

12 SPECIAL FUND OPERATING RULES

A Special Fund exists to facilitate participation of members from developing countries and countries in transition in the activities of the Association, especially Technical Committee activities. It aims to cover part of travel or accommodation expenses for participation in meetings, seminars or Congresses organised by PIARC, as long as the benefiting Government's annual subscription fees are up to date.

The Special Fund must help to reflect the whole range of PIARC member countries in PIARC activities (the objective being to have a balanced representation across continents and regions). Technical Committees are encouraged to use the Special Fund to strengthen the participation of members from developing countries and countries in transition.

The eligibility criterion for the Special Fund for benefiting from the Special Fund is to belong to a country classified as "Low-income economies" and "Lower-middle-income economies" by the World Bank. The list of eligible countries is annually updated by the General Secretariat from the document entitled "World Development Indicators", published by the World Bank.

The Special fund is supplied on the one hand by PIARC and on the other hand by member governments.

The Article 72 of the Association's Internal Rules states that the operating rules for the Special Fund are approved by the Executive Committee after being proposed by the Technological Exchanges and Development Commission.

12.1 Operating rules for 2004-2008

The General Secretariat manages the Special Fund according to the operating rules set in the Blue guide and annually reports to the Technological Exchanges and Development Commission.

Subject to the eligibility criterion, a member country can ask to benefit from the Special Fund for participation of:

- one delegate to the meetings of the Council,
- elected members to the PIARC Executive Committee and Commissions;
- up to 3 members of Technical Committees to the meetings of these Committees,
- one representative to seminars and other events organized by PIARC, in the absence of a member of the country to Technical Committees involved in these events and provided the topic is of interest to the country.

Subject to the eligibility criterion, these measures apply for the duration of the cycle.

In the case of the World Road Congress, the PIARC Council votes special arrangements for the use of the Special Fund on this occasion.

The beneficiary of the Special Fund may request the funding of either 100% of travel expenses or 100% of accommodation expenses corresponding to the PIARC meeting for which the request is made. The following terms apply:

- air tickets: beneficiaries are expected to travel in economy class only and seek the lowest fare whenever possible (no refund will be made for other classes);
- luxury hotels should be excluded; refunds will be made based on the meeting duration.

These conditions are detailed in section 12.2.

The General Secretariat is entitled to limit the reimbursements according to these principles.

12.2 Practical arrangements

12.2.1 Member of a Technical Committee

For the Technical Committees, the First Delegate, the beneficiary and PIARC Secretary General sign an agreement (see model in Annex E.1). After each meeting in which the beneficiary participates with Fund's help, the beneficiary must present a report to the First Delegate and to PIARC. The agreement is not a legal contract but a moral commitment.

The beneficiaries must be able to participate in the Technical Committee's activities for the entire four-year period.

12.2.2 Other cases

The request should in all cases be presented to the PIARC General Secretariat by the First Delegate.

12.2.3 Requests received within six weeks before a meeting

If the request concerns the cost of travel and this request is made to PIARC at least six weeks before the date of the meeting, PIARC will ensure that the beneficiary is provided with a prepaid ticket once the questions of visa are cleared.

For each request:

- The applicant should send a form (see annex E.2) providing information proposing flexible dates of travel and an itinerary including the name of the airline companies and the proposed costs. In order to fill this form, the applicant should make a preliminary enquiry about the possibility of a journey with cheap air fares;
- Tickets must always be in economy class and for fixed dates (no modifications, no refunds);
- The travel should, in general, comprise one Saturday to Sunday night (or Sunday to Monday depending on the country) abroad in order to benefit from low airfares;
- PIARC will buy tickets on commercial airlines and not charter companies;
- PIARC will not issue a second ticket for the same journey in case of cancellation or modification of dates.

12.2.4 Request received within less than six weeks

If this request is made to PIARC less than six weeks before the meeting or if the request is in relation to reimbursement of accommodation costs, the reimbursement will occur after the meeting by transferring funds to the bank account of the beneficiary or to their administration, determined by the information provided by the First Delegate.

In the case of a request for travel costs, the applicant should send the form (annex E.2) to PIARC. The applicant will be responsible for ordering and paying for their own tickets. The subsequent reimbursement will be limited to the value of the cheapest air tickets that could have been purchased if the request had been presented more than 6 weeks before the start of the journey.