



# Technical Assistance Report

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Project Number: 46274  
Regional–Policy and Advisory Technical Assistance (R-PATA)  
August 2012

## Facilitating Cross-Border Transport in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Region (Phase 1)

Asian Development Bank

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CAREC	–	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CPMM	–	corridor performance measurement and monitoring
CWRD	–	Central and West Asia Department
TA	–	technical assistance
TASU	–	TA supervising unit
TTF	–	transport and trade facilitation

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLASSIFICATION

<b>Type</b>	–	Regional—policy advisory technical assistance (R-PATA)
<b>Targeting classification</b>	–	General intervention
<b>Sector (subsectors)</b>	–	Industry and trade (industry and trade sector development, transport management and policies)
<b>Theme (subtheme)</b>	–	Regional cooperation and integration (cross-border infrastructure)
<b>Location (impact)</b>	–	Rural (low), urban (low), national (medium), regional (high)

## NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Improved transport links cut the cost of doing business, create good conditions for larger trade flows, bring people closer to markets and social services, and ultimately accelerate economic growth. This was underscored in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Transport and Trade Facilitation (TTF) strategy endorsed by the CAREC member countries at the sixth ministerial conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in 2007.<sup>1</sup> The TTF strategy aims to (i) establish competitive transport corridors across the CAREC region;<sup>2</sup> (ii) facilitate efficient movement through corridors and across borders; and (iii) develop sustainable, safe, and user-friendly transport and trade networks. In addition to building physical transport infrastructure, the TTF strategy emphasizes the so-called soft areas of harmonizing and simplifying cross-border transport and trade procedures, documentation, and regulations among the countries, to create a level playing field for economic operators and to promote efficiency and better services. CAREC national focal points have stressed the urgency of acting in the soft areas of the TTF strategy.

2. A seminar on corridor-based transport facilitation arrangements in the CAREC region in July 2012 identified key constraints on cross-border transport in the region, described existing transport facilitation arrangements, and recommended future action. Through technical assistance (TA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as CAREC program secretariat, will be able to support cross-border transport facilitation in the CAREC region.<sup>3</sup> It will build on earlier loans, grants, and TA that supported TTF under the CAREC program.<sup>4</sup> The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

## II. ISSUES

3. The CAREC TTF strategy pursues more efficient movement across borders by removing nonphysical barriers, which are legal, regulatory, administrative, documentary, organizational, and similar hindrances that adversely affect the efficiency, speed, and cost of cross-border transport. These barriers needlessly increase transport costs and, consequently, the prices of raw materials and commodities. In extreme cases, these barriers completely prohibit the cross-

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<sup>1</sup> Founded in 2001, CAREC is a partnership of 10 countries—Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—and six multilateral institutions: the Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, Islamic Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, and World Bank. ADB has served as the CAREC secretariat since 2001.

<sup>2</sup> The six CAREC corridors are (i) Europe–East Asia, (ii) Mediterranean–East Asia, (iii) Russian Federation–Middle East–South Asia, (iv) Russian Federation–East Asia, (v) East Asia–Middle East and South Asia, and (vi) Europe–Middle East and South Asia.

<sup>3</sup> ADB's vice-president for Operations 1 provided concept clearance for the TA on 28 June 2012. The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB's website on 15 August 2012.

<sup>4</sup> (i) ADB. 2002. *Regional Trade Facilitation and Customs Cooperation*. Manila (Loan 1926-KGZ and Loan 1927-TAJ; \$15 million and \$10 million, respectively); (ii) ADB. 2004. *Regional Customs Modernization and Infrastructure Development*. Manila (Loan 2113-KGZ and Loan 2114-TAJ; \$7.5 million and \$10.7 million, respectively); (iii) ADB. 2007. *Integrated Trade Facilitation Support for Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation*. Manila (TA 6437-REG); (iv) ADB. 2009. *Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation: Working with the Private Sector in Trade Facilitation*. Manila (TA 7353-REG); (v) ADB. 2004. *Regional Trade Facilitation and Customs Cooperation, Phase 2* (TA 6203-REG); (vi) ADB. 2004. *Formulating and Implementing an Intergovernmental Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Facilitation of International Road Transport*. Manila (TA 6223-REG); (vii) ADB. 2006. *Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation: Transport Sector Strategy Study*. Manila (TA 6347-REG); and (viii) ADB. 2011. *Preparing the CAREC Transport and Trade Facilitation Project: Border Crossing Point Improvement and Single Window Development*. Manila (TA 7775-REG).

border transport of goods, people, and services. The new 10-year strategic framework for CAREC (CAREC 2020), which was endorsed by the member countries in November 2011, emphasizes the importance of TTF to achieving the strategic objectives of expanded trade and improved competitiveness.<sup>5</sup>

4. An assessment of transport and trade indicators along CAREC corridors was conducted from January to December 2011 as part of CAREC corridor performance measurement and monitoring (CPMM).<sup>6</sup> CPMM revealed that the average time required to clear a border crossing point was 7.9 hours;<sup>7</sup> the average cost at a border crossing point was \$156; the average speed for a 20-ton truck or 20-foot-equivalent-unit container to travel 500 kilometers along a CAREC corridor section was 38 kilometers per hour without delay and 22 kilometers per hour with delay; and the average cost to travel along a corridor section was \$959. Although there were improvements in the values of some CPMM indicators in 2011 over 2010, many bottlenecks and impediments to the smooth flow of goods, vehicles, and people were observed along each of the six CAREC corridors.

5. There are many cross-border transport facilitation agreements involving CAREC member countries designed to mitigate nonphysical barriers to the smooth movement of goods and people between and among them. These include international transport facilitation conventions to which many CAREC countries are contracting parties; plurilateral agreements such as those under the Transport Corridor Europe–Caucasus–Asia Program, Economic Cooperation Organization, and Shanghai Cooperation Organization; and bilateral transport agreements such as the Agreement on the Cross-Border Transport of Persons, Vehicles, and Goods within the Framework of Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.<sup>8</sup> Progress in finalizing and implementing these arrangements has been varied and generally slow, barely addressing the key constraints on cross-border transport in the CAREC region: (i) restrictions on the entry of motor vehicles, often causing costly and time-consuming transshipment; (ii) different standards pertaining to vehicle size, weight, and safety requirements, as well as driver qualifications; (iii) inconsistent and difficult formalities related to customs procedures, inspections, clearances, and assessment of duties; and (iv) restrictive visa requirements.

6. As part of CAREC 2020's action plan for 2011–2015, it is envisaged that transport facilitation agreements will be reviewed, formulated, and implemented on a pilot basis along selected CAREC corridors and their border crossing points. Pilots will be selected according to the interest and willingness of countries to participate, the volume of international trade passing through the corridor, and the readiness of transport and border infrastructure to handle increased cross-border traffic.

7. At their meeting in Beijing in September 2011, CAREC national focal points discussed proposals to pursue cross-border transport facilitation in the region in line with CAREC 2020. Participants concurred on the need to remove nonphysical barriers to interstate and transit trade. They agreed that, as a first step, ADB will organize information-sharing workshops and country consultations on ongoing and planned transport facilitation arrangements in CAREC countries,

<sup>5</sup> ADB. 2011. *CAREC 2020: A Strategic Framework for the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program, 2011–2020*. Manila.

<sup>6</sup> ADB. 2012. *CAREC Corridor Performance Measurement & Monitoring: Annual Report 2011*. Manila.

<sup>7</sup> A study of the New Eurasian Land Transport Initiative reported that crossing European borders takes only 2 hours on average.

<sup>8</sup> Afghanistan has expressed its intention to become a contracting party to the agreement and signed with Tajikistan a protocol to formalize its accession. The protocol is being considered by the Kyrgyz Republic.

with a view to formulating recommendations on feasible approaches for addressing nonphysical barriers to the cross-border movement of goods and people along CAREC corridors. These approaches could include (i) amending existing agreements to make them operational, (ii) implementing critical provisions of existing agreements to carry out key facilitation measures, and (iii) formulating and implementing simple corridor-based transport facilitation agreements.

### III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

8. The TA will help facilitate the cross-border movement of goods and people in the CAREC region, which is in line with the CAREC TTF strategy and the operational priorities of TTF under CAREC 2020. It will complement ongoing and completed physical investments made in CAREC corridors. The TA, which is the first phase of a planned series of TA projects to help promote cross-border transport in the CAREC region, will complement related trade facilitation measures supported by ADB. It will help (i) identify key nonphysical barriers along priority CAREC corridors, (ii) formulate feasible approaches for addressing them, and (iii) prepare for adopting these agreed approaches. Subsequent phases will build on the results of the first phase and, subject to the satisfactory implementation of the first phase, support other activities in line with the agreed approaches and provide similar support for other priority CAREC corridors.

#### A. Impact and Outcome

9. The impact will be enhanced cross-border transport along CAREC corridors. The outcome will be the commencement of transport facilitation arrangements in the CAREC region. The TA will put into action priority cross-border transport facilitation measures in selected CAREC corridors.

#### B. Methodology and Key Activities

10. The TA will help deliver the following outputs: (i) CAREC countries agree on feasible approaches to mitigate nonphysical barriers to cross-border transport along CAREC corridors; and (ii) based on the first output, the required transport facilitation arrangements are identified and prepared for implementation.

11. **Agreement on feasible approaches to cross-border transport.** The TA will support the conduct of knowledge events on international good practice on cross-border transport facilitation and its benefits, for the participation of key stakeholders in CAREC countries. Based on feedback received from these knowledge events, detailed consultations and related studies will then be undertaken with selected CAREC countries on possible transport facilitation arrangements that may be pursued for the CAREC corridors that traverse them. These studies will (i) assess the nonphysical barriers to cross-border transport and benefits derived by addressing them; (ii) develop a sound business case for cross-border transport facilitation initiatives through the CAREC platform, taking into account the expected results from the planned midterm review of the CAREC TTF strategy,<sup>9</sup> and (iii) formulate feasible approaches to facilitating cross-border transport in selected corridors. Subregional meetings will be organized to discuss the outcomes of the consultation and studies with a view to reaching agreement on feasible approaches to facilitating cross-border transport along selected CAREC corridors.

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<sup>9</sup> To be undertaken under the auspices of planned ADB TA for approval in 2012.

12. **Identification and preparation of transport facilitation arrangements.** Based on the agreements reached on feasible approaches to cross-border transport, the TA will help (i) identify the transport facilitation arrangements to be pursued for selected corridors and (ii) determine the required assistance to formulate and prepare for implementation the agreed transport facilitation arrangements. The TA will support the latter by providing (i) assistance in establishing new national TTF committees, or operationalizing existing ones, in participating countries, which will be responsible for implementing the agreed transport facilitation arrangements; (ii) technical, legal, and/or coordinating support to the committees; (iii) advisory support to participating governments toward drafting amended or new laws and regulations necessary to implement transport facilitation arrangements; (iv) assistance in formulating operations manuals and related training for officials concerned; and/or (v) outreach and awareness raising targeting key stakeholders.

13. Attaining the expected TA impact assumes that ongoing and planned complementary trade facilitation measures will achieve their desired results. Another assumption is that border crossing points along CAREC corridors will be upgraded or modernized.

### **C. Cost and Financing**

14. The TA will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-IV). The TA is estimated to cost \$1.5 million equivalent (cost estimates are in Appendix 2).

### **D. Implementation Arrangements**

15. ADB will be the executing agency for the TA, which will be administered by the Central and West Asia Department (CWRD). Any existing national joint TTF committees, including national joint committees already established in the context of the CAREC TTF strategy, will be TA implementing agencies.<sup>10</sup> A team comprising two international staff members and one analyst from CWRD will oversee the implementation of the TA, which will be closely coordinated with the ADB East Asia Department. The TA will be implemented from September 2012 to December 2015.

16. Implementing the TA will require about 20 person-months of international consultancy from one TTF specialist (18 person-months) and short-term experts and resource persons (2 person-months combined) and about 106 person-months of national consultancy from three legal specialists (18 person-months combined), four TTF specialists (48 person-months combined), and one CAREC transport facilitation analyst (40 person-months). The consultants' outline terms of reference are in Appendix 3. These consultants will report to two international staff members in CWRD, who will act as team leaders and supervise consultants' work. Consultants will be engaged as individuals because (i) the tasks to be undertaken and the countries of origin of the consultants are diverse, (ii) CAREC national focal points are expected to be actively involved in implementing the TA and coordinating with CAREC as a whole, and (iii) CWRD staff will actively manage TA implementation. The consultants will be engaged by ADB in accordance with its Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2010, as amended from time to time). Some office and telecommunication equipment may be procured by ADB in coordination

<sup>10</sup> For example, the Kyrgyz Republic established a national joint committee on 29 January 2008 under the leadership of the minister of economic regulation (pursuant to Regulation on National Joint Council of Kyrgyz Republic on Transport and Trade Facilitation No. 29), and Tajikistan established a national joint committee on 2 October 2010 under the leadership of the first deputy prime minister (pursuant to Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 104).

with the Office of Administrative Services and Office of Information Systems and Technology. Equipment will be procured pursuant to ADB *Project Administration Instruction* 5.09, section L on Purchasing Equipment and Vehicles. This equipment will be turned over to implementing agencies upon TA completion.

17. Workshops, trainings, or seminars will be held during implementation. All procurement of goods and other services under the TA will be made in accordance with ADB's Procurement Guidelines (2010, as amended from time to time). Disbursements under the TA will be done in accordance with the ADB *Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook* (2010, as amended from time to time).

18. Reports on TA outputs will be submitted to the CAREC senior officials' meetings and annual CAREC ministerial conferences, as well as posted on the CAREC program website ([www.carecprogram.org](http://www.carecprogram.org)). The TA outcome will be measured by resource allocations from participating governments to the implementation of transport facilitation arrangements and will be reported to the CAREC ministerial conference and disseminated through the CAREC website.

#### **IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION**

19. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$1,500,000 on a grant basis for Facilitating Cross-Border Transport in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Region (Phase 1), and hereby reports this action to the Board.

## DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Design Summary	Performance Targets and Indicators with Baselines	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
<b>Impact</b>  Enhanced cross-border transport along CAREC corridors	By 2018, relative to 2011, the corridor time-cost distance methodology indicators for time will be reduced by at least 50%, and for cost by at least 30%, along the CAREC corridor(s) where agreed transport facilitation measures will apply.	CAREC corridors performance measurement and monitoring studies and World Bank Logistics Performance Index	<b>Assumptions</b>  Ongoing and planned complementary trade facilitation measures achieve their desired results.  Border crossing points along CAREC corridors are upgraded and modernized.
<b>Outcome</b>  Implementation of transport facilitation arrangement(s) commenced	By 2016, participating governments put in place or operationalize national bodies to oversee the implementation of the agreed transport facilitation arrangement(s).	Report of CAREC senior officials to the 15th CAREC ministerial conference	<b>Assumption</b>  CAREC corridors where transport facilitation arrangements will be implemented are in good condition.  <b>Risk</b> Influential groups with vested interests in the status quo lobby against cross-border transport facilitation.
<b>Outputs</b>  1. CAREC countries agree on feasible approaches to mitigate nonphysical barriers to cross-border transport along CAREC corridors.  2. Required transport facilitation arrangements are identified and prepared for implementation.	By 2013, CAREC members identify key barriers to cross-border transport along CAREC corridors and agree on potential methods for overcoming them.  By 2015, CAREC members that agreed to pursue cross-border transport facilitation arrangements complete detailed action plans drawn up by their respective national transport and trade facilitation committees.	Transport sector progress reports that are presented to CAREC senior officials' meetings	<b>Assumption</b>  Member countries remain committed to the CAREC transport and trade facilitation sector strategy goal of facilitating efficient movement through corridors and across borders.

Activities with Milestones	Inputs	
	ADB: \$1.5 million	
	Item	Amount (\$'000)
<b>1. CAREC countries agree on feasible approaches to mitigate nonphysical barriers to cross-border transport along CAREC corridors.</b>  1.1 Conduct knowledge events and consultations with countries on cross-border transport facilitation (Q4 2012–Q3 2013). 1.2 Carry out related studies (Q1 2013–Q3 2013). 1.3 Organize subregional and regional meetings and workshops to finalize studies (Q2 2013–Q3 2013).  <b>2. Required transport facilitation arrangements are identified and prepared for implementation.</b>  2.1. Identify and prepare appropriate transport facilitation arrangements between and among the countries concerned (Q3 2013–Q2 2014). 2.2 Help establish or operationalize national transport and trade facilitation committees in participating countries (Q2 2014–Q4 2015). 2.3 Assist participating countries in the required areas identified under item 2.1 above (Q3 2014–Q4 2015).	Consultants	800
	Equipment	60
	Training, seminars, conferences	480
	Publications, communications, and report preparation	20
	Miscellaneous administrative and support costs	20
	Contingencies	120

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CAREC = Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation, Q = quarter.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

**COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN**  
(\$'000)

Item	Total Cost
<b>Asian Development Bank<sup>a</sup></b>	
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration and per diem	
i. International consultants	390
ii. National consultants	286
b. International and local travel	124
2. Equipment <sup>b</sup>	60
3. Training, seminars, and conferences	480
4. Publications, communications, and report preparation	20
5. Miscellaneous administration and support costs	20
6. Contingencies	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,500</b>

<sup>a</sup> Financed by the Asian Development Bank's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-IV).

<sup>b</sup> This will be such basic office equipment as microcomputers and related software, which will be procured through shopping in accordance with Asian Development Bank Procurement Guidelines (2010, as amended from time to time).

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

## **OUTLINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS**

1. Under the supervision of the Central and West Asia Department (CWRD) team overseeing technical assistance (TA) implementation, about 20 person-months of international consultancy and 106 person-months of national consultancy will be engaged to help implement the TA. These consultants will report to two international staff members of CWRD, who will act as team leaders and supervise consultants' work. Consultants will be recruited as individuals in accordance with Asian Development Bank (ADB) Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2010, as amended from time to time). The indicative person-month requirements and terms of reference of the consultants are set out below. The schedule of recruitment will depend on the results of initial consultations that will be conducted at the inception of the TA.

### **A. International Consultants**

#### **1. Transport and Trade Facilitation Specialist (18 person-months)**

2. The transport and trade facilitation (TTF) specialist will have extensive knowledge of transport, transport and trade facilitation, and regional cooperation, preferably with at least 5 years of experience working with countries in Central and West Asia. The specialist's key deliverables will be studies on nonphysical barriers to cross-border transport and approaches to addressing them. The responsibilities of the specialist will include the following:

- (i) Assess projected demand for cross-border transport along Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) corridors in consultation with the experts for the midterm review of the CAREC TTF strategy and action plan.
- (ii) Work closely with the CAREC trade facilitation team to assess the key barriers to cross-border transport along high-priority, high-demand CAREC corridors.
- (iii) Take stock of existing and planned transport facilitation arrangements affecting high-priority, high-demand CAREC corridors, including existing and planned assistance from external aid agencies.
- (iv) Recommend approaches and measures to facilitate transport along high-priority corridors, including formulating detailed and time-bound action plans for the governments concerned and other stakeholders.
- (v) Provide the technical lead in forging agreements, as necessary, between and among countries that need to undertake transport facilitation along high-priority CAREC corridors.
- (vi) Identify and help implement high-priority capacity- and institution-building measures to prepare the countries to implement transport facilitation arrangements.
- (vii) Review and recommend improvements, as needed, to the operations manuals and other procedures to be drafted by the team of national consultants.
- (viii) Provide guidance to TA supervising unit (TASU) specialists supervising the work of the national transport and trade facilitation specialist.
- (ix) Carry out other, related tasks as requested by the TASU specialists.
- (x) Prepare reports requested by TASU specialists using the inputs received from the other consultants.

#### **2. Short-term Experts and Resource Persons (2 person-months combined)**

3. It is expected that TA implementation will require specialized, short-term skills related to tasks that will be performed by the other specialists to be engaged. These evolving needs will be addressed by the short-term use of resource persons and specialists recognized in their

respective fields and possessing good communication skills. The specialists may support the work of the international TTF specialist and/or serve as trainers and resource persons in meetings, workshops, and seminars conducted under the TA.

## **B. National Consultants**

### **1. Legal Specialists (3 positions, 18 person-months combined)**

4. The legal specialists should have legal degrees and experience in transport, TTF, and regional cooperation. The specialists will help formulate recommendations on possible revisions to laws and regulations related to transport facilitation and assist the work of the international TTF specialist. Their responsibilities will include the following:

- (i) Help identify necessary changes to, and improvements on, laws and regulations related to transport facilitation in countries that agree to carry out transport facilitation arrangements.
- (ii) Assist in formulating constituent and governance documentation and the required government decrees to establish and strengthen national TTF committees in preparation for implementing agreed transport facilitation measures.
- (iii) Help draft the operations manuals to prepare for the implementation of transport facilitation measures.
- (iv) Provide legal advice on matters necessary for the orderly implementation of transport facilitation measures.
- (v) Carry out other, related tasks as requested by the TASU specialists.

### **2. Transport and Trade Facilitation Specialists (4 positions, 48 person-months combined)**

5. The TTF specialists will have college degrees and experience in TTF and regional cooperation. The specialists will assist the international TTF specialist, and their responsibilities will include the following:

- (i) Help governments prepare their respective time-bound action plans for implementing transport facilitation measures.
- (ii) Serve as key coordinating staff of national TTF committees.
- (iii) Help conduct training to prepare for implementing transport facilitation measures.
- (iv) Help organize meetings of national TTF committees and other meetings related to the TA.
- (v) Serve as the principal focal point and contact point of TASU specialists for activities related to transport facilitation in the various countries.
- (vi) Carry out other, related tasks as requested by the TASU specialists.

### **3. CAREC Transport Facilitation Analyst (40 person-months)**

6. The CAREC transport facilitation analyst shall have a graduate degree in economics, business, or a related field, as well as experience in regional cooperation. The analyst will provide technical and administrative support for activities to be implemented under the TA. Responsibilities will include the following:

- (i) Help the CWRD team coordinate TA activities, including facilitating communication among the team, CAREC trade facilitation team, consultants, and participating governments.

- (ii) Provide secretariat and coordinating support for all TA-related activities, including administrative and communication tasks at ADB and organizing and updating TA information and data.
- (iii) Develop and maintain a system to monitor progress in TA implementation.
- (iv) Prepare progress reports and reference documents for TA-related meetings, workshops, and seminars, as well as other CAREC meetings that include transport facilitation in the agenda.
- (v) Assist the preparation, publication, and dissemination of knowledge products coming out of the TA.
- (vi) Contribute to the CAREC Program website relevant information on TA implementation.
- (vii) Organize regional meetings, seminars, and workshops related to the TA.
- (viii) Carry out other, related tasks as requested by the TASU specialists.