



NEWSLETTER No. 6

ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS THAILAND

15 July 2024

Dear Members,

Invitation to attend the 2024 Annual General Assembly (AGA)

The current Executive Board has completed its work of the first year of its two-year term of office at the end of June 2024. We are, therefore, pleased to announce that an Annual General Assembly will accordingly be convened to review the activities undertaken during July 2023 to June 2024 and address some issues of concern to the members.

In this context, the attention of the Executive Board was drawn to the difficulties of selecting a full team to be submitted for the election of Executive Board which takes place every two years. Indeed, for the last few years, experience had shown that it had become more and more difficult to enlist volunteers to become members of the Executive Board. Since the next election of the Executive Board will be conducted in 2025, it would be useful and timely to reflect on this issue and explore the possibility to streamline the process of the election of members of the Executive Board. Therefore, an independent Working Group was established with the task to draft relevant amendments to the Bylaws, for submission to the 2024 AGA.

In addition, we wish to inform that, from 22 to 25 July 2024, the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) will be conducting its 54th Council session at the UNCC. As you are aware, according to the AFICS-T Bylaws “the Annual General Assembly shall be held in July of each year, unless for reasons the Executive Board deems important, another day is chosen by the Executive Board” (Article V-The Assembly paragraph 1). Therefore, the Executive Board decided to postpone the conduct of 2024 Annual General Assembly to the month of August 2024.

In view of the above, we are therefore pleased to inform that the current Executive Board is finalizing the necessary steps to convene:

THE 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AGA)

on Thursday, 15 August 2024

at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)

Conference Room 4, level 1

Bangkok

Office: Ground Floor (UNCC), United Nations Building, Rajdamnern-nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand
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Registration will commence at 08.00 hours in front of **Conference Room 4**.

The opening of the 2024 Annual General Assembly will start at 09.00 hours. Attached to this Newsletter, you will find copies of (a) the provisional agenda, (b) the Annual Report of the Executive Board, and (c) the proposed amendments to the AFICS-T Bylaws.

The audited financial statement of accounts of the Association for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will be distributed at the 2024 Annual General Assembly.

We are also pleased to inform you that after the opening ceremony, a coffee break will be organized and sponsored by AFICS Thailand.

Please note also that 2024 Annual General Assembly will be conducted in “hybrid meetings” format with arrangements being made to accommodate additional participants online (via Microsoft Teams) to those participants attending in person.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I am pleased to invite all members of AFICS-T to attend the 2024 Annual General Assembly.

In response to measures to safeguard the world against global warming, we would urge you to bring along all the above documents as additional copies will not be available in the Conference Room that day.

I look forward to your participation and the pleasure of greeting you personally.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suraphon', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Suraphon Songweera
President, AFICS-T Executive Board, 2023-2025



**ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL SERVANTS – THAILAND**



2024 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AGA)

THURSDAY, 15 AUGUST 2024
(09.00 – 12.00 hours)

CONFERENCE ROOM 4, UNCC

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Address of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP
2. Statement by the AFICS-T President
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Consideration of AFICS-T activities undertaken during the period July 2023 to June 2024
(as contained in the attached Annual Report of the Executive Board)
5. Questions and answers
6. Consideration of proposed amendments of relevant Bylaws regarding the streamlining the
process of the election of members of the Executive Board
7. Brief report of the 54th Council session of FAFICS
8. Recommendations of activities to be undertaken by AFICS-T
9. Other matters



**ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL SERVANTS – THAILAND**



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
EXECUTIVE BOARD**
(July 2023 – June 2024)

2 July 2024

1. Executive Board of AFICS-THAILAND (AFICS-T)

1. The current Executive Board (2023-2025) of AFICS-T was elected at the 2023 Annual General Assembly (AGA) on 18 July 2023. The current Executive Board (2023-2025) comprises the following officers:

Bureau

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. President | Mr. Suraphon Songweera |
| 2. First Vice-President | Mr. Peter Hegenbarth |
| 3. Second Vice-President | Ms. Pagapunt Aneknidhi |
| 4. Treasurer | Ms. Duanglutai Khomson |
| 5. Deputy Treasurer | Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing |
| 6. Secretary | Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda |
| 7. Deputy Secretary | Ms. Uraiwan Siriwatananukul |
| 8. Registrar | Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen |
| 9. Communication Officer | Ms. Suthasinee Maruttamarn |
| 10. Web Master | Mr. Somkhon Antanai |
| 11. Deputy Web Master | Ms. Salaya Kaewmeechai |

Members

12. Mr. Somchai Congtavinsuti
13. Ms. Junpen Jirasavetakl
14. Ms. Vena Visaruitawongse
15. Ms. Duangthip Pattraplachai

Advisers

20. Mr. Vudhithep Tanghongse

16. Ms. Sumetee Jongmu
17. Ms. Siraprapha Khomson
18. Ms. Chitraporn Boonyasit
19. Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat

2. With the availability of the UNCC facilities, the AFICS-T was able to resume all its activities, in particular the convening of its monthly Board meetings using the UNCC facilities which allowed the conduct of hybrid meetings simultaneously in-person and online.

3. The Executive Board would like to express its thanks and appreciation to members of the Association who had assisted the Executive Board in carrying out the functions of Duty Officer, during the reporting period, who resumed their presence at the AFICS-T office from Tuesday to Thursday.

4. The names of the Duty Officers, including those of the Executive Board members who acted as Duty Officers, during the reporting period are:

1. Ms. Apinporn Israngkul Na Ayudhya
2. Ms. Chiraphorn Sawalaksana
3. Ms. Chitraporn Boonyasit
4. Ms. Duanglutai Khomson
5. Ms. Duangthip Pattraplachai
6. Ms. Metinee Hunkosol
7. Ms. Onanong Panyajaray
8. Mr. Patanapong Siriwatananukul
9. Ms. Salaya Kaewmeechai
10. Ms. Siraprapha Khomson
11. Mr. Somkhon Antanai
12. Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen
13. Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing
14. Ms. Sumetee Jongmu
15. Ms. Suthasinee Maruttamarn
16. Ms. Uraivan Siriwatananukul
17. Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat
18. Ms. Vena Visaruitawongse

2. Committees and Sub-Committees of AFICS-T

5. To facilitate AFICS-T Executive Board in ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of AFICS-T toward the provision of effective and timely services to members, the following Committees and Sub-Committees were established at the second meeting of the current Executive Board and their compositions are as follows:

1. Committee on Pension and Group Life Insurance Benefits:

Chairperson:	Mr. Suraphon Songweera
Members	Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing
	Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat

Sub-Committee on CEs:

Chairperson:

Mr. Somkoon Antanai

Members:

Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing

Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen

Ms. Junpen Jirasavetakul

2. Committee on Medical Benefits:

Co-Chairpersons:

Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda

Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing

(1) Sub-Committee on Worldwide Plan (WWP)

Chairperson:

Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda

Members:

Ms. Pagapunt Aneknidhi

Ms. Junpen Jirasavetakul

(2) Sub-Committee on MIP:

Chairperson:

Ms. Suntaree Suwannasing

Members:

Ms. Salaya Kaewmeechai

Ms. Duanglutai Khomson

Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen

Ms. Chitraporn Boonyasit

3. Committee on Information and Communication:

Co-Chairpersons:

Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen

Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat

Members:

Ms. Suthasinee Maruttamarn

Ms. Duangthip Pattraplachai

4. Committee on Newsletters:

Co-Chairpersons:

Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda (English)

Mr. Somchai Congtavinsutti (Thai)

5. Committee on Benevolent Fund and Funerals:

Co-Chairpersons:

Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat

Ms. Uraiwan Siriwatananukul

Member:

Ms. Duanglutai Khomson

6. Committee on Recreation and Excursion:

Chairperson:

Ms. Suthasinee Maruttamarn

Members:

Ms. Vena Visaruitawongse

Ms. Sumetee Jongmu

Ms. Siraprapha Khomson

7. Committee on Charity Activities:

Chairperson:

Ms. Pagapunt Aneknidhi

Members: Ms. Sumetee Jongmu
Ms. Siraprapha Khomson

8. Committee on Foreigners Living in Thailand (FLiT)

Chairperson: Mr. Peter Hegenbarth
Member: Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda
Adviser: Mr. Ti Le-Huu

3. Membership in AFICS-T

6. The AFICS-T membership has steadily grown since the Founding Meeting, held on 26 February 2001, when there were only 87 registered participants. A recollection of the numbers of registered membership per year (including non-paid-up members) are shown below:

<u>AGA</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Membership</u>
First Session	29 May 2001	110
Second Session	18 June 2002	153
Third Session	25 June 2003	225
Fourth Session	17 June 2004	300
Fifth Session	14 July 2005	356
Sixth Session	18 July 2006	420
Seventh Session	17 July 2007	453
Eighth Session	22 July 2008	574
Ninth Session	28 July 2009	607
Tenth Session	29 July 2010	626
Eleventh Session	09 August 2011	646
Twelfth Session	07 August 2012	701
Thirteenth Session	09 July 2013	725
Fourteenth Session	15 July 2014	742
Fifteenth Session	21 July 2015	787
Sixteenth Session	12 July 2016	762
Seventeenth Session	18 July 2017	820
Eighteenth Session	17 July 2018	826
Nineteenth Session	26 July 2019	820
Twentieth Session	<i>Cancelled</i>	832
Twenty-First Session	<i>Cancelled</i>	851
2022 Session	19 July 2022	853
2023 Session	18 July 2023	864

7. As of 30 April 2024, the paid-up memberships stand at 138. However, the total number of members, including those with their membership fees in arrears, was 848. Since the introduction of life membership in 2008, the Association now counts 710 life members, including 154 members who have reached 80 years old and over, and are exempted from paying any annual membership fees.

4. Summary of Activities

8. The Executive Board is pleased to provide the following summary of activities and assistance to members, which were carried out on behalf of the Association during the reporting period. In this connection, the Executive Board is also pleased to report that since the convening of the 2023 AGA, AFICS-T could resume most of its activities, however some of these could not be implemented yet. Indeed, since the process a full recovery from three years of severe Covid-19 pandemic will take its time, the Executive Board had however endeavor to ensure the delivery of assistance to AFICS-T members and carrying out activities which were felt as priority matters to members. The details of these activities are reported by the respective Committees as follows.

4.1 Summary of Financial Report

9. Ms. Panvipa Thammakoranonta, Auditor, has audited all account of AFICS-T. The audited financial statement of accounts for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will be distributed at the 2024 Annual General Assembly.

4.2 Report on memberships in FAFICS-T

10. As members may recall, the Association had been accepted as a member in the Federation of the Association of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) since July 2001. Since then, AFICS-T has been paying membership fees to FAFICS, based on the number of subscribing and paying-up members as of 1 January of each year. Starting from 2020, FAFICS had fixed the contribution rate at US\$2.00 per member per year. According to our official record as of 1 January 2024, AFICS-T had 173 paid-members. Therefore AFICS-T contribution amounted to US\$346,00 (173 members x US\$2.00) and payment was duly made accordingly. The reduced amount of AFICS-T contribution from the previous year was mainly attributed to the increase in the number of senior retirees who have reached the age of 80 years old and thus became exempted from paying any annual fees.

11. FAFICS would be arranging its 54th Council Meeting at the United Nations Conference Center (UNCC) in Bangkok on 22-25 July 2024. Regarding logistics arrangements and the cost involved, FAFICS established direct consultation with ESCAP Conference Management Unit. Therefore, AFICS-T in this respect agreed to provide support in the preparation of the Meeting.

4.3 Report of the Committee on Pension and Group Life Insurance Benefits

12. In accordance with the UNJSPF Pension Adjustment System and based on the consumer price index (CPI) data from the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS) published by the UN Statistics Division, there was an increase of 3.4 per cent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the US dollar track of periodic benefits effective 1 April 2024. Unfortunately, for those on the local track no adjustment on the cost-of-living had been made.

13. The applicable COLA adjustment to all countries of residence was effective 1 April 2024. COLA detailed letters were being issued by the end of April 2024. All beneficiaries who registered for access to their UNJSPF Member Self-service (MSS) account would be able to access their COLA letters in MSS under the “Document” tab.

14. On 4 April 2024, the UNJSPF held a global town hall. More than 2,000 participants from UNJSPF member organizations, retirees and beneficiaries joined the virtual event to hear from Ms. Rosemarie McClean, Chief Executive of Pension Administration, and Mr. Pedro Guazo, Representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of UNJSPF assets.

15. Ms. McClean highlighted the Fund’s modernizing efforts of the past years, including timely pension processing, enhanced communications, and continued modernization efforts. Confronted by an unstable economic and high-inflation environment, “the Fund is well-funded, and the purchasing power of pensions is protected with cost-of-living adjustments”, Ms. McClean stated.

16. Regarding the investment of the assets of the Fund, the Representative of the Secretary-General for the investment of the assets of the Fund, Mr. Pedro Guazo, highlighted that the Fund’s portfolio is in good health and continues to provide steady short and long-term returns with very conservative risk levels. The Pension Board was informed that the total portfolio value reached US\$ 91.1 billion on 31 March 2024. Mr. Guazo indicated that over 2023, the value of the Fund’s assets significantly recovered with a preliminary annual increase in the market value of assets by 10.4 per cent from 2022.

17. The AFICS-T Executive Board continued in assisting pensioners and spouses in drafting email messages or letters to UNJSPF regarding such matters as periodic benefits, disabled child benefit, spouse benefit, two-track pension adjustment system, change of mailing addresses and bank accounts, etc. Upon request, the Executive Board also assisted spouses of the deceased members in approaching HRMS for the drafting and submission of necessary documents to UNJSPF for the processing and conversion from “pension benefit” to “spouse benefit”, as well as group life insurance reimbursement. The Executive Board would like to place on record our appreciation to the Mr. Brian Casatelli, Bangkok Liaison Officer of UNJSPF in this respect

4.3.1 Report of the Sub-Committee on Certificates of Entitlement (CE)

18. The Sub-Committee on Certificate of Entitlement continued to assist members of AFICS-T on issues relevant to the Certificate of Entitlement (CE) and the details of assistance provided during this reporting period are as follows:

(a) The Sub-committee is still assisting members in collecting and submitting their paper-based 2023 CE to UNJSPF. During the reporting period, the number of paper CEs submitted through the association has decreased due to the availability of online submissions and the use of the DCE Application. Some 317 members submitted their 2023 CEs to the AFICS-T office which were then dispatched to the UNJSPF on 30 August 2023.

(b) The second mailing list in (paper-based) CEs started in October 2023. Eleven members submitted their CEs and one member submitted a letter of non-receipt of his CE through the AFICS-T office which were duly dispatched to the UNJSPF on 6 December 2023.

(c) With regard to beneficiaries slated for benefit suspension due to non-receipt by the UNJSPF of their 2023 CEs, the UNJSPF notified the AFICS-T that 20 CEs of retirees/beneficiaries living in Thailand, failed to submit their CEs on time. Out of the listed 20 persons concerned, 16 were not registered AFICS-T members. After some effort, AFICS-T could contact all of them and report back to UNJSPF on 9 May 2024 and copied to UNJSPF Bangkok liaison office for information.

19. In this regard, the sub-committee on Certificate of Entitlement would urge retirees/beneficiaries to regularly check the contact information given to UNJSPF to ensure they are up-to-date.

4.4 Report of Committee on Medical Benefits

20. Cigna remains the third-party administrator of the United Nations Health Insurance Plan covering both internationally- and locally-recruited staff members including retirees and their eligible dependents, as appropriate, under the World Wide Plan (WWP) and the Medical Insurance Plan (MIP).

21. There were no further changes in the reimbursement rules, nor in the entitlement ceilings in both WWP and MIP.

22. This year, Ms. Sasha Samuel, Cigna Regional Representative for Asia, visited Bangkok and met with AFICS-T President and members of Sub-Committees on MIP and WWP on 27 March 2024. The meeting provided an opportunity to address several issues of concern to AFICS-T members as well as allow Ms. Samuel to explain the structural changes which took place within Cigna. She also reiterated her advice in inviting AFICS-T members under both MIP and WWP to continue to contact Cigna Kuala Lumpur assuring that their concerns and problems would be dealt with in earnest. She would brief her Cigna colleagues on the various points raised during the meeting and assure AFICS-T that Cigna would take stock of these discussions to continuously improve their services. She would also try to hold regular consultations with AFICS-T either in person or online. However, her next visit to Bangkok is planned to take place in December 2024.

23. The attention of AFICS-T was drawn to problems regarding coverage for surviving spouses. AFICS-T then approached ESCAP HRMS and enquired about the correct procedures regarding the UN Medical Insurance transfer to surviving spouses. We were informed that since September 2023 new procedures were introduced as follows. A registration form must be filled in to indicate the intention to continue with the UN Medical Health Insurance Plan administered by Cigna and to request the conversion of the insurance contract under the name of the surviving spouse. In addition, the form will also include the authorization for the deduction of the insurance premium by UNJSPF. Such a request should be made within two months (for those under MIP) and three months (for those under WWP) from the date of the decease of the retiree.

24. Consequently, detailed information was provided to AFICS-T memberships at large through the issuance of Newsletter No.4 on 26 January 2024 as well as via email and LINE group. A sample of the required registration form was also attached to the communication. This information was also posted on the AFICS-T website.

4.5 Report of the Committee on Information and Communication

25. The Committee is tasked to keep registration records and update data of AFICS-T members. The Committee is also responsible for distribution of information, especially the Newsletters to all AFICS-T members by both electronic and postal mailing channels. In addition, the Committee also kept members informed of urgent matters through their posting via “AFICS-T Official Information ONLY” Line group.

4.6 Report of the Committee on Newsletters

26. AFICS-T issued, on a regular basis, several “Circulars/Newsletters” with a view to keeping members informed about issues and activities that would be of concern and interest to them. The Board accordingly issued the following circulars during the period under review:

<u>Circulars/Newsletters</u>	<u>Date of Issue</u>
Newsletter No. 1/2023-2025	17 August 2023
Newsletter No. 2/2023-2025	10 October 2023
Newsletter No. 3/2023-2025	12 January 2024
Newsletter No. 4/2023-2025	26 January 2024
Newsletter No. 5/2023-2025	10 June 2024

27. These circulars/Newsletters are available on the official AFICS-T website.

4.7 Report of the Committee on Benevolent Fund and Funerals

28. The Committee provides supporting services to members requesting assistance from the Benevolent Fund and on demise of members.

4.7.1. Report on Benevolent Fund

29. There was neither contribution nor request for benevolent fund received during the reporting period, 1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024. As of 7 June 2024, the Fund had a balance of Baht 208,427.73 of which Baht 313.50 was the interest income from the Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) for this period.

4.7.2. Report on Funerals

30. AFICS-T previously presented a funeral subsidy of Baht 2,000.00 as a token financial contribution and Baht 1,000.00 cash for the cost of a wreath to the deceased family members. However, the Executive Board strongly recognized that funeral expenses have gradually increased over the years. Accordingly, the Executive Board agreed at its third Executive Board meeting to replace the cost of Baht 1,000 for the wreath with the funeral subsidy to make the total financial assistance increased to Baht 3,000.00 as the new subsidy for funeral expenses. Such information was communicated to AFICS-T members via Newsletter No. 2 on 10 October 2023.

31. During July 2023 to June 2024, 11 members of AFICS-T passed away. AFICS-T granted a funeral subsidy of Baht 3,000.00 to the deceased family members, as follows:

<u>Name of Deceased Members</u>	<u>Date</u>
1. Ms. Tippawan Na Lumpoon, UNICEF	13 October 2023
2. Ms. Thongsuk Chemsai (<i>spouse of Mr. Poey Chemsai, ESCAP</i>)	22 October 2023
3. Ms. Malinee Dookchitra, ESCAP	18 November 2023
4. Mr. Cengiz Ertuna, ESCAP	07 March 2024

5. Ms. Sermsuk Kittikosana (<i>spouse of Mr. Thaweesak Kittikosana ESCAP</i>)	07 March 2024
6. Mr. Tanakorn Mondhatuplin (<i>spouse of Ms.Saisuri Mondhatuplin, UNDP</i>)	29 March 2024
7. Mr. Dej Preteepasen, ESCAP	26 April 2024
8. Ms. Diana Mills Aryee, ESCAP	07 May 2024
9. Ms. Manee Anekun, UNICEF	12 May 2024
10. Mr. Whatana Bulsuk, ESCAP	15 June 2024
11. Mr. Veerapong Roongruangmanirat, UNEP	16 June 2024

4.8 Report of the Committee on Recreation and Excursion

32. During the period under review, the Committee on Recreation and Excursion organized an excursion to the Si Thep Historical Park, Petchaboon province, from 18 to 20 February 2024. Altogether, 32 retirees and their family members participated in the trip and praised the Committee on Recreation and Excursion for its excellent work in organizing the excursion. On the first day, the focus was on discovering the beauty of the Si Thep Historical Park at Umper NamNow, Petchaboon Province, which was recently listed as a new World Heritage site by UNESCO. On the second day, the group headed to the Petchaboon Geopark. There the Group came across of an extensive area of the left-over of wildfire which had destroyed many coffee plants managed by the Arabica Coffee Community.

33. This excursion, being the first resumed activity from the Committee on Recreation and Excursion programmes interrupted since 2019 due to Covid-19 pandemic, was regarded as a very successful activity on two accounts. First, it provided the occasion for renewed social interaction and camaraderie among retirees and then bringing out an educational element to the excursion, especially in meeting members of the Arabica Coffee Community and sharing their ordeal.

34. During the trip, the group was further informed that the Coffee Plantation managed by the Arabica Coffee Community was engulfed by fire only a week ago. Members of the Committee on Charity, who had joined the excursion, felt very sad by such a desolated situation. They, therefore, proposed to make a financial donation of Thai Baht 30,000 subject to the approval of the AFICS-T Executive Board.

4.9 Report of the committee on Charity Activities

35. As a result of the AFICS-T's excursion trip to the Si Thep Historical Park, Petchaboon Province, from 18 to 20 February 2024, AFICS-T agreed to donate an amount of 30,000.00 Thai Baht to assist the Arabica Coffee Community which suffered from extensive damages by wildfire over its coffee plantations. These coffee plantations were an important part of the Community's "reforestation" project in this region of Thailand. AFICS-T's donation would be used to support the Community in procuring the much-needed medical supplies and wildfire extinguishing equipment for the villagers and its community members.

36. In this connection, the Committee on Charity Activities strongly believed that AFICS-T's donation would not only help the Arabica Coffee Community to recover from the wildfire incident faster, but also encourage that Community to maintain strong determination to continue its reforestation efforts - which was one of the options for slowing-down the on-going global warming and extreme climate change.

5.0 Report of the Committee on Foreigners Living in Thailand (FLiT)

37. The Committee provided advisory services to active and retired foreign UN staff members in- and outside of Thailand regarding retirement in the country. In this context, issues during the reporting period were as follows:

Health insurance issues of UN retirees on Non-OA visa status

38. The requirement of health insurance cover through local providers for retirees on annually renewable Non-OA visa status remained a persistent problem and attempts by AFICS-T to remedy the situation starting in 2020 through intervention with ESCAP's Division of Administration (DoA), the Health and Life Insurance Section (HLIS) New York and the President of FAFICS, New York had remained without results. The problem was particularly painful for older retiree colleagues since they found it increasingly difficult to obtain insurance cover due to advancing age and preexisting health conditions. The only solutions open to them were either shifting to the Long-Term Retirement (LTR) visa (see below) or, if the pension income was insufficient to qualify, leaving the country and applying from abroad for a Non-O type of retirement visa not requiring local health insurance.

39. After raising the issue again in December of 2023 in connection with preparations for the FAFICS Council meeting in Bangkok in July 2024, it was only in March/April 2024 that FLiT was informed that miscommunication between DoA and HLIS as far back as 2020 had created the impression that the problem was resolved, of which FLiT was not informed. Assurance has now been received that a new attempt would be made by HLIS, DoA and possibly the UN Regional Coordinator in Thailand to resolve the issue.

Long-Term Residence (LTR)

40. From 1 September 2022 the LTR visa was introduced. It has a duration of 10 years (review after five years). Apart from the longer duration, usually one year for O and OA visa, it offers several advantages. For example, the residential address (normally 90-days) reporting must be done only once a year after the most recent reentry into the country. Foreign health insurance cover, e.g., from Cigna or other UN-ASHI providers is accepted and foreign pension income would not be subject to personal income tax. This has changed the visa situation for many of the foreign UN retirees completely. However, the only hurdle is the required annual pension income. Based on the experience of our members, the FLiT Committee has put together a set of guidelines that are available on request.

Income taxation on foreign earnings

41. On 15 September 2023 the Revenue Department (RD) under the Ministry of Finance (MoF) announced a new "instruction" which is a revised interpretation of a longstanding tax regulation, stating that any income from a foreign source derived by a Thai individual tax resident is subject to personal income tax when brought into the country. This raised concerns among foreign and Thai UN pensioners alike that pensions brought in from abroad would be subject to personal income taxation when the new rule enters into force from 1 January 2024. Although, binding announcements from RD are still awaited, it was considered highly unlikely by competent commentators, e.g., tax lawyers, that pensions – UN or other – would be the subject of this new regulation.

End-of-life arrangements in Thailand

42. Based on the experience with deceased colleagues without next-of-kin relations in Thailand the issue of “power-of-attorney” arrangement was raised earlier. However, due to lack of response from our membership the issue has not been pursued any further.

5. Concluding remarks

43. Since the 2023 Annual General Assembly, AFICS-T Executive Board is pleased to report that all efforts have been made to resume its normal operations and activities, especially to render advice to and assist, within the means available, AFICS-T retirees concerning pension matters, medical benefits, residence in Thailand and other relevant issues



**ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL SERVANTS – THAILAND**



2024 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AGA)

THURSDAY, 15 AUGUST 2024
(09.00 – 12.00 hours)

Conference Room 4, Level 1, UNCC

PROPOSED REVISED AFICS-T BYLAWS
(Agenda item 6)

At its 9th Meeting on 5 April 2024, the attention of the Executive Board was drawn to the difficulties of selecting a full team to be submitted for the election of Executive Board which takes place every two years. Indeed, the last few years, experience had shown that it had become more and more difficult to enlist volunteers to become members of the Executive Board. Since the next election of the Executive Board will be conducted in 2025, it would be useful and timely to reflect on this issue and explore the possibility to streamline the process of the election of members of the Executive Board.

At its 10th Meeting on 3 May 2024, the Executive Board reopened its consideration on the possibility to streamline the process of the election of members of the Executive Board. The Board recommended that an Ad Hoc Working Group should be established to address this concern and come up with a proposal to streamline the election process. The meeting was reminded that the next election of the Executive Board would be conducted during the 2025 AGA, any changes to the election process should then be considered and approved at the forthcoming 2024 AGA. Accordingly, the Board decided to the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group to consider the possibility to streamline the process of the election of members of the Executive Board and report back to the Board at its next Board meeting. The composition of the Working Group included the following Board members: Mr. Suraphon Songweera (President), Mr. Peter Hegenbarth (First Vice-President), Mr. Jean-Louis Vignuda (Secretary), Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat (Member), Ms. Soythip Udomyingcharoen (Registrar), Ms. Sumetee Jongmu (Member), and Mr. Vudhithep Tanghongse (Adviser).

After a thorough review of the current and relevant AFICS-T Bylaws (i.e. within Article V) pertaining to the election process of members of the Executive Board, the Working Group had considered and then formulated two proposals with proposed changes and amendments which were submitted to the Board at its 12th Meeting on 5 July 2024. The Board took note of the two proposals and after some constructive exchanges agreed on a compromised formulation which is now submitted to the present 2024 Annual General Assembly for its consideration and approval.

To facilitate the consideration of the draft revised Bylaws, the Proposed amendments and changes are shown in ***bold italic font***.

Article V

The Executive Board

1. The Executive Board ***should*** consist of, as office bearers, a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Secretary, a Deputy Secretary, a Treasurer, a Deputy Treasurer, a Registrar, a Communications Officer, a Webmaster, a Deputy Webmaster, and six other Executive Board members. The Executive Board, during its tenure, may appoint additional Executive Board members and advisers. The advisers to the Executive Board, in line with Article II, paragraphs 1 and 2 above, are not Executive Members of the Board and shall not hold any decision-making power and/or voting capacity for activities undertaken by the Executive Board

2. The Executive Board will serve ***on a voluntary basis*** for a two-year term, and a member shall be eligible for immediate re-election when his or her term expires.

3. Election will be conducted at the Assembly meetings in odd numbered years. Through its newsletter, the existing Board will invite nomination of persons to serve as member of the next Executive Board. Nominations ***of at least for the posts of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Registrar*** with designated functioning titles must be received by the existing Executive Board two months before the Annual General Assembly. The names of the nominees, if available, shall be submitted to members of the Association together with the Annual Report and notification of the date of the meeting not less than 30 days in advance, as required in paragraph 1 of Article IV. The election will be decided by a show of hands or at the request of members by count of the votes cast. ***Candidates of the elected list will fill up the vacant positions, as appropriate.***

4. (new) In case the outgoing Executive Board does not receive any list(s) of nominees for election, the nomination and election will be conducted by the Assembly itself at that respective Annual General Assembly meeting. Thus, the Assembly would be invited to make nominations for the core team of office bearers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Registrar) and then conduct the election accordingly. The newly elected six office bearers will fill up the vacant positions as appropriate and to be officialized at the first meeting of the newly elected Executive Board. Should the General Assembly not succeed electing the six office bearers the outgoing Executive Board will initiate procedures under Article XI (Dissolution of the Association).

11. The Functions of the Executive Board shall be:

(i) (new) As AFICS-T has to maintain appropriate financial viability at all time and to bear in mind that the work of AFICS-T is of voluntary nature, the Executive Board must not engage in hiring any person to perform the normal office work of AFICS-T.