



Statement on E-Commerce

PBEC stands ready to respond to APEC Leaders' call to action and to support activities of APEC, the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), sub-regional groupings and individual economies aimed at improving the environment for E-Commerce in the region.

Background

In 1999 PBEC as the premier business organization with membership ranging across all areas of E-Commerce, including suppliers and users, issued a statement outlining broad, high level principles for the development of E-Commerce. In so doing, we anticipated that the role of information technology in business and in communities would grow exponentially and that increasingly, governments and their advisors would need to look to the private sector – IT innovators and users of technology – for guidance on key areas of focus.

Meeting in Auckland in September 1999 at the APEC forum, Ministers of the region acknowledged the potential of E-Commerce to provide an extraordinary stimulus to regional growth and trade and the key role of the private sector in driving change and innovation. They agreed that the role of the public sector was to ensure a favourable regulatory environment for E-Commerce to flourish and directed that special attention should be paid to the needs of consumers and small business. Leaders agreed and stipulated that APEC must continue efforts to create a favorable environment for E-Commerce in cooperation with the private sector.

Implementation

We note that there are e-commerce activities in 2000 to which PBEC's membership individually and collectively can provide input and guidance, drawing on our broad expertise in information technology across many business sectors. These include:

- **Consideration by APEC of the development of best practices for consumer protection.**

PBEC members will offer to provide input to APEC their experience with initiatives in emerging markets and in other forums. As appropriate, a representative will offer to discuss members' activities at the High Level E-Commerce Convention in May and at the planned E-Commerce consumer protection workshop in July. At the national level, PBEC committees will work to increase understanding and awareness of ways of addressing E-Commerce consumer protection issues, including building on existing laws and conventions.

- **A heightened focus on e-Government** – the use of Internet-based technologies for governments to interact with each other and with their communities as a means of building trust and confidence in this electronic medium and, importantly, as a means of



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reaching out to small businesses in their government procurement activities.

PBEC considers that governments need to lead by example to help bring the small and medium size business community into the information society. Offering procurement opportunities online would greatly facilitate the outreach to small business. As part of its activities for 2000, PBEC will offer to present members' views at the June 21-22 SME E-Commerce workshop in Brunei on the economic benefits to SME's of participating in a business online government procurement model.

- **Education and Training initiatives.**

PBEC has undertaken a number of E-Commerce-related education and training initiatives since the formation of our E-Commerce Working Committee in May 1998. Recognising the on-going critical role of education and training to the region's continued economic growth PBEC will offer to provide input to APEC on examples in member economies of successful Internet-based distance learning models in key sectors, including the financial sector, customs and transportation. We will also offer to discuss with APEC at the June 20-22 E-Commerce Workshop our membership's activities directed at SME E-Commerce capacity building and public/private sector cooperative initiatives to facilitate SME participation in the Internet economy.

- **Support for Sub-regional Initiatives** – the emerging initiative by ASEAN countries to establish an ASEAN e-Space, linking their economies, businesses and communities electronically via the Internet.

PBEC stands ready to work with e-ASEAN Taskforce members and staff to develop pilot projects that support e-ASEAN and offers the technical expertise of members.

Our work plan for 2000-2001 is a significant increase over our previous year's activities. In making this commitment to respond to the call by APEC Leaders, PBEC recognizes the growing importance of the Internet economy in shaping the way the region will conduct business in this new millennium.

Endorsed by the PBEC Steering Committee 03/19/00
Adopted by the PBEC Board of Directors 03/19/00
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