



**Agenda Item 11: Panel Discussion – Maritime Border Challenges: Emerging Maritime Trends in the Pacific.**

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**Recommendations**

Members are invited to (a) note the trends, challenges and emerging issues in Maritime Border for Immigration agencies and (b) identify activities that immigration and partner law enforcement agencies can pursue to

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**Facilitator:** PIDC Secretariat

**Panellist:** French Polynesia, PNG, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, RMI, FFA, PTCCC & OCO

**Objective:**

This session seeks to:

- better understand the complexities of managing maritime borders;
- discuss emerging maritime border trends in the Pacific;
- provide an opportunity for members to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore policy interventions and initiatives related to maritime border management for immigration agencies; and
- identify how immigration agencies can collaborate effectively with maritime law enforcement agencies to combat maritime immigration-related crimes.

**Overview**

Securing maritime borders is a significant and evolving challenge for immigration agencies in the Pacific region. The vast expanse of ocean, coupled with the diverse and often remote island nations, creates opportunities for terrorist activity and transnational crime, particularly involving foreign vessels and small craft. These vessels represent a security threat in a number of areas such as: illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, people smuggling, human trafficking, illegal migration, smuggling of weapons and drugs, prostitution, money laundering and corruption. The extent of risk in each of these areas is difficult to quantify with any certainty because of the lack of reliable data across the Pacific.

Consequently, improving partnerships with maritime border control agencies across the Pacific region is crucial to combatting these serious threats. Strengthening regional cooperation and understanding of the maritime environment also aligns with the Pacific Islands Forum 2050 Strategy for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives. Furthering the objective of security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.

Working with maritime law enforcement agencies provides: (a) an improved understanding of the maritime environment, through which specific maritime related activities relevant to national security can be effectively identified, evaluated and responded to appropriately; (b) enhanced situational awareness to allow an effective understanding of anything associated within the maritime environment; and (c) an active and layered approach that strengthens our ability to coordinate, direct,

collect, process and disseminate information about the civil maritime environment, to authorised maritime security and law enforcement agencies.

To enhance engagement in this important area, this session intends to explore how immigration agencies can work together with law enforcement counterparts to combat maritime crime.