

HIGHLIGHTS: TIC Council Webinar - 'A discussion with USTR on WTO and conformity assessment'

On 12th May 2020, TIC Council hosted a webinar with Jennifer Stradtman, Director, Technical Barriers to Trade at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), on WTO and conformity assessment

The webinar titled 'A discussion with USTR on WTO and conformity assessment' was moderated by Joan Sterling, Vice President of governmental affairs at Intertek, and presented by Jennifer Stradtman. A total of 55 participants attended the 30-minute discussion, followed by a Q&A.

With Ms Stradtman's expertise on conformity assessment, a clear and valuable presentation was provided which gave an overview of the WTO/TBT committee's work.

The WTO/TBT Agreement governs the trade rules related to technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment. The [TBT agreement](#) has been in place since 1995, is agreed by all WTO members and only covers goods.

In the TBT Committee, the members discuss the implementation of their obligations to the TBT Agreement and review member complaints, known as Specific Trade Concerns (STC), about proposed and existing rules. The STC's presented are examined and discussed to reach a better understanding and possible solution for the issues in question.

In addition, the Committee is currently undertaking its Eighth Triennial Review on the operation and implementation of the WTO/TBT Agreement. Under this Review, the Committee is developing a guidance document for regulators on conformity assessment procedures. The objective of the document is to put together some advice and good practices from national policies of the members. The submissions from the members on this guidance document are not publicly available; but so far, five members namely, the US, the EU, Australia, Japan, Canada submitted their contribution. As this Triennial Review reaches its completion, Ms Stradtman noted that the work on this guidance document is likely to be carried on to the Ninth Triennial Review starting in November 2020. She also indicated that the stakeholders can be involved in the work of the Committee through their national trade agencies.

For further details on the WTO/TBT Committee work, you may find all relevant information [here](#):

Information on notification alert system ePing:

https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/epingusers_map_e.htm

TBT information system

<http://tbtime.wto.org/>

To search notifications and STCs - Notify US

<https://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyus/data/index/index.cfm>

About the TIC Council

TIC Council is an international association representing over 90 international independent third-party testing, inspection, certification and verification organisations. The industry represents around a million employees across the world with annual sales of approximately USD 200 billion.