



Agenda item 8 (f): PIDC Membership

Proposed Recommendations

The PIDC Regular Annual Meeting is invited to:

- (a) **note** the ongoing activities undertaken to engage with suspended PIDC Members American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Guam; and
 - (b) **consider** the application by Tokelau to become a Member of the Pacific Immigration Development Community.
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Purpose

The purpose of this session is to: (a) provide a progress update of activities undertaken to engage with suspended Pacific Immigration Development Community¹ (PIDC) Members American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam; and (b) provide a briefing to support Members' consideration of an application by Tokelau Department of Transport and Support Services for Membership in PIDC.

Suspended PIDC Members

2. American Samoa, CNMI, and Guam were initially Members of the PIDC and were represented in a number of PIDC activities. However, with the adoption of the new foundation PIDC MoU, pursuant to Paragraph IX of the MoU

Members which do not sign the Memorandum of Understanding will have their membership of the PIDC suspended from the time that this MOU enters into force until such time as they sign it in the future.

3. On this basis American Samoa, CNMI and Guam were suspended from PIDC pending their signature of the PIDC MoU. Since the Secretariat's shift to Apia in 2016, the Secretariat has continued to engage with representatives of American Samoa Immigration and the US Customs and Border Protection Services (CBP)², to encourage return to full Membership. Recent activities undertaken in 2019 include:

- a) meeting with the American Samoa Governor's Chief of Staff and engaging with the Director of Immigration to encourage American Samoa's return to full PIDC Membership; and
- b) engagement with CBP representatives to promote return to full Membership of CNMI and Guam with CBP representatives attending the 2019 PIDC Regular Annual Meeting for the first time since suspension.

¹ Previously named Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference until 2018..

² CBP manage immigration services for CNMI and Guam.

Application by Tokelau for PIDC Membership

4. After initially raising the issue of possible Membership through New Zealand at PIDC Board discussions in November 2018 and March 2019, the Department of Transport and Support Services of Tokelau lodged an application for PIDC Membership on 25 March 2019 (Attachment One). After reviewing the application, the Secretariat disseminated a Circular in April 2019 advising Members of the application and providing possible draft text required to amend relevant foundation documents (Attachment Two).

5. In discussing Tokelau's application, the Secretariat notes that:

- a) Tokelau is eligible to become a Member of PIDC pursuant to Article 5.2 of the PIDC Constitution which provides *[w]here the member is a territory whose immigration authority is managed independently by the territory, membership and participation will be entered into with the territory's immigration department;*
- b) Tokelau's Membership will bring significant benefits to Tokelau in that it will allow their organisation which represents a small island community with limited resources to: (i) engage directly with the wider PIDC immigration network allowing for the sharing of information, experiences and best practices; and (ii) seek technical assistance and capacity building support; and
- c) Tokelau's Membership will also provide significant benefits to the PIDC community in: (i) allowing the Membership to further expand coverage of Pacific Island Countries and Territories; and (ii) allowing Members to access Tokelau's experiences, information and best practices in managing their isolated islands and communities.

6. Should PIDC Members endorse Tokelau's application for Membership, the PIDC MoU and Constitution will be amended to reflect the addition of Tokelau as a new PIDC Member and a representative of Tokelau will be invited to sign the PIDC MoU.

Financial Implications

7. Should Tokelau become a Member of PIDC then it will be expected to contribute to the Membership Contribution Fund. In addition, Tokelauan representatives will be eligible for attendance at capacity building activities hosted by the Secretariat and partner organisations and there will be financial impacts based on the number of activities undertaken in a financial year.