

Subregional Telecommunications Forum: Terms of Reference

Initiation

The Subregional Telecommunications Forum (STCF) was initiated under the GMS Economic Cooperation Program to serve as an advisory body on subregional telecommunications projects and issues. The STCF reports to the Ministerial Conference and the respective governments.

Rationale

The establishment of the STCF responds to the need for a forum that will identify and pursue opportunities for subregional cooperation in the telecommunications sector among the GMS countries. The STCF facilitates the implementation of priority subregional telecommunications projects. It also addresses issues affecting both the facilities and the regulatory and policy aspects of the subregional telecommunications network.

Main Objectives

The STCF has the following objectives:

- Provide a vehicle for the coordination of project planning at the macro level (e.g., studies covering multiple countries);
- Provide a mechanism for facilitating the implementation of priority subregional projects;
- Provide a venue for addressing regulatory and policy issues (e.g., issues related to technical standards, tariffs, regulation and policy formulation);
- Promote the financing of subregional projects by the government concerned, donor agencies, and the private sector;
- Facilitate training projects and other human resource development initiatives in the telecommunications sector; and
- Provide a vehicle for dissemination and exchange of information on telecommunications-related matters.

Membership

Each GMS country is represented by two senior officials in the STCF core group. Additional official(s) are invited to attend STCF meetings, depending on the issues to be discussed.

Chairperson and Venue

The venue (host country) for STCF meetings is rotated among the participating countries. A member of the STCF core group from the host country serves as Chairperson of the STCF. The Chairperson provides the necessary technical, administrative, and coordinating support for STCF activities.

Frequency of STCF Meetings

The STCF meets at least once a year or more frequently depending on its work program.

WGE Meetings Held

- Fifth Meeting, 21-22 February 2001, Bangkok, Thailand
- Steering Committee Meeting for the Regional Technical Assistance on the Establishment of the Backbone Telecommunications Project for the Greater Mekong Subregion - Phase 1 (RETA 5915), 18 December 2000, Bangkok, Thailand
- Fourth Meeting, 25-26 November 1999, Vientiane, Lao PDR
- Third Meeting, 2-4 July 1997, Pattaya, Thailand
- Second Meeting, 3-4 July 1996, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- Senior Officials' Meeting, 6-7 November 1995, ADB Headquarters, Manila, Philippines