



HARMONIZED SYSTEM
COMMITTEE

-
28th Session
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NC0456E1

O. Eng.

Brussels, 2 October 2001.

WCO POLICY WITH REGARD TO THE PUBLICATION OF LATE DOCUMENTS

(Item II.9 on Agenda)

1. Rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure of the Harmonized System Committee provides, in pertinent part, that :

“...items submitted by Members of the Committee shall not be entered on the Agenda for a session unless they are received by the Secretariat at least **eight weeks** before that session opens. Items received after this closing date shall be entered on an additional list appended to the provisional agenda.

In principle, all basic working documents should be dispatched to the Members of the Committee at least **30 days** before the opening date of the session.”
2. The Secretariat has noticed that lately more and more comments and proposals from administrations have been submitted later than the above agreed time frames.
3. As a result it has become difficult, if not impossible, for the Secretariat to publish working documents on a timely basis and there has been a tendency by the Committee and the Sub-Committees to delay consideration of the issue(s) in question to the next meeting. In the Secretariat's view this is a highly undesirable situation given the pressure on all of us to provide classification information in a timely manner and to keep the HS up to date with developments in technology and international trading patterns. Late submissions are also particularly disruptive on the Secretariat's document production process which is, of course, not limited to the production of documents for this Committee only.
4. For all of the above reasons, the Secretariat must insist that the timeframes set out in the Committee's Rules of Procedure be respected by administrations.
5. In the future, if the Secretariat receives comments and proposals later than the timeframes provided in the Rules it will not be possible to have these comments and proposals translated in time for consideration by the Committee. Consequently the Secretariat will only be able to reproduce such comments and proposals as “non-papers” in the language received; without additional input from the Secretariat.

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6. The above mentioned procedures will also apply to the work of the Review Sub-Committee and the Scientific Sub-Committee.
7. We trust that Members will understand the Secretariat's position and make their best efforts to comply with the timeframes provided for in the Rules of Procedure.
