



AustChamThailand

Business | Connections | Community



Annual Report 2016

AustChamThailand

Business | Connections | Community

Vision

AustCham is Business
Connections, Community

Mission

AustCham will continue to build and
strengthen relationships and effectively
advocate and represent the mutual
business interests of its members and
associated communities

Identity

Inclusive
Responsive
Collaborative
Respected

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President's Report



Brenton Mauriello - President

Friends and colleagues, our review of 2016 couldn't commence without our acknowledging the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. A momentous event that touched the heart of every Thai. The efforts of the late King over 70 years will resonate in the Kingdom for many years to come and we are thankful for his guidance and contributions to the Kingdom. We also take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun on his succession and wish him well in his endeavours.

Even in these difficult times the business community continued to perform relatively well in 2016. Despite ongoing challenges in sectors such as manufacturing, our members in the service industries have experienced a 'soft' but overall relatively stable year. Perhaps this is a sign of the new reality; business needs to work a little harder, for a little longer, just to keep the status quo.

Similarly your chamber has been working even harder to ensure that you, its members, receive real benefits from membership. Our voice in Thai government agencies is increasingly effective, with various ministries actively seeking the Chamber's input to developing new policies and processes. Led by our Advocacy Committee, work with the Board of Investment, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Education and the Thai Customs Department increased significantly during 2016. We are hopeful that we will see tangible outcomes that will have a positive impact on many of our members this year.

The Chamber has also built on its work with the Thai Board of Trade and the Thai Chamber of Commerce. Having submitted several policy papers and the Australian-ASEAN Business Survey, we were pleased to see our submissions well received by our Thai counterparts at the Board of Trade, the Thai Chamber of Commerce and certain Thai Ministries. By ensuring our voice is heard in a regular and consistent manner, we hope to ensure positive change in areas such as visa regulation, customs process and policy, logistics and general administration.

During 2016, AustCham, along with its counterparts in the region, conducted the inaugural Australian-ASEAN Business Survey to seek member input on the local business environment. The outcomes highlighted the need for Thailand to continue to address corruption, customs issues and its general regulatory environment. That said, Thailand remained top of the tables in several categories and was viewed positively in terms of investment and doing business. We will continue to undertake this survey annually along with our own Annual Business Survey which started in 2015.

In my last President's report I noted that our chamber reinstated a sub-Committee structure at board level to provide specific sector focus for advocacy and information sharing. I encouraged members to participate in these Committees and I will do so again today. Our strength as a chamber comes from you, its members, your involvement in the chamber, its committees, events and board of directors is what will provide it with greater success. We have been, and remain, a not-for-profit and largely voluntary organization, thus your time and ideas are needed.

Our relations with the Australian Embassy have continued to improve and expand during 2016 with several coordinated business efforts between various Embassy departments and AustCham. The willingness of the Embassy to work with AustCham and its members is greatly appreciated as together our efforts resonate further to bring about positive



outcomes. We thank the Australian Ambassador to Thailand; HE Paul Robilliard for his and his team's ongoing support.

An example of this support during the year was the Australian Government Grant to enhance Alumni engagement. With this grant, we hosted several Alumni focused events including the prestigious Alumni Awards where we recognise the contributions to Thailand of those Thais educated in Australia. With 30,000 Thais studying in Australian during 2016, the bonds that bring our two countries together grow and, with it, economic opportunities. At AustCham we see our Australian Alumni programme and its associated events as providing key benefits to our members in the years to come.

Along with our advocacy efforts our chamber continues to provide members with exceptional networking and business events. Our monthly Sundowners, business briefings, Golf Day, AFL Grand Final, Australia Day Ball and the Alumni Awards ensure that the chamber delivers on its objective to foster networking and a sense of Australian community in Thailand. We have also sought to increase our working relationships with other chambers to expand the events offered to members; something we hope to build on in 2017. With over 5000 attendees at AustCham events each year, we extend our thanks to the hard working staff at the chamber, they certainly do a wonderful job!



In conclusion, the chamber is looking forward to an improved business environment in 2017. With this in mind, AustCham will continue its efforts to make a real and positive impact for its members. Your Board of Directors, who give their time freely, will continue to focus on tangible outcomes in 2017.

We will seek your input and assistance as we are all members of the chamber and we all contribute to its success. We have been and will remain an inclusive chamber, one that welcomes everyone, so should you know of companies or individuals whether Thai, Australian or otherwise who would benefit from membership, do please suggest it to them. Together we will make a difference!

Treasurer's Report

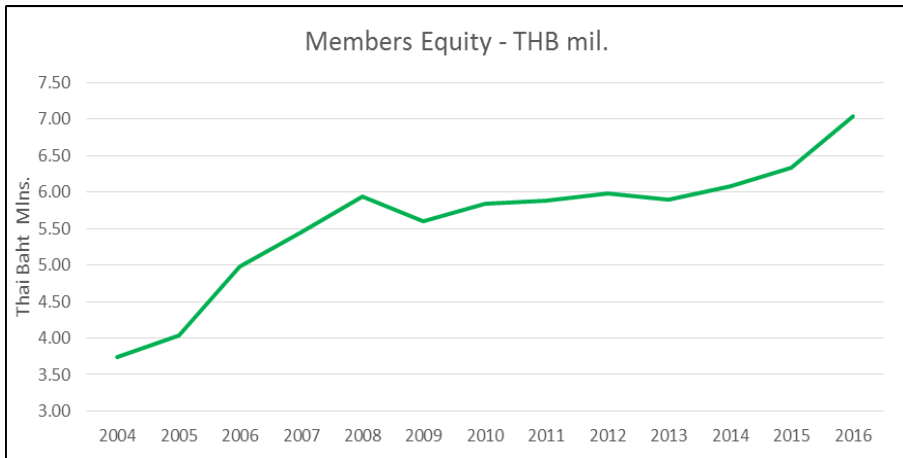


Peter Emblin - Treasurer

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to members for my second time their Chamber's financial report. This time for the year 2016. Before I deliver my report as Treasurer I would like to again thank the Chamber's staff for their support, and their diligence in protecting member's interests.

Given the uncertain economic times that were facing Thailand the Chamber Board at the start of 2016 set a conservative budget targeting a minimal surplus. We managed to achieve better than this as result of one strategic decision made by the Board and the continued hard work of our Executive Director, Alex Cullum and the Chamber team.

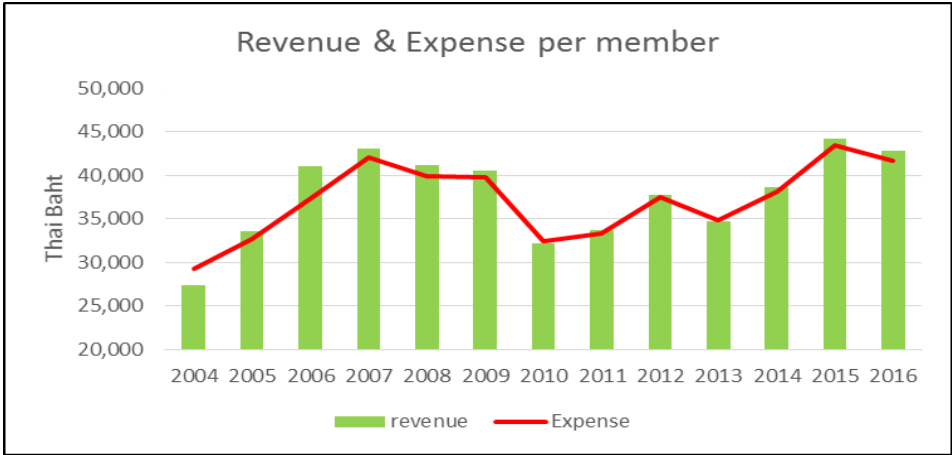
The Chamber was able to grow Member Equity to 7.04 MTHB in 2016, compared to 6.33 MTHB in 2015. This was not the plan which I shall explain later. Member equity is primarily held as cash reserves of approx. 3.9 MTHB to fund the Chambers day to day operations and 3.60 MTHB is held in deposits with financial institutions to ensure that the Chamber has a buffer for today cash flow mismatches and unforeseen events. Such as the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in October, which impacted Thailand emotionally and had flow on effect to activity.



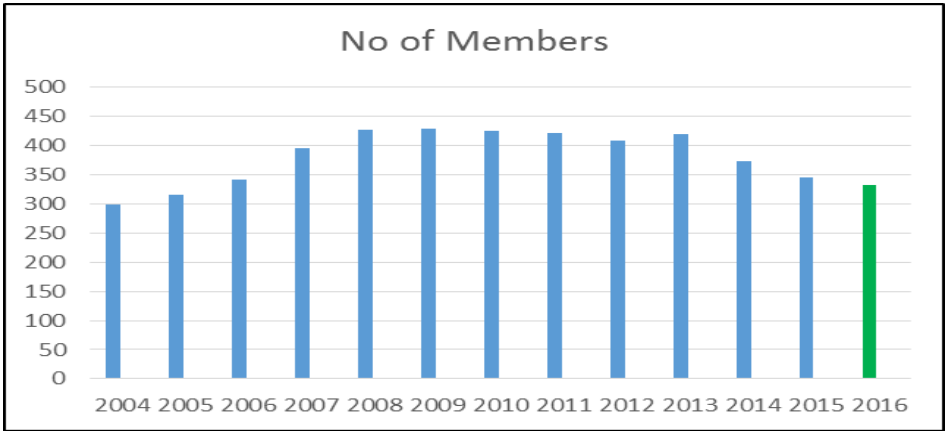
However, as mentioned in last year's report the lease on the existing AustCham office expired, and was temporarily extended. The Board planned to move the office during the course of the year and allocated the funds to do this. However given the costs of rents and our continued nervousness about the Thai economy the decision was made late in the year not to move but refurbish the existing Chamber office. This was the one large decision I referred to earlier. As a result our Leasehold improvements rose 655,000 THB and the chamber now has a more updated office. A significant part of this investment was in improving our technology both equipment and upgrading our connectivity to be able to free up resources.

The audited Financial Statements for the 2016 year show an operating surplus of 710,022 THB significantly above our breakeven target as the office refurbishment was 700,000 THB below the estimate cost of moving offices. The bulk of the planned office move in the budget was earmarked from sponsors' revenue so that we did not have to pull back on services delivered to members.

Total Assets grew from 7.8 MTHB to 9.0 MTHB as result of our investment in the Chamber office and a six percent increase in our cash reserves. The increase was held in short term deposits to provide liquidity in the first quarter of 2017. The first quarter is always a cash draw for the Chamber ahead of the bulk of member renewals in April.



Membership revenue was 8 percent below budget primarily due to the lower number of members at year end 2016, 333 versus 346 in 2015, and our inability to attract new members at our forecast rate. However, we were able at the same time through a focus on cost control versus value to reduce our costs by a similar percentage. This decline in member revenue meant that membership fees fell below 40% of total revenue placing greater reliance on our events and sponsors.



This is a situation the Board is working to address and we target greater member revenue to help us provide better events and services.

In 2016 we continued to host an active event program and saw only a marginal decline in our event income, two percent, but through more effective event management and continued sponsor support we were able to reduce the cost of delivering events by fourteen percent. I cannot stress enough that this was achieved through hard work by the Chamber team and through the support of your sponsors, so please remember them. Sponsors contributed over 20% of revenue.

Sponsors help the Chamber through many different ways and way we can support them is by taking advantage of many of the offers that they provide to members

On Behalf of the Board I would like to thank all the Chamber members for their support and engagement whether as an ordinary member, a sponsor or as a participant in an event. AustCham is proud to help its member's interests in furthering a strong Australia-Thai relationship. The Board as active members of the Thai business community are fully aware of the impact the current economic climate is having on members and continues to strive to offer members as much value as possible, while being financially prudent.

March 2016

Audited Financials

Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce

Statement of Financial Position as at December 31, 2016

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	2016 THB	2015 THB
Cash and cash equivalents	3,978,598	3,507,608
Short-term investments at Financial Institutions	3,603,168	3,603,168
Accounts receivable	-	99,022
Other current assets	395,869	281,784
Total Current Assets	7,977,635	7,491,582
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	2016 THB	2015 THB
Leasehold improvements and equipment-net	766,289	111,717
Intangible assets –net	4,759	15,417
Other deposits	252,446	239,665
Total Non-Current Assets	1,023,494	366,799
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>9,001,129</u>	<u>7,858,381</u>

LIABILITIES AND MEMBER EQUITY

CURRENT LIABILITIES	2016 THB	2015 THB
Deferred membership fees and other income	284,966	747,682
Accrued expenses	627,803	366,205
Hellfire Pass Fund	90,135	25,044
Community Project Fund	88,715	70,164
Convoy Project fund	647,577	109,187
Total Current Liabilities	1,739,196	1,318,282
NON-CURRENT LIABILITY	2016 THB	2015 THB
Provision for employee retirement benefit	218,734	207,822
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,957,930	1,526,104
MEMBER EQUITY	2016 THB	2015 THB
Balance at beginning of year	6,332,277	6,087,095
Operating surplus	710,922	245,182
Balance at end of year	7,043,199	6,332,277
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND MEMBER EQUITY	<u>9,001,129</u>	<u>7,858,381</u>

Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce

Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the year ended December 31, 2016

REVENUES	2016 THB	2015 THB
Membership and registration fees	5,621,379	6,086,772
Event income	5,804,431	5,928,214
Sponsorship income	2,925,000	3,165,000
Interest income	59,198	51,747
Other income	170,070	25,800
Total Revenues	14,580,078	
15,257,533		

EXPENSES	2016 THB	2015 THB
Cost of events	5,500,700	6,412,405
Staff salaries and benefits	5,928,216	6,336,995
Rental and service fees	973,728	943,742
Depreciation and amortization	114,820	203,043
Other expenses	1,351,692	1,116,166
Total Expenses	13,869,156	
15,012,351		

OPERATING SURPLUS	<u>710,922</u>	<u>245,182</u>
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2016-2017 Board of Directors



Brenton Mauriello
President



Brenton Mauriello
Vice President



Peter Emblin
Treasurer



Chris Larkin



Alan Polivnick



Angus Kent



Charles Wrightman



Alan Polivnick



Carly Cummings

Committees of the AustCham Board 2016

Membership	Brenton Mauriello, Josh Hyland
Sponsorship	Charles Wrightman, Peter Emblin
Communications	Stuart Kelly, Simon Shale
Australian Alumni	Brenton Mauriello, Carly Cummings Josh Hyland, Panita Vongkusolkrit,
CSR	Alan Polivnick, Stuart Kelly Panita Vongkusolkrit and Josh Hyland
Chamber Governance / Legal Advocacy	Alan Polivnick Chris Larkin, Alan Polivnick, Josh Hyland
Hospitality and Tourism	Wayne Williams, Angus Kent
Manufacturing	Simon Shale and ESB Coordinator (Trevor Dick)
Professional Services and Consulting	Alan Polivnick, Angus Kent, Greg Wallis

Major Events

- i. **AustCham Ball** Wayne Williams, Carly Cummings
Australian expat community representatives:
David Trigg
- ii. **AFL Grand Final** Wayne Williams, Josh Hyland
Thailand Tigers representatives:
Ben Giles, Brendan Cunningham, Jarrod Roberts
- iii. **AustCham Golf** Charles Wrightman

2016 Corporate Sponsors

AustCham thanks the 2016 Corporate Sponsors whose support was fundamental to the numerous events and activities conducted by the Chamber.

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Corporate Sponsors 2016

Platinum Sponsor & Alumni Partner
BLACKMORES™

Gold Sponsors
 Akara Resources
Public Company Limited
 ANZ
 BLUESCOPE
 MINOR
INTERNATIONAL
 SERVCORP
SERVICED OFFICES | VIRTUAL OFFICES

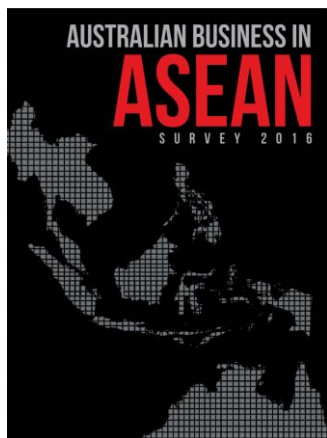
Silver Sponsors
 dwp
 MEINHARDT

Bronze Sponsors
 HEMARAJ
 MAZARS
 QBE
 VISY
FOR A BETTER WORLD

2016 saw the Chamber host business seminars and breakfast briefings.

Business briefings addressed a diverse range of topics from water stewardship, to legal, tax, and statutory obligations in Thailand, current and emerging issues for local business and Australian property, tax and superannuation for expatriates.

Australian Business in the ASEAN Survey 2016



Senior members of Australian Chamber of Commerce and business councils in ASEAN were surveyed in the latter part of 2016. The survey results benchmarked business characteristics, identifying the strengths of the current business environment as well as key issues and business challenges in ASEAN.

The inaugural Australian Business in ASEAN survey shows Australian companies that have made the move to the region are thriving and bullish about their growth prospects and the opportunities that ASEAN integration represents.

The **most significant challenges** for respondents were: lack of access to skilled labour, corruption and barriers to ownership and investment.

The **key reasons for expanding business and trade** were seen as growing consumer class, regional integration and improvement in infrastructure.

Ultimately the survey demonstrated the membership share a strong commitment to business in the region and, despite business challenges, hold a cautiously optimistic outlook for the future.

2016 provided plenty of opportunities to network and update industry knowledge through our Bangkok, Eastern Seaboard and Joint Chamber events.

Once again, our monthly Sundowners proved to be the premier evening networking event in Thailand, with members and guests coming together to discuss business and social issues, while enjoying the spoils of Thailand's finest hotels. These events were made possible by venue sponsors – Mode Sathorn, Grand Hyatt Erawan, Courtyard by Marriott Bangkok, Centra Maris Resort Jomtien, Crowne Plaza Bangkok Lumpini Park, Novotel Bangkok Sukhumvit 20, Courtyard by Marriott South Pattaya, Anantara Siam Bangkok, Banyan Tree Hotel Bangkok, and Amari Watergate Hotel.



Joint events with other Chambers allowed us to expand our reach into various topics and guest speakers, with education, tourism and the ever developing digital world focus points in 2016.

Eastern Seaboard events were held monthly throughout the year in partnership with other Chambers, with AustCham hosting in March and July. Boardroom briefing were also held to provide updates and discussion points on key relevant issues, including Thai employment law and obligations of Directors. The Chamber thanks Trevor Dick for his continued service as the Eastern Seaboard Coordinator for AustCham.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

AustCham was proud to provide assistance to charitable projects again in 2016. From the Austcham Ball, we raised 113,000THB for the Fred Hollows Foundation, and raised a further 400,000THB for the causes selected by our members. The primary avenues of fundraising continued to be charity auctions or raffles held in association with major events and a 50THB allocation from each entry ticket to the monthly Sundowners.

In total, AustCham members helped the Chamber CSR program to raise 513,000THB.

Feedback was sought from the membership via survey to identify which causes would be the recipient of 2016 CSR fundraising efforts and to determine the dispersal of fundraising.

The following five causes were provided with donations:

- ❖ Sister Joan Foundation received a donation of 80,000THB
- ❖ Operation Smile received a donation of 80,000THB
- ❖ The Mechai Pattana School received a donation of 80,000THB
- ❖ Mercy Centre received a donation of 80,000THB
- ❖ Born to Live received a donation of 80,000THB

Community Events



ANZAC Day 2016. The annual trip to Kanchanaburi for ANZAC Day was again a truly special event. Those on the tour were able to pay respects to the men and women in our armed services, by attending the Dawn Service at Hellfire Pass and the Memorial Wreath Laying service at Kanchanaburi War Cemetery.

AFL. The Coffee Club AFL Grand Final event was held at the Amari Watergate for the second year in a row, and again in partnership with the Thailand Tigers Australian Football Club. The Amari were commendable in their set up and the crowd brought the atmosphere to create another great event for the Chamber. It was a great family day and best of all, there was freshly ground coffee available all day from the Coffee Club Baristas!



AustCham Ball. The Austcham Ball was very much an Australian affair in 2016. Hosted by the Grand Hyatt and Emceed by Australian television icon, Mr. Ray Martin, guests enjoyed food and wine under the night sky at Uluru. As part of the event, the Austcham CSR Committee assisted by the Helping Hand Group, held an online charity auction featuring Australian favourites and regional offerings with the proceedings going to local charitable causes.



AustCham Golf. The Duchess Hotel Austcham Golf Day was held at Muang Kaew Golf Club on February the 19th 2016. Perfect conditions made for a great day's golf. With a full house all the participants had a great day out followed by an Aussie BBQ dinner and prize distribution.



Alumni Report



The Australian Alumni program unites and supports graduates of Australian universities and other Australian institutions of higher learning by providing activities and opportunities for Australian Alumni to leverage their Australian education for personal and professional success.

The Australian Alumni is managed by a sub-Committee of the AustCham Board in collaboration with the Australian Embassy Bangkok and the Australian Alumni Association (Thailand).

This year AustCham Board members ML Laksasubha Kridakorn, Brenton Mauriello, Josh Hyland and Panita Vongkusolkiet were responsible for overseeing Alumni activities.

2016 Membership Snapshot

1076 members (84 new in 2016) **81% Thai** **12% Australian**

Top 5 Universities represented in the Alumni membership

1. Wollongong University
2. UNSW
3. Sydney University
4. University of Queensland
5. Monash University

2016 Alumni Activity

a. Website redevelopment and launch

Assisted by a grant from the Australian Embassy Bangkok, an upgrade and redevelopment of the website was completed in March.

b. Stakeholder Engagement

Six Australian Universities including Deakin, Macquarie, RMIT, the University of Canberra, UNSW Business School and the University of Wollongong, joined the Australian Alumni as Educational Partners this year. Stronger linkages with Universities contributed to an increased number of nominations for the 2016 Australian Alumni Awards with Universities providing nominations, letters of support for nominees and promotion of the Awards via University websites and social media sites.

Following the very successful 2016 Australian Alumni Awards, the Thai community enthusiastically embraced their Australian Alumni links reinvigorating and rebranding the Thai Australian Association to form the Australian Alumni Association Thailand (AAA) with an engagement model that sought to engage Thai students whilst they were studying in Australia. The AAA began the process of seeking registration, establishing a governing committee and defining program activities in the final quarter of the year. Stronger linkages with the AAA to establish a collaborative relationship seeks to collectively strengthen and expand Australian Alumni engagement, programs and activities, ensure mutually supportive goals, and avoid duplication of effort.

c. Alumni Events

Three Alumni events were delivered in 2016 including **Equal Partners: Realising the Potential of Women in the Workplace** which celebrated women's voices in decision-making and leadership and aimed to support Thai and Australian women's participation in sustainable economic growth. The **AustCham End of Year Christmas Reception** which brought together AustCham and Alumni members at the Australian Ambassador's residence and, **The Australian Alumni Awards** which provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Alumni members.

Alumni events would not have been possible without the continued support of Blackmores and the Australian Embassy Bangkok – a special thanks to both for their ongoing commitment to Australian Alumni.



The Australian Alumni Awards



Held annually in June, the Awards continue to provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the significant achievements of alumni whose endeavors reflect the best of Australian education and Australian Alumni.

The format for the 2016 Awards moved away from a formal, black tie gala dinner towards a business dinner event that focused more on Australian Education and the awards presentation ceremony.

H.E Mr Paul Robilliard the Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand addressed guests, highlighting the Australian Government’s commitment to fostering strong educational connections between Australia and Thailand through both the Global Alumni program and the New Colombo Plan.

The Ambassador also announced Khun Panita Vongkusolkrit and Khun Prom Sirisant as Global Alumni Ambassadors, which is part of Government’s effort to

raise the profile of Australia's world class education system and strengthen the connections between Australia and rest of the world.

Key note speaker, Khun Pichai Chuensuksawadi, Editor in Chief of the Bangkok Post, also addressed guests, providing a heartfelt reflection of his experiences of living and studying in Australia and how those experiences had contributed to his professional success in Thailand.

The 2016 Alumni Awards recognised the achievements of four Alumni across 4 award categories.

The Award Recipients for 2016 were:

1. Bumrungrad International Hospital - Alumni of the Year

Khun Pichai Chuensuksawadi - Khun Pichai is one of Thailand's most outstanding media leaders and a senior statesman of media in Thailand, regionally and internationally. Starting his career as a proofreader, he rose quickly to the top and was appointed Editor of the Bangkok Post, Thailand's most influential English-language newspaper, at the age of 37. Among Australian alumni, he stands out as one who has shown leadership in his profession and thus made a significant contribution to his country. Khun Pichai is also active in charitable work, as chairman of the Bangkok Post Foundation (and education fund) and the Phud Hong Leper Foundation. Khun Pichai holds a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) from James Cook University and a Bachelor Arts (Journalism) from the University of Queensland.

2. Australian Embassy Bangkok - Alumni Leadership Award

Dr Thitipong Nandhabiwat - Dr Thitipong has demonstrated outstanding leadership of the highest calibre. At the age of thirty nine, he holds various senior management positions and pioneers for change in Thailand in both the academic field, and public sector. As an academic leader he has fostered strong Thai – Australian relationships by connecting Murdoch University and Rangsit University to deliver a collaborative double degree

program in Information Technology. He has also expanded the network between Thailand and Australia by establishing a double degree program in International Business between the University of Canberra and Rangsit University. Dr Thitipong holds a Doctorate of Information Technology from Murdoch University.

3. **dwp - Alumni Entrepreneurial Award**

Khun Phundanai 'Peter' Sathavonmanee - Phundanai is a 28-year old business entrepreneur. Fast-paced lifestyles and stressful jobs drove Phundanai and his brother to turn a plot of land in Ratchaburi province into a farm where they could seek sanctuary and grow vegetables as a hobby. Their hobby has since grown into the business venture 'Coro Brothers Company Limited'. Working with academics, an architectural team, chefs and farmers over several years, Phundanai and his brother opened innovative agro-tourism business 'Coro Field' in 2015. Receiving in excess of 2000 visitors per day, Coro Field focusses on cultivating organic and rare crop strains from around the world and provides visitors with the opportunity to unwind and gain hands on experience in organic farming. Khun Phundanai holds a Diploma of Business and a Bachelor of Business from Monash University.

4. **Mitr Phol - Young Alumni Award**

Khun Kawita Vatanajyankur - Kawita is a 29 year old video artist and business entrepreneur. She has demonstrated entrepreneurial thinking by developing an innovative, contemporary art gallery on a commuter ferry that crosses the Chao Phraya river. Recognised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand as a pioneering initiative, Kawita's not for profit 'Ferry Gallery' provides opportunities for creative exchange between Australian and Thai artists and also connects river commuters and tourists with contemporary digital art experiences. Kawita holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting Major) from RMIT University.

Publication: The Business Times

Date: 17 August 2016

Many Australian businesses in Asean plan expansion: survey

Wednesday, August 17, 2016 - 10:19

by
CLAIRE HUANG huangjy@sph.com.sg [@ClaireHuangBT](https://twitter.com/ClaireHuangBT)

THE majority of the Australian business community in Asean feel confident about the future and many have plans to expand, a survey on Wednesday showed.

The Australian Business in Asean Survey 2016 found that over the past two years, 60 per cent of Australian businesses in the region have expanded their trade and investment and 86 per cent are planning to expand over the next five years.

AustCham Singapore president Guy Scott said this shows Australian businesses are recognising the opportunities across the region.

"Singapore is also well positioned as a regional hub with 73 per cent of businesses based here being global, South-east Asian or Asia Pacific headquarters for the company," he said.

The close ties between the Singapore and Australian governments also help to support business, noted Mr Scott, adding that recent developments announced under the Singapore-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) will make it even easier to do business here.

SEE ALSO: [Time to push ahead with Asean Economic Community](#)

This, as the CSP increases labour mobility, fosters innovation and reduces red-tape, thereby making it easier for Australians to work and operate in Singapore, he said.

And plans to establish a business association representing Australian businesses working offshore at the Asean level are underway, Mr Scott said. "Establishing an Australian Asean association will give us a seat at the table for discussions on policies that will affect our members, and allow us to engage the Asean secretariat around matters that affect the Asean Economic Community."

The survey is a collaboration of all the Australia chambers of commerce and business councils representing each of the Asean member countries.



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Thailand by way of Down Under

STORY: PRAPAI KRAISORNKOVIT

ALUMNI OF THE YEAR AWARD

Pichai Chuensuksawadi is one of Thailand's most outstanding media leaders and a senior statesman of media in Thailand, regionally and internationally. Starting his career as a proofreader, he rose quickly to the top and was appointed editor of the *Bangkok Post*, Thailand's most influential English-language newspaper, at the age of 37. Among Australian alumni, he stands out as someone who has shown leadership in his profession and thus, made a significant contribution to his country. Pichai is also active in charitable work, as chairman of the Bangkok Post Foundation and the Phud Hong Leper Foundation. Pichai holds a bachelor of arts in political science from James Cook University and a bachelor of arts in journalism from the University of Queensland.

ALUMNI LEADERSHIP AWARD

Dr Thitipong Nandhabiwat has demonstrated outstanding leadership of the highest calibre. At the age of 39, he holds various senior management positions and pioneers for change in Thailand in both academics and the public sector. As an academic leader, he has fostered strong Thai-Australian relationships by connecting Murdoch University and Rangsit University to deliver a collaborative double-degree programme in



Australian Ambassador Paul Robilliard, fifth left, along with sponsors and awardees of the Australian Alumni Awards 2016, pose for a commemorative photograph at the annual alumni awards held at the St. Regis Hotel last Thursday evening. Four awardees were honoured at the gala dinner: Phundana Sathavonmanee, second left, Alumni Entrepreneurial Award; Pichai Chuensuksawadi, third left, Alumni of the Year Award; Kawita Vatanajyankur, sixth left, Young Alumni Award; and Dr Thitipong Nandhabiwat, seventh left, Alumni Leadership Award. Sponsors for the awards were Bamrungrad Hospital, the Australian Embassy, DWP and Mittr Phol Group.

information technology. He has also expanded the network between Thailand and Australia by establishing a double-degree programme in international business between the University of Canberra and Rangsit University. Dr Thitipong holds a doctorate of information technology from Murdoch University.

ALUMNI ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARD

Phundana "Peter" Sathavonmanee is a 26-year-old business entrepreneur. Fast-paced lifestyles and stressful jobs drove Phundana and his brother to turn a plot of land in Ratchaburi into a farm where they could seek sanctuary and grow vegetables as a hobby. Their hobby has

since grown into the business venture Coro Brothers Co Ltd. Working with academics, an architectural team, chefs and farmers over several years, Phundana and his brother opened the innovative agro-tourism business Coro Field in 2015. Receiving in excess of 2,000 visitors per day, Coro Field focuses on cultivating organic and rare crop strains from around the world, and provides visitors with the opportunity to unwind and gain hands-on experience in organic farming. Phundana holds a diploma in business and a bachelor's in business from Monash University.

YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Kawita Vatanajyankur, 29, is a video artist and entrepreneur. She has demonstrated entrepreneurial thinking by developing an innovative, contemporary art gallery on a commuter ferry that crosses the Chao Phraya River. Recognised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand as a pioneering initiative, Kawita's not-for-profit, Ferry Gallery, provides opportunities for creative exchange between Australian and Thai artists and also connects river commuters and tourists with contemporary digital-art experiences. Kawita holds a bachelor of fine arts in painting degree from RMIT University.

The 2016 Australian Alumni Awards.

Thai publications included: Public Post Online; Variety Etc; Biz to Success; Siam Event; Thai PR; Daily News; Lok Wan Nee; Naew Nah

Publication: The Bangkok Post

Date: May 2016



Creating Cities: Co-Creat Charoenkrung. An exchange focused on bespoke makers and retail. With opening remarks provided by **H.E. Mr Paul Robilliard** – the Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, Australian **Marcus Westbury** shared his story of resuscitating the downtown-shopping precinct of Newcastle, an Australian city in New South Wales. Local heroes **Peeradorn Kaewlai** and **Yossapon Boonsom** joined the presentation, providing insight as to how Bangrak and Klongsan are being turned into Bangkok's Creative District.

Australians keen on more investment here: survey

KINGDOM RANKED HIGHEST FOR GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES IN REGION

THE NATION

A BUSINESS survey by the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce showed that more than two-thirds of its members were planning to increase their investment in the region, with Thailand ranked highest for growth opportunities ahead of India, Australia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

According to the business survey – the first of its kind by AustCham – some 67 per cent of respondents expect to increase their investment in Thailand over the next two years, with 74 per cent anticipating an increase over five years.

Thailand was also rated as having the greatest prospects for growth (61 per cent) in the region, ahead of India (55 per cent) and Australia (48 per cent).

AustCham's business survey gauged about a third of its 299 members' views on the key issues and

characteristics of doing business in Thailand.

Relations between the two countries are increasing; Bilateral trade more than doubled over the past decade. Major Australian exports to Thailand include crude petroleum and wheat, while Thailand exports to Australia include vehicles and steel and rubber products.

The business survey underscored the success of the bilateral relationship, with 42 per cent of respondents reporting increased profitability for their company in 2015 compared with a year earlier.

Brenton Mauriello, president of AustCham Thailand, said that generally, AustCham members were cautiously optimistic about the short-to-medium-term business outlook in Thailand, with many reporting improved financial results last year amid a period of political instability.

"Considering the survey was conducted during the Bangkok bombing period, it bodes very well that two-thirds of our members are planning to increase their investment – and underscores the strength of the long-term partnerships that have developed between the Australian and Thai business communities since diplomatic ties began some 60 years ago."

Still, AustCham members' optimism was tempered by political instability, with 55 per cent of respondents citing it as their main concern. Some 70 per cent also ranked difficulty in processing work permits and visas as moderately to extremely important, consuming a significant amount of time and limiting the growth of small to medium-sized business enterprises.

"Visas and work permits are a particular issue where the AustCham board of directors are advocating for change," Mauriello

said.
"Making these processes simpler will enable significant efficiency gains, assist both new and established businesses and ultimately facilitate the growth of a productive economy."

Mauriello pointed to Australian companies' strength in education and training, as well as services innovation, as potentially playing larger roles, particularly as local firms target innovation, training and infrastructure as keys to unlocking Thailand's economy.

"Australian expats and businesses remain staunch investors in Thailand and have much to offer as the country undergoes political and economic challenges. Our role at AustCham is to facilitate the growth in bilateral relations by helping to resolve some of the challenges that the survey highlighted," he said.



Brenton Mauriello, president of AustCham Thailand.

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NOTE FROM DOWN UNDER

Australian investors still feel positive about Thailand and want to stay here but demand political stability. B3

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

AustCham poll confirms commitment to Thailand

PAWEE SIRIMAI

Australian investors still feel positive about Thailand and want to stay here but demand political stability, which they say would support investment in general.

These are the findings of a survey by the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce (AustCham).

President Brenton Mauriello said 74% of respondents said they would keep investing and even expand in Thailand.

But 70% said the elaborate regulations concerning work permits and visa arrangements remain major obstacles to doing business in Thailand.

Mr Mauriello said the survey showed that most investors rated political stability as the most important challenge for companies in Thailand, while other concerns include weak protection for intellectual property and complicated procedures for business licensing and customs.

"I think now is the time for the Thai government to tackle these problems in order to encourage foreign investment," Mr Mauriello said.

Tax incentives are another major factor for investors to consider when starting a business in Thailand.

AustCham may differ slightly from other foreign chambers because its members consist largely of small and medium-sized enterprises.

These Australian SMEs normally set aside a considerable amount of budget for investment in Thailand, Mr Mauriello said, unlike foreign conglomerates that have small amounts of investment budget scattered around the world that can be easily withdrawn.

The AustCham survey canvassed 299 out of 340 member companies last September, shortly after the mid-August bombing at the Ratchaprasong intersection.

"Australia does not get scared easily," he said. "We are small but we put in our money to grow and are committed to the country."

According to Mr Mauriello, Australian companies consider Thailand a great ally and a good place to do business, with bilateral trade nearly doubling from US\$9.6 billion in 2005 to \$19.1 billion in 2014.

Of AustCham's members, 42% are regional or global offices and branches, in line with the Thai government's policy to promote the country as a regional hub.

Australian investment in neighbouring Asean countries remains relatively low, Mr Mauriello said.

ออสเตรเลียปมใบอนุญาต ยึดไทยฐานอาชญา

ออสเตรเลีย พิจารณาการกำหนดเงื่อนไข
วีซ่า แก่คนไทยใบอนุญาตประกอบ
ลงทุน อันไทยเป็นฐานอาชญา
นายอานันท์ อนันต์นาค ประธาน
หอการค้าออสเตรเลีย-ไทย เป็น
แม่ว่า จาเหตุการณ์ความเคลื่อนไหว
ของนักลงทุนที่เป็นอาชญากรรม
ต้องลดจำนวน 377 ราย จาก 299
บริษัท ซึ่งส่วนใหญ่เป็นธุรกิจขนาด
กลางและขนาดย่อม พบว่า ภาค
เอกชนส่วนใหญ่กว่า 70% ต้องการ
ให้รัฐบาลไทยเร่งแก้ไขปัญหาด้าน
การขอใบอนุญาตในการทำงาน
(วีซ่าประเภทวีซ่า) และการขอวีซ่า
สำหรับนักลงทุน เนื่องจากปัจจุบัน
มีความล่าช้าและมีขั้นตอนที่ซับซ้อน
เมื่อเทียบกับต่างประเทศ และเป็น
ผลกระทบที่สำคัญต่อการตัดสินใจ
ของนักลงทุน

ขณะที่มีสื่อหลายสำนักได้กล่าว
ว่า 67% ของนักธุรกิจไทยในสื่อ
ปัญหาด้านการเมือง

“สิ่งที่ยกมาลงทุนอย่างของไทย
รัฐบาลระดับนานาชาติ คือ การอำนวยความสะดวก
และลดความยุ่งยากของใบอนุญาต
ทำงาน การขอวีซ่าของนักลงทุน
การคุ้มครองทรัพย์สินและการลงทุน
และความร่วมมือในระดับพื้นที่
คู่ค้า การ โดยควรจะมีการจัดการ
คอร์รัปชัน ซึ่งจะส่งผลต่อความ
เชื่อมั่นของนักลงทุนในระยะยาว”
นายอานันท์ กล่าว

อย่างไรก็ตาม สมาชิกหอ
การค้า ออสเตรเลีย กว่า 60%
ยืนยันว่าจะยังคงใช้ไทยเป็นฐาน
ในการลงทุนในอาเซียนต่อไป ซึ่ง
ถือเป็นสิ่งที่ดึงดูดในอาเซียน โดย

67% จะขยายฐานการผลิตและ
การลงทุนใน 1-2 ปีนี้ ส่วนอีก
74% จะขยายการลงทุนเพิ่มในระ
ยะ 5 ปีข้างหน้า

ซึ่งได้ถูกกล่าวหาว่ามีความขัด
แย้งใหญ่จะขยายการประกอบ
การค้า แต่อุตสาหกรรมบริการ ประเภท
การท่องเที่ยวและการขยาย
ธุรกิจบริการ การพัฒนาการศึกษา
และฝึกอบรม ออสเตรเลียที่มี “นา
นาเบรตติน” กล่าวไว้ สำหรับ
นโยบายการส่งเสริมการลงทุน
ในออสเตรเลียได้กำหนดและการ
สนับสนุนด้านกฎหมายและการ
กฎหมายด้าน การพัฒนา
การค้าและการลงทุนในอาเซียน
แต่ก็พบว่าหลังจากที่ไทยได้
ที่รัฐบาลไทยได้ ความร่วมมือ
งานกับระหว่างหน่วยงานภาครัฐ
ด้วย เพื่อให้การดำเนินงานที่
และสิทธิประโยชน์ที่ไทยได้
เหมาะกับการลงทุนของธุรกิจ
รายใหญ่ สมาชิกในชุมชน
การค้าและขนาดกลางจะพิจารณา
อีกครั้ง

นอกจากนี้ สมาชิกยังเห็นว่า
การเข้าร่วมความตกลงหุ้นส่วน
ยุทธศาสตร์ทางเศรษฐกิจ
เอเชีย-แปซิฟิก (ทีพีพี) จะเป็นโอกาส
ไทยจะได้ประโยชน์จากการส่งออก
และแลกเปลี่ยนความร่วมมือ
ทางการค้ากับประเทศสมาชิก
รัฐบาลไทยจึงควรพิจารณาเร่ง
แก้ไขปัญหานี้ไทยจะได้ประโยชน์
เนื่องจากประเทศเพื่อนบ้าน เช่น
มาเลเซีย สิงคโปร์ เวียดนาม ต่าง
ก็เข้าร่วมแล้ว

Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce (AustCham) plans to resolve visas and work permits which is a particular issue where the AustCham Board of Directors are advocating for change. According to AustCham’s Business Survey, 70% of respondents ranked difficulty in processing work permits and visas as an obstacle which also effects to a decision for investment in Thailand.

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หอการค้าออสเตรเลีย-ไทย เผยผลสำรวจทางธุรกิจพบว่ามีทัศนคติในแง่บวกต่อการลงทุนธุรกิจในไทย

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21 มกราคม 2559 15:00 น. (แก้ไขล่าสุด 21 มกราคม 2559 18:37 น.)



บรรณรักษ์ มอร์ริสโฮป ประธานหอการค้าออสเตรเลีย-ไทย

ผลสำรวจจากหอการค้าออสเตรเลีย-ไทย (AustCham) เผยให้เห็นว่าสมาชิกหอการค้า ออสเตรเลีย-ไทย มากกว่า 2 ใน 3 มีแผนเพิ่มการลงทุนในภูมิภาคเอเชีย โดยประเทศไทยได้รับการจัดอันดับสูงสุดของประเทศที่นักลงทุน นานาชาติ เอเชีย ออสเตรเลีย เวียดนาม และอินโดนีเซีย

จากข้อมูลการสำรวจซึ่งจัดขึ้นเป็นครั้งแรกโดยหอการค้าออสเตรเลีย-ไทย พบว่า 67 เปอร์เซ็นต์ของผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม มีแผนจะเพิ่มการลงทุนในไทยภายใน 2 ปีข้างหน้า ในขณะที่ 74 เปอร์เซ็นต์คาดว่าจะเพิ่มการลงทุนภายใน 5 ปี นอกจากนี้ ไทยยังได้รับการจัดอันดับให้เป็นประเทศที่มีโอกาสเติบโตสูงสุดในภูมิภาค โดยคิดเป็น 61 เปอร์เซ็นต์ ตามด้วยอินเดีย และออสเตรเลีย ซึ่งได้คะแนน 55 และ 48 เปอร์เซ็นต์ตามลำดับ

A business survey by the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce (AustCham) showed that more than two-thirds of its members are planning to increase their investment in the region, with Thailand ranked highest for growth opportunities ahead of India, Australia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

[illegible]

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