>Notification Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 25.12.</td>
<td>Authorities competent to initiate and conduct countervailing duty investigations referred to in ASCM Art. 11 and domestic procedures governing the initiation and conduct of such investigations.</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>One time</td>
<td>Once upon entry into force of the WTO Agreement for existing authorities and procedures; ad hoc as and when a Member establishes such authorities and procedures.</td>
<td>Yes (G/SCM/N/18 Request)</td>
<td>Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.</td>
<td>G/SCM/N/*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 25.11 and Article 25.12.</td>
<td>One-time nil notification of having no competent authority and never having taken any countervailing duty actions.</td>
<td>WTO Members with no competent authorities that have never taken countervailing actions.</td>
<td>One time</td>
<td>Once, on an ad hoc basis. Remains valid, with no further action needed, unless and until a competent authority is established and/or an action is taken.</td>
<td>Yes (G/SCM/129)</td>
<td>Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.</td>
<td>G/SCM/N/*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 27.13.</td>
<td>Debt relief (direct forgiveness of debt) and subsidies to cover social costs, in whatever form (including relinquishment of government revenue and other transfer of liabilities) when such subsidies are granted within and directly linked to a privatization programme of a developing country Member that results in eventual privatization.</td>
<td>WTO developing Members wishing to invoke the provisions of ASCM Art. 27.13.</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 32.6.</td>
<td>Laws/regulations and changes thereto, including changes in the administration of such laws (concerning the languages of notification for Article 32.6, see document G/SCM/N/1).</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
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## Listing of the Notification Obligations

### Expiring Notifications

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<td><strong>1.</strong> Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 8.3 (Ad hoc).</td>
<td>Any subsidy programme for which the provisions of ASCM Art. 8.2 are invoked.</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 8.3 (Annual).</td>
<td>Any subsidy programme for which the provisions of ASCM Art. 8.2 are invoked.</td>
<td>All WTO Members</td>
<td>Regular – Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, Article 27.11.</td>
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<td>WTO developing Members wishing to invoke the provisions of ASCM Art. 27.11</td>
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[^2]: All notifications, regardless of their subject content or the requirement under which they are being submitted, must be directed to the administrator of the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN), as indicated in document WT/INF/25/Rev.1. Notifications may be submitted through online submission systems, as electronic attachments to emails, by fax or on paper. As it may be practice, a copy of the notification may be sent to the Secretariat unit substantially handling the notification.
## Expired Notifications

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The notification formats and requests pertaining to the notification provisions in effect can be accessed through the following links:

Questionnaire format for subsidy notifications under Article 25 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and under Article XVI of GATT 1994 [G/SCM/6/Rev.1].

Format for notifications under Article 27.13 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures [G/SCM/15].

Minimum information to be provided under Article 25.11 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures in the reports on all preliminary or final countervailing actions [G/SCM/3/Rev.1].

Format for semi-annual reports of countervailing duty actions pursuant to Article 25.11 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures [G/SCM/2/Rev.1].

Notification under Articles 25.11 and 25.12 of Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures [G/SCM/129].

Notification of laws and regulations under Article 32.6 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures- Supplement [G/SCM/N/1/Suppl.1].

Informal contact group on Anti-dumping Subsidies and Safeguards [PC/IPL/11]. Refer to Annex 7 (Semi-Annual Reports of Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Duty Actions).

Notification of Competent Authorities [G/SCM/N/18].

Notification of Laws and Regulations under Article 32.6 Of the Agreement [G/SCM/N/1].
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