

DOCUMENT OF INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND NOT FOR PUBLIC USE

EBD/85/5

January 4, 1985

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: Requests for Waiver of Circulation Periods
of Papers on the Executive Board Agenda

Guidelines for the issuance of papers for Executive Board agenda were established in February 1982 (see Attachment) and, as applied to country items, provide that the circulation period should normally be not less than four weeks for:

1. Staff reports dealing with requests for the use of Fund resources in the upper credit tranches (including major reviews under such arrangements);
2. Staff reports on requests for the use of Fund resources under the CF and related facilities, if the member has an upper credit tranche arrangement (even if the arrangement is inoperative);
3. Staff reports on Article IV consultation discussions with members having an upper credit tranche arrangement with the Fund and with members whose consultations have an important bearing on the Fund's surveillance functions under Article IV.

As regards other country items, Article IV consultation reports for countries other than those described above and CF requests from countries not having an upper credit tranche arrangement with the Fund should normally be accorded a circulation period of not less than three weeks.

Above guidelines are intended to be applied flexibly. It is understood that in an urgent case, an individual Executive Director may seek the agreement of the Executive Board for a waiver of the circulation period. However, such cases are to be considered exceptional and the guidelines are intended to serve in most cases.

At a recent Executive Board meeting during the discussion of a request for a waiver of circulation period for the staff report for a review under stand-by arrangement, an Executive Director requested information concerning the number of times the Board had, in the recent past, been asked to grant a waiver of the guidelines concerning circulation periods. The following information is in response to that request.

During CY 1984, some 19 requests were submitted to and approved by the Executive Board for waiver of the guidelines concerning circulation periods for documents. Of these, 18 concerned documents on which favorable action by the Executive Board would be followed by immediate purchases from the Fund. In 11 of the 19 requests, the circulation period was shortened by 7 days or less. The breakdown according to the number of days waived is as follows:

<u>Days waived</u>	<u>Number of requests</u>
1 - 3	6
4 - 7	5
8 - 14	5
15 - 17	<u>3</u>
	19

The Executive Board was informed by the Chairman of four other documents for which the proposed Board discussion date resulted in a shortening of the circulation period. In addition, in light of flexibility in application envisaged for the guidelines, some 12 reports were brought to the agenda as a result of shortening the circulation period by one day in most cases, and by no more than two days in all of them. Such modest shortenings have resulted from the need to accommodate scheduling conflicts or other constraints and they have usually been noted in the tentative schedules of Executive Board meetings circulated to members of the Executive Board.

Finally, it may be noted that in all, some 183 country items were brought to the agenda of the Executive Board in CY 1984.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads

February 23, 1982 - 82/20

Statement by the Managing Director on
Issuance of Papers for Executive Board Agenda

In recent discussions of the Work Program, some Executive Directors noted that their work could be facilitated if the interval between the issuance of certain Board papers and their discussion by the Executive Board could be made longer. In order to meet this wish of Executive Directors, I have established a set of guidelines for the staff on the circulation period for Board papers with which, I hope, you will agree. I believe that a case could be made for establishing an across-the-board four-week period for country items and all major policy items. Such a rule would enable thorough and informed consideration to be given to the issues those items raised. In certain instances, however, it does not seem to be feasible to keep to such a rule because of operational necessities. I do envisage, therefore, that the guidelines can, and should, be applied flexibly.

For staff reports on Article IV consultation discussions, the circulation period should normally be not less than three weeks. However, in the case of members using the Fund's resources in the upper credit tranches and those whose consultation would have an important bearing on the Fund's surveillance functions under Article IV, the circulation period should normally be not less than four weeks. The period for reports on recent economic developments would continue to be two weeks.

Staff reports dealing with requests for the use of Fund resources in the upper credit tranches should have circulation periods of not less than four weeks. This guideline would also apply to major reviews of performance under programs in such cases. As regards requests under the compensatory financing and related facilities, if the member is making use of Fund resources in the upper credit tranches, or has an inoperative stand-by or extended arrangement, the circulation period should be not less than four weeks. For other requests for the use of Fund resources, the usual circulation period would be not less than three weeks.

Turning to major policy papers, I have suggested to the staff that the circulation period should be not less than four weeks. As examples of major policy papers I would mention "The Size of Fund in the 1980s," "The Evolving Role of the SDR in the International Monetary System," and the "Review of Stand-By and Extended Arrangements." On occasion it will be desirable to try to provide for longer circulation periods for certain papers, e.g., "The Application of Fund Policies to Planned Economies." At the same time, it will be recalled that for the papers relating to the World Economic Outlook exercise, it has been agreed that the circulation period would normally be three weeks owing to the tight constraints governing their preparation.

For most other policy papers, especially those of an operational nature, the circulation period should be not less than three weeks.

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With respect to the various other papers of an operational or administrative character that come before the Board, I have suggested that we maintain current practice.

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I believe that these guidelines will serve a useful purpose. It is possible, of course, that in an urgent case an individual Executive Director may seek the agreement of the Executive Board to shorten a circulation period. I would hope, however, that such cases would be considered exceptional and that these guidelines, at least for the present, could serve in most cases. The Secretary will be of assistance to you in the application of these guidelines.