

LICENSING

The Republic of China on Taiwan categorizes imports into controlled and permissible items. The government has been allowing the import of a larger range of products each year. At present, only 257 items are listed as controlled. The remaining 8,732 items contained in the *ROC Customs Import Tariff and Classification of Import and Export Commodities* listings are permissible. The following products are prohibited from import: catfish; herring; sardines; mackerel; saury; anchovies; and squid.

Importers must have a general license in order to bring goods into Taiwan. For 5,930 of the 8,989 permissible items, no additional permit is required, as such goods can be imported directly upon approval of an application for payment made through an authorized bank. For some particular items with quantitative restrictions, a specific import license is required. A license covering permissible goods can be obtained from any authorized foreign exchange bank, while a license for controlled items can only be obtained by applying directly to the Board of Foreign Trade.

Board of Foreign Trade, MOEA

1 Hu-kuo Street, Taipei

Tel: (02) 351-0271

Fax: (02) 351-3603

TARIFFS

Recent tariff reductions have had a profound impact on imports to the ROC. Effective average rates were projected to decline significantly by the time Taiwan is admitted into GATT. The scope of the cuts has been wide, with extensive tariff reductions being effected on a total of 7,079 items between 1985 and 1988. In July, 1989, the government approved tariff cuts covering 4,800 more product categories, and additional revisions were made in April, 1990, on items such as agricultural products, industrial raw materials, and electrical appliances, which lowered the average effective tariff rate to 4.3 percent. Taken together, these reductions have made a huge variety of foreign products competitive in the Taiwan market, resulting in increased imports of everything from refrigerators to value-added seafood products.

The dutiable value of an import is defined as its C.I.F. value. If customs officials consider an invoice's transaction value to be too low, they will value the item based on the actual transaction value. Duties are payable within 14 days from the date of issuance of the duty statement. When a firm cannot identify an article in the Taiwan Customs Import Tariff Code or is in doubt as to the proper classification of goods, it may write the Directorate General of Customs in advance of shipment to request a ruling regarding the applicable classification and import duty. A sample should be submitted with the written request for information. If it is not possible to submit a sample, a complete description of the article, specifications, and photographs may be required to assist the customs appraiser.