

National Center for Standards and Certification Information (NCSCI)

New Service: Notify U.S.

**U.S. Department of Commerce
Technology Administration**

**National Institute of Standards and Technology
Standards Services Division**

October 5, 2005

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NCSCI Fast Facts

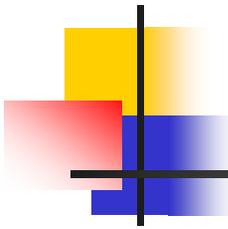
- Since 1965 NCSCI has served as a standards information center and since 1980 NCSCI has been the U.S. Inquiry Point.
- Today NCSCI is the U.S. Inquiry Point for the WTO TBT Agreement, NAFTA, and ISONET. NCSCI serves as:
 - The U.S. Inquiry Point for standards information.
 - The U.S. Notification Authority for WTO TBT.
- NCSCI offers free research and referral services on standards.
- NCSCI is open to visitors by appointment.
- NCSCI is operated by a staff of three technical information specialists and one information assistant.





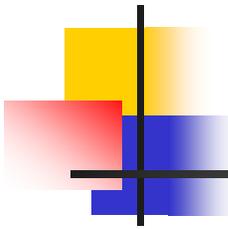
NCSCI – Inquiry Point

- **NCSCI is the U.S. WTO TBT Inquiry Point. Why?**
 - Under Article 10 of the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement:
 - “Each Member shall ensure that an inquiry point exists which is able to answer all reasonable inquiries from other Members and interested parties in other Member’s countries, as well as to provide relevant documents.”



NCSCI – Notification Authority

- **NCSCI is the U.S. WTO TBT Notification Authority. Why?**
 - Under Article 2 and Article 5 of the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement, notification to members is required:
 - “Whenever a relevant international standard does not exist or the technical content of a proposed regulation is not in accordance with the technical content of relevant international standards...”
 - “...And if the technical regulation may have a significant impact on trade.”



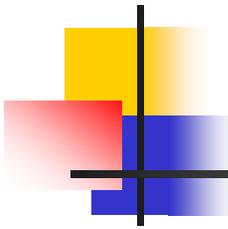
Roles and Responsibilities

- NCSCI is the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) U.S. Inquiry Point and Notification Authority **for non-agricultural products only.**
- The **U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Food Safety and Technical Services Division** operates the U.S. Inquiry Point and is the Notification Authority for agricultural products under the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement.
- NCSCI responds (bibliographically – not technically) to all inquiries on proposed changes to **technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.**



Why WTO Notification?

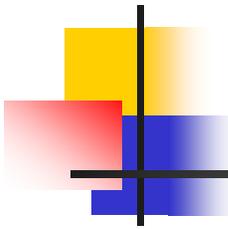
- Changes in technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures concerning products and labeling may significantly affect world trade.
- The WTO Members' notification process shares this important information with other countries.
- The WTO Members have the opportunity to review and comment to the issuing country on all proposed changes while they are at the draft stage and before the changes become official.



WTO Notifications

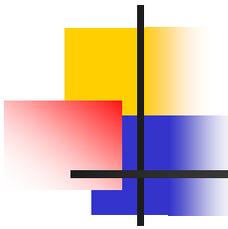
The Process

- WTO Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) is the central hub for receipt and dissemination of all notifications issued by WTO Member countries.
- All WTO Member national Inquiry Points notify their central government and sub-central government proposed regulation changes to WTO CRN.
- WTO distributes the notifications to all WTO Members via their web site at: <http://www.docsonline.wto.org/>



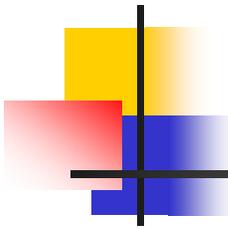
TBT Obligations

- **Fulfill Transparency Obligation: 1. Publish**
- By U.S. law, the *Federal Register* is published every Federal business day to identify new Federal rules, proposed rules, and notices.
- NCSCI staff reviews the *Federal Register* daily to identify any new proposed technical regulations or conformity assessment rules.
- NCSCI consults with the issuing U.S. regulatory agencies when necessary to determine significance to trade.
- NCSCI monitors U.S. state-level government publications to identify any proposed technical regulations or conformity assessment rules that are more strict than Federal ones.



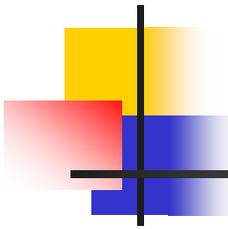
TBT Obligations

- **Fulfill Transparency Obligation: 2. Notify**
- NCSCI completes a standard WTO notification template for the proposed technical regulation or conformity assessment procedure.
- NCSCI sends the notification by email to the WTO Secretariat at the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) in Geneva for global distribution via the Internet.
- NCSCI sends U.S. notifications to NAFTA partners, and to all FTA partners at the same time as the notification is made to WTO.



TBT Obligations

- **Fulfill Transparency Obligation: 3. Provide full texts of regulations**
- NCSCI processes requests for full texts of U.S. regulations from WTO Member countries and provides Member countries with the full texts in support of U.S. notifications.
- WTO Member countries request full texts by mail, fax, and email to ncsci@nist.gov.
- NCSCI provides copies of the full texts of regulations or conformity assessment procedures to all interested parties who make requests.



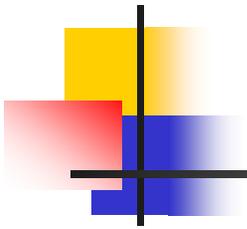
TBT Obligations

- **Fulfill Transparency Obligation: 4. Process Comments**
- The WTO Agreements on TBT and SPS require that Members allow a period of 60 days for comment from other Members.
- NCSCI receives incoming comments on proposed U.S. regulations from Member countries and overseas industries. NCSCI distributes the comments to the appropriate U.S. Federal regulatory agencies.
- NCSCI receives outgoing comments from U.S. industries on Member countries' proposed regulations. NCSCI distributes the comments to appropriate Member countries' Inquiry Points for Member country consideration.
- NCSCI coordinates requests with U.S. industry and WTO Member countries for comment period extensions.

How Notify U.S. Works

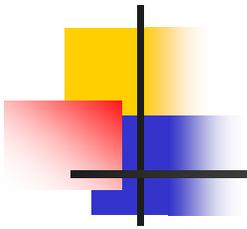
- NCSCI **collects notifications from WTO Member countries** that could affect U.S. industry and U.S. exporters via the WTO web site.
- NCSCI **distributes these WTO members' notifications to U.S. industry** and Federal government agencies via the **Notify U.S.** service.
- NCSCI then **obtains the full texts** of proposed changes from other countries on request and provides them to U.S. industries.





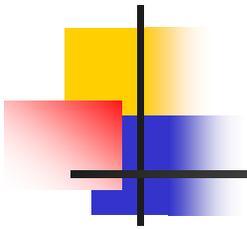
Notify U.S.

- 1. An Internet website for use by the public and service subscribers.**
- 2. An internal NIST component for use by the NCSCI team to accomplish work processes for information requests and fulfillment.**
- 3. An internal NIST component for use by the NCSCI team to administer the service.**



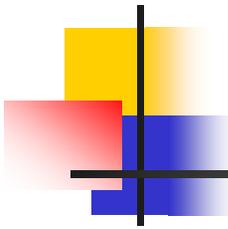
Notify U.S.

- Helps to inform U.S. industry and U.S. exporters of proposed regulatory changes in global markets before they become final regulations.
- Only service of its kind in the U.S
- Web-based application
- Service is free!



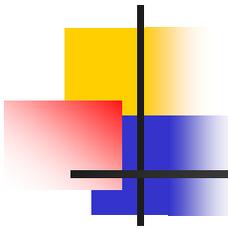
Notify U.S.

- Service began on July 1, 2005.
- Subscribers can monitor selected foreign regulatory developments.
- Subscribers can receive email alerting them to actions in countries or fields of interest they monitor.
- It takes only one click to access the Notify U.S. website.
- The Notify U.S. website is customized for each user.



Notify U.S. Summary

- It is a **free email and Internet service** for U.S. entities (industries, organizations, individuals) that distributes news of notifications from WTO Member countries.
- Users only receive email when their selected countries and sectors issue a notification.
- Users receive an email message alerting them to the notifications of interest including the date issued and products covered.
- Users can with one click access the Notify U.S. website to:
 - **read a copy of the full text of a proposed regulation**
 - **request a copy of the full text of a proposed regulation**
 - **learn how to submit comments**
 - **learn the deadline date for comments**
 - **request an extension on comment deadline dates**
 - **access a wealth of TBT-related information**
- Notify U.S. is online at: **<http://www.nist.gov/notifyus>**



Notify U.S. Advantages

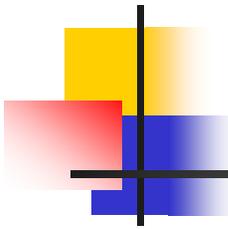
Provides customers with:

- **Self-service**
- **More information electronically**
- **24/7 information access**
- **Faster service**



Internet URL:

<http://www.nist.gov/notifyus>



Contact Notify U.S.

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Thank you!