

**OBJECTIVE OF THE ASIAN REGIONAL  
ENGINEERING EDUCATION ACCORD COMMITTEE**

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## **Objective of the Asian Regional Engineering Education Accord Committee**

Federation of Engineering Institutions of Southeast Asia and the Pacific (FEISEAP) decided at its 13th General Assembly held on August 2005 at Jakarta to establish Asian Regional Engineering Education Accreditation Committee (Tentative Name) and asked the Institution of Professional Engineers, Japan (IPEJ) to chair the Committee. I was asked to chair the Committee by IPEJ.

One of the five requirements for the registration as an APEC Engineer and/or International Engineer of Engineers' Mobility Forum (EMF) is the completion of an accredited or recognized engineering program or assessed as equivalent. There are a number of ways to meet this condition. One is successful completion of "an engineering degree delivered and accredited in accordance with the best practice guidelines developed by FEISEAP" as quoted in the APEC Engineer Manual and the Constitution of EMF. An engineering degree accredited by Washington Accord is one of the other alternatives. The main task of the Committee is to elaborate this past work of FEISEAP.

After the establishments of APEC Engineer Agreement and EMF, Washington Accord developed its system to make substantial equivalence of the accredited programs of its member countries/economies by review visits and exchange of information at International Engineering Meetings (IEM). Completion of engineering programs delivered and accredited in accordance with the best practice guidelines developed by FEISEAP would not be sufficient to meet the academic requirement for the registrations of both APEC Agreement and EMF in the near future unless substantial equivalence has to be maintained among the engineering programs at the same standard with that of Washington Accord. This has been emphasized at IEM 2006 held in Dublin in the position paper "Workshop 10: Framework for Possible Merger of EMF/APEC/FEANI" prepared by Alec Hay of the Engineering Council of South Africa". For this purpose, it is necessary that the best practice guidelines need to be updated incorporating review visits, regular exchange of information and so on similar to Washington Accord. Without this updating the "guidelines" might be forced to be removed from the APEC Engineer Manual and from the constitution of EMF. If this takes place, some of the member countries/economies of APEC Engineer Agreement might face difficulty to retain their memberships unless they become full members of Washington Accord or develop other alternative ways. The alternative ways such as assessment of academic qualification by newly established outcome examinations would not be easily recognized as substantially equivalent to the graduates of Washington Accord accredited programs. This may imply, in turn, that countries/ economies, which may face difficulty to become full members of Washington Accord, may be difficult to retain their memberships of APEC Engineer Agreement itself.

The above situation might result in losing identity of APEC Engineer Agreement since the memberships of all remaining members of APEC Agreement might be the full members of EMF, while EMF may include non-APEC members.

There are many ways to elaborate the FEISEAP best practice guidelines. One of the most favorable would be to agree to establish an accord or network within FEISEAP member countries/ economies, or extend memberships to non-member countries/economies in Asia and the Pacific region. It is essential that the graduates of the programs of the accord or network meet the benchmark of Washington Accord. Considering a large variation of outcomes of the programs for some of the member countries/economies within the region, it might be necessary to select programs of the accord or network to maintain the benchmark of Washington Accord. Adopting grading system of the accredited programs is one of the ways as practiced in the past for the entry of a country to the membership of APEC Engineer Agreement. Adopting additional conditions as practiced in the U. K. and the U.S. would be another alternative way. There maybe other alternatives.

A one day kick off meeting of the Committee is planned on Sunday, 17 December 2006 following immediately after the Accreditation Board for Engineering Education (JABEE) Symposium to be held on 15 and 16 December in Tokyo. The venue is the same with that of the JABEE Symposium.

The kick off meeting is a sort of opportunity for free exchange of the views of the regional countries/economies for the possible establishment of a Regional Accord or Network.

By the nature of the objective of the possible Committee, it would be appropriate to have two official representatives from each country/economy, if they so prefer, one on the issue of registration and the other on the issue of accreditation from each institution of engineers, or if accreditation organization is independent from the institution of engineers, a representative from such independent organization. Some of the full member signatories of Washington Accord in the region are hoped to participate in the Committee to mediate the possible accord or network with Washington Accord.

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