



EPING USER GUIDE

WHAT IS EPING AND WHY USE IT?

[ePing](#) is the WTO's online platform for notifications under the [Technical Barriers to Trade \(TBT\)](#) and [Sanitary and Phytosanitary \(SPS\)](#) Agreements. Transparency is a key pillar of these agreements, and the WTO at large. The notification system facilitates this transparency for these agreements. WTO Members are required to share, in accordance with these agreements, updates on plans to change product requirements and provide an opportunity for other Members to comment on these requirements. These are referred to as **notifications**. On the ePing website, users can subscribe to receive email alerts on new notifications relating to products and/or markets of interest. Each Member's TBT Enquiry Points then act as the liaison for providing comments on notifications of interest. In Australia, DFAT has responsibility for Australia's TBT Enquiry Point (TBT.Enquiry@dfat.gov.au).

We encourage Australian Government agencies and industry stakeholders alike to register for ePing to stay abreast of notifications from other Members which may be of interest to them. ePing allows users to tailor their subscription preferences by frequency and also by product type, so email alerts are targeted and not overwhelming.

The TBT Enquiry Point is here to help – please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions!

REGISTERING FOR EPING

1. Go to <https://epingalert.org/>
2. Click 'Register' in the top right corner. This will also be where you go to login once you have an account.



3. The registration page will ask you to provide 'Personal' information to identify the type of user you are. For country/territory, you should indicate the country you operate in/from, so 'Australia'. For sector and organization type, you should choose in accordance with your role or business.
4. The registration page then gives you the opportunity to tailor the type of notifications you receive in email alerts. You can do this by indicating HS codes, ICS codes, and also a 'Product(s)' field which allows you to add free text for key words separated by commas. You can also enter key export markets of interest. This will establish cumulative criteria. Any notification that matches any of the individual criteria will be provided to you. It is best to use a range of terms so you don't miss something just because a Member has used a different spelling (e.g. think about if there is an Americanised spelling of a term that people may use – aluminium vs aluminum) or slightly different terminology. If you enter no criteria, you will receive notifications for every type of good.
 - You will also be asked to indicate 'Area'. ePing is the platform for both TBT and SPS. You should indicate TBT if you do not wish to also receive SPS notifications.
5. Finally, you can decide the frequency of email alerts and whether you wish to receive all types of notifications, or just new notifications. We would suggest weekly is probably sufficient for most people's interests. You may choose not to receive email alerts at all and just come to the website to check for new notifications, but email alerts are a useful way to build it into your routine.
6. Click 'Register' and you are ready to go!

If you simply wish to search notifications on an ad hoc basis, you can do this on the website without registering and logging in to an account. If you or a team member would like assistance with navigating the website, contact TBT.Enquiry@dfat.gov.au.

TYPES OF NOTIFICATIONS

There are five types of notification. It is useful to understand this so you can understand the types of notifications you may see from other Members.

1. **New Notification:** This is to notify the draft text of a proposed technical regulation or conformity assessment procedure (the ‘notified measure’). A new notification must provide a comment period, ideally of 60 days. If the new notification relates to a previously notified measure (e.g. amending, supplementing or replacing a previously adopted measure), then the code for those notifications (referred to in the system as a symbol – it will take the format of G/TBT/N/XXX/number, where the XXX is a three letter country code e.g. Australia is AUS) should be provided.
 - Notifications will include the notifying Member, the responsible agency, where comments should be directed, the products impacted by the measure, a brief description of the notified measure, information about the objective of and justification for the measure, links or attachments to access the notified measure and other relevant documents (unlike the notification, the documents themselves are not required to be translated into one of the three WTO languages), information about key dates for the measure, and the deadline for comments.
2. **Addenda:** This is to provide additional information related to a notification. This could include:
 - Change to the comment period (e.g. extended or re-opened).
 - The notified measure has been adopted or entered into force, especially if expected dates were not provided in the original notification or if they have changed. Ideally this should a link to or copy of the final text.
 - Withdrawal or revocation of the notified measure. If replaced with a new measure, where possible, the symbol of the new notification should be included.
 - Content or scope of a notified measure has been partially changed or amended.
 - Interpretative guidance has been issued.
 - Any other additional information directly relevant to a notification or notified measure that doesn’t fall under another notification category.

Whether a new comment period is required is discretionary, depending on the nature of the update.

3. **Corrigenda:** This to correct minor administrative or clerical errors, which do not affect the meaning of the content, in notifications (including addenda, revisions and supplements) or the text of notified measures.
4. **Revision:** This is used to indicate a substantial re-draft prior to adoption or entry into force. A revision replaces the original notification and should open a new comment period, ideally of 60 days.
5. **Supplement:** This is to notify availability of unofficial translations of notified measures.

IF YOU WISH TO MAKE COMMENTS ON A NOTIFICATION

You can reach out to the Australian TBT Enquiry Point (TBT.Enquiry@dfat.gov.au) to discuss providing comments:

- If comments are to be provided “from” the Australian Government or with Australian Government endorsement, the TBT Enquiry Point will need to consult with the relevant Government stakeholders, including the responsible policy areas and our legal team, to ensure the Australian Government can endorse any positioning and that any political, legal and diplomatic sensitivities are managed.
- Even if comments cannot be provided as “from” or endorsed by Australian Government, the Australian TBT Enquiry Point can still send comments *on behalf of* a stakeholder with a caveat that the comments may not

necessarily be representative of the Australian Government. Even with this caveat, comments coming through the Enquiry Point can help to imbue comments with some additional legitimacy.

If you wish to take these pathways, please aim to contact us *at least* one week before the deadline for comments. This will allow the Enquiry Point time for any consultations required/ensure deadlines are not missed.

Industry is welcome to directly provide comments to the recipient designated for comments in notifications (generally the Member's Enquiry Point) without going through the Australian TBT Enquiry Point. If you do this, we would appreciate if you emailed the Australian TBT Enquiry Point afterwards, just so we're aware of engagements happening through the TBT Committee. Please note, some WTO Members have indicated they will not provide direct responses to comments not received through Enquiry Point channels, so if a response is important to you, you may wish to go through the above avenues.

It is possible to request an extension on the deadline for comments, but this should only be done in exceptional circumstances.

Comments can address a range of matters including:

- Questions to seek clarification on the justification for a measure;
- Questions to seek clarification on how to comply with a measure;
- Questions to seek clarification on implementation timelines;
- Concerns about the trade restrictiveness or impact of a measure;
- Suggestions for the improvement of the measure.

Comments should be specific and constructive, not just a list of perceived problems.

When comments are sent, it is reasonable to expect an acknowledgement of receipt within a couple of days, but a Member may take up to a couple of months to provide a response if they need to consider a wide range of comments, fit in with domestic processes, or consider the viability of suggestions.

OTHER EPING FUNCTIONALITY

In addition to facilitating email alerts with the latest notifications, ePing has a range of other useful functionalities, all of which are easily accessible from the ePing homepage. These include:

- Searchable database of all notifications
- Searchable database of Specific Trade Concerns (STCs) raised the TBT and SPS Committees, including past statements.
- Member profiles (accessible under the 'Facts & figures' dropdown menu)
- Information about Members' Enquiry Points (accessible under the 'Search' dropdown menu)
- Other documents relevant to committee operations (accessible under the 'Search' dropdown menu)

More information, including FAQs and video tutorials, can be found here: [More info - ePing SPS&TBT platform \(epingalert.org\)](https://epingalert.org). Of course, you are always welcome to reach out to the Australian TBT Enquiry Point if you have any questions.