

Country: Sri Lanka

Background:

Type of body: National Trade Facilitation Committee

Official name: National Trade Facilitation Committee

Year of establishment: 2014, formalised in 2016

Motivation for its establishment: Agreement on Trade Facilitation of the World Trade Organization.

Other national bodies dealing with WTO issues and/or with Trade Facilitation: Yes, the Ministry of Industries and Commerce / The Department of Commerce

Former multi-agency group/committee: No

Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc): Running

Institutional Framework:

Degree of institutionalisation: The approval decision adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc): Legal entity

Coordinating agency: The Secretariat of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Scope/mandate: Implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) of the World Trade Organization and Trade Facilitation measures which go beyond the TFA.

Terms of reference: Yes

Working structure of the group:

Chairman- Director General of Customs

Co Chairperson- Director General of Commerce,

Ten heads of key border agencies,

Seven heads of Trade Chambers.

Permanent technical secretariat: The permanent Secretariat scheduled to be established in February 2017.

Funding:

Budget: Yes

Sources of funding: World Bank Group

Items covered by the budget: The cost relating to consultants hired by the World Bank

Objectives / Focus:

Objectives: Ensure proper implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) of the World Trade Organization and attend to Trade Facilitation measures, which go beyond the TFA.

Working plan: Yes

Monitoring and evaluation: Through the Secretariat of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Reporting form and supervisory authority: Quarterly, to the Ministers of the Cabinet

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies:

Director General of Customs – Chairman

Director General of Commerce – Co-Chair/Member

Director General, Department of Trade and Investment Policy, Ministry of Finance - Member

Controller of Imports and Exports - Member

Controller General of Exchange, Department of Exchange Control - Member

Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health - Member

Director General, Department of Agriculture - Member

Director General, Sri Lanka Standards Institute - Member

Director General, National Intellectual Property Office - Member

Chairman, Sri Lanka Ports Authority - Member

Chairman, Airport and Aviation Services - Member

Chairman, Sri Lanka Export Development Board - Member

Private associations or entities: Private sector representation consisting Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and representatives nominated by other chambers, who participate as members.

Level of seniority of participants: Heads of the Government Institutions, Presidents and Secretary Generals of the trade chambers

Participation:

Frequency of meetings: Yes

Level of participation: Heads of government institutions and technical officers

Meetings format: Yes, there are technical committees for each member of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Promotion / Communication:

Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings: Through National Trade Facilitation Committee meeting minutes and emails

Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues: Through the Secretariat of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public: Yes

Benefits:

Impact: This has contributed positively for the timely ratification of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) of the World Trade Organization and the notification of the category A commitments

Benefits for the country's responsiveness to the WTO negotiation process: Timely ratification of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) of the World Trade Organization and the notification of category A commitments.

Concrete operational outcomes: Yes

Lessons learned:

Success factors: The active involvement of the Customs and the department of Commerce

Greatest obstacles: Insufficient commitment of the other Government Organisation.

Lessons learned from your experience: A greater degree of involvement is needed from the other members of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Future plans:

Plans for further development: Preparation of the road map for the implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation of the World Trade Organization.

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