

GATT Office Circular No. 92

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMME AT
THE GATT SECRETARIAT FOR OFFICIALS HOLDING UNTAA FELLOWSHIPS

1. As a result of an agreement entered into between the GATT and the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration, the GATT secretariat has organized, since 1956, a programme of in-service training by means of a small number of fellowships granted by the Technical Assistance to particularly qualified officials designated by their government, to enable them to familiarize themselves with the questions dealt with within the framework of the GATT and to study the various trade policy problems encountered by under-developed countries or by countries that have recently acceded to independence.
2. Each group includes a limited number of trainees, and the courses are for a duration of six months, beginning in March and September of each year. In making up the different groups, consideration is given, within practical possibilities, to the linguistic qualifications of the candidates, one group being reserved for French-speaking and another for English-speaking candidates, in order to facilitate instruction. For the programme to operate smoothly, applications are to be received by the Technical Assistance Administration in New York not later than 31 December of each year. In the case of African countries that have recently acceded to independence, applications may be submitted directly to the GATT secretariat, from whom all necessary information may be obtained regarding the procedure to be followed.
3. In admitting candidates to this programme, preference is given to men and women holding fellowships who have completed university training in economics or similar subjects and who are permanent officials in the central government of countries which are parties to, associated with, or in process of accession to the GATT. However, in the event of vacancies, the GATT secretariat is prepared to accept holders of fellowships possessing the same qualifications and employed in the government of countries that are not parties to the GATT but are members of the United Nations, as well as holders of fellowships employed, not in the central government of countries parties to the GATT, but in the local government of such countries located in territories under separate customs jurisdiction from the metropolitan area. Finally, in some cases, applications have been accepted from candidates in the employ of official agencies such as the Central Bank for Development, etc.
4. In accepting a fellowship, the holder undertakes to spend full time in the programme of work as assigned to him by his supervisor at the GATT secretariat. At the end of his training period, he is required to submit a full report on the experience gained and on the work performed during his training.

5. During the period of the fellowship, the holder receives from the Technical Assistance Administration of the United Nations a stipend at the daily rate of 40 Swiss francs for the first month and 36 Swiss francs for the balance of his training period, Sundays and holidays included. This allowance is intended to cover normal living expenses of one person only. In addition, the TAA provides each trainee with a sum equivalent to US\$50 to purchase books pertaining to the training programme and bears the cost of that portion of the trainee's travelling expenses to and from Geneva (based on the round-trip by air, tourist class) which is not paid by his own government.
6. Governments whose candidates are admitted undertake to make satisfactory arrangements to cover all expenses incurred within the trainee's home country incidental to travel abroad, including the cost of passports, visas, medical examination, clothing, etc., and to continue to pay the trainee's salary or to make other suitable arrangements for the maintenance of his dependents during his stay abroad.
7. The nominations of candidates for the programme are required to be countersigned by a responsible official of the government concerned and to be forwarded to the Executive Secretary of the GATT. The selection of the fellows is made by the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration on the recommendation of the Executive Secretary of the GATT.
8. In view of the confidential nature of the work performed at the GATT, the fellows admitted as trainees in the GATT secretariat are bound vis-à-vis their respective governments to exercise the same discretion as they would if they were still in the employ of their own government headquarters. Furthermore, they are required to take the same pledges toward the GATT organization as are required of other temporary or permanent officials.
9. The object of the training programme is to give trainees practical instruction in the procedures and methods most appropriate for dealing with such problems of a commercial and economic nature as they will have to handle in the course of their official career in the government of their own country. Apart from being instructed in matters of trade policies and in GATT problems in general, trainees are required to take an active part in the actual work performed at the secretariat.
10. The general curriculum of the training programme is as follows:

One month in the office of the Executive Secretary for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the organizational, liaison, legal and diplomatic work of the secretariat.

One month in the Trade Intelligence Unit for the purpose of acquiring first-hand knowledge of the special methods used by the GATT secretariat for analysing commercial trends and deriving the proper conclusions as to the outlook for future expansion of particular markets.

One month in the Trade Policy Unit for the purpose of gaining experience in the rules governing the multilateral system of international trade as practised within the GATT. This part of the programme is intended to familiarize trainees not only with the GATT regulations covering the various aspects of international trade, but chiefly with the experience gained in the course of recent years, and is based on concrete cases that have involved deliberations and decisions by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

During the ensuing months, the trainees are engaged in the actual daily work of the secretariat. Each trainee works with an official of the secretariat who is entrusted with the task of coaching him in his work and of instructing him in the practical working methods of an international secretariat. Usually the trainee is required to study concrete cases received for examination by the secretariat and to prepare a draft report which is then commented upon by the staff member in charge of the particular department concerned or, as the case may be, compared with the official report drawn up by the secretariat. Furthermore, during periods of sessions, trainees are given an opportunity of following the proceedings of one or more commissions by acting as assistants to the secretaries of such commissions. They are called upon to study the records, to prepare notes or draft reports which are subsequently compared with the final report issued by the secretariat.

During the course of the last month, the trainees undertake an educational tour of a number of European capitals where they have the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into the application of various customs procedures, the operation of raw materials import and export transactions, export incentive methods, etc.