



**Agenda item 7: Results Management Suite Output 3: A programme of immigration capacity building**

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**Proposed Recommendations**

The Board is invited to **consider** recommendations proposed under each of the agenda sub-items discussed below.

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**Purpose**

This paper seeks to provide the Board with an update regarding key activities undertaken by the Secretariat during the reporting period to advance the Results Management Suite Output 3. This output aims to establish and maintain PIDC as a regional coordination point for immigration capacity building in the region. Agenda items to be discussed include:

- a) COVID-19 Support Programme Update
- b) USP Academic Programme Update
- c) PIDC Scholarship Policy
- d) Hakili Matagi/Australia IBCP and Small Craft Application

**Agenda Item 7(a) COVID-19 Support Programme**

**Background**

2. The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most significant global threats in modern times introducing a number of challenges for border officials trying to contain its spread. In response, PIDC at its Special General Meeting in 2020 endorsed the establishment of a PIDC COVID-19 Support Programme recognising that the impacts of COVID-19 had been sudden and that many PIDC members had limited resources with which to respond effectively. An important objective of the Programme was ensuring Members were able to: (a) protect their communities; (b) meet their national obligations effectively as part of the multi-agency COVID-19 response; and (c) effectively implement the Pacific Islands Forum Pacific Humanitarian Pathway- COVID-19 (PHP-C) obligations which referred to high level immigration protocols that had been drafted with the support of the PIDC Secretariat.

3. The core activities advanced by the PIDC COVID-19 Programme included:
- a. building an effective communication capacity of PIDC Members through the provision upon request of a Communication Package to assist Members to adapt to the new virtual communication reality caused by COVID-19;
  - b. supporting Members to develop tailored SOPs and supporting training curriculum and modules that incorporate COVID-19 measures; and
  - c. assisting Members to meet any operational gaps for the implementation of the PHP-C and provision of Person Protective Equipment (PPE) where required.

**Update**

## **PIDC COVID-19 Communication Package**

4. To coordinate the implementation of the Programme, the PIDC Secretariat recruited a Programme Officer in November 2020. Since the recruitment of the Programme Officer, the Secretariat has communicated and engaged with 15 PIDC Members (American Samoa, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau, Nauru, Palau, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji) via zoom meetings and teleconference calls to confirm their Communication Package requirements. The Communication Package provided to Members under the programme varied slightly in composition based on their prioritised needs but for the most part included:

- a) 2 laptop computers;
- b) Multi-media teleconference equipment (camera with build in microphone, projector and UPS);
- c) One year data support package (Based on national Internet Service Provider (ISP) rates);
- d) One year Zoom Business license for two nominees per Member;
- e) One year anti-virus software; and
- f) Microsoft Office software.

5. To date, the Secretariat has processed the procurement of Communication Packages for 14 Members, with one pending approval. Ten Members have received their communication equipment including Samoa, Cook Islands<sup>1</sup>, Palau, Kiribati, FSM, Fiji, Tonga, Nauru, Tokelau and Niue<sup>2</sup>. The remaining Members are awaiting delivery in the next few weeks including RMI, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. The Suppliers are experiencing delays in shipment due to the COVID-19 pandemic impacting vessel schedules. The Secretariat will continue to track the orders and inform the respective Members on estimated delivery times accordingly.

6. For the use of the PIDC Communication Package, the Secretariat developed Terms of Conditions for the Members and held a briefing for Members on Friday 12 March 2021 via zoom. The Terms and Conditions focus on three key areas: Security, Use and Maintenance of the communication equipment. This is basically to ensure the equipment provided are being used for the purpose they were provided for and that PIDC Members look after the equipment in the same manner that they would ordinarily use to protect their other public computer and electronic assets. The Terms and Conditions are attached for the Board's information.

7. Part of the package includes two zoom accounts per Member for 1 year subscription paid for by PIDC. This online platform is an essential element for the Members in maintaining communication with PIDC and with other Members. Some Members have requested possible extension of zoom licenses for another year although this will be an issue for the Board to consider. It is envisaged that the ongoing costs such as provision of Zoom and dedicated internet services for PIDC engagement will eventually be taken over by the Members themselves.

## **COVID-19 Operational Safety Equipment**

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<sup>1</sup> Returned TV and processing approval to source locally.

<sup>2</sup> Partly supplied, the rest to be supplied in the next few weeks.

8. The majority of the Members engaged under this part of the COVID-19 Programme confirmed the need for assistance with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the Secretariat has been arranging procurement and delivery. Although most Members confirmed receiving supplies from their national Health Authorities, the assistance requested is to have a backup PPE stock specifically for Immigration Officers. Some Members, like Fiji were already buying their own PPE due to their Health Authorities running low on stock, and the assistance provided under the Programme came at an opportune time.

9. The common items requested by the Members included hand sanitizers, disposable masks and gloves. A few Members requested other items such as surgical gowns, face visors, shoe covers and other type of sanitizing items depending on the level of national emergency declared. The quantities provided to each Member by the Secretariat was finalised depending on the number of staff, and the number of flights to their borders.

10. The procurement of PPE are primarily from in-country suppliers where available and several Members were able to source PPE locally, including Tonga, RMI, Samoa, Tokelau, Fiji and Vanuatu which have now all received their PPE. Items being provided under the Programme that are not available locally are being purchased from suppliers in Australia and New Zealand.

#### **Resource Implications**

11. The programme spending is within budget for the current financial year. Total spending as of 16 February 2021 is at 52% (\$193,620.40) of the total budget, and about 10% committed pending final payments.

#### **Proposed Recommendations**

The Board is invited to:

- a) **welcome** the progress of activities under the COVID-19 Support Programme;
- b) **note** the Communication Package Terms and Conditions provided to Members who have received or are receiving Communication Packages; and
- c) **consider** the request from Members for an additional year of support for zoom accounts as part of the Communication Package.

#### **Agenda item 7 (b): USP Academic Programme Update**

##### **Background**

12. The PIDC – USP online Postgraduate Diploma in Border Security has now been in operation since January 2020. USP advises that 79 students are enrolled in the Programme for the first trimester of 2021. Of these, 40 students are studying the first paper of the Programme, PP-404 Border Management and the Security Context while 39 are studying PP- 407 International Cooperation, Partnership, and Peacekeeping. By the end of April 2021, the first cohort of pioneer students will complete the Post Graduate Diploma in Border Security with graduation planned for September 2021.

##### **PIDC Funding Support and Member Enrolment**

13. The table below shows the detailed names for each representative funded by the Secretariat for the 2021 first and second cohorts studying PP-404 Border Management and the Security Context and PP- 407 International Cooperation, Partnership, and Peacekeeping.

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>4404</b>	<b>4407</b>
1	Fiji	Angela Barinisavu	Laucala		X
2	Fiji	Salesi Ratumaiyale	Laucala		X
3	Fiji	Miriama Ravoka	Laucala		X
4	Fiji	Melaia Merumeru	Laucala	X	
5	Fiji	Reshma Lal	Laucala	X	
6	Samoa	Paul Ah Kuoi	Samoa		X
7	Samoa	Mose Faapuea	Samoa		X
8	Samoa	Talifaia Faatonu	Samoa	X	
9	Solomon Islands	Arnold Koresi	Honiara	X	
10	Solomon Islands	Benzily Kazutuba	Honiara	X	
11	Solomon Islands	Peter Poqebatu	Honiara	X	
12	Solomon Islands	Cosmas Arahauta	Honiara	X	
13	Solomon Islands	Johnson Oge	Honiara		X
14	Solomon Islands	Christopher Akosawa	Honiara		X
15	Vanuatu	Terence Naupa	Port-Vila Centre		X
16	Tonga	Lovina Ula	Tonga	X	
17	Tonga	Petilisa Taulanggovaka	Tonga	X	
18	Tonga	Tupou Kefu	Tonga	X	
19	Tuvalu	Vikiemi Kaitu	Tuvalu	X	
20	Tuvalu	Olepa Tamtoa	Tuvalu	X	
21	PIDC Secretariat	Ioane Alama	Secretariat		X
22	PIDC Secretariat	Seremana Titoko	Secretariat		X

23	PIDC Secretariat	Ruta T. Grey	Secretariat	X	X
	<b>Total</b>			<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>

14. The Secretariat notes that a number of countries are currently not utilising the study and scholarship opportunities being provided under the PIDC Programme. Currently PIDC is sponsoring students from only seven member countries reflected in the table below including the Secretariat. Members are strongly recommended to encourage their staff to undertake these courses.

	COUNTRY	4404	4407	PIDC Scholarships 4404	PIDC Scholarships 4407
1	Fiji	25	30	2	3
2	Kiribati	2	0	0	0
3	Samoa	1	3	1	2
4	Solomon Islands	7	2	4	2
5	Tuvalu	1	0	2	0
6	Vanuatu	0	1	0	1
7	Tonga	3	0	3	0
8	Secretariat	1	3	1	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>

15. In the current trimester, there are 2 funding slots still available for PP-404 and 4 slots still available for PP-407 to meet the PIDC contractual commitment to USP to fill 15 student slots per cohort. A number of countries sought additional funding for their staff and the Secretariat agreed to support the payment of these fees in an initial effort to fill in PIDC's obligation to USP. The Secretariat is reaching out to Members to nominate additional students who may have already enrolled for funding.

16. The joint USP-PIDC academic programme will achieve another significant milestone on September 2021 with an expected USP graduation in Fiji of the first group of students being awarded the Post Graduate Diploma certificate in Border Security. For the information of the Board, USP staff have reached out to the Secretariat to request if there is interest in upgrading the papers to a full Masters Programme. The Secretariat advised it was supportive of exploring options for an upgraded Masters Programme and is awaiting further advice from USP on possible costs.

#### Proposed Recommendations

Board members are invited to:

- a) **welcome** the update provided by the Secretariat regarding the USP Programme and the scholarships provided;
- b) **welcome** the upcoming milestone regarding the completion of the Postgraduate Diploma by the first PIDC Cohort;
- c) **endorse** Secretariat activities to seek additional nominations from Members to satisfy the full PIDC funding obligations with USP; and
- d) **endorse** Secretariat activities to engage with USP to upgrade the Programme to a full Masters Award

#### **Agenda item 7 (c): PIDC Scholarship Policy**

##### **Background**

17. The PIDC plays a lead coordinating role in the delivery of immigration and border control related training programmes in the Pacific and works closely with development partner and partner agencies. Part of this training has been the development of academic programmes such as the USP Online Postgraduate Diploma on Border Management (discussed under Agenda Item 7(b)) which is an important PIDC contribution to building capacity of enforcement officers in the region. For important activities such as the USP Programme, PIDC provides scholarships for officers from Member States. To guide how PIDC scholarships are managed, the Secretariat has worked with the PIDC Board Governance Committee to develop a scholarship policy for the Board to consider.

18. The Governance Committee and Secretariat have worked on the draft text and will be submitting a revised draft policy for the Board to consider at its next meeting. The objective of this policy is to guide PIDC in supporting and sponsoring training that will improve the skill sets and technical knowledge of officers within the Immigration and Border Security community.

19. Key features of the draft policy include providing guidance on:
- a. Funding for scholarships to maximize economic return so that scarce resources are not wasted;
  - b. Supporting training activities prioritised by Members;
  - c. Ensuring students are selected on merit and are academically capable to complete such training while respecting the sovereign rights of Members to select their nominees; and
  - d. Ensuring nominees have the support systems from Members such as electronic equipment, reasonable data connectivity etc. to successfully complete training;

##### **Proposed Recommendations**

Board members are invited to:

- a) **welcome** revised draft PIDC Scholarship policy; and
- b) **consider** the revised text for endorsement.

#### **Agenda item 7 (d): Hakili Matagi, Australia IBCP and Small Craft Application Update**

##### **Background**

20. Members continue to place a high priority on training programmes provided through PIDC and the historically high level of participation in PIDC (or PIDC endorsed) capacity building programmes is a reflection of Members' interest. These include training activities undertaken by a number of PIDC Members and partners. The New Zealand Hakili Matagi and Australian International Border Cooperation Programme (IBCP) are two core regional initiatives that support PIDC and its members. In 2020, the Australian Border Force (ABF) began training on its Pacific Small Craft Application which is a new tool that has some significant possible implications for Members.

#### **Hakili Matagi Update**

21. The Hakili Matagi programme is a capacity and capability programme implemented by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) for seven participating PIDC member countries; Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Kiribati. The programme is based on the training and learning priorities of each participating country. New Zealand is invited to provide an update on the Hakili Matagi programme.

#### **International Border Cooperation Programme (IBCP) Update**

22. Australian Home Affairs has been delivering its IBCP in coordination with the PIDC Secretariat in the region. However, since the last joint Customs and Immigration Vessel Search and Investigation training programme hosted in Australia in December 2019, all regional training programme and IBCP related programmes have been put on hold with the emergence of the new COVID-19 operating environment.

#### **Pacific Small Craft Application Training**

23. The ABF has designed a Pacific Small Craft Application (PSCA) that has the potential to strengthen vessel clearance in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). This is an exciting piece of new technology that Members may seek to adapt to support other key immigration activities. As a number of Immigration Agencies in the PIDC membership are involved in the inward and outbound clearance of international small craft, this application is being shared with PIDC Members as the roll out for this important tool continues. In November 2020 the ABF began hosting a virtual train-the-trainer workshop on the Application which was run over a five week period.

24. Australia is invited to provide an update on IBCP and PSCA and advise of any future plans as well as any support required from the PIDC.

#### **Recommendations**

Board members are invited to:

- a) **welcome** the Hakili Matagi update and encourage the Secretariat to continue working together with INZ to support the successful delivery of the Hakili Matagi Programme;
- b) **welcome** the update on IBCP and PSCA and encourage the Secretariat to continue working with Australia in any future regional training programme; and
- c) **task** the ISWG to explore possible implications from the PSCA on immigration operations in the region.