



A·P·O *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION


Cambodia joins the APO

On 17 May 2004, Cambodia was admitted as the 20th and newest member of the APO after two-thirds of the current membership approved its application to join the organization. As stated by its Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Hor Namhong, Cambodia's decision to join the APO was in recognition of the importance of increasing productivity for development. It is also seen as taking a further step in its endeavor to integrate into the regional and world economy.

The APO Director for Cambodia is Undersecretary of State Hul Lim, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME). The Alternate Director is Mr. Yea Bunna, Deputy Director, Department of Industrial Affairs, MIME, and Liaison Officer is Ms. Tey Dany, also from the Department of Industrial Affairs. MIME has established the National Productivity Unit to serve as the country's NPO. Mr. Hul Lim and Mr. Yea Bunna will attend the APO Governing Body Meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 8–10 June 2004, where Cambodia will be formally inducted as a member.



Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia and Phnom Penh is the capital. It shares borders with Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos, and has a 443-km coastline facing the Gulf of Thailand. The total land area is 181,040 km². The population totals just over 13 million, and the gender ratio is 0.94 male/female. The literacy rate is about 70%. The economy is dominated by agriculture, which contributed 28.4% to GDP in 2001 and employs 80% of the working population. In recent years, there has been a gradual shift from the agricultural economy to one that emphasizes the textile, tourism, and service industries.

Cambodia achieved independence from France on 9 November 1953. After two decades of internal armed conflict, a new constitution was adopted in 1993 which restored the constitutional monarchy. Since then, Cambodia has embarked on a process of political and economic reforms. The government has developed a "triangle strategy," which aims at restoring peace, ensuring sustainable development, and integrating Cambodia into the world community. A major economic goal is attracting foreign direct investment. However, two obstacles are standing in the way: low productivity and a shortage of skilled manpower. The government sees membership in the APO as providing a golden opportunity to gain insights into ways to adapt to globalization and the rapidly changing economic environment. 

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"There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group—there is less competition."

Indira Gandhi

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Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



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Quo vadis European productivity?

Industrial restructuring, migration, welfare reform, and anxiety are the recurring themes underlying the current productivity debate in Europe. Together they clearly demonstrate the continuous tug between the positive and negative connotations of the concept. Productivity improvement has always been founded on continuously embracing change. Although change is by no means beneficial to everyone, without it few can thrive in a world of competition. And nowhere is competition more acute than in today's expanded EU. From 1 May 2004 some 75 million more people in the 10 new member countries have been looking forward to substantial rises in the standard of living. Their average wage rates were previously not even one-quarter of those of their counterparts in the pre-May EU (Table). Low wage levels have been a major reason for western European companies to set up new plants, or even displace their existing factories, to the new market economies of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Thus major automobile companies and, in turn, their subcontractors, have introduced best practice productivity approaches in those countries.

But wage rates and market economies are only two reasons for investing in eastern European nations, especially when, with their low productivity, their overall unit labor costs are as high as in the EU. In addition, investments based on low wage costs can rapidly shift further eastward, notably to China. More important for the future of the new EU members is their full integration into a common market, their more favorable corporate tax rates (around 20%), and the availability of well-educated workforces with skills that are in short supply in western Europe. Some companies have moved whole R&D departments eastward. So pronounced has this eastward movement become that Germany's chancellor criticized industrialists for being "unpatriotic" by creating new jobs in adjacent countries when unemployment at home is so high. The trend worries many EU governments, spurred on by media headlines such as "Goodbye, jobs."

More generally, governments have been concerned about "de-industrialization," the decline of traditional industries, and the continuous transfer of jobs to the service sector. They fret under the EU's strict rules on state aid and competition. Yet if they do not respect those rules (which they have already ratified), they face serious legal conse-

quences. The European Commission is adamant: competition "makes it necessary to pursue a shift towards sectors with a higher technological content." There is no avoiding the tiresome process of industrial restructuring in the quest for continuously higher added value.

The situation is further compounded by eastern workers (skilled and semiskilled) working, legally and illegally, in western Europe for wages below collectively bargained levels. Clearly they are meeting a need: migration has always prevented labor market arthritis and contributes culturally and economically to the well-being of the adopted country. But as borders disappear will this westward trickle of job-seekers turn into a flood? And will they undermine western wages? So strong is this fear in all "old" EU countries that governments (with the exception of that of the new productivity leader Ireland) have placed short-term restrictions on individuals' free movement. This is despite the fact that the four freedoms of movement of people, goods, services, and capital are enshrined as the legal cornerstones of European prosperity. Again, Europe's future productivity development will depend to some extent on European Court rulings.

To become more competitive, governments realize that they must reform employment markets and welfare systems. These changes are proving very difficult to implement in large economies faced with powerful lobbies. Thus the Germans are

struggling to digest mini-reforms in employment regulations; the whiff of even mini-reforms in France has led to a government reshuffle; and in Italy arguments rather than even mini-actions flourish. But all is not gloom: the most productive economies—the Netherlands, Ireland, and Scandinavia—flourish by stressing organizational flexibility, greater individual autonomy, the elimination of repetitive jobs (in particular to avoid stress-related problems and absenteeism), reduced bureaucracy, and close labor-management cooperation; and the UK is developing an entrepreneurially friendly environment, not least for the unemployed. These more positive attitudes toward productivity give rise to far better employment figures.

Fear of change is also visible within the new EU members, with their already high levels of unemployment. The elderly in particular fear that products and systems resulting from western productivity levels will drive many existing eastern companies, or even communities, out of business. Traditional eastern European companies not only lack capital but have access to neither the technology nor the know-how to compete in new open markets; moreover, old "Soviet-style" work practices die hard. This anxiety has already produced a worrying political backlash against the "new Europe" in the new EU members.

An historical perspective shows that such reactions are wholly predictable and unfounded. Back in 1958, Italy's automakers feared being flooded

Table. Hourly labor costs and labor productivity rates in new and previous EU members.

Country	Hourly labor cost*	Labor productivity ¹	Country	Hourly labor cost*	Labor productivity ¹
Sweden	28.56	64.4	Cyprus	10.74	NA
Denmark	27.10	68.0	Slovenia	8.98	25.4
Germany	26.34	56.9	Portugal	8.13	NA
Luxembourg	24.61	90.5	Poland	4.48	16.9
France	24.42	65.6	Czech Rep.	3.90	17.3
UK	23.85	58.1	Hungary	3.83	17.0
Austria	23.60	63.1	Slovakia	3.06	13.3
Netherlands	22.99	55.6	Estonia	3.03	12.0
Finland	22.13	64.3	Lithuania	2.71	12.9
Italy	18.99	56.5	Latvia	2.42	10.7
Ireland	17.31	81.6	Old average	22.10	57.6
Spain	14.22	45.9	New average	4.20	16.7
Greece	11.62	39.3	Combined	19.09	51.9

Source: Eurostat; printed in *The Wall Street Journal* 16–18 April 2004.

NA, not available. Countries in bold are new EU members. No data were available for Belgium and Malta.

*In euros for 2000 in industry and services.

¹In gross value added at current prices per person employed, in thousands of euros for 2002 (2001 for France).



by cheaper German imports and then they exported more; in 1973, Ireland feared being turned into Europe's cattle ranch since indigenous companies would be unable to compete and today its economy provides European productivity benchmarks; and in 1995, Austrian retailers saw their future as being swamped by the Germans and they have flourished on cross-border trading. These and other EU members have prospered as companies have sought and embraced the opportunities of change and their governments have developed welfare systems to cushion those individuals, industries, and regions that lose out, although today those systems themselves need reforming.

If Europe is not to drop further behind in its goal of becoming the world's most competitive economy by 2010, there is no way of avoiding the twin strategies of innovation and productivity: producing new, market-driven products and services and continuously improving existing ones and the processes by which they are produced. In other words, EU economies must undertake daily productivity work. Public funds must be directed away from supporting what already exists, e.g., coal mining in Germany, shipbuilding in France, or comforting the comfortable everywhere, to providing some of the wherewithal for the future by stimulating national R&D, improving the quantity and quality of education and training, and making productive use of all resources, particularly the able elderly. ☺

Anthony C. Hubert is President of EuroJobs, an organization he established to promote efforts to raise the quality of working life and productivity in Europe. He was formerly Secretary-General of the European Association of National Productivity Organizations. He writes regularly for this column.

From the SECRETARY-GENERAL'S schedule

May 2004

18–21 May

APO Secretary-General Takashi Tajima paid an official visit to the Republic of China at the invitation of the Taiwanese government to attend the inauguration of President Chen Shui-bian on 20 May.

26 May

Hosted a breakfast meeting in Tokyo for Japanese business executives to promote the Eco-Products International Fair 2004 to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2–4 September 2004. Representatives from more than 30 Japanese corporations/organizations attended. The meeting was graced by APO Green Productivity Advisory Committee Chairman Yoichi Morishita and two Vice Chairmen Masatoshi Yoda and Prof. Ryoichi Yamamoto. Also present was Deputy Director-General for Environment Affairs Yuzo Ichikawa of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI).

The breakfast meeting featured two presentations. One was on “Eco-Products Exhibition in Asia” by METI Director for Environment Industries Hiroto Kunitomo and the other was a briefing on the Eco-Products International Fair 2004 by APO Director for Research and Planning Takuki Murayama.



(L–R at head table) Mr. Ichikawa, Mr. Morishita, Mr. Tajima, Mr. Yoda, and Prof. Yamamoto at the breakfast meeting



Breakfast meeting in progress



New APO publication



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

APO 64 pp. May 2004 ISBN: 92-833-7020-1

Intellectual property rights have become a crucial business issue from the perspective of attaining a competitive edge over rivals and preserving an important source of royalty earnings. It is not an overstatement to say that in today's global economy, the survival of a business will depend on its intellectual property or knowledge assets. Its protection, therefore, is of utmost importance if industries and others are to be encouraged to create more. Infringement of such rights can be very costly, as seen in a number of high-profile patent dispute settlements.

In many developing countries, however, the concept of intellectual property rights is not well understood and the mechanisms for registration and marketing are weak. Some major issues involved include the filing of patent applications on R&D results; negotiations for licensing agreements; treatment of exclusive and nonexclusive licensing; and avenues for commercial exploitation. Government has a key role in providing the infrastructure, platform, and environment for the creation, protection, and commercialization of intellectual property.

In response to the growing importance of intellectual property to achieving competitiveness and higher productivity, the APO organized a symposium on "Intellectual Property Rights" in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2003. This e-book is an outcome of the meeting. It consists of a summary report of the symposium and the complete text of the following resources papers:

- Measures to Promote Technology Transfer through Tripartite Linkages, by Dr. Kunio Yoshida, Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo, Japan;
- Intellectual Property Rights: Japan's Policies and Strategies and Global Trends and Issues, by Kouzo Oikawa, Senior Executive Director, Development Bank of Japan;
- Infrastructure, Platform, and Environment for the Creation, Protection, and Exploitation of Intellectual Property, by Dr. L.C. Lee, Deputy Executive Director (Research), Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology; and
- Protection of Intellectual Property Rights for Small and Medium Enterprises, by Dr. Leah Lo, Director, Technology Transfer Office, National Health Research Institute, Republic of China.

This publication is a useful resource for anyone interested in intellectual property and its protection and utilization for higher productivity and competitiveness.

The APO has uploaded a number of e-books to its Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org). Some are also available in hard copy, while others, including *Intellectual Property Rights*, are available only in e-edition.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Information and Public Relations Department, Asian Productivity Organization, Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan. Phone number: (81-3) 5226-3927, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3957, e-Mail: ipr@apo-tokyo.org

COMMON SENSE TALK



"Common sense and a sense of humor are the same thing, moving at different speeds. A sense of humor is just common sense, dancing."

Clive James

"Leadership is doing what is right when no one is watching."

George Van Valkenburg

"Knowledge is a process of piling up facts; wisdom lies in their simplification."

Martin Fischer

"New ideas pass through three periods: 1) It can't be done. 2) It probably can be done, but it's not worth doing. 3) I knew it was a good idea all along!"

Arthur C. Clarke

"Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability."

Roy L. Smith

"You don't get paid for the hour. You get paid for the value you bring to the hour."

Jim Rohn

"There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group—there is less competition."

Indira Gandhi

"You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it."

Charles Buxton

"We can do anything we want to if we stick to it long enough."

Helen Keller

"The more specific and measurable your goal, the more quickly you will be able to identify, locate, create, and implement the use of the necessary resources for its achievement."

Charles J. Givens

— Key areas in agricultural development —

Dr. Manuel S.J. de Leon

Dr. Manuel S.J. de Leon, Senior Program Officer (Agriculture), will retire from full-time service in the APO Secretariat at end June 2004, after 18 years of dedicated service. He will continue to assist the Agriculture Department in organizing APO projects on an assignment basis. Dr. de Leon wrote this article, at the request of the APO News, to share his thoughts on the future thrust of the APO Agriculture Program.

I am pleased to share a few thoughts with APO News readers on the areas that we could perhaps continue to focus on in our program for the improvement of agricultural productivity in member countries. After working with the APO for so many years, I have become convinced that more resources should be channeled to training projects in the following areas: 1) productivity management tools for agriculture; 2) ICT applications for agriculture/rural development; and 3) greater value addition in agriculture through entrepreneurship development. By highlighting only these areas, I do not mean to imply that there are no other important areas of concern or that they are less important. I highlight these areas simply because I consider them to be inherent to the core productivity mission of the APO and in which the APO has, over the years, acquired a “comparative advantage” vis-à-vis other international organizations.

It is well known that in the industry sector productivity management tools such as quality circles, 5S, quality management, and other improvement activities, for example kaizen, have been instrumental in the development of businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises, in many member countries. Some of these tools could be further developed to provide agricultural producers with the same types of useful methods for improving their productivity. Some of the methods would need to be adapted to the agricultural setting and might accordingly require pioneering efforts on the part of the APO.

There is also a vital need in the agriculture sector to establish mechanisms to get information to those who need it as quickly and accurately as possible. In the age of globalization when knowledge is a vital factor of production, ICT is increasingly becoming an indispensable tool for improving productivity. In the context of Asian



Dr. de Leon

agriculture specifically, ICT would facilitate to a large degree technology transfer and market development in member countries. For example, Web-based training could be used increasingly to upgrade the knowledge and skills of extension workers, while ICT-based information systems could be set up to deliver to farmers/producers the necessary information on market trends and requirements efficiently and at low cost.

The lack of value-adding activities in agricultural/rural areas appears to be a major reason why the development of agriculture in some member countries has remained sluggish. One important strategy to increase farm incomes and revitalize rural areas is to promote more value-adding activities by developing entrepreneurship among rural people. Specifically, under the APO Agriculture Program this would require putting more emphasis on entrepreneurial and management skills development in the agriculture/rural sector.

Addressing all of the above areas would involve capacity building, which is a core function of the

APO. This was also reflected in the reference above to the desirability of allocating more resources to training-type programs. Finally, I would like to reiterate that I have been very selective in identifying the focal areas. For reasons of space, I was not able to address the important issue of sustainability in agriculture. ☺



Report on Member Country Support Program

In 2002, at the initiative of the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED) and with a special grant from the Japanese government, the APO launched the Member Country Support Program to help NPOs develop key capabilities that will enable them to strengthen the productivity movements in their respective countries. Ten NPOs have been specially selected for participation in this program. Every two years, two will be singled out for development into model NPOs. The APO will depute technical experts to help them achieve this. The implementing agency for this program is the JPC-SED.


The first two NPOs to take part were the National Productivity Organization of Bangladesh and Vietnam Productivity Center. Over the past two years, experts were assigned to develop their capabilities in training middle management and providing consultancy services in kaizen. Model companies in these two areas were established successfully. To share the experience and insights gained from this program with other member countries, a training kit on “Middle Management Training for Problem Solving and Decision Making” and a consulting manual on “5S, Reduction of Defective Products, and Kaizen Practice” were produced.

A systems approach was adopted for training middle management in problem solving and decision making. A five-step methodology was used: problem awareness; problem solving; decision making; implementation; and evaluation and feedback. The consulting manual, on the other hand, has four

parts: 1) understanding kaizen; 2) implementing 5S; 3) defect reduction; and 4) applying kaizen.

For results achieved by model companies, we highlight three from Bangladesh. National Tubes is a public enterprise that produces galvanizing iron tubes. It implemented a kaizen project to reduce waste and defective products. Before the project was undertaken in January 2003, National Tubes was experiencing an 11% defect rate of end products and a zinc wastage rate of 35%, which amounted to 5,380 metric tons. The number of zinc units with black spots was 1,387. One year later, defect and zinc waste rates dropped to 0.2% and 13%, respectively, and the number of units with black spots was a meager 11.

Dandy Dyeing is a private company that manufactures textile products. Demand usually rises by about 40% in October-November each year. However, the company was unable to increase production to meet demand. A project on introducing 5S and reducing defects was initiated. After one year, output increased by 38% in the peak demand period with the same workforce.

Janata Jute Mills, a private company, makes jute products. It implemented a middle management training program, with the following results: 26% increase in productivity; 5% savings in material usage; and energy savings of up to 75%. 



p-TIPS

You don't have to be a star (Let's hear it for B players)

Organizations invest much time, energy, and money in recruiting and retaining star-quality employees (A players). This may lead to dangerous underestimation of the role of the supporting cast (B players). B players may not like calling attention to themselves, or seek a balance between work and family, or love their work more than their job title. While they may not bring in the most revenue, they bring depth and stability to organizations and are less likely to be involved in scandals or make critical mistakes. B players are especially important during times of transition because they tend just to get on with the work. In “Let's Hear It for the B Players” in the June 2003 issue of *Harvard Business Review*, T.J. DeLong and V. Vijayaraghavan give some advice on how to nurture and retain B players.

1) **Accept differences.** Since most managers are A players themselves, they may not sufficiently value B players with a different view of working life.

- 2) **Give the gift of time.** Solid performers often don't demand time with their managers, end up feeling alienated, and leave the organization.
- 3) **Give praise.** B players who are not promoted or given pay increases as frequently as A players should be recognized in other ways to make them feel more appreciated and motivated. A few words of praise in a meeting or a written note can work wonders.
- 4) **Offer choices.** Create a system for coaching and promoting B players with potential. “Sideways promotions” can be effective means to retain those who don't want to go the management route but have valuable experience and knowledge that could be applied in a variety of roles.



INDIA

Mr. Hamdi Othman, Manager, Human Resources Development, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, and **Ms. Nguyen Thi Bich Hang**, Managing Director, Vietnam Productivity Center, Vietnam, were deputed to serve as resource persons in the Sub-regional Green Productivity Demonstration Project for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, 17–20 May 2004.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Dr. Adnan Bin Alias, Lecturer, Business Faculty, University Technology MARA, Malaysia, was deputed to provide technical expert services in the training course on Productivity Management and Quality in Higher Education, 26–27 May 2004.

MALAYSIA

Mr. Rodney M. May, Consultant, Australia, was deputed to serve as resource person in the Integrated Community Development Demonstration Project on Natural Farming, 31 May–4 June 2004.

MONGOLIA

Mr. Mohd. Javed Pervez, Sr. Deputy Director, National Productivity Council, India, was deputed to provide technical expert services on Waste Minimization, 10–14 May 2004.

PHILIPPINES

Dr. Arnat Tancho, Lecturer, Department of Soil Resources and Environment, Faculty of Agricultural Production, Maejo University, Thailand, was deputed to serve as resource person in the Green Productivity-Integrated Community Development Demonstration Project on Natural Farming System, 17–27 May 2004.

SRI LANKA

Mr. Kwong Seng Johnny Tan, Lecturer, Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore, was deputed to provide technical expert services on Six Sigma, 31 May–3 June 2004.

APO/NPO update

Appointments in Cambodia

Mr. Hul Lim, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME), was designated as APO Director for Cambodia w.e.f. 17 May 2004.

Mr. Yea Bunna, Deputy Director, Department of Industrial Affairs, MIME, was designated as APO Alternate Director and NPO Head w.e.f. 17 May 2004.

Ms. Tey Dany, Vice Chief, Office of Investment, Department of Industrial Affairs, MIME, was designated as APO Liaison Officer w.e.f. 17 May 2004.

New NPO Head for the Philippines

Dr. Eduardo T. Gonzalez, APO Alternate Director for the Philippines and President, Development Academy of the Philippines, was appointed as the NPO Head/Executive Director, Productivity and Development Center, w.e.f. 29 April 2004, in place of Dr. Segundo E. Romero.

Program calendar

Republic of China

Seminar on Technologies for Sustainable Aquaculture, 18–22 October 2004.

Workshop on Greening Supply Chains and Eco-design, 25–28 October 2004.

India

Seminar on Reduction of Post-harvest Losses of Fruit and Vegetables, 5–11 October 2004.

Indonesia

Study Meeting on Productivity Management of Public Infrastructure: Productivity of Seaports, 7–10 December 2004.

Japan

Multi-country Study Mission on New Public Management and Quality Improvement for Local Government, 4–8 October 2004.

Republic of Korea

Study Meeting on Customer Satisfaction in Competitive Markets, 12–15 October 2004.

Mongolia

Seminar on Participatory Microcredit for Integrated Community Development, 20–25 September 2004.

Nepal

Seminar on the Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Productivity Movement, 18–22 October 2004.

Pakistan

Symposium on Supply Chain Management for SMEs, 5–8 October 2004.

Seminar on Sustainable Dairy-sector Development for Poverty Reduction, 22–27 November 2004.

Symposium on Strategic Alliances among SMEs through Technology Fusion, 30 November–3 December 2004.

Sri Lanka

Study Meeting on the Cluster Approach for Industrial Development, 25–28 October 2004.

Seminar on TQM for Public Administration, 6–10 December 2004.

Thailand

Multi-country Study Mission on Media and Productivity (Thailand and Vietnam), 20–25 September 2004.

USA

Seminar on Development of the Tourism Industry, 4–8 October 2004.

Vietnam

Multi-country Study Mission on Media and Productivity (Thailand and Vietnam), 20–25 September 2004.

Workshop on Green Productivity and Urban Environmental Management, 8–12 November 2004.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of the above activities, including eligibility for participation. If you need the address of your NPO, it is available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.

— Business continuity management —

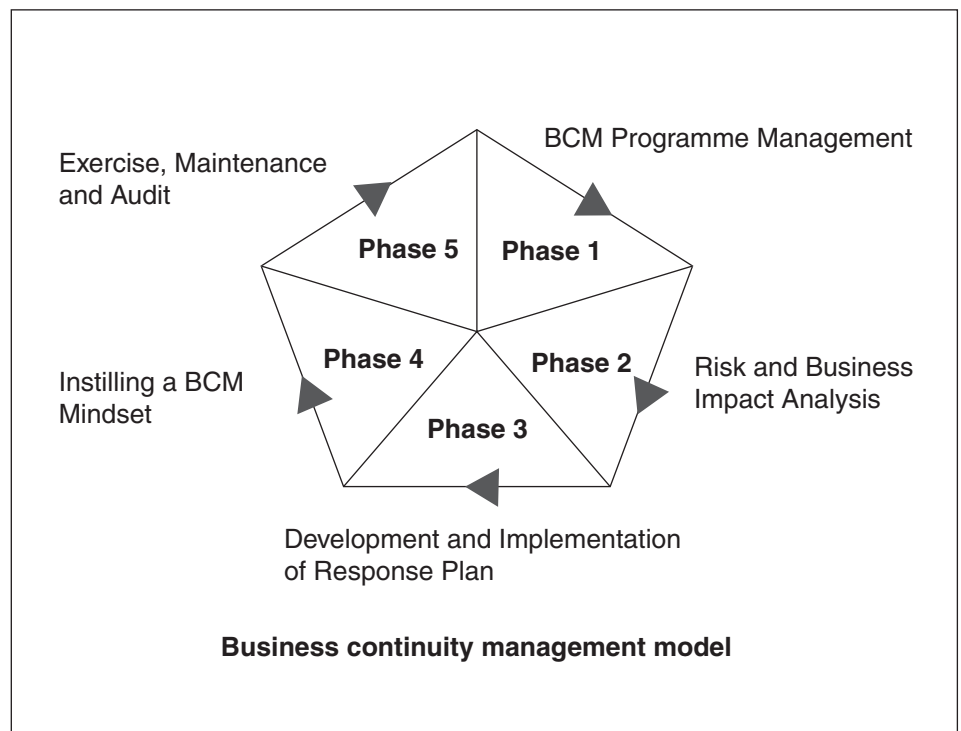
The past few years have witnessed the outbreaks of the SARS and avian flu epidemics, the Iraqi war, social and political unrest in many countries, and natural disasters like earthquakes, droughts, and floods. They caused serious disruptions to lives, properties, and businesses. Many enterprises, especially SMEs, were ill prepared for such crisis management.

The adverse incidents mentioned above have underlined the importance for companies wishing to remain viable and competitive in the event of such disruptions to build a business continuity management (BCM) capability. BCM has been described as a “holistic management process that identifies and analyzes potential incidents that threaten an organization and the development of response plans to minimize their impact on the business. It covers a broad range of business and management disciplines, including risk management, disaster recovery, and supply chain management” (*Requirements for Business Continuity Management* published by SPRING Singapore). Among the benefits attributed to BCM are: being better prepared for major business disruptions; enhanced competitiveness; less potential economic loss; better asset protection; improved corporate governance; favorable corporate image as a “well-prepared” organization; and greater customer and shareholder confidence in the corporation.

Although BCM has been widely practiced by multinational companies, it is a relatively new concept for local industries in Asia and the Pacific. It is felt that they too need to know and develop BCM capability. Recognizing this need, the APO organized a study meeting on BCM in Singapore hosted by the Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board (SPRING) of Singapore, 23–25 March 2004. The program provided an in-depth understanding of BCM, an examination of the methodologies for developing BCM capability, and ways to promote its widespread use within an organization. Eighteen participants from 14 member countries took part. A highlight of the program was an exposition on SPRING Singapore’s BCM standard, guidelines, and assurance audit process.

The study meeting attendees recognized the urgent need to promote BCM and its role in a global market in their respective countries, and that this should embrace public- and private-sector organizations at local, national, and regional levels. It should become an integral part of a business management process. SMEs were singled out for special mention as they constitute an important economic sector in APO member countries and they will need financial and technical support to implement BCM. Governmental assistance was suggested. Another key issue raised was the creation of a mechanism for

the sharing of information on BCM among APO member countries. In this regard, participants expressed appreciation to SPRING Singapore for sharing its BCM model (Figure). Most felt that it provides a good starting point for them to plan and implement BCM.



SPRING Singapore’s BCM model is described in its publication *Requirements for Business Continuity Management*. Established in 2003, it provides a standard that specifies the requirements for BCM and the model for the BCM process. It is not prescriptive and can be applied by any organization. As explained by SPRING Director for External Relations Low Choo Tuck, the BCM standard is targeted at industries and enterprises that support or provide components or services to larger, export-oriented companies. The BCM process has five phases: 1) BCM program management; 2) risk and business impact analysis; 3) development and implementation of a response plan; 4) instilling a BCM mindset; and 5) maintenance and auditing. SPRING Singapore offers training programs to help organizations implement BCM. Those who do can apply to SPRING Singapore for certification, which is an assurance to their customers of continuity in the supply of goods and services, even in the event of a business disruption. 