

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****International Trade Administration****Public Hearing on Establishment of Import Restrictions on Certain Steel Products From the Russian Federation to the United States**

**AGENCY:** Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public hearing.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 125(f) of the Trade Act of 1974, the Department of Commerce has scheduled a public hearing on the potential establishment of import restrictions on certain steel products from the Russian Federation to the United States.

**DATES:** The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 1999.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For procedural questions concerning the public hearing and/or public comments, contact Lesley Stagliano at (202) 482-0190 or Lyn Baranowski at (202) 482-3208. All other questions should be directed to Edward Yang at (202) 482-0406.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** February 23, 1999.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On June 1, 1990, pursuant to Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 (the Trade Act), the Governments of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics entered into the Agreement on Trade Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. On June 17, 1992, this agreement became effective between the United States and the Russian Federation (the 1992 Agreement). Article XI of the 1992 Agreement provides that the Parties will consult with a view toward finding means of remedying or preventing actual or threatened market disruption, and it authorizes the Parties to take action, including the imposition of import restrictions, to achieve this goal.

In February 1999, the United States Department of Commerce and the Ministry of Trade of the Russian Federation entered into negotiations and consultations pursuant to Article XI of the Agreement on Trade Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. The Parties mutually agree that the conditions of Article XI have been met with respect to U.S. imports of certain steel products from Russia.

Pursuant to Article XI, the United States proposes to establish import restrictions on Russian exports to the United States of the following 16 steel products:

1. Certain Cold-Rolled Carbon Steel Quality Products
2. Semifinished Steel Products
3. Galvanized Sheet Products
4. Other Metallic Coated Flat Rolled Products
5. Certain Tin Mill Products
6. Electrical Sheet Products
7. Heavy Structural Shapes
8. Rails
9. Hot-Rolled Bars
10. Cold Finished Bars
11. Pipe and Tube Products
12. Wire Rod Products
13. Tool Steel
14. Drawn Wire Products
15. Hot-Rolled Stainless and Alloy Sheet, Strip, and Plate
16. Pig Iron

Each category of steel would have a separate export limit. In addition to the issuance of export licenses by the Ministry of Trade of the Russian Federation, and consistent with the requests of the Russian officials, the United States would establish a border enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance with the export limits. The border mechanism will be in the form of denial of entry for any shipment of steel, covered by the categories listed above, which exceeds the limits or lacks the required documents.

Section 125(c) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2135(c)) provides that whenever the United States, acting in pursuance of any of its rights or obligations under any trade agreement entered into pursuant to the Trade Act, modifies any obligation with respect to the trade of any foreign country or instrumentality, the President is authorized to proclaim increased duties or other import restrictions, to the extent, at such times, and for such periods as he deems necessary or appropriate, in order to exercise the rights or fulfill the obligations of the United States.

Section 125(f) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2135(f)) requires the President to provide the opportunity for interested parties to present views at a public hearing prior to taking action pursuant to section 125(b), (c), or (d) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2135(b), (c), or (d)). Such an opportunity is being provided by the holding of such a hearing on Tuesday, March 2, 1999, at the United States Department of Commerce. In addition, the Department will separately publish in the **Federal Register** the proposed agreement establishing import restrictions on Russian exports to the United States. For convenience, the Department will also post this agreement on its Import Administration website ([http://www.ita.doc.gov/import\\_admin/records](http://www.ita.doc.gov/import_admin/records)).

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING:** Pursuant to section 125(f) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2135(f)), the International Trade Administration of the Department of Commerce, has scheduled a public hearing beginning at 1:30 p.m., on March 2, 1999, at Room 4830 of the Herbert C. Hoover Building, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC.

**REQUESTS TO PRESENT ORAL TESTIMONY:** Parties wishing to testify orally at the hearing must provide written notification of their intention not later than 5:00 p.m., February 26, 1999 to Robert S. LaRussa, Assistant Secretary for Import Administration: In re Public Hearing on Establishment of Import Restrictions on Certain Steel Products From the Russian Federation to the United States, Room 1870, Herbert C. Hoover Building, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC. The notification should include (1) the name of the person presenting the testimony, their address and telephone number; (2) the organization or company they are representing, if appropriate; (3) a list of issues to be addressed; and (4), if applicable, any request for an extension of the time limitation on the oral presentation. This notification may be submitted via facsimile to Vicki Sullivan at (202) 273-0957. Those parties presenting oral testimony must also submit a written brief, in 20 copies, not later than 10:00 a.m., March 2, 1999, to the above-mentioned address. Hearing presentations should be limited to no more than five minutes to allow for possible questions from the Chairman and the panel. Additional time for oral presentations may be granted as time and the number of participants permit. Any business proprietary material must be clearly marked as such on the cover page (or letter) and succeeding pages. Such submissions must be accompanied by a public summary thereof.

**WRITTEN BRIEFS:** Those persons not wishing to participate in the hearing may submit written comments, in 20 typed copies, not later than 10:00 a.m., March 2, 1999, to Robert S. LaRussa, Assistant Secretary for Import Administration: In re Public Hearing on Establishment of Import Restrictions on Certain Steel Products From the Russian Federation to the United States, Room 1870, Herbert C. Hoover Building, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC. Comments should state clearly the position taken and describe with particularity the evidence supporting

that position. Any business proprietary material must be clearly marked as such on the cover page (or letter) and succeeding pages. Such submissions must be accompanied by a public summary thereof. Public submissions will be available for public inspection at the Import Administration Central Records Unit. An appointment to review the file may be made by contacting Joni Myers at (202) 482-0865.

Dated: February 22, 1999.

**Richard W. Moreland,**

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.*

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