(d) if they consider an application complete for processing under the Member's domestic laws and regulations,[2] within a reasonable period of time after the submission of the application ensure that:

(i) the processing of the application is completed; and

(ii) the applicant is informed of the decision concerning the application,[3] to the extent possible in writing;[4]

(e) if they consider an application incomplete for processing under the Member's domestic laws and regulations, within a reasonable period of time, to the extent practicable:

(i) inform the applicant that the application is incomplete;

(ii) at the request of the applicant, identify the additional information required to complete the application, or otherwise provide guidance on why the application is considered incomplete; and

(iii) provide the applicant with the opportunity[5] to provide the additional information that is required to complete the application;

however, if none of the above is practicable, and the application is rejected due to incompleteness, ensure that they so inform the applicant within a reasonable period of time; and

(f) if an application is rejected, to the extent possible, either upon their own initiative or upon request of the applicant, inform the applicant of the reasons for rejection and, if applicable, the procedures for resubmission of an application; an applicant should not be prevented from submitting another application[6] solely on the basis of a previously rejected application.

8. The competent authorities of a Member shall ensure that authorization, once granted, enters into effect without undue delay, subject to applicable terms and conditions.[7]

Fees

9. Each Member shall ensure that the authorization fees[8] charged by its competent authorities are reasonable, transparent, based on authority set out in a measure, and do not in themselves restrict the supply of the relevant service.

Assessment of Qualifications

10. If a Member requires an examination for authorization for the supply of a service, that Member shall ensure that its competent authorities schedule such an examination at reasonably frequent intervals and provide a reasonable period of time to enable applicants to request to take the examination. Having regard to the cost, administrative burden, and the integrity of the procedures involved, Members are encouraged to accept requests in electronic format to take such examinations, and to consider, to the extent practicable, the use of electronic means in other aspects of examination processes.

Recognition

11. Where professional bodies of Members are mutually interested in establishing dialogues on issues relating to recognition of professional qualifications, licensing or registration, the relevant Members should consider supporting the dialogue of those bodies where requested and appropriate.

Independence

12. If a Member adopts or maintains measures relating to the authorization for the supply of a service, the Member shall ensure that its competent authorities reach and administer their decisions in a manner independent from any supplier of the service for which authorization is required.[9]

Publication and Information available

13. If a Member requires authorization for the supply of a service, further to Article III of the Agreement, the Member shall promptly publish,[10] or otherwise make publicly available in writing, the information necessary for service suppliers or persons seeking to supply a service to comply with the requirements and procedures for obtaining, maintaining, amending and renewing such authorization. Such information shall include, *inter alia*, where it exists:

(a) the requirements and procedures;

(b) contact information of relevant competent authorities;

(c) fees;

(d) technical standards;

(e) procedures for appeal or review of decisions concerning applications;

(f) procedures for monitoring or enforcing compliance with the terms and conditions of licenses or qualifications;

(g) opportunities for public involvement, such as through hearings or comments; and

(h) indicative timeframes for processing of an application.

Opportunity to Comment and Information before Entry into Force

14. To the extent practicable and in a manner consistent with its legal system for adopting measures, each Member[11] shall publish in advance:

(a) its laws and regulations of general application it proposes to adopt in relation to matters falling within the scope of paragraph 1 of this Section; or

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[2] Competent authorities may require that all information is submitted in a specified format to consider it "complete for processing".

[3] Competent authorities may meet this requirement by informing an applicant in advance in writing, including through a published measure, that lack of response after a specified period of time from the date of submission of an application indicates acceptance of the application or rejection of the application.

[4] "In writing" may include in electronic form.

[5] Such opportunity does not require a competent authority to provide extensions of deadlines.

[6] Competent authorities may require that the content of such an application has been revised.

[7] Competent authorities are not responsible for delays due to reasons outside their competence.

[8] Authorization fees do not include fees for the use of natural resources, payments for auction, tendering or other non-discriminatory means of awarding concessions, or mandated contributions to universal service provision.

[9] For greater certainty, this provision does not mandate a particular administrative structure; it refers to the decision-making process and administering of decisions.

[10] For purposes of these disciplines, "publish" means to include in an official publication, such as an official journal, or on an official website. Members are encouraged to consolidate electronic publications into a single portal.

[11] Paragraphs 14 to 17 of this Section recognize that Members have different systems to consult interested persons and other Members on certain measures before their adoption, and that the alternatives set out in paragraph 14 of this Section reflect different legal systems.