

Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference NEWSLETTER



Working Together to Strengthen Border Control in the Pacific



In opening the recent Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC) Management Board in Noumea the Director of Border Police for New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna, Mario Banner Martin, emphasised the collaborative and cooperative nature of border management. He certainly pointed out a crucial element to the process of establishing an effective border control system.

There are certainly a number of complex challenges faced by immigration agencies on a national, regional and international level, particularly when internal and external elements are targeting Pacific Island countries with the purpose of exploiting perceived border weaknesses. To combat the threats of transnational organised crime, fraud, corruption and terrorism, it becomes clearer how important PIDC Members need to develop trust with their neighbours by forging meaningful and collaborative relationships. Consequently, global threats and the vulnerabilities these expose have seen PIDC Members' working together ever more closely.

This collaborative work extends beyond PIDC membership to encompass all law

enforcement and border control agencies in the Pacific. PIDC with other regional organisations complement each other not only in strengthening border control systems but also in areas of passenger movement facilitation and the exchange of information. Additionally, PIDC has worked with other regional agencies like the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) and the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) in other areas ranging from document examination trainings, electronic border management systems, customs and immigration flashcards and consultations on pleasure craft studies amongst others.

While we recognise certain limitations within our own Member organisations, the PIDC approach continues to be one of taking incremental steps in the interests of our members and in consultation with partner organisations. PIDC's focus remains on building on the capacity of Pacific states to deal with migration issues on both a national and regional level, utilising person to person contact. This approach and the relationship it builds between immigration agencies in the Pacific is what underpins the PIDC family and PIDC continues to maintain these values.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- I PIDC Management Board meeting - Brisbane, 15-16 July
- II PIDC Document Examination Training: Port Vila Vanuatu, 19 - 21 August
- III PIDC Conference - Brisbane, Australia: 16 - 18 September 2008



From the Desk of the PIDC Secretariat

The Head of the PIDC Secretariat, Viliami Lolohea writes:



Viliami Lolohea at his desk at the PIDC Secretariat.

Bula to you all from the Desk of the PIDC Secretariat, and welcome to this first edition of our PIDC Newsletter! In this article we are giving you an update on PIDC staff and members' movement as well as highlighting some of the activities of the secretariat.

We would like to sincerely thank our seconded analyst from the U.K. Home Affairs, Matthew Capper who has successfully completed his secondment program with the secretariat. During his one and half year with PIDC, Matt contributed enormously to the running of the secretariat including policy analysis, report writing, research and the production of the PIDC flagship report the 2007 Human Trafficking, People Smuggling and Illegal Migration Report. We wish Matt all the best in his future career. We also welcome back Immigration Inspector Nunia Kamikamica and thank Fiji Immigration for releasing Nunia to the Secretariat. Furthermore, we are looking forward to welcoming Ms Taya Fabianic who will be seconded to the PIDC Secretariat for one year, starting in October. Taya comes from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in Sydney and joins us in Suva under the Australian Youth Ambassador Development program. No doubt Taya's experience will benefit the PIDC and its secretariat.

I have always greatly appreciated working with Ondrae Campbell. I remember my unexpected participation at the first PIDC Strategic Plan meeting in April 2005. Then I was representing Tonga. Three years later, Ondrae and I were again in a PIDC strategic plan meeting in a way as "survivors" from that

initial meeting. I can only describe her as a faithful supporter and advisor for PIDC matters. She still remains with DIAC but has moved on to another section within the department. Thank you Ondrae for all your help and contribution to the PIDC and we wish you the best in your new work environment!

The Management Board has already met twice this year, firstly in Noumea, New Caledonia on 6 – 7 February and then in Brisbane on 21 – 22 July. Important decisions from the Management Board meeting among others include the tasking to establish a working group to undertake a review of the current strategic plan, the development of secondment programmes, and the endorsement of the AYAD volunteer to be seconded to the secretariat. Appreciation goes to the New Caledonia Commissioner of Police Mario Banner-Martin for hosting the Management Board in Noumea. Following the Noumea meeting, a strategic plan review working group was formed and has already met twice in Brisbane in May and in July. Discussions centered on the future direction of the PIDC, how members view it as an organisation, its meaning and values as a forum for heads of immigration, and the activities to be undertaken by the secretariat. I am very pleased to say that the whole group contributed meaningfully and constructively to the review process in a true *Pacifican* family atmosphere.

Finally, I would like to thank all member countries who have actively contributed to the secretariat through our Annual Collection Plan and have responded to numerous requests made by Akuila, Nunia and myself. We do take note of your busy schedule and sometimes staff constraints but we really appreciate your collaboration and continuous support. We look forward to working with you



Mario-Banner Martin (third from left) with the French High Commissioner in New Caledonia and Poloma Komiti the PIDC Chair (second from right) at the cocktail reception hosted by the High Commissioner in Noumea.

Review of the PIDC Strategic Plan 2005-08

At the 2007 annual conference in Samoa, the Management Board had been tasked to lead the review of the PIDC Strategic Plan 2005-08. Following the first Management Board meeting of 2008 in Noumea, the Management Board agreed that a Working Group would be formed to review the Strategic Plan 2005-08 and formulate a new Strategic Plan. The Management Board had also tasked the Secretariat to approach appropriate Pacific Island experts to facilitate discussions at the working group.

Following these recommendations, a Working Group to review the PIDC Strategic Plan 2005-08 was established. The membership of the Working Group took into consideration the varying membership economies, department capacities and culture. The subsequent membership was a representative of these differences and similarities amongst members. Dr Lesi was also approached to facilitate the review process based on his expertise, knowledge, involvement and understanding of PIDC as an organisation.

To assist the Working Group's discussions the secretariat undertook a survey of members' assessment of the strategic plan 2005-08. An assessment report was produced which was drawn from issues highlighted by members in their submissions through the PIDC Strategic Plan survey, in addition to views raised through the 2007 Annual Collection Plan and the 2007 Country Reports. The issues raised in the report became a crucial point of reference drawing the Working Groups attention to the priorities and challenges of the PIDC.



The Strategic Review Working Group meeting in session during its first meeting in Brisbane.

The PIDC has made great strides from its origin since 1996 in delivering outcomes to membership based on objectives of the Strategic Plan 2005-08. Some major achievement to date includes: High quality of reporting, particularly the "People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration Report"; Regional and international recognition to PIDC reports; Website appearance and use by members; Facilitating communication and maintaining regular channels of communication with members in real time; Increased levels of communication between PIDC and members promoting a stronger sense of ownership and mutual cooperation; and improved collaboration with regional and international law enforcement agencies.

PIDC has grown over the years and with its new responsibilities has been taken on board by the organisation. Its strategic plan for the last 3 year period (2005-08) has guided the organisation successfully while the new strategic plan 2009-12 is intended to carry the organisation forward from the successful platform it has achieved.



Members of the Strategic Plan Review Working Group.

Regional Cooperation - Officers from Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu Visit Samoa

On 3 – 5 March 2008, PNG Immigration and Citizenship Service (ICS) officers Delilah Madao and Mae Daniel Mae and Vanuatu Internal Affairs officers, James Narwayeng and Maturine Tary travelled to Samoa accompanied by DIAC Australia officer Rachel Vines and DIAC/ICS ECP Advisor Mandy Sinclair. The purpose of this DIAC sponsored visit was to learn from Samoa's experience of the AusAID-funded Institutional Strengthening Program (ISP) and to provide networking opportunities between Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to discuss areas of mutual interest in regard to border management issues.



Samoa Immigration Officers workstations in Apia are all connected to the BMS. Samoa's BMS integrates Samoa Border Control agencies (Customs, TCU, Police, Quarantine and Justice Department) into a single information system.

This was an excellent opportunity for PICs to share experiences of change management processes. Importantly, Samoan Immigration stressed the importance of mutual cooperation and commitment through the bilateral relationship to both fully resourcing and sustaining the Border Management System (BMS). Samoan Immigration also noted the importance of ensuring on-going domestic commitment to the change management process, particularly through an emphasis on training, systems support and resourcing an IT Unit within the Immigration Department.

The visit also proved to be an excellent opportunity to promote regional cooperation between agencies and to discuss areas of mutual interest such as improved border security and improved governance and planning within Immigration agencies. Vanuatu had indicated in their report to PIDC in 2007 that such a visit was desirable.



PNG and Vanuatu Immigration officials studying the Samoa Border Management System at the Samoa Immigration Head quarters.

Palau Signs Inter-Agency Group Cooperative Agreement

The Honourable Vice President/Minister of Justice Elias Camsek Chin, together with the Attorney General's Office, Bureau of Immigration, Bureau of Public Safety, Division of Customs, Division of Revenue and Taxation, Financial Institutions Commission, Foreign Investment Board, Labour Department and Social Security, jointly signed a Co-operative Agreement establishing an inter-agency group (IAG) in the Republic of Palau on 21 March 2008.

The inter-agency group is a practical step towards enhanced co-operation and information sharing. This will help combat transnational crime, terrorism, and criminal activities that will enhance border security, internal security, and community well-being and safety. The inter-agency group is essentially a "ground up" initiative which reflects the emergence of inter-jurisdictional targets in the Republic of Palau. In other words - a common sense approach to a very real problem. Dealing with these offenders provides a multi-agency response. There are also advantages in terms of being able to direct greater resources against a particular problem. This results in a more effective and efficient use of the Government's total resources.

The objectives of the inter-agency group are to: provide for the timely exchange of information; facilitate opportunities for the sharing of resources; enhance communications and co-ordination of effort; develop joint targeting strategies; jointly profile common suspects; and develop and enhance common training opportunities.

The inter-agency group will also help strengthen the information being reported from Palau to regional law enforcement organisations such as the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC), Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) and Pacific Islands Law Officers Network (PILON). These organisations then report to the annual Forum Regional Security Committee meeting which reports directly to Forum Leaders. This helps build the security of all countries in the Pacific Region.

The inter-agency group is part of an initiative called the Pacific Region Immigration Identity Project (PRIIP) which is sponsored by the PIDC and supported by OCO and PICP with funding provided by

the New Zealand government. The overarching purpose of the PRIIP is to build capability to detect, prevent, investigate, prosecute, measure, and respond to identity crime. Palau is the first pilot country to participate, with others including Samoa, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea and Kiribati. Palau will act as a mentor to neighbouring countries e.g. Marshall Islands, Northern Marianas and FSM. As an example of inter-agency co-operation, a trainer from the Bureau of Immigration, Division of Customs and Bureau of Public Safety have developed and started to deliver a training package on identity crime awareness including types of identity crime, examples from Palau, and how to protect oneself. The development of the training is ongoing and further training sessions will be delivered to government agencies, private sector and the public.



The Palau national inter-agency teamwork in one of its meetings following the signing of the cooperative agreement..

Spotting Forged Passports.

PIDC in coordination with the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and joint sponsorship of participants from New Zealand Immigration and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat delivered an Advanced Document Examination training at the Le Meridian Hotel in Port Vila, Vanuatu from the 19-21 August 2008.

The course was attended by 17 Immigration Officers from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshal Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and a PIDC Secretariat staff. The course trained Immigration Officers on key document examination elements relating to characteristics of inadmissible travellers: systems, trends, intelligence, intuitive assessment and questioning



Participants at the Advanced document examination training in Vanuatu.

techniques; Assessment of Passengers; Secure Documents; Document Information, text, appearance, issuance, validity, security features and manufacturing process; and identifying genuine, fraudulent and counterfeit documents.

Bhavna Ben Naidu an immigration officer based at the Nadi International Airport in Fiji participated at the recent training and has returned to Fiji with valuably learnt skills that she has been imparting at her work place. Bhavna reported that the course was certainly an eye opener as it refreshed her knowledge with newly acquired sets of skills that equipped officers to be a step ahead of criminal elements trying to take advantage of our border control systems in the Pacific.

Participants were able to share their experiences during the course of the training and exchange ideas on how document related cases were to be handled. What was commonly reported by participants was the increasing sophistication of criminals in trying to beat border control systems. However the training provided the perfect platform for participants to update themselves with the latest document fraudulent trends and skills that they could employ to identify document fraudsters at the borders. Participants like Bhavna have highly recom-



Bhavna at her desk at the Nadi Airport Immigration Office.

mended the practicality and most importantly the applicability of the training to their respective work places. Bhavna has seen the training particularly useful especially in regards to the methods of document inspection and the need for intelligence information exchange. She was enthusiastic about how the course improved participant's skills in detecting potential fraud, forgeries and other illegal activities that are normally encountered at borders.

Samoa Immigration's Australian Youth Ambassador Departs with Fond Memories

The Australian Youth Ambassador Kate Archer has had an eventful year working as a Policy and Compliance officer for Samoan Immigration. Kate's assignment had involved working with Principle Immigration Officers at Samoa Immigration to develop legally appropriate policies to implement the new *Immigration Act 2004*. Immigration is currently working on Transit and Overstayer policies, areas with challenges specific to Samoa.

In developing an overstayer policy Kate worked with James, Samoa's IT manager, in using Samoa's Border Management System (BMS) to gather data on overstayers. Reports were generated on the number of overstayers, their nationalities and permit types and the length of time overstayed, with some interesting results. The study revealed that the largest numbers of overstayers were Samoans or potential Samoan citizens travelling on other passports.

A highlight of Kate's year has been the PIDC and New Zealand Immigration "Exercise Paradise" on people smuggling. As part of the exercise Kate played the role of a smuggled person, and was really surprised by how intimidating her usually smiling work colleagues turned out to be during the interviewing process. The exercise enabled Samoa to test their legislation on people smuggling and identify areas that could be improved. As a result, Immigration has requested an amendment to the *Immigration Act 2004* to include more specific references to people smuggling, human trafficking and associated offences.

The best part of Kate's year has been her introduction to the sport of ping pong at Samoa Immigration. It took Kate a few months to approach the office ping pong table but is now committed to improving her

game. Despite her commitment, Kate has managed to win only one game of ping pong and came last in the office ping pong tournament.

More than the game, ping pong has been a great way to get to know all Immigration staff and Kate has really enjoyed getting to know all her work colleagues. Being part of such a friendly Immigration team has been an amazing experience for the Australian Youth Ambassador, and Kate would like to thank Samoa Immigration for making her year an unforgettable one.



Kate Archer at far right with other immigration officers from Fiji, New Zealand, PNG, Palau, and Samoa during the 2007 Operation Paradise.

2008 Forum Regional Security Committee Meeting - Suva, Fiji

Representatives from Australia, Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, PNG, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu met at the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat in Suva, Fiji from 5 – 6 June 2008 for the annual Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) meeting. Observers from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Maritime Programme, Asia Pacific Group on Money laundering, Oceania Customs Organisation, Pacific Island Chief of Police, Pacific islands Law Officers Network, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS), the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, RAMSI and the PIDC Secretariat also attended the meeting.

The Acting Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat Mr Peter Forau opened the meeting and welcomed all the participants. He recognized that achieving the objectives of economic growth, good governance and sustainable development, the first three pillars of the Pacific Plan could not occur

in an environment of political and security instability. This fact underscored the importance of the Forum Regional Security Committee Meeting. It becomes imperative how valuable the role of every member nation, regional and international partner organization plays in collectively responding to the security challenges faced by the region. Challenges that are now complicated by a myriad of themes and issues that are reflective of the complexity of the global and regional political and security environment that the Pacific is now exposed and vulnerable too.

A joint report on future trends of transnational organised crime in the region and a Pacific Transnational Crime Assessment incorporating regional strategic advice and recommendations was prepared by PIFS, PIFFA, OCO, PIDC and the PICP Secretariat was presented at the meeting. The report also included PIDCs' 2007 People Smuggling, Human trafficking and Illegal Migration Report. In addition the Secretariat was also given the opportunity to further update participants on its regional activities in the post 2007 FRSC period. The presentation was well received by participants with members of the meeting noting the role and activities of the PIDC in regional and security matters. Members also encouraged PIDC to continue progressing outcomes of the 11th Pacific Immigration Directors Conference.



Delegates in discussion at the FRSC in Suva, Fiji.



Ondrae Campbell (second from left) attending her last PIDC Management Board meeting in Noumea, New Caledonia.

valuable and we wish her well in her new appointment.

Peter Holmes the former Senior Advisor to the PNG Department of Foreign Affairs Trade & Immigration & Citizenship has retired following a long and illustrious career. Tutai Toru of the Cook Island Immigration who has also retired from services. We thank the two gentlemen for their contributions to the PIDC over the years. Their contribution to the PIDC is greatly appreciated and we wish them well.

Kate Archer the Australian Youth Ambassador for Development has completed her one year work with the Division of Immigration in Samoa and has returned to Australia to pursue further opportunities of interest.

In addition the PIDC secretariat is now a number less after Matthew Capper the United Kingdom Home Office Seconded completed his two year term with the PIDC. During his term, Mathew brought new ideas and high level analytical skills which has strengthened the PIDC Secretariat. We thank Matthew for his contribution and wish him all the best when he returns to England at the end of the year.

With the departures of some of our members, there have also been new additions to the PIDC family. The PIDC would like to welcome and introduce new members to our family:

Helen Barlow the new Principal Immigration Officer at the Australian DIAC in Suva, Fiji; Mr Kave Ringi the new Immigration Services Director in the Cook Islands; Margot Clifford the new Assistant Director for the Pacific and PNG Section of DIAC in Canberra; Catherine Cefai the new Senior Advisor to the PNG department of Foreign Affairs Trade & Immigration & Citizenship; and Henry Fugui the new Director of Immigration in the Solomon Islands.

PIDC Departures and Arrivals

Since the last newsletter in December 2007, there have been a number of staff changes in the region. Therefore the PIDC would like to take this opportunity to thank the following members for their long involvement with PIDC over the years:

Ondrae Campbell of the Australian Department of Immigration who has taken up a new appointment within the Australian Government. Her contribution and strong support for the PIDC over the years has been

Photo Gallery of the PIDC Family



PIDC Management Board meeting in Noumea



Joseph Giramur the Immigration Supervisor in Palau at his desk.



The PIDC Secretariat Staff



Christian Capron (left) and Angeliqe (right) of New Caledonia Border Control Police with a SPC staff in Noumea.



Standing from far right Ulamanaia of Samoa, Tangi of the Cook Islands and (sitting) Ioane of Kiribati Immigration in discussion with David (left) from DIAC during the document examination training in Vanuatu.



Helen Barlow of DIAC giving a few tips on document examination.



Samoa Immigration Officers busy at work.



PIDC Management Board members at a cocktail reception hosted by the French High Commissioner in New Caledonia.



Graduation dinner for document examination participants in Vanuatu.



Ondrae Campbell welcoming strategic Plan Working Group members to their first review meeting..



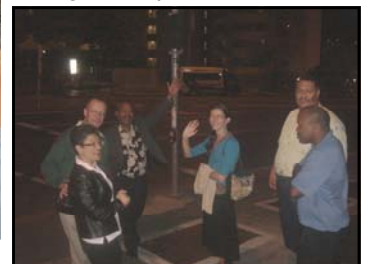
PNG and Vanuatu Immigration Officers studying the Samoa Border Management System.



Shaun Evans of Immigration New Zealand being checked in by Kiribati Immigration officers on his arrival for the PRIIP study in Kiribati.



Poloma the PIDC Chair (standing) thanking the Head of New Caledonia Border Control Police Mario Banner-Martin (on his left) for hosting a successful Management Board meeting .



Strategic plan working group members discussing at a Brisbane road crossing a possible dinner venue on the evening of the review meeting.