



## Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference

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*Canberra, Australia: 19-21 February 2013*

### **PIDC INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRACTITIONERS WORKSHOP**

#### ***Introduction***

The PIDC Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Practitioners Workshop was held in Canberra from 19-21 February 2013. The Workshop was coordinated and facilitated by the PIDC Secretariat and the Australian Department of Immigration (DIAC). The Workshop was an outcome of the 2012 Annual PIDC Conference in the Cook Islands.

The Workshop was attended by 30 participants, representing the immigration departments from the Governments of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The representatives from DIAC, INZ, Fiji Immigration, Samoa Immigration, PNG Immigration and Citizenship Services Authority and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) facilitated sessions of the workshop and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) participated as an Observer.

The Workshop was opened by the DIAC Secretary, Mr. Simon Schiwy. The Secretary welcomed participants and provided a brief overview of the Workshop programme. Mr Simon noted that this workshop was endorsed by the 2012 Annual Conference which was fully supported by Australia. He reinforced the objectives of the workshop on the need to develop a community of practice among ICT officers for sharing of information and support; identify areas of ICT expertise in the region and areas of common training need; and identify commonalities in business requirements and common approaches to the development of ICT solutions to immigration needs. He also noted that this forum was an opportunity for knowledge sharing, cooperation as a shared responsibility between PIDC Member countries and strengthening immigration networks in the region.

#### ***Objectives***

The PIDC regional forum on information, communication and technology is an opportunity for PIDC to work in partnership with members to establish a common understanding and consistency in addressing information, communication and technology issues in the region.

The purpose of the workshop is to:

- Develop a community of practice among ICT officers for sharing of information and support;
- Identify areas of ICT expertise in the region and areas of common training need; and
- Identify commonalities in business requirements and common approaches to the development of ICT solutions to immigration needs.

## **WORKSHOP OUTCOMES**

Supplementary activities through the PIDC typically arise from ideas generated at workshops, which are presented in the form of an Outcomes Summary – a document formulated by workshop participants and agreed upon for publication on the PIDC website.

The Outcomes Summary represents a tentative plan for future action (e.g. further workshops and other collaborative projects) and in-principle agreement to the high-level concepts discussed throughout a workshop.

All plans for future action, such as workshops, projects and other activities, must be endorsed by the PIDC Management Board. Although the Outcomes Summary does not represent a firm commitment to future action, it does represent in-principle agreement to progress the ideas contained in the Outcomes Summary.

### **Outcomes as agreed upon by ICT workshop participants**

The PIDC Information, Technology and Communications Workshop from 19-21 February 2013:

- **Thanked** the Donor; the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship in appreciation for supporting and financing this workshop on Information, Communication and Technology.
- **Acknowledged** and **thanked** in appreciation the Resource Persons and experts from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), Immigration New Zealand (INZ), Fiji Department of Immigration, PNG Immigration, Citizenship Services Authority (PNGICSA), Samoa Immigration, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the PIDC Secretariat.
- **Recognised** the value of having a specialist ICT workshop and **encouraged** the PIDC Management Board, with the Secretariat, to continue implementing further consultation forums for ICT.

- **Acknowledged** the increase in people movement into the region and the challenge this posed to immigration department's border control systems against irregular travellers.
- **Recognised** members' limitation and **agreed** to take a regional approach through the PIDC to address Information, Communications and Technology issues in the region.
- **Encouraged** Members to be realistic with their ICT environments and to identify specific ICT needs that are relevant and manageable.
- **Recognised** the different ICT standards and environments amongst PIDC members and the limitation these placed on members ability to improve and strengthen their ICT standards.
- **Recognised** that any ICT project proposal required thorough planning, stakeholder communication and the need to align project objectives with their department's vision.
- **Agreed** the importance of identifying those features in a border management system that fit the needs of the individual country at the same time recognising limited resources, expertise and capacity to sustainably operate and manage that border management system.
- **Recognising** the need to identify a suitable business model for the country before developing an associated IT solution.
- **Recognised** the need to develop Program Management expertise in the Department to lead and communicate any proposed IT development or change.
- **PIDC Secretariat to develop** a matrix to identify IT capacities in member nations to enable an IT stocktake and gap analysis to better inform future training and resourcing needs.
- **Recognised** that the quality of information was central to the reliability of ICT systems at the border and that the adoption of internal procedural checks to control the quality and security of information was crucial to the operation of any border management system.
- **Encouraged** the PIDC Management Board, with the Secretariat, to consider planning and funding options for the implementation of future ICT practitioners forums tailored specifically on immigration departments ICT needs.
- **Encouraged** the PIDC through the Management Board and Secretariat to identify regional processes or plans that members could adopt to improve or increase members' ability to access new border management systems.

- **Encouraged** participants at this workshop to take back lessons and recommendations from this workshop to their home nations to progress processes and systems that will improve and strengthen their ICT systems.
- **Recognised** the availability of ITC options in the region and the need to identify the most appropriate option suitable for respective immigration departments in the region.

### ***Future Work***

The PIDC through its Management Board and the Secretariat will:

1. Seek funding options for the implementation of future ICT workshop for PIDC Members including training and secondment opportunities in IT and Program Management;
2. Seek to identify regional or national approaches that members can adopt to assist members ability to establish/strengthen border management systems in the region and most importantly to improve the PIDC networks ability to exchange quality information in real time;
3. PIDC Secretariat to ensure outcomes from ICT workshop are reflected in PIDC Secretariat workplan; and
4. Develop a network of IT practitioners (Community of Practice) in member nations that can provide advice and guidance on IT issues to other member nations.