

## REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MARKETS DEVELOPMENT AND E-SERVICES WORKING GROUP

*Report by the Working Group Chair, New Zealand*

<b>1. Subject</b>  Informing Congress on the outcomes of the Markets Development and E-Services Working Group Meeting.	<b>References/Paragraphs</b>  §§ 1-4
<b>2. Decision expected</b>  Congress is asked to:  <b>note</b> the report of the meeting	  §§ 1-4

### 1. Introduction

The Markets Development and E-Services Working Group Meeting met at 16:10 Bangkok time on Tuesday, 30 August 2022 at the 13th APPU Congress, held in Bangkok, Thailand.

1.1. The following APPU member countries were recorded as being present in the meeting:

Australia, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand (Chair), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu.

1.2. Also, in attendance were member countries participating online, representatives of the APPU Bureau led by the APPU Secretary General Mr. LIN Hongliang, and Congress observers.

### 2. The agenda covered the following matters.

2.1. The agenda and its adoption

The agenda for the meeting comprised the following items:

- Agreeing and adopting the agenda
- Presentation by Japan
- Presentation by Singapore
- Presentation by the Chair
- Any other business

The Chair presented the agenda and meeting running order which was adopted without comment.

### 3. Presentations

3.1. POC Committee 3 (POC C 3) – Markets Development and Innovation: Activities and progress – a presentation by Mr Kazunori Uchida of Japan.

Mr Uchida described in some detail the four bodies under the auspices of POC C 3:

- Digital Transformation and Innovation Group (DTIG) co-chaired by Singapore and Türkiye
- Sustainable Postal Service Group (SPSG) chaired by Austria

- Direct Marketing Advisory Board (DMAB) chaired by Namibia
- Philately and International Reply Coupons, and World Association for the Development of Philately (WADP) chaired by Russian Federation

This presentation focused on the last three bullet points, as DTIG was to be presented separately by Singapore.

Mr Uchida's presentation on the SPSP, DMAB and WADP discussed achievements to date, planned future activities for each of these groups since their formation during and after the 2021 UPU Congress.

### 3.2. POC C 3 Digital Transformation and Innovation Group (DTIG) – a presentation by Mr LEE Hon Chew of Singapore

Mr LEE introduced the POC C 3 DTIG stating its objective is to advance digital transformation and foster innovation in the postal sector. He went on to describe the main areas of activity for DTIG, all of which arise from work plan items in the Abidjan Cycle Business Plan.

Mr LEE briefly described some of the key current activities of DTIG, such as:

- Research and analysis on the current developments of digital postal services
- Technical assistance including a project to digitize communications between the UPU International Bureau (IB) and UPU stakeholders, and collaboration with the PACER Plus (Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations) developing Asia-Pacific digital development, advocacy and planning initiatives
- Capacity building, in the form of training programmes and workshop on digital transformation and digitalization of postal services

Mr LEE then turned to the exciting area of an Innovation forum and "hackathon". The hackathon concept is a mechanism to create challenges to the digital development community and for them to respond with creative digital solutions. Some challenges under consideration include:

- What value can posts retrieve from their data?
- How can UPU technologies be integrated into the supply chain and e-commerce IT landscape?
- How could a shared postal block chain support cross-border services?

### 3.3. Acknowledgement of the contributions to the working group – a presentation by the Chair

The chair briefly spoke to and acknowledged the many valuable contributions from APPU member countries and the UPU International Bureau over the five-year cycle of the working group, noting the presentations from Iran (2), Sri Lanka, Singapore (2), Viet Nam, and India. The working group had a focus on sharing knowledge and lessons learnt and all the presentations over the years served to fully answered that goal.

#### 4. Any other business

The floor was opened, and some further useful discussion followed:

- Nepal noted that there are significantly different states of technical development within the region and asked what can be done to help fill the gaps and close the digital divide, to help bring the entire postal network to common standards of technical capacity and capability.

Mr LEE responded that we have to sometimes “think smaller” to find ways to fill the gaps. He cited a joint Asia Pacific Post Cooperative and UPU Quality of Service Fund (QSF) regional common fund project for the Asia-Pacific region to develop a Track & Trace app for smart phones to deliver tracking and visibility for sending and receiving customers and posts as an example of this approach.

- Iran asked about UPU technology solutions and the possibility of improving them further, citing CDS as an example where digital forms completion could be improved to reduce or remove entirely the possibility of false or incorrect declarations.

Mr LEE acknowledged that this was a very good point and one we needed to hear to allow the improvement of the digital experience both for our customers, other Posts and agencies such as Customs. He also noted that he would take this point up with the UPU Postal Technology Centre (PTC).

A follow on to the above point is that the UPU PTC has responded favorably and has indicated a willingness to look at options to improve the CDS platform.

The chair then made some brief closing comments, thanking today’s presenters, and the presenters and contributors over the last five years.

The meeting closed at 16:45, 31 August 2022.