

designated products to a predetermined level. Quantitative controls for Canada are arrived at by taking into account a variety of factors and quota amounts are usually allocated to domestic importers for a fixed period of time and subject to certain conditions.

Currently, different methods exist and are used to allocate quotas under the Export and Import Permits Act. These are: to importers in proportion to their share of imports of the products in question during a defined base period prior to the imposition of the quota; to importers based on their domestic market share; by setting aside a share of the quota; or by pro rata or equal share allocation.

* * *

When authorized by the Governor-in-Council, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal has a mandate to inquire into and report on any matter in relation to the economic, trade or commercial interests of Canada. It is well situated to carry out an inquiry into import quota allocations.

The Tribunal is an independent quasi-judicial body that reports to Parliament through the Minister of Finance. It began operations on December 31, 1988. It settles trade and tax disputes and conducts inquiries in three areas: domestic producers' complaints of trade injury, primarily arising from dumped and subsidized imports into Canada; taxpayers' appeals of Revenue Canada customs and sales tax decisions; and special fact-finding and advisory inquiries on economic, trade and tariff issues of a general or sectoral interest.

The Tribunal carries out its statutory responsibilities in an independent and impartial manner. As a quasi-judicial body, it has rules and procedures similar to those of a court of law, but not quite as formal or strict. It may hold public hearings, which are carried out as informally and expeditiously as possible. It has the power to subpoena witnesses and require parties to submit documents, even those of a confidential nature. The legislation governing its operations contains provisions that strictly control access to confidential documents.

Since its creation, the Tribunal has completed three special inquiries and is currently working on a fourth. The three completed inquiries, all of which were referred by the Minister of Finance, related to:

- Textile Tariffs (recommendations on the level and pace of textile tariff reductions);
- Tariff Anomalies (recommendations on the phase-out schedule of tariffs specified under the Free Trade Agreement); and