

Pearl River Delta Development Committee - Its works and future development

The PRD Region

The Pearl River Delta (PRD) region is an area that includes Hong Kong, Macau, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and a cluster of cities around PRD. It is a megalopolis which consists of 9 areas (excluding Hong Kong and Macau) covering over 50 million population. The potential IET membership will be drawn from the listed region. It is a significant economy in China and also with respect to the world, it is framed to be the factory of the world.

The IET's presence and plan to set up a regional network in PRD can be traced back to 2005 or earlier. The Pearl River Delta Development Committee (PRDDC) was established and funded directly by the IET in order to promote and make an impact to the region and China. Since then IET, as represented by PRDDC, had made constant collaborations and maintained a professional tie between IET, IET Hong Kong, the local authority, universities and industries. One of IET's major partners in Guangzhou (GZ) is Guangzhou Association of Science and Technology (GZAST), a governing body overseeing all the institutional affairs. During these years, PRDDC had made IET well known to the authority and industries and had also staged many major top level exchanges, conferences and events. Other close associates are universities and authorities at Shenzhen.



Pearl River Delta Region

Administrative Issues and Previous Working Models

Unlike other countries, in China, international learned societies or institutions are not allowed to operate as an independent body or in a form of branch etc. IET cannot register as a legal entity and it can only be operated in association with a local body in China. The PRDDC then decided to let IET be closely associated with GZAST, a governing body and willing to work closely with IET and can provide logistic and administrative supports; i.e. a de-factual shadow IET local network under the administration of GZAST. Under the new administrative change in China, this restriction may soon be lifted.

Since 2008, a workable model gradually emerged which could be acceptable to both GZAST and IET in terms of promoting IET's professional and educational activities, and in the same time could further the collaboration between IET and professional societies in Guangzhou area. Foreign institutions were not allowed to register as a

charitable status body then (may be possible now) in China. However, deep collaboration with local institutions is highly encouraged. A number of successful IET presences in PRD region were staged. For instance, the first conference on intelligent building was led by Ms Ellen Chan and Mr Albert So (2005). The second conference as led by Mr Indi Wong, ICT 2006, organized by PRDDC with Shenzhen Institution of Electronics.

The PRDDC and GZAST had tried to create an IET presence with regular members that can be as close as a branch/network in terms of operation within the guideline of the national policy in China. A good foundation was then formed.

Deep Collaboration with Guangzhou Association of Science and Technology (GZAST)

The core members from PRDDC have paid three more visits on 2009 to discuss the setting up of a Guangzhou IET presence. The IET Hong Kong is the largest overseas branch/network. It had cumulated years of experience and with a large membership base. It had provided GZAST with its constitution, election procedure and operation handbook for their reference, and on how to setting up learned societies. GZAST sent IET a handbook on forming registered society in China. "The Institution of Engineers and Technologies Guangzhou" were registered by GZAST in China, which mirror the IET setup and a home to IET members in China.

The Right Time

The IET's new China initiative and development, together with the recent open door policy in China, it is a good time to establish a local network in the PRD region. It should be noted that the integration of the PRD region with Hong Kong and Macau, means that more and more IET members who was resided in Hong Kong and Macau are now residents in the PRD region. They can form the initial driving force of the network. The setting up of the Interim GZ local network is in its advanced stage. As IET had begun its globalization and administration devolution, the PRDDC in future will be working under the China Development Board. Definitely, the expertise from Hong Kong and Macau Network will be a valuable source of input to GZ area, and surely its deep involvement will be most welcome and also essential to IET's China development in this region.

Acknowledgement

IET would like to express its appreciation to all those members who had made great contributions to its development in China Region, in particular to many previous Centre and Sections Chairpersons, their Committee Members, staff of the IET Office. This list may not be exhaustive and please excuse us if some names were missed.

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