



ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
Inter-American Committee on Ports

MEETINGS OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUPS (TAG)
(September 10 – 11, 2007, Salvador, Brazil)

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF
THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUPS (TAG)**

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I. Background

1. The Technical Advisory Groups (TAG) are accessory organs of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) on specific aspects of hemispheric port sector development. They are created by the CIP, under the proposal of a member State, which will lead the work of this group for a two-year period. This two-year period can be extended after favorable evaluation by the CIP.
2. Each TAG is composed of representatives of the government of the member States, specialized on the Group's issues, and associate members that represent administrative and operating port entities, academic, scientific, commercial, developmental, financial and industrial institutions and other organizations related to port sector activity, which have legal standing and specialization in the matter. Associate members subscribe an annual contribution and have right to voice their opinion but no vote. The member States have voice and vote.
3. In the First Meeting of the CIP (Guatemala, 1999), three TAG were established: Port Operations, under the chairmanship of Mexico; Port Security under the chairmanship of United States and Safety Control and Environmental Protection, under the chairmanship of Argentina. In the Second and Third Meeting (Costa Rica, 2001 and Mexico, 2003), the Committee made a favorable evaluation of the work of the three groups and approved the continuation of their work. In the Fourth Meeting (Maracaibo, 2005) the CIP made a favorable evaluation of the work of the two first TAG and additionally ended the work of the TAG on Safety Control and Environmental Protection. However, at the same time it approved the creation of two new Technical Groups on Safety Control under the chairmanship of Argentina and on Environmental Port Protection under the chairmanship of Venezuela.
4. The TAG have taken off and progressed since their creation to date, in a heterogenic form and some faster than others, for several reasons, among others: the role played by the chair and vice-chair offices; the participation of the member States representatives; the integration and activities of the associate members and the payment of the correspondent quota; the priority of the issues in the sector, among others. The Executive Board of the CIP (CECIP) recommended to hold a special meeting to generate ideas in order to improve the function of the future TAG.
5. This special meeting was celebrated in Panama City, Panama, on April 10, 2007, with the participation of representatives from El Salvador, United States, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela. The Secretariat presented an analytical document regarding the success of the TAG and facilitated to reach conclusions and recommendations. Details on these conclusions and recommendations follow.

II. Function of the TAG

The principal and general characteristics of the TAG functions, since their creation to date, have been the following:

1. *Meetings and experts.* The TAG have fulfilled with the celebration of their annual meetings, according to what their policy establish. The meetings were celebrated

jointly with the CIP or CECIP meetings, as the representatives of those meetings are the same, more precisely during the four TAG meetings and also the CIP and CECIP meetings. However a reduced number of “experts” have participated in the TAGs’ matters relative to their member States, which have limited the progress of their deliberations and objectives.

2. Representatives of Member States. The member States registered in the TAG related to their priorities. However, it has been observed that the representatives have often fulfilled their attributed functions on an irregular basis, such as endorsing experts in respective matters, providing specialized information, organizing work and presentation on issues, and attracting associate members, among others. These contributions have been marginal.
3. Associate Members. The number of associate members by TAG differs, but an elevated correlation has been observed between the country of the chair and the associate members. Other member States (different from the one of the chair) have not been successful in attracting associate members to the TAG they integrate. The cost-benefit of the participation of associate members is not clearly defined and also there is a controversy regarding this cost-benefit, which creates difficulty in the possibility of attracting new members. There is also ambiguity concerning the membership duration for the associate member due to the US \$1,000 quota payment. Finally, the responsibility assigned to the associate member has been occasional.
4. Work plan and its implementation. The annual work plan, approved by each TAG, consists in sub themes corresponding to the TAG’s area of expertise and have also been touched upon in conferences by experts presented in corresponding meetings. This has been efficiently implemented. However, other tasks such as the elaboration of technical and specialized studies and papers; compilation and exchange of information; use of technologic systems specialized in the issue; design and maintenance of the data base with pertinent information for their work; identification of training needs; organization of national and international meetings and activities specialized in the sector; presentations of written reports on the advancements and results of their work and other forms of participatory commitments have been occasional, and their implementation the same.
5. Information and circulation. Neither TAG has materials for circulation and promotion in the languages of the Organization (Spanish, English, French and Portuguese), or an updated web page which allows them to inform and divulge their actions and serves as promotion tool to recruit new associate members and inform the general community of the port sector.
6. Office of the Chair. It has fulfilled an important and recognized effort in generating and working with the TAG, as well as particularly promoting it in its country. It is observed that some offices count on specialized personnel who are assigned to follow up on the TAGs issues. However, in almost all the cases, there is insufficient coordination with the member States, with its associate members and with the offices of the vice-chairs. The efforts made to communicate and promote the TAG, especially outside its country, have also been limited or inexistent.
7. Office of the Vice-Chair. Has fulfilled a role relatively marginal in the majority of the TAG, with little coordination with the office of the chair and practically an inexistent responsibility to follow up on specific tasks.

8. *Coordination.* In all the cases the coordination and communication between the integrants of a TAG, being the office of the president, vice-president, member States and associate members, have been very incipient or inexistent.
9. *Budget and financial aspects.* It is the function of the Chair to manage the collection of funds coming from the associate members. These contributions have been irregular and the Secretariat has fallen in collecting these quotas.
10. *Evaluation of the TAG.* Every two years, during the CIP meeting, TAGs have been evaluated. The sub committee established for this purpose has based its evaluation on the reports of activities that occurred during the two-year period in consideration and presented by their respective Chairs and on the report of the Sub committee on Policy and Coordination of the CECIP.

III. The TAG on Port Operations

1. *Authorities, members, and finances.* Chair: Mexico. Vice Chair: Internacional de Contenedores Asociados de Veracruz (ICAVE) (Mexico). Other member States: Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Associate Members: Abarloa (Mexico); Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company (United States); Compañía Marítima del Pacífico, S.A. de C.V. (Mexico); Instituto de Investigación y Desarrollo Marítimo (INDESMAR) (Peru); Navegación Veracruzana (NAVEGA) (Mexico); OCAMAR (Venezuela); OCUPA (Mexico); Puerto de Altamira (Mexico), and Terminal Internacional del Sur (TISUR) (Peru). This TAG has the greatest number of associate members from different countries. Additionally, they contribute regularly to the TAG and generally this TAG has the greatest number of deposits. The TAG has gathered on seven occasions.
2. *Ample subject matter.* The issue “operations” practically involves all port matters, which provides a field that is very ample. As such, various sub-themes have been concentrated on such as infrastructure, administration and the operation of specialized terminals, information and telecommunications, port facilitation, logistics, industrial relations, operative and industrial safety, strategic planning, among others. With a variety of issues it is difficult to specialize in only one.

IV. The TAG on Port Security¹

1. *Authorities, members, and finances.* Chair: United States. Vice Chair: No selection. Other member States: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Associate Members: Administración General de Puertos (Argentina); Maritime Security Council (United States); Port of Texas (United States); Stevedoring Services of America (United States); Puerto de Miami (United States); Rapiscan Security Products, Inc. (United States); IENPAC Golfo y Caribe SC (Mexico) and Programa de Seguridad Portuaria (Guatemala). This TAG has regional coordinators, who have a personal title that does not represent a member State. This TAG has the greatest number of the member States and emphasizes the regular participation of representatives and guests from the United States. The participation of associate members has been decreasing and they do not contribute.

¹ The original name of the TAG in English is “TAG on Port Security” which corresponds in Spanish as “CTC sobre Protección Portuaria,” and should be corrected in Spanish. Also, this TAG does not include the issue in English of “Safety” which in Spanish is “Seguridad.”

2. *An issue of priority* that covered great intensity was the entry into force of the ISPS Code of the IMO in 2004. The issues covered include, Inter-American Program of Training for Port Security; training necessities (issues and instructors); security equipment, networks of security officials, Inter-American Program for Auto Evaluation on Port Security, technical assistance in materials in port security and financing; management and implementation of the ISPS Code; Inter-American Action Plan on Port Security, Strategic Framework for Inter-American Cooperation in Port Security Materials, among others. The issues have concentrated on issues of security in order to control the fight against terrorism and ban of drug trafficking. Nevertheless, other security issues (anti-theft, smuggling, pirating, among others) have been covered less extensively. The TAG has supported the organization of two Hemispheric Conferences on Port Security (Miami 2004 and Puerto La Cruz 2006) and has gathered on nine occasions.

V. **The TAG on Navigation Safety**

1. *Authorities, members, and finances.* Chair: Argentina. Vice Chair: Ecuador. Other member States: Barbados, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, United States, and Venezuela. Associate Members: Consorcio de Gestión del Puerto de Bahía Blanca (Argentina); Hidrovía (Argentina); Mollendo Equipment Co., Inc. (United States); Norcontrol IT (Mexico); Administración General de Puertos (Argentina); and Sabik-Mobilis (United States). The participation and support of the associate members has been decreasing.
2. *Issue areas* have primarily been the supply of information on the system of control of ship traffic (VTS – Vessel Traffic Systems and AIS – Autonomous Intelligent Systems), determining the training necessities of pilots and sets of standards and definitions of professional profiles for VTS operators. The TAG has gathered as a new advisory group one occasion and connected with another TAG in six opportunities.

VI. **The TAG on Environmental Port Protection**

1. *Authorities, members, and finances.* Chair: Venezuela. Vice-Chair: Panama. Other member States: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Dominica, Ecuador, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay. The TAG has one member: Ocean Pollution Control (Panama).
2. *Issue Areas.* The TAG has covered the following sub-themes from its commencement: the situation of countries in MARPOL, OPRC, and international environmental conventions, the identification of training necessities in the fight against contingencies, the organization of technical reports available in each country in the fight against contingencies, the development of environmental management plans, a proposal to exchange information among members in charge of dangerous cargo, the creation of a network to exchange experiences on the requirements of each country (Port Estate Control), the elaboration of a specific guide for ports on the potential for the certification of ports in ISO 14000, and the establishment of contingency plans for hydrocarbon spills. The TAG has celebrated the First Hemispheric Conference on Environmental Port Protection (Panama 2007). It has gathered as a new advisory group on one occasion and connected to another TAG in six opportunities.

VII. Recommendations

In order to improve the management of these advisory organs of the CIP and reach an active participation of all the members of a TAG, the following recommendations are proposed.

1. General Recommendations

- (i) Reinforce the concept of the TAG as an advisory organ to the Committee in specific matters of the hemispheric port sector. As such, each TAG should cover only one specific matter of the port sector, clearly defined and that it be covered exclusively.
- (ii) Emphasize the importance of technical leadership, the promotion and coordination of the office of the President of each TAG, in addition to the contribution of administrative and financial resources.
- (iii) Identify the relevant participation of associate members in the TAG, which should be established clearly, and in each case, the cost benefit of their participation that guarantees a payment of US \$2,000 for two year duration of the TAG.
- (iv) Strengthen the annual work programs of each TAG, not only with presentations from experts on topics of interests, but also including activities that generate a greater impact in the achievement of the TAG's objectives, such as the development of studies, documents, exchange of information, training activities, among others.
- (v) Fix quantifiable goals for the work plan activities of each TAG in order to facilitate their evaluation and that they are as objective as possible.
- (vi) Establish the forum of CIP Conferences as spaces of inter-American port dialogue principally for the TAG, but not exclusively.
- (vii) Organize a manual or procedural guide that includes a series of spaces in the CIP regulations, on the function of each TAG.

2. For the office of the Chair

- (i) Define the structure of the office of the chair identifying functions, responsibilities, and support, among others.
- (ii) Elaborate documents, pamphlets, and other written informational materials, in at least two languages of the Organization, that serve to circulate and promote its actions, for the two year period.
- (iii) Design and maintain a webpage that includes all of the information pertinent to the TAG, such as objectives, functions, work plans, information on specialists from member States, information on associate members, next activities, among others.
- (iv) Designate functions for the office of the vice chair establishing specific responsibilities and work to be done during the exercise of the term.
- (v) Define clearly the cost benefit in order to attract the participation of associate members of the TAG.
- (vi) Establish a plan to attract associate members and cover their fee for two years.
- (vii) Maintain a narrow coordination and communication with other members of the TAG.

3. For the member States

- (i) Define the functions and responsibilities of the member States of the TAG.
- (ii) Urge specialists in the issues of each TAG, which the member State belongs to, to participate in the meetings and work of the TAG.
- (iii) Fix areas of designation for member States in the area of specialization of each TAG, in such a way that these registrations allow for an understanding of the human resources available in each area.
- (iv) Participate regularly in the annual meetings of the TAG making presentations, gathering specialized information on the issues and assisting in the achievements of the TAG.
- (v) Urge each member State of a TAG to manage the support of the associate members of each TAG.

4. For associate members

- (i) Define the functions and responsibilities of each associate member.
- (ii) Participate regularly in the annual meetings of the TAG making presentations, gathering specialized information in the issues and assisting in the achievements of the TAG.
- (iii) Facilitate the participation of the associate members in the meetings and conferences of the CIP, ensuring that they are up to date with their contributions.
- (iv) Define that for the associate member the duration period of membership to the TAG is for two years, initiating in 2008-2009 and the fee will be in the amount of US \$2,000 for that period. The fee should be deposited to the Secretariat of the CIP/OAS.