

Helping YOUR Business Grow

**Guide for
Small and Medium
Enterprises
in the
APEC Region**

APEC Ministers Responsible for Small and Medium Enterprises

This publication is available electronically on the APEC Secretariat website at
<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>
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<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/apecsme>

All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information
in this publication.

Aussi disponible en français sous le titre:
Stimuler la croissance de votre entreprise
Guide à l'intention des petites et moyennes entreprises de l'APEC

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**Guide for
Small and Medium
Enterprises
in the
APEC Region**

**APEC
Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
September 1997**

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MESSAGE FROM THE APEC 1997 SME CHAIR

Profound changes are transforming national and regional economies around the world, challenging traditional assumptions about how companies — and governments — do business. Nowhere is this more evident than in the rapid growth of economies in the Asia Pacific region and in the dramatic increase in trade among these economies.

If you own or manage a small business, this is good news. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are among the key driving forces for this growth. It is an environment where SMEs — with their ability to adapt, to innovate, to respond quickly to change — have the opportunity to thrive and prosper like never before.

But to take advantage of this opportunity, you need good access to markets, information, technology, human resources and financing. You need governments that are committed to working together — and with you — to create an open, efficient trading regime and to address the special needs and priorities of SMEs.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is working hard to listen to your needs. Leaders from each of the 18 member economies have recognized the critical role that companies like yours play in sustaining and expanding economic growth. APEC's efforts to enhance the operating conditions for SMEs are based on the priorities SMEs asked us to address. These efforts are getting results.

This booklet is our first comprehensive guide to these results. It identifies the concrete, positive changes we have accomplished to facilitate your activities. And it sets out the practical resources you have helped us develop to support your efforts in this dynamic region.

Equally important, it demonstrates our commitment to go beyond words to action and to continue this action as the advocate for SMEs throughout all APEC economies tomorrow and in the years ahead.

Hon. John Manley
APEC 1997 SME Chair and
Minister of Industry, Government of Canada

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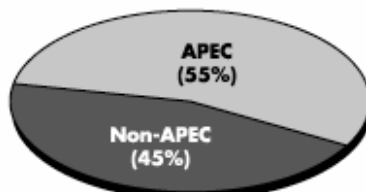
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INTRODUCTION

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.

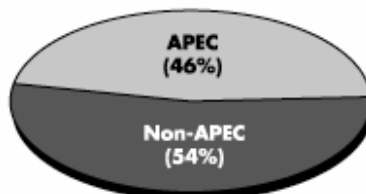
Figure 1. Size of APEC's GDP in relation to the world — 1995



The Asia Pacific growth in the world. gross domestic approximately 55 global trade. Over the region expanded by economies grew by

region is experiencing the most striking economic APEC's member economies had a combined product (GDP) of US\$16 trillion in 1995, percent of total world income and 46 percent of past five years, trade within the Asia Pacific 87 percent and the region's developing an average of 7.6 percent annually.

Figure 2. Size of trade in the APEC region in relation to the world — 1995



APEC provides the most this economic dynamism in the development of a truly Asia

prominent fora for maintaining and increasing region. Continued dynamism and the Pacific community will depend on:

- an open and rules-based trading regime within the region and in 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.

Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation

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 industrialized economies and 2020 in the case of developing economies. Initiatives under the Trade and Investment Liberalization 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 will be harmonized throughout APEC. By 1998, customs clearance procedures should be harmonized. Members have also agreed to align national standards with international standards and to recognize each other's national standards.

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

Economic and Technical Cooperation

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.

APEC and Small Business

Enhancing the vitality of SMEs is of pivotal importance in maintaining Asia Pacific dynamism into the 21st 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.

The Voice of Small Business

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

— **APEC Economic Leaders, November 1996**

The business community plays 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 liberalization, 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 will discuss market access and partnership strategies, finance and investment strategies, investing in business skills development, and technology innovation and partnerships, and will receive status reports on key APEC markets. Fifty-four participants from all APEC economies will meet in a joint session with APEC SME Ministers and present recommendations resulting from this forum.

Support organizations from APEC economies will also present their action plans to help Ministers address SME needs in the region.

Table 1. The role of SMEs in APEC member economies

Economy	SMEs (%)	Employment in SMEs (%)
Australia	95 (1991-1992) (Small business only)	50.6 (1991-1992) (Small business only)
Brunei Darussalam	Over 90	69.4
Canada	99.8 (1993)	57.2 (1993)
Chile	NA	NA
People's Republic of China	NA	84.27
Hong Kong, China	98.22 (1995)	60.74 (1995)
Indonesia	97 (1993)	42 (1993)
Japan	99.1 (1991)	79.2 (1991)
Republic of Korea	99.8 (1992)	78.5 (1991)
Malaysia	96 (1993)	40 (1993)
Mexico	98.17 (1993)	50.77 (1993)
New Zealand*	98.69 (1994)	52.33 (1994)
Papua New Guinea	NA	NA
Republic of the Philippines	98.7 (1988)	50 (1988)
Singapore	91.42 (1991)	44 (1991)
Chinese Taipei	96.26 (1994)	69.89 (1994)
Thailand	98.63 (1991)	73.80 (1991)
United States of America	99.72 (1990)	53.67 (1990)

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

Taking Action

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 you 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://strategis.ic.gc.ca/apecsme>

**BENEFITS
TO YOUR
BUSINESS**

Reducing Barriers to Trade and Investment

Trade barriers between countries 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 — harmonizing 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

Identifying Priority Industry Sectors for Early Voluntary Liberalization of Tariffs and Non-tariff Measures

In consultation with industry, priority sectors are being identified where early voluntary liberalization of tariff, non-tariff and other measures will have a positive impact on trade, investment and economic growth. 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, Email: kimneo@tdb.gov.sg

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: kimneo@tdb.gov.sg

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 labelling, 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: 1-613-995-4564, E-mail: 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.)

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

Work is under way to establish common procedures for assessing safety standards for electrical and electronic equipment. This will substantially reduce 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

APEC Deregulation Report

Updated information on APEC deregulation initiatives will be available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>) in November 1997. It will 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

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.

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 program 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.

For further information, contact Mr. John **Shearer**, Director General, Tariff Programs Division, Revenue Canada, Tel.: 1-613-954-6990, Fax: 1-613-954-0828, E-mail: jshearer@revcan.ca; or Mr. Douglas M. **Browning**, Assistant Commissioner, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Customs Service, Tel.: 1-202-927-0400, Fax: 1-202-927-2064.

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

A comprehensive technical assistance program on implementing UN/EDIFACT standards will lead to the harmonization and standardization of all customs electronic data interchange within each economy. SMEs will benefit from speedier transactions and the lower administration costs associated with paperless trade. This is the first year of the three-year program.

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.

Adoption of the Principles 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. This is the first year of the three-year program.

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 Organisation Division, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan, Tel.: 81-3-3581-4111, Fax: 81-3-5251-2123.

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 organizations. It will help SMEs access more transparent information on IPR protection available in APEC markets. Survey results will be available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.org.sg>) by the end of 1997.

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

Adoption of the Principles of the Harmonized System (HS) of Customs Classification

This training program, 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.

Improved Access to Customs Information

A handbook of "best practices" on customs laws, regulations, administrative regulations and rulings will be available from the APEC Secretariat by the end of 1997. 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.

Implementing Advanced Classification Ruling Systems

This training program, on implementing systems for advance customs rulings, before shipments arrive, began in 1997. It will help increase administrative and tax liability certainty for SMEs.

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, Korean Customs Service, Tel.: 82-2-512-2310, Fax: 82-2-512-2339.

The Third APEC Investment Symposium, Hong Kong, China, October 28–29, 1997

SMEs will be able to exchange views and information with other businesses and officials on investment regimes, and their priorities for investment liberalization and facilitation.

Coordinated by the APEC CTI Investment Experts Group. For further information, contact Mr. W.H. **Cheuk**, Assistant Director General Industry Department, Hong Kong, China, Tel: 852-273-72207, Fax: 852-273-01771.

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 networks and support the development of the skills required to take action when opportunity knocks.

Business Matching and Facilitation Services and Electronic Databases

The two-volume *Business Matching and Facilitation Services and Electronic Databases 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 internationalization of SMEs, business matching and facilitation services available, as well as relevant electronic databases. A directory of organizations and key contacts that provide matching services is 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

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, organization 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

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 missions; and
- conducting productivity improvement, small business consultancy and management training programs for SMEs (see Training and Certification of Small Business Counsellors description on page XX).

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

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/gphome.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

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

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 findings 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, K1A 0C8, Tel.: 1-613-941-5245, Fax: 1-613-991-0959, E-mail: chenard.charles@ic.gc.ca

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

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.

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.

APEC Centres of Science and Technology Excellence

APEC's Industrial Science and Technology Working Group is developing guidelines, criteria and procedures for 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 specialization, etc., will be 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

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 organizations 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

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 frameworks 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.cl

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

By early 1998, APEC's Fisheries Working Group expects to complete 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 will 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.

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;
- SME profiles;
- organizations responsible for SME policies and development;
- supporting agencies for SME development; and
- overseas agencies for promoting 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

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-04.1; 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

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 organizational 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

APEC Business Volunteer Program (BVP)

This initiative of APEC’s Human Resources Development Working Group provides for the exchange and transfer of managerial and technical skills. This program 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 experts in September 1997.

For further information, contact Ms. Runothai **Singkalvanij**, Director, and Mr. Satoshi **Matsunaga**, Advisor, APEC BVP Coordinating Office, c/o The Federation of Thai Industries, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Zone C, 4th Floor, 60 New Ratchadapisek Road, Klongteoy Bangkok 10110 Thailand, Tel.: 662-2294052, Fax: 662-2294057, E-mail: thaipito@mozarlinelco.th

Training Programs 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 (see ACTETSME on page XX).

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.

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, Email: 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).

For further information, contact Mr. Toshiyuki **Minami**, Senior Advisor, Telecommunications Bureau, MPT, 3-2 Kasumigaseki 1-Chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-90, Japan, Tel.: 81-2-3504-4835, Fax: 81-3-3595-2594, E-mail: 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@aoema.org

APEC Market Development Seminar (November 1997)

This forum is 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.

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

Monitoring Progress

Diagnostic and Benchmarking Tools Report

This report analyzes 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.

For further information, contact M s. Francine **L'Espérance**, Industry Canada, Tel.: 1-613-954-5484,
Fax: 1-613-946-1035, E-mail: lesperance.francine@ic.gc.ca

Building a Better Business Environment

To conduct business efficiently, SMEs need an efficient business environment — and knowledge of the rules and procedures that make up that environment. 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.

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 governments would like APEC to address the issue. April and September 1997 meetings of export credit agencies from various APEC economies are facilitating the discussion of best practices to address these challenges. The process will ultimately contribute to better access to export–import financing for SMEs.

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.

Eco-efficiency in SMEs

Under this SME Policy Level Group initiative, successful eco-efficiency measures used in specific industrial sectors will be compiled in best practices manuals. The results will be presented at a seminar to be 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.

For further information, 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

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.

APEC Environmental Business Information System and Network (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

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 professionalism 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.

APEC Trade Skills and Training Course Catalogue

For further information, contact Mr. **Shin** Koo-Sik, Korea International Trade Association (KITA), Korea, Tel.: 82-2-551-5313, website: <http://www.kita.or.kr>

Agricultural Technology Transfer and Training

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 programs.

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

APEC Tariff Database

In May 1997, APEC, in conjunction with Federal Express, launched a computerized database of 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

Identifying Non-tariff Impediments

By 1998, a list will be compiled of non-tariff measures (NTMs) recognized as impediments to trade among APEC economies and a list of products affected by them. APEC also plans to set up a computerized 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

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

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@apec.stems.com. It is also available on G-Book diskette (electronic book). An updated version is on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apecsec.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@apec.stems.com

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.apecsec.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@apec.stems.com

Information on Standards Requirements

In 1997, all APEC economies will designate 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

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.

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; 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: sgscom@globe.com.ph

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.

Harmonizing Trade Data Elements and Customs Procedures

APEC will develop a compendium of trade data elements, with definitions and coding, to assist in harmonizing 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 the 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

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.

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. Initial material should be available by the end of 1997.

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

Arbitration, Mediation and Conciliation Services Guidebook

A guidebook will be available from the APEC Secretariat in December 1997. It will help SMEs to ascertain what arbitration, mediation and conciliation services are available to them in case of disputes with governments or other private parties. It will increase 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.

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.

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 throughout the region.

The handbook (APEC #96-CT-03.2; price: S\$7, US\$5) is available from the APEC Secretariat, Singapore, Tel.: 65-276-1880, Fax: 65-276-1775, E-mail: info@apsec.stems.com. It is also available on the APEC Secretariat website (<http://www.apsecsec.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@apsec.stems.com

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.

APEC Guide to Telecommunications Regulatory Environments

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. A new edition will be available in November 1997. The guide is also available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.apsec-wg.com/busf-sq/datac-wg/datac.htm>

X.400 Test Program

APEC's Telecommunications Working Group has developed a matrix outlining each economy's capabilities to exchange information electronically with other APEC economies. The program assesses network interoperability using the X.400 communications protocol, which makes communications possible through a number of technical protocols, including the Internet. A final report, available in September 1997, will include best practices. It can be accessed at <http://www.apsecsec.org.sg/twg.html> or <http://www.apsec.wg.com/>

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.

**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 governments and they have expressed frustration with the government services available. In fact, many governments have only recently begun to recognize the pivotal importance of SMEs and the need to address the challenges SMEs encounter in the marketplace. Today, virtually all governments are working hard to improve their capacity to serve SMEs.

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.

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, E-mail: ntab1078@miti.go.jp

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

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

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

Training and Certification of Small Business Counsellors

APEC is creating a technology-based training program 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'Espérance**, Industry Canada, Tel.: 1-613-954-5484, Fax: 1-613-946-1035, E-mail: lesperance.francine@ic.gc.ca

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

The first year of a four-year technical assistance program 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.

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.

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.

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, Bogor, Indonesia, Tel.: 62-251-623985, Fax: 62-251-622202, E-mail: tpphp@indo.net.id

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 will be completed by September 1998.

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@dwsrb.gov.au

SME Indicators Project

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

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

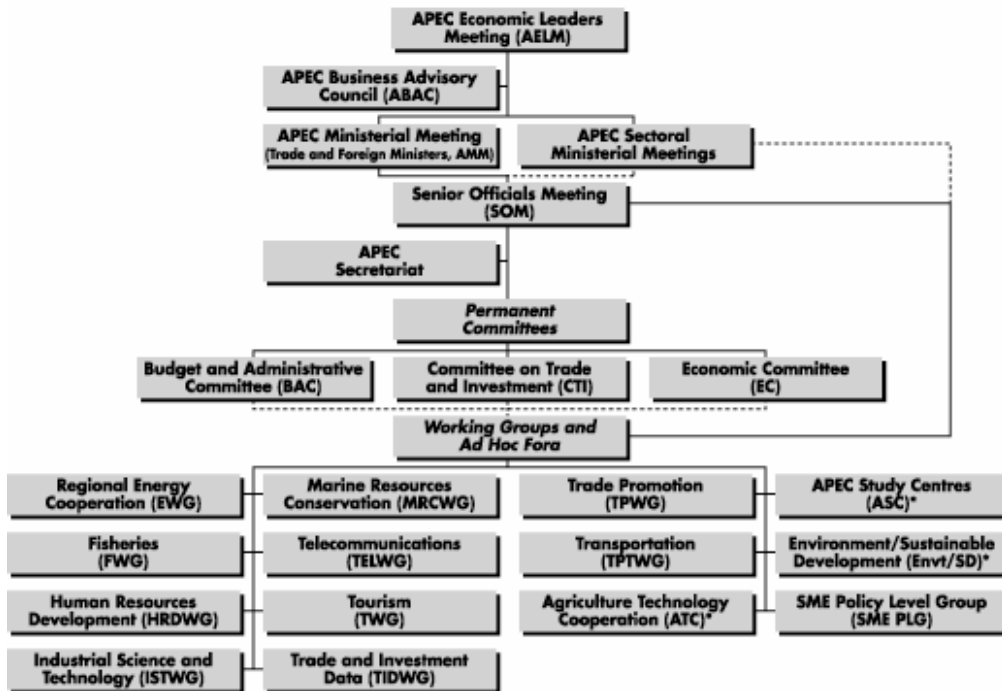
- How internationally competitive are SMEs relative to those in other member economies?
- How much do SMEs contribute to the growth of employment and GDP relative to those in other member economies?
- To what extent are structural changes affecting SMEs?
- Are impediments to SME mobility and competitiveness 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 Wandean Road, Clareville 2107 Australia, Fax: 612-99731163, E-mail: 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

**SUPPORT AND
CONTACTS
FOR SMEs**

APEC: Organizational Structure



* Ad Hoc Forum.

APEC Secretariat and APEC Business Advisory Council

APEC Secretariat

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.

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Mr. **Yang** Yafei

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.

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

Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI)

The Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) coordinates APEC's work on liberalizing and facilitating trade and investment. Activities are outlined below under 10 specific work areas, some of which are handled by specialized 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 summarizes 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.

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

Tariffs and Non-tariff Measures (NTMs)

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 liberalized unilaterally through IAPs. Collective actions are focussing on transparency and on work to underpin early voluntary sectoral liberalization initiatives.

Convenor: Ms. **Ng Kim Neo**, Tel.: 65-337-6628, Fax: 65-337-6898.
APEC Secretariat contact: Ms. Sulaimah **Mahmood** (E-mail: sbm@apec.stems.com).

Services

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.

Convenor: Mr. Ricardo A. **Lagos**, Tel.: 562-696-0043, Fax: 562-696-0639.
APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. **Sun Yuanjiang** (E-mail: sy@apec.stems.com).

Investment

Enabling investment flows around the region is an APEC priority. The Investment Experts Group (IEG) was established in 1994 to facilitate policy dialogue on investment issues. In 1994, it developed APEC's non-binding investment principles, 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 organized an annual Investment

Symposium.

Convenor: Mr. Neil **Hyden**, Tel.: 61-6-263-3742, Fax: 61-6-263-3390.

APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. **Sun** Yuanjiang (E-mail: sy@apec.stems.com).

Standards and Conformance

Minimizing 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.

Convenor: Mr. Richard **Lafontaine**, Tel.: 1-613-238-3222, Fax: 1-613-995-4564.

APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tsunehiro **Ogawa** (E-mail: to@apec.stems.com).

Customs Procedures

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 harmonizing 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.

Convenor: Mr. John **Shearer**, Tel.: 1-613-954-6990, Fax: 1-613-954-0828.

APEC Secretariat contact: Ms. Sulaimah **Mahmood** (E-mail: sbm@apec.stems.com).

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

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 a key objective.

Convenor: Mr. Shigeo **Takakura**, Tel.: 81-3-3581-1898, Fax: 81-3-3581-0762.

APEC Secretariat contact: Mr. Tsunehiro **Ogawa** (E-mail: to@apec.stems.com).

Mobility of Business Persons

Easier travel for business people is recognized 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 system for APEC business travellers is at the trial stage.

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).

Competition Policy and Deregulation

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

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

APEC Secretariat contact: Ms. Bridget **Romanes** (E-mail: br@apec.stems.com).

Government Procurement (GP)

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 procurement regimes, practices and international agreements. Officials are being trained in GP procedures, laws and regulations as well as bilateral and multilateral GP agreements.

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

Dispute Mediation

Business disputes can impose significant costs on SMEs. Maximizing the use of existing disputes mechanisms (including the WTO for intergovernment 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. A guide to dispute resolution mechanisms in APEC economies will be published in 1997.

Convenor: Mr. Jonathan T. **Fried**, Tel.: 1-613-992-0293, Fax: 1-613-996-1667.
APEC Secretariat contact: Ms. Bridget **Romanes** (E-mail: br@apec.stems.com).

Working Groups

Trade and Investment Data Working Group

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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Mr. Akio **Egawa**
Director
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Ministry of Finance
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Chiyoda-ku Tokyo, Japan
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APEC Secretariat:

Mr. **Nam Sang Jung**
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Trade Promotion Working Group

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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Mr. Ishak **Shamsudin**
Director
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APEC Secretariat:

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Industrial Science and Technology Working Group

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 a regional priority to lower costs and share the capability of advanced research centres, 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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Dr. Rosediana **Suharto**
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APEC Secretariat:

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Human Resources Development (HRD) Working Group

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

- the Business Management Network (BMN) focusses on executive education, and development and management for organizational change;
- the Network on Human Resources Development in Industrial Technology (HURDIT) focusses on technologies and professional standards, identification of skills shortages, provision of practical skills and high technical knowledge;
- the Network on Economic Development Management (NEDM) focusses on the regional labour market and the utilization of all human resources in economic development;
- the Education Forum (EDFOR) focusses 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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Mr. Stewart **Goodings**
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Regional Energy Cooperation Working Group (EWG)

Mandate: To maximize 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; 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/energy/apec/APEC_ENERGY.html

1997 Lead Shepherd:

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EWG Secretariat:

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Marine Resources Conservation Working Group

Major Focus: Joint program 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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Dr. Ampan Pintukanok
Chief of Marine & Coastal Resources Sub-Division
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Fax: 66-2-271-3226

APEC Secretariat:

Mr. Yang Yafei
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Telecommunications Working Group

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 liberalization 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 liberalization, business facilitation, and human resources development.

1997 Lead Shepherd and Chair:

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APEC Secretariat:

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Transportation Working Group

Mandate: To promote International Civil Aviation Organization and International Maritime Organization 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 Harmonization Project; encourage mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) for road vehicles; move to harmonize road vehicle regulations within international fora; and facilitate privatization or corporatization of transportation infrastructure projects.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

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APEC Secretariat:

Director (Program)

Tourism Working Group

Mandate: To remove barriers to tourism movements and tourism investment (investment by foreigners in sovereign ocean-front property); liberalize 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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

Mr. Pierre Villemaire

APEC Secretariat:

Mr. Claudio Rojas

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Director (Program)
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Fisheries Working Group

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.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

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APEC Secretariat:

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Ad Hoc Fora

SME Policy Level Group (PLG)

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 internalize SME considerations within their own mandates and activities. Thus, when the SME PLG's mandate ends (scheduled to end in 1999), SME support will be established as a fundamental part of APEC's activities.

1997 Chair:

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APEC Secretariat:

Mr. Reynaldo A. **Catapang**
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Environment and Sustainable Development Senior Officials

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.

Mr. Avrim **Lazar**
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environment Canada

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Fax: 1-819-997-4882

Agricultural Technology Cooperation Experts Group

Mandate: To conserve and utilize plant and animal genetic resources; research, develop and extend agriculture biotechnology; market, process and distribute agricultural products; oversee plant and animal quarantine and pest management; develop an agricultural finance system; promote agricultural technology transfer and training; and maintain sustainable agriculture.

1997 Lead Shepherd:

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APEC Secretariat:

Ms. **Julie Gould**
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SME Support Organizations in APEC Member Economies

Access to Information

AusTrade (Australia) provides information, market research, opportunity assessment, business matching/partnering/networking and funding to SMEs looking for export opportunities or looking into investing abroad. Similar programs 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 (Tradenz); 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 collection and dissemination for SMEs.

An International Network of Manufacturers and Exporters Associations provides its members with practical assistance to identify 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.

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

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 programs to assist SMEs in establishing innovative and successful partnerships. These programs involve trained business network advisors who assist SMEs in the development of new strategic alliances.

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

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

Access to Capital

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).

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

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.

Access to Markets

Export Access (Australia) is a trade facilitation and enterprise development program 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.

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. Similar programs are provided by the Brunei government through the Promotion and Development Division of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources; Overseas Trade Commissioners from most of the APEC economies also help their national SMEs to penetrate foreign markets in much the same way.

PHILEXPORT (Republic of the Philippines) is an umbrella organization for Philippine exporters that functions as a lobby group to pressure the Philippine government to make regulatory and policy changes that make it easier to export. 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.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council, a government-subsidized organization, maintains 51 offices worldwide and serves 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.

The Thai Chamber of Commerce is an autonomous organization representing Thailand's private sector in the process of national development in both social and economic perspectives. A Committee on SMEs was established by the Thai Chamber of Commerce to support the development of SMEs and to open new horizons of promotional activities to explore and create 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.

Access to Technology/Technology Sharing

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

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

The Canadian Technology Network (CTN) provides access to a wide range of technology and related business assistance

and services 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.

The Federation of Thai Industries is a private sector organization 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.

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

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.

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.

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-built accommodation.

The Industrial Environmental Management Office (Thailand), under the Federation of Thai Industries, provides all 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.

Access to Human Resources

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.

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.

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>; computerized 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 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 organizations.

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 on Toy Safety and Mid-term Technical Infrastructure Development Program.

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

Economy-specific Sites

Australia

Australian Business On-Line - <http://www.abol.net/> in connecting your business to the world.

Canada

Strategis: <http://strategis.ic.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 programs 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.hkite.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 information as 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

The Small and Medium Enterprise Homepage of Korea - <http://www.smipc.or.kr/> - is to promote the products produced by Korea's small and medium enterprises.

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 the Philippines

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

Singapore

Singapore Connect: <http://www.sgconnect.com.sg>; interactive directory of Singapore companies and businesses; 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>