

Critical Infrastructure and Support Systems Standardisation Project

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), through its APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), partnered with StanCert and Standards Australia to establish the Critical Infrastructure and Support Systems Standardization Project. StanCert was contracted to manage the project, which was jointly funded by APEC and Standards Australia.

The impetus for this project came from the need to refocus on security in the Asia-Pacific Region following events such as natural disasters and criminal activity in recent times. The project identified gaps in existing standards relating to the security of critical infrastructure, prioritised areas for future standards development and provided a blue-print for the development of a security standards framework to assist in identifying and categorising security standards. There was a solution oriented approach to barriers identified relating to the protection of critical infrastructure.

The benefits to APEC Member Economies from participation in this project included:

- a more consistent approach to security along with emergency and disaster management in the APEC region;
- the promotion of security standards and systems capacity which support business as well as critical infrastructure in times of emergency, helping to minimise impact on economies;
- harmonisation of related standards across the APEC region, which will help improve the interoperability and compatibility of systems related to securing critical infrastructure;
- improved technical capacity through assistance in ascertaining key areas of standardisation focus so that programs may be targeted for the development of security standards; and
- the capacity to make more informed choices about effective security solutions through better access to information on tested and consistent methods to protect critical infrastructure.

All 21 APEC Member Economies participated in the project and there was active engagement from 18 of these countries. There were over 500 responses to a comprehensive online survey developed during the project. The project report was published in June 2009 and featured in the top position on the most accessed publications page of the APEC website for several months.

As an initial follow on activity from this project, Standards Australia contracted StanCert to facilitate a workshop on security standardisation priorities for CEOs in the region. Through this workshop a key group of thought leaders was brought together to discuss how best to shape the future of security standards development in the Asia-Pacific region. This important and successful workshop, entitled *Critical Standards for Security – what every CEO needs to know*, was held alongside the APEC CEO Summit in Singapore during November 2009. A report on the outcomes has been submitted to the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), APEC Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC) and the Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC).