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United States International Trade Commission

Strategic Plan FY 2003-2008



Mission Statement

The mission of the U.S. International Trade Commission (Commission) is to: (1) administer U.S. trade remedy laws within its mandate in a fair and objective manner; (2) provide the President, the United States Trade Representative (USTR), and Congress with independent, quality analysis, information, and support on matters of tariffs and international trade and competitiveness; and (3) maintain the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

In so doing, the Commission serves the public by implementing U.S. law and contributing to the development of sound and informed U.S. trade policy.

Strategic Vision

The role of international trade in the U.S. economy has expanded and, thus, the work of the Commission has had a broader impact on many aspects of the U.S. economy. In light of this expanded role, the Commission recognizes the importance of striving for excellence in all aspects of its mission. It is dedicated to objectivity, timeliness, and continual improvement in support of its customers.

As an independent, quasi-judicial federal agency, the Commission is uniquely placed to administer important U.S. trade laws in a fair and impartial manner. The Commission is committed to the objective administration of the laws under its authority and is dedicated to improving the clarity and analytical and legal excellence of its decisions.

Likewise, the Commission's independent structure places it in a position to provide objective analysis and information to the President, USTR,

Congress, and the general public. The Commission is committed to serving as the key federal resource for analysis of international trade matters through its industry, economic, nomenclature, and regional expertise. The Commission anticipates that the need for this expertise will expand; thus, it envisions enhancing its ability to assess a wide range of emerging trade issues.

Introduction

The Commission's fifth edition of its Strategic Plan covers fiscal years 2003-2008 and was prepared in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (Results Act). The Commission's Strategic Plan consists of a mission statement, the agency's strategic vision, strategic goal, general goals that will be used to measure the agency's success level, and the general strategies that will be used to achieve the mission. The mission is based on the functions assigned to the Commission by statute. Relevant statutory provisions include 19 U.S.C. §§ 1332, 1337, 1484, 1671 *et seq.*, 2151, 2252, 2436, 2451, 2451a, 2463, 2704, 3005, 3007, 3010, 3203, 3204, 3803, and 3804. The mission also reflects a comprehensive review of the Commission's operations.

In developing the fifth edition of the Strategic Plan, the Commission has taken into account government-wide initiatives, such as the President's Management Agenda, that seek to enhance the delivery of electronic government services and information, to delayer management levels and streamline organizations, to make effective use of private sector contracting, to improve financial performance, and to integrate performance and budgeting. The Commission has already taken significant steps in all of those areas. Layers of middle management were eliminated in various reorganization efforts, thereby increasing the ratio of staff to managers by almost ten percent since FY 1996. The Commission also now provides, principally through its Internet site, public (i.e., non-confidential) trade and other information to its customers and the public electronically, and permits them to file certain documents with the agency electronically. By FY 2002, the Commission had entered into competitively-sourced contracts with the private sector for the services of on-site contract personnel corresponding to approximately 29 full-time equivalents or 7 percent of the workforce. Pursuant to the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002, the Commission is planning to prepare audited financial statements.

The Commission is committed to the strategic planning process. Through the Strategic Plan, the agency has learned to focus more directly on its goals and values and articulate them more clearly. In implementing the Strategic Plan, the Commission is communicating its goals to all agency employees, and making clear to managers and staff the importance of achieving those goals. The process has also brought the agency into closer touch with the concerns of its customers and stakeholders, which has helped the Commission learn from their perspectives. The Commission has also taken advantage of the planning experiences of other agencies. The Commission has placed this Strategic Plan on its Internet site (<http://www.usitc.gov>), and welcomes comments. In the years ahead, the Commission will continue to refine its plan in order to adapt to changing circumstances. The Commission will conduct program evaluations to contribute to the refinement of the agency's goals. The planning and review process will allow the Commission to maintain and enhance its unique expertise, to continue to administer import-remedy laws fairly and objectively, and to contribute to the development of U.S. trade policy.

Relationship to Other Planning Documents

The Commission conducts planning for multiple purposes and at multiple levels based on Federal mandates and guidance. The planning processes result in a number of documents designed to guide the Commission's decisionmaking. The Commission seeks to coordinate as much as practicable the content of these documents.

As in previous years and consistent with the Results Act, each year the Commission will issue Performance Plans based on the Strategic Plan. These annual Performance Plans are closely linked to the Strategic Plan in that each goal in the Performance Plans corresponds directly to a general goal in the Strategic Plan, although each performance goal is geared toward the timeframe of a single fiscal year. The Performance Plans also set out means to measure the Commission's success at meeting its performance goals; those annual measurements of success aim, in the aggregate over the period covered by the Strategic Plan, to indicate the Commission's progress at meeting its general goals. Moreover, the Performance Plans summarize the extent of such progress achieved each year. The first Performance Plan to be developed under

this edition of the Strategic Plan will cover FY 2005; the Commission anticipates issuing along with it a revised FY 2004 Performance Plan. Also consistent with the Results Act, the Commission issues each year a Program Performance Report providing information on the agency's performance in meeting its goals during the previous year. Both the Performance Plans and the Program Performance Reports address the adequacy and reliability of data sources and information systems to support strategic planning. The Program Performance Reports, covering FY 1999-2002, that the Commission has issued so far have shown that the agency has achieved a high degree of success in meeting its goals.

In accordance with the Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996 (Clinger-Cohen Act) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Commission prepares an Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan. That document contains goals and performance measures, based on the goals in the agency's Strategic Plan, designed to assist the Commission in acquiring and maintaining effective systems for the management of information resources. The Commission also maintains an Information Security Plan as part of its commitment to safeguarding the nonpublic information entrusted to the agency consistent with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130.

The Commission is a multidisciplinary, knowledge-based organization whose mission accomplishment is directly related to the quality and competence of its workforce. As such, the agency's workforce is its most important asset. To ensure it has the workforce needed to be successful over the next 5-10 years, the Commission has initiated the development of a strategic human capital management plan. The purpose of this plan is to identify the human resources programs and activities that need to be initiated in the short-term to ensure the right workforce is developed over the long-term. The Human Capital Steering Committee anticipates having a plan in place by the end of 2003.

The Commission also issues documents relating to its budget. The primary document is the annual Budget Justification, which the agency transmits to Congress when the President presents the Budget of the United States Government. In recent years, the Commission has brought the budget documents into close alignment with the Strategic Plan. The Budget Justification reports the agency's historical and proposed expenditures according to the five general goals in the Strategic Plan, and the agency allocates direct and indirect costs as much as practicable to each of those goals.

Strategic Goal

The Commission will effectively conduct five strategic Operations:

- Import injury investigations
- Intellectual property-based import investigations
- Research
- Trade and tariff information services
- Trade policy support

All of these Operations define the function of the Commission, emphasizing the benefits that the Commission provides in facilitating an open trading system based on the rule of law and the economic interests of the United States. The Commissioners and the staff offices of the agency work closely together to carry out the Commission's Operations.¹ Within each Operation, the Strategic Plan identifies a general goal and strategies. These can be found in the sections, set out below, addressing the Operations.

The strategies outlined in each Operation are designed to assist the Commission in meeting its general goals. Many of the strategies stress the importance of performing agency functions in an "effective" manner. Effectiveness includes ensuring that Commission products are of state-of-the-art quality and that they fully and objectively fulfill the agency's obligations. It also includes ensuring that, where appropriate, they are responsive to the needs of customers, as measured in part by feedback; and that the products are disseminated to customers in a useful, efficient, and cost-effective way.

Consistent with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, the Commission has a goal, affecting all Operations, to provide customers with the option to conduct business with the agency electronically.

¹ A chart showing the organizational structure of the Commission is included as an appendix.

External Factors

The Strategic Plan takes into account the Commission's large and diverse constituency. The agency's direct customers include the President, USTR, and Congress in that they request and receive trade policy support, including analytical reports and trade data. In addition, domestic industries, represented by the international trade bar and others, petition the Commission to conduct investigations where it has authority delegated by law to do so, and the public seeks assistance and information on trade issues. Ultimately, the Commission serves the U.S. taxpayer by assisting in the development and implementation of sound U.S. trade policy. External factors influencing the Commission's success at achieving its goals, largely outside the Commission's control, include the number and nature of requests and petitions received from its customers, judicial and panel² decisions reviewing Commission determinations, appropriation levels, and changes in the laws the Commission administers.

The Commission has in recent years seen its workload expand as a result of legislative changes. The Trade and Development Act of 2000 and the Trade Act of 2002 resulted in significant new investigative responsibilities for the Commission. The statute on permanent normal trade relations with the People's Republic of China has resulted in the conduct of a new type of investigation relating to market disruption and may result in investigations relating to trade diversion. The dispute resolution process in the World Trade Organization (WTO) also provides a source of increasing workload. The Commission works with USTR to defend Commission decisions, and challenge other countries' decisions contrary to U.S. interests, in WTO dispute resolution panel proceedings, which have steadily increased in number and complexity in recent years.

As discussed in previous editions of the Strategic Plan, the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) imposed substantial responsibilities on the Commission with respect to reviewing outstanding antidumping and countervailing duty orders. During the period 1998-2001, the Commission conducted reviews of outstanding antidumping and countervailing duty orders in place as of the date of enactment of the Uruguay Round. Earlier editions of the Strategic Plan focused on the need to realign resources to accommodate that workload. Although the Commission has completed the initial transition reviews and reallocated

² World Trade Organization (WTO) and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) panels.

resources accordingly, the agency will continue to conduct reviews of orders as they come due for review. This will lead to another substantial workload increase starting in 2004 as the Commission conducts reviews of the initially-outstanding orders that were not revoked during the initial period of review, 1998-2001. The expanded mission will again require each employee to carry an intensive workload and will involve significant internal shifting of resources. Even at peak efficiency, additional non-permanent staff will likely be necessary to meet the requirements of the review mandate. In addition, as negotiations in the Doha round continue over the next few years it is possible that negotiations could affect the statutes under which the Commission operates. Such changes could affect the Commission's workload as much as the earlier Uruguay Round Agreements did.

Aside from legislation, other external factors may affect the Commission's workload. Notably, a slowing economy often results in an increased rate of filings for relief under the import injury statutes. Intellectual property rights holders recently have shown a preference for the Commission's forum by filing increasing numbers of cases under Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930. Trade initiatives, such as the U.S.-Singapore and U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreements, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and a new round of multilateral WTO negotiations, coupled with provisions of the Trade Act of 2002, have resulted in a number of requests for comprehensive studies by USTR and Congress and for staff support in negotiations.

The Commission will take into account factors such as the President's Management Agenda, Chief Human Capital Officer Act, and e-Gov initiatives sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and OMB in its human capital strategies for the foreseeable future. OPM initiatives in recruitment and staffing, employment data warehousing, retirement processing, and security clearance processing will impact both how the Commission chooses to manage its human resources, as well as the tools and technology the agency uses to manage those resources.

At present, the Commission is able to carry out fully its functions with all its components located in one building in southwest Washington, D.C. Should changing circumstances indicate the need for additional offices elsewhere, the Commission will give first-priority consideration to rural areas, consistent with the Rural Development Act of 1972.

Business Environment

As discussed above, the Commission issues a Performance Plan for each fiscal year. Each Performance Plan discusses the challenges facing agency management in the year ahead. Because challenges tend to change from year to year, this multi-year Strategic Plan does not address all such challenges.

However, two challenges – the need for continued effective technology integration and information resources management and the need for continued effective human resources management – appear likely to persist over an extended period of time, and are addressed in the Commission’s human capital vision set out below, as well as in the sections of the Strategic Plan devoted to individual Operations.

The Commission’s human capital vision describes the stable mission of the agency as well as its dynamic workload, and the tools, skills and expectations to be employed in helping carry out the mission.

Stable mission. The fundamental mission of the Commission is mandated by statute and therefore not expected to change. Customers and stakeholders will continue to look to the Commission to administer trade remedy laws; provide independent, high quality analyses and information; and maintain the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

Dynamic workload. Although the mission is stable, changes in the international economy, in trade flows, and in U.S. trade policy influence the scope and volume of the Commission’s workload, as well as the distribution of the workload among the agency’s lines of business. These workload shifts will place added pressure on the agency to be agile and flexible in responding to new and changing workload requirements, while at the same time deepening its expertise.

New tools and new expectations. Information technology will continue to alter the way the work of the Commission is accomplished. Along with new technology will come new customer expectations. The Commission must be prepared to respond quicker to customer requests and to provide a wider variety of analytical services beyond traditional reports. The Commission looks to information technology for assistance in meeting the challenges ahead. The Commission recently established an Office of the Chief Information Officer to coordinate information resources management. The agency has taken steps to realign resources within

this function. The ongoing adoption of new or enhanced electronic processes is expected to facilitate the Commission's research and investigative activities and enhance the ability of agency customers to access information provided by the Commission and conduct their business with the agency.

Resources. Overall funding levels are expected to remain relatively stable. This will require the agency to find creative, flexible, and efficient ways of accomplishing its mission and responding to future workload changes. The Commission is funded entirely by appropriations. The Commission has one program activity (research, investigations, and reports) set forth in the Budget of the United States Government. Rent, salaries, and benefits account for the large majority of the Commission's expenditures. The Commission had available funds of \$53 million for FY 2002, and \$54.4 million for FY 2003.

To be successful in this new environment, the Commission needs a workforce that appropriately balances the following characteristics:

Technical expertise. The Commission must preserve its long tradition of outstanding economic, industry, technical, and legal expertise and its ability to conduct analyses and make judgments in an objective, independent manner. To successfully meet this requirement, the agency must replenish the significant portion of its current workforce which is eligible to retire over the next 5-10 years, while maintaining high technical standards and preserving invaluable institutional knowledge.

Flexibility. To support its mission the Commission must continue to build a workforce that is increasingly flexible. Reaching this goal will require developing multiple skill sets so that more employees can quickly move from one type of assignment to another, enhancing employee comfort with change and ability to handle change, and building organizational structures that allow more employees to move seamlessly throughout the Commission to those areas where they are most needed.

New and enhanced skills and expertise. The Commission needs to enhance skill sets that will become increasingly important in the future business environment. These include leadership and management skills, interpersonal skills, information technology skills, and technical skills and knowledge in new/emerging areas.

The Commission recognizes that equality of opportunity is essential to attracting, developing, and retaining the most qualified workforce to support the agency's achievement of its strategic mission.

Consequently, the Commission includes in its planning actions support of equal employment opportunity (EEO), including ensuring an appropriate role for the agency's EEO Director and the allocation of sufficient resources to the agency's EEO program, consistent with 29 CFR 1614.102.

Cross-Cutting Activities

The Commission participates in a number of cross-cutting activities in Operation No. 4 (Trade and Tariff Information Services) that involve significant cooperation with other U.S. Government agencies. To the extent appropriate, the objectives of these activities are subsumed within the general goal for the provision of trade and tariff information services under that Operation. The activities are also discussed below.

The Commission is actively engaged in the development of the International Trade Data System (ITDS). The ITDS is envisioned as an Internet-based integrated government trade data system designed for the secure electronic collection and distribution of international trade and transportation transaction data required by federal agencies. A Commission representative serves as Chair of the Board of Directors responsible for developing the ITDS. In addition, two other Commission employees actively participate in the work of the program. Additional background information regarding the ITDS can be found at www.itds.treas.gov.

The Commission also chairs a committee for determining the categories for which import and export statistics are collected. The so-called 484 Committee is composed of representatives of the Census Bureau (on behalf of the Department of Commerce) and the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (Customs) (in the Department of Homeland Security), as well as the Commission. This committee was established pursuant to Section 484(f) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, and has been in operation since 1964.

Finally, Commission staff, along with staff from other agencies, represent the U. S. Government at the World Customs Organization (formally known as the Customs Cooperation Council) with respect to the development and maintenance of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS). The HS is the basic nomenclature system in use by over one hundred countries, including the United States,

as the basis for their Customs tariff and foreign trade statistical systems. Commission staff prepare positions and serve on U.S. delegations to the Harmonized System Committee. A Commission representative chairs the U.S. delegation to the Review Sub-Committee of the HS Committee. Currently, a Commission representative serves as Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

The Commission interacts with other agencies in various other areas. However, these interactions do not constitute cross-cutting programs or activities. The Commission is part of an interagency trade policy mechanism mandated by the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 and designed to develop and coordinate U.S. Government positions on international trade and trade-related issues. The Trade Policy Review Group (TPRG) and the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), both chaired by USTR, are the subcabinet interagency trade policy coordination groups. The Commission is a non-voting member of the TPSC and an observer at meetings of the TPRG.

Agencies such as Customs and the Department of Commerce perform closely related functions to those of the Commission in some areas. The Commerce Department determines whether imports are dumped or subsidized in proceedings corresponding to Commission investigations conducted under Operation No. 1. Customs enforces antidumping and countervailing duty orders, as well as exclusion orders issued in Commission intellectual-property-based investigations conducted under Operation No. 2. However, those functions of Customs and the Commerce Department are, by statute, distinct and do not significantly overlap with those of the Commission. The Commission also works with agencies such as USTR, at its request, in support of various USTR programs.

OPERATION NO. 1: Import Injury Investigations

Stable Mission. As part of its mission, the Commission produces high-quality, well-reasoned determinations in a variety of import injury investigations, including antidumping and countervailing duty (AD/CVD) investigations concerning the effects of unfairly traded imports on a U.S. industry, as well as safeguards and market disruption investigations. The Commission provides a fair and transparent mechanism for investigating allegations of injury to domestic industries. The Commission thereby facilitates a rules-based international trading system and carries out U.S. law. While changes in the statutory regimes governing import injury investigations have occurred in the past and can be expected to occur in the future, the fundamental mission of the Commission in conducting import injury investigations is expected to continue. The investigations are conducted fairly and objectively and provide interested parties with meaningful opportunities to participate in and influence the investigative proceedings. The Commission regularly assesses the procedural requirements for investigations to identify costs incurred by the Commission and private litigants that could be reduced consistent with the provision of a fair and thorough investigative process. The determinations issued by the Commission conform to applicable deadlines and required procedures. The Commission expertly defends its AD/CVD determinations in litigation before courts and dispute resolution panels.

Dynamic Workload. The Commission faced a substantial workload in 1998-2001 resulting from the new requirement to conduct sunset reviews of all orders at least 5 years old (“transition reviews”). The Commission faces a permanent increase in workload due to other reviews, and will again face a substantial increase in its sunset review caseload starting in 2004 when it reviews anew remaining transition orders. Safeguard investigations have increased in number in recent years, and the law authorizing the extension of permanent normal trade relations to the People’s Republic of China has resulted in the conduct of a new form of import injury investigation addressing market disruption and may result in new investigations addressing trade diversion. The Commission maintains high standards in the conduct of import injury investigations while accommodating increases in workload.

Resource Requirements

New tools. The Commission seeks to ensure adequate resources for the conduct of investigations, including five-year reviews. This effort includes providing effective analytical and other research tools to the Commission staff such as document imaging and Internet access, as well as appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, and library resources.

Technical expertise. Commission staff provide high-quality support, including fact-gathering and analysis, for Commission decision-making. Operation No. 1 involves the efforts of Commissioners and their staffs, and investigative teams made up of investigators, financial analysts, and statisticians from the Commission's Office of Investigations, attorneys from the Office of the General Counsel, economists in the Office of Economics, industry analysts in the Office of Industries, and attorneys and nomenclature analysts in the Office of Tariff Affairs and Trade Agreements. The Secretary and her staff maintain the administrative record and provide other support. The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides support for automated data and information systems, the Office of External Relations provides media relations and other support, and the Office of Administration provides administrative support.

Enhanced skills. The effort also includes maintaining staff currency in analytical methods by such means as participation in outside and in-house academic conferences and other professional fora.

General Goal

The success of the Commission's import injury investigations will be determined in part by the following general goal:

GENERAL GOAL

Facilitate a rules-based international trading system and ensure that the United States fully benefits from that system by producing high quality and timely import injury determinations based on:

- *an effective exchange of information between the Commission and interested persons,*
- *an appropriate investigative record, and*
- *fair and equitably-implemented procedures.*

Strategies

1. (a) Conduct appropriate internal review of draft investigation and litigation documents.
(b) Meet statutory, court, and administrative deadlines.
2. Effectively develop investigative records and provide information on investigations to participants and the public.

The strategies are closely linked with the general goal and are designed to assist the Commission in achieving the goal. Internal review by Commissioners and staff and adherence to deadlines pursuant to Strategy No. 1 will contribute to high quality and timely determinations. Effectively gathering records and providing information under Strategy No. 2 will help ensure that information is exchanged effectively, that the record is appropriate, and that procedures are fair and equitably implemented. Effective gathering of investigative records and provision of information will involve the use of all appropriate state-of-the-art methods and tools, including where appropriate electronic information processing and dissemination systems such as the agency's Electronic Document Information System. The Commission will conduct periodic reviews of the agency's procedures. For example, the Commission recently obtained public comment by Federal Register notice regarding how well its investigative procedures operate in order to gauge where such procedures can be improved to reduce impediments and costs while maintaining a fair and thorough investigative process. The Commission is also conducting a self-examination of its investigative procedures.

OPERATION NO. 2: Intellectual Property-Based Import Investigations

Stable mission. The Commission adjudicates complaints brought by domestic industries under Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 that allege infringement of U.S. intellectual property rights and other unfair methods of competition in connection with imported goods. The Commission thereby facilitates a rules-based international trading system by providing a fair and transparent forum for the adjudication of such disputes. Section 337 investigations are conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, which affords the parties the opportunity to conduct discovery, present evidence, and make legal arguments before the Administrative Law Judges and the Commission. The procedures also protect the public interest and provide the parties with expedited determinations. The Commission expertly defends these determinations during judicial appeals.

Dynamic workload. The Section 337 caseload has risen significantly as the Commission's forum has become of greater interest to intellectual property right holders. The Commission produces high-quality, detailed analyses of complex legal and technical subject matter while handling the increase in workload.

Resource Requirements

Technical expertise. Operation No. 2 involves the efforts of Commissioners and their staffs, Commission Administrative Law Judges and their law clerks, attorneys from the Office of Unfair Import Investigations and the Office of the General Counsel, and the Secretary and her staff. Attorneys in the various offices that work on substantive Section 337 issues have technical or intellectual property law expertise. The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides support for automated data and information systems, the Office of External Relations provides media relations and other support, and the Office of Administration provides administrative support.

New tools. The Commission seeks to provide effective litigation support tools to Commission staff, such as document access via electronic means, and to monitor continuously and, when necessary, rebalance

caseloads, in order to produce the best work product with the available technical and human resources.

Enhanced skills. The effort also includes maintaining staff currency in litigation skills, technical expertise, and analytical methods by such means as participation in outside and in-house academic conferences and other professional fora.

General Goal

The success of the Commission in intellectual property-based import investigations will be determined in part by the following general goal:

GENERAL GOAL

Facilitate a rules-based international trading system by conducting intellectual property-based import investigations in an expeditious and transparent manner and providing for effective relief when violations of Section 337 are found and relief is warranted.

Strategies

1. Meet statutory and key administrative and court deadlines, conclude Section 337 investigations expeditiously, and reduce the average time to conclude ancillary proceedings.
2. Effectively provide information regarding investigations to the public as well as to investigative participants.
3. Actively facilitate enforcement of exclusion orders.

The strategies are closely linked with the general goal and are designed to assist the Commission in achieving the goal. Meeting deadlines and reducing the duration of proceedings as provided in Strategy No. 1 will achieve expeditious investigations. The Commission will continue to assess at regular intervals whether time frames for proceedings can be shortened consistent with the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act and the provision of a fair and equitable investigation and decisionmaking process. Increasing the availability of information will make investigations more transparent. The agency is committed to

providing to the public a wide range of information on the Section 337 process as well as on individual proceedings, and providing to complainants adequate information on enforcement mechanisms for remedial orders.

OPERATION NO. 3: Research Program

Stable mission. The Commission contributes to the development of sound and informed U.S. international trade policy and to the public debate on issues relating to U.S. international trade and competitiveness through an extensive research program. The Commission's long-range goals are to be a federal resource of industry, economic, and regional trade experts for the nation's policymakers and to enhance its position as a recognized leader in independent research and analysis through objective and timely reports. The Commission's research program consists of its probable economic effects investigations under Section 131 of the Trade Act of 1974 and Section 2104 of the Trade Act of 2002; analysis of trade and competitiveness issues under Section 332 of the Tariff Act of 1930; and independent assessments on a wide range of emerging trade issues. While changes in the statutory regimes governing research program investigations have occurred in the past and can be expected to occur in the future, the fundamental mission of the Commission in conducting such investigations is expected to continue.

The commodity and economic expertise developed and maintained as part of the Research Program contributes to the conduct of the Commission's import injury investigations under Operation 1, formal studies under Operation 3, legislative reports under Operation 4, and the provision of rapid technical assistance to the Executive Branch and Congress under Operation 5. The expertise developed in the Commission's research program is also used in providing technical assistance on industry and trade conditions to the general public and the business community. This assistance is provided both informally in immediate responses to telephone inquiries and more formally through written correspondence and public addresses.

Dynamic workload. The focus and nature of Commission research shifts with changes in U.S. trade legislation and with new U.S. country and sectoral trade initiatives. For example, recent legislative changes are bringing a significant increase in the number of probable effect analyses related to free trade agreements (FTAs), various textiles preference programs, and agricultural trade. Likewise, in recent years service industries have grown in importance in relation to the U.S. economy and U.S. trade positions, and the Commission's research efforts in the area have correspondingly expanded. Similarly, the agency continues to

commit resources to explore issues of increasing interest to policy makers such as the assessment of non-tariff barriers and the interaction of trade and environmental policies.

Resource Requirements

Technical expertise. Operation No. 3 involves the efforts of Commissioners and their staffs, industry analysts in the Commission's Office of Industries who specialize in commodity areas such as agriculture and forest products, textiles, and electronics, economists in the Office of Economics with regional or analytical specialties, nomenclature analysts and attorneys in the Office of Tariff Affairs and Trade Agreements, statisticians in the Office of Investigations, staff in the Office of External Relations, attorneys from the Office of the General Counsel, and the Secretary and her staff. The Office of Operations provides support for automated data and information systems, and the Office of Administration provides administrative support.

New tools. The Commission seeks to provide effective research tools to the Commission staff, including appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, U.S. and foreign databases, and library resources. The availability of various information dissemination methods allows the agency to make research available through wide public dissemination of reports and databases by the most economic means available, including both electronic (e.g., Internet) and hard copy formats.

Enhanced skills. The Commission conducts regular assessments of research projects. The goals of these assessments are to improve the Commission's overall research contribution through exploration of new conceptual approaches; to streamline research procedures; to optimize Commission review time; and to make other changes that enhance quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Further, the Commission seeks to improve communications with the Executive Branch and Congress to maximize the Commission's contribution to trade decisionmakers, particularly through regular contact with them by the Office of External Relations and pre- and post-investigation meetings.

The agency is committed to expanding the areas of resident industry, economic, and trade expertise and maintaining currency of professional and analytical skills, such as acknowledged high quality modeling and economic expertise, by providing appropriate training and maintaining

an environment for innovative research. The Commission seeks the knowledge and expertise of customers, other agencies, academia, and industry in the formulation of research plans and the conduct of research via means such as participation in academic conferences, interagency fora, and Commission seminars.

General Goal

The success of the research program will be determined in part by the following general goal:

GENERAL GOAL

Maintain a research program that provides the Legislative and Executive Branches, as well as the public, with timely research products that are widely recognized for their contribution to sound and informed trade policy formulation.

Strategies

1. Effective and timely provision of state-of-the-art research products to customers.
2. Implement innovative research methods and address emerging areas and issues.

The strategies are closely linked with the general goal and are designed to assist the Commission in achieving the goal. The provision of research products as described under Strategy No. 1 and the implementation of innovative research methods and initiatives in emerging areas and issues under Strategy No. 2 will contribute to sound and informed trade policy formulation.

The Commission seeks to initiate research studies on cutting-edge, trade-related issues, making better use of information in ways that are analytically useful, applying rigorous economic analysis to these issues and adding new, useful insights on them, and providing the results in highly accessible reports that add significantly to the policy dialogue.

OPERATION NO. 4:

Trade and Tariff Information Services

Stable mission. The Commission maintains an extensive repository of trade data and trade-related expertise and provides information services relating to U.S. international trade and competitiveness. The Commission thereby provides various resources to the trade policy community. The trade and tariff information services program prepares technical reports and analyses in response to special requests, maintains tariff and trade databases, and provides information gathering, processing, dissemination, and support for all Commission programs. Trade and tariff information services include such activities as trade remedy assistance; library services; legislative reports; maintenance of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS); the preparation of draft Presidential Proclamations; Schedule XX (schedule of U.S. goods liberalization commitments) and the U.S. Schedule of Services Commitments under the World Trade Organization; preparation of U.S. submissions to the Integrated Database of the World Trade Organization; periodic and specifically requested reports on U.S. bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade relations; the online Tariff and Trade Database (DataWeb); and certain other information gathering, processing, and dissemination activities.

Commission staff serve on U.S. delegations to the Harmonized System (HS) Committee. A Commission representative chairs the U.S. delegation to the Review Sub-Committee of the HS Committee. Currently a Commission representative also serves as Chairman of the Sub-Committee. The Commission also is a board member of and chairs an interagency effort to streamline the collection and dissemination of U.S. trade data (the International Trade Data System) and is active in interagency efforts to streamline the preparation of data for international fora. The Commission also serves as a member and chair of an interagency committee responsible for developing statistical product categories for imports and exports. In addition, the Commission makes recommendations to the President to modify the HTS.

Dynamic workload. The Commission's workload fluctuates significantly based on legislative and executive branch activity, as well as on the number of new trade agreements and other trade policy changes.

Resource Requirements

Technical Expertise. Operation No. 4 involves the efforts of Commissioners and their staffs, nomenclature analysts and attorneys in the Commission's Office of Tariff Affairs and Trade Agreements, staff in the Office of Operations, the Trade Remedy Assistance Office, industry analysts in the Commission's Office of Industries, attorneys from the Office of the General Counsel, and the Secretary and her staff. The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides support for automated data and information systems, the Office of External Relations provides media relations and other support, and the Office of Administration provides administrative support.

New tools. The Commission seeks to provide effective research tools to the Commission staff, including appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, and library resources. Commission staff are continuing to develop and maintain resources such as the Dataweb, and to work with other agencies on initiatives such as the International Trade Data System.

General Goal

The success of the trade and tariff information program will be determined in part by the following general goal:

GENERAL GOAL

Provide effective technical expertise and advice on the implementation of trade policy and related administrative decisions; enhance the availability of high-quality tariff and international trade information to the Executive and Legislative Branches, as well as the broader trade community and the public; and increase the ability of customers to use such information.

Strategies

1. Increase the utility and improve the dissemination of ITC trade and tariff information services to customers.
2. Provide timely, effective, and responsive nomenclature and similar technical services to customers.

The strategies are closely linked with the general goal and are designed to assist the Commission in achieving the goal. Provision of services as described in Strategies Nos. 1 and 2 corresponds directly to the Commission's goal for this Operation. The Commission seeks to enhance the coverage and availability of trade and tariff information, and to improve its methods of dissemination, such as by increasing self service and system responsiveness. In addition, the Commission seeks to effectively increase the public's awareness and understanding of the Trade Remedy Assistance Office and the technical and legal assistance that it can provide to small businesses.

OPERATION NO. 5: Trade Policy Support

Stable mission. The Commission is a direct and active contributor to the formulation of U.S. trade policy, providing objective input to both the Executive Branch and Congress on the basis of the distinctive expertise of its staff. The Commission does not make trade policy, nor does its staff participate in policy decisions on any committee on which they participate. The Commission and its staff support policymakers by providing technical expertise, factual information, and legal assistance in trade negotiations and international dispute settlement litigation on trade issues.

Dynamic workload. The Commission provides technical analysis of international trade issues that constantly vary in number and complexity. Agency staff seek opportunities to support U.S. trade policy formulation and serve as technical advisors to U.S. delegations in trade negotiations undertaken by the Administration and to U.S. delegations involved in dispute settlement litigation. The Commission and its staff of trade experts stand ready to conduct “quick response” research and analysis for Congress and the Executive Branch on any trade issues that confront them as key decision makers in the international trade arena.

Resource Requirements

Technical expertise. Operation No. 5 involves the efforts of Commissioners and their staffs, staff in the Commission’s Offices of Operations and External Relations, industry analysts in the Office of Industries, economists in the Office of Economics, nomenclature analysts and attorneys in the Office of Tariff Affairs and Trade Agreements, attorneys from the Office of the General Counsel, and the Secretary and her staff. The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides support for automated data and information systems, and the Office of Administration provides administrative support.

New tools. The Commission employs enhanced technology to broaden the scope of its analysis and to better deliver trade policy support through the agency’s web site and other electronic means.

General Goal

The success of the Commission's trade policy role will be determined in part by the following general goal:

GENERAL GOAL

Contribute to the development of sound and informed U.S. international trade policy by providing effective technical support and analysis to the Executive Branch in international trade negotiations, international trade dispute resolution proceedings, and other international trade fora and to the Legislative Branch through appropriate committees and subcommittees.

Strategies

1. Regularly contribute technical analysis to organizations involved in trade policy formulation where Commission participation is appropriate.
2. Provide effective trade policy support to customers.

The strategies are closely linked with the general goal and are designed to assist the Commission in achieving the goal. Regular contribution of analysis under Strategy No. 1 will assist the Commission in making a real contribution to the development of trade policy. Implementing Strategy No. 2 will ensure that support and analysis are effective. The Commission seeks to improve communications with the Executive Branch and Congress to maximize the Commission's contribution to trade decisionmakers, particularly through regular contact by the Office of External Relations, encouraging the active involvement of Commission staff in interagency and congressional committee activities where appropriate, and facilitating the participation of Commission staff as technical advisors to U.S. delegations to negotiations and meetings of multilateral organizations.

Appendix: Commission Organization

U.S. International Trade Commission

