The 25th Session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-25)

Space Education Working Group (SEWG)

Concept Note

1. Background and Objective of SEWG Activities

The goal of the Space Education Working Group (SEWG) is to develop a talented future workforce through space education activity. Our actions are intended to shape the future of not just children of the Asia-Pacific region, but of those all over the world.

In every place and culture on Earth, children love the natural world and look at life with wonder. They take pleasure in nature’s blessings, and stand in awe in the face of nature in all its power. Children may ask what lies beyond the stars they see, or how to overcome environmental crises. Over the 60-odd years that humanity has been exploring space, activities in space have increasingly become commonplace in our lives. Today, we have numerous players in aerospace, hailing from a range of countries and industries, seeking to broaden humanity’s horizons, dreaming of a more prosperous future.

The Space Education and Awareness WG was established at the 8th session of the APRSAF in 2001, changing its name to the Space Education WG in 2014. The working group has been actively pursuing a variety of programs in close collaboration with educators across the Asia-Pacific region, in service of a goal: to encourage young minds to see the world through a larger, more cosmic perspective, and channel the spirit of curiosity, adventure and craftsmanship to thus make a contribution to the global community, and become part of the solution to the ills that plague today’s society.

The SEWG has three major programs held concurrently with the annual APRSAF session. The first program is the Poster Contest that is open to children aged between 8 and 11. Its aim is to encourage the imagination through that year’s space-related theme; the theme for the next year’s Poster Contest is developed and selected at the WG’s annual meeting. Delegates to the annual APRSAF session are encouraged to vote for the best poster. The SEWG’s second program, the Water Rocket Event, is for students aged 12 to 16, and consists of a water rocket competition and cross-cultural activities. Because water rockets
can be constructed from common materials such as plastic bottles, plastic sheets and plasticine, it is an ideal way to study the principles of rocketry and engineering. A great deal can be learned through the process of designing, building, and launching, then making modifications to improve performance. The program also provides students with an opportunity to interact with different cultures and further understand their own background. And the last program, the Educator Workshop, provides a valuable opportunity for educators to gather and trade experiences, insights and achievements from their own space education activities. The aim is to enhance the quality of teaching, which can nurture the kind of next-generation talent capable of true innovation. The WG also holds its Space Education Seminar for Educators annually to promote space education within the region, organized in close collaboration with the host agency to meet the specific needs of the host country. The WG considers it important to make the seminar both participatory and practical, so that attendees can incorporate what they learn into their everyday curriculum.

2. Results of SEWG Activities at APRSAF-24