

the countries now eliminated, the Parties are considering harmonizing their MFN tariffs. Under NAFTA Article 308, the three countries did harmonize at zero tariff rates for computers/computer parts, local area network equipment and semiconductors.

Tariff harmonization could eliminate the need for preferential rule of origin requirements. Currently, NAFTA rules of origin are designed to ensure that tariff free treatment applies to all goods that originate or are substantially modified in North America while enabling NAFTA Parties to apply their own tariff rates to products of third country origin. Harmonizing MFN tariff rates at zero could eliminate the need for preferential rules of origin since the origin determination would be made when a good first enters the NAFTA area, making it unnecessary to have additional origin requirements for intra-NAFTA trade.

Additional Information

No decisions have been made to pursue rule of origin changes or harmonization of MFN tariffs, or the scope or degree of such changes. A decision to do so will consider several factors including (1) The expected reduction in transaction and manufacturing costs in North America and increase in trade that could result from either action; (2) the feasibility of devising, implementing and monitoring new rules of origin or harmonized MFN tariffs; (3) the level and breadth of interest in such an exercise by manufacturers, processors, traders and consumers in North America.

The following factors are also being considered as part of a possible framework for such an initiative:

(1) Harmonization would occur as countries with the higher MFN duties reduce such duties to the level of the lowest current duty rate applied by a NAFTA country, or move to a rate lower than any currently applied.

(2) Harmonization at a zero rate of duty is the most attractive option, and is the only option that could eliminate the need for preferential rules of origin.

(3) As was the case for products covered under Article 308, harmonization of an entire sector or broad range of goods would provide more benefits and be easier to implement and enforce.

(4) The NAFTA governments expect to proceed on the basis of consensus; that is, proposed rule of origin changes or tariff harmonization would be broadly supported by interested parties within each country.

Requirements for Comments/Proposals

A. Governments encourage submissions that enjoy broad support. Submitters should indicate if they have discussed their proposals with representatives of the affected sector in the other NAFTA countries and, if so, the result of such discussions. If representatives of an affected sector in one of the other NAFTA countries supports the proposal and the similar organization in the third NAFTA country does not support the proposal, such information should be included. Governments encourage interested parties to explore submitting proposals from organizations in all three countries.

B. Scope and Coverage of Proposals. Governments encourage interested parties to review the broadest appropriate range of items and to submit proposals that reflect a consensus reached after such a broad-based review. A single proposal can thus include requests covering multiple tariff headings. Proposals should cover entire 8-digit tariff subheadings, and may also be submitted at the 6, 4, or 2 digit level where the intent is to cover all subsidiary duties.

Requirements for Submissions: In order to facilitate the prompt processing of submissions, the Office of the United States Trade Representative strongly urges and prefers electronic (e-mail) submissions to nafta2004@ustr.gov in response to this notice. Documents should be submitted as WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or text (.TXT) files. In the event that an e-mail submission is impossible, submissions should be made by facsimile. Supporting documentation submitted in the form of spreadsheets is acceptable in Quattro Pro or Excel format. For any document containing business confidential information submitted electronically, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters "BC-" and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P-." The P- or BC- should be followed by the name of the submitter. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. Similarly, to the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files. Written comments will be placed in a file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5, except confidential business information exempt from public

inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6. Confidential business information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6 must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" at the top of each page, including any cover letter or cover page, and must be accompanied by a nonconfidential summary of the confidential information. All public documents and nonconfidential summaries shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file may be made by calling (202) 395-6186. Appointments must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance.

Regina K. Vargo,

Assistant United States Trade Representative for the Americas.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Aircraft Certification Policy Notice

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for public comment.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of and requests comments on the issuance of a proposed Certification Policy Notice for approving Complex Supplemental Type Certificates (STC). The proposed Certification Policy Notice introduces a new classification of STCs, and instructs Aircraft Certification Office engineers, STC applicants, and STC installers how to manage STCs classified as complex.

DATES: Identify comments as Certification Policy Complex STC and they must arrive by February 12, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send all comments on the proposed Certification Policy Notice to: Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Certification Service, Aircraft Engineering Division, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591. ATTN: Stephen (Steve) Flanagan, AIR-110. Or, deliver comments to: Federal Aviation Administration, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen (Steve) Flanagan, Aerospace Engineer, Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Certification