

Country: Pakistan

Background:

Type of body: National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee

Official name: National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee

Motivation for its establishment: Studies carried out by the World Bank identified the need for trade facilitation in Pakistan and funded a Trade and Transport Facilitation Project with technical support of UNCTAD. Establishment of the the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee was a prerequisite for successful implementation of the Trade and Transport Facilitation Project .

Year of establishment: 2001

Other national bodies dealing with WTO issues and/or with Trade Facilitation: To deal with WTO Trade Facilitation proposals, a capital-based WTO Working Group on Trade Facilitation has been established under the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee.

Former multi-agency group/committee: PAKPRO, which was established in 1994 but become dysfunctional.

Establishment of the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee was, therefore, a new initiative.

Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc): Running. The National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee has been in operation since 2001.

Institutional Framework:

Degree of institutionalisation: "Pakistan National Trade & Transport Facilitation Committee - Terms of Reference

New resolution on Pakistan's National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTFFC)
Resolution of the Ministry of Commerce for the establishment of the Pakistan National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee

The National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee was established on recommendations of the World Bank and the decision was taken by the Ministry of Commerce.

It was established by a Gazette Notification issued by the Government of Pakistan in April 2001."

Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc): The National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee has been established as a Standing Committee of the Ministry of Commerce through a Gazette Notification issued by the Government of Pakistan.

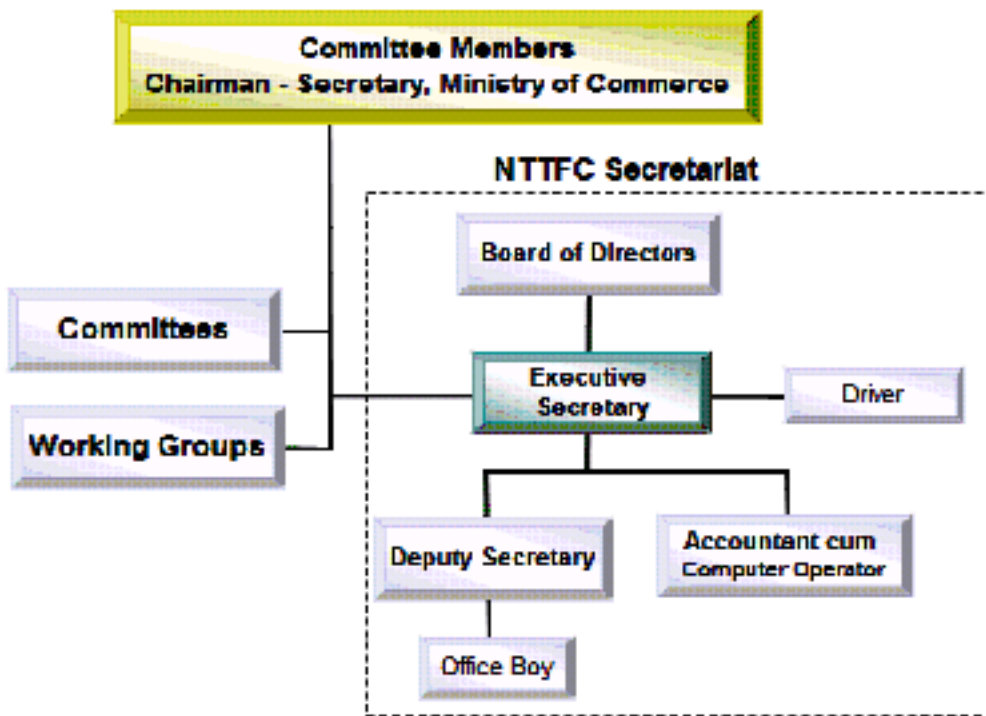
Scope/mandate: The mandate of the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee is indicated in its Terms of Reference. However, sometimes the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee is asked to attend to the issues that are not covered by its Terms of Reference.

Terms of reference: The Terms of Reference of the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee are:

Relevant information is available on the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee website

Coordinating agency: Ministry of Commerce

Working structure of the group:



Permanent technical secretariat: There is a permanent Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary.

Funding:

Budget: Yes

Sources of funding: The expenditure of the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee is met through a grant from Export Development Fund.

Items covered by the budget: Salaries, rental of premises, travel, maintenance, committee meetings, etc.

Objectives / Focus:

Objectives: Please refer to the terms of reference.

Working plan: A National Trade Facilitation Strategy has been developed, including a Plan of

Action.

Monitoring and evaluation: Through following-up correspondence and face-to-face meetings with the concerned organisations.

Reporting form and supervisory authority: To Ministry of Commerce in the meetings of the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee and also through correspondence.

A Board of Directors comprising the following has been constituted to provide the vision, approve the work plan, approve the budget and review the performance of NTTFC:

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies: The Committee is composed of representatives from public sector and private sector as well as trade and transport bodies. Members are 38, with nearly equal participation by public and private sectors.

The representatives from the public sector form part of:

- Ministry of Commerce;
- Ministry of Communications;
- Ministry of Ports and Shipping;
- Ministry of Finance;
- Ministry of Planning and Development;
- Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock;
- Ministry of Industries;
- Central Board of Revenue;
- State Bank of Pakistan;
- Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority;
- Karachi Port Trust;
- Port Qasim Authority;
- National Ship Owners;
- Pakistan Railways;
- Trade Development Authority of Pakistan;
- Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Board;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Pakistan International Airlines;

Private associations or entities: The representatives from the private sector form part of:

- Multimodal Transport Operators (All Pakistan Shipping Association);
- Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry;

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Pakistan Shippers's Council;
Insurance Association of Pakistan;
Dry Port Operators;
Pakistan International Freight Forwarders Association;
Customs Clearance Agents Associations;
Goods Carriage Associations;
Pakistan Ships Agents Association;
Pakistan Bankers Association;
International Chamber of Commerce, Pakistan;
Karachi International Container Terminal;
Qasim International Container Terminal;
Pakistan International Container Terminal;
Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and
Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Quetta.

Level of seniority of participants: Senior and Middle level official from ministries and public sector organisations.

Senior level from private sector.

Participation:

Frequency of meetings: Required to meet quarterly, but the average is every six months.

Meetings format: Mainly the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee meetings.
Working Group meetings as deemed necessary.

Promotion / Communication:

Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings: Through meetings

Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues: Through meetings as deemed necessary.

Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public: No

Benefits:

Impact: A number of measures recommended by the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee are getting implemented.

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Benefits for the country's responsiveness to the WTO negotiation process: Need assessment of trade facilitation proposals was carried out. Proposals requiring technical assistance and capacity building were identified. Preferred options for the Draft Consolidated Negotiating text of WTO negotiation WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement were identified. Category A commitments notified to WTO.

Concrete operational outcomes:

- Some UN layout key based documents introduced;
 - Single Administrative Document for Customs clearance introduced;
 - Customs clearance system computerised;
 - Web Base One Custom (WeBOC) system introduced by Pakistan Customs
 - Freight forwarding industry being modernised;
 - Security arrangements for international transport of goods; and
 - Modernisation of transport legislation.
- LOCODEs for main trading locations Accession to revised Kyoto Convention, ATA Carnet Convention COTIF.

Lessons learned:

Success factors:

- Political will and commitment at highest level
- Correct understanding and definition of public and private sector role
- Ownership and commitment of key stakeholder
- Committed lead agency
- Representation of concerned ministries and public and private sector organisations at senior level
- Institutional arrangement for functioning on permanent basis
- Strong linkage with international trade facilitation institutions

Greatest obstacles:

- Reluctance to change; and
- Frequent change of concerned officials in public and private sector organisations.

Lessons learned from your experience: Implementing trade facilitation agenda requires persistence and persuasion by dedicated professional staff of a permanent Secretariat.

Future plans:

Plans for further development: To continue with the existing arrangement.

Contact information:

Contact Information: Mr. Umar Wahid





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Executive Secretary

National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee

First Floor, Azeem Avenue

2C Lane 13, Bukhari Commercial Area

Khayaban-e-Shujaat, Phase VI, DHA

Karachi 75500

Tel: (+92)-21-3524 2569

Direct Tel/Fax: (+92) 21-3524 2570

Email: nttfc@cyber.net.pk; umar.wahid@nttfc.org

URL: www.nttfc.org