



Agenda item 8: Information Sharing Working Group

Recommendation

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to:

1. **note** the report provided regarding the activities of the PIDC Information Sharing Working Group (refer to Annex A);
 2. **thank** the Members of the Information Sharing Working Group for their hard work in advancing this important piece of work and support their continued efforts in implementing the proposed activities;
 3. **endorse** the four core recommended activities developed by the working group to resolve major information sharing issues (refer to paragraph 11);
 4. **note** the development of a draft Information and Intelligence Management Framework that can be used to provide guidance for Members (contained in Annex A).
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Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to brief Members on the activities of the Information Sharing Working Group that was established by the PIDC Board to advance a mandate provided by Members at the 2016 Regular Annual Meeting to strengthen information sharing.

Background

2. In recognition of the growing threat of irregular migration and organised crime to the Pacific region, limited resources available to Pacific Islands Immigration administrations, and the need for Pacific Islands to strengthen their law enforcement and border management capacity to advance national and regional strategic objectives, PIDC Members in their 2016 Regular Annual Meeting tasked the PIDC Secretariat to consider surveying Members or establishing a Working Group to identify information sharing capabilities and requirements, with the purpose of supporting the establishment of information sharing MoUs.
3. In response to this direction by Members, the Board in its October 2016 meeting in Cook Islands agreed to establish a Working Group chaired by the Secretariat consisting of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and regional representatives Palau (Micronesia), Vanuatu (Melanesia), Samoa (requested by Cook Islands to represent Polynesia) and Tuvalu (Small Island States) (refer attached ToR endorsed by the PIDC Board in March 2017).

Key Objectives

4. The working group was asked to:
 - a) assess the individual and collective capacity of PIDC Members to collect, analyse and share information;

- b) assess the suitability of current fora and platforms for secure sharing of information in the region;
- c) advance where possible work activities related to issues raised by Members on key regional concerns such as Third Country Nationals and Criminal Deportees; and
- d) provide recommendations to Members proposing options on how to strengthen PIDC information sharing including through the establishment of more formal information sharing mechanisms such as MoUs or the possible establishment of a regional information sharing strategy or framework.

Working Group activities

5. The working group undertook a number of activities to advance the implementation of its objectives. The working group first undertook an environmental scan to better understand the information sharing impediments faced by Members. The scan was undertaken through a Secretariat led desktop research of relevant regional and international activities and through a questionnaire disseminated to Members in March 2017 seeking information regarding Members' (i) capacity to collect, store, analyse and share information; and (ii) national priority needs for provision of future support.

6. The working group met twice to develop the proposed recommendations. The first meeting was held in Auckland to undertake a mapping exercise identifying existing law enforcement structures and organisations working in the information sharing and intelligence space at the national and regional levels¹ in the Pacific Islands. As part of this exercise the working group: (a) identified the various information and intelligence sharing services and products being provided by partner law enforcement organisations in the region; (b) reviewed the information and intelligence sharing frameworks developed by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Oceania Customs Organisation; (c) discussed how collaboration and information sharing amongst Members and partner agencies could be advanced formally/ informally across strategic, operational, tactical and statistical levels; (d) agreed to invite French Polynesia as a representative of French speaking community to contribute to Working Group discussions; and (e) reviewed responses provided by Members to the questionnaire. As part of the meeting programme, the Working Group undertook site visits to the New Zealand Customs Integrated Targeting Operations Centre (ITOC) and the Immigration New Zealand Immigration Border Operations Centre (IBOC) to familiarise and introduce themselves with advanced monitoring and targeting techniques currently being employed by New Zealand law enforcement border agencies.

7. The second meeting of the ISWG was held in May in Apia and was hosted by the Secretariat. The WG reviewed the draft recommendations developed by the Secretariat and held in depth discussions and shared experiences to determine how to best approach a number of the issues that had been identified in the first meeting. The initial draft and structure of the Working Report was then refined and amended through subsequent iterations. While in Apia the Working Group undertook a site visit to the Pacific Transnational Crimes Network Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre and were briefed on the

¹ (1) national stakeholders (Customs, Police, Bio-Security, Health, Labour, Finance, Industry, Carriers, agents), (2) Structures and Networks (PTCN, JIATFW, FFA RFSC), (3) Regional agencies (PICP, OCO, FFA, SPC, PIFS), (4) International agencies (UNODC, UNHCR, IOM, Bali Process, APG, IATA, ICAO, UNDP)

activities of this important law enforcement partner organisation. A briefing was provided on the current PTCN secure communication system All Partners Access Network run by the JIATFW of the US Department of Defence.

Findings

8. As a result of the questionnaire responses and working group discussions the working group were able to identify some key issues regarding Members priorities and needs.

Questionnaire responses

9. The responses provided by 12 responding Members provided a clear picture of where interventions were required.

(a) In terms of policy and legislative support, 40% of responding Members lacked provisions to allow for sharing of information and 55% reported having privacy laws that would complicate information sharing.

(b) In terms of information systems:

- i. about 40% of responding Members reported that they did not have an automated Border Management System (ABMIS) in place yet although they advised that they were working towards developing one;
- ii. the majority of responding Members reported that inbound and outbound information about travellers were stored in a variety of methods ranging from no storage to stored on excel, arrival cards, with statistics departments and on ABMIS (very varied)
- iii. more than 70% of responding Members reported not having a standardised and consistent method to store information about high risk individuals (very varied);
- iv. only two responding Members reported having access to automated analysis and charting capability;
- v. 60% of responding Members reported receiving information from domestic law enforcement agencies;
- vi. 60% of responding Members advised that they did not have access to Advanced Passenger Information (API) but all saw value in obtaining API.

(c) In terms of capacity to analyse information:

- i. all Members reported contributing information to law enforcement networks primarily through PIDC and TCU;
- ii. 50% of Members reported they had officers that undertook a targeting function;
- iii. about 70% of the responding Members reported that they were looking to establish an intelligence section;
- iv. in terms of support required to develop intelligence sections, training, development of SOPs, guidelines, were identified as main areas of support required;

(d) In terms of capacity building

- i. Only two Members reported having intelligence manuals/ guidelines for training purposes;
- ii. The bulk of the information and intelligence training received by Members had been through PRIIP and RSDP;

(e) In terms of capacity to share information

- i. only three responding Members indicated they had official contact points to facilitate the sharing of information.
- ii. nearly half responding Members advised they did not contribute to alerts and bulletins on a regular basis;
- iii. only three Members advised that they had more than three officers working on intelligence;
- iv. only two responding Members advised they had MoUs for information sharing with the private sector;
- v. while 60% advised that they had information security guidelines and protocols in place only three had formal security classifications to manage information;
- vi. all responding Members reported that they provided information to overseas agencies;
- vii. the most common requesting countries (alphabetical) were Australia, New Zealand and USA with Fiji, Vanuatu, Canada, UK and China also reported to a lesser extent.

Members priority needs

9. Responding Members identified key priority areas where they most required support from PIDC in strengthening their capacity to share information. In order of overall priority as identified by the responding Members, support was sought to develop:

- a) policies, SOPs and Guidelines to support information and intelligence collection, analysis and sharing;
- b) legislation to support information and intelligence collection, analysis and sharing;
- c) capacity building activities/ training manuals in beginner and advanced information and intelligence management and targeting;
- d) systems to support information and intelligence collection, analysis and sharing;
- e) model intelligence products/ templates and guides on their use.

10. In addition, Members were asked to identify key areas of ICT support that could be provided through the PIDC Secretariat especially through the website which all Members had access to. The majority of the responding Members identified requiring support through all of the website functions that the questionnaire had suggested as examples which included providing online access to:

- a) file and information sharing services;
- b) national information and links to activities;
- c) data Back-up services;
- d) password protected Intelligence products;
- e) specific shared intelligence files;
- f) online training manuals and courses;
- g) online Immigration tools and resources; and
- h) online access to regional Model Legislation.

Recommendations

Core Recommended activities

11. The working group recommendations are in two separate parts. The first part seeks endorsement for four core recommended activities to support Members in responding to information sharing impediments while at the same time looking to leverage off existing

strengths. These activities are provided for Members to endorse and will form the core of activities to be undertaken through the working group and include:

- a) To develop a regional Memorandum of Understanding to provide a legal basis for the sharing of immigration information among PIDC Members;
- b) To hold a regional workshop to enhance PIDC Members capacity to use common readily available platforms to collect store and analyse immigration information;
- c) To establish a regional network of accredited contact points for Members that could be used to securely share information; and
- d) To identify secure channel of communication to allow PIDC Members to freely and securely share information.

12. **Regional workshop on Immigration Data Collection** - Given data collection remains a significant issue for Members especially regarding key priority threat areas such as third country nationals, criminal deportees, outlaw motorcycle gangs, cruise liners and persons with links to transnational crime, the working group recommends that a regional workshop be held as part of the 2017/ 2018 Annual Work Plan to strengthen the capacity of Members to collect immigration data using simple Microsoft Excel and manual databases. It is envisaged that participants will commit to setting up simple databases upon their return to their organizations and national activities will be reported to Members at the Regular Annual Meeting in 2018.

13. **Establishment of PIDC Information and Intelligence Contact Points Network** -To facilitate the secure sharing of information between Members the working group recommends the establishment of a PIDC Information and Intelligence Regional Contacts Point Network. Nearly all Members advised that they currently do not have a contact point with most information being channelled through the Immigration Director. While this is an effective method for managing the flow of information, it also acts as a significant impediment. Each Member will be requested to nominate an officer to facilitate the sharing of information and this officer will receive guidelines on what types of information can be shared and how to share information securely. An integral part of this work would require formalising information sharing protocols, security classification and creation and accreditation of intelligence sharing contact points.

14. **Regional PIDC Memorandum of Understanding developed to facilitate the sharing of Information** - Members have advised the working group that to facilitate the sharing of information they require a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise information sharing practices. The MoU would identify what information can be shared and through what channels. Australia has agreed to lead the work on developing the MoU looking for its possible endorsement by Members at the 2018 Regular Annual Meeting.

15. **Identifying Secure electronic platforms to share information** - The working group agreed to explore options for the secure sharing of information. The working group were briefed on existing methods and Members through the questionnaire had provided a number of functions that they had wanted introduced or maintained on the PIDC website. The working group had also been briefed by the PTCCC on their current communication system (APAN which is maintained by USA Joint Inter-Agency Task Force West which is part of the US Department of Defense) which had been offered as an option free of charge.

Establishment of an Information and Intelligence Framework

16. The second part of the recommendations falls slightly outside of the scope of the working group but seeks to provide a draft Information and Intelligence Management Framework to provide guidance for possible activities that could be undertaken by the Secretariat and Members in response to issues raised by Members.

17. The Framework has been developed as a possible reference resource to guide future activities and is based upon issues that were raised by Members including those that fall outside the strict scope of information sharing. For completeness, the four core recommended activities are included and form part of the Framework. The Framework has been developed to provide possible long term guidance to PIDC on how to strengthen information and intelligence management and should remain aligned to the strategic plan. On this basis the Framework would be ideally implemented over a period of three years but would be subject to any priority changes that may occur in the next PIDC Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2021.

18. The key components for the draft regional Framework include:

- a) overarching strategic guidance is provided by the PIDC Constitution, 2016 – 2018 Strategic Plans and the PIDC Results Management Suite;
- b) a vision to guide the strategic direction of the Framework;
- c) four strategic objectives to realise the Vision each with specific activities to be undertaken by PIDC Members and Secretariat at national and regional levels;
- d) a multi-lateral Memorandum of Understanding for Members' consideration to formalise agreed information and intelligence sharing activities and provide a legal basis for collaboration;
- e) Strengthening of the existing PIDC information and intelligence network to facilitate information sharing using: (a) agreed PIDC products and services such as the Alerts System, the Monthly Bulletin, and the Annual Immigration Threat Assessment (People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration Report); (b) the PIDC Information Contact Points Network to facilitate information sharing; (c) a secure communication system and website leveraging off innovative technology; and (d) collaborating with law enforcement partners to identify and collectively combat priority transnational crime threats;
- f) Identified outputs and measures that indicate deliverables and implementation timeframes.

Strategic Implications

19. The proposed recommendations support the implementation of the strategic objectives for information and intelligence sharing in the PIDC Constitution, the Strategic Plan 2016 - 2018 and the Results Management Suite.

Financial Implications

20. The four core activities recommended for Members endorsement have been included as part of the 2017/ 18 budget. A number of activities included in the draft Information and Intelligence Framework have either been included in the 2017/ 18 budget work or are cost neutral. The remaining activities have yet to be funded and can be subject to funding as prioritised by Members in the future.

