

ELEMENTS FOR THE EFFECTIVE FULFILMENT OF NATIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

(Agreed at the 2015 Plenary)

The fulfilment of national reporting requirements for the import and export of conventional arms is featured in a number of international agreements. One way of responding to these requirements is by creating and maintaining stable procedures that simplify the task of reporting. The elements described herein are illustrative of processes and procedures already utilized by some in fulfilling their reporting requirements.

However, it should also be noted that not all of the described elements are necessarily applicable in all cases, due to differences in national legal and administrative frameworks.

In general, these elements focus on the systematization of reporting practices through the development of documented procedures. Such procedures can improve the ability to make accurate reports within required deadlines while at the same time cutting down on the resources required for the task. In addition, these practices may help to safeguard against the efficiency losses associated with the rotation of experienced personnel familiar with reporting practices.

1. Establish and maintain, if appropriate by national legislation or governmental decision, a procedures document which would contain, but not be limited to, the following elements:
 - i) An enumeration of the different types of national reports required to be submitted.
 - ii) Critical deadlines in the process of preparing reports and a mechanism by which these can be brought to the attention of relevant information providers, for instance through paper or electronic reminders, in order to improve compliance.
 - iii) A clearly defined method by which relevant reporting information is collected by licensing/permit officers or other individuals or systems and is provided, periodically or on an ongoing basis, to the individual or individuals responsible for compiling/submitting the national reports.
 - iv) A coordinated collection process that ensures that when the same information is needed for several reports it is collected only once. This saves resources and ensures consistency between reports.
 - v) A clear explanation of the contents and requirements for each type of report, including e.g. the specific categories of items.
 - vi) When appropriate and for additional transparency, nations may wish to record, *inter alia*, whether the data submitted in a report is made based on actual transfers (exports or imports) or on licences issued, and if the export or import is temporary.
 - vii) Clear assignment of specific reporting tasks to specific positions or divisions.
 - viii) Where Licensing Officers are not responsible for identifying the technical nature of goods or technology against Control Lists, i.e. are not those who assess the classification of goods or technology, it is important that the review/writing of item descriptions for reporting purposes be conducted as a team effort. The involvement of both groups ensures that the information is accurate, consistent and complete.

2. The classification of permit applications as either reportable or non-reportable should be documented in such a way that the compilation of reporting information is facilitated.
3. Maintain some form of repository, electronic or otherwise, of reporting data.
4. Where possible, provide training to additional staff to ensure some level of redundancy and allow for the continued fulfilment of reporting obligations in the event of the temporary absence or permanent departure of a given person from their position.
5. With a view to achieving consistent implementation of reporting commitments, utilize opportunities, when available, for the sharing of national experiences and further clarifying interpretations of specific aspects of the reporting requirements.