

# **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation**

## **Helping Your Business Grow & Guide for SMEs in the APEC Region**

**APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group**

**1998**

## **Chapter 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 WHAT IS APEC?**

Formed in 1989, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is a group of Pacific Rim economies working together to promote open trade, investment, and economic and technological cooperation. Its members are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and the United States of America. In November 1997, APEC economics leaders agreed to accept new member, namely Peru, The Russian Federation and Socialist Republic Of Vietnam. These member designate will be formally invited to participate in the 1998 leaders and ministers meeting which are to be held in Kuala Lumpur in November.

The Asia Pacific region is experiencing the most remarkable economics growth in the world. The Real GDP Growth in APEC region has increased from 2.5% to 3.7% in 1996. However, in 1997, the GDP Growth has declined to 3.4% from US\$16 trillion in 1995 only to US\$17.5 in 1997, due to slow growth momentum within the region from quarter to quarter and from economy to economy. With respect to trade, APEC as a whole has, over the past decade, experienced rapid growth, raising its shares of world trade to 50.6% in 1996, a gain of more than 7% over this period. In 1996 however, notwithstanding the overall acceleration of growth in the APEC region, export growth slowed sharply to 4.6% partly due to the slump in the price of semi-conductor in 1995, which led to a sharp term of trade deterioration for many APEC member economies. With respect to investment, the APEC region again witnessed large flow of FDI in 1996, with China and United States continuing to be major destinations.

Figure 1. Size of trade in the APEC region in relation to the world 1996

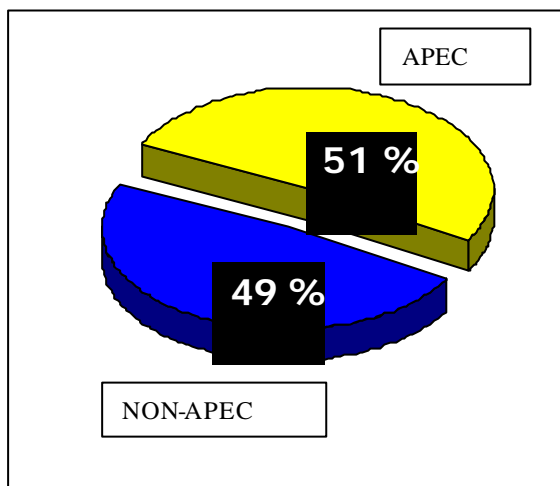
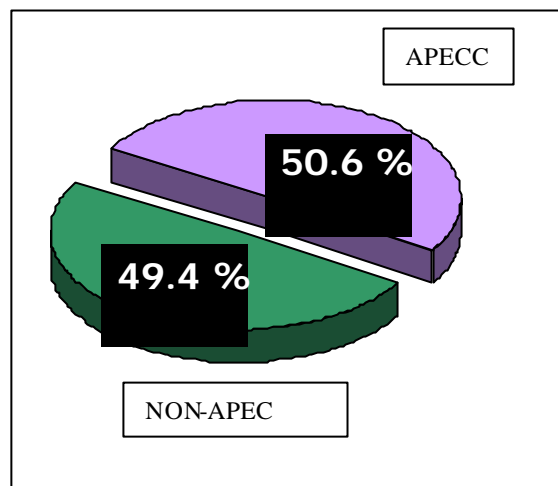


Figure 2. Size of APEC's GDP in relation to the world 1997



APEC provides the most prominent fora for maintaining and increasing this economic dynamism in the region. Continued dynamism and the development of a truly Asia Pacific community will depend on:-

- an open and rules-based trading regime within the region and the rest of the world;
- policy certainty over time for business; and
- economic and technical cooperation in APEC to address structural and institutional bottlenecks, reduce disparities among member economies and deepen the spirit of the Asia Pacific community.

### 1.1.1 Trade and Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation (TILF)

APEC member economies are committed to achieving free and open trade and investment throughout the region by no later than 2010 in the case of industrialised economies and 2020 in the case of developing economies. Initiatives under the Trade and

Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation (TILF) agenda have already brought direct, practical results to the business community.

In 1996, the tariff regimes of APEC economies were made more transparent. By the end of 1997, tariff nomenclature would be harmonised throughout APEC. By 1998, customs clearance procedures would be harmonised. Members have also agreed to align national standards with international standard and to recognise each other's national standards.

The Sub Committee on Custom Procedures(SCCP) is continuously delivering the technical assistance programmes on WTO valuation agreement, UN/EDIFACT Standard and WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) and Advance Ruling Systems.

In 1997, work has intensified to simplify customs clearance procedures, implement intellectual property rights commitments, harmonise customs valuation, facilitate comprehensive trade in services and enhance the environment for investments.

### **1.1.2 Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH)**

***We are pleased with the progress that has been made in implementing the 1996 framework for strengthening Economic Cooperation and Development in APEC...***

*We direct Minister to focus further efforts on capacity building in 1998 through work on developing human resources and harnessing technologies of the future...*

*APEC Economic Leader, November 1997*

**APEC's Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH) agenda complements the TILF agenda. ECOTECH goals are to:-**

- develop human capital;
- foster safe, efficient capital markets;
- strengthen economic infrastructure;
- harness technologies of the future;
- promote environmentally sustainable growth; and
- encourage the development and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

## **1.2 APEC AND SMEs**

*Enhancing the vitality of SMEs is of pivotal importance in maintaining Asia Pacific dynamism into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*- Foreword, The APEC Survey on Small and Medium Enterprises, 1994*

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the key to economic growth. The 40 million SMEs throughout APEC economies account for well over 90 percent of all enterprises, employ from 32 to 84 percent of the work force, contribute from 30 to 60 percent of the gross domestic product and account for 35 percent of exports in the region.

APEC economies cooperate to reduce or eliminate barriers for SMEs and share knowledge and experience regarding domestic policies and practices. Established in 1995, the Ad Hoc SME Policy Level Group has developed a comprehensive Framework to coordinate APEC efforts for SMEs. The objective of the Framework is to provide a strategic focus to APEC's wide-ranging set of activities, provide a natural basis for collaboration and clustering of activities to achieve commonly agreed outcomes, and to communicate to SMEs what APEC has done for them. This Guide is a direct product of the Framework and the second edition of the Guide is a continuous effort to further enhance the APEC activities to the SMEs. Building onto the Framework, the Policy Level Group has formulated an integrated plan for the development of SMEs. The Plan highlights the important elements in developing SMEs and serves as a guide for economies that wish to formulate an integrated programme for the development of SMEs.

### **1.2.1 The Voice of SMEs**

*We affirm the central role of the business sector in the APEC process.*

*- APEC Economic Leaders, November 1996*

**The business community assumes a direct role in helping APEC understand and address the needs of small business. The APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) acts as the independent voice**

**of business, providing input to economic leaders, reviewing the progress of regional trade and investment liberalisation, and recommending future action.**

The Asia Pacific Business Network (APBNet) holds an annual forum in conjunction with the annual meeting of APEC SME Ministers. At the APBNet forum in Ottawa, September 17 – 18, 1997, 700 SMEs from throughout the APEC region discussed market access and partnership strategies, finance and investment strategies, investing in business skills development, and technology innovation and partnerships. Several cross-cutting themes had emerged from the forum which are common to all economies:

- The impact of the technology and information revolution
- Developing skills and knowledge
- Fostering partnerships, networks and coalitions
- The emergence of standards and standardisation
- The need for benchmarking and sharing of best practices
- Ensuring timeliness and reduced timelessness
- Providing solution-oriented information

Support organisations from APEC economies presented their Action Plans to help Ministers address SME needs in the region.

***We stress the importance of strengthening our SME sectors, to allow them to take advantage of linkages into regional trade and investment opportunities...***

*Lowering costs, eliminating red tape and delay, promoting regulatory reform, developing mature recognition arrangements on standards and conformance, and increasing predictability are clear benefits, especially to operators of small and medium-sized enterprises(SMEs).*

*- APEC Economic Leaders, November 1997*

**Table 1. The role of SMEs in APEC member economies**

<b>Economy</b>	<b>SMEs (%)</b>	<b>Employment in SMEs (%)</b>
	95	45

Australia	(1993) (Small business only)	(1993) (Small business only)
Brunei Darussalam	Over 90 (1993)	70 (1993)
Canada	99.8 (1993)	65 (1993)
Chile	15.6 (1993)	36 (1993)
People's Republic of China	99 (1993)	78.8 (1993)
Hong Kong, China	98.22 (1995)	60.74 (1995)
Indonesia	97 (1993)	42 (1993)
Japan	99.1 (1994)	76.5 (1994)
Republic of Korea	99.8 (1993)	68.9 (1993)
Malaysia	84 (1993)	33 (1993)
Mexico	98.7 (1994)	77.7 (1994)
New Zealand*	98.69 (1994)	52.33 (1994)

Papua New Guinea	NA	NA
Republic of the Philippines	98.7 (1988)	50 (1988)
Singapore	92 (1992)	44 (1992)
Chinese Taipei	96.26 (1994)	69.89 (1994)
Thailand	98.63 (1991)	73.80 (1991)
United States of America	96 (1993)	69 (1993)

**\* New Zealand does not have a definition for SMEs, figures relate to firms with 0-49 full-time equivalent employees.**

### **1.3 ABOUT THE GUIDE**

APEC is taking decisive action to address SME priorities identified by SMEs throughout the Asia Pacific region. This guide presents specific results already achieved, initiatives that will be important to you in the future and how one can take advantage of these initiatives. It demonstrates how you can benefit from APEC's efforts to:-

- reduce barriers to trade and investment;
- help SMEs take advantage of new opportunities;
- build a better business environment; and
- improve government capacity to serve SMEs.

The Guide also provides information to help you access APEC and related fora, and a list of useful websites on the Internet.

The Guide will be published annually, and is available on the APEC Secretariat website at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg> and on the APEC SME Week website at <http://www.strategis.ic.gc.ca/apecsme>



## **Chapter 2**

# **BENEFITS TO YOUR BUSINESS**

## **2.1 REDUCING BARRIERS TO TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

Trade barriers between economies undermine the dynamism of the global economy and increase the cost of doing business. These barriers are particularly damaging to SMEs, which often lack the time, resources and expertise to navigate the complex maze of rules, regulations, restrictions and procedures involved in doing business in another country.

APEC members are committed to reducing these barriers – harmonising regulations, improving market access and cutting the cost of trade for SMEs throughout the region. A wide range of APEC initiatives are helping to build a freer, more streamlined and efficient trade environment for SMEs.

### **2.1.1 APEC/PFP Course On Management Of Industrial Property Rights**

**This course is held to enhance APEC members' understanding of Industrial Property Rights related law and enforcement as well as computerisation of IPR administration. It is an on-going project, from 1996-2000.**

For further information, contact Mr. Ishikawa, Japan, Tel : 81-3-3581-5794, Fax : 81-3-3592-0504.

### **2.1.2 Identifying Priority Industry Sectors for Early Voluntary Liberalisation of Tariffs and Non-tariff Measures (EVSL)**

*We endorse the agreement of our Ministers that action should be taken with respect to early voluntary liberalisation in 15 sectors, with nine to be advanced throughout 1998 with a view to implementation beginning in 1999...*

*We instruct Ministers responsible for Trade to finalise detailed targets and timeliness by their meeting in June 1998.*

*- APEC Economic Leaders, November 1997*

In consultation with industry, priority sectors are being identified where early voluntary liberalisation of tariff, non-tariff and other measures will have a positive impact on trade, investment and economic growth. For the nine fast-track sectors of the EVSL initiatives, there was emerging consensus on :

- Product coverage;
- Target end rates; and
- Target end dates.

**Participation in all the nine sectors, including the three elements of each sectors i.e. Liberalisation, Facilitation and ECOTECH is essential in ensuring a balanced and credible outcome in November. Final arrangement/ agreement of each sector will be considered in its entirety in November for implementation from 1999. Further development of the remaining six sectors would be undertaken throughout the year.**

SMEs in these sectors will gain greater market access and opportunities for trade expansion.

Coordinated by the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI). For further information, contact Ms. Ng Kim Neo, Senior Director, Trade Development Board (TDB), Singapore, Tel : 65-337-6628, Fax : 65-337-6898, E-mail : [kimneo@tdb.gov.sg](mailto:kimneo@tdb.gov.sg)

### **2.1.3 Progressive Reduction of Export Subsidies, Unjustifiable Export Prohibitions and Restrictions**

**APEC members will exchange information on all export subsidies, unjustifiable export prohibitions and restrictions. In the medium to long-term future, export subsidies will be progressively reduced**

**and abolished. As a result, SMEs will gain from new market opportunities and more competitively priced exports.**

Coordinated by the APEC CTI. For further information, contact Ms. Ng Kim Neo, Senior Director, Trade Development Board (TDB), Singapore, Tel:65-337-6628, Fax : 65-337-6898, E-mail : [kimnoe@db.tdb.gov.sg](mailto:kimnoe@db.tdb.gov.sg)

#### **2.1.4 Standards Alignment in Priority Areas**

Beginning in 1997, the domestic standards of APEC economies will be progressively aligned with international standards for electrical and electronic appliances, food labeling, rubber gloves, condoms and machinery. Regional input will help develop international standards in the priority areas of construction and building materials as well. SMEs will benefit from reduced technical barriers to trade, lower transaction costs and better quality products at competitive prices. The target completion date is 2000/2005.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance. For further information, contact Mr. Richard Lafontaine, Chairman, Standards Council of Canada, Tel : 1-613-238-3222, Fax : 613-995-4564, E-mail : [r.lafontaine@scc.ca](mailto:r.lafontaine@scc.ca)

(In related work, the Regional Energy Cooperation Working Group is pursuing a framework of cooperation in energy efficient standards. As a first step, it is establishing mutual acceptance of accredited product testing facilities and standard test results).

#### **2.1.5 Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Conformity Assessment for Safety Standards for Electrical and Electronic Equipment**

Work is underway to establish common procedures for assessing safety standards for electrical and electronic equipment. This will substantially reduced the cost of and technical barriers to trade in a multi-billion dollar industry where SMEs play a key role.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance. For further information, contact Mr. Richard Lafontaine, Chairman, Standards

Council of Canada, Tel : 1-613-238-3222, Fax : 1-613-995-4564, E-mail : [r.lafontaine@scc.ca](mailto:r.lafontaine@scc.ca)

### **2.1.6 APEC Deregulation Report**

Updated information on APEC deregulation initiatives is available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>) in November 1997. It provides detail actions taken by APEC economies to deregulate their domestic regulatory regimes, providing increased transparency and easy access to authoritative and current information.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI. For further information, contact Ms. Bridget Romanes, APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel: 65-373-7615, Fax: 65-276-1775, E-mail: [br@apec.stems.com](mailto:br@apec.stems.com)

### **2.1.7 Symposium On Regulatory Information**

A public/private sector Symposium on regulatory information will be held 5-6 September 1998 to develop understanding of the role of regulatory policy in trade and investment liberalisation. It benefits that the information sharing and cross fertilisation of deregulation policy. Business community is able to access free information on business opportunities opened by deregulation

Coordinated by the APEC CTI. For further information, contact Ms. Bridget Romanes, APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-373-7615, Fax:65-276-1775, E-mail : [br@apec.stems.com](mailto:br@apec.stems.com)

### **2.1.8 International Transport and Trade Paper Documentation Elimination**

APEC's Transportation Working Group is working to help members remove regulatory requirements for paper documents in favour of electronic data interchange (EDI). This trade facilitation measure will be implemented over a maximum of ten years, including trial EDI messaging by transportation businesses in various APEC economies and possible use of model law.

For further information, contact Mr. Tony Coriffeths, Transport and Regional Development, Australia, Tel : 616-274-7111, Fax:616-274-6739.

### **2.1.9 EDI – Internet Pilot Project**

**This project aims to promote the growth of commercial (business-business) electronic commerce transactions by evaluating ready available hardware and software to make Internet-EDI easy to implement even for SMEs. Japan has published Guidelines for implementing EDI over Internet, which are available at APEC Web Site.**

For further information, contact Mr. Masaaki Kobashi, Information Society, International Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), 1-3-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100 Japan, Tel : 81-3-3501-2964, Fax : 81-3-3580-6403.

### **2.1.10 Adopting the World Trade Organization (WTO) Valuation Agreement**

The APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures has launched the first year of a four-year comprehensive training programme on the WTO Valuation Agreement. This will help customs officials in APEC economies to adopt internationally agreed procedures for accurate and consistent determination of the value of imported goods, providing SMEs with greater certainty about customs costs.

In 1997, SCCP implemented the first phase of the technical assistance training programmes for its members in four of the eleven areas under its common plans which includes WTO Valuation Agreement.

For further information, contact Mr. Madehi bin Kolek, Deputy Director-General, Royal Customs and Excise Department, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Tel : 60-3 651 7115, Fax: 60-3 651 4927 or Ms. Sulaimah Mahmood, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel. 65-276-1880, Fax: 65-276-1775, E-mail: [sbm@mail.apecsec.org.my](mailto:sbm@mail.apecsec.org.my).

### **2.1.11 Adoption of United Nations/Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT) Standards**

**In order to assist the SCCP members in implementing this collective action, a technical assistance project for Interested SCCP members (Brunei, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong**

**Kong (China), Indonesia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) is on going under APEC TILF Special Fund. As part of this project, an introductory seminar on EDIFACT was conducted by IATA in Singapore in April 1997. A consultant has been engaged to deliver the technical assistance program. The consultant has conducted site visits to various economies to do assessment needs in the first quarter of 1998. There were two technical workshops conducted in late 1998 to all participating economies to monitor/oversee the implementation of appropriate standards of UN/EDIFACT. A network of EDIFACT Contacts linking regional customs organizations is being formed.**

**For further information, contact Mr. Tim Chapman, Australian Customs Service, Tel : 612-6275-6825, Fax : 612-6275-6825, E-mail : [Stephen@customs.gov.au](mailto:Stephen@customs.gov.au)**

#### **2.1.12 APEC Commercial Message Project**

**This project is aimed at demonstrating through pilot projects the use of harmonised EDIFACT messages in the trading chain between organisations in the APEC economies and is expected to be completed by September 1998. The project is managed by Tradegate ECA. The project work involves trade between Murray Goulburn (an Australian exporter of dairy products) an its customer in Asia, particularly in Malaysia and Singapore.**

For further information, contact Mr. Barry Keogh, Tradegate ECA, Australia, Tel : 613 9866 8833, Fax : 613 9820 0467, E-Mail : [bKeogh@mail.att.net](mailto:bKeogh@mail.att.net)

#### **2.1.13 Electronic Commerce Survey Projects**

Survey of 3000 SMEs to access penetration and uptake of electronic commerce has been tendered, with a report to be produced during 1998. Overview of Electronic Commerce Law in the APEC Region: Baker & Mackenzie, Hong Branch, presented a final draft of this report at their website, including hotlinks to related sites ([www.bakerinfo.com/apec](http://www.bakerinfo.com/apec)). : Baker & Mackenzie also agreed to periodically update the report.

For further information, contact Mr. Charles Chenard, Industry Canada,

E-Mail : [chenardchar@jc.gc.ca](mailto:chenardchar@jc.gc.ca)

#### 2.1.14 Cybernet/INGECEP (Integrated Next generation Electronic Commerce Environment Project)

Led by Japan, this project aims to help the extension of the global market through the development of new multimedia applications and security systems for electronic commerce. The project will concentrate on providing coherent services to clients both on broadband (IP over ATM) and narrowband (Internet) networks, with a view to filling the gap between large size-enterprise and small/medium size enterprises between developed and developing countries.

For further information, contact Mr. Michael Baker, Asia-Oceania Electronic messaging Association, Tel : 613 9816 3132, Fax : 613 9816 3265, E-Mail : [Michael.baker@aoema.org](mailto:Michael.baker@aoema.org)

#### 2.1.15 Adoption of the Principle of the Kyoto Convention

This technical assistance program will help APEC members implement the Kyoto Convention on simplifying customs procedures. SMEs will benefit from lower customs costs, easier customs clearance procedures and faster delivery of goods. It is a 3 years programmes duration from 1997-1999.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Mike Spong, Director, Trade and Business Facilitation, New Zealand Customs Department, Tel:64-4-474-8315 Fax : 64-4-472-3886; or Mr. Yoshio Okubo, Director, International Trade Organization Division, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan, Tel : 81-3-3581-4111, Fax : 81-3-5251-2123.

#### 2.1.16 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Protection Survey

This initiative examines the current state of IPR protection, relevant legislation and regulations, corresponding jurisprudence, administrative guidelines and activities of related organisations. It will help SMEs access more transparent information on IPR protection available in APEC markets. Survey results is now available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>).

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Intellectual Property Rights Get Together. For further information, contact Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa, Director (Program), APEC

Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail:to@apec.stems.com

### **2.1.17 Adoption of the Principles of the Harmonised System (HS) of Customs Classification**

This training programme, to be implemented in 1998, will help customs personnel to ensure accurate, consistent and uniform application of the HS of Customs Classification.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Yoichi Nemoto, Director, Office of Regional Customs Cooperation, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan, Tel : 81-3-3581-3825, Fax : 81-3-5251-2123.

### **2.1.18 Improved Access to Customs Information**

#### **2.1.18.1 Handbook of “Best Practices”**

A handbook of “Best Practices” on customs laws, regulations, administrative regulations and rulings is available from the APEC Secretariat. This will provide SMEs with better access to regional customs information. In addition, a long-term effective information dissemination program will improve compliance and help remove impediments to legitimate trade, thereby reducing business costs.

**Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. K. Chandran, Director Revenue, Customs & Excise Department, Singapore, Tel : 65-355-2096, Fax:65-250-8663.**

#### **2.1.18.2 Blueprint For Customs Modernization**

*A Blueprint For Customs Modernization: working with business for a faster, better border* was published in 1997 to facilitate business planning by providing SCCP/APEC’s view on where custom modernisation is heading. It also served as a tool for benchmarking against which APEC Customs Administrations can measure their progress on modernising.

### **2.1.19 Implementing Advanced Classification Ruling Systems**



This training programme on implementing systems for advance customs rulings before shipments arrive, began in 1997. It will help increase administrative and tax liability certainty for SMEs. The first phase of the project was completed in 1997 and follow-up to be made in 1998.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Mike Spong, Director, Trade and Business Facilitation, New Zealand Customs Department, Tel:64-4-474-8315 Fax : 64-4-472-3886; or Mr. Jong-II Ro, Director, International Customs Affairs Division, Korea Customs Service, Tel : 82-2-512-2310, Fax : 82-2-512-2339.

## **2.2 HELPING SMEs TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

New business opportunities are developing throughout APEC member economies every day. Unfortunately, many SMEs find themselves at a loss when trying to take advantage of these opportunities. Finding relevant, timely information is often difficult and time-consuming. The critical skills needed to understand and act on that information, to investigate opportunities, to develop and to expand into new markets, are often unfamiliar.

APEC is helping SMEs to address this challenge through a variety of initiatives that improve access to information, build new support network and support the development of the skills required to take action when opportunity knocks.

### **2.2.1 Business Matching and Facilitation Services and Electronic Databases**

The two-volume "Business Matching" and Facilitation Services and Electronic Database Available to SMEs to Facilitate Trade and Investment; provides SMEs with invaluable information for developing overseas markets. It summarizes, for each member economy, the government's policy on the internationalisation of SMEs, business matching and facilitation services available, as well as relevant electronic databases. A directory of organisations and key contacts that provide matching services are also provided.

Copies of the report may be obtained from Mr. Don Scavone, Assistant Director, Office of Small Business, Department of Workplace Relations and

Small Business, GPO Box 9879, Canberra ACT 2601, Fax: 61-6-243-7599, E-mail : [dscavone@dwsrb.gov.au](mailto:dscavone@dwsrb.gov.au)

### **2.2.2 Network of Industrial Technology Practice Firms in APEC**

Practice firms are ideal training models for potential SME owners and managers. A practice firm is a simulated business developed by trainees and students, under the guidance of a facilitator, to undertake simulated commercial activities in a wide range of environments. The “firm” provides hands-on experience, business skills and a “real” entrepreneurial environment. It resembles a real firm in form, organisation and function, but there is no actual transfer of goods or money. Other transactions, however, such as orders, invoices, financial records, creditors, debtors and stocks, are created. A practice firm can be developed for any line of business. APEC’s Human Resources Development Working Group is establishing a network of practice firms focussing on industrial technology.

For further information, contact Mr. Matt Ngui, Centre for Research Policy, University of Wollongong, Australia, Tel : 61-42-21-3256, Fax: 61-42-21-3257 E-mail : [matt.ngui@uow.edu.au](mailto:matt.ngui@uow.edu.au)

### **2.2.3 Human Resources Development and Information Technology : Multimedia Distance Learning in the Asia Pacific Region, Phase 1 (Coordinated by ACTETSME)**

Assessing the status quo of distance learning practices and holding an International Symposium for information exchange on multimedia distance learning. The proposal for the project has been approved and a workshop was held in Montreal in May 1997. Planning for International Symposium is underway.

For further information, contact Dr. David McClain, University of Hawaii, U.S.A, Tel : 1-808-956-7331, Fax : 1-808-956-3261

### **2.2.4 The APEC Centre for Technology Exchange and Training for Small and Medium Enterprises (ACTETSME)**

ACTETSME helps to accelerate the development of SMEs through technology exchange and cooperation, making SMEs more productive and competitive in

both domestic and international markets. The Centre functions as a resource hub with capabilities in electronic information networking, technical training and organizing special activities for technology transfer projects. The services and activities offered by ACTETSME include:-

- **linking the SME databases of APEC economies and all other interested parties into a master database;**
- providing sector specific services;
- **facilitating business and entrepreneurial exchange visits and mission; and**
- conducting productivity improvement, small business consultancy and management training programs for SMEs.

Enterprise Development Programme – Phase1 of this programme has been completed where training of trainers in Enterprise Development was conducted. The Programme is in progress and the programme development is expected to be completed early 1998.

A Regional Workshop On Factory Automation System And Technologies (FAST), Manila Philippines, September 2-5, 1998.

**The Regional Workshop FAST aims to provide exposure and practical application to system and technologies for factory automation. It will involve discussions, simulations and hands-on laboratory work which will facilitate sharing and transfer of technology.**

Coordinated by APEC Centre for Technologies Exchange and Training for Small and Medium Enterprises (ACTETSME) in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Research and Development Foundation, Inc. (SERDEF)

For further information, contact Mr. Fortunato T. De la Pena, Interim ACTETSME Director, Quezon City, Republic of the Philippines, Tel:632-928-7076, Fax : 632-927-1034, E-mail : [do@upissi.ph](mailto:do@upissi.ph)

### **2.2.5 APEC Government Procurement (GP) Information Database**

Information on procurement policies, procedures and opportunities is available through the APEC Government Procurement Information Database. The APEC GP Homepage (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg/gphone.html>) includes the results of a 1996 APEC survey on government procurement regimes and has links to government procurement databases in 11 APEC economies. This database provides SMEs with more transparent information on their government procurement trade options.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Government Procurement Experts Group. For further information, contact Mr. Tom Engle, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel:65-276-1880, Fax:65-276-1775, E-mail : [te@apec.stems.com](mailto:te@apec.stems.com)

#### **2.2.6 APEC Contact Points on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**

A list of government, business, private sector and academic IPR contacts is available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>). It provides SMEs with access to authoritative IPR information at a minimum cost.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Intellectual Property Rights Get Together. For further information, contact Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail : [to@apec.stems.com](mailto:to@apec.stems.com)

#### **2.2.7 Electronic Commerce Survey**

APEC's Telecommunications Working Group is surveying 3 000 SMEs to assess their usage of electronic commerce. The final report on their finding will be available in the second quarter of 1998.

For further information, contact Mr. Charles Chenard, Senior Policy Advisor, Industry Canada, 300 Slater Street, Ottawa, Canada, KIA OC8, Tel:1-613-941-5245, Fax : 1-613-991-0959, E-mail : [chenard.charles@ic.gc.ca](mailto:chenard.charles@ic.gc.ca)

#### **2.2.8 Electronic Commerce Legal Framework Study**

A study is assessing the legal and regulatory barriers to using electronic commerce in the APEC region through interviews with government officials and businesses. Results are due in the second quarter of 1998.

For further information, contact Mr. Michael Baker, Executive Director, Asia Oceania Electronic Messaging Association, P.O. Box 240 KEW East, Victoria, Australia 3102, Fax : 61-3-9816-3265, E-mail : [michael.baker@aoema.org](mailto:michael.baker@aoema.org)

### **2.2.9 Electronic Data Interchange/Internet Pilot Project**

APEC's Telecommunications Working Group is conducting a project to demonstrate the benefits to SMEs of using the Internet for electronic commerce. The project will be conducted in the electronic industry using Japanese companies as test ordering companies and a Malaysian firm as the order-receiving company. The project will run between August 1997 and March 1998. Japan has published guidelines for implementing EDI over the Internet, which are available at the APEC Web Site.

For further information, contact Mr. Masaaki Kobashi, Information Society, International Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), 1-3-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100 Japan, Tel : 81-3-3501-2964, Fax : 81-3-3580-6403.

### **2.2.10 APEC Centres of Science and Technology Excellence**

APEC's Industrial Science and Technology Working Group is developing guidelines, criteria and procedures of designating meritorious science and technology centres as APEC Centres of Science and Technology Excellence. These Centres will provide further collaboration and training opportunities among APEC economies and enhance opportunities for SMEs. A paper on practical options, including a target date for the designation of Centres, a target number, priority areas of specialisation, etc., has been developed on October 1 and 2, 1997, at a meeting in Singapore. For further information, contact Mr. Brian Delroy, Department of Industry, Science and Tourism, Australia, Tel : 61-6-213-6000, Fax : 61-6-213-7000, E-mail : [100245.3577@compuserve.com](mailto:100245.3577@compuserve.com)

### **2.2.11 APEC Science and Technology Web on the Internet**

**APEC's Industrial Science and Technology Working Group is developing the concept and tools for a science and technology (S&T) network on the Internet. This network will enhance the flow and application of information, technology and expertise. It will also enhance links among government, the private sector and organisations engaged in collaborative research and development, while providing networking opportunities for SME S&T firms. The initiative involves phases from the demonstration to the operational networking stage, which is scheduled to be completed by 1999. The website is located at <http://www.apecst.org>**

**For further information, contact Mr. Brian Delroy, Department of Industry, Science and Tourism, Australia, Tel : 61-6-213-6000, Fax : 61-6-213-7000, E-mail : [100245.3577@compuserve.com](mailto:100245.3577@compuserve.com)**

### **2.2.12 Comprehensive Linked Database on Mining-related Opportunities and Regional Legal Framework**

By early 1998, APEC's Regional Energy Cooperation Working Group expects to complete a database on opportunities in the mining sector, taking into consideration trade, mineral resource deposits, taxation and legal framework in APEC economies. It will be linked to other relevant databases.

For further information, contact Mr. Thomas Astorga, Ministerio de Minería, Teatinos 120 10° piso, Santiago, Chile, Tel : 56-2-671-4373, Fax : 56-2-698-9262, E-mail : [gerneed@reuna.d](mailto:gerneed@reuna.d)

### **2.2.13 Manual on APEC Markets for Air-shipped Live and Fresh Food Fish**

APEC's Fisheries Working Group has completed a comprehensive and easy to use manual explaining the technical requirements and public health regulations

associated with trade in air-freighted live and fresh fish and shellfish. This guide facilitate trading opportunities for SMEs.

For further information, contact Ms. Mary Harwood, Lead Shepherd, Fisheries Working Group, Australia, Tel : 61-6-272-5044, Fax:61-6-272-4215.

#### **2.2.14 Directory of Support Organizations for Small and Medium Enterprises, 1996**

This directory will help SMEs to obtain business information and information about economic policies and activities in APEC member economies. Each of the member profiles includes:-

- **tables of major imports and exports, with comparisons for the last two years;**
- investment policies and implementation;
- organizations responsible for SME policies and development;
- supporting agencies for SME development; and
- overseas agencies for promotion trade, investment and SME development.

The directory (APEC #96-SM-03.1;ISBN 9810080352; price S\$22, US\$15) is available from the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel: 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail : [info@apec.stems.com](mailto:info@apec.stems.com)

#### **2.2.15 Leadership Development in Small and Medium Enterprises, 1997**

**This volume of conference proceedings contains papers on human resources (“Finding and Motivating the Right People”), finance (“Unlocking the Financing Constraint”), strategy (“Expanding Internationally”) and working with governments (“What Government can do for SMEs”). The conference was convened by the Business Management Network of APEC’s Human Resources Development Working Group, the Pacific Basin Economic Council**

**and the APEC Studies Center of the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii.**

The proceedings (APEC #97-HR-04; price: S\$26, US\$19) are available from the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax: 65-276-1775, E-mail : [info@apec.stems.com](mailto:info@apec.stems.com)

### **2.2.16 Marketing Case Studies and a Training Curriculum for SME Managers in the APEC Region, 1996**

**The Business Management Network of APEC's Human Resources Development Working Group produced this curriculum as an organisational framework for SME manager training programs. It will help trainers to convey a basic understanding of the importance of strategic planning, the concepts behind modern marketing management and the basic steps in the development of a marketing plan. It includes 14 case studies from various APEC economies, accompanied by teaching notes.**

The curriculum (APEC #97-HR-01.2; price S\$42, US\$35) is available from the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax: 65-276-1775, E-mail : [info@apec.stems.com](mailto:info@apec.stems.com)

### **2.2.17 APEC Business Volunteer Programme (BVP)**

**This initiative of APEC's Human Resources Development Working Group provides for the exchange and transfer of managerial and technical skills. This programme will help to ease the shortage of human resources in some areas encountered by developing economies. A BVP Coordinating Office has been established to maintain and update a roster of available experts in member economies. The Office started accepting and processing applications for exports in September 1997.**

For further information, contact Ms. Runothai Singkalvanji, Director, and Mr. Satoshi Matsunaga, Advisor, APEC BVP Coordinating Office, c/o The Federation of Thai Industries, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Zone



C, 4<sup>th</sup>. Floor, 60 New Ratchadapisek Road, Klongteoy Bangkok 10110 Thailand, Tel : 662-2294052, Fax:662-2294057, E-mail : [thaipito@mozarlinelco.tb](mailto:thaipito@mozarlinelco.tb)

### **2.2.18 Training Programme to Enhance Productivity among SMEs in the APEC Region**

**This project will identify strategies and techniques to improve the productivity of SMEs in the APEC region through training and plant visits. It will be implemented by the APEC Centre for Technology Exchange and Training for Small and Medium Enterprises**

### **2.2.19 Cross-cultural Training for SMEs on Interactive CD-ROM**

**A CD-ROM, “Doing Business in APEC for SMEs,” is being developed to enhance market entry skills among SMEs, improve cross-cultural communication skills, increase international and regional trading knowledge among SMEs, and introduce an innovative and cost/time effective method of improving human resources development skills among SMEs.**

This project aims to create multimedia training tool that provides Asia-Pacific related cross-cultural and market entry skill for SME using Interactive CD-ROM technology. Demonstration on the prototype was made at the PLG Meeting in Ottawa, September 1997. A user guide has been drafted and copies of this prototype have been distributed to participating economies focus group testing. Refinement of the pilot continues and CD-ROM will be distributed in 1998.

For further information, contact Dr. Rikki Kersten, The Research Institute for Asia Pacific (RIAP), Sydney, Australia, Tel : 61-2-9290-3222, Fax : 61-2-9262-4819, E-mail : [R.Kersten@riap.biz.usyd.edu.au](mailto:R.Kersten@riap.biz.usyd.edu.au)

### ***Electronic Commerce Seminars***

**Seminars designed to show SMEs the benefits of doing business electronically will be offered in Thailand, Chinese Taipei and New Zealand during the last quarter of 1997 by the Asia Oceania Electronic Messaging Association (AOEMA).**

**It is an ongoing project (1996-1998) and aimed to migrate from paper based application to electronic commerce and communications.**

For further information, contact Mr. Toshiyuki Minami, Senior Advisor, Telecommunications Bureau, MPT, 3-2 Kasumigaseki 1-Cho9me, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-90, Jalan, Tel : 81-2-3504-4835, Fax : 81-3-3595-2594, E-mail : [t2minam@mpt.go.jp](mailto:t2minam@mpt.go.jp); or Mr. Michael Baker, Executive Director, Asia Oceania Electronic Messaging Association, P.O. Box 240 KEW East, Victoria, Australia 3102, Fax : 61-3-9816-3265 E-mail : [michael.baker@aeoma.org](mailto:michael.baker@aeoma.org)

### ***APEC Market Development Seminar (November 1997)***

**This forum was intended for SME managers, large institutions engaged in tendering and procurement processes, representatives from SME and industry associations, and officials from administrations responsible for SMEs, industry and trade. It will focus on the areas of services, manufacturing, trade and government procurement.**

The Seminar was convened in Chinese Taipei, July 22-23 1997. Eleven APEC economies participated in this seminar namely Australia, Singapore, USA, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Korea, Japan and Chinese Taipei. 20 papers were presented and discussion session proceeded in the following four phases.

1. Government assistance programme relevant to the entrance of small and medium business into the international market.

2. Innovation, strategy and the development of small and medium business towards a greater degree of internationalization.

3. Government policy and opportunity with regards small and medium business in respect of public infrastructure of procurement.

4. Market development and innovative strategies for expansion of small and medium business in domestic market.

For further information, contact Mr. John Ni, Small and Medium Enterprises Administration, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 3<sup>rd</sup>. Floor, No. 95, Roosevelt Road, Section 2, Taipei, Taiwan, Tel: 886-2-3673885 Fax: 886-2-3673914.

## **2.3 Monitoring Progress**

### **2.3.1 Diagnostic and Benchmarking Tools Report**

**This report analyses diagnostic and benchmarking tools used in APEC economies and provides information on data and output sought, how tools are applied and at what stage of the business cycle, and analysis techniques being used. Samples of questionnaires are included for use by member economies who wish to perform their own diagnostic analysis.**

A feasibility study and a pilot project with Mexico, US and Canada were completed in September 1997. 82 SMEs from Canada, Mexico and US participated in the pilot project and received individual performance report.

For further information, contact Ms. Francine L'Esperance, Industry Canada, Tel : 1-613-954-5484, Fax : 1-613-946-1035, E-mail: [lesperance.francine@ic.gc.ca](mailto:lesperance.francine@ic.gc.ca)

## **2.4 Building a Better Business Environment**

**To conduct business efficiently, SMEs business environment and knowledge of the rules and procedures that make up that environment are important. Many APEC initiatives are designed to identify the elements of such an environment that are most critical to SMEs and to provide them with the kind of information they need**

from financing opportunities to franchising, environmental regulations and investment regimes.

#### **2.4.1 SME Export-Import Financing**

**A 1997 survey of SMEs throughout the APEC region identified the challenges faced in securing medium-and long-term financing. On a general level, the survey found that export financing is a major concern to SMEs in virtually all APEC economies and that business associations, bankers, exporters and government would like APEC to address the issue. April and September 1997 meetings of Export Credit Agencies (ECA) from various APEC economies facilitate the discussion of best practices to address these challenges. The process will ultimately contribute to better access to export-import financing for SMEs.**

In September 1998, the ECA Meeting will table the simplified export/import documents and procedures that could give better access to finance to the SMEs exporters once it is endorsed.

#### **2.4.2 Consultative Survey on Franchising in APEC Member Economies**

Franchising seems poised to flourish throughout the APEC region due to the high growth rates and large consumer base in the area. This survey explores franchising as a means of small business development and looks at related financial and regulatory issues. The survey report can be accessed via the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>).

**Another resource is the 1997 report “Franchising in Asia Pacific,” which can be obtained from the Singapore Trade and Development Board, 230 Victoria Street, #07-00 Bugis Junction Office Tower, Singapore 188024, Tel : 65-337-6628, Fax : 65-337-6898.**

#### **2.4.3 Eco-efficiency in SMEs**

**Under the SME Policy Level Group initiative, successful eco-efficiency measures used in specific industrial sectors will be compiled in best practice manuals. The results were presented at a seminar held in March 1998 in Mexico City. SMEs will be able to**

**refer to the manual for measures applicable to their own circumstances and benefit from the experiences of others in their industrial sector.**

It was found in the report that from the survey, in many cases, SME practice a form of eco-efficiency already in managing raw materials and resources for common economic reasons. There are four key factors involved in the successful uptake of eco-efficiency by companies.

- ◆ Emphasis on services
- ◆ Emphasis on quality of life
- ◆ A life cycle perspective
- ◆ An eco-capacity imperative.

The final report of the project is published by the APEC Secretariat in Singapore.

**For further information about the studies, contact Ms. Luisa Montes, Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries, Mexico, Tel:525-628-0846, Fax : 525-628-0649, E-mail:lmontes@buzon.semarnap.gob.mx**

#### **2.4.4 APEC Cleaner Production Strategy**

**APEC's Industrial Science and Technology Working Group has developed sector-based, crosscutting training and information-sharing approaches for the adoption of innovative policies and methods for cleaner production.**

**For further information, contact Dr. Phyllis Genter Yoshida, U.S. Department of Commerce, Tel : 1-202-482-6814, Fax:1-202-219-3310.**

#### **2.4.5 APEC Environment Business Information System and Network ([E-BISNet@apecnetwork.org](mailto:E-BISNet@apecnetwork.org))**

**This website is part of the APEC Sustainable Development Training and Information Network. The website is in the process of being established. Among other things, it will include information on environmental regulations in participating economies.**

**For further information, contact Mr. Rick Schulbert, Oregon Economic Development Department, 775 Summer Street N.E.,**

**Salem, Oregon, USA 97310, Tel : 1-503-986-0199, Fax:1-503-986-0204, E-mail:rick.j.schulbert@state.or.us**

#### **2.4.6 Travel and Tourism Industry Common Occupational Skill Standards**

**APEC's Tourism Working Group is developing common occupational skill standards for the travel and tourism industry that will increase professional and facilitate labour mobility within the region.**

**For further information, contact Mr. Gede Ardike, Directorate General of Tourism, Indonesia, Tel : 62-21-383-8400, Fax:62-21-386-7589.**

#### **2.4.7 APEC Trade Skills and Training Course Catalogue**

**A database is being established containing information on institutions involved in agricultural technology transfer and training courses in the region. It could foster the development of cooperative training programmes.**

**For further information, contact Dr. Soetato Hadiwigeno, Ministry of Agriculture, Indonesia, Tel : 62-21-780-4427, Fax:62-21-780-4428.**

#### **2.4.8 APEC Tariff Database**

**In May 1997, APEC, in conjunction with Federal Express, launched a computerised database on the applied tariffs of APEC member economies that is accessible through the Internet (<http://www.apectariff.org>). This will increase transparency and fast access for SMEs to authoritative trade information at no cost.**

**Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Terry Lee, Director (Information Systems), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel:65-276-1880 Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail : [tl@apec.stems.com](mailto:tl@apec.stems.com)**

#### **2.4.9 Identifying Non-tariff Impediments**

**By 1998, a list will be compiled on non-tariff measures (NTMs), recognised as impediments to trade among APEC economies and a list of products by them. APEC also plans to set up a computerised database on NTMs by 1998. Expected benefits include improved information to support business decision making.**

Coordinated by the APEC CTI. For further information, contact Ms. Ng Kim Neo, Senior Director, Trade Development Board (TDB), Singapore, Tel : 65-337-6628, Fax : 65-337-6898, E-mail: [kimneo@tdb.gov.sg](mailto:kimneo@tdb.gov.sg)

#### **2.4.10 Enhanced Transparency in Services Trade Provisions**

**A contact network is being established to provide information on service trade laws/regulations in each economy that will provide SMEs with increased transparency and faster and cheaper access to information.**

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Group on Services. For further information, contact Mr. Ricardo A. Lagos, Head of APEC Department, MFA, Chile, Tel : 562-696-0043, Fax : 562-696-0639, E-mail : [rlagos@prochile.cl](mailto:rlagos@prochile.cl)

#### **2.4.11 Guide to the Investment Regimes of APEC Member Economies**

**The Guidebook covers six topics:-**

- background on foreign investment regimes;
- regulatory framework and investment facilitation;
- investment protection;
- investment promotion and incentives;
- a summary of international investment agreements or codes to which APEC members are party; and
- an assessment of recent trends in foreign investment.

This Guidebook will ensure more transparent investment regimes, lowering transaction costs to business. The Guidebook (APEC #96-CT-03.1; price:S\$75, US\$50) is available from the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail : [info@appec.stems.com](mailto:info@appec.stems.com). It is also available on G-Book diskette (electronic book). An updated version is on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.appecsec.org.sg>).

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Investment Experts Group. For further information, contact Mr. Sun Yuanjiang, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail: [sy@appec.stems.com](mailto:sy@appec.stems.com)

#### **2.4.12 APEC Standards and Conformance Guide**

A new edition of this Guide to standards and conformance will soon be available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.appecsec.org.sg>). The Guide provides clear information on standards and conformance in APEC economies.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance. For further information, contact Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax:65-276-1775, E-mail: [to@appec.stems.com](mailto:to@appec.stems.com)

#### **2.4.13 Information on Standards Requirements**

In 1997, all APEC economies designated central points for information on standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures. This will provide SMEs with better and more timely access to information on standards related requirements.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance. For further information, contact Mr. Richard Lafontaine, Chairman, Standards Council of Canada, Tel : 1-613-238-3222, Fax:1-613-995-4564, E-mail : [r.lafontaine@scc.ca](mailto:r.lafontaine@scc.ca)

#### **2.4.14 Study on the Operating Environment in China for SMEs from APEC Economies**

This study by the China Center for Business Cooperation and Coordination will identify problems, such as information access, business licensing and dispute



settlement with partners, that have been experienced by SMEs from other APEC economies operating in China. The study will also look at SMEs that were deterred from operating in China to determine what reservations they had about the business environment. The resulting report will catalogue problems and difficulties facing foreign SMEs in China and recommend policy adjustments to the government of China. Implementation of feasible recommendations could improve the operating environment and contribute to trade and investment liberalization. The initiative will take place between October 1, 1997, and August 31, 1998.

For further information, contact Miss Zhang Mei, Center for Business Cooperation and Coordination, People's Republic of China, Tel:86-10-6506-4523, Fax : 86-10-6500-5908; or Mr. Wang Xu, Department of Foreign Affairs, State Economic and Trade Commission of the People's Republic of China, Fax : 86-10-6304-5326.

#### **2.4.15 Implementing Clear Customs Appeal Provisions**

APEC is training officials in customs appeals procedures to support clear customs appeal systems. SMEs will gain better access to a fair and equitable appeal system, reinforcing the application of correct and appropriate treatment.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. William Claypole, Director, Strategic International Direction, Revenue Canada, Tel : 1-613-954-6980, Fax:1-613-954-2224, E-mail : [cseymour@cyberus.ca](mailto:cseymour@cyberus.ca); or Mr. Titus B. Villanueva, Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Customs, Port Area, Manila, Republic of the Philippines, Tel : 63-2-527-4602, Fax : 63-2-527-4512, E-mail:sgcom@globe.com.ph

#### **2.4.16 Establishing Facilities for Temporary Importation**

APEC is helping its members to establish facilities for temporary importation. Systems will be in accordance with international agreements (i.e. ATA and/or the Istanbul Convention), providing an international customs document to facilitate temporary importation of certain specified goods. This will reduce costs through reduced document requirements and common APEC systems exempting goods from all or part of normal duties.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Douglas M. Browning, Assistant

Commissioner, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Customs Service, Tel : 1-202-927-0400, Fax : 1-202-927-2064.

#### **2.4.17 Harmonising Trade Data Elements and Customs Procedures**

APEC will develop a compendium of trade and data elements, with definitions and coding, to assist in harmonising and simplifying customs clearance procedures. With a common set of trade data, information can be exchanged quickly and efficiently among interested parties in both the public and private/business sectors, thus supporting more efficient customs services to SMEs.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. William Claypole, Director Strategic International Direction, Revenue Canada, Tel : 1-613-954-6980, Fax:1-613-954-2224, E-mail : [cseymour@cyberus.ca](mailto:cseymour@cyberus.ca)

#### **2.4.18 Compendium on Rules of Origin in APEC Economies**

A compendium published in June 1997 contains a summary of the rules and related legislation on preferential and non-preferential Rules of Origin for APEC member economies and contact details. It informs importers, exporters and the general business community of current Rules of Origin trading arrangements. The compendium is accessible through the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>).

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Stephen Holloway, Director International, Australian Customs Service, Tel : 61-6-275-6815, Fax:61-6-275-6819.

#### **2.4.19 APEC Competition Policy and Law Database**

Chinese Taipei is creating a database that will provide easy access to information on the objectives, necessity, role and operation of each economy's competition policy and/or laws and administrative procedures. This will provide SMEs with enhanced information to support business decision making.

For further information, contact Mr. Li-ming Chang, Director, Fair Trade Commission, Chinese Taipei, Tel : 886-2-351-7588, Fax : 886-2-397-5075.

#### **2.4.20 Arbitration, Mediation and Conciliation Services Guidebook**

This Guidebook is available from the APEC Secretariat. It helps SMEs to ascertain what arbitration, mediation and conciliation services are available to them in case of disputes with governments or other private parties. It increases the transparency of laws, regulations, administrative guidelines and policies related to private-to-government and private-to-private disputes.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Disputes Mediation Experts Group. For further information, contact Mr. Jonathan T. Fried, Director General, Trade Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Tel : 1-613-992-0293, Fax : 1-613-996-1667.

#### **2.4.21 Streamlined and Accelerated Processing of Short-term Business Visas**

APEC's Committee on Trade and Investment is currently reviewing the issues and options related to this initiative. Implementation would improve the ease of travel for SME personnel and facilitate trade and investment.

For further information, contact Mr. Chris Butler, Chair, Committee on Trade and Investment, New Zealand, Tel : 644-473-2046, Fax : 644-494-8518.

#### **2.4.22 Handbook on Short-term Business Visa Requirements**

This handbook helps business people who travel frequently to the Asia Pacific region, providing a quick reference guide to the visa and entry requirements of APEC member economies. It lists basic eligibility criteria and procedures for applying for visas and terms and conditions that apply to business travellers. It also lists the embassies, consulates and visa-issuing agencies of each member economy website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>).

For further information, contact Mr. Tom Engle, Director (Program), APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel : 65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, E-mail: [te@apec.stems.com](mailto:te@apec.stems.com)

#### **2.4.23 APEC Business Travel Card**

In 1997, three economies participated in a trial project to improve the mobility of business people. Two other economies will take part if the trial is judged to be a success. New related measures introduced by individual economies include multiple entry visas, visa waiver arrangements and travel pass schemes.

For further information, contact Mr. Rod Smith, DFAT, Australia, Tel:61-6-261-2437, Fax : 61-6-261-3009.

#### **2.4.24 APEC Guide to Telecommunications Regulatory Environment**

APEC's Telecommunications Working Group compiles new editions of this Guide periodically to inform interested parties of the state of telecommunications networks in member economies as well as policy, legislative and regulatory environments. These Guides have proven to be very useful to businesses of all sizes as they investigate the possibility of offering goods or services in telecommunications and information sectors. The Guide is also available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.apec-wg.com/busf-sq/datac-vg/datac.htm>

#### **2.4.25 X.400 Test Programme**

APEC's Telecommunications Working Group has developed a matrix outlining each economy's capabilities to exchange information electronically with other APEC economies. The programme assesses network interoperability using the X.400 communications protocol, which makes communications possible through a number of technical protocol, including the Internet. A final report is available that include best practices. It can be accessed at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/twg.html> or <http://www.apec.wg.com/>

#### **2.4.26 Compilation of a Technology and High-tech Product Catalogue in the APEC Region**

This catalogue will improve the linkages between technology users and suppliers, assisting SMEs in both categories. It is an initiative of APEC's Industrial Science and Technology Working Group.

For further information, contact Mr. Lu Ji Jian, Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Foreign Trade, People's Republic of China, Tel:86-10-6519-7357, Fax : 86-10-6519-7926.

## **Chapter 3**

# **IMPROVING GOVERNMENT CAPACITY TO SERVE SMES**

Even though SMEs share many views and concerns with the broader business community, they also have their own strengths, weaknesses and needs that are directly related to their size and role in the economy. They face unique challenges and opportunities. They require support and services tailored to their needs.

Unfortunately, many SMEs feel that they have been ignored by government and they have expressed frustration with the government services available. In fact, many governments have only recently begun to recognise the significant importance of SMEs and the need to address the challenges SMEs encounter in the marketplace. Today, almost all governments provide special emphasis to the role of SMEs in the economic development plans of the respective economies.

APEC has undertaken a series of initiatives to help the governments of member economies change the way they do business and respond to SME concerns.

### **3.1 Best Practices for SMEs in APEC, 1995**

This booklet is a compilation of selected SME policies of APEC economies that are regarded as models of best practices. It is available from the International Affairs Office, SME Agency, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Japan, Tel : 81-3-3501-9093, Fax : 81-3-3501-7805, Email: [ntab1078@miti.go.jp](mailto:ntab1078@miti.go.jp)

### **3.2 Workshop for APEC Economies to Promote Diagnostic and Guidance Skills, October 1997**

Japan had hosted a workshop to improve the diagnostic and guidance skills of staff working in SME support organisations in APEC economies. In a follow-up programme, Japanese experts will be available to visit other APEC economies to continue the aims of the workshop. Following the workshop, documentation is now available on an SME related Internet website.

The workshop will be continued and the next one will be held in September 1998. Chinese Taipei had requested that the workshop be also extended to them.

For further information, contact the International Affairs and Research Department, Japan Small Business Corporation, Tel : 81-3-5470-1569, Fax:81-3-5470-1527, E-mail : [ko-kikaku@isbc.go.jp](mailto:ko-kikaku@isbc.go.jp)

### **3.3 Training and Certification of Small Business Counsellors**

APEC is creating a technology-based training programme and certification process for small business advisors and counsellors and will develop an infrastructure to manage and deliver the program. SMEs in APEC economies will have ready access to leading-edge advice on a range of business matters from a highly qualified network of counsellors. The program will help to enhance the competitiveness and growth of SMEs Training will commence in 1998.

For further information, contact Ms. Sonia Tiong-Aquino, Republic of the Philippines, Tel : 63-2-927-9238, Fax : 63-2-927-1034, E-mail:sta@upissi.ph.net; or Ms. Francine L'Esperance, Industry Canada, Tel: 1-613-954-5484, Fax : 1-613-946-1035, E-mail:lesperance.francine@ic.gc.ca

### **3.4 Adoption of the Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO)**

The first year of four-year technical assistance programme is under way to help APEC members establish effective intellectual property rights border enforcement regimes as provided for in the WTO TRIPs Agreement. With effective enforcement, SMEs will face less risk of IPR infringement on their products and services.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Douglas M. Browning, Assistant Commissioner, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Customs Service, Tel:1-202-927-0400, Fax : 1-202-927-2064.

### **3.5 Risk Management**

APEC is compiling information on the current risk management practices of member economies. This will facilitate information sharing to help governments implement systematic risk management systems that minimize disruptions to trade.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures. For further information, contact Mr. Stephen Holloway, Director International, Australian Customs Service, Tel : 61-6-275-6815, Fax:61-6-275-6819.

### **3.6 Trade and Investment Database**

A database has been completed to provide the region's policy makers and advisors with the most consistent, up-to-date measures of trade and investment among APEC member economies. This will lead to better informed regional trade policy.

Coordinated by APEC's Trade and Investment Data Working Group. For further information, contact Mr. Dudley Scoullar, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Tel : 61-6-252-6225, Fax : 61-6-252-7219.

### **3.7 Cross-cultural Training for Business and Technology Incubator Managers**

A training course for managers of SME incubator institutions will be developed and delivered between January 1998 and February 1999, and training materials will be made available for future use. In addition to providing cross-cultural training, the course will help incubator managers to network and forge linkages among their institutions.

For further information, contact Dr. Hadi K. Purwadaria, Manager, Incubator for Agribusiness and Agroindustry, Institut Pertanian Bogor, Indonesia, Tel:62-251-623985, Fax : 62-251-622202, E-mail : [tpphp@indo.net.id](mailto:tpphp@indo.net.id)

### **3.8 Best Practice Model for Information Delivery to SMEs**

APEC's SME Policy Level Group is developing a set of best practice guidelines that will help policy makers to overcome inefficiencies in the delivery of information and services to SMEs. In developing these guidelines, the project will examine such delivery mechanisms as "one-stop shop" contact points for SMEs seeking general and specific information, electronic services provided over the Internet, single-entry points for contact with government agencies and information hotlines. The initiative which was started in April 1998 is expected to be completed in August 1998. The guidelines may be used by APEC economies to improve and/or overcome inefficiencies in the delivery of information and services to SMEs.

For further information, contact Mr. Don Scavone, Assistant Director, Office of Small Business, Department of Workplace Relations and Small Business, GPO Box 9879, Canberra ACT 2601, Fax : 61-6-243-7599, E-mail:dscavone@dwrbs.gov.au

### **3.9 SME Indicators Project**

APEC's SME Policy Level Group is assessing the feasibility of a new operational set of measures or indicator for monitoring progress in improved service for SMEs. The indicators would measure progress in achieving APEC objectives as they relate to SMEs to growth and development.

This could improve information over the next five or ten years on key policy questions such as:-

- **How internationally competitive are SMEs relative to those in other member economies?**
- How much do SMEs contribute to the growth of employment and GDP relative to those in other member economies?
- To what extent are structural changes affecting SMEs?



- Are impediments to SME mobility and competitiveness being reduced?
- What is the level of policy assistance provided to SMEs relative to other member economies?

The picture provided would allow governments to make better informed policy and programming decisions affecting SMEs.

For further information, contact Dr. Chris Hall, 37 Wandeen Road, Clareville 2107 Australia, Fax : 612-99731163, E-mail: [100231.1327@compuserve.com](mailto:100231.1327@compuserve.com); or Mr. Meynardo Orberta, Director, Bureau of Small and Medium Business Development, Republic of the Philippines, Tel : 63-2-890-5492, Fax : 63-2-890-5433, E-mail: [bsmbd@mnl.sequel.net](mailto:bsmbd@mnl.sequel.net)

## SUPPORT AND CONTACTS FOR SMES

### 4.1 APEC Secretariat and APEC Business Advisory Council

Mandate : The APEC Secretariat was established in Singapore as a support mechanism to facilitate and coordinate APEC activities and to provide logistical and technical services, as well as administer APEC financial affairs under the direction of the APEC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM). The Secretariat appoints the program directors for the various working groups and committees.

#### Executive Director

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Website: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>

**Ambassador Timothy Hannah**  
Deputy Executive Director

#### Directors (Program)

Mr. Shaikh Fadilah Ahmad  
Mr. Reynaldo a. Catapang  
Mr. Tom Engle  
Ms. Julie Gould  
Ms. Sulaimah Mahmood  
Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa  
Mr. Chirachi Punkrasin  
Mr. Claudio Rojas  
Ms. Bridget Romanes  
**Mr. Shin Jhong Weon**  
Mr. Sun Yuanjiang  
Mr. Yang Yafei  
Mr. Shinya Aoki  
Mr. Jose Barojas  
Mr. Mignon Chan  
Ms. Iris Geddis  
Mr. Halimi Hussain  
Mr. Terry Lee Tsong-Guey  
Mr. Gordon Leung

### **4.1.1 APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)**

Mandate : ABAC was established as a permanent forum to advise APEC economic leaders and other APEC officials on issues of interest to business. ABAC also responds to requests from various APEC fora for information about business-related issues or the business perspective on specific areas of cooperation. ABAC seeks to represent the broad spectrum of business interests.

Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli  
Chairman  
APEC Business Advisory Council  
(ABAC)

Dr. Julius Caesar Parrenas  
Executive Secretary

Fax : 632-633-6741  
E-mail: [jcp@mnl.sequel.net](mailto:jcp@mnl.sequel.net)

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ABAC Coordinator  
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Singapore 119958  
Tel : 65-276-1880  
Fax : 65-276-1775  
E-mail: [te@apec.stems.com](mailto:te@apec.stems.com)

## **4.2 APEC Committee on Trade and Investment, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Fora**

### **4.2.1 Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI)**

The Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) coordinates APEC's work on liberalising and facilitating trade and investment. Activities outlined below are under 10 specific work areas, some of which are handled by specialised CTI sub-groups. APEC advances its trade and investment agenda on two fronts:-

- **Each individual APEC economy's unilateral actions (i.e. a specific import tariff reduction for a specific product**

**by a specific date). These are contained in Individual Action Plans (IAPs).**

- Actions undertaken cooperatively by all APEC economies (e.g. development of non-binding principles on investment). The Collective Action Plan (CAP) for each work area summarises these activities.

Both IAPs and CAPs can be viewed on the APEC Secretariat website at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>

Reducing impediments to international business provides tangible benefits for SMEs. These include increased transparency of government-imposed trade and investment measures, lower transaction costs, and greater certainty and predictability. Input from SME business people is welcomed, through ABAC and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference for APEC (PECC) or specific technical work (i.e. standards and conformance) where the private sector plays an active role.

#### Achievements

In 1997 the CTI focused its work in three major areas. The CTI:

- Implemented and improved Collective Action Plans (CAPs) which will significantly lower costs and reduce barriers to the movement of goods and services. (Major individual achievements are outline under the relevant section.)
- Improved Individual Action Plan (IAP) format guidelines to which member economies should adhere in preparing their IAPs in 1998.
- Assisted Ministers in identifying potential sectors for early voluntary liberalisation.

For further information, contact the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel:65-276-1880, Fax : 65-276-1775, Initial contacts: Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa, (E-mail: [to@apcc.stems.com](mailto:to@apcc.stems.com)) or Ms. Bridget Romanes (E-mail: [br@apcc.stems.com](mailto:br@apcc.stems.com))

#### **4.2.2 Tariffs and Non-tariff Measures (NTMs)**

Goal : To ensure that new trade opportunities and comprehensive tariff information are readily accessible on the Internet.

The tariff reduction process in APEC, for the most part, is faster and more in-depth than Uruguay Round commitments. A database of NTMs applied by APEC members is being established. Trade regimes are being liberalised unilaterally through IAPs. Collective actions are focussed on transparency and on work to underpin early voluntary sectorial liberalisation initiatives.

## **Achievements**

The computerised APEC Tariff Database, sponsored by Federal Express, incorporating the applied tariffs of APEC member economies, was launched in May 1997. The data was provided by individual member economies and was based on the Harmonised System (HS) Code. The database is publicly accessible through the Internet at <http://www.apectariff.org>. APEC is interested in receiving your comments about the database, please e-mail them to Mr. Terry Lee at [tl@mail.apecsec.org.sg](mailto:tl@mail.apecsec.org.sg).

Convenor: Ms. Ng Kim Neo, Tel : 65-337-6628, Fax : 65-337-6898.(E-mail: [kimneo@tdb.gov.sg](mailto:kimneo@tdb.gov.sg)), APEC Secretariat contact : Ms. Sulaimah Mahmood (E-mail: [sbm@apec.stems.com](mailto:sbm@apec.stems.com)).

### **4.2.3 Services**

Goal: To ensure that SMEs gain from lower costs and expanded market opportunities.

Reducing trade restrictions across all service sectors, including improving on Uruguay Round commitments, is a key activity for APEC. Initial APEC work focussed on the core service industries of energy, telecommunications, tourism and transportation. The Group on Services (GOS) was set up by the CTI in 1997 to address broader services issues through policy discussions and an exchange of information on services trade. Barriers to exports of professional services are also being addressed.

Achievements

As mandated by the OAA, one of the major aims of the GOS is to elaborate a matrix of Collective Actions in Services. The *Manila Action Plan* contained a matrix of Collective Actions by the four working groups relevant to services: Energy, Telecommunication, Transportation, and Tourism. In response to the Leaders' call for Collective Actions in service sectors beyond the four already specified, the GOS finalised a Collective Action Plan (CAP) in the area of services in 1997.

Other achievements in 1997 included: 1) a review of trade in services arrangements within APEC, including the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Australia and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA), and the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA); and 2) the compilation of a list prepared by the APEC Secretariat of existing database containing statistical information on trade in services.

Convenor: Mr. Juan Bournas, Tel : 562-696-0043, Fax : 562-696-0639 (E-mail: [jbourn@direcon.cl](mailto:jbourn@direcon.cl)), APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Sun Yuanjiang (E-mail: [sy@apcc.stems.com](mailto:sy@apcc.stems.com)).

#### **4.2.4 Investment**

Goal: To ensure free Internet access to information on investment rules in APEC and to provide input directly into APEC's investment liberalisation priorities through the Investment Symposium.

Enabling investment flows around the region is an APEC priority. The Investment Express Group (IEG) was established in 1994 to facilitate policy dialogue on investment issues. In 1994, it developed APEC's non-binding investment principle, covering issues such as transparency, non-discrimination and repatriation of funds. The IEG has published the "Guide to Investment Regimes of APEC Member Economies" and organised an annual Investment Symposium.

#### **Achievements**

The IEG conducts an annual Investment Symposium at which business representatives and investment officials meet to discuss issues. Three symposia were held since 1995. The 1997 Investment Symposium, *Enhancing the Environment for Investment in APEC*, took place in Hong Kong in October. The symposia have provided valuable input into APEC's investment reform

priorities and suggested ways to improve the investment environment in the APEC region.

Convenor: Dato J Jegathesan, Tel : 60-3-255-3633, Fax : 60-3-253-8507  
APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Sun Yuanjing (E-mail: [sy@apcc.stems.com](mailto:sy@apcc.stems.com)).

#### **4.2.5 Standards and Conformance**

Goal: To lower testing/compliance costs and reduce entry delays into new markets.

Minimising differences among standards across APEC economies, and the process for assessing compliance with them, is making trade easier and cheaper. Established in 1994, the Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance is pursuing mutual recognition and alignment of standards both within and outside APEC. It is also providing training and promoting transparency in standards.

#### **Achievements**

SCSC achievements during 1997 included:

- Completion of Guidelines for the Preparation, Adoption and Review of Technical Regulations.
- Completion and Internet dissemination of *APEC food MRA Supplementary Material*.
- Internet publication of *APEC Contact points for Standards and Conformance Information*.
- Submission of Progress Reports on alignment with international standards.
- Execution of a Technical Infrastructure Development survey (1997 TILF project).
- Compilation of recommendations to improve transparency following an evaluation of responses to the 1996 Transparency Survey.
- Seminar on *Environmental Management Standards and their Implications Global Trade held in April 1997*.
- Training Programmes on Standards and Conformity assessment Schemes held in March and November 1997( APEC Partners for Progress Project)

Convenor: Mr a. Aziz Mat, Tel : 60-3-559-8033, Fax : 60-3-559-2497, (E-mail: [azizmat@dsml.gov.my](mailto:azizmat@dsml.gov.my)), APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa (E-mail: [to@apcc.stems.com](mailto:to@apcc.stems.com)).

## 4.2.6 Customs Procedures

Goal: To ensure that SME exporters gain lower compliance/administration costs and fewer customs delays.

Simpler and more coordinated APEC customs procedures complement lower customs tariffs. The Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures was established in 1994 to facilitate regional trade by simplifying and harmonising customs procedures. Activities include implementing electronic data interchange (EDI), consistent APEC-wide valuation of exports, effective intellectual property rights (IPR) border enforcement regimes, advance customs ruling schemes and common trade data formats.

### Achievements

The SCCP's achievement during 1997 included:

- Development of the first phase of technical assistance training programme for its members in four of the eleven areas under its common action plan: WTO valuation agreement, UN/EDIFACT, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), and Advance Ruling Systems.
- Development of comprehensive multi-year technical assistance programme in the following four areas: HS Convention, Clear Appeal Provisions, Temporary Importation, and Common Data Elements.
- Conducting seminars and workshops on: rules of origin, risk management and computer applications, and UN/EDIFACT; and conducting its fifth annual public and private sector Customs-Industry symposia.
- Publication of A Blueprint for Customs Modernisation: working with Business for a faster, better border. The Blueprint describes, in practical terms, customs simplification and harmonisation in the Asia-Pacific region. Its purpose is both to facilitate business planning by providing SCCP/APEC's views on where customs modernisation is headed and to serve as a benchmark against which APEC Customs Administrations can measure their progress on modernisation.

Convenor: Mr Madehi bin Kolek, Tel : 60-3 651 7115, Fax : 60-3 651 4927, APEC Secretariat contacts: Mr. Sulaimah Mahmood (E-mail: [sbm@apec.stems.com](mailto:sbm@apec.stems.com)).

## 4.2.7 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)



Goal: To improve IPR protection, which lowers risks and legal costs for SME entering new markets.

APEC is promoting consistent and comprehensive IPR laws/regulations by ensuring that the WTO TRIPs Agreement is fully implemented in the region. The CTI set up an informal IPR “Get Together” group in 1996 for information exchange, for policy dialogue and to carry out training to support TRIPs implementation. Promoting transparency is the key objective.

## **Achievements**

Key achievements of the IPR experts group for 1997 included:

- Launch of the IPR Information Mall on the APEC homepage.
- Conducting training programmes on Management of Industrial Property Rights in Thailand (February and November 1997)
- Discussion of the US draft Memorandum of Understanding of Trademark Application with a view to the facilitation of the application for trademark registration in multiple APEC economies.

Convenor: Mr. Yoshifumi Saeki, Tel : 81-3-3581-1898, Fax : 81-3-3581-0762. (E-mail: [ipr@jpo-miti.gov.jp](mailto:ipr@jpo-miti.gov.jp)) ,APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tsunehiro Ogawa (E-mail: [to@apec.stems.com](mailto:to@apec.stems.com)).

### **4.2.8 Mobility of Business Persons**

Goal: To ensure that SMEs are time and cost efficient, making international business opportunities increasingly viable.

Easier travel for business people is recognised by APEC as an important complement to freer trade. Visa and other short-term travel information for each APEC economy are now on the Internet. A streamlined visa systems for APEC business travellers is at the trial stage.

Achievement

In 1997 :

- APEC members published a revised second edition of the APEC Business travel handbook which provides information on their short term business visa requirements and contact information for offices in the APEC region that issue visas. The handbook can be purchased from the Secretariat. It is available on the APEC homepage at <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>
- Individual members have taken steps to facilitate business travel, such as by expanding visa-waiver programmes or introducing multiple-entry visas.

Some members initiated a trial of the APEC Business Travel Card, which offers accredited business travellers visa-free travel and expedited airport processing when visiting participating economies (Australia, Korea and the Philippines). Chile and Hong Kong, China have announced their intention to join the scheme in 1998. More economies are expected to consider participation following assessment of the trial.

Convenor: Mr. Rod Smith, Tel : 61-6-261-2437, Fax : 61-6-261-3009.  
APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tom Engle (E-mail: [te@apec.stems.com](mailto:te@apec.stems.com)).

#### **4.2.9 Competition Policy and Deregulation**

Goal: To disseminate information to help SMEs make international business decisions.

Removing trade barriers at the border does not necessarily enable businesses to compete in all markets. APEC is working towards common understanding on effective ways for individual economies to regulate anti-competitive behaviour while promoting APEC's broad trade and investment liberalisation goals. APEC members' competition policies and laws will be freely publicised on the Internet, and deregulation initiatives are published annually.

##### **Achievements**

Three annual workshops have been held, covering issues such as competition policy and law; technical assistance; linkages between competition policy and trade policy; Objectives and mechanisms of competition policy; interrelationship between competition policy and deregulation; regulation of natural monopolies; and occupational regulation.

During 1997, progress in this work area included:

- Training seminars for officials working in the competition policy and law areas;
- Construction by Chinese Taipei of a publicly accessible database on APEC competition policy and law; and
- Conducting a Workshop on Competition Policy and Deregulation (Quebec City).

Highlights of work on deregulation in 1997 included:

- Publication on the Internet of the 1997 *Report on Deregulation Initiative in APEC Members Economies*. Its objective is to promote transparency in regulations, provide a basis for further APEC initiative on deregulation, and provide a user-friendly source of information for the private sector.
- Conducting the 1997 Workshop on Competition Policy and Deregulation.

Convenor: Mr. Mark Steel, Tel : 64-4-474-2915, Fax : 64-4-499-1791.

APEC Secretariat contact: Ms. Bridget Romanes (E-mail: [br@apcc.stems.com](mailto:br@apcc.stems.com)).

#### **4.2.10 Government Procurement (GP)**

Goal: To ensure access to APEC members' GP regimes and purchasing opportunities on the Internet.

Government procurement business opportunities are enhanced by improved access to government procurement information. The Government Procurement Experts Group (GPEG) was set up in 1995 with an initial focus on transparency and educational aspects about government GP procedures, laws and regulations as well as bilateral and multilateral GP agreements.

Achievements

In 1997, GPEG:

- Held a seminar on Bid Challenge System in Chinese Taipei, and a Government Procurement (GP) Training Programmes in the People's Republic of China as part of its ongoing education program to develop a common understanding about GP.

- Improved and expanded the APEC GP homepage to include more detailed information about more members' policies and procedures, including their returns to a questionnaire survey, and addition of new links to members' individual web sites, listing specific trade opportunities  
<http://www.apecsec.org.sg/govtproc/gphome.html>
- Contributed to the WTO's study on Transparency in GP by providing information on APEC members' GP regimes (the survey returns), their IAP commitments in the area of GP, and APEC views on the elements of the principles of transparency

Convenor: Miss Adeline Wong, Tel : 852-2398-5305, Fax : 852-2787-7799.  
APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tom Engle (E-mail: [te@apec.stems.com](mailto:te@apec.stems.com)).

#### **4.2.11 Dispute Mediation**

Goal: To ensure fast access to relevant information on dispute resolution.

Business disputes can impose significant costs on SMEs. Maximising the use of existing disputes mechanisms (including the WTO for inter government disputes) and facilitating access to information on disputes services in APEC economies are priorities for APEC. The Disputes Mediation Experts Group (DMEG) was established in 1995 with a focus on training, transparency and policy exchanges on disputes issues in APEC. A training program is under way.

Achievements

Highlights of the DMEG's work in 1997 included:

- Publications of International Commercial Disputes: a Guide to Arbitration and Dispute Resolution in APEC Member Economies.
- Conducting a training seminar on the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding, and conducting policy discussions and information sharing on dispute issues

Convenor: Mr. Valarie Huges, Tel : 1-613-943-2803, Fax : 1-613-994-3213.  
APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Jose Barojas (E-mail: [jb@apec.stems.com](mailto:jb@apec.stems.com)).

## 4.3 Working Groups

### 4.3.1 Trade and Investment Data Working Group

Goal: To provide measures of SME growth and performance.

Mandate: To improve methods of data collection/consistency and to collect and disseminate merchandise trade data, trade in services data and international investment flows data.

1998 Lead Shepherd:  
Mr. Takashi Osanai

APEC Secretariat  
Mr. Chirachai Punkrasin  
Director (Program)  
E-mail: [cp@appec.stems.com](mailto:cp@appec.stems.com)

### 4.3.2 Trade Promotion Working Group

Goal: To enhance the success of traders, especially first-time exporters.

*Ways and Means:* Exchange of trade information, trade promotion seminars, exchange of trade and economic missions, international trade fairs, trade promotion human resources development (HRD), trade opportunity.

#### Achievements

In 1997, the TPWG organized an international trade fair in Yantai, Shandong, People's Republic of China. The TPWG has also compiled trade information about member economies and is in the process of developing an Internet version of that Directory.

1997 Lead Shepherd:  
Mr. Mohamed Ab Halim  
Director General

APEC Secretariat  
Mr. Shin Jhong Weon  
Director (Program)  
E-mail: [sjw@appec.stems.com](mailto:sjw@appec.stems.com)

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Corporation  
7<sup>th</sup>. Floor, Wisma Sime Darby  
Jalan Raja Laut  
50350 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Tel : 60-3-294-7259  
Fax : 60-3-294-7363

### **4.3.3 Industrial Science and Technology Working Group**

Goal: To enhance economic growth, quality of life and environmental protection and to develop a well-balanced industrial structure.

Mandate: To promote cooperation in the field of industrial science and technology, promote the flow of technological information and technology, improve the exchange of researchers and human resources development in industrial science and technology, facilitate joint research projects that are of regional priority to lower costs and share the capability of advanced research and expertise, improve transparency of regulatory frameworks affecting flows of technology and expertise, use industrial science and technology to achieve sustainable development, and enhance policy dialogue and review.

#### Achievements

The ISTWG issued the ISTWG Handbook for Members to ensure that its members are well briefed and that the group is effectively organized. The Handbook describes the current aims, policies, procedures, and practices of the group.

In addition to conducting a series of seminars, symposia and workshops, the ISTWG has completed several projects, including :

- ‘Technomart’;
- A study on available industrial science and technology indicators;
- A survey of relevant laws and regulations of APEC members governing trade and investment-related technology ;
- Publication of various guide books on ISTWG-related matters including “APEC Emerging Infections” and “APEC Network of Science and Technology Industrial Parks”.

The ISTWG has created and will maintain the ‘APEC Science and Technology Web’ (AST Web) among member economies. The AST Web is on the Internet at <http://www.apecst.org>

1997 Lead Shepherd:

APEC Secretariat

Dr Rogelio A Panlasigu  
Director  
Department of Science and  
Technology  
Bicutan, Taguing, Metro Manila  
Republic of Philippines  
Tel : 63-2-837-6157  
Fax 63-2-837-3617

Mr. Shin Jhong Weon  
Director (Program)  
E-mail: [sjw@apec.stems.com](mailto:sjw@apec.stems.com)

#### **4.3.4 Human Resources Development (HRD) Working Group**

Goal: To help SMEs to acquire the skills to grow and compete in global markets.

Mandate: The HRD Working Group is made up of five sub-groups:

- **the Business Management Network (BMN) focuses on executive education, and development and management for organisational change;**
- the Network on Human Resources Development in Industrial Technology (HURDIT) focuses on technologies and professional standards, identification of skills shortages, provision of practical skills and high technical knowledge;
- the Network on Economic Development Management (NEDM) focuses on the regional labour market and the utilisation of all human resources in economic development;
- The Education Forum (EDFOR) focuses on the role of the education system in preparing people to meet rapidly changing labour markets; and
- the Labour Market Information Group serves as a forum for the exchange of information on labour market trends among APEC member economies.

#### **Achievements**

The HRD WG, being one of the largest APEC Working Groups, has been involved in more than 80 projects to date, including centrally and self-funded projects. In addition, in 1997 it :

- Prepared the Statement of Medium Term Priorities for the APEC HRDWG; and
- Completed an Organisational Review of its mandate, priorities, and structure.

1998 Lead Shepherd:  
Mdm Wen Haiying  
Mr. Wang Xiaochu

APEC Secretariat:  
Mr. Reynaldo A. Catapang  
Director (Program)  
E-mail: [rc@apcc.stems.com](mailto:rc@apcc.stems.com)

Mr. Shaikh Fadilah Ahmad  
Director (Program)  
E-mail: [sfa@apcc.stems.com](mailto:sfa@apcc.stems.com)

#### 4.3.5 Regional Energy Cooperation Working Group (EWG)

Goal: To unify energy equipment standards and testing protocols to create free and open trade for all supplies.

Mandate: To maximise the energy sector's contribution to the region's economic and social well-being.

The EWG's activities are based on five strategic themes. Work to address each theme is carried out through expert groups comprising technical specialists and relevant business/private sector representatives (including SMEs) from member economies. The five themes and the main activities are:

- **energy supply and demand (comprehensive supply and demand outlook to 2010, energy database and annual statistics publication);**
- energy and the environment (promote clean fossil fuel technologies to mitigate environmental effects of energy supply and identify future coal supply and use);
- energy efficiency and conservation (promote new and renewable energy technologies); energy research, development and technology transfer (maximize assimilation of new and existing technologies; and



- minerals and energy exploration and development (facilitate exploration and development investment).

The EWG also has an Ad Hoc Business Forum to facilitate input into the Group's work from the business/private sector. For further information, visit the EWG's website at [http://www.dpie.gov.au/resources.energy/apec/APEC\\_ENERGY.htm](http://www.dpie.gov.au/resources.energy/apec/APEC_ENERGY.htm)

## Achievements

The EWG has :

- Published APEC Energy Statistics on a regular basis, consisting of annual and quarterly data covering energy balances, final energy consumption, supply and demand by energy sources and electricity, and stock changes for APEC member economies.
- Developed and obtained the agreement by Energy Ministers to implement 14 Rational Energy Policy Principles which give impetus to the reform of energy policies in member economies. Ministers in Edmonton (1997) agreed that significant progress had been made in implementing the non-binding principles and that they would continue to review progress regularly.
- Held the Second Energy Ministers' Meetings (Edmonton, August 1997)
- Gained endorsement by Energy Ministers (1997) of the non-binding principles contained in the Manual of Best Practice Principles for Independent Power Producers (IPPs), aimed at mobilising capital for private sector investment in power infrastructure.
- Secured endorsement by Ministers of a set of non-binding principles for good environmental practice, aimed at ensuring new power infrastructure additions in APEC economies are environmentally sound.
- Conducted a programme of seminars, training courses and information exchange activities aimed at promoting new and renewable energy technologies, more efficient energy production and use, and the mitigation of the environmental impact of energy production and use, including through the application of clean fossil energy technologies.
- Upgraded and expanded its Internet web site resources aimed at facilitating power infrastructure investment.

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#### **4.3.6 Marine Resources Conservation Working Group**

Goal: To protect coastal fisheries and sustainable development.

Major Focus: Joint programme to deal with the threat of marine algal toxins (red tides/harmful algae blooms) to protect fisheries; United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) follow-up project to implement UNCED Oceans Chapter in the APEC region; Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project to deal with coastal zone planning and transborder coastal issues, assessment and regulatory control of land-based pollution affecting coastal zones; and coastal management of semi-enclosed bays.

##### Achievements

During 1997 the Working Group, among other things:

- Prepared an APEC Action Plan for Sustainability of the Marine Environment that identifies concrete actions to put the Strategy into practice. The Action Plan is built around three objectives identified in the Strategy: Integrated approaches to coastal management; prevention,

reduction and control of marine pollution; and sustainable management of marine resources.

- Assessed integrated coastal management approaches in APEC on regional, domestic and local scales. Among the resultant initiatives from this assessment were the Ocean Model and Information System (OMISAR) project, which coordinates model development; collects, analyses and disseminates ocean information; and transfer skills and modeling technologies, and the launch of a new Ocean Research Network for the Pacific (ORNEP).
- Held an APEC Workshop on the Impact of Destructive Fishing Practices on the Marine Environment to address the issues of: destructive fishing practices, protection of the coral reef environment, promotion of environmentally-friendly fishing practices, and legislation, enforcement and management strategies.

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#### **4.3.7 Telecommunication Working Group**

Goal: To establish infrastructures that reach all parts of the region with applications that facilitate trade in goods and services.

Mandate: To strengthen the open multilateral trade system; reduce barriers to trade and investment and the free flow of goods, services and capital; enhance trade and investment liberalisation in the Asia Pacific region; intensify Asia Pacific development cooperation; and improve the economic infrastructure, such as information and telecommunications.

The major issue for the group is to achieve technical compatibility across nations. Projects focus on trade and regulatory liberalisation, business facilitation, and human resources development.

#### Achievements

TEL completed more than 28 projects in 1997, including:

- Publication of the Guide to Regulatory Environments in APEC Member Economies.
- Creation of a pilot project for the establishment of a TEL web site.

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#### 4.3.8 Transportation Working Group

Goal: To harmonise standards to help SME suppliers of transport equipment and systems.

Mandate: To promote International Civil Aviation Organization and International Maritime Organisation standards, regulations and safety measures; support regional economic growth by promoting an effective, efficient, and integrated and environmentally sustainable and a safe region-wide transportation system; complete the Transportation Road Transport Harmonisation Project; encourage mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) for road vehicles; move to harmonise road vehicle regulations within international fora; and facilitate privatisation or corporatisation of transportation infrastructure projects.

## Achievements

Highlights of the TPTWG's achievements in 1997 included :

- Reconvening the Air Services Group (Singapore, October 1997) to prepare a report that analyses and prioritises the options previously identified by the Group, and recommends to Transportation Ministers which options should be developed and how they should be implemented.
- Development of a maritime initiative aimed at promoting an efficient, safe, and competitive operating environment for maritime transport, with the elaboration of a mission statement as the first step.
- Establishment of maritime and road safety groups; and
- As a follow-up to the Congestion Points Study, establishment of an Intermodal Task Force to provide guidelines, standards, and provisional options associated with an integrated transport system in the region.

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### **4.3.9 Tourism Working Group (TWG)**

Goal: To open up channels for foreign investment in the tourism sector.

Mandate: To remove barriers to tourism movements and tourism investment (investment by foreigners in sovereign ocean-front property); liberalise trade in services associated with tourism; promote environmental and social sustainability; protect and conserve cultural heritage and natural sites; facilitate

human resources development; enlarge the role of the private sector; enhance usage of information-based services to promote tourism in the APEC region; and share information.

#### Achievements

Since its creation in 1991, the TWG has completed more than 10 projects. Highlight of the Group's 1997 accomplishments include:

- Publication of *Tourism and the Environment, Best Practices*, a *Tourism Training Manual for Tourism*.

The TWG made significant strides in further defining its agenda and identifying priority issues. It has compiled a comprehensive inventory of barriers to travel in the APEC region and agreed to a series of collective actions to address impediments to tourism growth. Its work program includes activities in the areas of Trade and Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation and Economic and Technical Cooperation.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

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#### **4.3.10 Fisheries Working Group (FWG)**

**Goal:** To ensure regional protection and conservation of the fisheries industry for long-term viability of SMEs in maritime economies.

**Mandate:** To conserve and sustain the use of fisheries resources domestically and regionally; develop solutions to common fisheries resource management problems; promote sustainable development of aquaculture; develop joint solutions for aquaculture disease control; and promote habitat preservation.

#### Achievements

The FWG's achievements in 1997 included :

- Publication of an Inventory of Fisheries Administrations and Organizations in APEC Members (1997)
- Two technical workshops on seafood inspection systems (Bangkok, October 1997 and Bangkok, November 1997);
- Preparation of a 'how-to' manual on trade in air shipped seafood for publication in early 1998;
- Phase 1 (tariffs) of the project on Trade and Investment Liberalisation in Fisheries; and
- Six workshops on auditing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and quality programmes

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#### **4.4 Ad Hoc Fora**

##### **4.4.1 SME Policy Level Group (PLG)**

**Goal:** To help SMEs improve their competitiveness and facilitate their transition to an open trade environment.

**Mandate:** To provide policy direction to APEC's role in facilitating the development and growth of SMEs.

In 1994, it was agreed that the group should initially focus on addressing those areas where SMEs face the greatest difficulties. These are access to human resources, information, technology, financing and markets. The SME PLG is building the foundation for other APEC fora to internalise SME considerations

within their own mandates and activities. SME support should be established as a fundamental part of all APEC's activities.

#### Achievements

Accomplishments during 1997 included :

- Development and endorsement by SME Ministers of the Framework for APEC SME Activities. This will help APEC for a maximize the benefit of their activities to SMEs.
- Publication of the compendium Helping Your Business Grow: Guide for SMEs in the APEC Region, which identifies APEC initiatives of specific utility to SMEs; it is available on the APEC homepage at <http://www.apec.org.sg>
- Work on 20 SMEPLG projects.

1998 Chair:

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#### 4.2 Environment and Sustainable Development Senior Officials

Goal: To protect environmental security and social stability.

Mandate: To ensure that the increasing number of urban centres in the region develops in a way that is sustainable and livable for all citizens through, among other means, cleaner technology and production methods and protection of the marine environment.

#### Achievement



The Ministerial Meeting in Toronto (9 – 11 June 1997) included the following outcomes :

- Ministers commended the Industrial Science and Technology (IST) Working Group on its Cleaner Production Strategy and the Marine Resource Conservation (MRC) Working Group for its Action Plan On Marine Sustainability and directed environment officials to continue to work with colleagues from other APEC fora on the commitments and activities outlined in these documents.
- Ministers endorsed a Programme of Action for Sustainable Cities.
- APEC Senior Officials will annually review sustainable development work in APEC to coordinate activities and provide guidance to APEC fora.

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#### **4.4.3 Agricultural Technology Cooperation (ATC) Experts Group**

Goal: To enhance agriculture's contribution to the region's economic growth and social well-being.

The ATC's work programme focuses on seven priority areas: conservation and utilisation of plant and animal genetic resources; research, development and extension of agricultural products; plant and animal quarantine and pest management; cooperative development of an agricultural finance system; agricultural technology transfer and training; and sustainable agriculture.

Achievements

Highlights of the ATC's accomplishments during 1997 include :

- A workshop on Agricultural Biotechnology (Canberra, Australia, March 1997)

- A workshop on Conservation and Utilisation of Plant and Animal Genetic Resources (Chinese, Taipei, March 1997)
- A seminar on Agricultural Finance Systems (Chinese Taipei, March 1997)
- Development of an ATC homepage (see <http://www.dpie.gov.au/dpie/apec/atc>).
- Support for PECC's Trade Facilitation manual (see <http://www.pecc.org> under Food and Agricultural Forum)

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## 4.5 SME Support Organisations in APEC Member Economies

### 4.5.1 Access to Information

4.5.1.1 AusTrade (Australia) provides information, market research, opportunity assessment, business matching/partnering/networking and funding to SMEs looking for export opportunities or overseas investments. Similar programmes exist in Hong Kong, China (Hong Kong Trade Development Council), which also maintains an on-line database; Japan (Japan External Trade Organization and Japan Small Business Corporation); the Republic of Korea (Korean Foreign Trade Association); New Zealand (Trandenz); United States (Small Business Administration); Singapore (Economic Development Board); and Canada (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade). Most of the APEC economies provide some type of network or service that attempts to consolidate information for dissemination to SMEs.

4.5.1.2 *An International Network of Manufacturers and Exporters Associations* provide its members with practical assistance in identifying potential business partnerships. The following APEC economies are members of the network:

Australia, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore and Thailand.

4.5.1.3 *The Student Connection Programme* in Canada helps SMEs connect to and access the information tools they need to become more competitive, while the *Community Access Programme* provides SMEs in rural and remote communities with affordable access to the Information Highway and the skills to use it effectively.

4.5.1.4 *The China Centre for Business Cooperation and Coordination* provides information, research support, consultation services, management training and international networking opportunities. Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States also offer business networking programmes to assist SMEs in establishing innovative and successful partnerships. These programmes involve trained business network advisors who assist SMEs in the development of new strategic alliances.

4.5.1.5 *The Association of Small and Medium Enterprises* (Singapore) is a private "self-help" organisation of entrepreneurs who share business experiences and expertise, and facilitate business matching and networking.

4.5.1.6 *The Small Business Exporters Association* (United States) is a private organisation that sponsors trade missions and provides information on overseas investment.

## **4.5.2 Access to Capital**

4.5.2.1 *The Canadian Commercial Corporation* has made it easier for SMEs to obtain lines of credit at most financial institutions in Canada and acts as an intermediary between governments and international financial institutions seeking performance guarantees. There are similar programs in the Republic of Korea (Korea Credit Guarantee Fund), Republic of the Philippines (Small Business Guarantee and Financial Corporation) and United States (EXIMBANK).

4.5.2.2 *Export Market Development Grants* (Australia) provide financial incentives to firms or economies wishing to export or form an alliance. A similar programmes is offered in Thailand (Board of Investment).

4.5.2.3 *Export Development Corporation* (Canada) provides financing to foreign firms or economies wishing to purchase Canadian products, insures

foreign accounts receivable and works with private sector financial institutions to develop export financing instruments for Canadian SMEs.

### **4.5.3 Access to Markets**

4.5.3.1 *Export Access* (Australia) is a trade facilitation and enterprise development programmes administered by AusTrade, but delivered by private sector associations. It is designed to help SMEs develop exporting activities by providing advice and assistance in preparing detailed export strategies and business plans; funding is provided for market visits.

4.5.3.2 Small and Medium Industries development Corporation (SMIDEC)  
The Small and Medium Industries Development Corporation (SMIDEC) was established on 2<sup>n</sup>d May 1996 in recognition of the need for a specialised agency to further promote the development of Small and Medium industries (SMIs) through the provision of advisory services, fiscal and financial assistance, infrastructural facilities. Technologies enhancement, human resource development, market access and other support programmes.

4.5.3.2 *The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation* (MATRADE) is a joint public-private sector initiative aimed at promoting the export of Malaysia's products and services through events such as overseas trade missions and international trade fairs. MATRADE also provides comprehensive market information and marketing strategies.

4.5.3.3 *PHILEXPORT* (Republic of the Philippines) is an umbrella organization for Philippines exporters that functions as a lobby group to pressure the Philippines government to make regulatory and policy changes which can facilitate exports. Industry Chambers of Commerce in many of the APEC economies also promote the needs of SMEs and the private sector as they attempt to influence government policy.

4.5.3.4 *The Hong Kong Trade Development Council*, a government subvented organization, maintains 51 offices worldwide and serve as a global network for SMEs. It organizes more than 300 overseas trade promotion and international trade fairs each year to help enterprises market their products and establish contacts.

4.5.3.5 *The Thai Chamber of Commerce* is an autonomous organisation representing Thailand's private sector working with the government in the process of national development both in economic and social issues. A Committee on SMEs was established by the Thai Chamber of Commerce to support the development of SMEs through opening of new areas of promotional activities, and creating more opportunities for SMEs. The Chamber of Commerce provides information on trade, marketing research, opportunity assessment, business matching and networking, training and export promotional activities.

#### **4.5.4 Access to Technology/Technology Sharing**

4.5.4.1 *The Korea Institute of Industry and Technology Information* collects industrial and technical information, maintains databases, conducts research and acts as a consultant through its on-line database.

4.5.4.2 *The Technology Transfer Unit* (Mexico) provides technological solutions and training to local SMEs.

4.5.4.3 *The Canadian Technology Network* (CTN) provides access to a wide range of technology and related business assistance and service through a cross-country network of advisors. These advisors work on a one-on-one confidential basis with SMEs to identify their technology needs and to help them find solutions and opportunities. The CTN is linked to the Australian Science & Technology Council, the Agency of Industrial Science and Technology (Japan), the Standards & Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia, the National Technology Databank (Singapore), the Industrial Technology Research Institute (Chinese Taipei) and several technology and science institutes in the United States.

4.5.4.4 *The Federation of Thai Industries* is a private sector organisation promoting research, testing, training and information dissemination on technology and technical knowledge. There is also the Thailand Science and Technology Development Board, which provides funding for research and development as well as information and consulting services.

4.5.4.5 *The Spark Programme* (People's Republic of China) is designed to spread scientific and technological knowledge and training to rural areas.

4.5.4.6 *The Small and Medium Industry Promotion Corporation* (Republic of Korea) is a non-profit organization designed to enhance SME productivity by providing technological training and services and promoting automation and computerization.

4.5.4.7 *The Hong Kong Productivity Council* offers a diverse range of services in technology transfer, consultancy, product development and training with the aim of promoting productivity and enhancing the value-added content of products and services.

4.5.4.8 *The Hong Kong Industrial Technology Centre Corporation* helps new and developing technology-based SMEs, including start-up companies, by assisting with technology transfer and by providing purpose-build accommodation.

4.5.4.9 *The Industrial Environmental Management Office* (Thailand), under the Federation of Thai Industries, provides all types of technical services and encourages the coordination of technology transfer in areas of environmental management of industry, including the testing of wastewater and the quality of the air in the industrial plant.

4.5.4.10 The National Productivity Corporation (Malaysia) assumes an important role in the enhancement of productivity and quality towards achieving a more dynamic national economic growth through programmes like research, training, and management system development and promotion.

#### **4.5.5 Access to Human Resources**

4.5.5.1 *The Institute for Small Business Management and Technology* consists of nine schools throughout Japan. They provide instruction for SMEs, as well as guidance for managers of SMEs.

4.5.5.2 *The Qingdao Training Centre* (under the China Centre for Business Cooperation and Coordination) will provide training services for SMEs in the areas of enterprise management, enterprise finance and international trade. It will be operational by the end of 1997.

#### **4.6 Websites**

APEC Secretariat website: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg>

APEC Government Procurement Information Database: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/gphome.html>; includes information on government procurement regimes, procurement opportunities and a common Internet entry point.

APEC Tariff Database: <http://www.apectariff.org>; computerised database of the applied tariffs of 14 APEC economies.

APEC Guide to Telecommunications Regulatory Environments: <http://www.apec-wg.com/busf-sq/datac-wg/datac.htm>; APEC Telecom WG; information on the state of telecommunications networks in member economies, as well as on policy, legislative and regulatory environments.

APEC Science and Technology Web on the Internet: <http://www.apecst.org>; provides environment for the transfer of information, technology and expertise and provides networking opportunities among governments, the private sector and organisations.

Business Travel Handbook: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/travbook/cover.html>; includes the Internet edition of the APEC Business Travel Handbook, an up-to-date compilation of each APEC member's visa and other requirements for making a short-term business trip to that economy. Contact information for each economy's visa issuing offices in the other 17 economies is also provided.

Rules of Origin: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/roo>; provides a summary of the rules and related legislation on preferential and non-preferential Rules of Origin for APEC member economies and contact details.

IPR Contacts Database: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/ipr/iprlist.html>; provides information on APEC contact points for intellectual property rights.

Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformances Homepage: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/cti/standards>; provides information on the APEC Food Mutual Recognition Arrangement, Arrangement for Exchange of Information arrangement on Toy Safety and Mid-term Technical Infrastructure Development Programme.

Global Information Network: <http://www.gin.ipa.go.jp>; provides information on SMEs of the G7 nations, seven APEC economies and the European Union. APEC economies linked to the network are Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, China (September 1997), Japan; Republic of Korea; Singapore, and United States of America.

Electronic Money Experiment:  
[http://www.info.hqs.cae.ntt.jp/MON/97\\_mar/97mar3.html](http://www.info.hqs.cae.ntt.jp/MON/97_mar/97mar3.html); Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation and InfoCom Research are testing their Electronic Commerce Network (ECN), an Internet-based system for conducting commercial transactions using electronic money.

X.400 Test Programme: <http://www.aoema.org>; APEC Telecommunications Working Group; assessment on X.400 network operability.

#### **4.7 Economy-specific Sites**

◆ **Australia**

See Global Information Network.

◆ **Canada**

Strategis: <http://strategis.ie.gc.ca>; a new website for business that helps SMEs to find partners, get information on markets, form alliances, find/develop new technologies or processes, and get information on government programmes and services.

Student Connection Program: <http://www.scp-ebb.com>; provides information on how SMEs can register for business-oriented Internet training. Training is conducted by students and offers access to relevant Internet sites and databases.

◆ **People's Republic of China**

China Investment and Trade Net: <http://china-invest.cci.co.cn>; provides information relevant to SMEs, such as financing and investment options.

◆ **Hong Kong, China**

SME Centre: <http://www.tdc.org.hk/sme>; Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC); site provides information on HKTDC's services in support of SMEs in Hong Kong, China and other relevant SME reference websites.



SME-Net: <http://www.sme-cma.org.hk>; Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong site provides useful business and industrial information to SMEs; promotes SMEs' products to their customers and buyers worldwide; and facilitates efficient communication among SMEs.

TechLink: <http://www.hkitc.org/techlink>; Hong Kong Industrial Technology Centre Corporation; an interactive database that aims to encourage strategic commercial partnership and helps to develop business in the high-technology arena; provides a marketplace for buying and selling technologies and a channel to source high value-added technology products.

#### ◆ **Japan**

JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization): <http://www.jetro.go.jp>; offers information to promote mutually beneficial trade and economic relations between Japan and other economies, such as information on business opportunities, importers/exporters data collected worldwide, and Japanese procurement data.

JSBC (Japan Small Business Corporation): <http://www.jsbc.go.jp>; provides information on SMEs in Japan; the activities of JSBC, including personnel training at the Institute for Small Business Management and Technology and a technical upgrading information service.

#### ◆ **Republic of Korea**

See Global Information Network.

#### ◆ **Malaysia**

SMIDEC: <http://www.smidec.gov.my/smidec> : Provides information on the various incentives, financial assistance and support programme for SMIs in Malaysia as well as provides the opportunities for SME to make an application for participation in some of the programmes on line

#### ◆ **Mexico**

SECOFI-SIEM: <http://www.secofi-siem.gob.mx>; offers information on business opportunities, corporate data and assistance programs for SMEs; enterprises can easily search for products supplied or requested by other companies; government bids can also be found.

◆ **Republic of Philippines**

ACTETSME: <http://www.actetsme.org>; provides information relevant to SMEs from websites in member economies.

◆ **Singapore**

Singapore Connect: <http://www.sgconnect.co.sg>; interactive directory of Singapore companies and business; provides SMEs with an effective means to seek international collaboration regarding business, technology, production, distribution and suppliers.

◆ **Thailand**

Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.tcc.or.th>;

The Federation of Thai Industries: <http://www.fti.or.th>

◆ **United States**

Small Business Administration: <http://www.sba.gov>

International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce: <http://www.ita.doc.gov>

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Overseas Private Investment Corporation: <http://www.opic.gov>

U.S. Trade and Development Agency: <http://www.tda.gov>