



Agenda item 14: Small Craft Movements and Fishing Vessels

Proposed Recommendation

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to **note** Members' experiences and lessons in working with maritime law enforcement counterparts.

Purpose

The purpose of this session is to discuss how immigration agencies can work with maritime law enforcement agencies to combat immigration related crime.

Background

2. The threat of terrorist activity and transnational crime associated with foreign fishing vessels and small craft operating in the Pacific region is a vulnerability that PIDC Members and law enforcement agencies continue to grapple with. 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.

3. 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 Framework for Pacific Regionalism, furthering the objective of security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.

4. 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.

5. In the Pacific region, there is a lack of common understanding amongst maritime border stakeholders regarding the activities of those responsible for fisheries management, maritime administration and border control issues. As mentioned in a 2005 SPC report on foreign fishing vessels in the Pacific, "communication and information sharing between these sectors occurs infrequently if at all."

6. 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. French Polynesia and the Oceania Customs Organisation will share their experiences in managing operational relationships with maritime stakeholders.

Policy Impacts

7. The discussion outcomes for this session are expected to support and guide the organisation's work in Key Activity Area 1.1, Key Activity Area 1.2, Key Activity Area 2.3, and Key Activity Area 4.3 of the PIDC Strategic Plan 2019-2021 in the areas of: (i) strengthening international partnerships and collaboration; (ii) enhancing national enforcement and investigations capacity; (iii) developing modern and streamlined Standard Operating Procedures; and (iv) developing and implementing regional standards and best practices.

Resource Implications

8. There are no specific financial implications identified at this stage. However, it is envisaged that at the conclusion of this panel discussion, Members could recommend potential activities based on the discussion outcomes. The Secretariat in consultation with the Board will subsequently review this session outcomes at its first 2019/20 Board meeting to make further recommendations.