

Asia-Pacific Legal Metrology Forum

Working Group Transition

Discussion Paper

Purpose

This paper summarises the changes to Working Groups that were discussed in Hawaii 2015 and Japan 2016 and details a transition plan to begin their implementation.

In Japan there was agreement that the role of a Working Group is to build knowledge and experience and to focus on the completion of a project based, time bound work programme. The work programmes and projects of Working Groups also need regular review by APLMF members and to contribute to the practical implementation of APLMF's Strategic Plan. To achieve this, it was decided that more frequent rotation of membership and transition across member economies is required to ensure we achieve greater knowledge sharing. The regular review of the scope and composition of Working Groups was also seen as important.

Background

As noted previously the current Rules of Procedures for Working Groups provide limited guidance on how Working Groups should operate. It was also noted that these rules are over 20 years old and need to reflect the current environment, international developments in Legal Metrology and the APLMF membership and their needs.

At the APLMF meetings in Hawaii and Tokyo there was general consensus that it was time to review and improve the way in which APLMF undertakes Working Group activities and its annual Working Group meetings.

It was also noted that the seven current Working Groups were established between 1994 and 1996 over 20 years ago and it was time to review each Working Group with a view to:

- Reviewing current Working Groups membership and structures
- Where appropriate, disestablish any Working Group that has achieved its goals or completed its work programme.
- In cases where a Working Group is no longer required, APLMF members consider identification of an individual to be a *Point of Contact* or *Subject Matter Expert* for the subject area. This person would monitor international activities and developments in the subject area and liaise with APLMF members on that subject when needed.
- Working Groups focus on a time bound work programme of specific projects.
- Working Groups agreeing to work to the new *Guidelines and Operating procedures*

Summary of actions from Tokyo

(Refer to the Appendix 1 summary of new Guidelines and Operating processes)

1. Working Group structure

In Hawaii and Tokyo it was discussed and agreed in general that the following changes to Working Groups needed to be made to ensure they are relevant to the Forum members:

- a) Working Group membership needs to be more active and engaged
- b) Role and responsibilities of the Working Group Chair needs to be more clearly articulated with greater support from members and the Secretariat
- c) That the Roles and Responsibilities of members needs to be clearly articulated
- d) Working Groups need to be clear about the frequency by which they meet, a clear structure and outcomes are well articulated
- e) Working Group outputs must be more visible; ensuring all Working Groups have Terms of Reference, time bound tasks, annual work plans and report back annually on progress.
- f) Must be aligned to APEC goals and work programme

2. Establishing *Point of Contact* or *Subject Matter Experts*

The current Working Groups have been in place for many years and some groups do not currently have active projects or membership. These groups may no longer be needed, however their knowledge and expertise needs to be retained by APLMF. It is suggested that if a Working Group is dis-established, an APLMF *Point of Contact* or *Subject Matter Expert* on that subject area is identified by APLMF and named on our website. This person would be a point of contact for that subject area and responsible for answering questions from member economies, working with the Training Co-ordinator on responses to training needs, monitoring international developments, liaison with International Organisation of Legal Metrology (OIML) activities and when necessary reporting to APLMF members and suggesting future activity in that subject area.

3. Training Coordinator

It was discussed and agreed that the Training Working Group be moved out of the APLMF Working Group structure and into a specific role within the APLMF Secretariat. This change was made to reflect the importance of APLMF's training activities and the universal nature of this role across all of areas of legal metrology. This change will also enable more effective co-ordination, support and delivery of the work streams of Metrology Enabling Developing Economies in Asia (MEDEA) project focused on training and regional development.

As the incumbent Chair of the previous Training Working Group and APLMF representative on the MEDEA Consultative Committee, Mrs Marian Haire was confirmed by the APLMF President as the inaugural Training Coordinator in 2017.

The term of the Training Coordinator role will be for a period of up to three years and future succession of the role will be to an individual selected from Member Economy nominations by the Executive Committee.

4. Biannual Needs Assessment review

It was agreed that every second-year, members identify new issues and topics that the APLMF should be addressing and undertaking within its work programme. This could result in an extension of a current Working Group's Terms of Reference or the establishment of a new Working Group.

Next Steps – transition plan

It is proposed that members note or agree to the following recommendations to progress the implementation of the new Guidelines and Operational processes for current and future Working Groups.

1. **NOTE** that the Working Group for Training Coordination has been disestablished and replaced with a role within the Secretariat created to carry out the responsibilities of Training Coordination.
2. **NOTE** Mrs Marian Haire has been confirmed as the inaugural Training Coordinator in 2017.
3. **APPROVE** that the Training Coordinator role term be for a maximum of three years.
4. **APPROVE** the new Guidelines and Operational Processes for Working Groups.
5. **APPROVE** that a needs assessment be carried out every two years. Noting that the first needs assessment will be undertaken as part the 24th Working Group meeting in Cambodia 2017.
6. **NOTE** that on the agenda at the 24th Working Group meetings in Cambodia will be a request for ideas for new topics for Working Group projects.
7. **APPROVE** that the Secretariat ask all current Chairs to evaluate their current Working Group membership and work programme with a view to deciding whether the Group is still relevant and should remain a Working Group.
8. **APPROVE** the appointment of *Point of Contact* or *Subject Matter Experts* on key subject areas where a Working Group has been disestablished.

Appendix One: Proposed New Guidelines and Operating processes for Projects and Working Groups

Chair – Role and responsibilities

- The Chair's primary role is to lead the work programme of the Group, and to ensure that there are sufficient members of the Group to support the work programme.
- Ensuring the right composition of skills is available to deliver on agreed tasks.
- The Chair is expected to consider drawing on additional resources from outside of APLMF to help accomplish the work plan (for example, involving consumer groups, industry bodies, authorities, experts/technical support).
- Prioritising the tasks of the Working Group and establishing the timelines for completion of the work programme.
- The Chair is responsible for establishing how the Group will operate in terms of teleconferencing, email discussions or webinars etc., setting the agenda for meetings, providing members with minutes or action points from any meeting.
- The Chair is expected to forward presentations, minutes and agendas, working papers etc. to the Secretariat for uploading onto the Working Group pages on the APLMF website (Members Only Section).
- The Chair is responsible for establishing expectations amongst members of the Group on how they will work together, encourage active collaboration by all members at meetings and using an open and collaborative approach to resolving differences of opinion within the Group.
- Developing a Terms of Reference for the Working Group
- The Chair is responsible for the delivery of the annual report of the Working Group's activities and the proposed future activities to all member economies at the annual APLMF meeting. This written report to be delivered six weeks before the date of the annual meeting to enable all Forum members to read the report and identify questions or issues for discussion at the Forum meeting.
- The Chair is responsible for updating the President and Secretariat of any developments or achievements of the Working Group.
- The Chair will identify work in their Group that is of interest to all members and to provide a short summary for inclusion in the President's newsletter.
- The Chair is to take account of ongoing work and discussions in other international groups (e.g. OIML Technical Committees) and Specialist Regional Bodies (e.g. APMP) etc., and to update Group members, as appropriate, via regular meetings and the Working Group's website page.

Members – Roles and responsibilities

- Members of Working Groups are expected to work collaboratively in undertaking the tasks agreed in their annual work plan, and deliver the specific work as agreed by the Chair at the regular Working Group meetings.

- Members are expected to help the Chair in preparing the annual report (e.g. providing peer review or specific material/information).

Working Group Meetings

- Working Groups are responsible for arranging their own work programmes according to their Terms of Reference and will hold meetings when necessary (and in a way that enables members to collaborate effectively).
- All invitations, agendas and documents sent to Group members in relation to any meeting are to be copied to the APLMF Secretariat, and will be uploaded in the Members Only Working Group section of the APLMF Website.
- The Secretariat will explore and develop new technological options that can better support Working Group activities collaborative engagement, for example, team viewer, videoconferencing, Central virtual meetings/webinar etc.
- The Secretariat will also provide a short summary outlining meeting processes and protocols to assist new members and support their active engagement in Working Group and Forum meetings.

Work Plans

- The APLMF Working Groups are established to support the work programme and activities of the Forum by undertaking specific tasks or projects in a collaborative environment.
- Each Working Group Chair provides a written report and presentation to the Forum on their Group's previous year's activities and proposed activities for the upcoming year.
- The future work plans of each Working Group are agreed by the Forum at the annual meeting.
- The Working Groups endeavour to provide an environment that facilitates detailed discussion and collaboration on addressing specific issues that of interest to member economies (and to a lesser extent, corresponding members).

There are three key mechanisms to help guide each Working Group's activities:

1. **Terms of Reference – Each Working Group has** clearly defined Terms of Reference to assist in framing the tasks undertaken by the Group. However, not all Groups appear to have Terms of Reference, and the Forum does not revisit the original terms of reference to ensure that they remain valid. It is proposed that the Terms of Reference be periodically reviewed three (3) yearly by the Working Group and reaffirmed by the Forum. In the first instance, it is proposed that each Working Group undertake to review their Terms of Reference and update the Forum on any modifications.
2. **Time-limited tasks** – Each Working Group is set up to undertake a series of specific tasks that are limited in time. However, to date no Working Group has ceased or completed its specific tasks, or have established new tasks. In some instances, a Working Group's activities are core to the APLMF operations and are likely to be ongoing, such as, Training Coordination. As a result, the activities undertaken the Training Working Group have become part of the work of the APLMF Secretariat,

with a specific person assuming responsibility for role of Training Co-ordinator within the Secretariat.

3. **Needs assessment** – undertaking assessment of member’s needs every two years to determine areas of interest and identifying any new issues that the APLMF should be undertaking a specific collaborative work programme or project to address. Some topics may not require a Working Group to be established and could be addressed by tasking a specialist or expert to prepare a report for the members. However, there is also benefit in member economies working together to identify different solutions and risks associated with various topics, and a new issue may require either a new Working Group to be established, or an existing Working Group to broaden its remit (Terms of Reference) to undertake the work.

Approval of the work plan

- The Chair with the support and agreement of the Working Group members will develop a work plan.
- The proposed draft work plan will be distributed to all APLMF member six weeks prior to the APLMF Annual meeting, to enable all members to provide feedback and commentary to the Chair (copied to the Secretariat for posting on the Working Group web page).
- Members will also be encouraged to raise questions or seek clarification, which the Chair can address at the annual Forum Working Group sessions.
- The Chair, in consultation with the Working Group, will make any revisions to the proposed work plan and distribute the final draft before the annual APLMF meeting. This version will be presented at the Forum and be the basis for any further discussion on the proposed work plan.
- All members at the APLMF annual meeting will endorse each future work plan.

Reports

- The Working Groups are required to prepare yearly reports for each annual meeting of the APLMF. These reports are to be sent to the APLMF Secretariat at least **six (6) weeks before the APLMF annual meeting**, so the Secretariat can provide the reports to all APLMF members and upload them to the Annual Meeting webpage (together with other material for the annual meeting).

The annual report should cover the following:

- Details of the membership of the Working Group
 - Progress and activities since the last annual APLMF meeting
 - Proposed programme for further work (for next year and out years)
 - Identification of any emerging issues, risks, resourcing issues, engagement etc., and any proposed solutions for APLMF Executive or members to consider
- The distribution of the future work plans and annual reports outlining the current year’s activities by the Working Group, prior to the annual meeting will ensure greater engagement and discussion of the Working Group’s activities by APLMF members.

Appendix 2: Current APLMF Working Groups

Working Group	Date	Chair	Scope	Objective(s)
Training Coordination (Moved from Working Group to Training Coordinator position in 2017)	1994	Mrs Marian Haire Australia	Training is an important component in developing regional confidence in measurement and testing and it has been a key delivery action of the Forum in the region.	To establish a regionally consistent training program that will provide highly competent staff and a comparable legal metrology system in the region.
Goods Packed by Measure (Originally known as <i>Prepacked Articles</i>)	1994	Mr Phil Sorrell New Zealand	Legislative and administrative requirements for prepacked articles, including short measure, identification of the packer on the packet, standard sizes, permitted deficiencies, drained weight and deceptive packaging	To harmonize the requirements for prepacked articles in the Asia-Pacific economies with a view to removing technical barriers to trade.
Mutual Recognition Arrangements	1994	Dr Charles Ehrlich United States of America	The identification of the requirements for mutual recognition arrangements between legal metrology authorities in the region and other regional legal metrology bodies is key to removing barriers to free trade in the region.	To support free trade in measuring instruments and the removal of technical barriers to trade through mutual recognition arrangements of measurement and testing in legal metrology
Utility Meters	1995	Mr Alan Johnston Canada	Utility meters covered by the Group covers wide range of measuring instruments: water meters, gas meters, electricity meters, taximeters, telephone meters and heat meters. Given the significant of international trade in these meters, focus is on ensuring harmonisation of pattern approval requirements for meters.	To ensure that requirements for utility meters are harmonized within the Asia-Pacific region.

Working Group	Date	Chair	Scope	Objective(s)
Medical Measurement	1996	Mr Chung-Lin WANG Chinese Taipei	Accuracy and reliability of medical measuring instruments, with a focusing on the harmonisation, pattern approval and verification of electronic sphygmomanometers (instruments for measuring blood pressure).	To ensure the accuracy and reliability of medical measuring instruments in human medication and to promote harmonization and pattern approval in the region.
Quality Measurement of Agricultural Products	1996	To be confirmed	Development of requirements to calibrate, verify and test rice moisture meters as well as other instruments/ requirements for quality analysis of agricultural products (eg moisture and protein in cereal grains and oilseeds)	To ensure the accuracy of measurement used for agricultural products.
Metrological Control Systems	1996	Mr Guo Su People's Republic of China	Focus currently on ionizing radiation metrology for human health and security in medicine on legal metrology system and application of pressure metrology in industry safety.	Developing a total systems approach which ensures that individual elements of the measurement process are assessed in terms of a total process to ensure efficiency in controls mechanisms.