



Agenda item 6: SFA 2 – National Immigration Strengthening

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to **note** and **welcome** the PIDC national Immigration strengthening programme update and **encourage** the Secretariat to continue working with members and partner agencies in delivering national immigration strengthening programmes across the membership.

Purpose

The purpose of this session is to provide a progress update of PIDCs national immigration strengthening programmes under PIDCS Strategic Focus Area 2 of its new Strategic Plan since July 2023.

Background

2. The PIDC plays a lead role in coordinating the delivery of immigration and border control national immigration strengthening programmes in the Pacific and works closely with Donors and partner agencies to deliver this strategic focus area across the membership. Members continue to place a high priority on the support provided through PIDC and the 2023 Regular Annual Meeting (RAM) had reflected on Members' needs and how the organisation and Secretariat could better work with Members to develop its national immigration strengthening programme. As such, Strategic Focus Area 2 continues to be a core part of the Secretariat's work plan, including coordinating regional training programmes and seeking new training opportunities for Members.

3. During this current reporting period; July 2023 – March 2023, the Secretariat has supported members in its ongoing coordination efforts to support members legislation review programmes, support on website development, progress the Masters in Border Security Course with USP, coordinating sharing of information efforts including the delivery of monthly intelligence briefing to assist members strengthen their national capacity to use law enforcement intelligence, ongoing support on the development of members strategic plans, hosting the PIDC NCP/Profiling Group workshop and creation of a new group of contact points specific to maritime monitoring responsibilities and is currently in the process of supporting the coordination and delivery of a number of major regional training programmes under the law enforcement partnership agreement including the joint immigration, customs and fisheries vessel boarding course scheduled for April 2024 in Fiji.

(a) PIDC Legislation Review Programme

4. Table 1 below provides a summary of the legislation review programme and the stages where the respective countries assisted under PIDC's modernisation programme are at. Three member countries were scheduled for support in phase one of the legislation review programme in this 2023/24 financial period including Niue, the Solomon Islands and Palau; with Tonga, Samoa and the Solomon Islands currently scheduled for phase 2 while ongoing work to finalise Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu legislation review projects continues.

Table 1: Summary of 2022-23 Legislative Review Modernisation project – Phase One: Policy and Legislation Support

Country		Legislation Review Project Update
Solomon Islands (Phase One)	Immigration Act	- National consultations completed - Solomon Islands Migration Policy completed and submitted for Solomon Islands approval - Drafting instructions completed
Palau (Phase One)	Immigration Act	- Draft Instructions submitted to Palau Immigration for consideration
Niue (Phase One)	Immigration Act	- Niue government reviewing review interim report to determine government direction for drafting instructions development

Table 2: Summary of 2022-23 Legislative Review Modernisation project – Phase Two: Drafting of Legislation

Tonga (Phase Two)	Immigration Act	- Immigration Bill drafting in progress
Palau (Phase Two)	Immigration Act	- Draft Immigration Bill under review and consideration by Palau Immigration
Solomon Islands (Phase Two)	Immigration Act and Regulations	- Will be determined by Government's approval of the migration policy and drafting instruction for approval to draft immigration bill

Table 3: Summary of ongoing work dependant on national approval processes

Samoa (Phase Two)	Regulations	- Draft Immigration Regulations currently undergoing final national approval process
Tuvalu (Ongoing)	Immigration Act	- Draft Immigration Bill and Draft Immigration Regulations completed and undergoing national approval process
	Passport Act	- Development of desktop analysis of Tuvalu Passport Act completed - Development of Tuvalu Passport Act Information paper based on desktop analysis for Tuvalu to consider for Cabinet information completed - Tuvalu to determine decision to progress to next stage of Passport Act review
Tonga (Ongoing)	Passport Act	- Drafting Instruction completed - Tonga to determine scheduling of Drafting consultation programme
FSM (Ongoing)	Immigration Act	- Drafting national consultations and Drafting Instruction completed and FSM to determine next steps
Marshall Islands	Immigration Act & Regulations	- Draft Immigration Bill and Regulations completed and undergoing national approval process

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note** the update provided by the Secretariat and the work undertaken to date; and
- (ii) **encourage** the Secretariat to continue monitoring members modernisation programme and keep working with members to complete their respective legislation modernisation programme.

(b) Strategic Plan Development Support Programme Update

5. The PIDC regional Strategic Plan Development support programme was established to support members modernise their department operations through the development of department strategic plans, business plans or operational plans where none existed. PIDC recognises the importance of Members developing modern and streamlined national Strategic Plans and planning frameworks aligned to international standards and best practices to support effective execution of their core business.

6. Through this programme members have direct access to an expert to support members developing country specific strategic plan frameworks through an in-country PIDC consultation mission. Two countries currently scheduled for support under this programme include Solomon Islands and the Cook Islands. Table 4 provides a summary on the latest implementation update of the strategic plan development programme.

Table 4: Summary of SOP Modernisation Programme

Country	Standard Operating Procedures Project Update
Solomon Islands	- Strategic Plan completed and endorsed by Solomon Islands Immigration
Cook Islands	- National consultations completed at end of February 2024 and draft strategic plan under review by Cook Islands Immigration

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **welcome** memberships support to the development of members national strategic plans support programme; and
- (ii) **encourage** the Secretariat to continue working to support finalising members strategic plans.

(c) USP Masters Programme Development Update

7. The Board at the Palau Board meeting approved the development of the USP Masters Programme and had consequently tasked the Secretariat to begin working with USP towards the development and delivery of the Masters in Border Security Programme.

8. PIDC's ongoing support and investment in the PIDC-USP Masters development programme supports PIDC's aim to: (a) provide opportunities to PIDC Member Officers in academic training allowing them to obtain a regionally and internationally recognised academic award which now is often required to hold executive positions across the PIDC membership; and (b) strengthen the body of knowledge on Pacific Island migration concerns having input from the Pacific Islands immigration and border enforcement community.

Update

9. The Secretariat has consequently engaged in discussions with USP on PIDC's commitment to support the development of the Masters Programme and agreed to put in place mechanisms towards the development of the Post Graduate Diploma in Border Security to a full online Masters

Programme. Consequently, following PIDC’s commitment to the development of a Master’s programme in November, USP agreed on a revised PIDC-USP MOU signed in 2019 to include the development of the Masters Programme with an agreed extension/renewal of the MoU for 5 years.

10. The MOU allows the development of the Masters Programme to meet USP academic Board assessment deadlines with an aim of rolling out the Masters programme from the 2025 academic year. Consequently, work has begun on the creation of the Masters Programme with the objective of obtaining USP Council approval by November 2024. Since finalization of the MoU, the following has been done, the Masters Programme creator specialist has met with the relevant officials to confirm USP approval dates for the development of the new programme. These dates are as follows:

USP Approving Body	Due Date
AUSQC 3:	July 4th
APC 3:	August 6th
TQC 3:	August 8th
URC 4:	October 8th
Senate 4:	November 7th
Council:	November 14

11. It should be noted that failure to meet any of these deadlines will significantly impact on programme delivery targets. Since the signing of the PIDC-USP MOU (attached as Annex 1) to develop the Masters Programme the following has been undertaken to meet the aforementioned deadlines:

- (i) The Master Programme Course creator has presented two programme models to the SoLaSS for consideration: (1) a fully taught Masters programme including 8 courses (4 completed at the diploma level, 2 electives from existing USP postgraduate courses and 2 new border security courses), and (2) a Masters by research thesis only (students will have the option to do a full research paper only to meet the requirements for award of the Masters). This has received approval to be presented for PIDC endorsement.
- (ii) USP has invoiced PIDC for programme development funds to facilitate external stakeholder engagement meetings and development of new courses. Commencement of programme development is dependent on USP receipt of funds. PIDC has transmitted this fund and on receipt work on this phase of the course development programme will begin.
- (iii) As part of this course creation process, the PIDC is required to provide the Masters course developer an opportunity to present the proposed Masters programme options for workshopping at the upcoming PIDC Regular Annual Meeting in the Solomon Islands. Once stakeholder engagement with PIDC is completed, all documentation will be finalized for the first targeted USP meeting on July 4th.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note and welcome** USP’s commitment and support to develop a new Masters in Border Security Programme with the new PIDC-USP MoU;
- (ii) **welcome** the progress to meet the Masters course deadlines by November 2024
- (iii) **approve** the inclusion of a workshop session at the 2024 Regular Annual Meeting for members to review and determine the Masters Course modality options on offer for consideration; and
- (iv) **task** the Secretariat to continue engaging and supporting USP towards the course development process to meet USP Council approval deadlines by November 2024.

(d) PIDC Members Website Development Programme Update

12. The PIDC Website Development Support programme provides members with support to increase immigration departments visibility nationally and internationally on a global scale. Immigration specific information enquiries from outside members jurisdictions are normally sought online and the development of members website seeks to address the lack of online immigration specific information that can guide travellers and consumers seeking to travel or enter the Pacific. Fiji and Vanuatu were scheduled for support under this programme.

Progress

Fiji Immigration Website

13. The new Fiji Immigration Department (FID) website was launched on 06 November 2023 with an official ceremony attended by Fiji's Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration. Since the launch the Secretariat has received positive feedback on FID's new website, not only from FID but also other PIDC members. The new website is available here at: www.immigration.gov.fj

14. Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd the contracted website designer also delivered website training for FID staff. To date they will continue to provide website backup support to FID for a year. This is all part of the website support package funded by PIDC. The Secretariat has advice FID of their responsibility to cover the website maintenance costs after the initial funded year by PIDC, and should be addressed in a separate Service Level Agreement (SLA) between FID and Pacific Bedbank Co. Ltd.

Vanuatu Immigration Department Website

15. In September 2023 the Secretariat single sourced the revamping of Vanuatu Immigration Department's website to Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd. This decision was made based on Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd's outstanding performance when developing Fiji Immigration Department's website. It was good value for money and the organisation also received a volume discount.

16. On 15 December 2023 the new VID website was successfully launched with an official launch ceremony organised by VID. The scope of works for revamping the website, also included online website training for VID staff and the development of a User Manual for the website. The new website is available on the following link: www.immigration.gov.vu

17. VID's website maintenance and backup support cost has the similar arrangements like FID's website. PIDC funds the revamping of the website and maintenance for one year from date of launch with VID and FID expected to absorb this cost beyond the initial year and shall be done in a separate SLA with Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd. Additional members are expected to be supported in the next financial year as members recognize Fiji and Vanuatu's success in enhancing the visibility of their department through the development and revamping of their new website.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **welcome** the completion of revamping websites for Fiji Immigration Department and Vanuatu Immigration Department; and
- (ii) **encourage** member countries to strengthen their department visibility and recognise the opportunity provided through the website development programme to support members visibility efforts.

(e) PIDC Website Revamp Update

18. Revamping of the current PIDC website is part of PIDC's Awareness and Visibility programme to improve its communication with the PIDC membership and the visibility of the organisation in the Region.

Progress

19. Significant progress has been achieved on the website revamp project, since Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd was officially contracted on 20 February 2024. The scope of works will only include the redesigning of the PIDC website. The host of the website will remain with the current host provider Digital Stream.

20. The Secretariat has completed reviewing three website layout options provided by Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd. Comments on the preferred options has been submitted to Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd and an update version is expected on 29 March 2024. This will be further workshopped with the Secretariat staff to create a sense of ownership to the revamped site as we look to strengthen the visibility and accessibility of our online platform for PIDC.

21. The scope of works will also include website training for the Secretariat and User Manual for the website update, etc. Part of Pacific BedBank Co. Ltd's work is to re-create the existing PIDC logo in a high-resolution file and develop a Brand Guideline for the PIDC logo that includes colour pallet and text type. This is to ensure consistency in the use of the PIDC logo. According to the work plan the website revamp will be completed by 29 March 2024, and officially launched at the 2024 RAM meeting in the Solomon Islands in June.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note and welcome** the Secretariats efforts in revamping the PIDC website to be more accessible and user friendly to its membership; and
- (ii) **encouraged** the Secretariat to work towards completing the website revamp project for launching at the 2024 RAM in Honiara.

(f) PIDC BMS Support Programme Update

22. The BMS Assessment member support programme was established to provide immigration agencies direct access to a PIDC expert that would be able to review their border operating systems and develop a set of recommendations on the preferred BMS solution that was specific to members operational environment. The BMS Business Case was consequently utilised to guide department decision makers in determining the type of immigration border systems that could be customised to member country's specific operational need.

23. Two member countries have been scheduled for support in this financial period; Palau and Tuvalu. The Palau business case development had been completed and presented to Palau Immigration in August 2023. Tuvalu initially scheduled for support through the PIDC support programme will be supported by Australia Home Affair following a renewal of bilateral engagements between the Tuvalu government and the Australian government with Australia Home Affairs confirming commitment to support Tuvalu in the development of their business case under this new bilateral arrangement. Members that have to date received technical support in the development of a business case include the Cook Islands and Tonga. Cook Islands and Tonga have subsequently progressed towards the adoption of BMS that meet their objectives as outlined in their business cases.

Palau has used their Business Case report to guide the development of their customised Border Management System.

Country	Year	Status
Cook Islands	2019	Completed
Tonga	2022	Completed
Palau	2023	Completed
Tuvalu	2024	Australia-Tuvalu bilateral arrangement to support development of business case

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note and welcome** the progress update in the support provided to members in the development of their BMS Business Cases; and
- (ii) **encourage** the Secretariat to continue supporting members in the development of their BMS Business Case.

(g) Training Curriculum

24. The PIDC Work Plan for 2023/2024 includes the provision of technical support for Nauru and RMI to develop their Training Curricula and Module Training Manuals. This was part of PIDC's support to its member countries in building capacity at the national level in policy, legislation, operating procedures and best practices in managing migration and border control.

Progress

25. A Consultant expert has been recruited to deliver this important regional support programme. The PIDC Training Curriculum nationalisation programme for Marshall Islands and Nauru intends to build members capacity to deliver and sustain their own national training programmes. The curriculum development support is a response to the operational realities in the Pacific and is intended to introduce a set of topics that Nauru and the Marshall Islands can work with as minimum components for frontline border induction training. The Training Curriculum development support to be coordinated through the Pacific Security Consultant will be using the PIDC Training Curriculum as its guiding document in the nationalisation of the two members training curriculum. The project is on track to be implemented and completed by the end of this financial period in June with the first planning meeting scheduled for early March with subsequent ongoing consultations with the two member countries to be scheduled in the coming weeks.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note and welcome** the progress supporting Marshall Islands and Nauru in the development of their immigration training curriculum specific to their operating environment; and
- (ii) **encourage** the Secretariat to continue supporting members in the development of their training curriculum.



Pacific Immigration Development Community

2023/24 Board Meeting 2

14-15 March: Apia, Samoa

Annex One: PIDC-USP Memorandum of Understanding for the development of the Masters Programme



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

and


THE PACIFIC IMMIGRATION DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY


1.0 Preamble

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, herein referred to as "USP", founded in 1968, with its headquarters in Laucala Bay Road, Suva, Fiji, represented herein by its Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Pal Ahluwalia. The University of the South Pacific, a body incorporated by the Royal Charter of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, is a key contributor to the development of Pacific Island Countries and region's premier University providing a primary source of high quality graduates in the region. USP serves the regional needs of its 12 member Countries¹. USP strives towards excellence in the provision of tertiary education and aims to build on and preserve the Pacific Heritage. It proactively engages with the region, its communities, and with international partners on major development issues relevant to the region. The University has positioned itself as a leader in research and education that is original, modern, and readily applicable in addressing the problems and challenges faced by its member countries. USP is one of few regional Universities in the world and is not only a higher education institute, but also an active regional integration organisation. The steady supply of graduates has contributed to meeting the growing development needs of the region for almost 50 years. The University, through its Faculty of Arts, Law and Education will be responsible for implementing this Memorandum of Understanding.

THE PACIFIC IMMIGRATION DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY, formerly known as the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference, herein referred to as "PIDC" was founded in 1996 and registered as an International Organisation in Samoa in June 2016. The PIDC headquarters is located in Beach Road, Apia, Samoa and is represented herein by current Chair and Director for the Vanuatu Department of Immigration and Passport Services – Mr. Jeffrey Markson. The PIDC is a forum for official immigration agencies of the Pacific region that enables the heads of immigration agencies to discuss issues of mutual interest and assistance to foster multilateral cooperation aimed at strengthening Members' territorial borders and the integrity of their passenger processing systems.

¹ Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Niue, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu

Initialed by Prof. Pal Ahluwalia for USP: 

Initialed by Jeffrey Markson for PIDC: 

The PIDC services 19 Member states² and as the leading immigration regional body in the Pacific, strives to achieve border integrity across the Pacific through regional cooperation, facilitating seamless and efficient people movement that contributes to economic growth. Entering the Memorandum of Understanding with USP addresses and builds enhanced quality immigration and border management practices across the Pacific region.

Border Security represents an area significant to Pacific Island Communities preservation, continuity and way of life. As the primary provider of tertiary education in the Pacific, USP's Strategic Vision and objectives highlight the institution's commitment to meeting the needs of the region. Regional security continues to be a priority area for all governments and is therefore a significant focal area for USP. It is therefore prudent to have a programme designated for regional border security personnel housed at the regional education provider as it links directly to regional capacity building, contextual specificity and applicability.

2.0 Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is designed to foster a friendly relationship through mutual cooperation in regional Immigration capacity building between the PIDC and the USP. PIDC and USP have reached agreement on the following area of cooperation, subject to mutual consent and the availability of sufficient funding and human resources:

- Development and delivery of a Masters in Border Security

PIDC and USP will designate an individual to coordinate this programme and all endeavors that may derive from it. For this purpose, The Pacific Immigration Development Community designates Mr. Akuila Ratu, and The University of the South Pacific designates Adjunct Associate Professor Danielle Watson of the School of Law and Social Sciences.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibility of USP:

USP shall be responsible for the following:

- i. The creation and coordination of the Masters Programme in Border Security;
- ii. The alignment of the Masters Programme to meet regional border security needs;
- iii. The recruitment of suitable staff for the delivery of courses within the programme;
- iv. The attainment of appropriate programme accreditation; and
- v. The waiver of university overhead costs associated with the development of the programme.

3.2 Responsibility of the PIDC

² Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna.

Initialed by Prof. Pal Ahluwalia for USP: *P.A.*

Initialed by Jeffrey Markson for PIDC: *J.M.*

PIDC shall be responsible for the following:

- i. Funding all costs associated with the creation of the Masters Programme in Border Security not exceeding FJD \$30,000.00;
- ii. Funding programme staffing for five years not exceeding FJD\$79,241 per year, from year 1 of the Masters offering;
- iii. Funding a minimum of four (4) student cohorts (with a minimum of 15 students per cohort) towards completion of the Postgraduate Diploma or Masters in Border Security;
- iv. Facilitating collaboration among USP, international and regional Immigration stakeholders to develop region-specific programme content; and
- v. Coordinating the attainment of all relevant material and resources required to facilitate curriculum design related activities such as case studies and policies to be used as assessment pieces within Border Security courses.

4.0 Amendment

No amendment, consent, or waiver of terms of this MOU shall bind either party unless in writing and signed by all parties. Any such amendment, consent, or waiver shall be effective only in the specific instance and for the specified purpose given. The parties to this MOU, by the signatures below of their authorised representatives, acknowledge having read and understood this MOU and agree to be bound by its terms and conditions.

5.0 Term of MOU

This MOU shall commence on the date of latest signature and be in effect for 5 years, at which time it shall be reviewed for possible extension. Either party may terminate this MOU by written notification signed by the appropriate official of the institution initiating the notice. However, such notification must be received by the other party at least six months prior to the effective date of termination.

Signed in two original copies in English Language.



Professor Pal Ahluwalia
Vice-Chancellor & President
The University of the South Pacific,
Laucala, Suva, Fiji





Mr. Jeffrey Markson
PIDC Chair
Vanuatu Immigration and Passport Services

Date: December 20, 2023

Place: USP Laucala
CAMPUS

Date: 24/01/24

Initialed by Prof. Pal Ahluwalia for USP: 

Initialed by Jeffrey Markson for PIDC: 

Witnessed by: Tony Siamomua
Manager Development
[Full Name and Title]

Signed: [Signature]
Date: 20th December, 2023

Place: Vanuatu Immigration Office,
Port Vila, Vanuatu.
Witnessed by: Akui/a Ratu (Virtual)
[Full Name and Title] Head of Secretariat
PIDL.

Signed: [Signature]
Date: 24/01/24.

Initialed by Prof. Pal Ahluwalia for USP: [Signature]
Initialed by Jeffrey Markson for PIDC: J.M

