



the dti

Department:
Trade and Industry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Technical Barriers to Trade Early Warning System for South African exporters

Keeping you informed on technical regulatory and conformity assessment developments that may impact on your exports

Providing you with an opportunity to have your say on technical regulations and conformity assessment requirements of countries that you export to before it becomes a technical barrier to your trade

Background

Exporters from developing countries including South African exporters continue to face non-tariff barriers in the form of standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.

An early warning system will inform South African exporters about draft technical regulations, which are being developed by other countries that may create technical barriers to trade.

What is a technical regulation?

Technical regulations refer to a set of requirements used by governments to determine compulsory requirements for product or service characteristics or the related processes that should be complied with. Technical regulations also have specific administrative provisions and testing, certification and other conformity assessment requirements where compliance is mandatory with regard to public safety, health and environmental issues.

Notifications from countries

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Technical Barrier to Trade Agreement has a transparency obligation that requires that countries publish and notify to the WTO draft technical regulations at least 60 days in advance of adoption to allow time for comment and consideration of comments. Before their entry into force a reasonable time of at least 6 months should be allowed for trading partners to become acquainted with them.

Where can you peruse these notifications?

The South African Enquiry Point downloads all these notifications, classifies them according to International Code for Standards and avails them as a searchable online database for exporters, manufacturers, regulators and the public's information and comment.

Or if you prefer the full texts of TBT notifications can be requested through the SABS Enquiry point.

To see the list of notifications go to <http://www.sadcstan.co.za/wto/index.asp>

To search for notifications on your product, select the "Fields of activity (ICS)" field

Do you want to comment on a particular draft technical regulation?

Submissions may be prepared and submitted to **the dti** through the SABS Enquiry point on matters of concern.

E-mail your comment through to wto@sabs.co.za

What will happen with your comments?

- If it is in national interest a South African national position or comments may be developed by **the dti** in conjunction with experts who will submit it to the relevant country. This may also result in bilateral talks with this country if concerns are not taken into consideration.
- If the bilateral talks do not resolve the problem, it may be registered as a specific trade concern in the WTO TBT Committee meetings.
- If the matter cannot be resolved and an unnecessary barrier to trade is created by the implementation of the draft regulation, the WTO dispute settlement mechanism may be engaged.

Do you want to be an alert exporter?

Incoming notifications will be sent to a dedicated industry and stakeholder mailing list for information.

To subscribe to the Early Warning System, contact the South African TBT Enquiry Point at:

Telephone: 012 428 6561

Fax: 012 428 6928

E-mail: wto@sabs.co.za

Online: <http://www.sabs.co.za/forms/standards/wtomailssubscribe.php>

Do you want to contact **the dti**?

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