APEC SECRETARIAT PROCESS REFORMS

FORA PROCESSES

US-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI)

November 2018

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APEC SECRETARIAT PROCESS REFORMS

FORA PROCESSES

US-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI)
## ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMC</td>
<td>Budget and Management Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>Concept Note</td>
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<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Completion Report</td>
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<td>FIN</td>
<td>Finance Department</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDDB</td>
<td>Meeting Document Database</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>Monitoring Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
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<td>PDB</td>
<td>Project Database</td>
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<td>PDM</td>
<td>Principle Decision Maker</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Program Executive</td>
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<td>PMU</td>
<td>Project Management Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Project Overseer</td>
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<tr>
<td>QA</td>
<td>Quality Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>QAF</td>
<td>Quality Assessment Frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACI</td>
<td>Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed</td>
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<tr>
<td>RFP</td>
<td>Request for Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>US-ATAARI</td>
<td>US-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum that consists of 21 member economies and aims to create greater prosperity in the region by promoting economic growth and accelerating regional economic integration. The APEC Secretariat, based in Singapore, serves to deliver the broad APEC policy agenda and to manage core support mechanisms for APEC processes, by providing coordination, technical and advisory support to the APEC economies. The primary responsibilities of the Secretariat involve supporting more than 60 APEC fora, overseeing more than 250 APEC-funded projects per annum, as well as providing information management, communications and public outreach services.

As APEC as a key multilateral institution expands its responsibilities and grows in complexity, the US-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI) activity\(^1\) commissioned a project to conduct a comprehensive review of the Secretariat’s existing support and management mechanisms to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of these processes. This project was undertaken at the request of the APEC Secretariat.

In 2016 US-ATAARI completed a comprehensive mapping exercise of the processes the APEC Secretariat employs in meeting its operational mandate. The exercise resulted in examining the Secretariat’s functions and systems, and identifying any inefficiencies and chokepoints that limit the delivery of the APEC Secretariat’s functions. The study resulted in a set of broad recommendations for improvement of procedures across all of the APEC Secretariat’s key units. As the recommendations provided in the 2016 activity were broad, the key objective of the follow-on activity is to transform the initial report’s recommendations into detailed implementable solutions focusing on project and fora related improvements.

As a first step, key Baseline Documents (Process Mapping Report and Process Maps of 2016) were reviewed and evaluated for their comprehensiveness, correctness and clarity by the independent consultant. The process maps were converted into As-Is Cross Functional Process Maps, which presented a visual layout of the flow of events (actions, information) among the business users and the business activities that are undertaken, thus making it easier for them to quickly identify their responsibilities and deliverables.

The As-Is Process Maps, fora guidelines, document templates and IT systems were also analyzed to identify the process points that impeded the efficiency and effectiveness of the Secretariat’s functioning. This yielded a set of more detailed issues/observations. All the issues, including those listed in the process mapping report of 2016, and the process activities were discussed and presented to the APEC Secretariat in 2017.

The key findings of this report are as follows:

Key Findings

- Major consumers of fora-level process and activities are external parties, i.e., the fora chair and fora members.

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\(^1\) US-ATAARI is a joint project of USAID, the U.S. State Department, and APEC.
• Over 80 percent of the process related activities are the responsibility of the Program Directors.

• The processes are unstructured in nature, i.e., barring a small set of process points, the activities do not have any flow of events and/or outputs; in other words, one activity does not lead sequentially to another. Hence, these are self-standing activities and cannot be streamlined.

• These activities are primarily logistical and content intensive, relying heavily on a set of guidelines which are distributed across separate documents.

• Most of the process issues or inefficiencies are either due to a limited understanding of guidelines by the fora chair/members or these stakeholders not following existing processes.

As a next step, the consultant recommended reforms categorized under the following implementation tasks:

- **Process Streamlining:** Reforms that call for changes in the current process.
- **Procedures Streamlining:** Reforms that call for changes in the existing guidelines or development of new guidelines.
  - **Knowledge Management (User Assistance System):** Reforms that require contextualized dissemination of information (guidelines, policies, procedures, FAQs) to the business users. This includes managing the training material.
- **Operational Restructuring** (optional): Reforms that call for changes in operational structure of APEC Secretariat such as establishing a Fora Management Unit similar to PMU.
- **Standardization:** Reforms that call for (a) standardizing documents and communication templates (layout, look & feel, fonts, structure, etc.); (b) converting different variants of similar documents, data and communication templates into universal templates; and (c) defining the document naming conventions.
- **Process Automation:** Reforms that call for transferring the repetitive activities, such as content reuse, dynamic listing of documents on website, etc. onto an IT system.

The extent of the reforms proposed by the consultant are outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Task</th>
<th>No. of Reforms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process Streamlining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Process Development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures Streamlining</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Help Development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Restructuring</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Automation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementation of a majority of reforms require knowledge management, involving the establishment of a User Assistance System, an online platform for contextualized assimilation and dissemination of relevant information, documents and data, to enable a reliable, effective, efficient and secure way of managing information that is handled by APEC staff and external stakeholders. This system could be designed as an effective and efficient integrated platform for sharing, collaborating, classifying, managing, tracking and storing of all fora related information. This system potentially can be part of the Secretariat’s proposed new system for process automation which can be scaled up to integrate all projects processes (refer to details on this below).

The tasks that require **Process Streamlining** have been addressed. Wherever applicable, any conflicts due to overlaps, gaps or duplications in the responsibilities between Program Directors (PDs) and Program Executives (PEs) have all been resolved. Beyond this, there is no scope for any improvement in process efficiencies and effectiveness. The process changes have been highlighted which can be communicated to all the business users.
The reforms requiring *Procedures Streamlining* can be implemented by clarifying any issues that are unclear and consolidating the guidelines on fora management processes into a new APEC Fora Support Guidebook. This task could be undertaken by internal staff (PDs or PEs) given their familiarity with the topics.

As next steps, APEC Secretariat should review and prioritize the recommendations provided in this report based on the needs and demands of the organization. One possibility is to develop the business and functional requirements for a holistic automation system, which can achieve the objectives of streamlining the project and fora related functions and improving efficiencies.
INTRODUCTION

At the request of the APEC Secretariat, in 2016 US-ATAARI completed a comprehensive mapping exercise of the processes the APEC Secretariat employs in meeting its operational mandates. The primary outputs included a study report and a series of process maps that highlighted the Secretariat’s functions and systems in managing APEC projects and managing APEC fora. The study presented a set of broad recommendations for improvement of procedures across all of the APEC Secretariat’s key units.

The 2016 study identified two core functions of the APEC Secretariat: 1) oversight and support to APEC fora; and 2) administration of APEC projects. As the recommendations provided in the 2016 activity were broad, it was agreed to undertake a follow-up activity to further expand on some of the findings of the study to provide more detailed process maps. Essentially, the key objective of the follow-on activity is to transform the initial report’s broad recommendations into several detailed implementable solutions focusing on fora related improvements.

This report proposes potential recommendations to increase the efficiency of the APEC Secretariat’s oversight of APEC fora. This involves identifying ways of improving a range of processes and steps to be followed to ensure that all the stakeholders have a common understanding of how the proposed improvements will be implemented. It aims to identify a set of broad reforms that are needed to be implemented in terms of processes, procedures, resources and systems to improve the APEC Secretariat’s fora-related operations, and provide a preliminary action plan on how achieve these reforms. It covers business process analysis, issues / observations and leads to recommendations and solutions for the implementation of reforms.

BACKGROUND

As APEC expands its operations and grows in complexity, the US-APEC Technical Assistance to Advance Regional Integration (US-ATAARI) project, on behalf of the United States, commissioned a project to conduct a comprehensive review of the APEC Secretariat’s existing support and management mechanisms and provide process recommendations to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. This work was requested by the Secretariat and conducted as part of the US-ATAARI project’s efforts to improve the capacities and overall efficiencies of the APEC Secretariat.

The US-ATAARI process mapping exercise completed in 2016 identified a number of Secretariat processes that need to be improved. However, the study did not provide detailed recommendations for how those improvements should be undertaken. Following this, US-ATAARI analyzed in detail the project-related administrative processes (travel disbursement, project lifecycle management, contracts disbursement), and with close collaboration with the APEC Executive Office, and a strategic recommendations and implementation plan was drafted.

In the next stage, US-ATAARI focused on the implementation of these recommendations and is near completion in implementing reforms for project-related improvements. These improvements include the adoption of a new tool to process the travel disbursements, as well as a more streamlined process workflow for Secretariat staff.

In this next phase of this activity, US-ATAARI focuses on fora-related improvements, which include analysis and suggestions for improvement in Secretariat management of fora and fora meetings. As in the activity under project-related processes, US-ATAARI refers to the 2016 APEC Process Mapping Report as a baseline document and conducts further interviews and analysis to produce more thorough and implementable solutions. This process mapping report led to an assessment of the Secretariat’s efficiencies and an
identification of opportunities for harmonizing APEC Secretariat procedures across units, staff, and stakeholders, defined as a set of broad recommendations for improvements.

KEY OBJECTIVES
The objective of this follow-on activity was to analyze and transform the mapping report’s broad recommendations into detailed implementable solutions focusing on fora-related improvements. The recommendations provide a strong basis for potential solutions and recommendations identified during this review.

This activity focuses specifically on APEC Fora Oversight and Fora Meetings Management processes. The strategic goals and objectives of the Secretariat are to:

• Strengthen the overall capacity of the APEC Secretariat’s staff to deliver on its key mandate;
• Improve the services response time to APEC business users and external participants; and
• Improve the overall quality of service relating to fora engagement.

BASELINE DOCUMENTS
The following baseline documents were reviewed to obtain a sound appreciation of the context.

• Final APEC Process Mapping Report - Fora and Project Process Assessment and Recommendations
• Final APEC Secretariat Process Maps - Fora and Project Processes
PROCESS ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

FORA PROCESS OVERVIEW

Within the scope of the APEC Secretariat’s responsibility to oversee APEC fora, there are two distinct yet interrelated processes – managing fora and conducting fora meetings. Included in each process is a series of activities that the Secretariat carries out as part of its mandate. Each activity consists of more specific tasks and actions that ultimately comprise a holistic and thorough representation of the Secretariat’s overall role in overseeing the APEC fora.

The specific activities involved in managing fora represent the role undertaken by the Secretariat to ensure the APEC fora and sub-fora are provided guidance, administrative as well as technical support to deliver APEC’s broader policy priorities. The broader components of managing fora include: information management relating to policies developed under APEC fora, guidance on existing APEC guidelines approved by members (non-member participation guidelines, APEC publication guidelines, hosting guidelines, sponsorship guidelines etc.), document management (related to both in-person meetings and intersessional activities), and communications management. Under these broader components, APEC Secretariat tasks range from gathering, collating, and disseminating relevant information for APEC meetings as well as providing ancillary advisory services to enable APEC members to follow APEC guidelines and policies to work towards achieving broader APEC goals.

The broader components included under conducting fora meetings represent activities involving APEC meeting related deliverables of APEC fora, organizational arrangements for meetings, planning schedules, and post-meeting follow-up tasks including reporting of meeting outcomes. Under the planning phase, there are two separate tracks which involve fora strategic planning and annual work planning (S) that reflects the technical tasks of the fora to deliver on the relevant policy agenda; and logistical planning (L) that includes administrative tasks and communications with APEC member delegates and other stakeholders.

PROCESS ASSESSMENT APPROACH

A two-pronged approach was adopted to assess the current (As-Is) Fora Management scenarios –

(a) Desk review and analysis of existing materials, i.e., the baseline documents; and

(b) Validation of the information contained in the baseline documents with APEC Secretariat staff and obtain any additional useful inputs to ground-test the initial assumptions made during the desk review.

As a first step, the baseline documents were reviewed and evaluated for their comprehensiveness, accuracy and clarity. The information in these documents was analyzed to gain a complete understanding on:

- how the Secretariat functions,
- how the fora process activities are currently performed by APEC staff,
- details of business users and their roles and responsibilities,
- the technological/systems support for the processes, and
- how the fora processes integrate/connect with the other business processes in the Secretariat.

The fora process related issues and the corresponding reforms recommendations, which were presented in the Process Mapping Report, were then categorized in accordance with the nature of task that will be undertaken to implement them (refer to the section Recommendations Categorization).
Each of these issues, and corresponding recommendations, were then reviewed and analyzed for their applicability. Any composite issues and/or recommendations were broken down into meaningful points.

The fora process diagrams, which were developed as part of the Process Mapping Report, were assessed for their comprehensiveness. These were then reorganized into As-Is Cross-functional Process Maps which were later used for detailed process analysis and streamlining.

Following this initial assessment, the consultant followed up with Program Directors and technical advisers\(^2\), the Director of the Communications and Public Affairs Unit (CPAU) and relevant staff within the Executive Office, to validate the issues and the As-Is Process Workflows.

**THE AS-IS PROCESS ANALYSIS**

The detailed analysis of the As-Is Process diagrams, together with the Responsibility tables from the Process Mapping Report, led to the following assessments:

- The process diagrams provided a high-level view of various activities undertaken by the business users/functionaries.
- These diagrams were not comprehensive and clear enough to guide business users in effectively identifying their action points, responsibilities and deliverables.
- The diagrams did not reflect the sequencing of process events (activities, actions) and the corresponding actors.

Considering these assessments, it was decided to convert the current process diagrams into As-Is Cross-Functional Process Maps, which presented a clearer visual layout of the business functions/units, business users, business activities and information flow.

The following process maps were developed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Process Map</th>
<th>As-Is Cross-functional Process Map</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing Fora</td>
<td>F-1.0 Fora Oversight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting Fora Meetings</td>
<td>F-2.0 Fora Meetings Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Observations**

During the development of As-Is Cross-Functional Process Maps, it was observed that the process maps cannot be completely translated into “Workflows” due to the following constraints in the fora activities:

- While the process of fora engagement in an APEC context requires the approval and consensus of all 21 members (in terms of approvals of fora strategic and annual workplans and overarching mandates and guidelines for engagement with external bodies), fora oversight and fora meeting management processes are unstructured, i.e., they are a set of self-standing (complete in itself) activities that are inconsistent (not

\(^2\) Mr. Bernard Li, Mr. Carlos Kuriyama, Mr. Michael Chapnick and Ms Ha Thi Quynh Phuong
following is defined pattern or sequence) and mostly non-repeatable in nature, whose end-state does not always result into similar output. These processes include those that are:

(a) content intensive - driven by frameworks of policies and procedures;

(b) collaborative - involving internal and external organizations; and

(c) dynamic - requiring situational or discretionary decisions.

For example, managing ad-hoc requests from fora members or Chairs/Conveners and Lead Shepherds, coordinating with different fora on cross cutting issues, coordinating presentation and report protocol with speakers and presenters, providing support to fora leadership on governance, etc. are self-standing activities reliant on guidelines and individual judgement.

• The fora processes are devoid of any clear start/end points of each activity and task. Each next step does not depend on the outcome of the previous one, i.e. the outcome of an activity could be completely different each time a particular activity is undertaken.

For example, to setup a fora meeting, a PD is expected to advise the meeting host on venue requirements and review the venue preparedness before the start of a meeting. The venue requirements are prescribed in the APEC Guidelines for Hosting APEC Meetings, while the review of venue is logistical and situational in nature. Here, the start and end points, and the outcomes are unpredictable, non-repeatable. The flow of activities between the host and program director is not linear or sequential; hence these do not yield into a structured process or cross-functional workflow.

• Major consumers of these activities are external parties, i.e., the Fora Chair and fora members. A majority of activities, over 80 percent, are undertaken only by the PDs and reflect the needs of external parties (fora members/Chairs/conveners) and event specific requirements. There are no identified inter-dependencies, or flow of incoming and outgoing actions and/or information between the PDs and PEs to accomplish their tasks.

This essentially means that the fora processes remain primarily a set of disconnected activities, which do not follow a specific flow or sequence hence the resultant process maps do not depict any workflow.

The new process maps and above observations detailed above, were then presented to various business users – i.e. the Program Directors, the Director of APEC’s Public Affairs and Communications Unit (CPAU) and Executive Assistant to the Executive Office in the APEC Secretariat with the aim of validating the information and to confirm if these represented the As-Is state of their activities. Based on their feedback, these process maps were optimized to depict any gaps that the business users undertake, technologies/systems they use and documents that they produce or use.

THE TO-BE PROCESS ANALYSIS AND STREAMLINING

Since the fora processes are a set of disconnected activities and do not have any workflow, there was no scope for simplifying them further. Wherever required, all ambiguities in the roles between PDs and PEs were resolved by identifying and eliminating overlaps, and gaps in some of their activities, and by shifting the responsibilities of some of the activities to either of them. This streamlining resulted in resolving a couple of issues listed in Reforms Recommendations section. Beyond these points, there is no scope for streamlining these processes to achieve any further improvement in fora process efficiencies.
REFORMS RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS CATEGORIZATION

The Reforms Recommendations have been organized according to the processes and entities (documents, users) they impact on. They were then reviewed and analyzed for their relevance and applicability, and were categorized as per the nature of tasks that will be undertaken to implement them.

The implementation tasks are as follows:

- **Process Streamlining**: Reforms that call for changes in the current process.
- **Procedures Streamlining**: Reforms that call for changes in the existing guidelines or development of new guidelines.
  - **Knowledge Management (through User Assistance System)**: Reforms that require contextualized dissemination of contextualized information (guidelines, policies, procedures, FAQs) to the business users. This includes training material.
- **Operational Restructuring** (optional): Reforms that call for changes in operational structure of APEC Secretariat such as centralizing the claims settlement forms printing, etc.
- **Standardization**: Reforms that call for standardizing the (a) document and communication templates (layout, look & feel, fonts, structure, etc.), (b) converting different variants of similar documents, data and communication templates into universal templates, and (c) defining the document naming conventions.
- **Process Automation**: Reforms that call for transferring the repetitive activities, such as formulations and calculations, dynamic listing of documents on website, etc. onto an IT System.
# FORA PROCESS ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

[From Process Mapping Report 2016]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Issues &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Recommendations / Solutions</th>
<th>Implementation Tasks</th>
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</table>
| 1 | Tasks involving communicating or interacting directly with Fora Chairs, Lead Shepherds or conveners are considered shared responsibilities between the PEs, mostly due to the experience level of the chair, PD, and/or PE\(^3\).  
Currently, at the commencement of a PD’s assignment, they are heavily reliant on their immediate predecessor’s standard practices, and they do not revert to the standard division of responsibilities as defined by their job descriptions, as learned during the induction period. At times, this can lead to communication issues between the Secretariat and the fora. | The PD and PE job descriptions should further clarify the expected or common interaction function with fora chairs or conveners.  
Within their job descriptions, there should be a clear explanation of which unit is expected to lead such interactions or oversight, and how the counterpart is expected to support. | - Process Streamlining  
- Procedures Streamlining  
- Knowledge Management |
|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Ensure that new PEs and PDs are properly trained using the APEC Guidelines and the Administrative Circulars that discuss Secretariat support to fora and to chairs or conveners.  
Additionally, scenario-based learning examples could be incorporated in the training material to help emphasize the                                                                                                                                 | - Knowledge Management |

\(^3\) The extent of this varies and are subject to the PEs experience and capacities. Most times the PE would submit documents to fora on behalf of the PD in his/her absence.
| #  | Issues & Observations                                                                 | Recommendations / Solutions                                                                 | Implementation Tasks                      |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|=============================================================================================|------------------------------------------|
|    | importance of proper communication with fora and chairs or conveners.                  |                                                                                             |                                          |
| 2  | Interactions between the APEC Secretariat and the wider APEC fora are multi-layered and complex. The administrative capacities of fora and their leadership can vary, which require PDs and PEs to play different roles depending on circumstances. Moreover, different types of APEC fora (e.g., industry dialogues, special task forces, Friends of the Chair arrangements and policy partnerships) have different expectations for scope and deliverables. Another variable in interactions between the APEC Secretariat and fora is the communication styles of the chair, Lead Shepherd or convener. These conditions have led to inconsistent implementation of APEC processes and have created ambiguous roles for PEs and PDs. Clarification of the roles of PDs and PEs is not standardized across all fora, creating inconsistent procedures. | Modify the portfolios of APEC Secretariat assignments so that distinct groups are responsible for supporting similar types of fora. In addition, consider developing fora and Secretariat guidelines to address the different types of fora and the support extended by the APEC Secretariat for each. | - Operational Restructuring  
- Procedures Streamlining  
- Knowledge Management |
| 3  | Information is not consistently shared on cross-collaboration issues amongst the fora. | Encourage PDs and PEs to discuss processes and responsibilities regularly to minimize confusion and ensure clarity of roles. | - Knowledge Management  
- Procedures Streamlining  
- Knowledge Management |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Issues &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Recommendations / Solutions</th>
<th>Implementation Tasks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New chairs/conveners/Lead Shepherds and delegates are not familiar with the role of the APEC Secretariat and how they need to interact with PDs and PEs.</td>
<td>Develop a Chair/Convener/Lead Shepherd training module that is available to all member economies (and delegates) that provides an overview of the Secretariat, role of the PE and PD, and how they can expect to interact with each other.</td>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The ACS site is not user friendly and not all delegates are aware of the process relating to obtaining information they need to effectively communicate.</td>
<td>Review the ACS site and identify ways to make it more accessible to fora members and APEC delegates. Develop a training module for external users on how to use the ACS site.</td>
<td>Online Help Development, Knowledge Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>APEC delegates may not always have access to the AIMP log-in information which can create an administrative backlog for the APEC Secretariat.</td>
<td>PEs and PDs can collaborate with ITU at the beginning of each year when fora contact lists are being updated to ensure delegates have access to the AIMP.</td>
<td>Automation, Online Help Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>APEC fora website pages are not always updated on a regular basis. There is no standard or clear process (or assignment clarification) for ensuring the fora pages are updated.</td>
<td>Conduct a working-group session with PEs, PDs, and CPAU to identify the steps required to update the website pages, and develop a process in terms of content updating for the APEC site.</td>
<td>New Process Development (Process Streamlining)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Issues &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Recommendations / Solutions</th>
<th>Implementation Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8 | Prime consumers of fora activities are the Chairs/Conveners/Lead Shepherds and fora members. The main points of contact at the APEC Secretariat are PDs. Hence, the fora processes, which are unstructured in nature, are largely ‘customer service’ oriented with little or almost no control on the actions of the external parties. Further, the responsibilities of PDs to support the fora are drafted largely in a broad manner and are devoid of any explicit phrasing. This often leads to self-favoring interpretations and unwanted expectations by the external parties. | Setup a Fora Management Unit (FMU) similar to the Project Management Unit (PMU). This will help in addressing any uncalled-for requests by fora members/chairs appropriately. Besides, this will further empower the PDs in taking appropriate position towards the requests for any out-of-scope tasks. Each time a new chair is appointed, let the FMU can prepare a Welcome Pack to ensure that they have all relevant documentation to implement their activities. This welcome pack would be in electronic form comprising of welcome note, role of FMU, role of PD, etc. Also, in the fora guidelines, restructure the responsibilities of PDs and that of fora members/chair in a tabular format. This will help in quickly identifying the support each party can expect from one another. Further, rewrite the fora facing guidelines in a more explicit / to-the-point manner to minimize or eliminate any fuzziness. It should include what the PD will NOT be doing. For example, a PD or PE is not expected to translate any documents or transcribe any meeting recordings, which are primarily a source of information for the meeting reports. | - Operational Restructuring  
- Procedures Streamlining  
- Knowledge Management                                                                                                                                    |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|    | The fora guidelines are distributed in various documents. There are no cross-references which could possibly imply repetition of some policies, guidelines or responsibilities among them. Further, despite the fact that the fora related guidelines, schedules, document templates, reference material, etc. are available on APEC website, PDs have to invariably package and email them to the new Fora Chair/Lead or a new member whenever requested. | To begin with, merge all the fora related guidelines into a single document “Fora Support Guidebook”. Restructure the contents meaningfully so that the relevant information can be found easily and quickly. Later, host this guidebook on an online platform, which would serve as the User Assistance System. This could be a standalone tool or hosted on the integrated system that is being proposed by the APEC Secretariat, i.e. this platform will also include ACS, MDDB and any other relevant portal, such as travel rules. Such a system will significantly save the time and effort of PDs who often assimilate and communicate almost the same information whenever requested by the fora members. Besides, this system will eliminate the need for producing and maintaining any separate training material. It will pave way for self-service and self-learning.                                                                 | - Automation  
- Knowledge Management                                                                                                                                   |
<p>| 9  | APEC Guidelines for Promoting Cross-Fora Collaboration document (2017/SOM3/020) does not spell out the responsibilities of a PD. Further, this document appears to be applicable only to SCE. If the guidelines in this document are universally applicable to all                                                                 | Define the responsibilities of PDs in order to regulate the sharing / reporting of information besides the nature of support the PDs are expected to provide to the fora.                                                                 | - Procedures Streamlining                                                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Issues &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Recommendations / Solutions</th>
<th>Implementation Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11 | The Meeting Document Database (MDDB) system does not dynamically list out the meeting documents stored in the SharePoint library. The lists of documents appearing on its webpages are created manually by entering each document name, catalogue number, etc. manually, thus making the process of document storage, listing, cataloging and retrieving more laborious. This system should generate the documents list automatically from the SharePoint Documents library. | Option 1: Develop a program in the SharePoint to automatically generate the lists of documents from its documents libraries.  
Option 2: Move MDDB to the proposed new integrated system to be implemented by the APEC Secretariat for uploading, categorizing, cataloging and disseminating the meeting documents automatically.  
This system could also facilitate submission of requests for document reproduction and thus eliminate the need for handling such requests through the DRRF Word form and any other related forms. | - Automation         |
| 12 | Every year, a new host economy develops a new website of APEC and a Participant Registration site (could be a part of the sub-website). The efforts towards this task are repeated annually which includes support from the Secretariat’s ITU. This appears to be avoidable waste of time and expenditure. | Instead of each host economy developing a new sub-website each year, the Secretariat should develop it as an offshoot of APEC.ORG website, such as PNG.APEC.ORG. The same sub-website can be reused every year by updating the contents as per the new host’s requirements.  
Instead of each host economy developing a new Participants’ Registration site each year, the Secretariat can develop and manage a Universal Participants’ Registration site which can be adapted (localized) for the new host. The control of data and | - Automation         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Issues &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Recommendations / Solutions</th>
<th>Implementation Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>security can lie with the host economy’s PD.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Over the years, queries from fora members have been received by the Secretariat. These queries and corresponding responses have been saved under the M-Drive in word format. Similar queries come up again and again, and are responded afresh due to difficulty in locating the responses.</td>
<td>Engage a short-term technical writer to compile and categorize all queries and responses into a useable FAQs and host on the SharePoint Wiki Library as a temporary solution to the User Assistance System or the new integrated system proposed by the APEC Secretariat can be developed. This will reduce the repeat communications from the external parties significantly, thus help save PD/PE’s time.</td>
<td>- Knowledge Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The requirements for hosting APEC meetings, including their schedules, are maintained in a single Excel workbook which is updated by PDs.</td>
<td>Develop an online APEC Events Management module to manage the hosting requirements and schedules. Later, move this module to the proposed new system.</td>
<td>- Automation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFORMS IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Implementation of the majority of reforms requires Knowledge Management, i.e. setting up a User Assistance System (please refer to the section below – Knowledge Management). This system can potentially be a part of the proposed new integrated system, which can also scale up to integrated the Projects processes and their information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Task</th>
<th>No. of Reforms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Process Streamlining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Process Development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures Streamlining</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Help Development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Restructuring</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Automation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROCESS STREAMLINING

The tasks of Process Streamlining have been accomplished by streamlining the Process maps (see Appendix). Wherever applicable, all ambiguities or overlaps in the roles and responsibilities of the Program Directors and Program Executives have been resolved.

The streamlined process maps reflecting the changes can be put to practice. For any procedural requirements towards any activity in the process maps, please refer to the corresponding guidelines prescribed in the guidebooks listed below.

The reform requiring development of a new processes can be accomplished by engaging a process consultant. The consultant, under the close guidance of relevant Program Directors, will be able to implement the required actions to capture the process and guidelines.

PROCEDURES STREAMLINING

The fora guidelines are covered in the following guidelines:

- Guidelines on Hosting APEC Meetings
- APEC Guidelines for Promoting Cross-Fora Collaboration
- Guidelines on Managing Cooperation with Non-Members
- Guidelines for Lead Shepherd/Chair and Deputy Lead Shepherd/Chair of APEC Working Groups and SOM Task Forces
- Edition.13 of the Guidebook on APEC Projects

The existing guidelines do not require any particular streamlining other than converting these guidelines (with the exception of the APEC project guidebook), into a single document called “FORA Support Guidebook”, and removing any ambiguities in the policies, procedures and deliverables.
This can be accomplished internally by PDs or PEs. For developing the structure of the proposed online document, it is recommended to engage a technical writer.

Going forward, all the proposed Fora Support Guidebook, together with all the document templates used for various activities, can be migrated to the online User Assistance System and proposed Knowledge Management Portal.

ONLINE HELP DEVELOPMENT

To develop the online help towards two reforms, it is proposed to engage a technical writer. This technical writer, in close coordination with the APEC Secretariat's Information Technology Unit, can author the contents and develop the online help pages in HTML. This would be subject to the staffing requirements.

OPERATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

There are two reforms recommended under operational restructuring. One of these, namely establishing a Fora Management Unit (FMU) would require executive decision. The other recommendation can be brought to effect only by the executive office in close consultation with APEC Secretariat staff.

PROCESS AUTOMATION

For the reforms requiring Process Automation, it is proposed to engage an IT solution provider to design the model of the proposed User Assistance System for knowledge management. Should the Secretariat pursue the holistic online solution, it should engage a business analyst who can capture the complete business and functional requirements so that an IT solution provider can design a holistic solution.

STANDARDIZATION

There are no variants of document templates used in the fora processes hence there is no scope for documents standardization. In contrast, the Project Management Unit has undertaken work in the recent past to ensure that project related activities are implemented effectively and that stakeholders have access to all key documentation relating to project development and implementation.4

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

As observed in the Process Mapping Report of 2016, there is wealth of institutional knowledge but there is no central information management repository which specifies how the roles of Secretariat staff relate to the external stakeholders. The APEC Secretariat's induction program, is one way of orientating new staff to enable them to carry out their responsibilities. This has been designed to improve their understanding of APEC as an organization: its role, fora specific issues, APEC project issues as well as standard processes and procedures that are relevant to deliver the relevant tasks and activities.

The Secretariat should explore developing a comprehensive User Assistance System, an online platform for contextualized assimilation and dissemination of information, documents and data to enable reliable, effective, efficient and secure way of knowledge management. This system could be a standalone tool or work as an

---

4 Project Overseers Toolkit on the website.
integrated platform for sharing, collaboration, classification, management, tracking and storage of all APEC-wide knowledge.

A conceptual model and sample mockups have been presented below – these are figurative and provide detailed analysis of the business requirements and functional modeling of a possible system which will need to be implemented using specific technical assistance.

User Assistance System – Conceptual Framework
User Assistance System – Sample Mockups

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

For Fora Oversight
Members of Forum

The duties of Forum members are as follows:
CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This exercise leverages work conducted under the APEC Process Mapping Report of 2016 by delving deeper into the recommendations identified in the report, related to fora oversight and providing more tangible and implementable solutions to creating efficiencies in the Secretariat processes.

Further work will be needed to reinforce a sustained effective and efficient approach for overseeing APEC fora. In its next steps, the consultant recommends that the Secretariat prioritizes the recommendations based on its understanding of the key issues that limits the organization’s ability to deliver its mandate. A solution that ensures fluid communication with stakeholders will be crucial in the success of implementation in order to ensure internal process leadership and ownership of improvements. This may, based on the findings of this study, include the development of the business and functional requirements for a holistic automation system as proposed by the APEC Secretariat.
APPENDIX A: AS-IS PROCESS WORKFLOW MAPS

APPENDIX A.1, P-1.1, PROJECT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT
APPENDIX A.2, P-1.2, PROJECT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT
### APPENDIX A.3, P-2.1, PROJECT CHANGE MANAGEMENT

#### P2.1 Projects Management – Project Change Management Process [A.1-h]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Change</th>
<th>Self-Funded Concept Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Project scope change</td>
<td>P2: Clients certfied CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Strategic shift</td>
<td>Implement project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Major technical or financial risk</td>
<td>P2: Clients certfied CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Revised scope of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Significant change in budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Revised project scope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Self-Funded Concept Note**
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
  - Implement project
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF

- **Project Change**
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on

- **Self-Funded Concept Note**
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
  - Implement project
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF

- **Project Change**
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on

- **Self-Funded Concept Note**
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
  - Implement project
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF

- **Project Change**
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on

- **Self-Funded Concept Note**
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
  - Implement project
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF

- **Project Change**
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on
  - Revised scope of work
  - Revised project scope
  - Significant change in budget
  - Development of an add-on capital or a financial add-on

- **Self-Funded Concept Note**
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
  - Implement project
  - P2: Clients certified CH to AMF
APPENDIX A.4, P-3.1, CONTRACTS DISBURSEMENT
APPENDIX A.5, P-3.2, TRAVEL DISBURSEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P-3.2 Projects Administration – Travel Disbursement Process [As-is]</th>
<th>Advance Payment</th>
<th>Travel Accounting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel Approval</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Travel Authorization Form to IFMS system</td>
<td>Submit Advance Payment Request to IFMS system</td>
<td>Submit travel expenditure reconciliation and reimbursement documentation to IFMS system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare all travel quotes</td>
<td>Approve travel quotes</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel expenditure reconciliation to Finance Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirm travel quotes are included in Budget</td>
<td>Submit travel quotes for approval</td>
<td>Travelers will receive petty cash reimbursement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement quote travel</td>
<td>Submit travel quotes for approval</td>
<td>Submit travel quote reimbursement form to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update medical information</td>
<td>Submit travel quote reimbursement form to travel office</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update Budget Table</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advance Payment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare Medical Authorization for Traveler</td>
<td>Travelers will receive petty cash reimbursement</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare and submit Travel Authorization</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel Accounting</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit travel expenditure reconciliation and reimbursement documentation to IFMS system</td>
<td>Submit travel expenditure reconciliation and reimbursement documentation to IFMS system</td>
<td>Complete and submit travel reimbursement forms to travel office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To Continue</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: IFMS stands for Integrated Financial Management System.*
APPENDIX A.6, P-3.3, PUBLICATIONS & EVENTS MANAGEMENT
APPENDIX A.7, F-1.0, FORA MANAGEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Management</th>
<th>Document Management</th>
<th>Communications Management</th>
<th>Advisory Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F-1.0 FORA Oversight – FORA Management [To-be]</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information Management**
- Consolidate information from various sources like FORA, NIPCC, and other stakeholders.
- Validate and ensure the information is accurate and complete.
- Ensure timely submission of reports and documents.
- Send reminders for timely submission of information.

**Document Management**
- Implement project and document policies - FORA, NIPCC.
- Develop tables for FORA, NIPCC.
- Maintain current document versions - NIPCC, FORA.
- Prepare documents for distribution - FORA, NIPCC.
- Finalize documents - NIPCC, FORA.

**Communications Management**
- Ensure information is disseminated in a timely manner.
- Communicate with Project Oversight and Team.
- Updated milestone plans and project timelines.
- Communicate with Project Oversight and Team.
- Monitor project milestones and timelines.

**Advisory Services**
- Assist in project development and reporting.
- Provide project management support to the Project Oversight and Team.
- Ensure communication and coordination among stakeholders.
- Monitor and report on project progress.
- Provide regular updates on project status.
## APPENDIX A.8, F-2.0, FORA MEETINGS MANAGEMENT

### F-2.0 FORA Oversight – FORA Meetings Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Setup</th>
<th>Meeting Planning</th>
<th>On-site Services</th>
<th>Post-Meeting Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Confront meeting schedule time and space with hotel booking | Communicate meeting attendees’ (or delegate) | Complete all required meeting documentation (e.g., FORA Collaboration System) | Submit meeting attendees to Communications & Public Affairs |}

### Logistics

- **War Room**
  - Communicate meeting attendees’ (or delegate)
  - Complete all required meeting documentation (e.g., FORA Collaboration System)
  - Submit meeting attendees to Communications & Public Affairs

- **Logistics**
  - Communicate meeting attendees’ (or delegate)
  - Complete all required meeting documentation (e.g., FORA Collaboration System)
  - Submit meeting attendees to Communications & Public Affairs
## APPENDIX B: TO-BE PROCESS WORKFLOW MAPS

### APPENDIX B.1, F1.0 FORA OVERSIGHT – FORA SUPPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F1.0 FORA Oversight – FORA Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Director</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure APEC national calendar and provide input on the schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure regular updating of the technical and policy content of the FORA, workshops, meetings, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the timely development and maintenance of FORA publications and documents (strategic plans, work plans, meeting minutes, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update FORA members on FORA priorities and themes, funding criteria and policies/procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send project-specific information to FORA members and address all project-specific issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide project management information and updates to FORA and F1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide support for FORA-level reporting templates, publications, and guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide support for FORA-related activities, including technical cooperation and APEC Technical Cooperation (ACT) decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster constructive dialogue and exchange information on FORA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage and communicate with external stakeholders, such as international, private, and public sector organizations. Facilitate their engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate with relevant FORA and other APEC fora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and communicate relevant information to FORA members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and facilitate discussions (as needed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage and communicate sensitive procedures (audit, funding, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide support for FORA leadership on governance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Implemented projects and deliverables: F10, M Drive, Concept Notes (M Drive), M Drive Pro, P11, P11 Pro, P11 Shove, M Drive, M Drive Pro, M Drive P11, M Drive Pro, M Drive P11, M Drive P11 Pro.*
# APPENDIX B.2, F2.0 FORA OVERSIGHT – FORA MEETING MANAGEMENT

## F2.0 FORA Oversight – FORA Meetings Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Director</th>
<th>Meeting Host</th>
<th>Program Executive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEETING&lt;Group&gt;</strong></td>
<td><strong>MEETING&lt;Group&gt;</strong></td>
<td><strong>MEETING&lt;Group&gt;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate the Meeting Details to the FORA Delegates (ISO Meetings Planner Spreadsheet)</td>
<td>Relay Delegates’ registration details</td>
<td>Confirm the meeting schedule and venue with the host economy (provide details to PD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise the meeting host on venue requirements (PPG Guidelines for Hosting PPG Meetings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PREMEETING

- Communicate with Chair & Host regarding priorities, objectives and stakeholder engagement plans.
- Support Chair to prepare and circulate meeting agenda.
- Review previous meetings’ minutes to follow up on open items.
- Send administrative circular to attendees.
- Coordinate presentation and report protocols with speakers and panel members.
- Annex supporting documentation protocols.
- Collect, review, and circulate meeting documents through ACS.
- Submit processed meeting documents to Documentation Center for posting.
- Compile and upload meeting documents on ACS.
- Facilitate and ensure members and non-member participation on behalf of PD.

### DURING MEETING

- Ensure registered participants list from the meeting host.
- Conduct pre-meeting briefing with the host and Chair. Meet with the Chair and delegates as and when required.
- Ensure meeting venue preparations; interface with the venue facilities.
- Conduct / oversee proceedings at task-off. Provide logistical support for smooth conduct of meeting.
- Take notes during the meeting for秘书ariat’s internal purposes.
- Provide advice and logistical support for smooth flow of meeting.
- Foster constructive dialogue and active planning within FORA. Serve as a mediator as necessary.
- Obtain meeting attendance from the meeting host.

### POST-MEETING SERVICES

- Collect feedback from delegates.
- Support the Chair in drafting the summary report and when necessary.
- Conduct follow-up with Chair (as needed).
- Submit internal report to EU, FCO, and CPAIO.

### Translators
- Distribute meeting minutes to the delegates.
- Support the Chair in drafting the summary report and when necessary.
- Conduct follow-up with Chair (as needed).
- Submit internal report to EU, FCO, and CPAIO.
- Send final meeting documents to CPAIO for upload to MODS.