![APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation logo]

**GENERAL INFORMATION
CIRCULAR**

Utilizing Digital Technology in the Field of Trade Facilitation
under the Current COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond:
Best-Practices Sharing Workshops (Phase 2)
~ 2nd Workshop – Digitalizing Customs Cooperation ~

5 October 2022
Virtual Workshop

* Date/Times in Thailand Time. Please check page 3-4 for the date and time for your location.

Organizer: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan (METI)

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1. OBJECTIVES

In the field of trade facilitation, since late 2010s, the digital technology has been utilized to smoothen the flow of goods, for example, by reducing inefficiency and redundancy in various paperwork. Efforts have also been made to increase the trustworthiness of digital information and to coordinate interoperability of public trade-related systems, like single windows.

Furthermore, especially in light of the current COVID-19[1] pandemic, digital technology also enables trade transactions without physical contact, which is increasingly desirable. Moreover, digital technology has proven to be a valuable asset in overcoming various barriers erected by the pandemic, including rapid changes in demand for various goods and services, supply chain disruption, and the implementation of new border control requirements.

APEC economies have long understood that effective technology utilization in trade would be critical to future prosperity and competitiveness, as the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade recognized the need for a renewed focus in their statements[2] issued in 2020.

With this as background, we invite you to a series of short online workshops to:
1) share best practices of digital technology utilization in trade facilitation; and
2) discuss challenges and solutions for adopting such technologies.

Workshop Objectives

We will host a series of three online workshops and will invite experts from private industry, government, and academia, who will share knowledge and experiences through panel discussions.

Although the workshops have the common theme of trade facilitation, each workshop is focused on varying topics. In 2021, we hosted four workshops respectively covering trade platforms, e-commerce enabling technologies, single windows, and inclusion of MSMEs. Based on the audience feedback, we have selected the topics for this year as follows:

➢ 1st Workshop (3 August) – Technology to Support Customs Procedures (completed. See here for the materials)
➢ 2nd Workshop (5 October) – Digitalizing Customs Cooperation
➢ 3rd Workshop (18 January*) – Port Digitalization for Efficient Supply Chain
* The dates for the 3rd workshops are tentatively scheduled and subject to change.

The current General Information Circular announces the Project Overseer's plan to host the project's **2nd workshop** focused on customs cooperation, which are enabled by novel digital technologies, and benefits and challenges in their utilization for cross-border trade within and beyond the APEC region. Please also see ANNEX 1 for more details about this particular workshop.

2. DATES

In Thailand Time, on **Wednesday, October 5, 2022.**

* Please note that in some economies, the workshop will be in the evening of **Tuesday, October 4, 2022** (See below for dates and times in the Capital City of each economy).

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[1] Coronavirus Disease 2019, caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).
[2] Statement on COVID-19 by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (5 May 2020):
https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Trade/2020_trade
Ministers Responsible for Trade Virtual Meeting Joint Statement 2020 (25 July 2020):
https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Trade/2020_MRT

time zone	Economy (capital city time zone)	1st date	begin	end
PDT	(Pacific Daylight Time[3])	Tuesday, October 4, 2022	19:00	21:00
CDT	Mexico; Peru	Tuesday, October 4, 2022	21:00	23:00
EDT	Canada; United States	Tuesday, October 4, 2022	22:00	0:00
CLDT	Chile	Tuesday, October 4, 2022	23:00	1:00
CEDT	Central EU (Netherlands, etc.)	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	4:00	6:00
MSK	Russia	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	5:00	7:00
ICT	Indonesia; Thailand; Viet Nam	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	9:00	11:00
SGT	Brunei Darussalam; China; Hong Kong, China; Malaysia; The Philippines; Singapore; Chinese Taipei	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	10:00	12:00
JST	Japan; Korea	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	11:00	13:00
AEDT	Australia; Papua New Guinea	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	13:00	15:00
NZDT	New Zealand	Wednesday, October 5, 2022	15:00	17:00

3. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

To ensure the safety and health of all participants, the workshop will be held online via **GoToWebinar**. No travel will be required, and all participants can participate in the workshop at their own home or office via the internet. To ensure that workshop participants will be able to efficiently interact with speakers, experts, moderators, and other participants, we recommend the following hardware minimum requirements[4]:

Operating system	Windows 7 - Windows 11 Mac OS X 10.9 (Mavericks) - macOS 12 Monterey Linux / Ubuntu (Chrome or Firefox only) Google Chrome OS (Chromebook) (Chrome only) Android OS 5 (Lollipop) or newer iOS 10 or newer
Web browser	Google Chrome (most recent 2 versions) Mozilla Firefox (most recent 2 versions) Apple Safari (most recent 2 versions) Microsoft Edge (most recent 2 versions)
Internet connection	Computer: 1 Mbps or better (broadband recommended) Mobile device: 3G or better (Wi-Fi recommended for VoIP audio)
Software	(if using a mobile device) GoToWebinar mobile app JavaScript enabled
Hardware	2GB of RAM (minimum), 4GB or more of RAM (recommended)

Attendees can join the workshop via web browser or mobile devices.
Well before the workshop, please see below instruction to join the workshop with a web browser. If the participants face any technical problems, please contact the organizer (apec@wcore.com) for assistance.

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[3] As a reference for those who participating from places like British Columbia (Canada), Baja California (Mexico), and Western states of the United States (e.g., California, Oregon, and Washington)
[4] More detailed specifications can be found in the link below:
https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/hardware-requirements-for-the-teams-app

[How to test your system before the event]
Please click on the link below to automatically check the compatibility of your device and network: https://support.goto.com/webinar/system-check-attendee-av

For more detailed instruction on how to prepare and join the workshop, please click on the link below: https://support.goto.com/webinar/att-user-guide
Please note that some functions will be turned off for this event. Examples include, but not limited to: the ability to turn on one's camera and/or microphone and option to use telephone for audio.

If you intend to use a mobile device like tablet or smartphone to join the workshop, you will have to download one of the following mobile applications.

[Links to GoToWebinar Mobile Applications]
Mobile app for iOS: https://apps.apple.com/app/gotowebinar/id1244921300
Mobile app for Android:
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.logmein.gotowebinar

4. PARTICIPANTS

All 21 APEC member economies are welcome and invited to attend and actively participate in the workshop. All the attendees will be required to sign up for the workshop by **Tuesday, October 4, 2022, 9:00 (UTC+7.00 Thailand Time)** using the below link:
Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5483589268501370383
Webinar ID: 709-111-011

The link to join the webinar (unique to each participant) will be sent in a confirmation email sent after the registration and in reminder emails sent 1 week, 1day, and 1hour before the event.

APEC government officials and policymakers in charge of trade facilitation are very much encouraged to take active part in the workshops to exchange views and experience on government policies and measures.

5. HOW TO PARTICIPATE

General Note
Participants will join the Workshop as an "Attendee" on the GoToWebinar platform. By default, attendees can view the presenter's screen and listen to presentations and discussions between the organizers and speakers, but they themselves are initially muted (in listen-only mode, no webcam) to minimize background noises that would detract from the presentation.

Entering the meeting
Before the meeting, GoToWebinar will send each attendee an email with log-in information (join link, Webinar ID, etc.) designated to each attendee.

Alternatively, an attendee can join the meeting by accessing GoToWebinar website (https://www.goto.com/webinar/join) and entering the Webinar ID and her/his email address.

Audio options
This time only computer audio is provided, and phone call is not an option.

Control Panel
We will explain briefly how to use the GoToWebinar Control Panel at the beginning of the Workshop. Below are instructions for basic functions that attendees will be using.

Asking a Question
During the session, there will be multiple opportunities for attendees to ask questions. To ask a question, we ask participants to follow the steps outlined below.

1) When you wish to ask a question, please enter your name, economy and question in the Questions field in your Control Panel (see the image below).
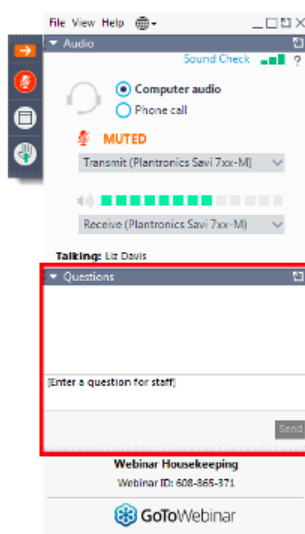
2) The question will be then considered to be asked during the workshop by the moderator.

Pre-Meeting Preparation
We recommend each attendee watch the below videos to learn quickly how to join and participate in the workshop, as well:
Video: Attendee Quick Start (4:23): https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/video-attendee-quick-start-4-23-1308134931
Shorter version (0:57): https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/video-attendee-quick-tip-57-1308123751

6. AGENDA

The tentative **agenda** of the workshop is attached as ANNEX 1.
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7. METHODOLOGY

(6.1) Organization of Program

Target audiences of this project:

The primary target beneficiaries will be policymakers (representatives in SOM, CTI, DESG and SCCP or other officials in charge of digitalization of trade in their respective APEC economies), especially who want to know the role of promoting digital technology in trade facilitation.

However, since the quality of regulations is enhanced by transparency and broad opportunities for gaining public understanding, the invitation is not limited only to the government officials but extended also to those in the private sector and academia with expert knowledge and experience in relevant topics.

Economies are strongly encouraged to consider having qualified female officials attend the workshop.

(6.2) Evaluation

The workshop organizer will design and distribute questionnaire to the workshop audience. The survey will encourage each respondent to share his/her views and advice on the workshop's impact and efficiency as well as possible suggestions and policy implications for future APEC related cooperation programs and activities.

(6.3) Language

The workshop will be conducted in English.

8. INSTITUTION

The workshop will be organized by Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan (METI).

Mr WATANABE Masao
Project Overseer
APEC Office, Trade Policy Bureau, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan
Email: watanabe-masao@meti.go.jp

For all substantive and logistics matters, please directly contact the project contractor: Mr Takahiro Nakamura, Project Manager / Japan Liaison, Washington CORE L.L.C. (apec@wcore.com).

9. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Focal points of respective APEC member economies in CTI, DESG, SCCP will nominate their proposed speakers / participants to attend the workshop by contacting the Project Overseer.

Speakers approved by the Project Overseer should submit their presentations via email to Mr Takahiro Nakamura (takan@wcore.com) with the copy to Mr WATANABE Masao (watanabe-masao@meti.go.jp) on or before **Tuesday, September 27, 2022** at the latest.

10. ALLOWANCE AND EXPENSES

(9.1) Allowance principles

As the workshop will be held online, the APEC Secretariat will not provide APEC funding for speakers and participants for traveling purposes.

(9.2) Signing of Undertakings for APEC funded speakers
Once the APEC Secretariat approves the final list of speakers from the organizer, the Secretariat's Program Executive will contact each APEC-funded speaker with an undertaking letter for signature. The undertaking is a minor contract between a speaker and the APEC Secretariat, in which a speaker agrees to perform the Terms of Reference and the Secretariat commits to paying a speaker honorarium, if applicable (may be subject

to restrictions stated in the Guidebook on APEC Projects). The undertaking must be signed by each APEC-funded speaker at least 5 working days before the workshop.

11. MISCELLANEOUS

(10.1) On successful registration, all speakers are requested to attend a pre-workshop meeting (a **dry-run**) to test online participation, scheduled a week before the workshop at the same time as the actual workshop at **9:00- 10:00** on **Wednesday, September 28, 2022**, Thailand Time;

(10.2) Speakers funded by APEC will assume responsibility for any other expenses incurred for participating in this workshop. They will also make their own arrangements for any other financial matters of a personal nature;

(10.3) APEC highly values collaboration with appropriate external stakeholders. Participation in all APEC events is governed by APEC's Guidelines for Managing Co-operation with Non-members, and attendance of nominees for this workshop who are not government officials (or part of a government delegation), for instance from the private or academic sectors, will be subject to CTI approval as per the aforementioned Guidelines.

(10.4) Speakers and participants are required to strictly observe the workshop schedule. Non-attendance of APEC funded speakers would result in financial and potentially other penalties;

(10.5) The presentations and other documents from the workshop will be collated by the Project Overseer (or their delegate) who will send them to the APEC Secretariat within 2 weeks of the workshop. The presentations will be made publicly available shortly after through APEC's Meeting Document Database (unless they are indicated to be for restricted circulation only to CTI members). Presenters are reminded that all workshop materials must comply with APEC Publication Guidelines. The workshop deliberations also need to comply with the APEC Hosting Guidelines. In particular organisers, speakers and participants should ensure compliance with the following IMPORTANT APEC REQUIREMENTS contained in those Guidelines as required by APEC Senior Officials:

All attendees need to ensure while drafting any workshop documents or making presentations at the workshop to please be mindful of APEC nomenclature. APEC is a grouping of economies. Therefore, it is inappropriate to use anything, such as flags or emblems, which may imply the "political status" of any member economy. Disputed maps should not be included in any presentations or materials distributed at an APEC event. Members of APEC should be referred to as "member economies" or "members" or "economies". Please do not use in reference to APEC member economies the words "country", "nation" or "national".

Please also be mindful to use the correct names of the APEC economies: Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; the People's Republic of China (China also acceptable); Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; the Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; the Republic of the Philippines (the Philippines also acceptable); the Russian Federation (Russia also acceptable); Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; the United States of America (the USA, the US or the United States also acceptable); Viet Nam.

12. DATA PRIVACY

The APEC Secretariat collects, uses and stores personal data from participants in APEC-funded projects to support our project administration and evaluation processes. APEC Project Overseers transfer participant personal data to the APEC Secretariat for these purposes. APEC Secretariat has in place a Personal Data Protection Policy and collects, uses, stores and disposes of personal data in accordance with Singapore's Personal Data Privacy Act 2012.

ANNEX 1 TENTATIVE PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

Please see the separate document.