



NEWSLETTER No.12

ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS THAILAND

17 June 2025

Dear Members,

Invitation to attend the 2025 Annual General Assembly (AGA)

The current Executive Board (2023-2025) of AFICS-T was elected at the 2023 General Assembly (AGA) on 18 July 2023 and completed its two-year term of office in June 2025. We are, therefore, pleased to announce that an Annual General Assembly will accordingly be convened to review the activities undertaken during July 2024 to June 2025 and address some issues of concern to members.

In this context, and in accordance with AFICS-T regulations and rules, an election of members to serve the Executive Board for the period 2025-2027 will also be conducted during this session of this Annual General Assembly.

In this respect, we would like to refer to our previous Newsletter No. 10 in which it was stipulated that “the duly completed form with full or reduced list of candidates must be returned to the office of AFICS-T (...) as soon as possible but not later than Friday, 16 May 2025.” In addition, as indicated in the same Newsletter some members of the current Executive Board, including the President, have clearly indicated their intention of not running for another Executive Board term. Unfortunately, by the deadline AFICS-T did not receive any list of nominations. Therefore, according to the relevant paragraphs of the current Bylaws the election for members to the Executive Board for 2025-2027 could not be conducted in the absence of any proposed candidates. Please note that nominations proposed from the floor during the AGA will not be accepted.

Under these exceptional circumstances, while the item on election is still retained on the Provisional Agenda, AFICS-T members participating to the AGA will be invited to consider how to deal with this impasse and provide advice on the course of action in this respect. Please be reminded that this issue could be resolved with the cooperation of all AFICS-T members. The survival of our Association is at stake and a solution can only be found if all members stand together. So, please, do come ALL to the AGA on Thursday, 17 July 2025.

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

THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AGA)

on THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2025

**at the United Nations Conference Centre
Conference Room 4
Bangkok**

Registration will commence at 08.00 hours in front of Conference **Room 4**.



The opening of the 2025 Annual General Assembly will start at 09.00 hours. Attached to this Newsletter, you will find copies of (a) the provisional agenda, and (b) the Annual Report of the Executive Board,

The audited financial statement of accounts of the Association for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 will be distributed at the 2025 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 this year session of the 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 2025 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 long horizontal flourish extending to the left and a shorter one to the right.

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



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



2025 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AGA)

THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2025
(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 2024 to June 2025
(as contained in the attached Annual Report of the Executive Board)
5. Questions and answers
6. Consideration and election of the Executive Board of AFICS-T 2025-2027
7. Recommendations of activities to be undertaken by AFICS-T
8. Other matters



ASSOCIATION OF FORMER INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS - THAILAND



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (July 2024 – June 2025)

15 June 2025

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

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 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 Congtavinsutti
13. Ms. Junpen Jirasavetakul
14. Ms. Vena Visaruitawongse
15. Ms. Duangthip Pattraplachai
16. Ms. Sumetee Jongmu
17. Ms. Siraprapha Khomson
18. Ms. Chitraporn Boonyasit
19. Ms. Yupa Wongsuchat

Advisers

20. Mr. Vudhithep Tanghongse

Office: Ground Floor, UNCC, United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand.

Telephone: +66 2288 1890; Fax: +66 2288 1088; E-mail: escap_un_retirees.unescap@un.org; website: www.aficsthailand.com

2. In January 2025, Ms. Salaya Kaewmeechai submitted her resignation, due to family obligation, from the position of Executive Board member and Deputy Webmaster, with immediate effect.

3. AFICS-T was able to convene its monthly Board meetings using the UNCC facilities which allowed the conduct of hybrid meetings simultaneously in-person and online.

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

5. 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
19. Ms. Veena Mahaaree

2. Committees and Sub-Committees of AFICS-T

6. 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 remain 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
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(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. Uraivan 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

7. The AFICS-T membership has steadily grown since the Founding Meeting, held on 26 February 2001, when there were only 87 registered participants. At its 2024 Annual General Meeting, AFICS-T membership reached 851 registered participants.

8. As of 30 April 2025, the paid-up memberships stand at 163. However, the total number of members, including those with their membership fees in arrears, was 851. Since the introduction of life membership in 2008, the Association currently has 688 life members, including 170 members who have reached 80 years old and over, and are exempted from paying any annual membership fees.

4. Summary of Activities

9. 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. The details of these activities are reported by the respective Committees as follows.

4.1 Summary of Financial Report

10. Ms. Panvipa Thammakoranonta, Auditor, has audited all accounts of AFICS-T. The audited financial statement of accounts for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 will be distributed at the 2025 Annual General Assembly.

4.2 Report on AFICS-T interaction with FAFICS

11. As members may recall, the Association had been accepted as a member of 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 2025, AFICS-T had 157 paid members. Therefore AFICS-T contribution amounted to US\$314.00 (157 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 reached the age of 80 years old and thus became exempted from paying any annual fees.

12. FAFICS conducted 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 role in this respect consisted of providing support in the preparation of the Meeting.

13. There were about 40 attendants in the conference room and around 50 people were attending virtually. FAFICS placed the emphasis on 4 pillars or 4 core areas of activities, namely, (i) Communication, (ii) Memberships, (iii) Health Insurance and Long-term Care, and (iv) Pension Issues.

14. Out of around 86,000 UN retirees in the world, only 18,000 retirees are members of local retirees' associations and thus of FAFICS. One of the objectives of FAFICS was therefore to increase the number of retiree members through the organization of pre-retirement seminars. A team had already been established to revive some dormant retirees' associations. On After-Service Health Insurance and Long-term Care, FAFICS were fully aware of its limitations concerning representation in the management committees of several medical insurance schemes. Efforts were being made to assume the role of full-fledged representation in the committees concerned of all the ASHI schemes. MIP has been also the major focus of the related Standing Committee of FAFICS. An inter-agency working group on ASHI has recently been created while the United Nations secretariat has also set up a working group of the same nature on their own.

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

15. 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 2.8 per cent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the US dollar track of periodic benefits effective on 1 April 2025. Unfortunately, for those on the local track no adjustment to the cost-of-living had been made.

16. The applicable COLA adjustment to all countries of residence will be effective on 1 April 2025. COLA detailed letters were issued by the end of April 2025. 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.

17. On 9 April 2025, the UNJSPF held its third global town hall meeting. 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, on the status of the Fund.

18. Ms. McClean emphasized that members of the Fund can be assured that their benefits are secure. She explained that changes in the number of participants have a limited impact on the Funds solvency.

19. 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, informed the meeting that over the past few days in March/April 2025, global equity markets had experienced significant volatility, in light of the extraordinary event, however, with a target allocation of 43% to public equities, the Fund had been affected by recent valuation losses. As of 4 April 2025, the market value of the portfolio stood at US\$ 92.9 billion, reflecting a 2.9% decrease in asset value over one week.

20. AFICS-T organized a Seminar on Benefits for Retirees which was successfully held on 10 September 2024. Altogether some 203 people participated including family members. The Seminar provided general information on Pension and Health insurance issues, including guidance for surviving spouses in the administrative steps required following the demise of their retiree spouses. The Committee on Pension and Group Life Insurance Benefits expressed its thanks to the resource persons for their initiative and contribution, and based on the popularity of this type of event wished to recommend a repeat of such activity.

21. 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 Mr. Brian Casatelli, Bangkok Liaison Officer of UNJSPF in this respect.

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

22. 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 2024 CEs to UNJSPF. During the reporting period, some 263 members submitted their 2024 CEs to the AFICS-T office which were then dispatched to the UNJSPF within the set deadline. For comparison purposes, in 2023 AFICS-T collected 314 paper-based CEs. The number of paper-based 2024 CEs

submitted through the association registered a decrease due to the availability of online submissions (through MSS) and the successful use of the DCE Application.

(b) With regard to beneficiaries slated for benefit suspension due to non-receipt by the UNJSPF of their 2024 CEs, the UNJSPF notified the AFICS-T that 19 CEs of retirees/beneficiaries living in Thailand, failed to submit their CEs on time. Out of the listed 19 people concerned, 16 were not registered AFICS-T members. After some effort, AFICS-T could contact all of them including relatives of 4 deceased members and report back to UNJSPF on 16 April and copied to UNJSPF Bangkok liaison office for information.

23. In this regard, the Sub-committee on CE would urge retirees/beneficiaries to regularly check the contact information given to UNJSPF to ensure they are up to date. In addition, it is important for relatives to inform the Fund of the retiree's passing. Indeed, the work of AFICS-T faces several obstacles in locating the whereabouts of those listed retirees/beneficiaries who had failed to submit their CEs on time, especially those who are not registered AFICS-T members. Despite these challenges, the Sub-committee on CE has made significant efforts and has been able to successfully contact all retirees/beneficiaries. The result of its investigation had always been submitted to the UNJSPF in a timely and comprehensive manner

4.4 Report of Committee on Medical Benefits

24. 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 under the Worldwide Plan (WWP) and the Medical Insurance Plan (MIP).

25. Effective 7th March 2025, to enhance the security of the Cigna Application, Cigna has introduced 2-step verification. This extra layer of security helps ensure that our personal information remains protected. However, our elderly retirees seem to have some difficulty in accessing the Cigna Application. The AFICS-T office stands ready to help.

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

4.5 Report of the Committee on Information and Communication

27. 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 on the Committee on Newsletters

28. 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. 6/2023-2025	15 July 2024
Newsletter No. 7/2023-2025	12 September 2024
Newsletter No. 8/2023-2025	17 October 2024
Newsletter No. 9/2023-2025	10 December 2024
Newsletter No. 10/2023-2025	17 March 2025
Newsletter No. 11/2023-2025	04 June 2025

29. These circulars/Newsletters are available on the official AFICS-T website (www.aficsthailand.com).

4.7 Report on the Committee on Benevolent Fund and Funerals

30. The Committee provides supporting services to members requesting assistance from the benevolent fund and on the demise issues.

4.7.1. Report on Benevolent Fund

31. The Committee received Baht 1,000 contribution to the benevolent fund during the reporting period, 1 July 2024 to mid-June 2025. The Fund recorded a balance of Baht 210,358.93 of which Baht 303.73 was the interest income from the Siam Commercial Bank for the period from July 2024 to April 2025.

4.7.2. Report on Funerals

32. During July 2024 to mid-June 2025, 27 members of AFICS-T passed away. AFICS-T granted a funeral subsidy of Baht 3,000.00 to the respective families of deceased members.

4.8 Report on the Committee on Recreation and Excursion

33. The Committee on Recreation and Excursion organized an excursion trip to Shantou and Chaozhou, China from 18 to 23 March 2025. Altogether, there were 20 retirees and their family who joined the trip. The programme was very much appreciated as well as the overall organization, especially the guide who was very knowledgeable and made the excursion both enjoyable and instructive. The feedback from the 20 people who had joined the excursion was very positive,

4.9 Report on the committee on Charity Activities

34. No charity activities have been implemented during the reporting period.

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

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

Income taxation on foreign earnings

36. After the initial excitement during 2024 about taxation of “overseas earnings”, things have largely calmed down. The Revenue Department (RD) had announced that remittances from abroad would have to be reported from 1 January 2024, the deadline for submission was 31 March 2025. This date has come and gone without specifics being added to the original announcement, e.g., pensions and the role of double taxation treaties with 61 countries, UN pensions and the role of other international treaties. Therefore, most of our members, Thai and foreign alike, have not filed income tax returns. Regarding our foreign members, we have learnt that there was no link between the Immigration Bureau (IB) for visa extension and income taxation (RD). It could also be confirmed that only remittances arriving in the country (based on bank

statements) and not “worldwide income” would – if at all - be considered. According to information from a member in April 2025 who had gone through the process of obtaining a Tax Identification Number (TIN) and filled the required income tax declaration forms (PND 90, 91) with the help of a tax consultant, he was informed that there was no payment required with the remark “UN tax exempt income”.

37. The issue was also raised in a meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and thus the Representative of the Secretary General in Thailand on 13 February 2025. The RC is the designated channel of communication between the Government of Thailand and all UN agencies operating in the country. It was agreed that further clarifications from the RD should be awaited. The establishment of a direct contact, before only possible – and mostly not working - through one of the local UN agencies, e.g., ESCAP, was one of the positive outcomes of ESCAP in cooperation with AFICS Thailand hosting the FAFICS 54th Council meeting in July 2024 in Bangkok where AFICS-T had raised the issue.

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

38. The problem of foreign AFICS-T members with Non-OA visa status and the requirement of buying in addition to their after-service health insurance and long-term care (ASHIL) cover, e.g., from Cigna, local policies, has largely disappeared. Unfortunately, despite trying to alert ESCAP’s Division of Administration (DoA), the Health and Life Insurance Section (HLIS), New York, AFICS-T can take no credit for it. It was mainly due to the initiative of individual members changing their visa status from OA to O where this requirement does not exist. Should it arise again, solutions could be explored through the newly established contact with the UN Resident Coordinator.

Long-Term Residence (LTR)

39. The LTR visa, introduced from 1 September 2022, remains to be available and has proven popular with foreign UN retirees. 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 re-entry 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. Based on the experience of our members the FLiT Committee had put together a set of guidelines (available on request). A slight revision based on recent experience was expected to be undertaken.

5. Concluding remarks

40. Since the 2024 Annual General Assembly, the AFICS-T Executive Board is pleased to report that all efforts have been made to ensure the full resumption of its normal operations and activities which had been somewhat discontinued during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this context, the Executive Board has been able to render advice to and assist, within the means available, AFICS-T members concerning pension matters, medical benefits, residence in Thailand and other relevant issues
