



Pacific Immigration Development Community
2022/23 Board Meeting 2
17-18 April 2022: Port Moresby, PNG

Agenda item 7: Strategic Focus Area 1 – Partnership and Coordination

Proposed Recommendations

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

Purpose

2. This paper seeks to provide the Board with an update regarding key activities undertaken by the Secretariat during the reporting period to advance its advocacy, partnership and coordination programme in the region and internationally. This output aims to establish and maintain PIDC as a regional coordination point for immigration, liaison, advocacy & representation and agenda setting. Key activities to be discussed include:

- a) Partnership Initiatives: Declaration of Partnership Update (OCO, PICP & PIDC)
- b) UNODC Programme in the Pacific
- c) Bali Process Observer Status Application and Partnership Engagements
- d) Biometric Institute

Agenda Item 7(a) Partnership Initiatives: Declaration of Partnership Update (OCO, PICP & PIDC)

Background

3. The Declaration of Partnership between OCO, PICP & PICP continues to be upheld by the three regional Secretariats with ongoing collaborative activities being progressed under the partnership declaration. The Heads of Secretariat for PIDC, PICP and OCO continue to hold monthly coordination meetings to advance the Declaration of Partnership (DOP). These monthly meetings have been very effective in promoting the sharing of information amongst the Secretariats especially in regards to regional activities undertaken by other organisations such as PIFS and UNODC.

4. As part of current DOP discussions, the group agreed to a number of activities including the consideration to holding a: (a) A second multi-agency table top exercise; (b) scheduling of annual conferences to ensure that there were no clashes between Secretariat scheduling and (c) second Talanoa conference to be hosted at the Pacific Fusion Centre in Port Vila.

(i) Pacific Heads of Regional Law Enforcement Agency Talanoa Conference on Maritime Domain Awareness and Opportunities

5. As reported to FSRS in November 2022, the Pacific Fusion Centre, with support from UNODC, has facilitated discussions on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and the rationale for a unified regional approach with Regional Security Secretariats. The first of these 'Talanoa' discussions was held 10-11 November in Nadi.

6. At that first Talanoa, participants noted increasing interest of law enforcement and national strategic security stakeholders to explore MDA tools for non-fisheries related monitoring, secure

information-sharing, joint analysis capabilities and strategic level domain awareness. They also noted that numerous external governments and commercial parties offering a wide range of MDA tools to PIC operational agencies could result in disparate adoption of these MDA tools by individual agencies. In turn, this risks the embedding of a patchwork of technology and information exchange systems across the region that may not be efficiently and securely interoperable to enable information sharing and the development of common operating pictures that can underpin national and regional domain security.

7. Participants agreed to urge their respective members to consider a unified regional approach to MDA. Participants further agreed that in the interim, while a unified regional MDA platform is being considered by regional policy makers, it would be important to offer their respective members access to MDA tools. Participants agreed that a number of tools and associated training opportunities offered for free be further considered for possible use to provide this interim service in 2023.

8. A second Talanoa was then hosted at the Pacific Fusion Centre in Port Vila from 14-15 March 2023 to consider a range of free tools and associated training opportunities.

Purpose:

The purpose of the second Talanoa session was to introduce and familiarise participants on MDA techniques and related information sharing tools, to jointly review the technology, training and cooperation offers that have been received, and to agree on a joint way forward to develop these opportunities, while awaiting a decision by PIF members on a unified regional approach.

Participants:

9. Talanoa Participants were:

- *Session 1 (10-11 November 2022):* OCO, PFC, PICP, PIDC, PIFS, PTCCC/PTCN, SPC-GEM, USP-GIS (a representative of FFA was invited, but was unable to attend due to illness).
- *Session 2 (14-15 March 2023):* FFA, OCO, PFC, PIDC, PIFS, PTCN (representatives of PICP, SPC-GEM and SPREP were invited, but unable to attend due to other commitments).

Opportunities

10. In the past three years there has been a significant increase in external interest and offers of assistance of individual technology elements and systems to different PICs, sectors and individual agencies. There is a risk of disparate MDA and information sharing systems being adopted across the region. It would be disadvantageous for PICs if these platforms and systems are not inter-connected and inter-operable at the level of secrecy, security and control (PIC national or regional) desired, and do not lead to enhanced detection, apprehension, prosecution and deterrence of these maritime threats.

Presentations:

The following presentations and offers were made at the Talanoa in March:

UNODC	Pledged continuing support for the regional security secretariat Talanoa on MDA and for training support
EU CRIMARIO	Offered initial free trial of IORIS MDA information sharing and shared analysis platform, as well as their evolving Share-It inter-system information sharing app
US Information Security Governance program (ISG)	Offered assistance with MDA analysis virtual training
Singapore IFC	Noted interest in exploring inclusion of Pacific MDA coverage within the scope of the Singapore Centre through their IRIS MDA and info sharing tool
Pacific Fusion Centre	Noted the availability of IHS Markit on the Centre’s website for Beneficiary use. Committed to provide training to those interested (funded by Pacific Fusion Centre).

Issues considered:

11. The Talanoa Group recognised the potential concerns of some PIC stakeholders about unauthorised and uncontrolled sharing or observation of user data and monitoring tracks. The Talanoa Group considered that training and use of MDA tools should be limited to those that are user-controlled, and those known to share information generally, without specific user approval, should not be trialled in the Pilot project.

12. The Talanoa Group also recognised that senior national security policy makers and managers may benefit from direct introduction to the uses and tools of MDA in sectoral and strategic security at national and regional levels, and that a suitable orientation program should be considered to engage these policy makers.

Outcomes

13. The Talanoa Group agreed to a Pilot project to trial MDA platforms, with a view to informing selection of future MDA tools for a unified regional MDA system or framework. The Pilot project will focus initially on the EU CRIMARIO IORIS information system.

14. The Pacific Fusion Centre will act as a 'hub' for this Pilot project, assuming the licensee role on behalf of the group.

15. Specifically, the trial will involve:

- use of IORIS (and potentially other tools) by the regional security secretariats to gain experience in MDA capabilities;
- 2-3 weeks of face-to-face training by EU CRIMARIO at the PFC (tentatively scheduled for July 2023);
- inclusion of other tools, based on agreement with the Talanoa Group participants; and
- provision of MDA services to national security agencies on request, including IHS Markit provided on the Pacific Fusion Centre website.

16. The Talanoa group further agreed that it was premature to proceed with a trial of the Share.It inter-system exchange App, but they would monitor its development. It was noted that at least one regional security sector is constrained by the lack of a uniform information platform sharing amongst their sectoral members and consequently experience challenges in efficiently sharing information between the different national sectoral parties.

Resourcing:

17. PFC will continue to liaise with UNODC for potential funding for future regional security MDA Talanoas and training.

18. The US ISG may be approached to fund participant travel and other costs for MDA analyst training delivered at the PFC. Other sources of assistance will also be investigated.

ii. OCO Collaboration

19. As part of the Secretariats efforts in strengthening its partnership engagements with OCO, PIDC had collaborated with OCO on a number of activities recently including:

- a) Meeting with the new OCO Head of Secretariat to familiarise the new HOS on the ongoing collaborative activities that PIDC has engaged with OCO in the past and opportunities on how we can strengthen this partnership
- b) Engaged with OCO to share governance best practises in areas that PIDC was reviewing in terms of membership financial modalities and operational structures

- c) Shared resources with OCO providing their APAN expert to share their experience with members at the PIDC National Contact Point and Profiling Group Workshop in addition to supporting the PIDC Coordination Officer 2-day attachment at the OCO Secretariat on APAN training.

(iii) JHOPS Update

20. The fourth Joint Heads of Pacific Security Meeting was held in-person on Denarau Island, Nadi Fiji 2022. The themes for JHoPS 2022 were Climate and Maritime Security. The meeting brought together more than 65 leaders across defence, police, customs and immigration from 25 countries and territories and six regional security organisations. Joint Heads of Pacific Security 2022 brought together operational-level security heads from across the Pacific to discuss practical solutions to common security challenges. The Boe Declaration in 2018 and the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy for a resilient Pacific of harmony, security, peace, social inclusion and prosperity were the foundation documents for JHoPS discussions and operational collaboration.

21. JHOPS participants discussed issues related to two major thematic areas on (i) Climate Security and (ii) Maritime Security. All outputs tabled across the two days of discussions were presented and endorsed in an agreement outlined as the Denarau Outcomes (Attached as Annex One) with commitments from the Republic of Palau to host JHOPS 2023; and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea to host JHOPS 2024. While there were a number of specific recommendations relating to the thematic areas of climate security, maritime security and governance, specific outcomes that would be of interest to PIDC members that might impact our engagements through JHOPS initiatives related to the following:

Climate Security

- (a) JHOPS to improve communication between JHOPS members to coordinate HADR responses and enable effective resource distribution.
- (b) Consider options for JHOPS to support members inclusion in existing regional HADR tabletop exercises

Maritime Security

- (c) Agree to establish a partnership for information sharing, with a view to enhancing regional maritime security.
- (d) Agree that the JHOPS Secretariat coordinate, in consultation with participating countries, a register of lead JHOPS members' point of contacts to build a network that enables greater information sharing.

Governance Outcomes

- (e) Agree to develop a JHOPS Terms of Reference for consideration at JHOPS 2023, which includes a governance framework to clarify JHOPS arrangements and enhance alignment of JHOPS with existing regional security architecture.

22. This years JHOPS is scheduled to be hosted in Palau and discussions have been initiated between the JHOPS Secretariat with the Palaun government on their hosting responsibility and logistics for the annual meeting with meeting dates yet to be confirmed.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **Welcome** the Partnership initiatives progressed through the Declaration of Partnership (DoP) **noting** in appreciation the work undertaken to progress discussions on Maritime Domain Awareness;
- (ii) **Welcome** the offer provided by EU CRIMARIO to support the adaptation of the IORIS system across the different MDA information sharing platforms across the Pacific;
- (iii) **Task** the Secretariat to continue managing and monitoring PIDC's engagements with OCO, PICP and the Pacific Fusion Centre through any DoP initiatives.

Agenda Item 7(b) UNDP Programme in the Pacific

23. As part of UNDP's project for strengthening Border Control Capacity for the COVID-19 Crisis, UNDO has undertaken to assist Fiji, Palau and Vanuatu in their development and implementation of border re-opening strategies and safe travel corridors. UNDP, working closely with IOM and UNCTAD, have been supporting Fiji, Palau and Vanuatu's respective border agencies, and COVID 19 sectoral task forces with:

- measures to support business continuity and front-line border agencies,
- measures to facilitate safe cross-border travel and trade through enhanced use of risk management in the reception and processing of travellers and goods,
- measures to increase internal and external border agency collaboration and
- measures to facilitate regional cooperation and shared understanding of protocols and procedures in coordinating public health measures and smooth operation of global supply chains.

24. The intended outcome of the project is that border control with respect to COVID-19 will be strengthened and streamlined in the three recipient countries as they gradually reopen international borders. The expected results will be delivered according to the Results Framework of the project. Border Agencies will have the systems, infrastructure and capacity to effectively implement public health protocols while maintaining border services and supporting implementation of COVID-19 measures ensuring business continuity as borders reopen.

25. PIDC has been monitoring this programme of work being delivered through UNDP and IOM. We have been working closely with UNDP to avoid scheduling clashes in addition to duplication of resources and work programmes. PIDC is aware that IOM is also working in this space supporting Vanuatu, Samoa, Fiji and Palau in the development of their border management systems and review of immigration legislations. While UNDP and IOM potentially source their funds from the same Donor, PIDC has worked to ensure that members are supported in the respective work programme these institutions have committed to support. In terms of PIDC work programme, we have:

- (a) IBMS for the Pacific, PNG Hosted workshop – we have ensured that the PNG hosted IBMS workshop and the UNDP BMS workshop in Fiji didn't clash and have worked to ensure

that findings from each regional workshop are captured by PIDC and aligned into our work programmes to sustain it into the future

- (b) IOM Border management system support and consequent legislation review support programme potentially clashes with PIDC's legislation review programme. Consequently, the Secretariat has managed the work programme to enable IOM and PIDC to complement our respective resources and combine our efforts in reviewing Palau's Immigration Act.

Proposed Recommendations

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) **Note** the ongoing programme that UNDP will be delivering for Fiji, Palau and Vanuatu; and
- (ii) **Task** the Secretariat to continue monitoring and supporting the three members in their UNDOP funded project

Agenda Item 7(c) Bali Process Observer Status Application and Partnership Engagements

26. The Bali Process, a regional forum for policy dialogue, information sharing and practical cooperation to help the Asia-Pacific region address the challenges of people smuggling, trafficking in persons and Related Transnational Crimes is a regional dialogue that PIDC intends to gain membership as an Observer organisation. PIDC has recently lodged an application seeking to join the Bali Process as an Observer in view of PIDC members also being members of the Bali Process and the need to ensure that our organisations work to support each other in delivering programmes for our respective membership to avoid duplication of efforts and wastage of resources.

(a) Benefit to PIDC:

27. PIDC has in the past relied upon its members to coordinate communication between the Bali Process and PIDC. This communication strategy had worked since 2004 but emerging regional and global immigration issues affecting our members in the Pacific and PIDC's disconnect from the Bali Process as of late has highlighted the need for the PIDC Secretariat to be directly engaged with the Bali Process.

28. In addition, a number of core objectives of the Bali Process are also reflected in PIDC's Strategic Plan with a more specific focus in the Pacific region. At the outset, PIDC's application for Observer status demonstrates the importance and value PIDC places on the Bali Process. However, our direct participation means that this provides the opportunity to:

- (i) Developing a more coordinated regional approach and response in the areas of information and intelligence sharing, cooperation amongst regional law enforcement agencies in the Pacific and the Asian region;
- (ii) Strengthening the complementary role, we provide to the Bali Process and this provides an opportunity for better coordination of regional immigration programmes;
- (iii) PIDC to being directly informed and updated on all Bali Process decisions and regional programmes, ensuring that there aren't any duplication of efforts or wastage of resources in the Pacific;

- (iv) Provides the mechanism to continually monitor PIDC regional programmes on people smuggling, trafficking in persons and transnational organised crime in the Pacific to be aligned with Bali Process objectives and standards;
- (v) Enables PIDC to monitor Bali Process discussions therein on matters of direct interest to PIDC members and identifying the complementary role we can offer to support these decisions in the Pacific;
- (vi) Provides PIDC access to discussions on Asia-Pacific best practises and standards on addressing people smuggling, trafficking in Persons and related Transnational Crime; and subsequent
- (vii) Dissemination of Bali Process information to immigration agencies in the Pacific and the provision of supporting mechanisms to members in the Pacific to support progressing Bali Process mandate in the region.

(b) Benefit to the Bali Process:

29. PIDC's participation as an official Observer organisation in the Bali Process is expected to also directly benefit the Bali Process and most importantly the Bali Process Regional Support Office. PIDC's participation as an Observer will:

- (i) Strengthen relationships between law enforcement agencies in the Asian and Pacific region which could boost the efficiency and effectiveness of regional cooperation. Records show that with proper coordination, partnerships among complementary organisations like PIDC and the Bali Process will be of considerable value to all participants amongst the two complementary organisations;
- (ii) Opportunity to capitalize on this complementarity where PIDC and the Bali Process have the opportunity to work together to strengthen training, immigration knowledge and expertise of countries in the Pacific;
- (iii) PIDC will be able to assist the RSO and Bali Process to monitor Bali Process work programmes or initiatives with its members in the Pacific;
- (iv) Ensure that there is no duplication of work programmes in the region and resources are utilized appropriately; and
- (v) Bali Process through the PIDC has a direct focal point with Bali Process members in the Pacific region.

(c) Partnership Engagements

30. PIDC has in the past partnered with Bali Process in a number of capacity building programmes for the entire Pacific region including: (i) People Smuggling, Trafficking in Person and Irregular Migration Workshops for the Pacific (2010 & 2013); (ii) PIDC Train the Trainer Course (2018); (iii) PIDC Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Regional Framework Workshop (2019); and the (iv) Development of the PIDC Training Curriculum (2021); in addition to participating in a number of PIDC Regular Annual Meetings as an Observer Organisation over the years.

31. More recently, the Secretariat has begun reengaging with the Bali Process RSO in a number of proposed capacity building programmes targeting Bali Process and PIDC members in the Pacific. The Bali Process RSO recently provided support to the NCP/Profiling Group workshop through the remote participation of a people smuggling/trafficking in persons expert during the sessions. Ongoing discussions are currently focused on how PIDC can partner with the Bali Process on regional training addressing Trafficking in Persons through strengthening cross sectoral collaboration in the Pacific islands and the development of Members National Action Plans for Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling.

Proposed Recommendations

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) Note** PIDC's application for Observership Status with the Bali Process;
- (ii) Encourage** PIDC Members that are members of the Bali Process to advocate PIDC's application to be an Observer through their government-to-government diplomatic channels;
- (iii) Welcome** PIDC's collaborative work with Bali Process RSO; and
- (iv) encourage** the Secretariat to continue working closely with the Bali Process RSO in delivering activities for members in the areas of Trafficking in Persons and people Smuggling.

Agenda Item 7(d) Biometric Institute

32. The Biometrics Institute is an independent and impartial international membership organisation for biometric users and other interested parties. It has more than a thousand members from 200 membership organisations spread across 30 countries – representing a global and diverse multi-stakeholder community. At a time when legislation, policies and standards are struggling to keep up with developments and new applications in biometric technology, the work of the Biometrics Institute has become extremely important especially for the Pacific, a region that has only just begun exploring and adopting biometric technology.

33. The Biometrics Institute was founded in October 2001 to provide an independent and impartial international multi-stakeholder platform for the sharing of knowledge and information about biometrics. Its mission is to promote the responsible and ethical use of biometrics through thought-leadership and good-practice guidance. The organisation is unique in that it has been set up as a user group to set the strategic direction of the association that represents a unique multi-stakeholder community spreading across the globe including a large number of government agencies, banks, airlines, airports, biometric experts, privacy experts, regulators, suppliers and academics as well as international observers such as United Nations agencies, EU institutions and IGOs.

34. The mission of the Biometrics Institute is to promote the responsible and ethical use of biometric analytics in an independent and impartial international forum for biometric users and other interested parties. The goals of the Biometrics Institute are:

- To develop thought leadership and guidance for the responsible use of biometrics, using the input of experts
- To facilitate knowledge transfer to members, prospects, key stakeholders and the public
- To act as a connector for the global Biometrics industry including users, suppliers, academics, regulators and privacy advocates

35. The Biometric Institute provides an unbiased and independent platform for discussion bringing together different perspectives to provide a balanced viewpoint on biometrics. Attached as Annex Two is a Biometrics Institute Good Practice Guidance Material providing some insight into the products, they produce for their members to guide them on their biometrics journey.

Opportunities

36. The Secretariat at the 2022 IOM BMIC in Bangkok had engaged in discussions with the Biometric Institute representative attending the biannual conference exploring opportunities and support that could be made available and accessed by PIDC members in the Pacific that were progressively shifting towards biometric technology and were just beginning their biometric journey. Consequently, the following opportunities were offered by the Biometric Institute for PIDC Board members to consider:

- (a) **2023 Biometrics Institute Asia-Pacific Conference (Attached as Annex Three is the Conference concept note)**– brings together biometric users from key government agencies, commercial organisational and technology providers from the Asia-Pacific region to share ideas and discuss the opportunities biometrics offer and its implementational challenges.
 - PIDC Members are to be invited to the 2023 Biometrics Institute Asia-Pacific Conference with a proposal for the PIDC Secretariat to facilitate invitation to members to participate in this conference in May 2023 in Australia and consideration can be made to look for funding support to enable invited members to attend this conference especially for those in the early development stages of their biometric journey.
- (b) **Biometrics Institute offers to hold a half day pre-conference workshop during the 2023 PIDC Regular Annual Meeting with an introduction to biometrics at the border. Attached as Annex four is a half day introductory workshop programme that can be similarly delivered for PIDC members** – A workshop targeting countries starting their biometric journey to be held alongside the conference or within the 2023-week schedule.
- (c) **Biometrics Institute to present at the 2023 Regular Annual Meeting** – Willing to present at the 2023 RAM to raise awareness on the work that the Biometric Institute provides to its membership and the support they provide to agencies that are beginning their biometric journey
- (d) **Invitation for PIDC to be in an ‘umbrella membership’ to engage the Biometric Institute with Pacific Islands** - Biometric Institute could consider designing a large membership modality allowing 9 different countries under the PIDC membership to access the Biometric Institute services subject to discussion. This is a modality that the Biometric Institute can consider for the Pacific islands through a PIDC umbrella membership modality especially for countries that are in the infancy stages of their biometric journey.

Proposed Recommendations

Board Members are invited to:

- (i) **Note** the opportunities offered through becoming a member of the Biometric Institute especially for members that are just beginning their biometric journey; and to
- (ii) **consider** approving PIDC to explore the opportunities offered from 36(a) – (d)

Agenda Item 7(e) IOM in the Pacific

37. IOM has begun rolling out a number of major border control capacity strengthening projects for responding to infectious disease in the Pacific. The objective of this project is to support Pacific socio-economic recovery through safe resumption of border management operations and enhanced seamless border management infrastructure technology, equipment, and improved capacity. Reopening international borders, through the adoption COVID-19 measures that allow safe resumption of border management operations, including infrastructure upgrades and the provision of necessary equipment and technology, specifically tailored to the needs of frontline border officials, will directly contribute to revitalising economic activity, through re-starting human mobility to drive the development of new business and reignite existing commerce.

38. The proposed project has two key outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Strengthened immigration and border management infrastructure, equipment, and technology for safe border reopening in the Pacific region.
- Outcome 2: Immigration and border management systems in target countries are improved through enhanced strategy, knowledge and skills of respective border agencies to safely manage borders to prevent and respond to public health crises.

IOM's Support to PIDC:

39. Within the project, IOM strives to build the capacity of Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) to **practice an integrated and coordinated approach to border management in the Pacific**. In particular, the project could support strengthening of border related information sharing within the Pacific region. Strengthening information sharing can allow for appropriate health measures to be in place to ensure a harmonized, coherent, and consistent approach across immigration and border management offices across the Pacific, in order to reduce health risks.

40. IOM has been working to support PIDC over the past years and the issue of capacity to share data between PICs has been highlighted as a priority. These activities have been determined through ongoing consultation with PIDC. The project allocates USD \$200,000 of funding available to be utilized to achieve these goals.

Way Forward

- (a) Initial discussions have centred around recommendations from the ISWG Meeting recommendations and NCP/Profiling Group Recommendations that could be supported through this project with initial assessments indicating a high likelihood of support through this funding programme
- (b) Recommendations emerging from the IBMS in the Pacific Workshop will be considered for support through this funding programme.
- (c) The Secretariat will make an analysis of the recommendations from the two regional workshops and ISWG meeting recommendations and identify its applicability to be funded under the IOM- PIDC Support Programme on information sharing in particular.
- (d) PIDC to discuss with INZ on the PDECT project as this project provides the opportunity to support this project and reengage activities under this programme provided that the PDECT prototype is confirmed to be owned as a PIDC product.

Proposed Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- (i) **note** IOM's funded programme to be implemented in the region; and
- (ii) **task** the Secretariat to assess recommendations from the NCP/Profiling Group Workshop and IBMS workshop that can be supported through this funding programme.