

THE AUSTRALIA-THAILAND BUSINESS

COUNCIL has a mission to convey to Australian industry that the time is **NOW**, rather than in the future, to aggressively pursue opportunities for bilateral trade and investment.

NOW is the time to increase existing involvement.

NOW is the time to seriously explore market entry.

Why is Thailand so attractive a destination?

For Australian business the prospect of a Free Trade Agreement with Thailand makes Thailand a more attractive business prospect. The very process will lead to businesses in both countries becoming more knowledgeable of one another.

Thailand has been building a new economy. In response to the 1997 'crisis' the country took up the challenge of ambitious political and economic reform. Although not perfect in their execution, these reforms are positioning Thailand, in sharp contrast to most of its neighbours, to withstand the full impact of future economic downturns.

Significant levels of foreign investment are flowing into Thailand. There is recognition that Thailand's recovering standard of living, its population of about seventy million, and its geographical location make it the ideal regional entry point to AFTA's tariff concessions and five hundred million person marketplace.

With reform still being pursued, the prospect of Thailand's economy speedily becoming one of the largest in Asia should be brought to a reality.

Why join the Australia-Thailand Business Council (ATBC)?

Through membership you can:-

- build improved bilateral business links;
- share in its capacity to input to policy making through the Council's access to and liaison with both governments;
- add strategic value to your investment

ATBC will do this by providing knowledge, promotion and support for business enterprises through the creation of opportunities for linkages, networking and appropriate interaction with both governments.

The ATBC operates to:

- (a) Provide networking and information access events for persons interested or involved in the bilateral commerce.
- (b) Increase the knowledge of persons at the highest levels of government, finance and business of both countries with regard to trends in, and the impediments to, the bilateral commerce.
- (c) Increase the awareness of the capabilities of each country's business community and also of the areas of investment opportunity.
- (d) Offer assistance and co-operation to other groups with similar objectives.
- (e) Foster friendship and understanding between the business communities of both countries.

How do we operate?

The Council has a number of state based Chapters which achieve, together with the national body, the 'Objectives' through the following services and activities:

(a) *Relationship with Government*

Establish with relevant Government representatives and officials a relationship of direct access and mutual resource for the purpose of promoting growth in the bilateral commerce.

Participate in, as appropriate, the pursuit of specific bilateral goals.

(b) *Membership Services*

Membership networking and information access through the organisation of relevant events and linkages with other bodies sharing the bilateral focus.

A forum for discussion of bilateral business issues in such areas as, but not exclusively:

- tariff and non tariff barriers/market access
- financial requirements
- partner selection and evaluation
- statutory environment
- long-term partnerships vs short-term technology transfer
- translation services
- expatriate entry and exit planning
- specific industry trends and opportunities

Representations on behalf of Members to either or both Governments.

Membership database development to include details of Members' activities.

Regular communication with Members.

(c) *Public Events*

Annual Joint Business Conference of Australian and Thailand sections of the ATBC.

Forums and associated study tours.

Functions for visiting dignitaries.

Seminars and functions for Members.

(d) *External Affiliations*

Linkages with other groups with similar interests.

Background History

In 1980 a number of Australian companies with interests in Thailand formed the Thai-Australia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TACCI) as a private sector initiative to develop connections and to promote Australian business in Thailand.

At a time when Australian business generally was showing little interest in Thailand, TACCI had a considerable impact in Thailand developing networks at the top of Thai business and government.

In 1987, TACCI evolved into the Australia Thailand Business Council (ATBC). In the years that followed there was a merger with a longstanding bilateral business group in Victoria and the development of the Chapter structure.

The formation of the ATBC's Australian and Thailand Sections represented the creation of the first formal link between the private sectors of Australia and Thailand.

Organisation and Membership

The Business Council has adopted a state based chapter structure to better serve the networking, information access, opportunity identification needs of the membership. As a non-profit organisation it is funded by the annual subscriptions received from its membership and any surplus gained on its functions.

Membership of the ATBC comprises a cross section of business interests from the largest corporations to small individual consultancies. Current membership represents a significant proportion of Australian business interests in Thailand. Membership is open to any Australian based organisation, or individual, with an interest in Thailand.

The Council works closely with their respective governments and this collaboration is acknowledged by the governments in their inviting ATBC representation at the Joint Trade Committee talks of officials and Ministerial Economic Commission meetings.

Between general meetings of the ATBC – Australian Section, the ATBC Executive holds regular meetings and is responsible for the conduct of the Council's affairs. The Executive Committee comprises the Chairperson of each Chapter as Vice Presidents, and a President, Treasurer and Committee of up to ten persons elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The Council is serviced by the International Division of the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ACCI) in Australia and the Thai Chamber of Commerce (TCC) in Thailand.

For further information contact:-

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Australia-Thailand Business Council

Your
invitation
to join



"The Australia-Thailand Business Council's(ATBC) contacts within Thailand helped our business gain the Thai Government recognition we sought. Now, it is assisting us expand our activities in Thailand."
Grant Atkinson,
Rocket Film Equipment

"The Council provides excellent networking and information exchange activities. Importantly, it helps us gain access to the policy makers."
Sam Lo Ricco,
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu