



TRANSPARENCY

EIGHTH TRIENNIAL REVIEW

Submission from Australia

The following submission, dated 8 June 2018, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Australia.

Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Eighth Triennial Review and share with the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade the following matters for its consideration, recommendation and possible decision.

1 TRANSPARENCY AND NOTIFICATION

1.1. Australia acknowledges the importance of effective notification processes. With recent updates to the IMS and the new [ePing](#) system, Australia acknowledges that more stakeholders are reviewing notifications, particularly from the private sector. Australia supports the proposals to build on and improve transparency operations of the TBT Committee. Further to this, Australia would like to make additional proposals to improve the notification process particularly for the private sector.

1.1 Keywords in Notifications

1.2. Australia proposes that TBT notifications have keywords to allow stakeholders, particularly in the private sector, to easily identify which notifications affect them as well assist notification search functions. Keywords could be included in either an open field in the notification template or alternatively, include a drop down menu of a set of applicable key words which help further identify the goods and/or types of measures that a TBT measure affects. This feature would add to the existing fields which describe a measure's objective and products it applies to, and allow a more focused and narrowed search/alert option for interested stakeholders.

1.3. Examples of the type of keywords that could be used are common types of TBT measures such as 'labelling'; 'standard'; 'conformity assessment' or broad product descriptions possibly based on HS Nomenclature Section descriptions, such as Animals/animal products; Mineral products; Footwear, headgear, umbrellas; etc.

1.4. This would mean that these keywords could be easily searchable through the [IMS](#) and [ePing](#) in addition to existing fields such as 'products' and 'objectives' fields

1.5. Australia notes that while the scope of measures covered by the TBT Agreement and Committee cover a larger cross-section of goods than the SPS Agreement/Committee, the TBT Committee can learn from the SPS Committees' experiences with keywords to include their experiences and benefits in the development of a similar mechanism for TBT notifications.

1.2 Template fields for the adoption of final measures

1.6. Australia proposes that the TBT Committee establish new fields within the addendum notification template to enable a member to indicate:

- a. when notifications are in relation to finalised TBT measures; and
- b. when the measure will enter into force.

1.7. While the notification of final measures is optional, having a field within the addendum template would improve transparency for the private sector and may assist Members in notifying the adoption of measures. The addendum template could also stipulate in the notification when the measure will enter into force – which is the most valuable information for Members and the private sector. The current standard notification template indicates the proposed date of entry into force, but this can often change by the time the measure is finalised.

1.3 Utilisation of ePing

1.8. Australia proposes that the TBT Committee holds an informal discussion and develop recommendations on how Members can best utilise [ePing](#). This will enable Members to share experiences in using [ePing](#) domestically and also establish how [ePing](#) can be used to facilitate the work of the TBT Committee. For example, [ePing](#) allows for Members to attach documents to notifications – this function could allow members to share comments, summaries and translations. The informal discussion would also include how Members engage their private sectors.
