

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

S/CSC/W/8

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(97-4452)

Committee on Specific Commitments

CALENDAR AND BUDGET ASPECTS OF THE CREATION OF AGGREGATED AND ELECTRONICALLY UPDATED SCHEDULES FOR SERVICES

Note by the Secretariat

1. Following the discussion held at the meeting of 16 June 1997 of the Committee on Specific Commitments and the endorsement by Members of the Secretariat proposal of the compilation of aggregated and electronically updated schedules for services without legal value, the Secretariat has examined in detail the possible calendar and the budgetary implications of this proposal. In deciding whether to go ahead with this project the Committee should be aware of the following points:

I. BUDGET AND CALENDAR

2. As stated in paragraph 10 of document S/CSC/W/5, the data entry and checking would require six man-months of G2 level consultancy (temporary personnel), as was the case for the elaboration of the services data base. Therefore the initiation of the project in 1998 is subject to the availability of funds for temporary personnel, which are expected to remain stable in 1998 as compared to 1997.

3. If this difficulty is solved, it is suggested that the work will begin in 1998 but will only be completed in 1999: the future results of the financial services negotiations will only have been ratified, hopefully by the end of 1998 (depending on the date to be fixed by the Fifth Protocol) and can only be aggregated after ratification, that is probably in January-February 1999. There would be a possibility to produce a first version of the aggregated schedules, without the financial services results, in June-September 1998, but this would mean the printing and dispatching of around 625,000 pages (2 sets of 2,500 pages sent to 131 delegations), that would be out of date six months later and would have to be reprinted. It is therefore suggested that if work can begin in 1998, it should be completed by February-March 1999 and include the financial services negotiations results.

4. If no funds are available for temporary personnel in 1998, completion of the work would be delayed until the end of 1999.

II. FORMAT, CIRCULATION, AND PRICES

5. As stated in paragraphs 6 and 7 of document S/CSC/W/5 the format of the compilation would have to include an additional column to indicate the date of the commitments. Additionally the material presentation of the footnotes would slightly differ from the treaty copies. In effect the material used to elaborate the compilation comes from the services data base. Data bases are structurally unable to accommodate footnotes as they are structured horizontally by fields. Therefore it is suggested that footnotes would appear also in a column, but that this column would be typographically distinct from the schedules, would bear the name "footnotes" and that the Committee will acknowledge in its minutes that this presentation in a column-form does not have the effect of including the footnotes in the schedule itself. Members will find annexed to the present document a draft format for discussion.

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6. It is suggested to present the set of compiled schedules in the form of two folders and to distribute freely two sets to each delegation, and that additional copies should be sold to delegations at a price similar to Volumes 28, 29, 30 and 32 of the Uruguay Round results (that is in total Sw F 205).

7. It is also suggested to offer the compilations for sale to the general public as all documents forming part of them are derestricted and already available. This would alleviate the cost per unit of the folders and would create additional receipts for the Organization.

8. Based on those parameters the additional costs in the printing budget have been estimated for 1000 copies of a single language version of 2,500 pages including the purchase of the folders to Sw F 27,000 for in-house printing and to Sw F 40,000 for outside printing.

9. As far as the electronic form of the schedules is concerned the estimated cost would lie in the region of Sw F 20,000 if 400 copies were produced for free distribution. Sales of additional copies would reduce the net cost.

III. VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

10. As proposed in paragraph 12 of document S/CSC/W/5 it is suggested to adopt the following procedure:

- The Secretariat would produce a first draft of an aggregated schedule;
- This draft would be sent to the delegation concerned for approval or if need be modification;
- Failing comments within sixty days by the delegation concerned the aggregated schedule would be circulated to all delegations. Any Member may at any time raise in the Committee questions concerning the accuracy of the aggregation.