



**Agenda item 7(a): COVID-19 Support Programme Update**

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**Proposed Recommendations:**

The Board is invited to:

- a) **welcome** the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to implement the PIDC COVID-19 Support Programme;
  - b) **encourage** Members where a priority and also where possible to incorporate activities and services provided by the PIDC COVID-19 Support Programme into national budgets;
  - c) **encourage** Members to inform the Secretariat of additional activities and support they may require as part of the Programme and provide the relevant details to facilitate procurement; and
  - d) **task** the Secretariat to continue to deliver this important programme effectively.
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**Purpose**

To provide the Board with an update on the COVID-19 Support Programme activities undertaken by the Secretariat.

**Background**

2. The COVID-19 PIDC Support Programme was approved at the Special General Meeting in July 2020. It focused on three main areas including providing Members with (i) Communication Packages to help adapt to the new virtual communication reality; (ii) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) specifically for Immigration Officers as a backup stock; and (iii) policy development support integrating COVID-19 safe measures. The programme is for two years, and during the first year, Members received Communication Packages and PPE.

**Additional PPE and other support**

3. The Secretariat has completed procurement of additional PPE, disinfectants, and cleaning equipment and products upon request for Fiji, Samoa, Tokelau, Palau, Tonga, and Solomon Islands. It is currently processing procurement for Vanuatu and Tuvalu. Other Members confirmed they still have enough stock from the first PPE supplies.

4. In addition, the Secretariat has also provided additional protective gear for Tonga Immigration Office to assist with their response after the volcanic eruption in Tonga early this year. The Secretariat continues to offer support to Tonga Immigration Office with their recovery.

5. Members during engagements with the Secretariat also requested support for national projects to support their border officers and operations prepare for border reopening. The Secretariat has since completed the procurement of these additional resources including:

- **Dual-way window counter intercoms** (x18) for Samoa – for installation at immigration counters, as immigration officers have difficulty hearing masked travellers when being interviewed.
- **Signage** for Fiji, Tokelau, Niue – includes floor stickers (x372) and pull-up banners (x16) with COVID-19 health measures, strategically located in terminals and immigration offices to raise awareness and direct travellers. Currently processing procurement for Vanuatu.
- **Queue stanchions** (x20) for Cook Islands – to better manage travellers in the terminal queuing up for processing.
- **Tablets** (x3) for Tokelau – to have no contact at seaport when sharing ship manifests.
- **Radio earphones** (x15) for Cook Islands – to support security in the border processing area.
- **ID makers** (x3) for Nauru, Tonga, and Solomon Islands – to quickly issue IDs for new staff and foreigner IDs. The ID makers are currently being shipped over and are inclusive of printing consumables, cards, ID holders, and lanyards. Currently processing procurement for Kiribati.
- **Covered footwear** for Kiribati, Tokelau, and Niue (men) – health protection measure and requirement at the borders for frontline officers. Currently processing procurement of footwear for Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Niue (women).
- **Uniforms** (polo shirts/shirts and pants) for Fiji and Niue – easy to put on PPE, and to have comfortable attire for seaport staff, improve immigration frontline professional look and boost morale. Currently processing procurement for Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Cook Islands.

6. In continuing internet support for the Members who received this support in the first phase of the programme, the Secretariat has completed extending internet plans for another 12 months for four Members including Fiji, Tonga, RMI, and Cook Islands. The remaining six members, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Niue, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu internet plan extensions will be processed in the next quarter when their existing 12 months plan expire.

7. The development of the PIDC Mobile Application to support Members to quickly access important border information, websites, and application for both COVID-19 and immigration matters has been put on hold. This will be revisited when work by the Technical Working Group (TWG) on developing a regional COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate for Cross Border Travel is completed. This is to ensure COVID-19 information will be made available and linked (where possible) to the development of a possible PIDC Mobile Application.

### **Policy Support**

8. The Secretariat has contracted Coordinated Border Solutions (CBS) consultancy to undertake a COVID-19 Research for Reopening of Borders. This research is basically to identify recommendations to Immigration Directors on how to prepare for the reopening of their international borders. The first draft of the Research Paper has been circulated to members for their review. CBS also developed a 'Quick Reference Checklist' for PICTs when preparing to ease or reopen their borders. This work however is currently being impacted by related work being undertaken by the Technical Working Group established by the Pacific Islands Forum to develop a Regional Vaccination Certificate for Cross Border Travel.

### **Resource Implications**

9. The programme has spent 66% of its total budget for this financial year. Implementing some activities was delayed due to factors that are out of the Secretariat's control, such as national lockdowns due to COVID-19 outbreaks in the Member countries, changes in Member priorities, and other regional COVID-19 initiatives that programme activities needed to be harmonized with for better-coordinated outcomes. The Secretariat continues to work with the Members to advance this important work in providing support based on Members priorities.

10. Please refer to Annex 1 for total quantities of support resources provided to Members and Annex 2 for photographs.

## Annex 1: Resources Quantities

Communication Equipment:	FY20/21	FY21-22 (as of 31 March 2022)
	Quantity	Quantity
Laptop	28	
Licenses (Microsoft)	19	
Licenses (Antivirus)	19	
Projector	11	
Conference Camera	13	
UPS	12	
Internet Plan	10	Extended 4 (6 in next quarter)
Interactive Whiteboard	1	
TV	2	
Zoom licenses	25	Extending licenses for an additional 12 months
<b>Addition Resources Requested:</b>		
Queue stanchions		20
Radio earpieces		15
Dual-way window counter intercom		18
Pull up banners (850mmx2000mm)		16
Floor sticker/signs (different messages)		372
Automatic hand sanitizer dispenser		16
Tablets		3
Uniforms (polo shirts/pants)		50 polo / 12 pants
Personal Protective Equipment:	FY20/21	FY21-22 (as of 31 March 2022)
	Quantity	Quantity
Total disposable masks (50/box)	109 boxes (5,450 masks)	266 boxes (11,300 masks)
Total N95 masks (20/10 pcs/box)		44boxes (680 masks)
Total disposable gloves (different sizes, 100/box)	143 boxes (14,300 gloves)	246 boxes (24,600 gloves)
Total face visors	460 visors	370 visors
Total gowns (different sizes)	450 gowns	350 gowns
Sanitizing wipes	114 packs	98 packs
Shoe covers	1000 shoe covers	None requested
Hand Sanitizers (50ml/100ml/250ml/500ml)	483 bottles	540 bottles
Bleach / Disinfectant liquid (2.8L/5L)	20 bottles	25 bottles
Infra-red gun	1 gun	
Coveralls		100 coveralls
Antibacterial handwash		50 bottles
Hand Sanitizers Refill (5 litres)		51 bottles
Disinfectant sprays		36 spray cans
Auto UV disinfectant spray		26 UV sprays
Vacuum		1 vacuum
Safety glasses		100 glasses
Bin (20 litres)		3 bins
Dry-wipe cloth		12 rolls

**Annex 2: Photos**



**FSM: Automatic dispenser for Kosrae**



**Fiji: Additional PPE**



**Samoa – dual intercom**



**Tokelau Office: COVID-19 Signage in English and Tokelauan**



**Cook Islands Immigration staff with their queue stanchion to better manage travellers for processing and radio earpieces.**



**Niue Immigration staff with their uniforms (polo shirts and long pants)**