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**Agenda item 17:      Workshop Session Two - Strengthening the PIDC Information and Intelligence Network (Information Sharing Working Group Update)**

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**Recommendations**

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to:

- a) **note** the update provided regarding the activities of the Information Sharing Working Group (ISWG) and **welcome** the significant work undertaken by the ISWG to advance priority issues identified at the 2017 Regular Annual Meeting;
- b) **consider** and **endorse** the draft Memorandum of Arrangement for Information Sharing developed by the ISWG; and
- c) **consider** the recommendations highlighted in the attached outcomes documents which will be discussed as part of the Agenda Item Workshop.

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Facilitator TBC

**Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to brief Members on the activities of the PIDC Information Sharing Working Group (ISWG) since the 2017 PIDC Regular Annual Meeting and guide their workshop discussions of the various recommendations developed by: (a) ISWG; and (b) regional workshops that discussed law enforcement and border security information sharing.

**Background**

2. To strengthen law enforcement and border management capacity and advance national and regional strategic objectives for closer collaboration, PIDC Members and the Board agreed in 2016 to establish a Working Group to strengthen information sharing (ISWG) chaired by the Secretariat consisting of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and regional representatives Palau (Micronesia), Vanuatu (Melanesia), Samoa (Polynesia), and Tuvalu (Small Island States).

**Key Activities to be undertaken by Working Group**

3. At the 2017 Regular Annual Meeting, Members after considering a report tabled by the working group tasked the ISWG to: (a) develop a regional Memorandum of Understanding to provide a legal basis for the sharing of immigration information among PIDC Members; (b) hold a regional workshop to enhance PIDC Members' capacity to use common readily available platforms to collect, store, and analyse immigration information; (c) establish a regional network of accredited contact points for Members that could be used to securely share information; and (d) identify secure channel of communication to allow PIDC Members to freely and securely share information.

## Update of Activities

4. Significant work has been undertaken by the ISWG in the 2017/18 Financial Year. In terms of overall architecture, the ISWG mapped out the various activities, services, products, and national and regional structures which form the current PIDC Information and Intelligence Sharing Network (Attachment One). The ISWG met twice (November 2017 and April 2018) in Honiara and Suva respectively to advance the work as tasked by Members. At the meeting held in Honiara, the ISWG was hosted by the Forum Fisheries Agency and visited the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre to familiarise working group Members with the regional surveillance picture currently available to Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

5. *Develop a regional Memorandum of Understanding to provide a legal basis for the sharing of immigration information among PIDC Members* - The draft Memorandum of Arrangement for Information Sharing<sup>1</sup> was developed by New Zealand and comprehensively reviewed by the ISWG in its March 2018 meeting. The revised text of the draft Arrangement was disseminated to the Membership twice for comment and Members were asked to consult with their Attorney Generals with a view of beginning the signing process at the 2018 Regular Annual Meeting. The draft Arrangement is attached (Attachment Two) for consideration and endorsement by Members with a summary (Attachment Three) prepared by the Secretariat outlining the purpose of the various provisions. Members will note the operative provisions being Paragraph 6 - calling for the sharing of information, Paragraph 7 – establishing National Contact Points to facilitate information sharing, and Paragraph 8 – listing information to be shared under the Arrangement.

6. *Hold a regional workshop to enhance PIDC Members' capacity to use common readily available platforms to collect, store, and analyse immigration information* - The regional Data Collection Workshop was held on 16 – 19 April in Suva, Fiji with 16 participants representing 13 PIDC Members (Outcomes and programme attached as Attachment Four). Significant areas advanced by participants included: (a) endorsement of specific data fields to be shared under the PIDC draft Arrangement; (b) support for the draft Accredited Contact Points Network; (c) discussion of the proposed PIDC model information security classification system; (d) familiarisation with the PIDC Excel Data Collection Tool developed by New Zealand Statistics for PIDC to provide a systematic data collection and automated analysis tool for selected immigration data fields to support Members meet their national and regional reporting priorities; and (e) agreement to be part of a 1 month information sharing trial using a commercial mobile application platform to share real time information coordinated through the Secretariat.

7. *Establish a regional network of accredited contact points for Members that could be used to securely share information* - The Secretariat developed for the ISWG a paper for the

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<sup>1</sup> Full title is: Arrangement between Members of the Pacific Immigration Development Community concerning cooperation and capacity building and the disclosure of information for immigration, border protection, law enforcement, and public safety purpose.

proposed Contact Points Network (CPN) (Attachment Five). The ISWG agreed to a conservative approach to begin the flow of secure information while ensuring that the Network could expand to meet existing and future needs of Members. The ISWG agreed that the accreditation process would at the minimum require: (a) training and a simple to use certification process on the PIDC Information Security Classification System and Information Sharing Protocols; and (b) training on domestic information sharing process that were unique to each country. ISWG Members welcomed New Zealand's announcement of the proposed continuation of PRIIP that would be more aligned to the needs of PIDC Members and noted that this initiative could be used to support both the establishment of the Network of Contact Points and also a regional group of Profiling Officers as well (in jurisdictions where these two functions were being undertaken by separate officers).

8. *Identify secure channel of communication to allow PIDC Members to freely and securely share information* – The ISWG recognised that based on the model PIDC Information Security Classification System and the draft regional Memorandum of Arrangement, the levels of security for various types of information exchanged would vary. Noting that any system developed would need to be aligned with Members' current platforms and national connectivity levels in the region, the ISWG noted a proposal by the Secretariat utilising multiple secure accessible platforms that would support Members' activities and meet their security needs. The Secretariat proposed for the exchange of secure information that the information be shared through the accredited Contact Points Network using the PIDC Website function with more sensitive documents requiring double verification. To facilitate the timely sharing of information, the Secretariat proposes that commercially available mobile applications such as WhatsApp, that are subject to commercial encryption at sending and receiving ends, be used between recognised PIDC Users to facilitate appropriate information in real time with the Secretariat administering membership and use of the communication platform.

#### **Additional Related Regional Workshops and Meetings**

9. During the reporting period, the Secretariat supported two regional immigration related workshops (Passenger Profiling and Pacific Regional Security Information Sharing especially across the maritime domain). The **Passenger Profiling Workshop** was held in May 2018 in Suva, Fiji as part of the Annual Work Plan to strengthen national border enforcement and Members' collective and individual capability to undertake immigration border profiling. The main objectives included: (a) developing profiling skills for participating immigration officers; (b) exploring the development of a regional profiling group/ network of practitioners for PIDC; (c) identifying latest profiling trends and indicators in border control activities and operations; (d) identifying information and intelligence sources to be used to develop and support national and regional profiles; and (e) developing agreed recommendations on possible ways forward for Members to consider at the 2018 PIDC Regular Annual Meeting.

10. The Outcomes from this workshop are attached (Attachment Six) and Members will be asked to consider several recommendations made by the workshop participants including

a request for PIDC support to establish national in-country profiling functions and also to establish a regional Profiling Group (PRPG) made up of operational representatives of PIDC Members to serve as a platform for:

- (a) exchange of information, views, experiences, and analysis;
- (b) advancing profiling policy dialogue;
- (c) developing regional resources and tools such as templates, common communication platforms, and best practices to support national profilers;
- (d) coordinating regional targeting campaigns or operations;
- (e) coordinating capacity building and training for basic, advanced, and trainer profiling officers; and
- (f) collaborating with related industry, civil society, and media.

11. The Secretariat also attended a **Pacific Regional Security Information Sharing** Workshop hosted by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in April 2018. Attended by regional law enforcement bodies and national representatives of Pacific countries, the workshop allowed participants to: (a) consider ways to strengthen information sharing amongst law enforcement agencies in the region; (b) examine the operation of the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre at FFA, as a possible model for enhanced information sharing and cooperation; (c) consider options for strengthening Pacific Island Countries and Territories Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA); and (d) develop key recommendations for the consideration of the Pacific Islands Forum Officials Committee on possible actions to advance the development of a Biketawa Plus Security Declaration through enhanced regional law enforcement information sharing.

12. Key outcomes (Attachment Seven) from this workshop included: (a) enhancing collaboration and information sharing among regional law enforcement agencies to combat transnational crime; (b) establishing a cross agency technical working group for regional law enforcement bodies to explore enhancing information sharing between police, customs, and immigration agencies; (c) developing a strategy that considers the roles and potential engagement with other stakeholders; and (d) a call for appropriate resourcing to be provided to fund these proposed activities.

13. Members will be provided a full briefing on these activities and will be requested to consider and endorse as appropriate the: (a) draft Arrangement; (b) recommendations made by the ISWG; and (c) recommendations made by the Data Collection and Profiling Workshop participants as part of the Agenda Item 17 Workshop Sessions.