

APEC Telecommunications and Information Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

The Telecommunications and Information Working Group (TEL or TELWG) was established in 1990. It is committed to improving access to and the quality of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) infrastructure in the region and to facilitating effective cooperation and information sharing among stakeholders on the development and the implementation of new and emerging digital technologies, as well as on effective ICT policies and regulations within the Asia-Pacific region. It also aims to enhance social and economic development through the effective use of ICTs as well as to promote a secure and trusted ICT environment to facilitate free and secure trade, investment and sustainable development.

The TELWG plays a crucial role in the implementation of APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER)¹, especially on Key focus areas (KFAs) 1 “Development of digital infrastructure”, 2 “Promotion of Interoperability”, 3 “Achievement of universal broadband access”, 6 “Promoting innovation and adoption of enabling technologies and services” and 7 “Enhancing trust and security in the use of ICTs”. Also the TELWG contributes to KFA 4 “Development of holistic government policy frameworks for the Internet and Digital Economy”, 5 “Promoting coherence and cooperation of regulatory approaches affecting the Internet and Digital Economy”, 9 “Improvement of baseline Internet and Digital Economy measurements” and 10 “Enhancing inclusiveness of Internet and Digital Economy”.

The TELWG is also guided by the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040² economic driver of Innovation and Digitalisation, to strengthen digital infrastructure, accelerate digital transformation, narrow the digital divide, as well as strengthening consumer trust.

2. Goals and Objectives

The main TELWG goal is to establish an ICT ecosystem, characterized by an integrated, seamless, secure, trusted and innovative ICT infrastructure, services and applications, widespread use of ICTs in all sectors of the economy; and improved ICT skills and digital literacy which will enable APEC to attain regional economic integration and growth, including through digital transformation, and physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity, and other relevant APEC goals.

The main objectives of the TELWG are:

- Share knowledge among the TELWG member economies to improve access to and the quality of ICT infrastructure in the region;
- Share best regulatory and business practices and discuss best approaches to the development of Internet and Digital Economy as well as Internet-based platforms, including the aspects of digital transformation;
- Promote secure digital environment that facilitates free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment;
- Encourage capacity building initiatives and take necessary measures among TELWG members to reduce digital divide in the APEC Region;
- Focus on sustainable development and human capacity building;
- Contributes to the implementation of AIDER on KFA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10;
- Strengthen collaboration with other APEC fora and all parties concerned in the field of ICTs.

3. Principles of work

The TELWG sets its priorities in accordance with APEC Leaders, Ministers and Sectoral Ministers (Telecommunication and Information Ministers) Declarations, as well as with Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) official documents and requirements on APEC activities.

The TELWG aims to promote improvement of ICT ecosystem in the APEC region through capacity building activities, including but not limited to conducting studies, workshops and exchanging

¹ http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2017/SOM/CSOM/17_csom_006.pdf

² https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2020/2020_aelm/Annex-A

information to advance goals such as enhancing cooperation and improving regulatory and policy environments.

The TELWG ensures that its work is practical and focused on improving working relationships between stakeholders (government, industries, business, all parties concerned in society, academia and stakeholders specified in Section 11 of ToR) within and among member economies.

The TELWG provides member economies with opportunities to exchange information, views, experiences and analyses concerning telecommunications and information issues related to ICTs in the APEC region, with a particular emphasis on improving and sharing best practice initiatives.

The TELWG ensures that its activities do not duplicate those undertaken by other APEC fora.

The TELWG meetings are paperless to reduce paper consumption. All meeting documents are shared through online collaboration systems managed by the APEC Secretariat, with support by TELWG Program Director.

TELWG provides opportunities for remote participation³ by member economies in TELWG meetings through the assistance of the TELWG meeting Host Economy. In the post-COVID environment, TELWG will endeavour to make virtual/hybrid meeting participation more readily available.

4. TELWG Scope and Priorities

The TELWG consists of member economy policy makers, regulators and experts, working with the private sector, academia, and agreed stakeholders. TELWG members are encouraged to conduct studies, workshops, information exchanges, and capacity building activities, to advance goals of the TELWG cooperation and improve regulatory and policy environments.

The expertise and core competencies of the TELWG shall relate to policies and regulation of ICT and telecommunications infrastructure and services across the region.

4.1 ICT Adoption and digital transformation:

The TELWG will promote infrastructure investment and connectivity and support the productive and innovative use of ICTs in line with technological trends. The TELWG will implement studies on digital transformation of economic sectors by promoting the adoption and effective use of new and emerging ICTs and digital technologies including the use of Artificial Intelligence, Internet of things, modern radiocommunication technologies and services, etc., in various fields. Examples of such fields are specified in APEC TEL SAP 2021-2025.

4.2 The Internet and Digital Economy:

The TELWG is committed to support a vibrant ICT ecosystem for the Internet and Digital Economy. The TELWG contributes to the implementation of APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER) especially on Key focus areas (KFAs) 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7. The TELWG also contributes to KFAs 4, 5, 9 and 10.

4.3 Secure, resilient and trusted ICT environment:

The TELWG will continue to work to enhance trust and confidence in the use of ICTs and maintain the openness, security and stability of ICT by promoting the importance of cyber security, collaboration and cooperation, as well as the dissemination of knowledge. These support the capacity of all relevant stakeholders in the APEC economies to manage risks, create resilient networks, and facilitate a trusted environment for transactions and communications.

4.4 Regional economic integration:

The TELWG will continue to support of regional economic integration by promoting connectivity, regulatory coherence, technical harmonisation, interoperability and cross-border cooperation. This

³ http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2017/BMC/BMC2/17_bmc2_008.pdf

includes physical, institutional, and people-to-people as well as online connectivity⁴ to address relevant emerging issues.

4.5 Cooperation:

The TELWG will engage with groups within APEC and other fora to consider how to apply digital technologies and issues arising from their application. The TELWG will also engage with external organizations to maximize synergies, harness resources and minimize duplication between the work of these groups and that of the TELWG. See Section 11 of this ToR for an expanded list of collaboration partners.

5. Structure of the TELWG⁵

5.1 Sub-groups and their Activities

The current work of the TELWG is conducted by three steering groups, which propose, implement and monitor projects and activities to advance TELWG mandates and overall goals of SCE and APEC. The steering groups are not decision-making bodies. Each steering group addresses a specific priority area: 1) ICT Development and Policies; 2) ICT Security and Trust, 3) ICT Conformity Assessment and Interoperability

ICT Development and Policy Steering Group (DPSG) is accountable for the following topics:

- Advancement & Use of ICT infrastructure, services & applications to create digital opportunities (e.g. broadband access, tele-centers, e-inclusion, e-government);
- Development, implementation, promotion, and application of advanced and emerging technologies (e.g. mobile broadband, IoT, artificial intelligence, IPv6, Grids), including knowledge transfer on ICT research;
- Capacity building and enhance digital literacy and skills for socio-economic development;
- Enabling environment including policies and regulations;
- Telecommunication/ICT Policy & Regulation;
- Facilitating Trade & Investment Liberalization.

ICT Security and Trust Steering Group (STSG) coordinates the activities on:

- Secure and trusted networks (including converged networks), infrastructure, services, technologies, applications, e-commerce;
- Cybercrime prevention;
- Incidence Response;
- Malicious use of ICT e.g. Spam/Malware;
- Emergency Preparedness & Response;
- E-authentication;
- Cybersecurity awareness and education.

ICT Conformity Assessment and Interoperability Steering Group (CISG) is responsible for:

- ICT Conformity Assessment topics;
- ICT Interoperability topics;

⁴ "Online connectivity" in this Strategic Action Plan is not meant to create a new pillar of connectivity but, for the purpose of APEC TELWG only, to promote studies, workshops, information sharing and capacity building relating to ICT Connectivity in accordance with the APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025 endorsed by Leaders in 2014.

⁵ See Section 14 Transitional provisions

- Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment (MRA CA);
- Mutual Recognition Arrangement for the Equivalence of Technical Requirements (MRA ETR);
- Maintenance (and development as needed) of MRA publications.

All Steering Groups are responsible for human resources development & capacity building, business facilitation, regulatory and industry roundtable discussions, and other substantive cross-cutting issues.

5.2 Chairmanship

TELWG Chair and Vice Chairs

The TELWG has a Chair and three Vice Chairs who must be competent in all aspects of each Steering Group's activities, be aware of recent APEC developments and Initiatives and be capable of presiding over all aspects of the TELWG's meetings and activities, in accordance with APEC Guidelines for Lead Shepherds/Chairs⁶.

The Chair will serve four (4) consecutive TELWG meetings, transferring the chairing responsibilities at the end of the fourth TELWG meeting.⁷

The Chair is selected by consensus from among the member economies on a voluntary basis. The Convenors of the three steering groups will serve as Vice Chairs of TELWG (see section below for Convenor selection process). In the consensus-seeking process, priority is normally given to one of the incumbent Vice Chairs to assume the position of the Chair at the end of the outgoing Chair's tenure to ensure the continuity and smooth transition of the leadership.

Functions of the TELWG Chair, in collaboration with Vice-chairs, with support from the APEC Secretariat, are:

- Communicate the work of TELWG within APEC and consulting with other relevant fora;
- Coordinate the scheduling and chairing of meetings;
- Prepare the Heads of Delegation (HoDs) and Executive Committee (ExComm, see Section 5.4) Meeting Agendas, as well as Plenary Meeting Agendas;
- Prepare the TELWG annual report by the third Senior Officials Meeting (SOM3) and other necessary reports, upon the request by the SCE;
- Prepare the TELWG Meetings reports for consideration of the TELWG members and information of the TELWG guests;
- Prepare the proposals for revisions of Terms of Reference;
- Prepare the TELWG Strategic Action Plans one year before their completion and the TELWG Annual Work Plans for submission to SCE before SOM1 and;
- Lead the implementation of the action program and other activities to fulfil instructions given by APEC Leaders, Ministers and Senior Officials and report to Senior Officials on the development of these issues;
- Track project implementation including the submission of final evaluation reports;
- Prepare detailed final and mid-term Reports on the work of TELWG, incorporating the best practice identified in the TELWG projects, roundtables and information sharing, as directed by the TELWG Strategic Action Plan (SAP), to be presented at SCE Committee-on-the-Whole (SCE-COW) meeting;

⁶ http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2012/SCE/SCE-COW/12_sce-cow1_004.doc

⁷ See Section 14 Transitional provisions

- Attend the annual SCE Committee-on-the-Whole (SCE-COW) meeting, held on the margins of the first SCE meeting of each year, to update the SCE on fora activities and ensure that these are in line with APEC priorities;
- Act as the spokesperson and representative of the TELWG during the other APEC fora meetings or external organisations meetings;
- Acts as a Co-Chair of TEL-DESG annual meetings;
- Invite APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) or other relevant non-governmental actor(s) to contribute to the fora's plenary meeting agenda and activities (e.g., seminars, workshops); and
- Ensure that the forum website, as appropriate, is linked to the APEC Secretariat website and remains up-to-date, providing a current reflection of the forum's priorities and activities.

One of the Vice Chairs is required to exercise the Chair functions, based on the consensus among 3 Vice-chairs, when the Chair is unable to do so.

Steering Groups Convenors

Each of the Steering Groups has a Convenor and two (2) Deputy Convenors appointed through a process of consultation between the TELWG Chair, Heads of Delegation (HoD) and present Steering Groups Convenors and Deputy Convenors. Final appointments are agreed during the concluding Plenary of TELWG Meetings. The term of appointment is for four (4) consecutive TELWG meetings.

In the event that a Convenor cannot continue with his/her duties on a permanent basis, the member economy of the current position holder will have the priority to assume the position for the remainder of the term. However, a Deputy Convenor is appointed by the Chair through consultation, when possible, to exercise the Convenor's functions, when the Convenor is unable to do so on a temporary basis. Similarly, if a Deputy Convenor is unable to continue with his/her duties on a permanent basis, the member economy of the current position holder will have the priority to assume that position.

Functions of the Steering Group's Convenors, in collaboration with Deputy Convenors, with support from the APEC Secretariat, are:

- Communicate the work of the Steering Group within TELWG;
- Chair of Steering Group meetings;
- Serve as Vice Chair of TELWG;
- Prepare the Steering Groups' Agendas;
- Prepare the Steering Groups' Report to TELWG before the Second TELWG Plenary meeting;
- Prepare the comments on revisions of Terms of Reference;
- Prepare the comments on TELWG Draft Annual Work Plans and Strategic Action Plans;
- Prepare the contribution for TELWG Chair's final and mid-term Reports on the work of TELWG, incorporating the best practice identified in the TELWG projects, roundtables and information sharing, as directed by the TELWG Strategic Action Plan (SAP), in accordance with scope of respective steering group;
- Check the compliance of the Concept Notes and Cover Sheets of the projects with the Leaders' and Ministers' priorities, APEC initiatives and the Steering Groups responsibilities, outlined in 5.1;
- Encourage member economies to develop high quality projects and help them improving them;
- Oversee the prioritization/ranking of the fora's project proposal concept notes using the APEC-wide funding criteria in advance of the deadline for each project approval session.
- Once fora projects are approved ensure that the project overseer works with the APEC Secretariat Communications team to provide a short statement on the activity to be published on the APEC website, if appropriate.
- As major project milestones or deliverables are completed (e.g. workshops, reports, etc.), ensure that the project overseer provides a statement (e.g. press release, article, etc.) on the outcomes

of the activity to be published on the APEC website and that he/she works with the APEC Secretariat Communications team, as well as local and international media, to promote and encourage media coverage of APEC project-related activities.

- Once projects are fully completed, ensure that project overseers work with the APEC Secretariat Communications team to provide a write-up of the project's accomplishments and planned follow-up.
- Act as the spokesperson and representative of the Steering Group during HoDs and ExComm and Plenary Meetings, as well as the other APEC and external fora upon the request from the TELWG Chair.

5.3 Friends of the Chair (FoTC)

Subject to the approval of SOM, a FoTC might be formed if TELWG member economies agree on it and see the necessity in it. Before the establishment of the FoTC, the TELWG should prepare the appropriate ToR that will define the main goal, objectives, functions, term, work and reporting mechanisms of the FoTC.

5.4 Executive Committee (ExComm)

The Executive Committee is composed of the Heads of Delegation, the TELWG Chair, and the Convenors and Deputy Convenors of the TELWG Steering Groups. It plays a consultative role only (i.e., is non-decisional) in preparing meetings or coordinating work intersessionally.

6. Strategic Action Plans & Work Plans

6.1 Strategic Action Plans (SAP)

The SAP should be developed in line with Strategic Planning – Process Guide for APEC Working Groups (2012/SOM2/SCE/007) and APEC Strategic Planning Checklist (2012/SOM2/SCE/008) and present ToR. The SAP term should be four years⁸.

The SAP should be endorsed by the TELWG and presented to SCE for information.

The TELWG should report to the SCE and to the TEL Ministerial Meeting (TELMIN), as appropriate, on the SAP implementation progress and should present mid-term and final Reports on the work of TELWG, incorporating the best practice identified in the TELWG projects, roundtables and information sharing, as directed by the SAP.

6.2 Work Plans

Each year the TELWG establishes a Work Plan. The Work Plan should include deliverables, activities, projects and outcomes outlined in the TELWG SAP, APEC Leader's Statement, and the SOM's directions. The Annual Work Plan should be endorsed by TELWG one month before the first SCE meeting for its consideration.

The TELWG reports annually on progress towards achieving its Work Plan through completion and submission of its annual report before SOM3.

7. Project Management

The main activities of the TELWG are conducted through APEC-funded and self-funded projects. The project management procedures are determined by the Guidebook on APEC Projects and all APEC projects should comply with it. Each TELWG meeting, the APEC Secretariat informs the meeting on the project management progress.

All information on the APEC-funded projects and their requirements can be found on the APEC Website⁹, which contains information on available APEC Funds, Concept Notes and Project Proposals deadlines and templates, as well as the project completion and middle-term reports templates.

⁸ See Section 14 Transitional provisions

⁹ <http://www.apec.org/Projects/Forms-and-Resources>

One year projects are implemented over two APEC financial years, starting with the year that a project is approved and ending on 31 December the following year. Multi-year projects may last longer. And all APEC funded projects are monitored twice a year and the monitoring reports are due for the projects on 1 August and 1 February each year, regardless of how long the project has been implemented. The final report should contain main findings of the project and its outputs. TELWG members are encouraged to target the tangible results of the projects, i.e. applications, new technologies, training programmes with long-term results, cooperation research centres and intra-economy researches and studies.

TELOWG members are encouraged to propose self-funded projects, which can be conducted in the form of a research, workshop, training program, seminar or roundtable. Self-funded projects can be financed with the support of private sector representatives. Self-funded projects may be applied throughout the year. They do not require co-sponsors, but should be endorsed by TELWG Members. Self-funded projects' proposing economy should provide a report on the projects' final results to TELWG meetings.

The information on accomplished, ongoing and planning projects should be reflected in the SAP Prioritization and Planning table to facilitate cooperation with other member economies and other fora.

Member economies are encouraged to publish the projects' analytical reports and prepare publications on the projects' results to the APEC website. The reports and publications should be endorsed by all APEC members for that.

Projects, developed in the TELWG should comply with the APEC Leaders, Ministers, Host Economy and SCE priorities and Initiatives. Member Economies are encouraged to include information on the projects' results in the Leaders and Ministers Declarations.

8. Working timelines

8.1 Meeting frequency

The requirements to the TELWG meetings are defined in the Guidelines for Hosting APEC Meetings¹⁰, APEC Meetings Communications Guidelines¹¹ and Documentation Requirements – Guidelines for Meeting Organizers¹².

TELOWG meetings commence twice a year in the SOM cluster of meetings usually at SOM 1 and SOM 3, preferably back-to-back with the Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG) meeting. At the same time, if any member economies wish to host TELWG meeting, it can be conducted instead of the one in the margins of SOM 1 or 3, subject to consensus and consultation with the host of APEC and other members¹³.

The Host Economies for future TELWG meetings are announced at the end of every TELWG meeting.

To achieve a better communication on the questions of mutual interest and use the opportunity of back-to-back meeting with DESG, TELWG and DESG should conduct joint meetings. Such meetings could discuss:

- Joint TELWG and DESG projects on topics related to the both groups, like Digital Economy measurement;
- Outputs of TELWG for implementation of AIDER.

8.2 Documents submission

All TELWG meetings are paperless. Member Economies are encouraged to submit documents for consideration not less than two weeks before the meeting and not less than one week before the meeting for information to facilitate productive discussion at TELWG meetings.

¹⁰ http://www.apec.org/~media/Files/AboutUs/PoliciesandProcedures/Meetings/Guidelines%20for%20Hosting%20APEC%20meetings_Jul2016.pdf

¹¹ http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2014/SOM/SOM2/14_som2_034.pdf

¹² http://www.apec.org/~media/Files/AboutUs/PoliciesandProcedures/Documents/Meeting%20Organizers_fnl_2017.doc

¹³ See Section 14 Transitional provisions

Concept Notes should be submitted not less than two weeks before the TELWG meeting or Project Session deadlines for internal TELWG consideration.

Project Proposals should be submitted not less than two weeks before the deadlines, defined by Budget and Management Committee (BMC) for TELWG Consideration.

Every TELWG document is recommended to identify the target audience and the purpose of the document:

- APEC Leaders & Ministers;
- Other APEC Working Groups;
- Industry Leaders
- Academics;
- Other international organizations (OECD, ASEAN);
- Government Agencies in Member Economies (Officials, Policy Makers);
- Elected Government Representatives in Member Economies (Ministers, Decision Makers);
- TELWG members.

9. Cooperation with SCE

9.1 Reporting to SCE and Leaders

The TELWG takes action based on the recommendations of the SOM of its parent committee – SCE, as well as direction from Leaders and Ministers that relate to the TELWG, and/or related recommendations that arise within the APEC process. The TELWG Strategic Action Plans and Work Plans should be consistent with SCE recommendations, particularly Framework to Guide ECOTECH activities¹⁴, adopted in 2010, Policy on APEC's Capacity Building through Economic and Technical Cooperation¹⁵, adopted in 2015.

The TELWG annually provides a general report to SOM in accordance with the Template, approved by SCE. The Report should contain information on SAP and WP achievements and progress, reflect the TELWG contribution to APEC Initiatives and Leaders Statements, as well as provide recommendations to SOM on ways to coordinate and prioritise the various TELWG activities within the APEC process. The Report should be endorsed by all TELWG members, before submission to SCE.

In addition to the general report the TELWG should present detailed mid-term and final Reports on the work of TELWG, incorporating the best practice identified in the TELWG projects, roundtables and information sharing, as directed by the SAP. Also upon the request of the SCE, the TELWG should contribute to the APEC SCE initiatives annual reports, as well as give recommendations and comments to the SCE reports to the APEC Ministers and Leaders, such as "SCE Report on Synergies within ECOTECH Agenda"¹⁶.

9.2 Independent Assessment

Every four years, the TELWG should go through the Independent Assessment, upon the SCE request. The SCE itself chooses the Independent Assessment organization, which conducts half-year research on TELWG activities and provides the Middle-term Assessment report by SOM2 and prepares the Final Assessment Report by SOM3. The Interim Report and the Final Assessment Reports are the subjects for TELWG members' consideration and proposals for improvements.

The TELWG should help the assessment process, prepare the official response to the Recommendations and implement the Recommendations of the SCE in result of the Final Independent Report consideration.

¹⁴http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1075

¹⁵http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2015/MM/AMM/15_amm_003.pdf

¹⁶http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2015/MM/AMM/15_amm_003.pdf

10. Cooperation with other Fora and Organizations

ICT is engaged in the wide range of social and economic activities in the APEC Region. This defines the vital necessity for the TELWG to cooperate with different APEC fora, especially with:

- Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG) – to cooperate in the implementation of KFAs of AIDER
- Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) – to strengthen and contribute to regional economic integration;
- Counter Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) – to promote a trusted ICTs environment;
- Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) – to promote the benefits of and share policy options for using ICTs for emergency preparedness and disaster prevention/ mitigation;
- Health Working Group (HWG) – to identify effective e-Health applications;
- Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) – to cooperate on ICT implementation for people with disabilities' social inclusion and economic empowerment.
- Group on Services (GOS) – to promote trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation (TILF) issues related to trade in ICTs services;
- Finance Ministers' Process (FMP) – to foster awareness of mobile banking activities to better reach the unserved population due to geographic or economic/ financial barriers; and
- SME Working Group (SMEWG) – to promote the development of SMEs by increasing the opportunity of SMEs to access the Internet and reduce the cost of using it.

The TELWG works closely with relevant APEC fora on the issues, related to the development of the Internet and Digital Economy.

The TELWG engages with the international organisations, such as the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC), Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Name Association (APTLTD), the Global Business Dialogue on e-Society (GBDe), and the International Telecommunications Users Group (INTUG), the Internet Society (ISOC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and others. TELWG always welcomes participation of the industries representatives, who participate in the projects implementation, which are interested in closer cooperation with APEC ICT regulators and academia.

11. ToR Revision

ToR revision is a subject to the agreement of TELWG members and approval of Senior Officials. ToR should be reviewed, revised if necessary and endorsed by TELMIN or Senior Officials in the absence of TELMIN. The SAP should correlate with the ToR for consistency. ToR should be revised every four years in line with the terms of SAP.

12. Quorum

Quorum for TELWG Meetings constitutes attendees from 14 economies, which can include remote participation. Decisions can be made if quorum and consensus are reached. If the quorum is not reached, the meeting may continue, but decisions must be put to the full TELWG membership for consideration. Should the TELWG fail to meet quorum for one meeting, the TELWG must notify the SCE Chair. Should the TELWG fail to meet quorum for two consecutive meetings, it shall be referred to Senior Officials for a decision on whether it should continue to exist.

13. Sunset clause

The TELWG has term of four years from 2022 to 2025. Alongside with the final Report on implementation of SAP, TELWG should provide the opinion of member economies on the needs to extend for the next four years term which should be sent for approval of the SCE. The TELWG must be explicitly renewed by Senior Officials in order to continue after the expiration of this Terms of Reference.

14. Transitional provisions

To allow for smoother transitions and harmonize the terms of all chairmanship positions, the existing TELWG sub-group and chairmanship structure, as described in Section 5 of the TELWG Terms of Reference 2018-2021¹⁷, will remain in effect until the end of 2022. The terms of the current Chair, Vice-Chair, Convenors and Deputy Convenors as of TEL 62 will be extended until the end of 2022.

Starting in 2023, the structure of the TELWG will be organized according to Section 5 of this Terms of Reference, and the Chair, Vice-Chair, Convenors and Deputy Convenors will be selected for their normal term (2 years).

Section 6.1 provision "The SAP term should be four years" will not affect the SAP 2021-2025 but will be used for harmonization of ToR and SAP terms starting from 2026, if possible.

Section 8.1 provision "TELWG meetings commence twice a year in the SOM cluster of meetings usually at SOM 1 and SOM 3, preferably back-to-back with the Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG) meeting" will take effect starting in 2023.

¹⁷ http://mddb.apec.org/Documents/2018/SCE/SCE1/18_sce1_021.pdf