

APEC Non-Binding Guidelines on Logistics-related Services that Support the Movement of Essential Goods During a Public Health Emergency

Recognizing the economic and social costs across APEC economies caused by disrupted supply of essential goods needed to respond to the pandemic;

Building on the 2020 Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods adopted by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade;

Responding to the 2021 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade Statement on Services to Support the Movement of Essential Goods;

Guided by the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap endorsed by Leaders in 2016 and with a view towards achieving the goal of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap to ensure an open and predictable environment for access to services markets by addressing restrictions on trade and investment in services;

Reflecting the 2018 APEC Non-binding Principles for Domestic Regulation of the Services Sector;

Reaffirming the principles and goals of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action to ensure that the Asia-Pacific remains the world's most dynamic and interconnected regional economy and deliver a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment;

Taking account of the APEC Connectivity Blueprint 2015-2025 and recognizing the importance of physical and institutional connectivity for logistics-related services;

Reaffirming our support for efforts to foster open, secure, sustainable and resilient supply chains, enhance supply chain connectivity and minimize supply chain disruptions, and in this regard recognizing the chokepoints identified as needing to be addressed in Phase Three of the APEC Supply Chain Connectivity Framework Action Plan;

Without prejudice to APEC economies' positions with respect to discussions in the WTO, WHO or other negotiations;

Recognizing the significant potential that enhanced efficiency of and access to logistics-related services offer to advance gender equality and the economic empowerment of women and girls, as agreed in the La Serena Roadmap and the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040;

APEC economies, aiming at fostering open, secure, sustainable and resilient global logistics supply chains, are encouraged to work together in the following areas related to logistics-related services: facilitation of trade and investment; promotion of the connectivity of the APEC region through better-functioning logistics-related services; more open, secure, sustainable and resilient supply chains for the movement of essential goods; furthering of opportunities for participation by women, MSMEs and other groups with untapped economic potential; promotion of regional cooperation policies in general and especially during a public health emergency; and, supporting and complementing initiatives to reduce unnecessary barriers to trade in logistics-related services.

1. Scope and application of non-binding guidelines on logistics-related services

- 1.1 APEC economies will endeavor to apply these non-binding guidelines to logistics-related services sectors, noting that the *APEC Definition of Logistics-related Services*,¹ is non-binding, non-exhaustive, and open for future review.
- 1.2 APEC economies are encouraged to apply these non-binding guidelines to logistics-related services, recognizing the different circumstances of each economy. APEC economies are also encouraged to address the five chokepoints identified in the Third Phase of the Supply Chain Connectivity Framework Action Plan (SCFAP III), to facilitate the movement of essential goods.

2. Good regulatory practice and trade measures affecting logistics-related services

- 2.1 APEC economies will endeavor to implement domestic regulation of logistics-related services taking into consideration the APEC Non-binding Principles for Domestic Regulation of the Services Sector.
- 2.2 APEC economies will promote fair competition, as well as the development and adoption of new technologies.
- 2.3 Any trade measure applied to logistics-related services during a public health emergency should be consistent with WTO rules.
- 2.4 APEC economies will strive to facilitate trade and investment in logistics-related services and enhance the competitiveness of these logistics-related services sectors.
- 2.5 APEC economies will endeavor to strengthen the transportation infrastructure connectivity, optimize transportation structure and promote international transport facilitation, to support regional logistics networks.
- 2.6 To enhance delivery efficiency and promote trade development, APEC economies shall endeavor to cooperate, where appropriate, to promote international multimodal transport and inter-connectivity between different modes of transport, formulate standard and compatible transport rules and strengthen information sharing to promote the development of new and emerging technologies in logistics-related services.

3. Customs clearance and terminal operation services for logistics-related services

- 3.1 APEC economies will consider ways to identify and reduce unnecessarily restrictive regulations related to customs clearance and terminal operation services which impact logistics-related services and supply chains in the region.

¹ See *APEC Definition of Logistics-related Services* (2022), as annexed to *APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade Statement of Chair* (Bangkok, Thailand, 22 May 2022).

- 3.2 APEC economies will endeavor to cooperate on operating hours of major seaports, inland or dry ports, land ports and airports on the critical cargo routes in the Asia Pacific during public health emergencies to avoid bottlenecks and delays.
- 3.3 APEC economies will seek to facilitate ease of access to, and payment for, terminal services.
- 3.4 During a public health emergency, APEC economies will endeavor to introduce flexibility in their policies related to terminal operations and customs clearance services.
- 3.5 APEC economies will work to facilitate digitization of information used to process trade through terminals and customs in order to enhance both transparency and efficiency, including through capacity building programs and the adoption of new technologies.
- 3.6 APEC economies' Customs administrations are encouraged to utilize existing Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) arrangements and encourage businesses to be accredited as AEOs to facilitate the use of simplified arrangements.
- 3.7 APEC economies will support the cooperation between logistics services and postal services.

4. Coordination around logistics-related services

- 4.1 APEC economies will apply the recommendations agreed by the APEC Safe Passage Task Force (2022), as appropriate, to logistics-related services during a public health emergency.
- 4.2 APEC economies will continue to facilitate information sharing on requirements and procedures regarding and will make best endeavors to develop interoperable requirements for, the movement of logistics-related services providers during a public health emergency.
- 4.3 APEC economies will seek to inform economies of measures taken during public health emergencies that affect logistics-related services in accordance with their WTO obligations.
- 4.4 APEC economies will seek to coordinate policies and measures for dealing with logistics-related services during public health emergencies.
- 4.5 APEC economies will seek to draw upon the input of relevant stakeholders, including ABAC and PECC.
- 4.6 APEC economies shall endeavor to share best practices and general information regarding the logistics sector, including but not limited to the following:
 - (a) cold-chain logistics to ensure the safety and efficiency of essential goods, especially for medical supplies and food;
 - (b) strengthening rural and remote area logistics-related services to boost economic growth, including capacity building and the sharing of best practices;
 - (c) improving the digitalization of logistics-related services to support e-commerce and digital trade;
 - (d) last mile deliveries, including on-demand and dynamic routing solutions;
 - (e) the use of electric, remote controlled and autonomous vehicles;
 - (f) facilitating the availability of cross-border options for the delivery of goods; and

(g) new delivery and business models for logistics.

5. Digitalization of measures for logistics-related services appropriate during a public health emergency

- 5.1 6.1 APEC economies will strive to introduce greater digitalization of trade facilitative and supply chain processes in order to improve efficiency of logistics-related services sectors.²
- 5.2 APEC economies will strive to provide access to those digitally-enabled services as a key to advance supply chain connectivity and to maintain supply chain operations.
- 5.3 APEC economies will share best practices and information on new and emerging technologies relevant to logistics-related services to promote connectivity and digital transformation, including through capacity building for developing economies.
- 5.4 APEC economies will endeavor to enhance the standards and quality of logistics-related services.

² See *APEC Definition of Logistics-related Services (2022)*, as annexed to *APEC Ministers responsible for Trade Statement of the Chair* (Bangkok, Thailand, 22 May 2022).