

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

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CUSTOMS CONVENTION REGARDING E.C.S. CARNETS
FOR COMMERCIAL SAMPLES

Communication from the Customs Co-operation Council

The CONTRACTING PARTIES to GATT in 1952 adopted an International Convention to Facilitate the Importation of Commercial Samples and Advertising Material which entered into force on 20 November 1955. Based on this Convention the Customs Co-operation Council prepared the Customs Convention Regarding the E.C.S. Carnets for Commercial Samples which entered into force on 3 October 1957. The E.C.S.¹ Carnet, introduced by the second Convention, is a substitution on an optional basis for the usual national temporary importation papers and replaces any deposit or guarantee for suspended import duties and charges if such a guarantee is required by the customs authorities in a particular case.

The Customs Co-operation Council informed the Executive Secretary of GATT that the "satisfactory results obtained by the use of E.C.S. carnets for the temporary importation of commercial samples (in 1960, 15,600 E.C.S. carnets were issued, for a total value of US\$16,320,000) has induced the international trading community to propose that the facilities offered by the E.C.S. Carnet Convention should be extended over the widest possible field. Accordingly, the Customs Co-operation Council has amended this Convention in order to open it for accession by the Government of any Member of the United Nations or its specialized agencies, whether or not a Member of the Council. This amendment came into force on 7 July 1961."

The amended text of the E.C.S. Convention can be either consulted in the GATT secretariat or obtained from the Customs Co-operation Council headquarters in Brussels. The official text of the amendments is in the course of preparation by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is the depositary of the Convention.

¹The initials E.C.S. stand for the combined English and French words: Echantillons Commerciaux - Commercial Samples.