



HARMONIZED SYSTEM  
REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

NR0312E1

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26<sup>th</sup> Session  
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O. Eng.

Brussels, 9 July 2002.

AMENDMENT OF THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO CLARIFY THE CLASSIFICATION OF  
DVD DRIVES, STANDALONE DVD PLAYERS AND GAME PLAYERS

(Item III.A.14 on Agenda)

Reference documents :

NR0258E1 (RSC/25)  
NR0265E3, Annex D/14 (RSC/25 – Report)  
NC0590E2, Annex H/10 (HSC/29 – Report)  
NR0284E1 (RSC/26)

I. NOTE FROM THE CANADIAN ADMINISTRATION

1. On 21 June 2002, the Secretariat received the following note from the Canadian Administration :
2. "...At its 29<sup>th</sup> Session, the Harmonized System Committee decided that CD and DVD drives are clearly goods of heading 84.71; they were distinguished from CD/DVD players and video game units.
3. Canada supports the concept, proposed by the United States at the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Review Sub-Committee, of adding a specific reference to CD/DVD drives to the Explanatory Note to heading 84.71. The US text was as set out in the Annex to Doc. NR0284B1.
4. Canada feels that if the Explanatory Note is to include any reference to the manner in which these drives function, that description must be more complete. An expanded, alternative text is presented in Option I below.
5. In the alternative, the proposed text should simply identify the goods and not attempt to describe the manner in which they function. A simplified version of the US proposal is presented in Option 2 below (NOTE : the bold, underlined text reflects added text and the strikethrough text indicates deletions).

Note : Shaded parts will be removed when documents are placed on the WCO documentation database available to the public.

File No. 2913

**Option 1**

6. “Such storage units include compact disc (CD) and digital versatile disc (DVD) drives, which may be read-only (CD-ROM, DVD-ROM), recordable (CD-R, DVD-R) or rewritable (CD-RW, DVD-RW).
- (a) Data is encoded on ROM discs when they are produced (pressed) using bumps that deflect light away from the drive’s sensor. ROM drives direct a weak laser light at the disc, detects (“reads”) whether that light is reflected back and translates the reflection or lack thereof into digital data. Because data is physically stored on the surface of the disc, none can be added or removed after the disc is produced. ROM drives can generally read discs created by recordable drives; some may be able to read discs created by rewritable drives.
  - (b) Recordable drives read data just as do read-only drives. They record data using a second, stronger laser to “burn” a layer of photosensitive dye in the flat surface of a recordable disc, creating non-reflective points that function like the bumps on a CD-ROM. The recording is irreversible and the discs cannot be re-used. The second laser is known as the “write laser”. The data can be retrieved because the “read laser” is not strong enough to affect the photosensitive dye. Recordable drives can read ROM disks and some may be able to read discs created by rewritable drives.
  - (c) Rewritable drives read and write data in a manner similar to recordable drives. However, instead of a photosensitive dye the disc has a layer of a phase-change chemical compound. The “write laser” heats the crystalline structure of this compound to the point that it liquefies; the unique nature of the compound is that these points remain liquid even after they cool. The liquid points are non-reflective and function like the bumps on a CD-ROM. The difference from recordable discs is that the non-reflective points return to their crystalline (reflective) state if re-heated to a certain temperature and thereby can be re-used; this is done by a third, “erase” laser that is stronger than the read laser but weaker than the write laser. Rewritable drives can read ROM and recordable discs. However, as rewritable discs reflect less light, ROM and recordable drives sometimes cannot read them.

These devices may be designed to be incorporated into an automatic data processing machine or to function as a peripheral unit.”

**Option 2**

7. “Such storage units include compact disc (**CD**) and digital versatile disc (**DVD**) drives. Those drives may be read only memory drives (e.g., CD-ROM, DVD-ROM), recordable drives (e.g., CD-R, DVD-R) and/or rewritable drives (e.g., CD-RW, DVD-RW). ~~These devices possess a laser, mirror and lens. They are external or internal units designed for use with automatic data processing machines. A read only memory drive reads discs bearing data that cannot be erased or re-recorded. A recordable drive permanently records data on specially treated discs that may be read by a read only memory drive. A rewritable drive is used to read, record, erase and re-record data stored on discs. “...”~~”

## II. SECRETARIAT COMMENTS

8. As regards the first alternative proposed by Canada, it should be pointed out that the Committee, when it classified the products in question did not consider the details of their components or their working methods. In order to avoid any confusion, the Secretariat prefers the shorter version.
9. The second Canadian proposal is similar to the Secretariat's proposal set out in the Annex to Doc. NR0284B1 but even shorter in terms of the second part. The preference as to texts is, obviously, left to the Sub-Committee.

## III. CONCLUSION

10. The Sub-Committee is invited to take into account the two Canadian proposals set out above when discussing this agenda item.
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