



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2017/SOM3/014**

Agenda Item: 8

## **Report on APEC Workshop on Enhancing Whistleblower Protection in Corruption Cases**

Purpose: Information  
Submitted by: Chinese Taipei



**Third Senior Officials' Meeting  
Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam  
29-30 August 2017**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The APEC Workshop on Enhancing Whistleblower Protection in Corruption Cases was held in Taipei from July 19 to 20, 2017. Around 100 people participated in the workshop, including delegates from 13 APEC member economies (Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States, and Viet Nam), 13 experts and scholars from related fields, and professionals from multinational corporations, financial institutions, risk auditing firms, and judicial authorities.

Prior to the workshop, the 13 participating APEC member economies filled in a questionnaire and 16 feedback items were submitted. Papua New Guinea completed the accumulation of data and analysis in May 2017.

The results show that even though most APEC member economies have whistleblower protection regimes, they face a similar challenge, i.e., the involvement of multiple executive agencies. It is therefore necessary to streamline existing structures to prevent future whistleblowers from having to go through complex bureaucracies. Based on the results of the questionnaire, the workshop was divided in five sessions, as described below:

- Session 1: Whistleblower protection in the public sector—legal frameworks
- Session 2: Whistleblower protection in the private sector—recipients and providers
- Session 3: Best practices and experience sharing
- Session 4: APEC cooperation on whistleblower protection

It was suggested that the APEC guiding principles for whistleblower protection should be in line with related rules in G20 countries and of UNCAC. Key performance indicators should be set up to measure the progress of whistleblower protection in each APEC economy. ACTWG and ACT-NET can act as platforms for experience sharing.

- Session 5: Discussions on the draft guiding principles

### **Required Action/Decision Points**

It is recommended that Senior Officials note the current progress of the APEC guiding principles for whistleblower protection.

## **Title: APEC Workshop on Enhancing Whistleblower Protection in Corruption Cases**

### **Background/Key Issues**

The 2015 APEC Leaders' Declaration recognized that corruption impedes economic development, called for promoting cultures of integrity, and supported international cooperation to prevent corruption in APEC. This workshop project aims to strengthen APEC's anti-corruption work through the enhancement of member economies' capabilities to protect whistleblowers.

The existence of an effective whistleblower system can serve as a deterrent to corruption and ensure whistleblowers will be more willing to come forward and provide important information. This will contribute to the advancement of cultures of integrity in the APEC region.

### **APEC Actions**

APEC has strengthened its anti-corruption efforts by enhancing APEC member economies' capabilities to protect whistleblowers. Chinese Taipei and Papua New Guinea held the APEC Workshop on Enhancing Whistleblower Protection in Corruption Cases in 2017 in Taipei to generate suggestions for building successful whistleblower protection systems and to bring together experts to share experiences and best practices in whistleblower protection, how such protection can be implemented in a cost-effective manner, and how it works in practice. The workshop also promoted public-private partnerships by inviting speakers and participants from government, business, and academia.

The outcomes of the project can be summarized as follows:

1. **APEC member economies:** All APEC member economies already appreciate the importance of effective systems. This project seeks to identify gaps in existing systems and processes and examine ways to collectively address these shortcomings through best practice and experience sharing.
2. **Participants:** Participants gained a better understanding of the key elements of an effective whistleblower system, as well as the ability to assess what improvements need to be made to enhance, redefine, or implement whistleblower systems.
  - a) For participants from member economies that have existing systems, this workshop offered validation of their systems and identified deficiencies that need to be addressed through legislative or administrative measures.
  - b) For member economies in the process of developing new or overhauling existing systems, the project provided an excellent basis for further efforts to be based on internationally consistent standards.
3. A set of guiding principles was drafted at the end of the workshop and circulated within the ACTWG. Endorsement will be sought for this set of principles at the annual Concluding Senior Officials' Meeting.
4. The guiding principles of whistleblower protection will serve as reference for APEC member economies in seeking convergence on legislative and executive aspects. Capacity-building needs identified during the workshop were outlined in the final report and reported to the ACTWG with recommendations on future endeavors and potential collaboration with relevant international organizations.