



Agenda item 3(c)(ii): Secretariat Acting Appointment

Purposed Recommendation

The PIDC Board is invited to:

- a) **consider** the remuneration of a high duty allowance to the Acting Head of Secretariat who currently holds the responsibility of the top two executive positions within the Secretariat.
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Purpose

This paper is intended to advise the Board on the transition that the Secretariat is going through and to provide information regarding processes for the Board to:

- a) consider the provision of a High Officer duty allowance payment to the Acting Head of Secretariat; and
- b) consider approving the payment formulae for any approved responsibility allowance.

Background

2. The PIDC Board at its last meeting in April 2022:
 - a) *agreed for the one-year contract extension of the Deputy Head of Secretariat to ensure a smooth transition of the Executive leadership at the conclusion of the Head of Secretariat contract;*
 - b) *Strengthening the transition period while minimising the loss of corporate knowledge; and*
 - c) *Deputy Head of Secretariat to assume the Acting Head of Secretariat in the absence of the Head of Secretariat.*

3. Following the departure of the Head of Secretariat in September 2022 the Deputy Head of Secretariat assumed the role of Acting Head of Secretariat while still fulfilling his substantive primary responsibilities as the Deputy Head of Secretariat. This has mitigated the risks to possible leadership gap and the loss of corporate knowledge and business continuity. It also prevents exposing the vulnerability of the Secretariat to the significant risks of failing to effectively deliver the organisation's core services to Members and also meeting its governance and legal obligations.

4. The Acting Head of Secretariat is currently holding two High Officer positions in terms of doing both the work of the Head of Secretariat and consequently delivering the current work that he is paid to do as the Deputy Head of Secretariat. A portion of the work has been delegated to other staff but the lack of technical skill sets means that the majority of

the technical work apart from the overall administration is undertaken by the Acting Head of Secretariat. This is largely due to the small size of the Secretariat.

Analysis

5. On current projections, the recruitment of the new Head of Secretariat indicates a possible appointment in February/March 2023. Optimistically it is estimated that the new HOS could report for duty in Apia on March 2023. This would mean that this acting appointment would last for a period of at least, at the very minimum, 6 months.

6. The provision of an “Acting Allowance” is already covered under Employee Regulations 45 which instructs ***“An employee who is required by the Head of Secretariat to carry out the full duties of a higher graded position for a continuous period of not less than 15 days will be paid a higher duties allowance amounting to the difference between their salary at the time and the lowest point on the salary scale of the higher graded position.”***

7. Under normal circumstances, appointing a person to an Acting position implies a relatively short-term appointment to cover for annual leave, sickness or while a recruitment process is under way, often of only a few months at best. Often this is alleviated by the person who is appointed to act in a more senior role is in turn temporarily replaced by a subordinate who is also upgraded to replace/act for the substantive position holder. In this current situation we have one person assuming the responsibilities of two ‘Higher Officer’ positions noting the additional high work load involved. It should also be noted that with borders being re-opened, there is more duty travel involved for meetings and training requiring the physical presence of the Acting Head of Secretariat.

8. The Secretariat staffing to deliver the Board’s directive rests on the leadership of the Head of Secretariat supported by the:

- a) Deputy Head of Secretariat; and
- b) Several Technical Officers.

9. This means that for at least 6 months PIDC has one individual delivering the responsibilities of two High Officers. As such there should be consideration for Higher Duty Allowance. As instructed under Employee Regulations 45, the higher duty allowance is calculated according to the “difference between their salary at the time and the lowest point on the salary scale of the higher graded position”. This infers that the Higher Officer Acting Allowance prescribed to the Acting Head of Secretariat shall be calculated as the difference between the current Deputy Head of Secretariat’s salary and the 80% of the lowest salary scale of the former Head of Secretariat’s salary.

10. Therefore, to compensate the additional workload that the current Acting Head of Secretariat has undertaken since 23 September 2022 until the new Head of Secretariat takes office, it is recommended that the Acting Head of Secretariat be paid the:

- a) Higher and Extra Duties Allowances as per Regulations 45 to be calculated by the difference between the DHOS current salary and the lowest band of the former Head of Secretariat which is 80% of band 14 on the PIDC salary scale.

Financial Implications

11. The cost of the extra duties allowance can be sourced from the Head of Secretariat's salary that was approved in the 2022 Workplan and Budget.