



## Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference

2018 Regular Annual Meeting

June 26 – 28, Nadi, Fiji

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### Agenda item 15: Panel Discussion – How PIDC and Members can contribute to combating transnational crime

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#### Recommendation

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to:

1. **note** and discuss current trends in transnational organised crime in the Pacific and **explore** the possible development of joint collaborative responses;
  2. **welcome** the presentations provided by panellists identifying possible activities on how PIDC and PIDC Members can best collaborate to combat transnational crime;
  3. **task** the Secretariat to enhance collaboration with PTCN and UNODC across the breadth of their activities in the region and engage in collecting data around people smuggling, human trafficking, criminal deportees, foreign fighters, outlaw motorcycles gangs and cruise liners; and
  4. **task** the Secretariat to develop a regional strategic framework for people smuggling and human trafficking by holding a regional seminar for Members and partner organisations to develop coordinated and targeted national and regional responses to combat these criminal activities.
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#### Purpose

To discuss the most recent trends in transnational crime in the Pacific region and explore possible collaborative responses.

#### Background

2. For the past several years the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre has reported that organised crime groups, particularly from Asia, continue to operate in a number of Pacific Island Countries. Many of these crime groups seek to disguise their activities to facilitate the unlawful transport of persons and illicit goods through the region into the more affluent markets in Australia, New Zealand, and North America.

3. Recent cases of money laundering and methamphetamine smuggling in Tonga, significant cocaine smuggling involving Pacific Islanders in Australia, and reports of human trafficking and modern-day slavery involving fishing fleets in the Pacific region continue to highlight the presence of transnational crime in the region. Transnational criminal groups have been linked to several business sectors including import, export, retail, wholesale, shipping, logging, and fisheries. Often operating in several different Pacific countries, transnational criminal groups are able to facilitate the transport of illicit goods and illegal migrants from source countries in Asia to target destinations often facilitated by corrupt officials.

4. For this panel discussion, the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre has been invited to provide a scene setting presentation on recent trends and Pacific case studies related to immigration.

5. Australia has also been invited to present to Members on its extensive national activities currently being undertaken to combat transnational crime. As one of the major regional targets for transnational crime activities, Australia will seek to explore how it can best collaborate with PIDC and PIDC Members to combat the various transnational crime activities in the region.

6. While Australia will provide specific details on how PIDC can best collaborate in this area, common international approaches to combating transnational crime include: (a) building strong partnerships between law enforcement agencies; (b) undertaking a whole of government approach to coordinate multi-agency initiatives and responses; (c) sharing information and intelligence between law enforcement agencies; (d) prioritising law enforcement capacity building and training; (e) hardening the regulatory environment; and (f) increasing the ability of the public and industries to protect themselves from organised crime.

7. In the 2018/19 Financial Year, the Secretariat proposes to host with partner organisations a regional seminar to develop a coordinated regional framework to combat human trafficking and people smuggling. The framework will guide and coordinate possible national and regional responses for Members to implement as appropriate to national circumstances.

#### **Financial Implications**

8. The cost for the proposed Regional Seminar has been included in the PIDC Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2018/19.