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<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>Information and communication technologies: policy, law and practice in the Lao people's democratic republic</th>
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<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Khamkhong Kongvongsa</td>
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Paper No. 7
Information and Communication Technologies

Policy, Law, and Practice

in the

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Authored by: Khamkhong Kongvongsar
Vientiane, Lao PDR August 1998
Foreword

This Report was drafted at the request of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center. The author of this report drew on many sources for the purposes of compiling data for this Report. As a result, errors or inconsistencies may be because information collection is not yet regularized. That is, much of the information appearing herein was drawn from sources whose knowledge is not otherwise recorded. All of the conclusions are drawn by the author with reference to the author's specific experience and involvement in the media sector in the Lao PDR and do not reflect the official policies or positions of the National Mass Media Training Centre, the Ministry of Information and Culture, or the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The author is proud to have been asked to put to paper information that otherwise does not exist about the telecommunications and communications sector in the Lao PDR. This is an important first step for the Lao PDR and is necessarily limited by the circumstances of the country's development. Consequently, this could not have been done without the kind assistance of friends and colleagues who gave freely and generously of their time to assist in compiling this Report as well as in reading and editing this Report.

Special thanks go to His Excellency, the Minister of the Ministry of Information and Culture, Mr. Sileua Bounkham and His Excellency, the Vice Minister of Information and Culture, Mr. Bouabane Vorakoune, and the officials of the Ministry of Information and Culture, with special thanks to the Department of Mass Media. The author also wishes to give special thanks to provincial colleagues, without whom much of the local data would not have been obtained.

The author also wishes to acknowledge the law firm of Dirksen Flipse Doran & Lê for their generous contributions of the unofficial translations attached to this Report as well as their contributions to the legal sections of this Report.

Finally, the author hopes that readers will give of their precious time to report any errors or inconsistencies found in this Report.
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I. Introduction

This section provides an overview of basic geographic, demographic and technical statistics relative to communications and telecommunications in the Lao PDR. This report does not cover book publishing or distribution in the Lao PDR, but will focus rather on conventional print or broadcast media being radio broadcasting, television, newspapers, and the like. What follows then is a brief synopsis of the existing circumstances of the Lao PDR. This is important to establish a proper context when considering development to date as well as development in future.

A. General Political Background

Since the Government adopted the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) in 1986, a move towards a market-based approach that accelerated in 1988, much has changed in the Lao PDR. The NEM was an economic reform package that transformed economic activity from a central command system to a market-based approach, decentralizing economic decision-making, and allowing the private sector to take an active role. From this movement, the economic growth rate has accelerated, and there has been increasing emphasis on social sector spending. Nonetheless, the Lao PDR remains among the world's poorest countries. Yet if current growth rates continue for another five years, as projected in the Five-year Plan for 1996-2000, the nation will move to a considerably higher ranking within the group that makes up the world's low-income countries.

The economic environment has been transformed in recent years, with the loss of most Eastern Bloc support being replaced by increasing technical and financial assistance from a wide range of other agencies, both multilateral and bilateral. Commercial relations with the vigorous Thai economy grew rapidly. The background to these developments has been the reorientation of economic doctrine and practice that took place in nearly all socialist countries during the 1980s, including the Lao PDR's large neighbors, China and Vietnam, and the political transformation of the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. As a result, the population situation is likely to be profoundly affected by these contextual changes.

The Lao PDR's Five-year Plan for 1996-2000 was drafted with the aim of carrying forward the rapid economic development achieved in recent years, and to raise the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita from about US$380 today to US$500 by the year 2000. The Plan also seeks to continue promoting a market economy, and places particular emphasis on regional development planning, integrated rural development including agro-forestry, improving the transportation and communication system, and increasing attention to expanding and upgrading education and health systems.

Human resource development is a critical need in the Lao PDR. Universal primary school education has not been attained, though the net primary school enrolment rate has finally exceeded 70 percent. The fact that the official goal of the five-year Plan for 1996-2000 is to raise this rate only to eighty percent (80%) by the year 2000 reflects both the lack of resources for education and the subsequent adverse effects on human resource development due to the high birth rate, resulting in rapidly
increasing numbers of children reaching school age each year. Adult literacy is lower for females (35%) than males (65%) and younger females remain disadvantaged in education compared with males, particularly at higher educational levels.

Because the ethnic minority groups tend to live in isolated, mountainous regions, practicing shifting cultivation and are poorly served by government services, socio-economic disadvantage and ethnicity are closely related. To give just one example, the maternal mortality rate in the mountainous northern part of the country, inhabited mainly by ethnic minorities, is more than twice the national rate and is one of the highest in the world. The link between poverty and ethnicity makes it especially important that socio-economic gaps do not widen.

B. Physical Features and Natural Resources

The Lao PDR has a total land of 236,800 square kilometers; its dimensions are more than 1,100 kilometers from north to south and between 100 to 500 kilometers from east to west. The nation has long borders with the Kingdom of Thailand to the west and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the east. Shorter common borders are shared with the People's Republic of China (Yunnan Province), the Union of Myanmar to the north, and the Kingdom of Cambodia to the south.

Although it is a landlocked nation, the Lao PDR has an abundance of rivers, including a 1,865 kilometers stretch of the Mekong River which defines its border with Myanmar.

Major stretches of the Mekong River and its tributaries are navigable and they provide alluvial deposits for some of the fertile plains. About two-thirds of the country is mountainous, with the elevations ranging from 200 meters to the highest peak of 2,820 meters. The mountains pose formidable difficulties for transportation and communication and lead to fragmentation of settlement patterns, but together with the rivers they produce a vast potential of hydropower. Only a small proportion of this hydropower potential is developed, but nevertheless constitutes one of the leading exports for the Lao PDR. Plans are underway to construct facilities to provide additional hydroelectric capacity.

The Lao PDR has considerable mineral resources, including potash, iron ore, gypsum, tin, salt, and coal. These resources are known to exist or, are believed to be, scattered across the country. In particular, gold is panned along considerable lengths of the rivers. Little exploration has occurred, but preparations are under way for geological surveying, mineral exploration, and thorough assessment of the mineral wealth. Potentially exploitable petroleum basins have also been explored. Development of many of the mineral resources will depend directly on development of the physical infrastructure and will require long-range planning.

The Lao PDR has been a heavily forested country, but the destruction of its forests is causing great concern in planning circles. It was estimated that in 1981, 11.2 million hectares of forests remained, covering forty seven percent (47%) of the land. There are different estimates of the rate of destruction of forests. A survey of the Forestry
Department\(^1\) indicates that the total forest area of the Lao PDR declined by about 470,000 hectares between 1982 and 1989. All regions were affected, but deforestation was most pronounced in the central and northern regions. Deforestation stems from several causes. While shifting cultivation is an important contributing factor, logging and conversion to permanent agriculture are likely to be equally, if not more, significant.

C. Socio-economic Profile of the Lao PDR

1. Demographics

The 1995 Population Census recorded the population of the Lao PDR at 4.6 million. The average annual rate of increase since the 1985 Census was 2.5 percent, representing a population doubling in only twenty-eight (28) years. Both fertility and mortality are presently very high by Southeast Asian standards. According to the 1994 Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey, the total fertility rate averaged 6.4 in the five (5) years preceding the survey. The infant mortality rate was estimated to be 113 per 1,000 live births over the 1989-1994 period, a slight fall from the level a decade earlier. The maternal mortality rate is estimated to be very high at 656 deaths per 100,000 live births. Life expectancy at birth is approximately fifty-one (51) years.

Available evidence points to the Lao PDR as being in the very stages of a demographic transition. A slight fall in mortality appears to have occurred, but there is no evidence of any decline in fertility. This is in sharp contrast to neighboring Southeast Asian countries, most of which have been experiencing substantial declines in fertility.

International migration appears to have been limited since 1985, contrary to the 1975-1985 decade when there was a massive exodus of more than 300,000 refugees. Internal migration, also substantial during the Indochina war and its aftermath, appears to have slackened.

However, there is some movement to urban areas. Vientiane municipality, comprising the capitol city of Vientiane and its surrounding area, grew from 381,000 in 1985 to 532,000 in 1995, an annual growth rate of 3.4 percent. Vientiane capitol had a population of 150,000 to 200,000 in 1995, about the double size of the next largest city, Savannakhet, with almost 100,000. The third largest city, Pakse, had a population of 60,000 in 1995. The overall proportion of urban to rural, according to the 1985 census, was either eleven percent (11%), or twenty-one percent (21%), depending on the definitions used for the urban population. The accepted figure for urbanization in 1995, pending the availability of the census figure, is nineteen percent (19%).

2. Economic Data

The Lao PDR is a low-income country. In 1992, the World Bank estimated the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) to be US$250, a figure below the average for the Bank's category of Least Developed Countries (US$390). In Asia, only Cambodia, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh were ranked below the Lao PDR.

\(^1\) National Reconnaissance Survey 1992
According to different criteria used by the UNDP to calculate its Human Development Index, the Lao PDR ranked 138th out of 174 countries in 1993.

The Lao PDR has a high incidence of poverty, with forty-six percent (46%) of the population below the poverty line. Agricultural productivity is low; only 1.8% of cultivated rice land is irrigated. Unexploded ordnance left over from the Indochina war, frequent natural disasters, and poor access to markets and social services all exacerbate the poverty situation. The lack of access to seaports hinders the development of export industries. Lack of food security among a large number of households is indicated by the fact that half of the children suffer stunted or severely stunted growth due to under-nutrition. The country has massive infrastructure needs, a poorly trained workforce and a low capacity to mobilize domestic savings.

Agriculture accounts for fifty-nine percent (59%) of the GDP and eighty-five percent (85%) of the labor force. Less than five percent (5%) of the nation's land is under permanent cultivation, mostly for wet rice that is single cropped on rain-fed paddies. There is negligible irrigation for dry season production - only 2 percent of the rice growing area. Swidden farming is the dominant farming system in the upland areas, thinly populated by various ethnic minorities. It is also practised on the lower slopes by farmers needing supplement crop production in the face of paddy land. The absence of irrigation makes Lao rice production very weather-independent, particularly in the upland areas. All land is owned by the state; however, use rights are transferable and inheritable. De facto, the agricultural sector is privatized with a fairly loose overlay of cooperatives.

Four factors serve as key, interrelated constraints to economic and social development in the Lao PDR, the first of which concerns structural constraints to be overcome in the agricultural and forestry sectors. The second relates to the nation's narrow, relatively weak export base. The third is associated with the poor conditions of the country's transport infrastructure and the limited access it provides to domestic and external markets. The fourth constraint is the lack of skilled personnel in key development sectors. These constraints appear to remain crucial and need to be addressed on an integrated basis.

Nevertheless, there are many positive factors conducive to development. A favorable land to population ratio, a relatively egalitarian distribution of assets and income, a valuable natural resource endowment, beautiful scenery and strategic location within a dynamic regional economy, are some of them. In recent years, impressive economic growth rates have been achieved: an annual rate of 6.4 percent for the past five years. In 1995, GDP growth estimated at 7.1 percent and per capita GDP at around US$350.

Basic Data of the Lao PDR (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Area Km²</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Density Per./Sq.Km²</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Infant Mortality</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole country</td>
<td>236 800</td>
<td>4 574 848</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>775 755</td>
<td>104.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vientiane Cap.</td>
<td>3 920</td>
<td>524 107</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89 413</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phongsaly</td>
<td>16 270</td>
<td>152 848</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26 550</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luang Namtha</td>
<td>9 325</td>
<td>114 741</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21 161</td>
<td>119.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudomsay</td>
<td>15 370</td>
<td>210 207</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33 090</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Social Data

The Lao PDR has a very mixed population in terms of ethnicity, and ethnic differences have a geographic dimension. The minority groups are usually divided into three categories. The Lao Theung live mostly fixed villages on the hillsides but rotate their fields over a swidden cycle. The Lao Soung are nomadic shifting cultivators living higher in the mountains, especially in the north. The majority population is usually called Lao Loum. These people are mainly lowland farmers in the Mekong valley, although they also include farmers engaged in livestock production in savannah regions.

These three broad groups are distinct in language as well as ecological setting. The Lao Loum speak Lao. The Lao Theung speak Mon-Khmer languages; and the Lao Soung use Tibeto-Burman languages.

The proportions of the population in the three categories are difficult to gauge accurately and may have been appreciably altered by differential rates of emigration since 1975. The 1995 census, which sought information on ethnic affiliation, yielded the following unofficial distribution: Lao Loum at 68 percent, the Lao Theung at 22 percent, and the Lao Soung at 10 percent. If these figures are correct, one-third of the population belongs to non-Lao speaking minority groups. In several provinces, these groups are in fact a majority.

D. Education

From colonial times, the Lao PDR inherited a very inadequate educational system. Figures for 1960 show a primary enrolment rate of twenty-five percent (25%) and a secondary rate of one percent (1%). Although the system has greatly broadened, the goals of achieving basic literacy and universal primary school education have not yet been realized. Literacy is around fifty percent (50%), and only seventy-one percent (71%) of primary school aged children are in school. Net enrolment rates drop to fifteen percent (15%) at the lower secondary level and two percent (2%) at upper secondary level. Even the seventy-one percent (71%) figure for the net primary school enrolment ration may be too high, as the data are questionable. Forty-six percent (46%) of primary school-going children are over-aged (between 11-18 years of age). Repetition rates are thirty percent (30%), and thirty percent (30%) percent of children complete primary school.
Another serious issue is the wide difference of enrolment rates between boys and girls and between the different ethnic groups. The higher the level of schooling, the relatively worse the attendance of girls and ethnic minorities.

The numbers of tertiary educated persons is particularly small. The 1985 census recorded fewer than 5,000 persons who had graduated from a university or technical institute, and another 6,000 who had completed vocational training school. The Lao PDR had never had a university until 1995. Post-secondary education was split among a variety of training institutions run by individual line ministries, for example, a Teacher Training College under the Ministry of Education and the College of Medicine under the Ministry of Public Health. There was also a National Polytechnic Institute. None of these were degree-awarding institutions. In the past, large numbers (several hundreds annually) of graduates from upper secondary schools went to eastern European countries and the USSR for higher education. This option is now virtually closed off, leaving them with language training outside the mainstream of international commerce. Many others received training in Vietnam. Currently, a limited number of students are sent to Vietnam, Thailand, China, Australia and some other countries for tertiary education.

The National University was formed in 1996 by combining the pre-existing tertiary institutions and adding two new faculties: economics and management, and law and political science. There are therefore now eight faculties - humanities science, engineering and agriculture, agronomy, economics and management, law and political science, education, and medical sciences. Further development of the National University is being funded by a loan from the Asian Development Bank.

E. Health

Health conditions are poor and characterized by high infant and maternal mortality, low life expectancy, poor sanitation and hygiene, and poor housing and living conditions. The overall health status of the Lao PDR is among the lowest in the world. The infant mortality rate remains over 110 per 1,000 live births and the maternal mortality rate is approximately 656 deaths per 100,000 live births. A large proportion of the population has none or very limited access to appropriate health care services, including pharmaceuticals. Leading diseases, including diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, and some common communicable diseases. With regard to maternal and prenatal mortality, the lack of prenatal care and the overwhelming prevalence of home delivery complications result in many preventable deaths.

The Government budget for social development, including education and health, is very low. Health sector spending as a percentage of GDP is amongst the lowest in the world and almost all capital expenditure for health is provided by foreign assistance. A target of the Government is to raise social sector spending to twenty percent (20%) of the total Government budget in the year 2000 and to 20 percent of total external assistance. Health care services are poor, particularly in remote rural areas. Out of 121 district hospitals, only twenty (20) were reported as fully operational in 1993.
II. Review and Examination of Existing Literature relative to Communications and Telecommunications in the Lao PDR

The only literature known to exist is a summary of an internet workshop held in 1995 sponsored by the International Development Research Centre of Monash University of Australia. The contents of that meeting are attached hereto in Appendix D.

III. Communication Infrastructure of the Lao PDR

A. Background of Lao Mass Media

In comparison with one decade before, today Lao mass media organizations, either in print or electronic, have developed both quantitatively and qualitatively. This change has created new challenges, especially relative to the development and application of information technologies in daily life. If we compare this development to those of our neighbors, the Lao mass media is still far from being well-developed, not only in terms of technique but also in terms of substance.

Throughout the thirty (30) year struggle for freedom and independence (1945-1975), and in the ten plus years after the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Lao mass media originated as revolutionary newspapers and grew to be the single most important link between the leadership of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and the Lao people of all ethnic groups. While bringing Party doctrine, revolutionary ideology, policies and pathways to the people, the Lao mass media also fed back people's opinions, wishes and desires to the Party as well as to other concerned organizations.

Since 1986, after the 4th Party Congress, the Lao mass media has experienced progress in disseminating the New Changes, the Party's New Thinking (Chintanakan Mai), and has imparted knowledge from the New Economic Mechanism and new methodologies. At the same time the Lao mass media also contributed to the organization and mobilization the Lao people of all strata to take part in the Party's Policy of New Changes for the sake of national defense and development as well as for the betterment of their own living standards.

In the face of profound and complex changes in the world, the Lao mass media has actively and timely informed the people on important and serious events so that they could understand such events and react positively.

Gathering under the umbrella of the Lao Journalists Association, the Lao mass media, including editors-in-chief, senior editors, journalists, producers, cameramen as well as radio and tv technicians, are uniting as one in exchanging professional experience and training to better serve the people's interests.

As there is yet no university or institute to professionally train the Lao mass media, the National Mass Media Training Center (NMTC) plays a key role in educating and training practicing journalists. The International Program for the Development of Communication/UNESCO has been the permanent principal donor to the Center since its foundation in 1990. The NMTC also cooperates in various fields with AMIC/Singapore, AIBD/Malaysia, ABC/Australia, Dustch Welle and IIJB/Germany,
Freedom Forum/USA etc. . . . Besides organizing in-country training courses, the NMTC has sent many journalists to upgrade their professional skills in the above-mentioned counterpart countries.

B. Communications Infrastructure

The communications sector in the Lao PDR is considered one of the least developed in the world. Both print and electronic media as well as telecommunications services are inadequate. The problem becomes even more acute in the provinces. Due to limited revenue, several bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have signified interest in assisting the Lao PDR in upgrading its telecommunications and broadcasting facilities.

Since opening the Lao PDR to foreign direct investment, the government has been cautious with licensing projects in sectors seen to have sensitive national security issues. Telecommunication was one such sector. Faced with such concern in a sector that while potentially lucrative, was also one that could be problematic, if not closely controlled and monitored, the Government engaged in lengthy talks to negotiate a specific telecommunications project with a foreign investor in the Lao PDR. As a result, the Government negotiated an investment agreement to establish the Lao PDR’s first privately operated national carrier operated by Lao Telecommunications (Lao Telecom). Lao Telecom is a joint venture between the Lao Government and Shinnawatra International of Thailand and enjoys a monopoly over telecommunications in the Lao PDR. The Lao nominees to senior management positions of Lao Telecom were drawn from Enterprise des Telecommunications, the former State enterprise telephone operator of the Lao PDR.

The joint venture comprises commitments from Shinnawatra to provide US$ 400,000,000 of investment into the telecommunication sector in the Lao PDR over the next twenty years.

Although the Lao Telecom monopoly effectively blocks other efforts in telecommunications sector in the Lao PDR until the year 2000, there are other participants who engage in servicing, spare parts supplies, and installation.

Data on Main Telecommunication Facilities in the Lao PDR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Mobile-</th>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Fax Machines</th>
<th>Internet Subscribers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital City</td>
<td>19,500</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>10,600</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>500*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provinces</td>
<td>7,700</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,800</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,250</strong></td>
<td><strong>510</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* approximate

A list of participants in the telecommunications sector appears as Appendix B hereto.

C. Infrastructure of Lao Print Media

Throughout the Lao PDR, there are approximately thirty (30) different newspapers, magazines, journals and news bulletins. Most of them are produced in the capital city, under the ownership of state bodies, public organizations and official
institutions. The print media of the country is concentrated in Vientiane, where there are thirty (30) newspapers and magazines in established competition; about five (5) magazines published in provinces, broken down into two (2) dailies, three (3) bi-weeklies, five (5) weeklies, two (2) fortnightly published and more than ten (10) monthlies.

**Data on Main Print Media in the Lao PDR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Pasason Newspaper</td>
<td>Lao People's Revolutionary Party</td>
<td>10,000/Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Vientiane Mai Newspaper</td>
<td>Vientiane Municipal Administrative</td>
<td>2,000/Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Vientiane Times English Language Newspaper</td>
<td>Ministry of Information and culture</td>
<td>3,000/Bi-Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Pasason Van Athit newspaper</td>
<td>Ministry of Information and culture</td>
<td>2,000/Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Vannasinh Literature Magazine</td>
<td>Ministry of Information and culture</td>
<td>1,500/Weekly</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pathet Lao Illustration Magazine</td>
<td>Khaosane Pathet Lao News Agency</td>
<td>3,000/Weekly</td>
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<td>Laos English Magazine</td>
<td>Khaosane Pathet Lao News Agency</td>
<td>1,000/Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Xiengkhene Journal</td>
<td>Lao Writers' Association</td>
<td>1,000/Weekly</td>
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<td>09</td>
<td>Lao Mass Media Journal</td>
<td>Lao Journalists' Association</td>
<td>1,000/Weekly</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Vientiane Municipal Administrative</td>
<td>1,200/Weekly</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Suksa Mai Journal</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>3,000/Trimester</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Ministry of National Defence</td>
<td>3,1000/Bi-Weekly</td>
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<td>Phonthane Pasason Journal</td>
<td>National Assembly</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Mae Ying Lao Magazine</td>
<td>Lao Women's Federation</td>
<td>8,000/Fortnight</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Non May Lao Newspaper</td>
<td>Lao Youth's Union</td>
<td>1,500/Fortnight</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Haeng Ngane Journal</td>
<td>Lao Federation of Trade Unions</td>
<td>1,500/Monthly</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Xae Bame Journal</td>
<td>Non-Formal Education</td>
<td>5,000/Monthly</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Akoun Mai Magazine</td>
<td>Party's Propaganda and Education Board</td>
<td>2,000/Monthly</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Fongrath Journal</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
<td>1,500/Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Renovateur French Language Paper</td>
<td>Ministry of Information and Culture</td>
<td>2,000/Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Savan Thamko Magazine</td>
<td>Savannakhet Province</td>
<td>1,000/Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Thongthieu Journal</td>
<td>Lao Tourism Authority</td>
<td>1,000/Monthly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. **Infrastructure of Lao Electronic (Broadcast) Media**

1. **Radio Broadcasting**
A radio broadcasting station was firstly established in Laos in late 1950s. As transport systems are very limited due to road conditions, especially during the rainy season, radio broadcasting played the most important role in reaching recipients. Throughout the country, there are altogether twelve (12) radio broadcasting stations of which three (3) are located in Vientiane, including one (1) 200-kw medium wave station and one 5-kw FM station. These two (2) stations are the responsibility of the Lao National Radio, which airs its programs almost twenty-four (24) hours a day. The third (3rd) station is an AM station working under the Information and Culture Service of the Vientiane Municipality. Its programs are mainly aimed at informing, educating and entertaining listeners living in the capital city.

Under the direct supervision and funding of the Ministry of Information and Culture, the other nine (9) stations scattered from the North to South of the country work as provincial radio stations. Each of them has its own editorial and technical boards that are able to produce a number of educational and informational programs and broadcasts from five (5) to twelve (12) hours per day. Some of the programs are broadcast in local ethnic dialects.

Only sixty percent (60%) of the entire Lao population can access the above-mentioned radio facilities, which are not clear in some northern provinces. As a substitute for the Lao radio signals, listeners tune in to foreign stations broadcasting in the Lao Language. The main foreign radio stations favored by Lao listeners are: the Voice of Vietnam, Beijing International Radio, VOA, BBC, Radio France International and various other nearby Thai radio stations.

### Data on Radio Stations in the Lao PDR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Station Name</th>
<th>Band/Power</th>
<th>Radio Set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital city</td>
<td>Lao National Radio</td>
<td>AM/200 kW</td>
<td>275,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National FM Station</td>
<td>SW/50 kW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vientiane Capital</td>
<td>FM/200 kW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champasak</td>
<td>Champasak</td>
<td>AM/1 kW</td>
<td>79,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayaboury</td>
<td>Sayaboury</td>
<td>FM/100W</td>
<td>56,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>AM/25 kW</td>
<td>37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SW/1Kw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiengkhouang</td>
<td>Xiengkhouang</td>
<td>AM/1Kw</td>
<td>56,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champasak</td>
<td>Champasak</td>
<td>AM/25kW</td>
<td>210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AM/1KW</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Television Broadcasting**

The Lao National Television started in December 1983 in Vientiane with the aim of conducting broadcasting services to the Lao people. That was the first tv station ever established in the country. The various units of program production equipment in use at that time were mostly those for non-professional purposes and, both in terms of quality and quantity, were insufficient for use by a broadcast station. The broadcasting period was only about three (3) hours a day. Because the tv
transmitter output was small at 1kw, the service area was also limited to only the capital city.

With a view to attaining its national development plan, the Government of the Lao PDR requested the Government of Japan to provide grant aid assistance with regards to improving and expanding existing broadcasting equipment, including renewing the tv transmitter, renewing studio equipment and constructing a studio as well as remodeling studio facilities. Since 1993, the Lao National Television has improved its transmitter output from 1kw to 5kw. Because of the improvement in its financial, technical, and manpower conditions, today this tv station broadcasts seventeen (17) hours a day. Seventy percent (70%) percent of its programs are also broadcast via satellite to different parts of the country.

Lao TV3 is another tv station located in Vientiane capital. Founded in April 1994, LaoTV3 is now playing an important role in the daily life of Vientiane capital citizens. This tv station broadcasts different programs for ten (10) hours everyday of which sixty percent (60%) is transmitted via ASIASAT satellite to all provincial stations similar to Lao National Television.

As far as the tasks of provincial tv stations is concerned, these stations act more like relay stations for the Lao National Television and Lao TV3. That is why they are so different in terms of their production facilities as compared to the two (2) main stations in the capital city and in some of the other larger cities.

Seventy percent (70%) of Lao viewers throughout the country can watch six Thai TV stations without any problem relative to language comprehension as the Lao and Thai languages are quite similar. Paralleled with this, Lao people living along the borders with China and Vietnam can capture various TV programs from those countries too. In the main towns as well as in remote areas, satellite dishes have been widely installed by private people, thus facilitating connections to the outside world. Those satellite dishes come in a range of capacities, from 2 to 100 feet. The cheapest satellite dish you can purchase in the northern part of the country is US$200 and the most expensive one in Vientiane is US$ 2,000 while the Direct To Home (DTH) service is US$300 per year. Satellite programs that can be captured by personal dishes are: Star TV, Star Movie, CNN, MTV, CNBC, Channel V, Discovery, Animal Planet, HBO, UBC, Super Sports, ESPN, CINEMAX ... to name a few of the more popular programs.

Data on TV Stations in the Lao PDR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Station Name</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>TV Set</th>
<th>Sat.Dish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital City</td>
<td>Lao Nat TV</td>
<td>5kw</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>2,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lao TV 3</td>
<td>10kw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phongsaly</td>
<td>Phongsaly</td>
<td>300kw</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luang Namtha</td>
<td>Luang Namtha</td>
<td>10W</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>1,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolaven</td>
<td>Bolaven</td>
<td>300W</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudomsay</td>
<td>Oudomsay</td>
<td>100W</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannakhet</td>
<td>Savannakhet</td>
<td>300W</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>10W</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>1,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiengkhouang</td>
<td>Xiengkhouang</td>
<td>300W</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Present Status of Telecommunications in the Lao PDR

Since opening the Lao PDR to foreign direct investment, the Government has been cautious with licensing projects in sectors seen to have sensitive national security issues. Telecommunication was one such sector. Faced with such concern in a sector that while potentially lucrative, was also one that could be problematic if not closely controlled and monitored, the Government engaged in lengthy talks to negotiate a specific telecommunications project with a foreign investor in the Lao PDR. As a result, the Government negotiated an investment agreement to establish the Lao PDR's first privately operated national carrier operated by Lao Telecommunications ("Lao Telecom"). Lao Telecom is a joint venture between the Lao Government and Shinnawatra International of Thailand and enjoys a monopoly over telecommunications in the Lao PDR. The Lao nominees to senior management positions of Lao Telecom were drawn from Enterprise des Telecommunications, the former State enterprise telephone operator of the Lao PDR.

The joint venture comprises commitments from Shinnawatra to provide USD 400,000,000 of investment into the telecommunication sector in the Lao PDR over the next twenty (20) years.

Although the Lao Telecom monopoly effectively blocks other efforts in the telecommunications sector in the Lao PDR until the year 2000, there are other participants who engage in servicing, spare parts supplies, and installation. A list of those other participants in the telecommunications sector appears as Appendix B hereto.

V. Description of Laws, Rules, Regulations, Practices relating to Both National and International Communication in the Lao PDR

Since opening its doors to foreign direct investment in 1988 and opening up access to its telecommunications sector, the Lao PDR has yet to adopt a comprehensive law or set of regulations relative to communications or telecommunications. As communications and telecommunications investments and technology have developed, however, the Government has begun to take steps toward regulating what it deems to be specific areas that require immediate attention. Because the Government lacks the human resources to allocate to regulation of the communications and telecommunications sector, the regulations that are adopted are a signal to sector participants of the Government's priorities in that sector.
To this end, this section provides an overview of the existing domestic and international communications and telecommunications regulatory scheme for the Lao PDR. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of all legal documents cited in this section are attached herewith in Appendix A.

A. Regulatory Regime

1. General
Administratively, the Lao PDR is divided into Vientiane municipality (a province cum capitol city) and sixteen (16) provinces. Next and subordinate to this level is are districts (3 to 13 per province, with an average of 6), and villages (about 100 per district and some 11,500 in the entire country). There is also a sub-district level. The average population size of provinces is 230,000 while for districts it is 36,000, and for villages it is approximately 300-400 (40-70 households).

After being involved in the Indochina War, on 2 December 1975, a unified country was proclaimed under the name the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. The change of regime led to major shifts in Government organization as well as in personnel and policy. On 14 August 1991, the People’s Supreme Assembly of the Lao PDR adopted the first constitution effective in the country since 1975. The Constitution describes the governing authorities of the country, most notably, the National Assembly (elected by the Lao citizenry), the President of the Republic (elected by the National Assembly), and the executive Government headed by the Prime Minister (appointed by the President). Political power rests with the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party. The Party’s Political Bureau (Politburo) and Central Committee are the policy-making organs, with their decisions ratified by Party Congresses held at 4-5 year intervals. The Sixth Party Congress was held in March 1996. Most Government Ministers are Party Central Committee members.

Four (4) public organizations play an important role in conveying the Party’s directives and policies, and the Government’s regulations and laws, and in involving people in the political life of the nation. These four (4) organizations are: the Lao Front for National Construction, the Lao People’s Revolutionary Youth Union, the Lao Women’s Union and the Lao Federation of Trade Unions.

2. Telecommunications Regulatory Regime
The telecommunications regulatory regime in the Lao PDR is divided among three (3) ministries and one (1) agency, the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction, the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of Interior, and the Science Technology and Environment Organization (hereinafter all referred to collectively as ministries). Those ministries are each assigned certain regulatory responsibilities relative to defined parts of the communications and telecommunications sector. This section provides a general description of each of the ministries involved in regulating the telecommunications sector.

The communication regulatory regime for print and broadcast media is governed specifically and exclusively by the Ministry of Information and Culture and is further discussed below in point 2.
1. **Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction ("MCTPC")**

The lead ministry for these purposes is, both at law and in practice, the largest ministry of the Lao PDR, the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction. The MCTPC is the largest and consequently the most powerful ministry of the Lao Government in respect of the telecommunications sector. To demonstrate the width and breadth of the MCTPC, following is list of some of the powers entrusted to it:

- complying with the directives and the policies of the Party and the Government relative to communication, transportation, posts, and construction works to regularize such into a regime for later promulgation into regulations and laws to administer its sector.
- researching strategies to compile work development plans for communication, transportation, posts, and construction works throughout the country.
- researching and finding domestic and foreign funding sources to improve and expand communication, transportation, posts and construction works according to the Government's plan.
- administering and monitoring the application of the budget in its sector throughout the country.
- inspecting and reviewing works of the undertakings of technical units and grassroots production-business units in its sector based upon rules, regulations, laws, standards, and economic and technical indicators as issued by the State.
- administering communication, transportation, posts, and construction, registering equipment, vehicles and machinery in its sector throughout the country.
- managing the building and training and disciplining of employees in its own sector.
- administering schools and institutions in the sector.
- to improve, establish or terminate its own structural mechanism subject to its own administrative authority when necessitated by its political duties.
- to promulgate, instruct, and notify regarding regulations, rules, and various measures relative to its technical expertise to all State, international, and private agencies for application.
- to appoint, promote, move, reward, punish, dismiss employees subject to its administrative rights.
- to co-ordinate with all State, international and private agencies to together execute policies, decrees, and orders of the Government.
- to regularly conduct comprehensive inspections and work inspections of its sectors and fine and sue offenders of rules and regulations and regulations issued by the sector.
- to contact, negotiate, and sign contracts, sub-contracts, and binding obligations with foreign parties and international agencies with the approval of the Government.
- to negotiate and sign agreements and make binding obligations with economic units both domestically and abroad.
- to approve the establishment and termination of business units in its sector.
• to approve payments a budget in its sector as proposed by the Government to
the National Assembly for adoption.  

2. **Ministry of Information and Culture ("MIC")**

The MIC's rights and duties are generally limited to information, culture, and political
issues. It is by decree, the mouthpiece of the Party and the State. Accordingly,
along with conventional bureaucratic rights and duties, MIC also has the right to
monitor and inspect propaganda and the dissemination of ideology and politics
throughout the country.  

The MIC, although given authority to impose content restriction on information
obtained via the internet, has exclusive domain of conventional print and broadcast
media. To this end, it is important to note that the most important document guiding
the MIC and development of this sector is a Resolution by the Politburo of the Lao
People's Revolutionary Party to Increase Party Leadership in and State Control of
the Mass Media in the New Era. Although at its adoption in 1993, no one could have
predicted the incredible growth of the worldwide web and information technologies,
and hence it is focused primarily on conventional media, it is nevertheless useful as
a policy statement on the development of the mass media (and the internet by
extension) in the Lao PDR. An unofficial translation of the Resolution is attached in
Appendix A.

3. **Science Technology and Environment Organization ("STENO")**.

As an organization under the full authority of the Office of the Prime Minister, the
Science, Technology, and Environment Organization has a list of rights and duties
that are generally limited to issues regarding technical and scientific matters rather
than matters of culture or politics. Accordingly, along with conventional bureaucratic
rights and duties, STENO also has the right to negotiate and conclude contracts with
foreign parties, issue rules and regulations covering its sector, and to hire and use
experts as it may require.  

4. **Ministry of the Interior ("Mol")**

There is no available documentation establishing the Mol. It is, however, the
undisputed enforcer of laws in the Lao PDR and it manages the police force in the
Lao PDR at all levels of government, from the village to the central government. The
specific authorities granted to the Mol regarding telecommunications are most
readily identified in the available legislation regarding the internet as discussed

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2 Selected from Decree No. 07/PM on the Establishment of the Ministry of Communication Transportation, Posts, and Construction, 29 January 1993 ("Decree No. 07").

3 Decree No. 71/PM on the Establishment of the Ministry of Information and Culture, 5 May 1993 ("Decree No. 71").

4 Decree No. 63/PM on the Organization of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization, 10 April 1993 ("Decree No. 63").
below in the section regarding national legislation.

B. National Legislation

Although there is no specific legislation relative to telecommunications in the Lao PDR, practice since 1975 has been based upon Party policy as interpreted and applied by the MCTPC and other relevant organizations. Consequently, as mentioned above, the MCTPC is the controlling ministry with respect to telecommunications and the regulations issued by the MCTPC comprise all the existing regulations on telecommunications.

Relative to communications and mass media, practice derived from the application of Party policies as interpreted by various decrees and regulations has served as a basis for the development of communications and mass media regulation.

What follows in this section is a brief overview of the relevant practice or regulation(s) governing telecommunications, satellite transmissions, the internet, the mass media, copyright, defamation, hate speech, obscenity, and fraud.

1. Telecommunications

As mentioned above, telecommunications is operated by a joint venture monopoly between the Lao Government and Thai investors. Although currently under a Government-sanctioned monopoly, the telecommunications sector is expected to open to private investment by the year 2000. Presently, the only other participants in the telecommunications sector are involved in activities limited to those appearing in Annex B.

2. Satellite Transmissions

The Lao PDR does not have satellite transmission capability. The Lao PDR does receive, however, satellite transmissions of broadcast programming. To this end, the MIC issues licenses to persons or organizations in the Lao PDR who install satellite dishes for receiving television satellite signals. At present, there are approximately seven (7) companies authorized to install and service satellite dishes installed to receive satellite transmissions. The satellite transmissions currently received in the Lao PDR are broadcast by UBC of Thailand. The programming transmitted by UBC of Thailand consists of well known programs such as HBO, Cinemax, Discovery, Animal Planet, Hallmark, ESPN, BBC, CNN, CNBC, etc.

By regulation, the MIC also requires that the owner of the satellite or the person receiving the satellite transmission be similarly licensed, however, the MIC is not actively enforcing this requirement to date.

There is scattered use of global satellite communications technology by projects in remote areas. Approvals for such communications hardware are issued by MCTPC.
The Lao PDR is in the midst of organizing the finance and launch of its own satellite, Lao Star, which will occupy a geo-stationary orbit and which will have a footprint covering all of Southeast Asia, parts of eastern India and southern China, covering a consumer population of approximately 200,000 (two hundred million). The launch of Lao Star is expected some time late 1998 or early 1999. The earth station located in Vientiane has been completed. Operation of Lao Star will require three (3) earth stations, located in Laos, Thailand, and Australia.

3. Internet

The internet was initially approved by a Decree of the Prime Minister in late 1997. Before the internet was officially sanctioned by the Lao Government, local subscribers connected to the internet via Thailand through such internet providers as Loxley, KSC, and IBM, to name a few of the more popular services for subscribers resident in the Lao PDR. Although such connections were viewed by the Government as being illegal, the MCTPC did institute a registration system in which it called for subscribers to foreign services to register their use with the MCTPC. No warnings, fines, or prosecutions are known to have occurred either before the registration process or after the registration process was instituted.

After the Decree acknowledging and approving domestic internet service was adopted, later regulations were promulgated by the various ministries and one agency to control both information and hardware involved in internet services. The Decree and subsequent regulations are listed with brief descriptions below:


This Decree is the starting point for internet approval in the Lao PDR. The Decree established that the MCTPC would be the central administrative center to control internet services in Vientiane, the capital city. The Decree then goes on to appoint the MIC as the entity with authority to control the content of information derived via the internet. STENO was appointed to oversee the hardware requirements and registration. Finally, the Ministry of Interior was mentioned in the Decree as the point ministry to coordinate enforcement and inspection of information via the internet.

Besides establishing an administrative hierarchy among the ministries concerned, the Decree created a statutory basis upon which private investors could participate as internet service providers.

The Provisions issued by STENO focus upon the capacity of computer hardware and consequently requires registration of such hardware with STENO. These Provisions are significant in that they incorporate computer standards regulations issued by STENO in 1997.


The Provisions issued by MIC are specific to content controls. Although these Provisions require that applicants seeking to be internet service providers request prior approval for content, it is unclear exactly what content would be unacceptable. Additionally, providers may be wary of a clause requiring that internet service providers be completely responsible for any information to which they provide subscribers access.


The Provisions issued by the MCTPC are the most detailed of all of the regulations issued pursuant to Decree 166 and focus primarily on the private internet service provider. The Provisions are relatively specific regarding applications, documentation required in the application and the MCTPC's approval period.

4. Mass Media

Although there currently exists no law on the mass media, because of the Resolution of the Politburo referenced above, the Lao Government, and in particular the MIC, has made development of the mass media a priority. Accordingly, the Lao Government has determined that a mass media law should be adopted before year 2000. Although a mass media law is part of the schedule of laws that should be adopted, due to demands from other sectors for other pressing legislation, no current draft of a mass media law exists. Thus, the MIC has, on its own initiative, drafted a Decree on the Mass Media. An English translation of that Draft Decree is attached in Appendix A to this Report. The Decree largely reflects the Resolution of the Politburo referenced above.

In practice, editors-in-chief, tv station managers and heads of other mass media organizations are deemed to have full and final responsibility for all substance. This practice has evolved based upon the position and policies of the Party as stated from time to time and as embodied in various regulations discussed herein.
5. **Copyright**

The Lao PDR currently has no regulations regarding copyright protection. It has been the practice of the MIC, however, to entertain claims of authorship infringement and the like and STENO is currently considering a copyright protection decree. Nevertheless, MIC publishes no officially documented accounts of claims of authorship infringement or copyright violations. Although there is a system whereby an author who requests approval to publish in the Lao PDR can receive a publication number, there is as yet no mechanism by which an author may register a copyright for that work to protect it against infringement.

6. **Defamation and Hate Speech**

The Lao Penal Code allows for general claims of defamation and insulting language, whether verbal or in writing. The specific provisions of the Penal Code are embodied in two articles that read as follows (no translation of the Penal Code is attached in Appendix A):

**Article 87: Slander and Libel**

Any individual causing a serious loss of reputation to another person, verbally or in writing, or by other means, shall be punished by deprivation of personal liberty [ranging] from three [(3)] months to one [(1)] year or shall have imposed upon them corrective measures without the deprivation of personal liberty or shall be fined [a penalty ranging] from 5,000 to 10,000 Kip.

Any individual causing a serious loss of reputation to another person by means of the untruthful slander of another, verbally or writing, or by other means, shall be punished by deprivation of personal liberty [ranging] from three [(3)] months to one [(1)] year or shall have imposed upon them corrective measures without the deprivation of personal liberty or shall be fined [a penalty ranging] from 5,000 to 10,000 Kip.

**Article 88: Invectives [Affronts]**

Any individual who speaks, writes, or behaves coarsely toward another in order to seriously damage [that person's] reputation causing a serious loss of reputation to another person shall be punished by deprivation of personal liberty [ranging] from three [(3)] months to one [(1)] year or shall have imposed upon them corrective measures without the deprivation of personal liberty or shall be fined [a penalty ranging] from 5,000 to 10,000 Kip.

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5 Penal Code, No. 29/PSA, 23 November 1989, Unofficial English translation supplied by Dirksen Flipse Doran & Lê
There have been cases filed in Lao courts seeking damages for slander and affronts. Of the claims filed, awards have known to have been granted within the limits of the damages provided for by law. Little is known regarding the actual details of these cases as court opinions are not published and available to the public.

7. **Obscenity**

The only published guidelines on obscenity are provided for in the following regulations. The specific provisions relative to obscenity are reproduced below (no translation of either of the following documents is attached in Appendix A).

a. **Temporary Provisions of the Council of Ministers No. 45/CM, on REGULATING PUBLISHING, PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER IN THE LAO PDR, 20/10/1987**

These Temporary Provisions are not considered entirely applicable to the current circumstances of the Lao PDR. Within these Temporary Provisions are several articles that make reference to restricted material without detailing that restricted material. The restricted material is indicated in more detail in the following document.

b. **LIST OF BOOKS AND PRINTED MATERIALS WHICH ARE [EITHER] AUTHORIZED [OR] PROHIBITED FROM BEING IMPORTED AND DISTRIBUTED IN THE LAO PDR, No. 1015/IC**

   II. **Material prohibited for import**

   4. **Books and magazines regarding sexual relationships, and [demonstrating] a degenerate mentality [or] life-style, lacking moral, decorum and human [dignity].**

   5. **Photographs of nude women and men simulating sexual intercourse and [other] pornographic photographs.**

8. **Fraud**

The only provisions relative to fraud in the Penal Code are specific to defrauding the State of its property or collective property, that is property belonging to the public. There are no provisions in the Penal Code that provide punishment to private persons for perpetrating fraud against another private person. That article reads as follows:

**Article 100: Defrauding [the] State or Collective [of] Property**

Any individual opportunistically using trust to steal, divest, or transform State or cooperative assets in respect of which such individual has been assigned responsibility to maintain, transport, build, repair, or do
any work [regarding such assets], shall be punished by the deprivation of personal liberty [ranging] from six [(6)] months to three [(3)] years.

If the offender habitually defrauds assets, is organized as a group, or in case there are severe losses, the offender shall be punished by the deprivation of personal liberty from three [(3)] to seven [(7)] years.

Attempts to cause the commission of the offense shall [also] be punished.  

C. International Agreements and Issues relative to Telecommunications

1. Agreement on Trade and Investment Protection with the United States of America

The Agreement on Trade and Investment Protection ("Agreement") between the Lao PDR and the United States of America was initialed in 1997 by H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR, Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad and Secretary of State of the United States of America, Madame Albright. Although in the Lao PDR, the Agreement would prove to be an effective and binding document without further domestic legislation, the Congress of the United States of America would have to adopt the Agreement as law before it would be binding between the Lao PDR and the United States of America. The most significant benefit expected to arise from the effectiveness of the Agreement would be the extension to the Lao PDR by the United States of America of Most Favored Nation ("MFN") trading status. With this trading status, virtually all of the high tariffs imposed on Lao goods exported to the United States of America would drop dramatically. Telecommunications would not be significantly affected in the short or medium term due to the adoption of the Agreement or the granting of MFN.

Presently, the granting of MFN has been delayed although supporters in the Lao PDR are putting forth great efforts to encourage the adoption of the Agreement.

2. Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights ("TRIPS")

The Lao PDR is not a member of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs ("GATT") of which TRIPS is a part. To that end, the Lao PDR is not presently bound by and does not recognize TRIPS. This will, however, change with the conclusion of the Agreement on Trade and Investment Protection with the United States of America and the granting of MFN to the Lao PDR.

3. Unsolicited or Unlicensed Multinational Satellite Broadcasting into Lao Air Space

To date, the only regulations restricting, regulating or limiting multinational satellite broadcasting into Lao air space is effected through the regulation of the installation of

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6 Penal Code, No. 29/PSA, 23 November 1989, Unofficial English translation supplied by Dirksen Flipse Doran & Lê
of satellites and receivers as discussed above in Section B(2). There are no publicly known provisions regulating these matters.

VI. Future Plans for the Development of Mass Media Communication Facilities in the Lao PDR

The national telecommunications systems of the country is still in the process of development. The main centers of population, however, are connected to the capitol for telecommunications and news agency operations. KPL, the national news service, utilizes HF/computer systems to gather and disseminate news in some of the provincial centers.

When launching the Lao PDR's five-year plan in 1996, the Government emphasized the need for upgrading and expanding the national communication infrastructure in all fields related to print media, radio and television broadcasting. It is recognized that such expansion would largely concern the updating of information technologies and the training of communication personnel in order to achieve the national goals. At the moment, the training facilities are inadequate and cannot cope with the growing needs. For example, it is envisaged that by the year 2005, the number of people employed by the Lao TV networks will rise from the present 300 to 500, while numbers in radio broadcasting will increase from 400 to 600. With regard to the print media, KPL, newspapers and magazines need to improve technical quality and broaden their scope by thorough training and the addition of new expertise.

With training at the national level conducted in the local language, it is agreed that the best way to proceed is for Laos to set up its own National Communication Development to enable media personnel to raise the level of their professional competence. At the same time, this facility will make it possible for new entrants to obtain basic skills before joining the communication media professions. This action is aimed at gaining a measure of self-sufficiency in the field of tertiary communication training and development and to reduce the dependence on foreign institutions that offer training in languages other than Lao.
VII. Appendices
Appendix A. List of Legal Documents Attached
(Unofficial English Translations Only)


2. Decree No. 07/PM of the Prime Minister on the ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION TRANSPORTATION, POSTS, AND CONSTRUCTION, 29 January 1993 ("Decree No. 07").

3. Decree No. 63/PM of the Prime Minister on the ORGANIZATION OF THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND ENVIRONMENT ORGANIZATION, 10 April 1993 ("Decree No. 63").


5. Decree No. 71/PM of the Prime Minister on the ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, 5 May 1998.


Resolution

from the

Politburo

regarding

INCREASING PARTY LEADERSHIP IN, AND STATE CONTROL OF, THE MASS MEDIA IN THE NEW ERA

Department of Mass Media
1996
Foreword

Providing for the demands of mass media, both generally and specifically, are those who propagandize and dispatch news. On 19 June 1993, the Politburo promulgated Resolution No. 36/Polit.

This Resolution No. 36/Polit. is the first for the Lao PDR, and is comprised of 4 large sections. The purpose of this Resolution is to provide the mass media with a path for the New Changes. Important are the substance and the essence of this Resolution in that they reflect the circumstances of past media activities, our views relative to the media, certain tasks that must be attended to in instructing and controlling the media in the short term and in the long term, and implementation.

Therefore, it is necessary for each sector that conducts propaganda and informational work throughout the country to attend to, study, and profoundly absorb the views and the directions of the work and the implementation standards provided for in this Resolution.
A Remark from the Publisher

To organize, propagate, and disseminate [this] to cadres who work in propaganda and information so that they can properly absorb and implement [this Resolution].

The Mass Media Department attached to the Ministry of Information and Culture has printed this Resolution No 36/Polit. regarding Increasing Party Leadership in, and State Control of, the Mass Media in the New Era as a book to facilitate research and actual implementation, particularly for those who do work in propaganda and in information who should possess one as a handbook.

We hope that this book will become an important handbook for your propaganda and information work [and may all your tasks] blossom and bear fruit.

Department of Mass Media
The Ministry of Information and Culture
**Unofficial Translation**

Not Intended for Further Distribution or Sale.

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Resolution of the Politburo regarding Increasing Party Leadership in, and State Control of, the Mass media in the New Era

To propagate the Resolutions adopted in the Fifth Party Congress relative to improving the training features, the tenacious features, and the actual features of ideological tasks, such as improving and enhancing the quality of propaganda to meet the demands of this New Era as a swift and keen vehicle, timely disseminating Party and State policies, fostering a unified national spirit, solidarity and harmony, mobilizing patriotism and confidence in the Party's leadership, creating an awareness of the laws of our country, forfeiting one's knowledge and interests, constructing an abiding and proper knowledge of the national legacy and heritage and of the Party, having a highly developed sense of self-protectiveness, without bowing to debilitating fear in the face of a multitude of trials and difficulties, be firmly resolute in all circumstances, foster moral attributes and stoke revolutionary ambition, [promote] loyalty, honesty and pureness of heart for the sake of the national interest and to resist all weakness,

The Politburo issues this Resolution relative to Increasing Party Leadership in, and State Control of, the Mass Media in the New Era:

I. Background of Mass Media Activities
Throughout the thirty years of liberating leadership, in the struggle for the people's freedom and independence, in ten plus years of the New Regime's duties to preserve and build this Nation, our Party has always believed that propaganda, training, quests [for knowledge], and mass [people's] organizations are strategic issues. This includes the mass media, a keen weapon, diligently contributing to the overall revolutionary victory on occasion.

Our mass media originated as revolutionary newspapers in the people's struggle and grew along with the triumph of the revolution and has grown to be the most important link between the Party and the people, bringing doctrine, revolutionary ideology, policies and pathways of the Party to the people, while also bringing the opinions, wishes, and desires of the people to the Party. After the IVth Party Congress and the upcoming Vth Party Congress, our mass media has experienced progress in disseminating the New Changes, the Party's New Thinking [Chintanakan Mai], has imparted knowledge from the New Mechanism and new methodologies while also contributing to the organization, propagandizing, mobilization of, alerting, and encouraging Party cadres and members, warriors, and other people to participate in implementing the Party's New Changes, in commending those who are models of work productivity and outstanding personal behavior, and by highlighting the elements and new experiences arising from the movement, and the labors of and lessons from the public.

-The mass media has made efforts to increase the variety and flavor of the information [they impart], primarily taking constructive public opinions that reflect actual societal circumstances, their proposals, and then disseminating such, progressively freeing our mass media from being partial, responding to some of the people's demands clearly making the mass media the speaker for the Party as well as a forum for the people.
In the face of profound and complex changes in world circumstances, the mass media has been active in timely reporting on events, reporting on the cause and the circumstances, making cadres and Party members, as well as peoples at various levels, have proper knowledge to reference for the proper undertaking of their activities in conformity with our Party's views. In addition, [the mass media] has responded to the times as reflected in society and has peacefully diverted forces opposing our country; mobilizing solidarity and understanding, public confidence in the leadership of the Party, in one's own strength, continue to resolutely effect the New Changes; protect political stability and social order in our country.

Rank and file civil servants working in the mass media have grown in number and in quality, many reporters have unwavering political views, have responded quickly to circumstances, are skilled in their discipline, have received the public trust, rank and file cub reporters have emerged and have expanded their awareness and capacity to conform to the tasks of the New Changes of our country as well as to the mass media itself.

Coupled with the good points and diligence, the mass media still has some weak points and is deficient in many aspects, i.e:

Our mass media has yet to receive broad popularity because the quality and the content [of the news] is not yet good, it does not yet attract interest and has not yet provided readers, viewers, or listeners with the benefits that they should receive, primarily, the benefit of receiving news and information, scientific or technological knowledge, edification, or other things.

-Displays of the actual conditions of social life is still not wide ranging, the search for new elements, promoting good people who produce excellent work product, good experiences that have arisen in the actual workings of the public is still not good, is sporadic, experiences relative to these issues is not deep, and only good things are said, and weaknesses or outstanding matters are not addressed, [and] the causes and means of resolving those problems are not pinpointed. Receiving public criticism and constructive criticism and then incorporating that into the mass media is still little done. Reporting from time to time lacks a sense of carefulness, causing the disclosures of secret strategies. Reporting on some international issues is still not in conformity with the Party's views and policy plans, the research of news from foreign newspapers lacks definitive discrimination and weighing before [such is subsequently] reported.

-Our instruction and control has yet to create appropriate conditions to allow the mass media to undertake it activities in a regular manner [or] to achieve a certain level of quality. The Party Committee, leading committees of sectors and organizations in many areas have not concerned themselves with the mass media, and have allowed the head of the mass media bureaus to make all decisions by themselves. There have been certain places, and at certain times, that technicians have conducted strict and penetrating inspections of minutiae, imposing many strict measures that restricted a person's ability to be their own taskmaster and [consequently] the responsibility of the head of the mass media agency. Funds and means [and] tools used in the mass media have not been used to their maximum potential.

-The relevant agencies have not given their full attention to the building up and the strengthening of their own rank and file civil servants. Therefore, some of the civil servants who perform these tasks have many weaknesses, are still not their own taskmasters in resolving various problems, such as in performing their own duties, [and consequently] cannot improve the quality of our mass media to correspond to the accelerating political demands of our New Era.
II. Our Views on the Mass Media

Our mass media vehicles are political tools and ideological tools for political organizations of which the Party is pivotal and is comprised of: newspapers, magazines, informational sheets, broadcast frequencies, television programs, and audio and visual programs performed by various means.

In our continuing obligation to build and expand the people's democratic regime as well as to the comprehensive obligations of the New Changes that incorporate our principles, mass media vehicles have important roles in building-up solidarity and harmony, in propaganda, in mobilizing and encouraging the socio-economic development of our country, transforming the natural economy into a goods-based economy, political and ideological training, building qualities of steadfastness and confidence in the ideals and the leadership of the Party, in encouraging and mobilizing the people, in fulfilling duties of national defense and peace-keeping, in propagandizing to attract cooperation and foreign assistance and foreign investment, as well as propagating democracy and in resisting weaknesses and other things that may arise.

For these reasons, our mass media must have the qualities of assertiveness, educators, teachers of the public and be genuine.

In order that the mass media play that role and these qualities, the leadership, instruction and control of the mass media must profoundly absorb and grasp the following views:

1)- The Mass Media are a Keen Tool of Our Party and State
In propagandizing and disseminating the Party's path, policy plans, policies, and State laws and regulations, in the educating and training of the public in politics or ideology, in mobilizing and encouraging them to contribute to the twofold strategy of the continuing obligation to build and expand the people's democratic regime and to build up the basic elements of progressively moving toward Socialism.

2)- The Mass Media is a Public Forum, the Primary Tie that Binds the People to the Party
In addition to being a vehicle, the mass media is a tool to bring ideology and the path, and Party views to the public, while also being a public forum to reflect public opinion, constructive views relative to Party leadership and State control. That is to say, it is a forum in which to expand democracy and the rights of the people to be genuine masters of their own country, bringing the Party and public closer and closer together. If we want to do this, we must ensure the public's right to receive news and their right to dispatch information.

3)- The Mass Media Must Vary and Must Consist of a Wealth of Content
The mass media must build up its popularity and its attractiveness by providing direct or indirect benefits to readers, listeners or viewers. Therefore, there must be a variety conforming to people's tastes and needs, with a wealth of substance providing information and news, knowledge, features and entertainment in addition to educating, organizing, and mobilizing the people.

4)- Agencies, Sectors, Leading Cadres of the Party and the State at Various Levels have the Responsibility and Must Attend to Instructing the Mass Media and, assisting the mass media. The mass media fulfills the duty of serving the Party and the State and all of the people. Therefore, agencies and sectors of the Party and the State, leading cadres at various levels shall have the duty and the responsibility to instruct and assist the media to enable it to properly fulfill its duties and to always be more productive.

5)- An Appropriate Policy toward the Mass Media.
Against the background of our transition to a New Mechanism, there should be a proper understanding of the mass media. On the one hand, we should acknowledge that whether with a regime or under the conditions of any mechanism, it is necessary to have a mass media to provide for the spiritual needs of the people. Therefore, there should be funding at a level necessary to ensure regular and [to ensure a certain level of] quality undertakings by the mass media for all of society. From yet another perspective, the mass media must search for and find ways and means to transform itself to create revenue providing for some of its expenses by mobilizing contributions from the public and from other economic sectors (those that are able and authorized) in order to decrease the mass media’s budgetary burden on the State, but the mass media should not fulfill its duties [in the same manner] as a business [would as this would] dilute its role to educate and mobilize, [and such business behavior would render it and its] undertakings inconsistent with its purpose and objective to serve politics.

III. Certain Tasks that Must be Attended to in Instructing and Controlling the Mass Media for the Immediate Future and for the Long Term

Instructing and controlling the mass media are important tasks in our Party’s leadership and State control. Therefore, the Party Committee, leading committees at various levels, and in various sectors must attend to leading, instructing, and controlling the mass media in order that it properly perform according to the ideological direction of the mass media, specifically the 6 Principles and the 6 Protests provided for in the Resolution of the 8th Meeting (4th Ordinary) of the Party Administrative Committee, the Resolution of the 5th party Congress, resolutions, notifications from the central levels and from the Politburo, laws, decrees and other policies of the State, with particular focus on the following tasks:

1. Propaganda and Training the Mass Media

Attend to:
+Widely, profoundly, and in detail propagandize and disseminate each aspect of the path and policies of the Party and the State throughout the Party and the populace for all to know and understand such, while also explaining and informing them of the means to implement and coordinate with other relevant agencies and sectors.

+Promote solidarity and patriotic understanding, love the democratic regime, [have the] independent spirit of self-mastery [and] self-reliance by increasing one’s knowledge of the national heritage [and] of the revolution, propagate victory and success achieved by applying the pathways of the New Changes. Simultaneously [one should] exhibit [one’s] ability and exhibit new opportunities for the country’s progress, such as trials and difficulties, to decisively overcome and take responsibility for, encourage and promote production, industrious creativity, frugal, [and] in meeting one’s obligations toward the Nation and in other matters.

+Increase substance in the mass media making it abundant with more variety to interest people to make them want to read, view, and listen to the propaganda and dissemination of data, news, and other beneficial knowledge, while also providing conforming entertainment. Increase the features of constructive criticism, promote good and beneficial behavior for the public by propagandizing proper feelings and a proper view of the path in loyally and honestly fulfilling one’s duties; resist bribery, the abuse of one’s position for personal gain and other weaknesses; promote the awareness and adherence to law, fairness, justice, and create good and brilliance in rank and file civil servants, Party members, and among the people.

+As a keen vehicle on the front lines of political ideology, the mass media must always, promptly, and adroitly oppose [our] enemies’ psychological warfare and trickery [now altered] by peace, not only by responding to the style of propaganda that distorts our policy
directions or defames our Party and State, but [the mass media] must also be the taskmaster in preempting [such activities] by actively leading the voice of the people, maintaining political stability [and] social order, maintaining independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, [and] protecting the national interest and those of Lao citizens.

+For the near future, relevant agencies should research and issue decrees or provisions relative to the mass media as a legal reference point for advising and controlling the mass media so that its activities will comply with the path, primarily provisions relative to rights and duties and responsibilities of the mass media; provisions regarding the establishment and the activities of mass media agencies; rules controlling reporters (both domestically [Lao] and abroad [foreign]) and other matters.

+Establish a mass media policy regime to create conditions to facilitate regular activities by [the mass media] such as: a policy to contribute initial working capital; a policy for a minimum discounted price for newspaper distribution; a policy to subsidize and promote the [taking of] responsibility by mass media rank and file personnel.

+Rules relative to goods advertising and other services [provided] by the mass media.

+Provisions regarding copyrights on goods and news, the mass media, and culture.

3). Investing, Upgrading and Building Up a Foundation of Materials and Technical [Requirements]
+In addition to the budget already supplied by the State, mass media agencies must seek means to mobilize additional funding sources by appropriate means from the public and from other economic sectors, vie for foreign assistance and cooperation, and from other international agencies to upgrade and expand the material and technical foundation. Simultaneously, [the mass media should] establish a regulatory regime for the more efficient use of what exists presently, and preventing the loss of [current resources].

+Increase radio broadcasting strength so that such can be heard in all parts of the country, improve existing stations for regular operations with better programming; expand television broadcasting stations to some additional provinces.

+Increase the volume of publications to improve the speed of and guarantee the dispatching [of publications] to their destinations.

4). Upgrading Mechanisms and Building Up Personnel
+First and foremost, the mechanism for advising and controlling the mass media must be upgraded (propagandizing and training, the Ministry of Information and Culture) to give it the capacity to advise and facilitate its control of the mass media throughout the country in a self-disciplined and efficient manner to ensure the firm Party leadership of, and State control of, the mass media.

+Strengthen, build, and re-train all types of civil servants in methodology that is suitable to enhancing stalwart qualities and a systematized knowledge of the policy path, the economic mechanism, [and] laws and provisions already promulgated by the State; progressively enhance the level of professionalism; give special attention to building loyalty, a patriotic and nationalistic spirit [conducive to] self-mastery and responsibility toward one's work that is becoming of a warrior in the front lines of the ideological and cultural battlefield.

IV. Implementation
IV. Implementation

To implement this Resolution so that it yields genuine results, the Politburo assigns responsibility to relevant agencies and sectors as follows:

1) The Central Propaganda and Training Committee is assigned as the central logistical agency for ideological tasks. [It is to] draft plans and advise regarding the thorough and profound dissemination of this Resolution within the community of civil servants who do information works, civil servants permanently posted at the provincial and ministerial levels [and] in particular, sectors and localities that have newspapers, radios and televisions.

- Regularly coordinate with the Ministry of Information and Culture, advise regarding the activities of mass media agencies.

- Advise schools and centers for the upgrading of mass media personnel in projects, courses, curricula, inspect and organize the implementation of such course projects. Attend to the building up of all types of personnel so that they can contribute to mass media agencies throughout the country.

2) The leading committee of the Ministry of Information and Culture is assigned to establish projects and plans to expand the obligations of the mass media, plans to contribute technical vehicles, investment plans, budgeting, projects to build up and upgrade personnel for the mass media.

- Research and draft laws, legal documents, policies, mass media regimes, documents regarding titles [or designations] and standards for reporters, advise in the implementation of policies, mass media-related plans, policies for investment and donations and [other] policies, [and] other regimes within this same [subject] area.

- Control the activities of mass media agencies throughout the country, communicate with relevant agencies to control the activities of foreign mass media in Laos.

- Research and draft plans to vie for assistance and cooperation from abroad and from other international organizations to upgrade and expand our mass media to be broad-ranging and to exhibit a high level of quality by ensuring our Party and State's principles of international communications and cooperation.

3) Party committees at various levels, leading committees of agencies, sectors and public organizations shall provide comprehensive advice and be directly responsible for, primarily for the political content, mass media activities under their supervision. The head of the host agency should demonstrate serious concern, establish a time to do work with the mass media, who are subject to their authority, listen to reports, inspect, advise regarding the fulfillment of [certain] ideals, purposes and provisions and rules regarding the mass media; encourage and promote, attend to upgrading and expanding a material and technical foundation [for the mass media]. Apply an appropriate policy regime to create conditions to facilitate the mass media enabling them to operate efficiently. Attend to and familiarize one's self with the personnel and appoint those who meet all standards, primarily political, cultural, and professional standards, as heads of mass media agencies.

- Leading committees at various levels, agencies, and sectors should employ a regimen of meeting the mass media to disclose policy news [and to disclose] their work plans via the mass media, to meet reporters, respond to what interests the public or supply data to ensure the correctness and accuracy [of the data] and to
enliven propaganda.

- From now on, requests to establish newspapers, [and] radio and television broadcasts must be project-based and [must consist of a] general plan, and must confirm to rules such as:

+ Clearly provide for an ideal, a purpose, a role, duties, [and] an objective in serving the distribution [or] broadcast areas, or other areas.

+ Have an agency head and rank and file reporters [and] an editor who meets all qualifications as established by the State.

+ Have sufficient financial conditions, [and] a material and technical foundation to ensure one's activities.

4) Mass media agencies must expand their important roles as primary links tying the people to the Party with their planned activities, with detailed projects from time to time, enhancing the spirit of responsibility and self-mastery in receiving news, selecting news, and dispatching news with substance and with an abundance of information benefiting the reader, viewer, and listener while also ensuring that such conforms the path and the views, policies and the stratagem of our Party and State; properly reflecting life and society's realities, primarily people's opinions toward the Party and the State's policy path, as well as the circumstances of our country.

- The mass media must go to and become intimate with the grassroots level, get in touch with that level and then show the realities of production, development, national defense and maintaining public order, including education and training, and preservation and expansion of the national culture, as well as those of ethnic minorities.

Increasing Party leadership and State control of the mass media is an important task of the obligations of the New Changes. Party committees at all levels, leading committees of agencies and sectors, particularly relevant agencies and sectors, must attend to, research, and profoundly absorb the views, the path of works and the implementation measures provided for in this Resolution to in turn promulgate such [in the form of] provisions, a regulatory regime, plans, and detailed project plans and for [subsequent] successful implementation.

Vientiane, Date 19 June 1993
Representing the Politburo
President of the Central Administrative Committee
[seal of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party]
[signature]
Khamthay Siphandone
Office of the Prime Minister

Decree

of the Prime Minister
regarding the Establishment of the Ministry of Communication Transportation, Posts, and Construction

Article 1: The Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts, and Construction is one of a number of central managing and administering agencies with a status equivalent to other ministries in the governmental mechanism, with the role as the logistics [coordinator] for the Central Party Committee and the Government in planning, arranging and administering communication, transportation, posts, and construction works throughout the country.

Part II
Regarding Duties

Article 2: The Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts, and Construction has the following duties:

1. Comply with the directives and the policies of the Party and the Government relative to communication, transportation, posts, and construction works so that such become a regularized regime, to [later] become regulations and laws in the administering of its own sector.

2. Research strategies and make work development plans for communication, transportation, posts, and construction works throughout the country.

3. Research and find domestic and foreign funding sources to improve and expand communication, transportation, posts and construction works according to the Government's plan.

4. Administer and monitor the application of the budget in its sector throughout the country.

5. Inspect and review works of the undertakings of technical units and grassroots production-business units in its sector based upon rules,
regulations, laws, standards, and economic and technical indicators as issued by the State.

6. Administer communication, transportation, posts, and construction, register equipment, vehicles and machinery in its sector throughout the country.

7. Manage the building and training and disciplining of employees in its own sector.

8. Administer schools and institutions in the sector.

Article 3: The Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts, and Construction has the following rights:

1. Improve, establish or terminate its own structural mechanism subject to its own administrative authority when necessitated by its political duties.

2. Promulgate, instruct, and notify regarding regulations, rules, and various measures relative to its technical expertise to all State, international, and private agencies for application.

3. Appoint, promote, move, reward, punish, dismiss employees subject to its administrative rights.

4. Co-ordinate with all State, international and private agencies to together execute policies, decrees, and orders of the Government.

5. Regularly conduct comprehensive inspections and work inspections of its sectors and fine and sue offenders of rules and regulations and regulations issued by the sector.

6. Contact, negotiate, and sign contracts, sub-contracts, and binding obligations with foreign parties and international agencies with the approval of the Government.

7. Negotiate and sign agreements and make binding obligations with economic units both domestically and abroad.

8. Approve the establishment and termination of business units in its sector.

9. Approve payments a budget in its sector as proposed by the Government to the National Assembly for adoption.

Chapter III
Regarding the Organizational Structure of the Leadership Mechanism

Article 4: Regarding the Organizational Structure
The organizational structure of the Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts, and Construction is as follows:

1. Bureau
2. Department of Organization
3. Department of Communication
4. Department of Transportation
5. Department of Posts and Telecommunication
6. Department of Buildings and City Planning
7. Department of Civil Aviation [moved to the Prime Minister's Office]

If it is deemed necessary, the Minister of the Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts, and Construction may establish a committee to assist in his works to inspect works in his sector, which shall be called the Inspection Committee for the Ministry comprised of relevant parties, who shall be skilled, experts, qualified persons in his sector.

Article 5: Regarding Policy Leadership
1. The ministerial leadership is comprised of one Minister who is appointed or dismissed by the President of the State based upon the nomination of the Prime Minister and adopted by the National Assembly.
2. The Minister is the chief of the ministry and is a member of the Government, is responsible for administering and organizing the directives and the policies of the Party and the State relative to communication, transportation, posts and construction works, be responsible for results and defects in his sector and to the Government.
3. The Minister is absolutely responsible throughout the sector, is the signatory of various documents on behalf of the ministry, is the person who communicates with the Government. In the case that he is absent or is conducting works far away, the Minister grants temporary rights to one vice minister.
4. Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts has one vice minister who is appointed or dismissed by the Prime Minister as the Minister's assistant in the administration and the implementation of the directives and the policies of the sector, while also being responsible for conducting various works according to an assignment from the Minister.

Article 6: Technical Leadership
1. Technical leadership is comprised of a bureau chief and deputy chief, department and deputy department heads who are appointed by the Minister based upon agreement with the Central Organizational Committee, the primary function being research and assisting the Minister and the vice minister in administering and implementing technical works, being responsible for results and damages.
2. The Government allows necessary divisions, technical organs and technical work units for each work under the responsibility of the office and various departments.

Article 7: Regarding Local Organization
1. The Ministry determines the structural organization of its sector at the local level in compliance with the special needs of each locality and by making the [provincial] division as the administrative and implementing unit, representing the ministry at the province and the prefecture.
2. The Minister appoints and removes employees at the division and deputy chief division at the provincial and prefectural level after having consulted and having
Article 8: Regarding Basic Duties of the Department of Administration and the Executive and the Technical Department are as follows:

1. The Bureau is the central executive office of the Ministry and is the central planning and logistics, economics, financial, and foreign relation for the Minister.

2. The organizational department has the duty to administer and build and train and place employees under the authority of the Ministry, to apply privileges to civil servants and pensioners, to be responsible for Party-strengthening works and issuing instructions for works to public organizations.

3. The Department of Communication has the principal duty to administer and improve and place employees under the authority of the Ministry, apply privileges to civil servants and pensioners, be responsible for Party-strengthening works and in supervising the works of public organizations.

4. The Department of Transportation has the principal duty to administer, improve and propagate the surface and water transportation system, draft short-term, medium-term and long-term strategic plans for transportation, research technical rules and regulations and determine indicators, list and register and issue surface and water transportation vehicle driving licenses throughout the entire country.

5. The Department of Posts and Telecommunications has the principal duty to administer, improve and extend the posts and telecommunications network, draft short-term, medium-term and long-term strategic plans, research rules, regulations and laws, and technical standards, administer radio communication frequencies, broadcasting, and television throughout the country.

6. The Department of Urban Planning has the principal duty to administer, improve, and extend urban planning works, draft short-term, medium-term and long-term strategic plans, research rules, regulations and laws, technical standards and indicators, promote Lao architecture in the construction of buildings throughout the country.

7. The Department of Civil Aviation has the principal duty to administer, improve and extend the aviation network, draft short-term, medium-term and long-term strategic plans, research rules, regulations, and laws and technical standards of civil aviation, ensure safety in air transport throughout the entire country.

The role, function, and the structure of the bureau and the departments will be determined by separate detailed documents.

Chapter IV
Regarding the Ministerial Work Regime and Methodology

Article 9: The Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction conducts works according to the following principles:
Works according to central principles of democracy; works as a team of friends, with individual responsibility, strictly implementing a single leader system;

2. Works under a plan, with a time schedule, with organization, with coordination, with regular monitoring and inspection, with a summary and evaluation and exchange of experiences.

3. Works via a division of administration, a detailed division of labor, with assignments of works accompanied by express rights and privileges, creating conditions for all persons to expand their creativity, to increase individual responsibilities [so that civil servants become confident and become] their own masters.

4. Weekly meeting and discussion of the leading committee of the Ministry with minutes of such meeting. Works which have been completed must be accompanied by official certifying documentation for reporting to the Government.

5. Three month and six month summaries and annual summaries for evaluations and exchange of experiences to continuously propagate good points.

Chapter V
Regarding Final Provisions

Article 10: The Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction as well as the Bureau and various departments have their own seals for use in their official duties.

Article 11: This Decree is effective from the date of its signature onwards and replaces Decree of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers number 35/CM, dated 05/06/90.

The Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction, ministries and equivalent agencies, provinces, the prefecture are to acknowledge and adhere to this Decree.

Vientiane 29 Jan 1993
Prime Minister
signed and sealed Khamthay Siphandone

Vientiane 21 April 1993
Chief of the Bureau of the Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction
(seal of the Bureau and signature)
Say Pa-ka-soom
Lao People Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Office of the Prime Minister

Decree
of the
Prime Minister
regarding the
Organization of the Science, Technology and Environment Organization

- Reference the Constitution of the Lao PDR;
- Reference Resolution No. 09/PSA, dated 7/7/1992 regarding the Approving a Project to Create a Governing Mechanism;
- Reference the Needs of Scientific, Technological and Environmental Development;

The Prime Minister issues this Decree:

Chapter I
Location and Duties

Article 1. Science, Technology, and Environment Organization, abbreviated as STENO is an agency under the aegis of the Office of the Prime Minister, with the role of being the logistical arm of the Government in researching and administering the use and development of science, technology and the environment.

Chapter II
Duties and Scope of Rights

Article 2. The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization has the following duties:

2.1 Research and propagate the directions, the policy plans and the policies of the Party and the Government to realize such in the form of plans, projects, provisions, regulations and law regarding science, technology and the environment to then propose such to higher authorities to promulgate or to itself promulgate such as so authorized.

2.2 Research, select or modify advanced international science and technology as appropriate to the actual circumstances of our country for national socio-economic development.

2.3 Organize, promote, create basic factors and other conditions for domestic scientific, technological and environmental research.

2.4 Inspect, on-site inspections, evaluate, give opinions and advice to units undertaking science and technology-related tasks (including standardization and metrology) and the environment. Organize the registration of scientific and technological research throughout the country.
2.5 Accept and consider the resolution of proposals, claims, and complaints from various parties and from the people regarding scientific and technological problems (including standardization and metrology) and the environment.

2.6 Organize scientific and technological dissemination and administration throughout the country. Research regulations to confirm and grant rewards to those who have inventive ideas, scientists, researchers . . . in science, technology and the environment.

2.7 Build and strengthen civil servants [involved in] science, technology and the environment throughout the country.

2.8 Communicate and cooperate with foreign and other international organizations to gain experiences, financial assistance and for scientific and technological exchanges according based upon Government issued regulations or as authorized by the Government.

2.9 Administer, make use of one’s own civil servants and ensure their benefits according to laws and regulations promulgated by the Government.

2.10 Organize the administration of plans, projects, financial budgets, materials and equipment, vehicle, etc., within its own sector.

2.11 Research and promulgate its own regulations and methodologies, primarily intra-agency administrative regulations, structure, organization, determine positions, the amount of benefits for permanent staff (excluding contract hires and those on daily rates) and others.

2.12 Monitor, encourage and provide conditions convenient to the implementation of work unit plans that are under its own control.

Article 3

The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization has the following scope of rights:

3.1 Cooperate with the sectors, localities, grass roots, and other parties concerned with research, scientific, technological, and environmental administration, and to collect data on natural resources to serve as a basis for research to draft plans; in the establishment of units conducting scientific, technological and environmental tasks in various the above sectors where deemed necessary.

3.2 Promulgate rules, provisions, instructions and convene conferences regarding scientific, technological and environmental works in conformity with its role.

3.3 Confirm and grant awards to those who have inventive ideas, scientists, researchers . . . in science, technology and the environment according to its authority.
3.4 Inspect, conduct on-site inspections, evaluate, warn, confirm and stop activities that have an adverse scientific, technological and environmental effect in conformity with its role.

3.5 Approve of the import of foreign technology for domestic use and propagation by various parties and sectors throughout the country according to its authority.

Inspect and pass various conditions regarding the environment and register technology before the establishment of factories and other activities.

3.6 Participate in and give opinions in Government and sectoral meetings relative to scientific, technological and environmental tasks as well as other tasks.

3.7 Cooperate to meet and negotiate and sign contracts, subcontracts, memoranda . . . with foreign [parties] and international organizations based on the laws and regulations of the Government.

3.8 Establish, dissolve, improve and enhance work units under one's authority.

3.9 Appoint, move, and dismiss, promote [persons] in positions, discipline and apply other policies to one's civil servants at various levels.

3.10 Hire experts or temporary labor when necessary and develop a scientific benefits fund to encourage civil servants and State workers who have inventive ideas.

3.11 Manage and use the technical revenue and budget authorized by the Government.

Chapter III
Leadership Mechanism, Mechanism to Assist with Tasks, and Organizational Structure

Article 4 Policy Direction Leadership.

4.1 The leadership of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization is comprised of one Organization Head, who is appointed by the Prime Minister, with the responsibility to administer and implement Party and Government policy directives regarding science, technology and environment work; be responsible for good and bad results of the works in one's organization.

The head of the organization is absolutely responsible for the entirety of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization, and is the person who signs documents and is the Government liaison. If indisposed or is undertaking duties far away, the Head of the Organization temporarily grants rights to any deputy head of the Organization to act on [his/her] behalf.
4.2 The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization has a number of deputy organization heads who are appointed by the Prime Minister. Deputy organization heads are assistants to the organization head in the administration and implementation of policy directives, policy plans, and policies of the Party and the Government. In addition, will be responsible to carry out tasks as assigned by the Head of the Organization.

Article 5. Regarding Professional Leadership.

5.1 The professional leadership is comprised of heads and deputy heads of bureaus, departments, institutes, and centers to which the head of the organization appointed [the above persons] based upon established standards of qualifications and interdisciplinary standards. The primary duty of this professional leadership is to assist the head and deputy heads of the organization in the administration and implementation of professional tasks and to be directly responsible for the successes and the losses arising from such tasks within its own organ or department.

5.2 Bureaus, departments, institutes, and centers, are allowed to establish under them divisions, organs, centers, stations, work units and projects as necessitated by the work.

5.3 The leadership of divisions, organs, centers, stations, work units and projects is nominated by the heads of bureaus, departments, institutes, centers and the Head of the Organization appoints them based upon selection according to established standards. The primary duty of the division, organ, center, station, work unit and project heads and deputy heads is to assist in the leadership of bureau, department, institute and center to successfully perform their professional tasks as assigned by higher authorities.


6.1 Assistants are comprised professional and general purpose administrative personnel. These assistants have been assigned to their tasks based upon the requirements of bureaus, departments, institutes, centers, divisions, organs, stations, work units, and projects.

6.2 Bureau, department, institute and center heads select employees to be assigned to divisions, organs, centers, stations, work units and projects based on standards and positions established in the regulations of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization to then submit such for consideration and posting to various tasks.

The primary duty of these two types of personnel is perform duties in
accordance with the plans and assignments of the leadership to which they are subject.

Article 7. Organizational Structure.

7.1 The organizational structure of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization is as follows:

7.1.1 Bureau:

Has the duty to conduct general administration, monitor, encourage, inspect, conduct on-site inspections, draft plans, finances, accounting, building a foundation, the secretarial organ, organize and build up civil servants, perform policies, conduct security tasks and foreign relations; has the duty to accept and consider with a view to resolving proposals, petitions, and complaints regarding scientific, technological and environmental issues.

7.1.2 Department of the Environment:

Has the duty to research and set out policies, provisions, and regulations, administer, inspect, and disseminate [such], for the purpose of protecting natural resources, to protect and resolve environment issues throughout the country.

7.1.3 Department of Intellectual Property, Standardization and Metrology:

Has the duty to research and set out provisions and regulations, administer, inspect and disseminate [such] with the field of intellectual property, standardization and metrology. Register intellectual property, which is comprised of trademarks, patents, licensing agreements . . . , to create and inspect products and goods standards for metrology equipment in respect of weights, lengths, volume, etc.

7.1.4 Science Service Center:

Has the duty to research and provide scientific and technological computer services, information, news, a library, etc.

7.1.5 Institute of Scientific and Technological Research:

Has the duty to research and select advanced international science and technology or modify such to accommodate the actual circumstances of our country for use in national socio-economic development. Organize, promote, create basic elements and other
conditions for scientific and technological research, while also registering such works domestically. Research and set out policies, draft other scientific and technological provisions and regulations; inspect, conduct on-site inspections, evaluation, give opinions, and provide advice to work units that operate scientific and technological activities and collect scientific and technological data and statistics throughout society.

7.2 Relevant departments, institutes, centers within the Science, Technology and Environment Organization can establish their own branches as centers, stations or work units, or research projects according to actual circumstances of each locality.

7.3 The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization will consider the size and organizational structure of bureaus, departments, institutes, centers, divisions, organs, stations, work units, and projects, as appropriate to ensure the performance of the strategic direction, policy plans, policies and all duties and obligations assigned to it by the Central Party and the Government.

7.4 The improvement and change to the organizational structure of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization, including branches in the localities, other than those that are provided for in this Decree must be considered and approved by the Government.

7.5 The Science and Technical Board

The Science and Technical Board is an organization established to assist the Government in issuing policy directions regarding science and technology and to research and agree to the assigning scientific names. The Science and Technical Board is comprised of scientists from various sectors throughout the country. The Head of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization is the Chair of the Science and Technical Board; The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization is a permanent office of that Science and Technical Board. The role and detailed duties of the Science and Technical Board will be provided for separately.

Chapter IV
Work Regime

Article 8. The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization undertakes and operates according to the following general principles:

8.1 Adheres to the one leader regime according to a system of a separation of administrative levels, based upon a central principle of democracy, consensus leadership, and individual responsibility. There must be a clear separation of tasks within the consensus and at all levels and with definite and appropriate allocations of rights and authority in decision-making within each person's and level's scope [of rights and authority].
8.2 The undertakings and operations of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization must utilize the strategic direction, policy plans, and general policies of the Central Party and of the Government, primarily relative to science, technology and the environment to serve as a [guiding] compass [in its undertakings].

8.3 In accordance with strategic directions, policy plans and policies referred to in Article 8.2 above, the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization must create its own long term, annual and period plans, and use those plans as a starting point for all activities within the science, technology, and environmental system.

8.4 Apply macro level administration by monitoring and encouraging all organizations under its administration throughout country in respect of applying the direction, policy plans and policies of the Central Party and of the Government and apply plans and projects of the Science, Technology, and Environment Organization.

8.5 Must strictly adhere to the work regime of meeting and reporting, primarily weekly reflections. Monthly meetings of the organization's leading committee (including the head of the cabinet, department heads, institution heads, heads of centers and experts) and from various levels. In such meetings, there must be reflection upon, summary of, and evaluation of the good or bad results of the performance of tasks and the fulfillment of duties of various organizations and an exchange of experiences. Each meeting must be recorded by the meeting and thereafter reported to the Government.

Chapter V
Final Provisions

Article 9. The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization, bureaus, departments, institutes, centers and work units have their own seals if they deem it necessary to use such in official tasks.

Article 10. The Science, Technology, and Environment Organization is hereby assigned to propagate [this Decree] as detailed provisions and regulations of bureaus, departments, institutes, centers and scientific and technological boards.

Article 11. The Office of the Prime Minister, relevant ministries, organizations, provinces and the Prefecture are to acknowledge and strictly adhere to this Decree.

Article 12. This Decree is effective from the date of its signing. All provisions and regulations previously promulgated that conflict with this Decree are hereby repealed.

Vientiane, dated 10 April 1993
Prime Minister
Lao People's Democratic Republic
[seal of the Prime Minister]
[signature]
Khamtay Siphandone
Prime Minister's Decree regarding Organization of a Network, Importation, Use and Control of the Internet System

Chapter I
General Provisions

Article 1: This Decree specifies rules relative to control of the Internet system for the proper and legal organization of a network, importation, and use of the Internet system in the Lao PDR, and to allow for productive communication and exchange of information, whether domestically or abroad, to contribute to national socio-economic development.

Article 2: Internet is the use of computers to swiftly connect to the most up-to-date information and data systems throughout the entire world without regard to territory or boundaries.

Article 3: Only the Government can approve of the establishment of an Internet system.

Chapter II
Control of the Internet System

Article 4: For effective Internet control, to ensure peace, safety, and to restrict elements destructive to culture, society, and the national economy, the Government authorizes the Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts and Construction to organize an administrative center for the international network and an administrative center for domestic [Internet] services in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

Article 5: The Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts and Construction coordinates with relevant sectors to study and make proposals relative to approval of and establishment of networks, importing, use of equipment and tools and control of the communications system and Internet technicians.

The Ministry of Information and Culture has the duty to approve of the contents of programming and information and data [available] to subscribers while also controlling the contents of such information and data exchanged on the Internet.

The Science Technology and Environment Organization has the duty to research, control and approve of equipment and computer networks which will be connected to the Internet system and scientific, technological, and environmental information and data.
The Ministry of Interior has the duty to coordinate with ministries and relevant organizations to apply measures, methodologies and techniques of control and inspection of the content of information and data sent over the Internet network in order to ensure national peace and public order.

Article 6: Juristic entities or organizations seeking to establish service enterprises or to invest in the Internet must adhere to the Business Law, the Law on the Promotion and Management of Domestic Investment, the Law on the Promotion and Management of Foreign Investment in the Lao PDR, and other laws and regulations.

Article 7: Juristic entities or organizations as provided for in Article 6 above must establish a technical administrative service center that has the capability of restricting information and data conflicting with directives and policies [of the Party], laws and regulations, society and culture, and the economy, while also having to strictly adhere to Internet regulations.

Article 8: Individuals, juristic entities, or organizations seeking to use the Internet system must first request approval for the contents of the information and data from the Ministry of Information and Culture. Equipment and computer networks which will be imported for installation into the Internet system must be approved by the Science Technology and Environment Organization. After having received use approval from this ministry and organization, such individuals, juristic entities, or organizations are to then reserve a number and register themselves as Internet system users with the Ministry of Communication Transportation Posts and Construction.

Chapter III
Rights and Obligations of Internet Users

Article 9: Individuals, juristic entities or organizations who have received permission and are registered to use the Internet system have the right to be provided with and to send information and data, for the benefit of their activities or business, via an Internet center as authorized by the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Article 10: Individuals, juristic entities or organizations who have received approval to use the Internet system are obligated to strictly adhere to laws and regulations of the Lao PDR and Internet regulations.

Chapter IV
Policies toward those who are Productive and Measures against Offenders

Article 11: Individuals, juristic entities or organizations, including those who have established a services network and Internet system users, who provide [high] quality services or who use [the Internet] for the benefit of national socio-economic development in accordance with laws and regulations, provisions, or rules issued by relevant State organizations shall be commended, will receive approval to extend their services network, or will be authorized to extend Internet user registrations upon expiration of such authorization.

Article 12: Any individual, juristic entity or organization violating this Decree shall be educated and trained and fined, will have their operations suspended, will have their approval withdrawn or be prosecuted under the law.
Chapter V

Final Provisions

Article 13: The Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Posts and Construction, the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of Interior, and the Science Technology and Environment Organization have the duty to productively coordinate and implement this Decree.

Article 14: This Decree is effective from the date of its signing onward.

Provisions or regulations conflicting with this Decree are hereby repealed.

Vientiane, date 28 November 1997

Prime Minister

(seal of the Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic)

(signature)

Khamtay Siphandone
Establishment of the Ministry of Information and Culture

The Prime Minister issues this Decree:

Chapter I
Location and Role

Article 1: The Ministry of Information and Culture is a central administrative organization in the governmental structure, with the role of being the logistical arm of the Central Party and for the Government in uniform macro-level line ministry planning and control, from the central levels to localities throughout the country relative to information and culture, serve as the mouthpiece of the Central Party and of the Government in information, declaring, and disseminating documents in respect of paths and policies, regulations and laws, and the views of the Party as well as the Government regarding major events, both domestically and abroad.

Chapter II
Duties and Scope of Rights

Article 2: The principal duty of the Ministry of Information and Culture are as follows:

2.1 Research and propagate the paths and policies of the Party and the laws and regulations of the Government to transform them into plans/work plans and detailed projects in the work of information and culture activities.

2.2 Organize a network to collect statistical data regarding the conditions of information and culture works in order to service research and planning, projects, building, and improving information and culture laws.

2.3 Coordinate with central and local level divisions, consult, summarize and derive experience from the organization and activities of information and culture works, improve and expand such works to improve their development.

2.4 Organize the study and analysis of each aspect of information works in order to delve into and propagate and preserve the fine culture of the Lao peoples to become a part of the multi-cultural national community, analyze and select and make use of the best of human culture.

2.5 Monitor, inspect, advise, encourage and create all conditions to facilitate organizations subject to one's authority, including those at the central level to the local levels throughout the country, in activities to successfully implement works in all
aspects.

2.6 Research and build and declare a plan-based work regime for the Ministry as well as internal administrative regulations for the mechanism as well as systems for information and culture divisions throughout the country, including the organizational structure, from the central to the local levels according to vertical hierarchy. Determine the number of people servicing its entire mechanism.

2.7 Research and create a system of domestic news networks and news branches posted abroad.

2.8 Research, create, control, and use a budget and property in the system and the mechanism within the field of information and culture throughout the country.

2.9 Conduct information and culture relations with foreign parties and international organizations.

2.10 Research and create systematic and comprehensive plans to build, improve, control rank and file civil servants who undertake information and culture tasks according to vertical hierarchy, from the central to the local levels throughout the country.

2.11 Research and create policies for rank and file civil servants and for those who conduct information and culture works to propose to higher authorities to consider and promulgate such.

Article 3: Scope of Rights of the Ministry of Information and Culture are as follows:

3.1 Establish and terminate organizations at various levels in bureaus, departments, divisions, technical units, enterprises, and other units that are subject to the supervisory authority of the Ministry.

3.2 Appoint, move, promote levels and ranks, move down and demote, apply discipline and apply policies toward civil servants who are posted within one's sector. For division heads and deputy heads posted at the Prefecture or Province, district bureau heads and deputy and high level cadres posted at the localities, before being appointed, moved, promoted levels, or demoted, there must first be consultation with the Governor of the Province, the Mayor of the Prefecture, or the District Chief.

3.3 Consider and approve of applications to establish associations and businesses regarding information and culture works.

3.4 Issue orders, give advice, and notices regarding issues within [the scope] of one's roles and duties to [other] levels, units [and] organizations subject to the authority of the Ministry.

3.5 Coordinate with ministries and central and local organizations to consult on all matters that relate to information and culture works.

3.6 Sign sub-contracts or memorandums with foreign parties or international organizations regarding assistance, cooperation, and exchange of experiences in information and culture works based upon approval from the Government.
Chapter III
Leadership Mechanism, Assistance Mechanism, and Organizational Structure

Article 4: Policy and Pathway Leadership

4.1 The leadership of the Ministry is comprised of one Minister appointed by the President of the State, based upon nomination of the Prime Minister and with the approval of the National Assembly.

4.2 The Minister is the head of the Ministry and is a member of the Government, is responsible for the control and implementation of Party and Government policies relative to information and culture works, responsible for the successes and failures of [his/her] sector before the Government.

4.3 The Minister is absolutely responsible for the entire information and culture sector. If indisposed or attending to work far away, the Minister grants rights temporarily to the Vice-Minister to attend to matters in [his/her] stead.

The Vice Minister assists the Minister in controlling and implementing policies and pathways of the sector while also being responsible for undertaking any task assigned by the Minister.

Article 5: Disciplinary Leadership

5.1. Disciplinary leadership is comprised of bureau heads and deputy heads, department heads and deputy heads, heads and deputy general managers, editors-in-chief, who have been appointed by the Minister based upon qualifications and established professional standards.

The primary duty of the above mentioned disciplinary leadership is to assist the Minister and Vice Minister in controlling and implementing professional tasks within the sector for which one is responsible. Be directly responsible to the Minister for successes and failures arising from professional tasks within one's sector.

5.2. Within a bureau, department, general manager, and editors-in-chief, the Government allows the existence of divisions and specific organs, specific work units and projects as necessitated by the work.

5.3. Leadership within a division, technical organ, specific work unit, and project are nominated by bureau and department heads. The Minister appoints [that person] based upon selection according to established standards.

The primary duty of division heads and deputy heads, technical organ heads and deputy heads, specific work units and projects assist in the leadership of the bureau and the department, carrying out and completing professional duties as one's superiors have assigned.

Article 6: Civil Servant Assistants within the Ministry

6.1 Civil servant assistants are comprised of professional parties and general administrative staff.

These civil servant assistants shall be posted to their jobs based upon the
requirements of a bureau, department, division, technical organ, [or] project.

6.2 Leadership within a bureau, department, division, organ, or project selects civil servants based upon established standards and work positions in the organizational structure of the Ministry to then submit them for consideration and job posting.

6.3 The primary duty of professional staff and general administrative staff is to perform their duties as assigned by the leadership where one is posted.

Article 7: Control, Leadership and Organizational Structure at Localities

7.1 The Minister is the person who establishes the organizational structure within [his/her] sector at the localities to conform to the special circumstances existing at each locality and shall use the division as the controlling and leading unit at the Prefecture, province and bureau level and use the bureau as the controlling and leading unit at the district level.

7.2 The Minister appoints and moves division heads and deputy heads at the Prefecture, provinces, and professional cadres to post them permanently at localities and to take them out of the localities as appropriate after consulting and agreeing with local administrative authorities. Local administrative authorities do not have the right to appoint, move, promote levels or promote rank, demote the above mentioned types of civil servants.

Article 8: The Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Information and Culture is as follows:

8.1 Cabinet of the Ministry:

- fulfills the duty and obligation of collecting and researching general plans, analyzing, monitoring, and inspecting the Ministry's performance of plans from time to time. Writes up minute meetings, speeches, interviews, and articles providing opinions relative to various tasks for the leadership of the Ministry.
- draft statistics, plans, and cooperation, investment, development of information and cultural works.
- conduct macro-level foreign relations within the field of information and culture.
- control the sectoral budget throughout the country.
- be responsible for administrative services: import-export, keep documents, typing, mimeographs, contact with [persons] outside [of the Ministry], receive guest, control vehicles, clean, keep peace and order in offices and agencies, and give advice in respect of bureau works at Ministry units in the localities.
- control all of the assets throughout the sector.

8.2 Department of Organization and Building-Up of Civil Servants

- coordinate with all parties at the central and local levels, research the improvement of the organizational mechanism, including the building-up of and the improvement of the roles, and regulatory system of works of the Ministry all the way down to the localities.
research the improvement and building-up of, control and utilize civil servants throughout the sector, along with all parties at the central and local levels, create general plans to build up and improve all types of technical civil servants.

research and create policies, decrees, and regulations for civil servants and those who undertake information and culture works while also monitoring, inspection, and advising on the implementation of existing policies for civil servants.

fulfill one's professional obligations to conduct political and ideological training throughout one's sector.

undertake technical tasks to improve and build up the Party, tasks for domestic defense, and tasks to monitor and conduct on site inspections of the Ministry.

8.3 The Mass Media Department

fulfills the obligation of research and planning to improve and develop information and cultural works: newspapers, information, radio broadcasts, televisions; directions, principles, substance, methodology, and forms of propagandizing and disseminating the paths and policies of the Party and the laws and regulations of the Government and news in general.

research and draft cinema and video development plans to conform to the New Changes of our Party and State

research and create terms, decrees, or laws to control the mass media and cinemas and videos, monitor, inspect and advise on the strict implementation of those terms, decrees, and laws.

research and submit for approval applications to establish business in information, cinema, and video throughout the entire country.

8.4 Department of Fine Arts

fulfill obligations to research and draft plans to improve and develop fine arts works from time to time, including music, theatre, and the arts throughout the country, monitor, inspect, advise and encourage the implementation of such project plans.

research and create terms and regulations, policies, and laws to control the activities of fine arts works throughout the country.

research and consider and submit for approval requests to establish associations and businesses in the fine arts and monitor and inspect cassettes related to the fine arts.

draft general plans to improve, strengthen, control and use civil servants in one's sector and advise units under one's supervision.

8.5 Department of Printing, Publishing and Libraries

research and draft development plans and create terms, regulations and laws controlling printing and publishing works, printing of printed materials and signs, monitor, inspect, and advise on implementation.

research and draft plans to delve into, rehabilitate, develop, and preserve the National Library and its branches throughout the country for it to be actually beneficial in research and analysis of data.
8.6 Department of Museums and Artifacts

- research, draft plans to delve into, rehabilitate, develop, and preserve
  the museum, artifacts, ancient sites, and the revolutionary legacy
  throughout the country.
- research and draft terms, regulations, and laws to control the
  preservation of museums and artifacts, ancient sites, and historical
  revolutionary sites, and the legacy of the revolution.

8.7 Department of Literature and the People's Culture

- research and draft plans, delve into, rehabilitate, promote, and
  preserve ancient literature, national eras, and the best literature from
  humanity.
- research and draft plans, delve into, rehabilitate, promote, and
  preserve traditions and model living by peoples throughout the
  country.
- research and draft plans, promote and develop works of all types of
  cultural associations.

In addition, there are still other organizations that are directly posted to
the Ministry, such as:

1. National Radio
2. National TV
3. Pasason Newspaper
4. Khao San Pathet Lao
5. Cultural Research Institute

The Ministry is assigned research and determine detailed organizational structures
for the following technical organizations as appropriate: organs, units posted to
departments, [and] agencies.

8.8 Organizational structure at the localities is directly determined by the Ministry
and is to conform to the special circumstances of each locality with provincial
and prefectural divisions as supervising units, implementing and representing
the Ministry.

Improving and changing the organizational structure of the Ministry, including
at the locality, beyond what has been provided for in this Decree, must be
considered and approved by the Government.

Chapter IV

Work Regime

Article 9: The Ministry of Information and Culture undertakes and operates
according to the following general principles:

9.1 Adheres to the one leader regime according to a system of a separation of
administrative levels, based upon a central principle of democracy, consensual
leadership, and individual responsibility. There must be a clear separation of tasks
within the consensus and at all levels and with definite and appropriate allocations of rights and authority in decision-making within each person’s and level’s scope [of rights and authority].

9.2 The undertakings and operations of the Ministry of Information and Culture must utilize the strategic direction, policy plans, and general policies of the Central Party and of the Government as a [guiding] compass [in its undertakings].

9.3 In accordance with strategic directions, policy plans and policies referred to in Article 9.2 above, the Ministry must create its own long term and annual plans for all of the sectors under its authority, and use those plans as a starting point for all activities within all of the information and cultural systems.

9.4 Apply macro level administration by monitoring and encouraging all levels, sectors, all technical units under its administration throughout country in respect of applying the direction, policy plans and policies of the Central Party and of the Government and apply plans and projects of the Ministry itself.

9.5 Must adhere to the work regime of meeting and reporting, regularly seeking opinions from higher authorities and notifying subordinates.

Chapter V
Final Provisions

Article 10: The Ministry of Information and Culture has its own seal if they deem it necessary to use such in official tasks.

Bureaus, departments, and divisions of the Prefecture or the provinces or district bureaus, technical units, or businesses, are also allowed to have seals for technical and enterprise controls.

Article 11: The Ministry of Information and Culture is hereby assigned to propagate [this Decree] as detailed internal provisions relative to the role and duties and scope of rights of bureaus, departments, and technical units under its supervision to successfully implement information and cultural works.

Article 12: This Decree is effective from the date of its signing. The Ministry of Information and Culture, the Office of the Prime Minister, ministries, the Prefecture, and provinces are to strictly acknowledge and adhere to this Decree. All provisions and regulations previously promulgated that conflict with this Decree are hereby repealed.

Vientiane, dated 5 MAY 1993
Prime Minister
Lao People’s Democratic Republic
[seal of the Prime Minister]
[signature]
Khamtay Siphandone
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Science Technology and Environment Organization

No. 1044/STENO

Provisions

regarding

The Control of the Information System Used in the Internet System

In applying the Decree of the Prime Minister' No. 166, dated 28/11/1997, regarding the Organization of a Network, the Importation, Use and Control of the Internet System;

In applying the Decree of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 63/PM, dated 10/04/1993, regarding the Organization of the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

According to Notification of the Office of the Prime Minister No. 237/96/PMO, dated 12/02/1996, delegating authority to the Science Technology and Environment Organization to control the information system in the Lao PDR.

According to Notification of the Office of the Prime Minister No. 1104/PMO, dated 04/07/1997, agreeing to allow Science Technology and Environment Organization issue provisions regarding the control of computer standards.

The Head of the Science Technology and Environment Organization issues these provisions:

Chapter I
General Principles

Article 1: These provisions are issued to serve the organization of the internet system relating to information system controls and computer standards to be used in the internet network and scientific, technological and environmental data and information imported and exported through the system.

Article 2: Persons, organizations or juristic entities who will import computers to be used on the internet system in the Lao PDR must guarantee standards and must have first received approval from the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

Article 3: Persons, organizations, or juristic entities who connect other computer networks into the internet system must request approval and must receive permission from the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

Article 4: Persons, organizations or juristic entities who use data and information from internet networks must adhere to regulations and laws and international rules and principles regarding intellectual property protection that the Lao PDR has promulgated [or in which the] Lao PDR participates [as signatory or member].
Chapter II
Controlling Principles

Article 5: The Science Technology and Environment Organization has the duty to control and intensively scrutinize standards and computer networks, scientific, technological and environmental data and information and intellectual property rights to be used in the internet system.

Article 6: All usage of computers, computer network installations and transmitting sending scientific, technological and environmental data and information on the internet network must be inspected by the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

Chapter III
Regulations for the Use of Equipment and Computer Networks on Internet Networks

Article 7: Persons, organizations or juristic entities who need to import equipment and computer networks to use on the internet system in the Lao PDR, must request technical approval from the Science Technology and Environment Organization. Application must be done according to a form issued by the Organization, which includes the following data and other documents:

7.1 details regarding computer to be installed as an internet service provider (number, type, kind, brand . . .)
7.2 technical system of the computer network that will be used in the internet system.
7.3 value of the computer and related equipment.
7.4 copies of business documents of importers and documents or licenses from other concerned divisions.
7.5 after receiving those documents, the Science Technology and Environment Organization will consider such and issue a written response within 15 days.

Article 8: Persons, organizations or juristic entities who have already installed computer networks and who seek to take that system and connect it to the internet system must request approval from the Science Technology and Environment Organization. Applications are to be made similarly to that provided for in Article 7.

Article 9: Persons, organizations or juristic entities who operate computer import businesses for use as service providers to the network system to connect to the internet system must guarantee the standards as provided for in Provisions of the Science Technology and Environment Organization No. 1243/STENO, dated 12/07/1997, regarding control of computer standards.

Article 10: Usage of computer networks in the internet system in the Lao PDR must comply with the information system as issued by the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

Chapter IV
Prohibitions and Measures [to be applied to offenders]

Article 11: It is prohibited for persons, organizations or juristic entities to import computers and install them as network service providers or connect computer
networks to the internet system without [having first] received permission from the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

**Article 12:** It is prohibited for persons, organizations, or juristic entities to use data and information taken from the internet system that has copyright protection to conduct one's own business or to disseminate such for one's own benefit without having received permission from the copyright owner and it is absolutely prohibited for internet users to bring such data and information that receives copyright protection in conformity with the laws of the Lao PDR into the internet system, unless approval has been received from the owner of that copyright.

**Article 13:** All violations contrary to rules provided for in Articles 11 and 12 of these Provisions will be warned, fined, and punished according to regulations and laws on a case by case basis.

**Chapter V**

**Implementation**

**Article 14:** The Department of Industrial Property, Standardization and Metrology is delegated to coordinate with the Department of Technology Development and Promotion to strictly implement these Provisions and to cooperate with other concerned divisions in the general control of the internet system.

**Article 15:** These Provisions are effective from the date of signature. All other provisions and regulations that conflict with these Provisions are hereby cancelled.

Vientiane, dated 18/5/98
Head of the Science Technology and Environment Organization
(signature)
(seal of the Head of the Science Technology and Environment Organization)
Souli Nanthavong
Provisions from the
Minister of Information and Culture
on the
Control of the Content and the Information and Data [Obtained] via the Internet System

In applying Decree No. 166/PM dated 28/11/97 of the Prime Minister on the Organization of a Network, the Importation of, the Use and Control of the Internet System.

The Minister of Information and Culture issues these Provisions on the Control of the Content and the Information and Data [Obtained] via the Internet System as follows:

Chapter I
General Provisions

Article 1: The Ministry of Information and Culture has the duty to approve the content and the programming of information and data for subscribers as well as in controlling the content of the information and data [obtained] via the internet system.

Article 2: The control of content and the information and data [obtained] via the internet system is rule that is necessary to procure that the use of the internet system conforms to the policies of the Party and State laws and regulations to benefit national socio-economic development.

Chapter II
Control and Use of the Content of the Information and Data [Obtained Via the Internet System]

Article 3: The Ministry of Information and Culture has the duty to control the content, the form and the method that the information and data [obtained] via the internet system is used according to the respective roles and duties of its technical agencies in conformity with its views, the policies of the Party, and State laws and [other] regulations [issued] from time to time.

Article 4: Receiving and supplying information and data via the internet system must [consist] of [a certain] content and be information and data that is beneficial to society, which [information and data] can be openly and widely disseminated, which has no impact upon political issues, is not in conflict with the policies of the Party and the laws and regulations of the Lao PDR, [and] is not contrary to the fine Lao national culture, customs, and traditions.

Chapter III
Principles and Rules for Requesting Approval to Use the Content of Information and Data [Obtained Via the Internet System]

Article 5: Lao or foreign individuals, organizations, or juristic entities residing permanently in the Lao PDR seeking to use the content of information and data [obtained] via the internet system must submit complete documents to the Ministry of Information and Culture for review and consideration according to [certain] rules [that follow below].
Article 6: Order of Documents Submitted

1. Application requesting use of information and data [obtained] via the internet system.
2. Official documents, brief biography of person, organization or juristic person [applying for approval].
3. Objective, target, plan, programs and type of information and data [required].
4. Foreign and international organizations with offices in the Lao PDR who seek to use information and data [obtained] via the internet system must have certifications acknowledging [those organizations] issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR on [some other] relevant state agency.

Article 7: Rules for Approval

1. Within a period of 15 days from the date that the application and the documents requesting to use information and data are received, the Ministry of Information and Culture has the duty to review such and issue a license. In the event that a license cannot be issued, the Ministry of Information and Culture will reply in writing.

2. After having received approval from the Ministry of Information and Culture, the individual, organization, or juristic entity must then submit various documents to the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction for further consideration and approval [from the perspective that such application meets conditions] according to rules for technical [points] and [technical] methodology.

3. If [an applicant] wants to change or add any data to the license, approval must first be obtained from Ministry of Information and Culture.

Chapter IV
Prohibitions and [Other] Measures

Article 8: Prohibitions:

1. It is prohibited to use information and data without authorization from the Ministry of Information and Culture.

2. It is prohibited to use information and data that does not conform to the provisions and rules issued by the Ministry of Information and Culture.

3. It is prohibited to transfer or assign the license or to allow someone else to use the license [issued to the applicant by the Ministry of Information and Culture].

Article 9: Measures:

Any individual, organization, or juristic entity using information and data [obtained] via the internet system violating these Provisions, with reference to the seriousness of the violation, whether serious or immaterial, will be fined and punished in accordance with the laws and regulations or will have their license to use such information and data withdrawn.

The Ministry of Information and Culture has the duty to inspect [violations] and to propose punitive measures for offenders throughout the country.
Chapter V
Implementation

Article 10: The Department of Mass Media is assigned to coordinate with relevant sectors for the strict and productive implementation of these Provisions.

Article 11: These Provisions are effective from the date of their signing until they are changed.

Vientiane, date 21/5/1998
Minister of Information and Culture

[seal of the Minister of the Ministry of Information and Culture]
[signature]

Bouabane Volakhoun.
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Communications, Transportation,
Posts and Construction

Provisions from the
Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction
on the
Organization of the Internet Network to Conduct the Information and Data Services
Business and for the Use of the Internet System

• Reference the Decree of the Prime Minister No. 07/PM dated 29/01/93 on the
Organization of the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and
Construction.
• Reference the Decree of the Prime Minister No. 166/PM dated 28/11/97 on the
Organization of a Network, the Importation of, the Use and Control of the Internet
System.

The Minister of the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction
issues these provisions.

Chapter I
General Provisions

Article 1: Objective

These Provisions establish rules for the control of the organization of the internet network for
conducting the information and data services business and for the use of the internet system
in order that such conforms to the direction of the policies of the Party and to the laws and
regulations of the State for a high level of efficiency in service and in the use of information
and data benefiting national development.

Regarding the control of the information and data networks of embassies and international
organizations, [they are to] adhere to international and diplomatic rules of engagement
[concluded] between the Government of the Lao PDR and the relevant international
organization.

Article 2: Type of Information and Data to be Provided via the Internet Network

Services that the internet network will provide to users shall be comprised of:

• Electronic letters;
• Images and sounds;
• Dispatching and receiving information and data;
• Searches for data at information centers on the internet system both domestically
and abroad.
Chapter II
Rules for Requesting Approval to Establish an Internet Network to Conduct the Information and Data Services Business


Upon meeting the conditions provided for in Article 6 of the Decree of the Prime Minister No. 166/PM dated 28/7/97, a juristic entity or an organization seeking to request approval to establish an internet network to conduct the information and data services business must submit documents to the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction as follow below:

- Application requesting approval to establish an internet network;
- A high level [secondary school] diploma in technology, telecommunications or a similar discipline or in the internet system in particular and a certificate of internet experience or on-the-job training with the internet issued by an internationally recognized institution or relevant organization for at least three of [the applicant's] technicians who are permanently posted with the [applicant's organization].

Article 4: Approval to Establish an Internet Network

After having received the above mentioned documents, the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction will review, consider, and reply in writing to the applicant within 30 days. If the application is approved, a license to establish an internet network will be issued.

Chapter III
Rights and Duties of Internet Service Providers and Control of those Services

Article 5: Rights of Internet Service Providers

Juristic entities or organizations that are internet system service providers have the right to stop a juristic entity, an individual, or an organization's use [of the internet] if they do the following:

- Disseminate information or data affecting national security;
- Use information and data without authorization from the Ministry of Information and Culture;
- Use their equipment or computer network to disturb or trespass upon data in the computers or computer networks of others.
- Use unregistered equipment or a computer network that has not been approved by the Science Technology and Environment Organization;
- Fail to regularly pay service fees as agreed.

Upon stopping use [as described above], the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction, the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Science Technology and Environment Organization are to be immediately notified and [they are also to receive a] report.
Article 6: Duties of the Internet Service Provider

Internet service providers have the following duties:

- To strictly adhere to rules of these Provisions;
- Must organize a network control center to make international connections and a domestic services control center comprised of modern and fully integrated technical equipment that can:
  - Create and record necessary data to provide quality information and data conveniently [and] quickly and which conforms to approvals granted to the user to receive [that] information and data;
  - Protect data and prevent the trespassing [unauthorized use] of data on the internet system.
  - Adhere to accounting, statistical and reporting rules and other obligations provided for by the State;
  - Must be under the control and inspection of the relevant agency and must be responsible for all information and data provided to users.

Article 7: Control of Internet Services

The Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction coordinates with relevant ministries to establish a working unit to control internet services.

Chapter IV

Rules for Requesting Approval to Use or for Stopping Use of the Internet System

Article 8: Conditions for Those Who Will Be Approved to Use the Internet System

Any individual, juristic entity or organization seeking to request approval to use the internet system must submit an application to the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction with the following necessary documents attached:

- Approval to use information and data via the internet system from the Ministry of Information and Culture;
- Registration or authorization to use equipment and a computer network issued by the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

The Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction will review, consider and reply in writing within 15 days. If the application is approved, a license will be issued with a subscription [account] number and user registration.

Article 9: Term of License for Users and Rules for Stopping Use of the Internet System

The term of a user license is twelve (12) months. Upon expiration of the term, the subscriber must request a license extension within 30 days. Beyond this time period, the subscriber will be deemed to have forfeited [the service] and will be deleted from the list of subscriber accounts and the registry, and the service center will be notified to delete that person from the internet network.

- If use must be temporarily stopped, notification in writing must be sent to the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction and the Ministry of Information and Culture regarding the reasons [for such suspension].
If one must stop usage for a long period of time, notification must be made according to the rules specified in paragraph two of this Article and the [user] will be deleted from the list of subscriber accounts and the registry of users and then deleted from the internet network.

Chapter V
Rights and Duties of Internet Users

Article 10: Rights of Internet Users

Any individual, juristic entity, or organization authorized to use the internet system has the following rights:

- Has the right to receive the supply of and to send information and data via the internet system;
- Has the right to connect one’s equipment or computer network to the internet system as [which equipment or network has been] approved by the Science Technology and Environment Organization.

Article 11: Duties of Internet Users

Internet users have the following duties:

- Strictly adhere to rules of the Provisions of the Minister of Information and Culture No. 416/IC dated 21/05/1998 on the Control of Contents of and the Information and Data [Obtained] via the Internet System, the Provisions of the Science, Technology and Environment Organization No. 1044/STENO dated 18/05/1998 on the Control of Computer Systems Used in the Systeme Informatique Used in the Internet System and rules of these Provisions regarding the Organization of the Internet Network to Conduct the Information and Data Services Business and for the Use of the Internet System;
- Regularly pay service fees as agreed;
- Must be under the inspection of the relevant sector.

Chapter VI
Prohibitions

Article 12: Prohibitions on Internet Services

Individuals, juristic entities or organizations who have not received approval to do so are absolutely prohibited from establishing an internet network to provide information and data services.

Juristic entities or organizations that provide internet services are prohibited from:

- Servicing information and data that has not been approved by the Ministry of Information and Culture;
- Servicing information and data that conflicts with the policies of the Party, State laws and regulations, and [adversely affecting] the fine national culture and society;
- Servicing information and data for which there is copyright protection under the laws of the Lao PDR and/or under international laws without authorization from the copyright owner;
- Giving the license to establish the internet system to someone else for their use, subleasing or transferring [the license] to someone else.
Article 13: Prohibitions on the Use of the Internet System

Individuals, juristic entities, or organizations are prohibited from the following acts:

- Using one’s equipment or computer network to disturb, trespass upon, or steal data from the equipment or computer networks of others;
- Using equipment or computer networks without [the requisite] authorization from the Science Technology and Environment Organization;
- Connecting one’s equipment or one’s computer network directly to a foreign internet network without passing through the Lao PDR control center.
- Downloading information and data protected by copyright under the laws of the Lao PDR and/or under international laws into one’s equipment or one’s computer network and thereafter disseminating it for commercial purposes without authorization from the copyright owner;
- Giving the license to use the internet system to someone else; subleasing or transferring [the license] to someone else.

Chapter VII

Policies/Allowances for Those Who are Productive and Measures to be Applied to Offenders

Article 14: Policies/Allowances for Those Who are Productive

Any juristic entity or organization who has established fully integrated and progressive internet network services according to the international system who can efficiently carry out their services in compliance with the policies of the Party and State laws and regulations will receive commendations and allowances in the promotion [of their business] for the progressive expansion of and increase in the breadth of their activities.

Any individual, juristic entity, or organization who truly uses the internet system to benefit one’s activities or one’s own business, without violating the rights and benefits of other persons or the public at large, who adhere to the direction of the Party, laws and regulations as issued shall receive approval to continue their use of the internet when their [initial] approval [to use the internet] has expired.

Article 15: Measures against Offenders

Any individual, juristic entity, or organization who violates these Provisions on the Organization of the Internet Network to Conduct the Information and Data Services Business and for the Use of the Internet System shall receive education/[instruction], be fined or be criminally punished. Offenders may also receive additional punishments, such as:

suspension of their activities, withdrawal of approval [to use the internet] and vehicles used in the [committing an] offense will be seized.

Article 16: Measures for Education

For serious or non-serious violations, first time offenders will receive education/[instruction].
Article 17: Measures for Fines [to be Imposed]

Any individual, juristic entity or organization will be fined according to the seriousness [of the offense they have committed] if they commit any of the following violations:

- Using someone else’s approval or giving one’s approval to someone else for their use in establishing an internet network to provide information and data services or to use the internet system;
- Unauthorized establishment of an internet network to provide informative and data services;
- Servicing information and data in respect of which the copyright is protected under the laws of the Lao PDR and/or under international laws to users at large without having received approval from the copyright owner;
- Downloading/incorporating information and data in respect of which the copyright is protected under the laws of Lao PDR and/or under international laws into one’s equipment or computer network and thereafter disseminating such for commercial purposes without authorization from the copyright owner.

Regarding the schedule of fines, the Control Unit is to review and propose such for approval.

Article 18: Criminal Measures

Any individual conducting any of the following offenses shall be criminally punished:

- Submitting false documents to obtain approval to establish an internet network or for approval to use the internet system;
- Disseminating information and data through the internet system which information and data conflicts with the policies of the Party and [adversely affects] the fine national culture and society;
- Use equipment or one’s computer network to disturb or trespass upon or steal data from the equipment or computer networks of other persons.

Any civil servant or State employee receiving bribes, improperly exercising their power, falsifying documents, [or] abusing power for personal benefit in establishing an internet network and/or using the internet system will be punished under the Penal Code.

Chapter VIII
Final provisions

Article 19: Implementation

The Department of Posts and Telecommunication is assigned to coordinate with relevant sectors to strictly and effectively implement these Provisions.

Article 20: Effectiveness

These Provisions are effective from the date of their signing until there are new changes [to such].

Vientiane 16 July 1998
Minister of the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction
[seal of the Minister of the Ministry of Communications, Transportation, Posts and Construction]
[signature]
Phao Bounnaphol
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independent Democracy Unity Prosperity

The Prime Minister's Office No.[NO NUMBER]/PM

- D R A F T -

Decree
on the
Organization and Activities of the Mass Media

- Reference the Constitution of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Article 19 and 31
- Reference the Decree of the Prime Minister regarding the Organization and Activities of the Ministry of Information and Culture, No. 71/PM, dated 5/5/1993.

The Prime Minister issues this Decree:

Chapter I
General Provisions

Article 1: The mass media in the Lao PDR is an important vehicles for activities in the dissemination and the protection of the Party and the States direction, policy plans and plans both domestically and abroad. In order to supply the demand for news, enhancing knowledge, and entertainment of the public, increase the sharp characteristics, timeliness, and accuracy, as well as the wealth of the contents, create a profound responsibility, proper in respect of the national legacy and of the Party, be a public forum comprised of: newspapers, magazines, informational sheets, news, radio broadcasts, television in our national language and of the peoples and in foreign languages.

Article 2: The Government and various administrative agencies at various levels create conditions and facilitate citizens in giving and receiving proper, clear, independent news both verbally and in writing in the mass media.

Article 3: Organizations and civil servants in the mass media must undertake their activities within the scope of the laws of the Lao PDR by receiving protection from the Government and other administrative authorities at various levels.

Article 4: This Decree is Applicable to the Lao Mass media.

Chapter II
Rights and Duties of Mass Media Agencies

Article 5: The activities of mass media agencies, for providing domestic and foreign news regarding politics, economics, culture, and society, science, the arts, to disseminate the directions, policy plans, and the policies of the Party, State laws, successes accomplished, to expand the democratic spirit, awareness of national unity, solidarity and
understanding, providing the public's need for broad ranging news, enhance public awareness, contribute to the obligation to build and protect the nation, expand mutual understanding among the populace, participate in the general obligations for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

Article 6: Mass media agencies and personnel have the following duties:

- Adhere to proper ideals, objectives, roles and duties as provide for in a license.
- Correctly subscribe to and perform independently in writing and verbally of citizen organizations, for articles that are not printed or are not broadcast, if there are questions, there must be responses, and reasons must be stated clearly.
- It is prohibited to mobilize the people against the Lao People's Democratic Republic, to destroy the binds of solidarity among the peoples.
- It is prohibited to print or broadcast news that violates the laws or mobilizes the people to seek to contravene the application of laws and regulations.
- It is prohibited to use internal documents from the Party and the State [and from] organizations which documents have not been promulgated.
- It is prohibited to mobilize by mustering one's resources to propagandize war, to create difficulties among the [ethnic] peoples and between countries, to promote a degenerate lifestyle, improper behavior [or] stupid beliefs.
- It is prohibited for a news agency to bring about results adverse to the policy of solidarity and harmony and to create notoriety. Any need to commend or criticize must [be accompanied by] clear information of such.
- Articles and news regarding criminal cases and sentencing shall not be discussed in detail, primarily robberies and gruesome [details] related to murders.
- It is prohibited to print or publish immoral and sexually arousing photographs of people (except for scientific and artistic photographs that conform to [the certain] ideals and objectives of the mass media agency). . .
- News provided relative to new scientific and mystical [or] supernatural issues must be certified by sciences and technicians first and there must [also] be an explanation regarding the source of a document not used in any specific research.
- It is prohibited to disclose secrets relation to national, military, public order, economic, [or] foreign affairs [or] other secrets as provided for by law.
- It is prohibited to give news that is not truthful, distorting, makes false accusations, is slanderous prejudicing the reputation of an organization or a citizen, if there is a mistake, the mistake must be corrected or there must be an apology.

Article 7: Mass media agencies have the following rights:

- Give constructive opinions and to adhere to the path, policy plans and policies of the Party and the laws of the State.
Propose that organizations supply correct, accurate, and timely news, and [those organizations] must ensure the substance of such.

Propose that individuals or organizations respond in writing to questions and submissions from the people sent to the mass media or that are discovered [by the mass media agency] itself.

If an investigation is pending or a judgement has not been issued in respect of which an organization involved in legal proceedings does not authorize the publication [of relevant information], the mass media agency and mass media personnel have the right to give the news by relying on their own sources and will be liable at law [for any damages arising from unauthorized reporting].

-[The mass media are] not to disclose the names of individuals who supply news if the [mass media] are of the view that such person will suffer adverse consequences [as a result], except if there is a request from the head of the inspection committee [of] or [from] the head of the provincial people’s courts or equivalent courts and higher.

Personnel from mass media agencies have the right to receive enhancement of their knowledge [base] and the capacity in their specific technical areas and in policies [allowances to encourage] them to expand their abilities.

Chapter III
Organization and Activities of the Mass media

Article 8: To establish a mass media agency, one must send an application to the Ministry of Information and Culture. The following must be stated clearly in that application:

-Name, ideals, purpose, objective, [and] area [to be] served, to conform with the roles and duties of the agency that will host [the applicant].

-The bureau chief must meet all standards and fulfil all conditions;

-The mass media bureaus must have funds and basic technical materials to ensure mass media activities;

-For agencies at the provincial or prefectural level that are subject to the central [Government], when requesting approval to organize a mass media agency, there must be agreement from the head of the administrative authorities of that area agreeing and approving that the [application] completely fulfills the conditions and meets the standards and is in conformity with the mass media plans as provided for in that locality.

Article 9: Mass media agencies must have licenses from the Ministry of Information and Culture before they can operate. If the [Ministry of Information and Culture] does not issue a license, the Ministry of Information and Culture must respond and clearly state the reason [for such rejection].

Article 10: The printing foundation must ensure proper performance in conformity with an agreement, it is prohibited to print a newspaper without a license or to reprint a newspaper whose distribution is prohibited.

-The technical basis and broadcast frequency must ensure a broadcast area in conformity with the frequency provided.
Article 11: [For all] newspapers and informational sheets printed and distributed, 1 copy must be submitted to the State administrative agency for inspection and safekeeping, 1 copy to the library, given to the inspection agency of the State as instructed by the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Article 12: Mass media agencies shall be established and can themselves distribute or assign some [other] organization [or] a registered individual, to distribute Lao information sheets, newspapers and other magazines abroad. The importing of newspapers, information sheets, magazines from abroad into Laos and the recording of audio, visual, radio broadcasts, [and] Lao satellite transmitted television broadcasts, including foreign [broadcasts] in Laos, must have a license from the Ministry of Information and Culture before being able to operate.

Article 13: -Mass media agencies who have received permission to advertise goods, broadcast goods advertisements, make entertainment notices, post obituaries . . (abbreviated as "goods advertising") and can receive money for that advertisement. Costs arising from goods advertising services are subject to provisions issued by the Ministry.

- Goods advertising must be separate from general news reports and [must have] proper and legal contents, [and must] be in an appropriate proportion as instructed by the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Article 14: Agencies and citizens seeking to convene news conferences must have first notified and have adhered to the instructions of the Ministry of Information and Culture. The contents of new conferences cannot violate Articles 5, 6, and 7 of this Decree.

Article 15: Mass media agencies (Ministry of Information and Culture, provinces, the prefecture or other domestic bureaus and Lao agency offices abroad that carry out mass media duties for propagandizing within the scope of their own works) is where news dispatches are made as referred to in Article 1 of this Decree.

-The mass media agency bureau chiefs must comprise of one Lao national who is resident in Laos, with a university level or equivalent education, having been a newspaper professional or having worked no fewer than 5 years in this field, be qualified, and have good political standing.

Chapter IV

Administration of the Decree and the Mass Media

Article 16: For uniform administration of the mass media throughout the country, the Ministry of Information and Culture is the agency representing the Government and administering the mass media and has the duty and the [following] scope of rights:

-To draft determinative plans, plans to expand the duties of the mass media, material and technical plans, investment [plans], budget [plans], [and] plans for building up and strengthening mass media personnel.

-To issue provisions and regulations and orders regarding mass media activities.

-To withdraw or cancel mass media operations licenses, special additional licenses to print and distribute, additional copies for State newspapers, socio-political organizations at the central, provincial or prefectural levels.
[transpose]

-Cancel [and] prohibit the illegal distribution of newspapers, order the cessation of illegal mass media agency activities.

-Control and inspect newspapers and copies.

-Advise and organize, inspect mass media activities according to [their] licenses, declare and apply measures to prevent illegal activities by the mass media.

-Organize news dispatches and responses to questions submitted by mass media agencies.

-Control the activities of newspapers and newspaper people throughout the country, coordinate with relevant agencies, control the activities of newspapers of the Lao PDR in respect of foreign affairs and newspaper activities of foreign organizations and individuals in the Lao PDR.


-Sign binding international cooperation contracts within the field of mass media, control the international activities of mass media agencies throughout the country.

Article 17: Information and culture divisions of the prefecture are agencies assisting the Provincial Governor. The Prefectural Mayor controls the mass media within his locality and has the following duties:

-To assist the provincial and prefectural administrative authorities in studying and drafting activities plans for the mass media at that locality as instructed by the Ministry of Information and Culture.

-To adhere to the provisions, resolutions, orders and the policy plans of the Ministry of Information and Culture relative to the mass media.

Article 18: The Government has an investment plan to ensure the [provision of] basic technical materials to [assist the] mass media in [fulfilling its] service obligations. Assist in selecting any monies for radio and television broadcasts, political newspapers, foreign propaganda newspapers, scientific techniques, newspapers to serve young people with price subsidies, to reimburse expenses, or to remit budgetary income based upon the difference between income and expenses.

-If there is income from the State, this will facilitate the strengthening of working conditions and the living standards of mass media personnel.

Article 19: Mass media bureau chiefs are editors (news, newspapers) or directors (radio and television broadcasts).

Article 20: Newspaper personnel are editors, reporters, personnel responsible for the substance of news articles [and] news broadcasts for which they are responsible that are being undertaken by the mass media in the Lao PDR.

-Newspaper personnel must be Lao nationals, and have the duty to regularly stay in the Lao PDR, while carrying out activities or regularly working at any mass media bureau and shall receive a press card after having worked for 1 year.

-Newspaper personnel have the duty to perform properly according to the objectives of their responsibility, [within] the scope of rights of the mass media agency as provided for in
Articles 56, 6, and 7 of this Decree in conformity with division of duties within the agency where one works.

-Newspaper personnel and reporters have the right to use and to submit their press cards to bureaus, agencies, institutes, ministries, or other places in order to collect data and news and to fully carry out their professional duties.

-Reporters who have received invitations to participate in and to conduct their professional activities at a meeting, that is [an] official [meeting], by receiving guests of the State and of socio-political organizations, to hear the consideration and decision-making in public [court] cases, to collect news, to conduct interviews (to take photographs, to shoot footage, videos, audio recordings) and have received facilitation to conduct their profession duties, have received privileges in buying transportation tickets, in sending telexes, [and the] timely dispatching of news articles with bureau personnel.

Article 21: The Newspapers Association is a professional agency for those undertaking mass media activities (provided for in Article 20) [and] has the right and the duty to participate in the building up of and the contribution to the performance of mass media policy to protect the proper and legal rights and benefits of newspaper personnel.

-The organization and the activities of the association shall be governed by specific regulations and must be registered with the State Mass Media Control Agency.

Chapter V

Awards [for those who are Productive] and Measures [to be Applied to] Offenders

Article 22: Agencies, organizations, and citizens who are productive in their mass media activities shall receive awards according to State regulations.

Article 23: Directors or editors (news, newspapers, radio and television broadcasts), mass media host agencies are directly responsible for the successes or offenses committed by their members.

Article 24: Mass media agencies and other organizations [and/or] citizens who violate the provisions of their operating licenses, in respect of the contents of the news and other provisions in this Decree shall be punished according to the seriousness of the violation, i.e.: warned, fined, have products seized, such as cassettes, compact discs, video cassettes, photographic film, have their distribution activities halted temporarily or have their licenses withdrawn as provided for by law.

Article 25: Those responsible for any organization or individual that violates provisions in Article 23 or Article 24, shall be punished according to the seriousness of the violation, i.e.: disciplined, fined, or considered criminally liable.

Chapter VI

Final Provisions

Article 26: The Ministry of Information and Culture is assigned to expand and implement this Decree.

Article 27: The Office of the Prime Minster, ministries, and ministry-equivalent organizations and administrative agencies at all levels have the duty to participate in the implementation [of this Decree] according to their respective roles.
Article 28: This Decree is effective from the date of its signature onward.

Vientiane, date [NO DATE]

Prime Minister

[NO SEAL, NO SIGNATURE]
### Appendix B. List of Licensed Businesses in Telecommunications Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Company/Enterprise</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lao Star</td>
<td>Satellite Operations for Lao Star Satellite</td>
<td>Thailand and Laos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Asia Pacific Electronics (Laos)</td>
<td>Paging</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lao-China International Radio-TV Development</td>
<td>Radio-TV Development</td>
<td>PR China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societe de Telecom Aeronautiques (SITA)</td>
<td>Information &amp; Telecom Services</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. IBC Lao</td>
<td>Broadcasting</td>
<td>Thailand and Laos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lao Shinawatra Telecom Co., Ltd.</td>
<td>Telecommunication Services</td>
<td>Thailand and Laos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Telstra International Representative Office</td>
<td>Representative Office</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. NKC</td>
<td>Satellite Installation</td>
<td>Thai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Phongsavan</td>
<td>Telecommunications systems and equipment sales, installation, and repair</td>
<td>Lao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Loxstar</td>
<td>Satellite Installation</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Vientiane Shending</td>
<td>Telecommunications equipment sales and installation</td>
<td>PR China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C. List of Authorized Internet Service Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Company/Enterprise</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. GlobeCom (via arrangement with Lao wire service &quot;Khao San Pathet Lao&quot; (KPL))</td>
<td>Internet service provider</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Science Technology and Environment Organization</td>
<td>Internet service provider</td>
<td>Government agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
Pan Laos
Workshop and Report on Information Technology in Laos
10-17 August 1995
PAN-LAOS

A workshop and report on Information Technology in Laos.
Proceeding from the first "Lao Internet Technology Seminar"
10-17 August 1995 Vientiane Laos PDR

Sponsored by IDRC
Facilitated by Lao STENO
Presented by LaoNet
Seminar team:
IDRC: Maria Ng Lee Hoon, David Lewis
LaoNet: Soupha Muangkhot, Mark Prado, Houmphanh Thongvilu

by
Houmphanh Thongvilu
30 January, 1996
(with Jul 96 updates)

The views expressed in this report are those of the seminar facilitators and the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the International Development Research Centre. Material contained in this report is produced as submitted and has not been subjected to peer review or editing by staff of IDRC.

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1. FOREWORD

The use of the terms Laos and Lao in the report follow a common practice in Lao, which may be confusing for non Lao accustomed reader. Laos means the country, and Lao can refer to the language or the people.
This report is a contribution to IDRC PAN-ASIA Asian countries IT survey and report, under PAN-LAOS project. The report is of a wider scope in a context of social political nature, as to reflect perceived problems that exist in introducing a new technology of global intercommunication for the masses, the Internet, to Laos. The short and hurried timetable of the August seminar had only provided a broad answer to the problem. It is hoped that when an intermediate electronic mail service is available, it would permit direct participation from Laos, allowing the total team to meet the challenge of achieving full Internet connectivity for Laos.

Apology for the delay in report writing due to Houmphanh personal commitment.

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Appreciation of IDRC sponsorship to enable the August seminar to be realised, IDRC: Maria Ng Lee Hoon, David Lewis.

Equally, much appreciated support and assistance from:

Lao STENO: Dr Souli Nanthavong, Somphone Phanousith, Pho Muangnalad, Nheune Sisavad, STENO team.

NECTEC/ThaiSarn of Thailand: Hugh Thaweesak Koanantakool, ThaiSarn team.

Chulalongkorn University: Dr. Sutham, Khanit Wattanavichien, Montree Suntichaikul

Monash University International: Brian Corbitt.

LaoNet: Mark Prado, Craig Rice, especially LaoNet Lao government liaison Europe team, Somphone Manixab (OPEC Swiss-Laos), Soupha Muangkhot, Sourythep Samoutphonh.

CISCO USA has pledged a donation of a router 2511.

III. DISCLAIMER

Much effort was taken to compile a fair and accurate report, it is however influenced by personal view. The content does not reflect the views of other organisations or members, who may or may not agree with certain points expressed in this report. It is a gathering of data, thoughts and views shared by many.
Houmphanh Thongvilu

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IV. SUMMARY

The reader should be aware of Laos political circumstance, complex parallel and direct consequences of the Vietnam war. The effort of connecting Laos onto the global Internet had been explored for over a year by an overseas group of expatriates, LaoNet "A global network of Lao human resource" addressing to Lao issues on project to project basis. The group deeply appreciates IDRC's support in helping to realise a long overdue field study and a seminar on the technology of Internet. The main objective was to sensitise and demystify Internet to the Lao policy makers and technocrats, to enable the authority to make an informed decision with regards to public Internet use in Laos. At times, with a war time suspicion the Lao government seems overly cautious, and frustrating to work with. Nevertheless it was felt that Laos is politically stable, and ready. The net benefit will justify the effort, when knowing Lao peers have a capability to reach out to the world more easily. The existing infrastructure is certainly adequate to support an Internet connection, initially, to the capital Vientiane where there is a good concentration of foreign communities, government offices and institutions to sustain an Internet connection. In the longer term, Vientiane will be a centre of training and propagating Internet to other part of Laos. The report does not cover private data communication networks as used in banks, airlines and major international organisations, which presently either operate over telephone and leased lines or via a satellite network. There has been some 'pirate' Internet hub tested over a period in Laos via telephone dialling, but to date no permanent hub is known, except LaoNet's FidoNet hub at the National Polytechnic Institute (NPI). LaoNet's effort is concentrated on working with the government in developing a public Internet system in Laos.

During the August seminar, a survey (Appendix D) was also conducted, to gather numerical data to help assess the level of demand and readiness of Lao Information Technology (IT) communities for the Internet connection. It is now more convincing than ever that the awaited catalyst is a political signal, a legal
authorisation of Internet use, coupled with stimulating commercial mechanics to enable Internet to take hold and find its place in the new Laos. Technically connecting Laos is very possible; the business and private sector are ready to invest in suitable technology of Internet to meet the demand of Laos IT customers.

Laos Information Technology status was initially conceived remotely from information received from the public, and it was generally confirmed by the August seminar and subsequent discussions with various entities and individuals.

Lao IT industry lags extremely far behind most of the advanced South East Asian countries such as Thailand, through years of neglect and the effect of the Western technology sanction against communist block countries. Until recently, Lao IT exposure was limited to simple IBM PC based word processors. There is no significant number of other general purpose computer in Laos, apart from IBM PC systems.

The handling of Lao information is complicated by the inability of hardware to deal with Lao script, requiring proficient users to have English language as a prerequisite. A critical lack of computer technology reading material in Lao further restricts the development of a user base, who depends largely on Thai reading material. Lao system development is at the moment piggybacked onto Thailand whose development of a Thai system with Thai script being similar to Lao. The recent boom of IBM PC technology, its advanced graphics capability and peripherals, is enabling Lao characters to be handled more easily and affordable. Laos since has been compiling and building a Lao database of information, namely under the supervision of Lao Science Technology, Environment National Organisation (STENO). STENO had established several IT library services for institutions to use, and had worked with Thailand's Chulalongkorn University to produce a DOS based wordprocessor called "CU Lao wordprocessor".

STENO had commissioned a Thai private company to develop a Lao desktop publishing package, LaoWin similar to ThaiWin, which is based on PageMaker software. Microsoft Windows with Lao fonts forms the main platform for Lao Information system. LaoNet had contributed five TrueType Font (TTF) sets in the public domain use to encourage Lao use on computers for PC, MAC and X (BDF) platforms. National Polytechnic Institute (NPI) had started experimenting with Linux PC based Unix systems. There is no other system or work done researching and developing a Lao system to more effectively handle Lao language across platforms. One approach developed by LaoNet is with the use of "Lao Romanisation for Transliteration" (LRT) scheme. With a utility called "JakPaa" it is possible to convert LRT text to Lao, and it would also be possible to transcribe Lao script to LRT. Such scheme would find practical use in the world of electronic communication, to enable mail dialogue in Lao language.
A significant contribution to Lao wordprocessing is Laos Win or LSWIN, a Lao script for MSWIndows platform by Dr. John and Marc Durdin of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

Data sharing is limited to a small number of sites with Ethernet based Novell Local Area Network (LAN) system. Data communication knowledge is limited, remote dial via modem is foreign to local users, who however have quickly grasped the concept of global information sharing and are eagerly awaiting the means.

PC systems are mostly locally assembled with sub systems imported from Singapore and Taiwan. Local support is limited. The slow and limited exposure to computer systems information, trends and problems, cripples Laos computer knowledge. This problem is highlighted by, for example, a lack of effective tools to control PC computer viruses, frustrating many end users. Low volume and demand mean some repair need to wait for simplest spare parts to arrive from overseas. The overall problem is exacerbated by the need to cut cost, resulting in the use of lower quality parts and sub systems, affecting systems reliability and discouraging serious users. Unfavourable taxing system of anything 'foreign' encourages complete closed systems importation, under projects plan and machinery capital investment. Other government practices encourage delivery of turnkey tax free systems, breeding no incentive to fully develop local know how.

Trained technical staff is limited, many are foreign trained but having long worked in a restricted environment the knowledge base had been eroding and staff would require an updated training of current art. Considering the low volume of (1000) PCs in Laos, and a small number of proficient staff, it would be more practical to encourage the development of a single centre of expert support, until such time when demand and number would justify otherwise, which is estimated to be some 2 to 5 years.

The reality of commercialisation of Internet, as a mean for Internet to sustain itself, as a national resource should be viewed favourably, and should not be regarded as a revenue raising source. However the small Lao market size will probably not support a large number of Internet Service Providers (ISPs), but it is important for the Lao authority to avoid a monopoly situation developing. Internet is a world public resource, and its spirit lives in an open competitive environment. Competition would encourage local industry to adding value and create a more diverse service.

Being a late starter has benefited Laos, in that PCs purchased are mainly i486 or Pentium high disk capacity systems. The newly acquired telephone system provides Laos, specifically Vientiane with 64Kbps (ISDN) capability at kerb side for digital communication over telephone line. The national microwave based
telecommunication infrastructure will make remote interconnection possible for future expansion of information sharing with provinces. The geographical land hub of Laos interconnecting South East Asia will further advance Laos as part of the area development, especially land based infrastructure such as fibre optic global network. An improved computer communication will not only benefit local industry but also bring about Laos contribution to the world, for instance the feed of news from Laos KPL to the world news grid will enrich all.

For a country with excess power to sell, Laos suffers from effective power delivery to the homes. Illegal wiring, power stealing and poor line maintenance result in poor power condition, 30% of repair is contributed to power supply failure. Power line conditioner and uninterrupted power supply (UPS) unit should be mandatory for critical systems.

The foreign communities in Laos who are used to effective means of telecommunication are being starved and crippled in conducting their business and programs without the effective tool of electronic mail and ready global data access. As a newly country opening to the world and thus communicating with the world, it relies heavily on more costly traditional telephone and fax in doing business. Cost is blamed for the sometimes 'lack' of communication with Lao business people and officials, not so often blamed on a lack of world standard work ethics and practices. This topic was well covered during the seminar; that technology development needs to be met with equal development in human resource, sensitively, with awareness of investment and development of the total social capital.

The seminar was well received, a success. The new 'open' policy of the Lao P.D.R. has been timely with the warming of the global cold war. The liberalising and implementation of the government market economy reforms, is urging Laos to acquire a minimum set of tools equal to Laos' trading partners, to compete sees the need to reach out onto the global information super highway. The Lao government welcome such initiative. It is acknowledged that Internet availability to the public and business is a political issue rather than a technical problem. Lack of finance to build the needed infrastructure complicates the matter. The need and the desire are real but are somewhat of a lower priority on the national agenda.

The seminar succeeded in demystifying what is Internet to the policy makers. It convinced the technocrats that such tool is essential for the development of Laos and Lao global communities. It showed an affordable way to tap onto the total Lao global human resource to assist in developing the country.

A consensus was reached at the seminar. All delegates urged the government to strive to achieve Internet connectivity at government institutions and business as soon as possible. The implementation, and the introduction of this new and radical
tool will be phased in a controlled manner. STENO will continue to be the national coordination centre, in cooperation with LaoNet and other organisation, such as IDRC in:

- Assessing and planning a controlled introduction of an immediate Internet connection into Laos starting with a UUCP feed system.
- Leading up to a full Internet connection via a 64Kpbs leased line to possibly Thailand NECTEC in a medium term usage of 2 to 3 years.
- Approaching Thailand NECTEC and TOT, via an existing Thai-Lao Cooperation Committee to collaborate and assist in boot stating Lao Internet, such as developing a Thai-Lao aid package for funding of a leased line, and training.
- Developing a local industry and a support group, capable of maintaining up to date technology.
- Expanding and building a cost effective self sustaining system and network infrastructure to meet with future growth.
- Continually improving and developing quality services for customers.
- Expanding the network into the provinces using Vientiane as a base for internal training.
- Identifying and seeking source of direct aid from various donor countries and companies.
- Marketing and further developing a user base in Laos.
- Promoting and increase Laos exposure to the world with the use of the Internet World Wide Web technology and tools.

1. INTRODUCTION

The report is intended to provide an overview Information Technology and computer industry of Laos in general. The information is most relevant to the effort of achieving a Lao self-sustainable Internet connectivity. The research and gathering of information have been conducted at a distance, over a year (1994-1995) and it was generally substantiated by direct discussion with relevant Lao government departments during the 10-17 August 1995 "Lao Internet Technology Seminar" conducted by LaoNet, in Vientiane, capital of Laos.

The seminar was sponsored by IDRC Pan Asia Networking Program Initiative, and was facilitated by Science, Technology, Environment National Organisation (STENO), a government department. A team of three LaoNet members and two IDRC staff members were on hand. The seminar was supported by Thailand National Electronic and Communication Technology, Environment Commission (NECTEC) and Chulalongkorn University computer resources as gateways onto the Internet for a demonstration of the Internet resource. Monash University International provided outline of remote campus course work on human resource development.
The objectives of the August seminar were to:

- Explain IDRC PAN-ASIA/ PAN-LAOS project and proposal.
- Demystify Internet to the Lao policy makers.
- Explain what is Internet and conduct workshop
- Demonstrate of the Internet resources.
- Raise technology and human resource awareness.
- Survey and assess the needs and readiness of Lao Information Technology community
- Assess the level of Information Technology usage and the penetration of PC in Laos.
- Identify the potential user base.
- Identify a potential support group.
- Discuss the issue of commercialisation of Internet Service.
- Investigate and gather information on existing infrastructure, to support the connectivity.
- Assist STENO team in developing proposals for Internet connectivity.

Chapter 2. Background, gives an overview of Laos' economic, social and political status. It describes how the working party came together and how the PAN-LAOS project was developed.

Chapter 3. Methodology, highlights the work involved thus far. Initial Lao government lobbying, pre-seminar work and the August seminar.

Chapter 4. Finding, compiles the result and data.

Chapter 5. Report, gives an analysis of the data and a summary of the situation.

Chapter 6. Recommendation, is a compilation of action plans to achieve Lao Internet connectivity and public access.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Where is Laos?

Laos is the only landlocked South East Asian country, a natural land hub interconnecting China, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. A recent survey recorded a population of 4.5 million, with 16.5% illiteracy rate (government's figure). The Laos People Democratic Republic was proclaimed in December 1975, with the change of political balance in South East Asia (Vietnam war). Laos is a member of the socialist communist block countries, of a single central controlled government. The gross National product is estimated to be $250.00 per capita ('95 figure, inflation rate at 20%). Mainly a subsistence economy, its natural resource remains mostly unexploited and untapped. Laos is a
poor and isolated developing country, which had suffered much from the misfortune of war and neglect. Remote and removed from the world, little is known about the infrastructure of the country. The problem was made worst with significant brain drain due to political retribution after the war (1975), with some 300000 people fleeing the country.

Since 1979, as the communist model showed signs of poor performant, economically, it became a preoccupation of eastern block governments to look at market economy reforms to address to public discontentment, demands and expectation. The 'JinTanarKarnMhei' or the 'New mechanic policy' was designed to gain the population's confidence, and set new path to encourage foreign investment. The change to economy driven policy saw compromises in other hard line policies, however national sovereignty and security continue to dominate decision making.

Today Laos still depends largely on foreign aid, and since the communist block can no longer sustain such support, Laos is looking more and more to the Western world for assistance. With a chapter of the global cold war closed, Laos is beginning to venture cautiously into the open world, learning as it goes due to a lack of human resource and know how to deal with the new world. The desire of Laos to catch up with the world, has influenced many liberal reforms. The government has adopted a more conciliatory position in an effort to call on Lao expatriate overseas community to help develop the country. It recognises the potential contribution of Lao total human resource outside the country, now of a significant number of higher educated professionals, bonded by patriotism. To cultivate such productive partnership requires goodwill from all parties, to work together and take initiatives.

2.2 At the beginning.

In early 1994 a group of regular Internet Usenet electronic bulletin board 'Soc.Culture.Laos', which is a forum for discussion of Lao affairs. The group was drawn together all convinced of the value of Internet as a resource to be shared. Its possibility as a vehicle to promote, preserve and to share Lao culture; with Lao people, inside the country, the expatriate communities and foreigner. As observed in other models of Internet use, the exchange of views breeds better understanding and tolerance. It dissolves distance, barriers of ignorance and tension. Vast world resources are readily available, an invaluable data bank needed for the development of the country and its people. The improved process of dissemination of information will encourage trust, and dialogue leading to a better working relationship and cooperation. In such favourable atmosphere of partnership, empower the Lao people, to draw on the total Lao global resource to work on resolving Lao issues as they arise, in parallel with other conventional processes. It is generally acknowledged that politically, economically and socially Laos and Lao people will benefit from the Internet cost effective
intercommunication for the masses.

Laos does not have Internet connectivity. This led the group to investigate ways on how to realise such connectivity, 'Lao Internet node' project was conceived. A group called LaoNet was formed, based mainly on electronic mail (Email), consisting of a few Lao expatriates across the world. LaoNet is not a microcosm of Lao communities, but rather an affordable linkage of many resources to realise a common vision, relying on goodwill and voluntary work by members. Mail is forwarded and distributed via a mailing list. The group soon was overwhelmed with offer of assistance from many quarters, Lao and foreigners alike. To foster such goodwill from all and diverse sources, LaoNet was expanded with a charter to welcome all well wishers to truly become "A global network of Lao Human resource", on the 28 October 1994.

LaoNet is a project oriented entity. It therefore is a multiple partnered working group. LaoNet is actively, keenly seeking and developing new projects relevant to Lao communities as the prime objective.

2.3 IDRC PAN-LAOS project

LaoNet 'Lao Internet node' project led us to the International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) regional office in Singapore. IDRC is a Canadian government sponsored organisation. Which shares a common goal of interconnecting Laos and other developing countries on the Internet. IDRC PAN-ASIA project aims to promote research through the sharing of information in Asia and in the world, aided by technology such as the Internet. PAN-ASIA is assisting in the Internet connectivity of many countries of Asia, Laos is the last few countries of the region to achieve connectivity.

The development of the IDRC PAN-LAOS project involved LaoNet, in order to draw on the team's Lao language support and natural understanding of the culture, combine with an inside awareness of the impact of such technology on Lao people. Besides, LaoNet had succeeded in lobbying the Lao government and had gained Lao Cabinet approval to investigate Lao connectivity on the government's behalf.

2.4 First public Internet electronic mail service in Laos.

To further enhance participation in the project from Laos, without having to depend on costly standard fax and telephone communication, LaoNet had established the first public email service in Laos, at the National Polytechnic Institute in December 1994, using a Fidonet technology system that is served by dialling out to Permanet.org host in Washington DC in America. It was intended as an experimental email service, that would service the group as well as 'test' the email system. However mixed result was achieved due to a lack of support and
understanding at high level of the use of the resource. Nonetheless it provided NPI with valuable introduction to an Email system. The Lao Science, Technology and Environment National Organisation (STENO), is presently taking charge of the internal coordination.

2.5 Moving into top gear

LaoNet, and IDRC's long working relationship with Laos' STENO form a partnership to fast track the project and gives much promise to Lao Internet connectivity. To sensitize Internet, and to gain relevant data, LaoNet was sponsored by IDRC to conduct the first "Lao Internet Technology Seminar" in Vientiane 10-17 August 1995.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Initial work

The August seminar is the result of a year long behind the scene lobbying the Lao government. The late coming of face-to-face discussion and on site data gathering was hampered by lack of financial support due to the volunteer nature of operation of LaoNet. The situation is not helped by the cautious and some time almost paranoia position of the Lao government. A picture of Lao infrastructure was constructed remotely, from information forwarded by LaoNet members and the Internet community. Much from Lao public servants whilst on training abroad, other source was from visiting and returning Lao expatriates and foreigners, working in Laos under various projects.

There was the need to work directly with people in Laos, to assess and gather relevant data accurately without having to resort to expensive traditional means of fax and telephone communication, the very objective of Internet connectivity. LaoNet started to investigate setting up an Email service in Laos. An intermediate step, but part of the full Internet service. After having identified Lao National Polytechnic Institute (NPI) being a well equipped institution, with adequate resource to support such service, LaoNet member Mark Prado, an Internet consultant working in Bangkok (Thailand), while on a visit to Laos made contact with NPI, conducted a demonstration and established the first Email service into Laos in December 1994 using a MSDOS based FidoNet technology.

However full Laos participation and usage of the NPI Email resource was not fully achieved due to the lack support and understanding at higher authority, a chicken and egg issue. None the less NPI staff had gained some invaluable exposure to an Email system.

Lack of fund for the telephone physical link dial out to the Permanet.org in Washington DC further restricted the frequency of use (higher throughput and
reliability was achieved by dialling to the US). Permanet.org is providing Internet mail store and forward service at no cost for dial in, thanks to Mark's association with Permanet.

LaoNet lobby of Lao diplomats on visit to Europe continued to be more successful. Lao government clearance for the seminar was also lobbied. Credit goes to Swiss-Laos OPEC with Somphone, Sourythep and Soupha being LaoNet Lao government liaison people, a truly global team work effort.

3.2 Pre-seminar preparation

3.2.1 Laos IP address.

LaoNet had applied and obtained from the Asia Pacific Network Internet Centre (APNIC) for a designate country Internet Protocol (IP) class B address (202.58.0.0) with top level domain's name .LA, which will permit Laos to allocate some sixty four thousand sub addresses to users. STENO was named as the network administrative body, with NPI being a secondary support and further technical support from the US and Australia LaoNet members. As for Domain Name Server (DNS), the first server was intended to be NECTEC and the backup server to be St.Olaf in the US.

In any case all the listing (apart from IP address) can be changed on notice to APNIC by named administrative bodies.

3.2.2 Seminar planning

Help with preparing for the seminar was sought from various source of expertise, from individuals who had worked on similar project in the area; such as Andrew Garton from Pegasus who did a survey of Cambodia, Rob Hurle from COOMBS from Australia National University (ANU) who was involved in setting up the Vietnam Internet, Robert Elz (kre) from Melbourne University who helped establish Thailand's Internet, Hugh Thaweesak Kaonantakool from Thailand NECTEC/ThaiSarn, and of course from IDRC team members.

It was acknowledged from the outset that Lao Internet connectivity and usage is a political issue, only the Lao government can realise it on the public scale. Thus, the August session was targeted at the policy makers to raise the level of awareness and understanding of Internet amongst the potential users and technocrats.

To overcome the language barrier and achieve a broader impact, it was decided the seminar would be conducted in Lao. The non existence of Internet training material in Lao meant much preparation failed on seminar LaoNet members. The agenda was developed jointly with IDRC, with emphasis on the importance of
technological advancement to be met with equal human development; such as work ethic and practices of world standard. Human resources development falls well onto Monash University with much remote campus material already available in Australia. Monash University International's Vientiane University College could provide course work quality assurance.

Based on a draft agenda sent to STENO, a seminar timetable and invitation was organised.

The team had prepared World Wide Web (WWW) pages for Netscape Web program, PC presentation software and pre-prepared documents on portable PCs, and on transparency. IDRC came prepared with a PC overhead projector that it intended to leave it behind for STENO use. Equipment necessary for the demonstration was all imported, such as modems down to telephone wire, connectors and clips.

3.2.3 Thailand support

Whilst on transit in Bangkok, Soupha and Houmphanh met with Hugh Thaweesak Kaonantakool, Director of ThaiSarn and a ThaiSarn team, to confirm discussion of points already covered in emails. The Lao seminar objectives were explained, and the mention of possible further NECTEC assistance was explored. NECTEC/ThaiSarn is working under the government mandate of science and technology cooperation with neighbouring countries. The NECTEC assistance to LaoNet/IDRC team during the seminar, was to assist with the demonstration by providing computer resource as a gateway onto the Internet. Thailand is the logical and most practical connection point for Laos to get onto the Internet network. Thailand and Laos has a similar scheme for international telephone trunk interconnection. For a backup gateway, arrangement was made with Chulalongkorn University, the cooperation was confirmed at a meeting with Dr. Southam, Montree Suntichaikul and Khanit Wattanavichien. The final fall back position would be to dial to the IDRC server in Singapore.

3.3 Work in Laos

(Working hours: Morning 8:00a.m to 11:30a.m. Afternoon 2:00p.m to 5:00p.m)

□ Thursday 10 August Noon

The seminar team was received at Wattay Airport by STENO welcoming party and taken to the Asia Pavilion hotel.

Afternoon Introductory meeting and briefing to Director of STENO and Lao project (3 hrs) coordinator Nheune Sisavad and Somluay of STENO and Soupha and Houmphanh.
Friday 11 Aug

Morning

Meeting with STENO team of members: Nheune Sisavad, Miss Sisavan, Dr. Viengsavan, Samano, Somlouay.

Work on final workshop agenda, discussion, assess needs and desire, drafting session of a wish list. Site testing and preparation,

Afternoon 2 teams:

Mark & David, site preparation and testing.

Maria, Soupha and Houmphanh, meeting with:

Somlith Phouthonesy, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Communications, Transports, Posts and Construction.

Papdaphet Sayakhot, Deputy Director of Laos Enterprise of Telecommunication.

to gain Laos telecommunication infrastructure information.

Saturday 12 Aug

Morning

Mark & David, site preparation and testing. Informal training of STENO staff.

Maria, Soupha and Houmphanh; meeting with computer suppliers to ascertain information on the level of computer penetration in Laos. Three were organised but the time available only permitted a visit to two main suppliers:

1. Sanouk Chounlamany, General manager of MicroTec.
2. Daovone Phachanthavong, General manager of Accounting Consultancy.

Afternoon

Mark & David, site preparation and testing. Informal training of STENO staff.

Test dial to NECTEC, Chulalongkorn (Bangkok) and IDRC (Singapore).

Maria, Nheune, Sisavan, Viengsavan, Samano, Soupha and Houmphanh: further seminar planning, discussion of desire and needs. drafting of proposals.
Sunday 13 August Rest day (organised trip to NamNgum).

Monday 14 August

Morning

Private presentation for Somphone Phanousith, Deputy Director of Cabinet, (responsible of Science and Technology Policy) and Pho Muangnalad, Director of Lao Cabinet.

-IDRC PAN-ASIA project, LaoNet, Internet, WWW demo.

(Maria left VTE)

Afternoon

- Mark & David, site preparation and script testing. Informal training of STENO staff.


Tuesday 15 August, 1st day of the seminar.

Morning

- Opening by Pho Muangnalad.

- David Lewis introduced IDRC PAN-ASIA project.

- Houmphanh explained LaoNet and projects.

- Followed by live Web demonstration.

(David left VTE)

Afternoon

- Technical (Houmphanh) 'What is Internet', network (Soupha), and more live demonstration (Mark).

Wednesday 16 August

Morning
Human issues: Human resources, local and global. Work ethics and practices, staff development (Houmphanh and Soupha).

Afternoon

Future issues: NGO, development, cooperation, 'Face to Face' project (Houmphanh and Soupha).

- Thursday 17 August

Morning

- Summary, consensus reached.

- Questions and answers.

- Closing by Somphone Phanousit. Deputy Director of Lao Cabinet.

All government sixteen ministries (Appendix B) were invited with each ministry sending two representatives, additionally there were commercial and business participants, altogether totalling 35 participants. Australian ADAB officer, John Adams attended as an observer.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Survey and assess the needs and readiness of Lao Information Technology community

Of the total attendance (see Appendix B. List of attendees) of thirty seven, with two representatives from some department, twenty four completed a questionnaire which was in Lao and English (see Appendix D) handout:

Personal Detail (optional)

18 returned with details, 6 have no names.

Organisation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Unkn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. All are local.

System usage

Do you have access to a computer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PC</th>
<th>MAC</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 94

Note. A Nox Data system at the Electricity Commission was mentioned.

Do you have your own computer?: 8

What do you use the computers for?:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wordprocessor</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Programming</th>
<th>Database</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What operating system do you use?:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOS /MSWindows</th>
<th>Mac</th>
<th>Unix</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

System maintenance

How is your system being maintained?:

Service department  Supplier  Other
### Number of direct support staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of staff</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Physical link

**Do you have a direct dial IDD telephone line?**

- **Yes**: 11
- **No**: 5
- **Don't**: 8

### What is your average monthly telephone bill?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Oversea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U$10-30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U$31-100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U$101-200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U$201-500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Note One computer supplier and other of his business quoted a combined telephone bill of US$2000.00/month.

General questions

If you currently have an Internet connection: Only one site answered yes

Who is your current service provider? Permanet.org

What charging rate per kilobyte are you accustomed to US$? International call rate.

If you do not yet have Internet connection

Would you be interested for immediate connection to the Internet?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If it is deferred, none deferred how long? (all skipped this question)

Would you be interested in setting up a redistribution hub?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What mail service delivery would you prefer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Real time</th>
<th>1/2-1hr</th>
<th>2-4hrs</th>
<th>1/2days</th>
<th>1-2 days</th>
<th>2-4 days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Payment

Would you be interested to pay in advance for a guaranteed service at a discounted rate?:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>no answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Assess the level of Information Technology usage, the penetration of PC in Laos.

It was ascertained that office of UNDP, Electricity Commission, Bureau of Statistic, NPI are the major sites with clusters of LAN networked PC's. There are some ten computer suppliers in Vientiane covering the whole Laos., of which 4 can be considered as wholesalers. Each wholesaler is estimated to move some 10 PCs per month, already doubling last year figure. As the standard of living increases it is expected the volume to increase at the same rate this financial year.

Currently there is some one thousand (1000) PCs in Laos, mainly in Vientiane; 60% in government department and educational institutes, 20% in business, 5% domestic and 15% of unknown.

PC usage is based on DOS/MSwindows Lao version, mainly for word processor using MSWord. Turbo C is used but the extent of software development could not be assessed, equally of DBase usage.

NPI had installed Linux on a cluster of PCs for investigation.

3.2 Identify potential user base.

Government and educational institutions are seen to be the major users of computer. The business sector only had begun to use computer, mainly for wordprocessing or conducting computer training school. The seminar had raised awareness of the use of computer for data communication such as for email and Fax, making computer an attractive all-in-one business tool. All are keen to acquire the newly discovered tool. As for the foreign community who is already aware of the tool, they await the government authorisation and the means.

3.4 Identify a potential support group.
Computer suppliers have more up to date information, but compared to other countries they operate on a smaller scale owing to Laos' market size. Government offices such as STENO and NPI holds the trained man power to set a computer support group. Ideally, one would see a seconding of trained staff from various departments to form a task force of expert support group. No doubt it would require some commercial interest to drive and setup the group. Laos' computer market size (1000) would be too small to be financially viable otherwise, in the short to medium term of 2 years.

3.5 Discuss the issue of commercialisation of Internet Service.

Commercialising of Internet is a reality, it was a well lobbied and acknowledged by the government. It is in line with government policy to encourage new technology industry to develop and be self reliant. However at this early stage, it is beyond the government grasp to formulate a suitable policy to guide the industry. Government officials hinted an introduction of Internet to Laos in a controlled manner, giving the authority time to fully analyse its impact.

3.6 Investigate and gather information on existing infrastructure, to support the connectivity.

Old telephone system

As far as Vientiane is concerned, the telephone availability is high. Domestic usage is restricted to the old exchange identifiable without country code phone number. It also serves the majority of government general offices. They are of poorer line quality and would probably only support data communication at a baud rate of no more than 1200bps. The system is not capable of direct dial out of the country or be polled from overseas. Overseas call from such system cost some Baht100/3 minutes (US$4.00) via a congested operator connection.

New telephone system

(*)The system was inaugurated in mid-1994 with 17200 automatic lines, funded by a $16.8 million loan from Japan. 34Mbits digital microwave backbone linking Vientiane with other major cities. Another segment links Luangprabang to Xai was funded by a grant from the French government, implemented in 1993 and put into service in July 1994. The Xai to LuangNamtha segment, was also funded by France and completed in June 1994, at the same time as the link between Kioukacham to Xiangkhouang. With the new system the availability of telephone jumped from 9693 (old system) to some 19,065 lines, an increase of 96.69%. The overseas was helped by a donation of a $990,000.00 34Mbits digital microwave link by Fujitsu in August 1993 to commemorate the opening of Thai-Lao friendship bridge. It is a 120 channels feed into the Thailand Telephone system at
NongKhai. The total system was enhanced with a new satellite link replacing the old HF radio link to HongKong in January 1995.

(* updated Jul 1996)

Selected government offices, business sector and people of influence have access to the new International Direct Dial (IDD) lines from a new digital exchange, with country code 856-21 for VTE. The lines have been tested to work well at rate up to 14.4kbps. It is worth noting that although Bangkok (BKK) is nearer, the line quality to BKK is poor, compared with dialling to the US with better result and effective throughput. The new digital system also provides Vientiane with ISDN 64kbps capability at the kerb side. Leased lines are available at US$1500/month. Currently, only three lines are used by banks and airline businesses. Standard IDD rate varies between US$1.20 and $1.50 per minute, including to BKK. Vientiane is also serviced by analogue and digital GSM mobile phone system.

The national 64kbps microwave link, covers major cities from north to south, carrying mainly telephone traffic. IDD has reached LuangPrabang, Laos second largest city, with (856) 71 code, however the extend of availability is not known.

Satellite option

Satellite 64kbps circuit is available from Intelsat at a cost of US$590/month. The virtual connection to anywhere in the world would then be possible. Satellite physical link, although possible to service Internet link, because of the delay in bouncing data up and down, the technology is more suitable for 'batched', stored and forward services such as UUCP feed. It is not suitable for real time services eg. for World Wide Web, the delay would make its use impractical. The delay will be even more intolerable during peak period due to the already congested demand on the satellite link. The link is already subscribed to by Lao telephone authority as a backup trunk for international telephone service.

Fibre optic cable

The government telecommunication authority has been approached by some international company involved in establishing around the world fibre optic network, to complete the missing link between HongKong and Singapore. It was spoken of a land based link via Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia and finally complete the world circuit in Singapore.

Power

For a country with excess power to sell, Vientiane and the whole of Laos suffers from the lack of effective power delivery to the homes. Domestic and general business still suffers from poor line condition, which contributes to the majority of electrical equipment failure. Power conditioning and uninterrupted power supply
(UPS) would be invaluable for critical computer system.

4. REPORT

4.1 Lao Government view

The government has a genuine need for new technology such as the Internet, realising the pressure of market economy demand of such tool in conducting business in the nineties. There has been similar precedent when Fax machines came to Laos. The government tried to control it, but today it has become an integral part of doing business. The government is aware of the negativity of Internet, at the same acknowledging the net benefit of Internet services. To further develop an appropriate policy, government officials had hinted the need for an introduction of Internet to Laos in a controlled manner, with STENO being the focal point of implementation. This would allow the government time to analyse the technology impact phase by phase. At the same time it would allow authorised users to gain hands on experience. The preliminary authorisation of Internet use will come in the form of a Lao Cabinet decree, starting with government ministries and educational communities, with keen flexibility for business sector and aid communities. The government is conscious of the reality and the need for the service to be self sustaining on a business basis. Such venture would help in financing and developing the required infrastructure. An alternative to achieve Internet connectivity with the Lao government incurring no cost would be some kind of foreign aid. Experience of Internet growth in other countries, has shown its potential to contribute and subsidise the educational sector and thus becoming an important national resource.

4.1.1 A sensitivity issue

Remanence of war time paranoia still persists in some official sector. It has been expressed that the Lao government would prefer Internet traffic transiting a trusted country. It was explained that in the virtual world of Internet, it is possible. However let us concentrate the effort on getting pass the first post of connectivity first. The luxury of choices can be explored at a later stage when the Lao government is more fully aware of all the options. The plain facts of this technology would dissolve fear of information blockade or tampering. It was explained that Internet is not a secured network, it is rather an open media for sharing information. Any sensitive material would go through existing normal channel. It was also clarified that Internet traffic can be made relatively more secure using encryption technology.

4.2 Infrastructure

4.2.1 Physical link
Laos, Vientiane specifically for this effort of Internet connectivity is highly Internet capable. The digital direct dial telephone system and leased lines availability are better than many parts of Thailand that has achieved 64kbps link onto the Internet.

4.2.2 Computer power

The advance of PC today dwarfs some computers of yesteryear that fully supported Internet. Today plug and play hardware and its reliability combined with well designed, robust operating systems and tools, permit Internet connectivity to the most remote parts of the world; Laos is more than Internet capable.

4.2.3 Resource; human and finance

Laos lacks the know how, which the government is working hard on building. There are many overseas trained staff who are well equipped to be trained for the task of looking after the Lao Internet network. Given the relative size of Lao network it will be possible to recruit a team of local experts. Once, a connection is made into the world information cyberspace, it will be possible for Laos to tap into the total Laos global network of support. Finance is a key issue and hard to resolve. Internet is of a lower level in the order of priority on the Lao government list. It therefore leaves no option for the commercial needs of the Internet to drive its infrastructure development. Proper government guiding will benefit all.

4.3 Commercial Internet viability

There is some urgency for Laos to gain valuable new technology exposure. Internet is the world largest library of information, ready for tapping. To achieve immediate Internet connectivity, without putting a burden on the government financially, it is unavoidable for Laos not to follow the path of commercialising Internet, on the basis of users pay. Commercial interest has the ability to realise and complete projects suitable to demand. However commercial interest may develop into protectionism of market share leading to a monopoly situation. A single control of Internet will be negative, and destroy the spirit of Internet, which strives in a free, open and sharing of information.

Base on the current market size (1000 PC's), given the good reception at the August seminar it is realistic to expect 20% of PC's owners (50 users) to subscribe to Internet service immediately. Discussion of US$40.00 subscription fee and a monthly charge of US$30.00, plus some volume charge of 15 cents per kilobyte for local users was well received. With Laos economy increasing at 8% pa, the doubling of PC's sale and ownership can be expected. It is likely the figure would double within 2 months to 100 subscribers. Once the official permission of use of the Internet is given by the government, within 6 months to a year, the demand
would flatten around 400 subscribers with total expected number of PC's to reach 2000. Within 2 years, the demand would be saturated at about 1500 subscribers of the total number of PC's of 7000 at the end of 1997. Note, that these are paying customers, excluding government and education institutions users. The government users should not be exempted from contributing to the cost of the service to build an appreciation of the resource.

It is not too optimistic either to forecast a doubling of the number of all subscriber figures.

4.4 Support

Given the market size of Laos and the small number of proficient support staff, it is expected that local experts will pool resources and develop a centralised support group, on some semi commercial basis. Once a reliable electronic mail service is established, Laos would no longer be isolated. Laos would have access to the total global network of support and expert advice.

Further discussion and size of local support group is discussed in the "recommendation's" section following.

4.5 Training

In the initial stage, a "train Lao trainers" phase would see the expansion of local know how. The most foreseeable need is in the training of

1. Unix operating system, required for Internet system operation, maintenance and network debugging.
2. When dealing with information, data would require proper planning of backup procedure and system restoration.
3. Internet applications are relatively user friendly, it however needs the support of proper documentation.
4. As far as hardware maintenance is concerned, today modular design of hardware makes field servicing relatively easy given access to logistic and proper handling practices. It is also important to avoid a single point of failure, where a critical systems failure can affect the total network. Therefore, selection of equipment should favour system of being totally supportable within Laos.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- It is imperative for Laos, that the effective authority in this case STENO to achieve electronic mail (Email) capability as soon as possible, in order to work with overseas partners on the project.
- It is important to emphasise on infrastructure building, flexible and
expandable to meet expected future growth of the network.

- To guarantee maximum up time of critical systems, installation **Uninterrupted Power Supplies (UPS's)** should be mandatory.

- Because of the isolation of Laos, it is critical for Lao computer industry to be able to support the total maintenance of equipment forming the backbone of the network. (To date, it is apparent that only PC hardware would meet this criteria.)

- Training is another critical component in making Lao Internet support self-reliant. As discussed in 4.5 "Training" section.

With these points in mind and limited resource, the different steps to achieve Lao Internet are as follows:

6.1 Intermediate

Implementation: FidoNet DOS based system similar to NPI to be setup at STENO. Giving STENO the capability to part take with overseas partners in finalising Laos Internet connectivity. If funding can be found, the hubs can be polled saving IDD cost with overseas rate driven down by competion in telephone services. Selected customer with needs and ability to pay can immediately be enrolled to contribute to the running cost of the system. Collection point for fees would be at the ISP end which services and feeds Laos.

Service available: Email, Fax, FTPmail, Gophermail, WAISmail.

(FTPmail (File Transfer Protocol), Gophermail, WAISmail (Wide Area Information Service) are Internet offline information retrieval tools from an email request sent to a server site which will return the requested information via email to the sender).

Equipment needed (Cost):

- 14.4kbps modem ($300.00)

- A dedicated IDD line (call cost if dial out).

- An ISP host (Permanet.org, special arrangement).

- Shareware software (free).

Time frame: Immediate.

Duration: To be replaced by phase 1 installation. FidoNet can be retained to provide cheap email service to the provinces.
Comment:

- It is intended as a mean of maintaining the momentum built up by the August seminar and demonstration.

- Familiarise Lao staff with an email system, and providing a platform for hands on training with STENO and NPI hubs intercommunicating over local telephone dialling.

(Although this step was completed during the August seminar, for some unknown reason the link has not been used. Various reasons were given: the hub awaits for a dedicated IDD line, the modem went faulty, staff do not know how to use it. It is most disappointing!)

6.2- Phase 1. Unix to Unix Copy Program (UUCP) system.

- Implementation The exchange of data (dialling for connection) will be set according to need and affordability. The Lao hub, will probably be located at STENO, and it will be connected to the world via a 14.4kbps modem. The system will be accessible by end users with account on the main system via a pool of modems. To minimise connection time and increase modem availability, end users should be encouraged to use offline email reader such as Eudora. It should also be favourably considered to implement localised hub using FidoNet email technology to further expand on email availability.

The exchange of information or 'feed' with a host system, is determined by the cost of international telephone calls. Arrangement will need to be finalised with a host system which will be Laos' Internet Service Provider such as NECTEC, SINGNET, Australian National University (ANU) or Monash University.

Commercialising the service should be expanded from the intermediate step.

Service available: Email, Fax, FTP-mail, Gophermail, WAISmail. This is not a full Internet connection.

Equipment needed (Cost):

- A multi user computer (????).

- A 14.4/28.8 kbps modem ($300).

- A pool of modems (rack mount 16 x $200) connected to local lines (and overseas).

- UUCP software (freely available).

- UUCP host(s) eg. NECTEC, IDRC, COOMBS, virtually from anywhere limited by phone cost.

- Online/offline mail reader Eudora (freeware).

Time frame: As soon a proposal can be drafted, and finance of the setup be sourced. With an expectation of a UUCP hub to be operational by April 1996.

Duration: It is expected that Phase I will be replaced by a full Internet connection within 12 months (1996). The UUCP experience gained will help setting up UUCP link to remote part of Laos.

Comment:

This setup requires a centralised computer capable of supporting multiple users.

(STENO had recently signed for IDRC funding, following STENO acceptance of a proposal http://www.idrc.org.sg/idrc/pan/laos.htm)

6.3 Phase II. Leased line full Internet link.

Implementation: This phase will be an expansion of phase 1 with a redeployment of existing equipment. Other new elements of the network such as a router, name server, CSU/DSU will be introduced into the system. The setup will begin to take the shape of a typical Internet connection, and a good system design should be flexible and cater for further system expansion.

Service available: Full Internet services; Email, Fax, FTP-mail, Gopher, WWW, WAIS etc...

Equipment needed (Cost):

- CSU, DSU unit for 64kbps link over leased line ($6000, although cost may be absorbed by Thailand/NECTEC/TOT aid package).

- A multi user computer (redeploy system from Phase I, to be used as name servers and possibly as a file server).

- A router/firewall. (LaoNet has approached CISCO in the US which had expressed their willingness to donate a CISCO2511 router in return for publicity).

- A pool of modems (redeploy rack mount 16 x $200) connected to local lines (and
overseas).

- ISP, most practical being NECTEC/ThaiSarn.
- Online/offline mail reader Eudora (freeware).

Time frame: It is expected this step will come within 12 months after Phase I.

Duration: It is expected that Phase II will be maintained for at least 2 years. On going system improvement should be phased in little by little, and Laos keeping with the world Internet technology.

Comment: The system in this stage, is now an online system. The issue of system security should be considered to safeguard against wilful data tampering and access, typically a FireWall should be included in the system design for this purpose. The system no longer relies on a 'central computer' to serve multiple users. Although such server still exists the total system is now more functionally distributed. Each components of the network, or systems, assume specific role or roles. Much of these roles are within the capability of PC's.

An ideal setup: With these distributed roles assigned to separate computers, as part of the total network of Internet, it is possible to design a system based on PC's. Thus meeting the criteria of local support of hardware. With PC power of a i486 and beyond, combined with stable public domain Unix operating system (Linux, NetBSD), the system will provide Laos with adequate Internet services, until such time when Laos can justify and can support a more elaborate system.

6.4 Estimated support team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Personel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardware maintenance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant (combined with management)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop and conference (as needed)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cost of operational staff should be fully recovered from total income from use of all part of the network.

6.5 Assistance

6.5.1 Assistant from Thailand

Thailand is the logical connection point for Laos. Discussion have been conducted with NECTEC (Hugh Thaweesal Koanantakool) by LaoNet. This requirement is critical to Lao full Internet connection in Phase II. With Thai language similar to Lao, and Thailand advance in Internet know how, Thailand will be invaluable to train Lao IT people. Thailand's Science and Technology Ministry already had formulated a plan of technological support and cooperation with neighbouring countries. Being a national issue such dialogue would need to pass through respective Foreign Ministries, via existing diplomatic channel, specifically Thai-Lao Cooperation Committee. Once the approval is obtained, the implementation will be the easy part. Thaisarn, a commercial arm of NECTEC, 'the only official Internet Service Provider ' (ISP) can be providing the logical feed to Laos, or any other ISP in the virtual world of Internet can.

Phase II full Internet connection means online permanent connection onto the Internet network. This can be met with the use of 64kbps commercial leased line from Bangkok (BKK) to Vientiane (VTE), which is worth U$1500/month (U$900/month Thai segment BKK-NongKhai and U$600/month Lao portion, NongKhai-VTE). Once Phase II is fully supported by Thai and Lao at the governments level, it would possible to develop a Thai-Lao aid package (with Thailand's TOT approval) to absorb the cost of the leased line. Or an alternative aid donor would need to be found to minimise the operational cost.

LaoNet will continue to seek assistance from various entities, such as IDRC, NECTEC and TOT of Thailand as an aid package to assist Laos with a telephone leased line for the full implementation of Internet.

APPENDICES

A. List of attendees at the August 95 workshop.

Government departments:
Foreign Affairs

Commerce

Cultural

Education

Telecommunication and Construction

Interior

Industry

City of Vientiane

Finance (Monetary)

Law

Lao Cabinet ministry

Planning and Corporation

National Polytechnic Institute

Health

Science and Technology

Post Telecommunication

News service (KPL)

Business

MicroTec

Davone

Palay Pty

Observer

Australian Aid Development officer, John Adams.
B. List of main speakers and affiliation.

STENO, P.O Box: 2279, Vientiane, LAOS.

Tel: (856) 213470-71 Fax: (856) 213472

- Pho Muangnalad, Director of Cabinet.

- Somphone Phanousith, Deputy Director of Cabinet Responsible for Science and Technology Policy.

- Nheune Sisavad, Director of Department of Industrial Property Standardization and Metrology.

IDRC Asia regional Office.

Tanglin. P.O Box :101, Singapore 912404.

Tel: (65) 235-1344 Fax: (65) 235-1849

- Maria Ng Lee, Co-Team leader Pan Asia Networking (PAN)

Email: MariaNgLeeHoon@idrc.org.sg

- David Lewis, PAN resource person.

LaoNet.

- Mark Prado, LaoNet's member.

Email: mark@ksc5.th.com

Tel: (66) 2 319-0503 to 0513 ext. 1217

Fax: (66) 2 319-0570 (Mark attention)

Internet Consultant based in Bangkok.

- Brice Soupha Muangkhot, LaoNet's Lao government liaison team member.

Email: Brice@ibm.fr

IBM France, EMEA DCE Centre of Competency
1, Place JB, Clement
93881 Noisy le Grand cedex (FRANCE)
Tel: (33) 1 49 314988 Fax: : (33) 1 49 315256
Email: Pan@cc.monash.edu.au
Senior Computer System Engineer, Computer Centre.
Monash University, Wellington Rd, Clayton 3168. AUSTRALIA
Tel: (61) 3 9905 4749 Fax: (61) 3 9905 4746

C. Seminar note

Topic: What is Internet and how does it work

- History and development of the Internet
- UUCP/TCP/IP 1st Internet
- FidoNet
- NSFnet
- Growth
- Network
- Bandwidth
- Topology
- Ethernet
- Token ring
- ISO Layers
- Routing
- Domain
Internet tools

Connection

Internet Service Providers (ISPs)

InterNIC

Topic: Human resources development

What is human resources

Work ethic and practices

Staff development

Future use of Internet as a tool for corporation.

Tapping onto Lao global resource.

'Face to Face' project, a brainstorming forum.

D. Seminar survey questionnaire (in Lao and English)

Personal detail (optional)

Name: Position:

Organisation: Phone: Fax: Email:

Local office: Government office: Education institute: Foreign office:

System usage

Do you have access to a computer?: PC: MAC: Other:

How many?:

Do you have your own computer?:

What do you use the computers for?: Wordprocessor Fax Email Programming Database Other

What operating system do you use?: DOS MSWindows Mac Unix Other
System maintenance

How is your system being maintained?: Service department Supplier Other

Number of direct support staff:

Physical link

Do you have a direct dial IDD telephone line?

What is your average monthly telephone bill?

Telephone: Local Overseas Fax: Local Overseas Email Other (eg. Telex)

General questions

If you currently have an Internet connection

Who is your current service provider?

What charging rate per kilobyte are you accustomed to US$?

If you do not yet have Internet connection

Would you be interested for immediate connection to the Internet?

If it is deferred, how long?

Would you be interested in setting up a redistribution hub?

What mail service delivery would you prefer: Real time

1/2-1hr 1-2hrs 2-4hrs 1/2days 1-2 days 2-4 days

Payment

Would you be interested to pay in advance for a guaranteed service at a discounted rate?:

Thankyou, for your valued participation in our survey. We aim to deliver to you a quality service that can be of some assistance to your operation.

E. Application for Laos IP
#NETWORK TEMPLATE V:2.0#

netname: LANIC Laos Network Information Center

descr: Science Technology and Environment National Organisation (STENO)

descr: Department of Industrial Property

descr: P.O Box 2279, Vientiane LAOS P.D.R

country: Laos

admin-c: Ngheune

admin-c: Vorasone Dengkayaphichit

tech-c: Tharongsinh Kanlagna

tech-c: Anousak Souphavanh

tech-c: Craig Rice

tech-c: Houmphanh Thongvilu

changed: asouphavanh@vnet.ibm.com

source: APNIC

#PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0#

person: Ngheune

address: Sciences, Technology and Environment National Organization

address: Department of Industrial Property

address: P.O Box 2279, Vientiane, LAOS P.D.R

phone: +856 21 213470

fax-no: +856 21 213472

e-mail:

nic-hdl:
changed:

source: APNIC

#[PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0]#

person: Vorasone Dengkayaphichit

address: National Polytechnic Institute

address: Computer Science Division

address: Sokpaluang

address: Vientiane, LAOS

phone: +856 21 312072 EXt 132

phone: +856 21 314382

fax-no:

e-mail: vorasone@npi.laos.permanent.org

nic-hdl:

changed:

source: APNIC

# [PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0] #

person: Tharongsinh Kanlagna

address: National Polytechnic Institute

address: Computer Science Division

address: Sokpaluang

address: Vientiane, LAOS

phone: +856 21 312072 EXt 132
fax-no:
e-mail: sino@npi.laos.permanent.org
nic-hdl:
changed:
source: APNIC
#[PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0]#
person: Anousak Souphavanh
address: 1630 Long Pond Rd
address: Rochester, NY 14626
address: USA
phone: 716-723-4985
fax-no:
e-mail: asouphavanh@VNET.IBM.COM
e-mail: aasl241@cs.rit.edu.us
nic-hdl:
changed:
source: APNIC
#[PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0]#
person: Craig Rice
address: St. Olaf College
address: 1510 St. Olaf Ave
address: Northfield, MN 555057-1097 USA
phone: 507-646-3631
fax-no: 507-646-3099

e-mail: cdr@stolaf.edu

nic-hdl: cr127

changed:

source: APNIC

#\[PERSON TEMPLATE V:2.0]\#

person: Houmphanh Thongvilu

address: Computer Centre, Monash University

address: Wellington Rd, Clayton

address: Victoria, 3168 AUSTRALIA

phone: +61 3 905 47479, +41 2030154

fax-no: +61 3 905 4746

e-mail: pan@cc.monash.edu.au

nic-hdl:

changed:

source: APNIC

Part B - Technical Details

#\[TECHNICAL TEMPLATE V:2.0]\#

host-bits: 8

connect: yes

classless: yes

single-home: yes
service-provider:

service-provider:

service-provider:

sub-registry: no

network-plan: x.x.x.0 255.255.255.0 5 24 128

country-net: JP AU KR ID US UK RU CA ME BR NZ FR BE DE NO FI

country-net: SG TW TH MN TO TH IT MA IN HK CN AT AG

old-network:

old-network:

source: APNIC

# [TEMPLATES END] #

Part C - Comments

This application is done by Laonet, an external working party that is pursuing Laos Internet connectivity, on behalf of Lao STENO, from a permission granted by Laos Director of Cabinet, Pho Muangnalad letter dated March 10 1995 ref. no. 272/STENO.

Part D - Proxy Details

Complete this portion only if you are submitting this application on behalf of someone else.

This application is made by:

name: Anousak Souphavanh
organisation: member of Laonet working group.

country: USA

phone: 716-723-4985

fax-no:

e-mail: asouphavanh@vnet.ibm.com

e-mail: aas1241@cs.rit.edu.us

On behalf of the following organisation:

person: Ngheune

address: Sciences, Technology and Environment National Organization

address: Department of Industrial Property

address: P.O Box 2279, Vientiane, LAOS P.D.R

phone: +856 21 213470

fax-no: +856 21 213472

e-mail: