U.S. International Trade Commission

CONTACT INFORMATION
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ABOUT ITC
The ITC, founded in 1912, is an independent quasi-judicial federal agency focused on international trade. Commissioners are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. No more than three of the six commissioners may be members of one political party. The ITC’s primary roles are to provide impartial rulings on trade remedy cases and conduct studies of U.S. trade policies, e.g. the effects of proposed free trade agreements. In recent years, the ITC has been increasingly involved in disputes about intellectual property rights disputes involving imported goods.

Import Injury Investigations
The ITC plays a critical role in evaluating domestic petitions to increase tariffs beyond WTO-commitments.

U.S. domestic industries can obtain relief from foreign competition under the “unfair trade” laws (antidumping (AD) and countervailing duty (CVD)) if the ITC determines that dumped or subsidized imports cause “material injury” to the domestic industry. The Department of Commerce investigates the presence of dumping or government subsidies. The President cannot prevent these additional duties if both agencies vote affirmatively. These higher tariffs are placed only on firms and countries that meet both criteria; they are typically for very narrow product categories.

The ITC investigates “serious injury” in safeguard petitions that involve an entire sector, e.g. the steel industry. This is a higher standard than material injury in AD and CVD petitions. If the ITC rules that import surges are causing serious injury, the Commission recommends a plan for import restrictions to the President, who makes the final decision based on broad national interest.

Industry and Economic Analysis
The ITC conducts investigations on U.S. import policies and broad international trends, most often through requests from members of Congress. For example, the ITC is required to investigate the impact of proposed free trade agreements on U.S. industries, consumers and the overall economy before Congress votes. The ITC also provides analysis for broader economic
globalization issues, e.g. the impact of China on the U.S. economy, the consequences of foreign service sector barriers on U.S. industry, or the effect of off-shoring on the U.S. domestic activity.

**Intellectual Property-Based Investigations**
The ITC’s quasi-judicial role extends to evaluating complaints by U.S. companies that imported goods have infringed on U.S. patents or trademarks. If the foreign company is found to be violating patents, trademarks, or other intellectual property rights, the ITC can issue cease and desist orders that can halt imports of the products under review.

**Trade Remedy Assistance Program**
http://www.usitc.gov/press_room/trao/trao_program_info.htm
The Trade Remedy Assistance Office (TRAO) assists small businesses, trade associations, and worker organizations in understanding trade laws and requirements for trade relief. The office also provides advice on how to prepare petitions and complaints to the ITC. In order to receive certain services from TRAO, a business must be considered an “eligible small entity” as described on their website.

**Dataweb**
The ITC maintains a public database (“Dataweb”) on detailed U.S. import and export statistics as well as trade balances. The data originate with Customs and are available typically at the 10-digit Harmonized System level but can also be retrieved using SIC, SITC, and NAICS codes. Data is available from 1989 through 2014. This resource can be found at: http://dataweb.usitc.gov/

More aggregated data can be found at the International Trade Administration’s TradeStats Express website: http://tse.export.gov

**Tariff Schedule**
The Harmonized Tariff Schedule is maintained by the ITC and contains all the applied tariff rates on goods imported into the United States. This includes all preference program tariff rates (including CAFTA-DR rates). It is available on their website at http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/index.htm.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Includes all authored publications by the ITC including industry and analysis, details of I investigations, and other related trade information.

*Executive Briefings on Trade*: http://www.usitc.gov/research_and_analysis/executive_briefings.htm
These briefings keep up with current global and domestic activities that affect trade, investment, and competitiveness.
**Strategic Plan and Budgets:** [http://www.usitc.gov/strategicplan.htm#plan](http://www.usitc.gov/strategicplan.htm#plan)
Includes budget accountability reports, sources of income, and the business plan for the upcoming year.

**Official Harmonized Tariff Schedule:** [http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/index.htm](http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/index.htm)
The official US tariff schedule published by the Office of Tariff Affairs and Trade Agreements.