

CRGA 44 DECISIONS

Context	CRGA 44 decisions	Implementation status	Responsible officer
AGENDA ITEM 3 – GOVERNANCE REVIEW			
<p>CRGA 43 and the 8th Conference directed the secretariat to commission a review of its governance processes in 2014, with the findings and recommendations of the review to be presented to CRGA 44. The review was steered by a Governance Working Group comprising representatives from the secretariat and 11 member countries and territories: Australia, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), France, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Solomon Islands and the United States of America. The outcome of the review was discussed with the whole membership at a Special Session of CRGA on 4 November 2014, which acknowledged the dedicated efforts of the Working Group, and presented the following recommendations for improved governance of SPC for CRGA approval.</p>	<p>CRGA (44) agreed to:</p> <p>A. REFORMS TO CURRENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS</p> <p>1. Improve the effectiveness of CRGA</p>		
	<p>a. Develop clear terms of reference (TOR) for CRGA including level of authority, standing orders, meeting processes, and structure of recommendations and to also include:</p> <p>i. TOR for the Chair of CRGA; and</p> <p>ii. guidance for members in selection of representatives.</p>	<p>In draft (Annex B); will be further refined following CRGA 45</p>	<p>Director-General with Chief of Staff and Director Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility (SEPPF)</p> <p>Director-General, with Chief of Staff and Director SEPPF</p> <p>Director-General, with Chief of Staff and Director SEPPF</p>
	<p>b. Institute induction for members, to be facilitated by an external consultant, expected before the November 2015 CRGA meeting (to avoid additional travel costs), to be repeated on an ‘as needed’ basis for new members.</p>		<p>Not possible due to budgetary constraints</p>

	<p>c. Adopt a principle of continuity of representation. Members will seek to retain the same representatives over a period of time to allow continuity of perspectives and experience. Each member will also seek to ensure there are at least two representatives involved. These representatives are to be determined by each member. SPC will cover the costs for one representative from each Pacific Island member country or territory to attend CRGA/Conference.</p>	<p>Members to implement</p>	<p>Member focal points</p>
	<p>d. Ensure all papers are provided a minimum of 10 working days before CRGA. Papers provided by the secretariat should clearly request decisions rather than simply ask for agreement or noting of recommendations.</p>	<p>Work in progress</p>	<p>SPC Senior Leadership Team</p>
	<p>e. Introduce a decision tracking system to monitor implementation of CRGA decisions; this will also enable the Secretariat to regularly report to members.</p>	<p>There is an established system for tracking implementation of CRGA decisions, with status presented regularly to the Senior Leadership Team at their meetings</p>	<p>Chief of Staff</p>
	<p>f. During CRGA, allow time for delegates to assess and rate CRGA's performance and suggest improvements.</p>	<p>Standing agenda item for CRGA meetings</p>	
	<p>g. Support CRGA via a dedicated (part-time) staff member allocated to the purpose.</p>	<p>This is a Key Result Area for the Chief of Staff</p>	<p>Chief of Staff</p>

	<p>2. Adjust times and location of CRGA meetings</p> <p>a. Continue annual CRGA meetings but align meeting times with SPC's financial year so reports are more relevant and timely. As the financial year ends 31 December, move CRGA meetings to May or June (at times that suit members and the timing of other regional meetings), commencing 2016. Given the new timing for CRGA, CRGA will approve a revised budget for the current year as well as a budget outlook for the following two years (e.g. CRGA 46, to be held in May 2016, will approve a revised budget for 2016, as well as a budget outlook for 2017–2018).</p>	<p>From 2016 meetings shall be convened in May of each year</p>	<p>Director-General and Management Advisory Group</p>
	<p>b. Shorten the CRGA meeting to two days commencing November 2015.</p>	<p>In progress for November 2015</p>	<p>All</p>
	<p>c. Adjust the location of CRGA meetings.</p> <p>ii) In years where the Conference is also held, countries have the opportunity to host the meeting provided they cover the additional costs to SPC, including the costs of hosting CRGA.</p> <p>If no member offers to host the Conference, it will take place in either Noumea at the headquarters of the organisation, or in Suva.</p>	<p>Requires further work and discussion, and decision by Conference</p>	<p>Director-General and Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management</p>
	<p>3. Provide specific support to the Chair of CRGA and the Director-General</p> <p>a. Arrange specific induction and training for the Chair.</p> <p>b. Establish a troika of Chairs (past, present and future) with clear TOR to have quarterly meetings with the Director-General (teleconference), engage with the broader membership on SPC developments and promote the work of</p>	<p>An induction programme will commence in October 2015 with the Chair of CRGA 45</p> <p>To be further explored with clear TOR developed and presented to CRGA 46</p>	<p>Director-General and Chief of Staff</p>

	<p>SPC through media, launches, etc. The positions of past, present and future Chair will continue to be held for periods of one year rotating in alphabetical order through all CRGA members.</p>		
	<p>4. Clarify the role of the Conference of the Pacific Community</p> <p>a. Clarify the TOR of the Conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To appoint the Director-General. ii. To consider major regional policy issues and SPC’s strategy for addressing them iii. To approve changes to Financial and Staff Regulations approved by CRGA. 	<p>As per the agenda of the 9th Conference of the Pacific Community</p>	<p>Director-General and Chief of Staff</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">USE OF SUB-COMMITTEES</p> <p>5. Increase member engagement through a limited number of time-bound working groups and sub-committees:</p> <p>a) For the purpose of this paper, <i>sub-committee</i> refers to a group established by CRGA to focus on governance issues. A sub-committee may have external representatives if this is acceptable to CRGA. It is envisaged sub-committees will analyse and interrogate issues on behalf of CRGA and will report back to CRGA with recommendations on any significant decisions required. As such, sub-committees will not have executive authority (i.e. they won’t be able to make any significant decisions on behalf of CRGA).</p> <p><i>Working group</i> refers to a group established by the Director-General to advise on management issues.</p>	<p>A CRGA Subcommittee was established to advise on the new SPC Strategic Plan and has been active throughout 2014.</p> <p>Following the adoption of the Strategic Plan, the Director-General may convene other time-bound working groups to assist with specific strategic governance issues.</p>	<p>Management Advisory Group</p>

	<p>b) While recognising other organisations use sub-committees, the Governance Working Group was cautious not to recommend a suite of sub-committees, principally due to concerns relating to cost and effectiveness. Instead the following is proposed:</p>		
	<p>6. Direct the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to include a particular focus on advising CRGA on the SPC budget and major asset acquisitions.</p> <p>The ARC was established in 2013 and is an example of CRGA delegating work to independent external expert representatives.</p> <p>a. In addition to designated current activities, this would include:</p> <p>i. Budget: Offering a brief assessment and an opinion for CRGA on the budget papers prepared for CRGA (and any interim budget papers), and if required making specific recommendations.</p> <p>ii. Assets: Providing advice, guidance and recommendations to CRGA, as appropriate, regarding the financial impact of operating costs resulting from major new acquisitions.</p> <p>b. This would reinforce the provision of expert and informed advice to CRGA on key financial issues for which it has responsibility, including financial risk, budget, and major assets.</p> <p>c. This request falls into the current remit of ARC, has no implications for its present composition or meeting arrangements, and is consistent with the ARC Charter.</p>	<p>The ARC has met three times in 2015.</p> <p>The scope of its work has been extended to consider the budget, assets and financial risk matters</p> <p>A report from the Chair of ARC will be presented to CRGA</p>	<p>ARC and Chief of Staff to ensure reports fulfil requirements</p>

	<p>7. Establish a sub-committee to focus on the new Corporate Strategic Plan (to be endorsed by CRGA and approved by Conference in November 2015). This sub-committee will be based on constituency representation where possible, and be open to voluntary participation and limited external stakeholders, if required.</p> <p>a. This sub-committee will be established by CRGA 44 in 2014 and initially operate for 12 months. It is envisaged it will meet once face-to-face and up to three times via teleconference. Based on the TOR to be developed, its focus will be to provide oversight, direction, analysis, contestability and advice regarding the secretariat’s development of the new Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP). This will include SPC’s role and approach to development effectiveness.</p> <p>b. This sub-committee (ideally comprising around eight members) and CRGA will determine which constituencies these members will be drawn from and whether external stakeholders (e.g. the European Union) or independent experts may participate. It will also be open to voluntary participation by members.</p> <p>c. CRGA could evaluate whether there may be a longer-term role for such a sub-committee in monitoring the ongoing relevance of the Corporate Strategic Plan or whether this can be done by CRGA itself.</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan Subcommittee was established in April 2015, with the EU invited to participate as a full member</p> <p>The subcommittee had two face to face meetings, one in May and the other in August</p> <p>Their third and final meeting is on 2 November</p> <p>They have been in regular contact with the internal team on the various drafts of the Strategic Plan</p> <p>The subcommittee will recommend the establishment of an on-going subcommittee at CRGA 46 (2016) to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Director SEPPF</p>
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	<p>8. Continue the SPC Governance Review Sub-committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CRGA governance reforms and make recommendations to CRGA and Conference in 2015.</p> <p>a. It is envisaged the Governance Review Sub-committee will meet by teleconference twice during the year, once in May 2015 and again prior to CRGA 2015.</p> <p>b. The Governance Review Sub-committee will look at the extent to which these recommendations have been implemented.</p> <p>c. It will also determine which recommendations should be approved by Conference in 2015.</p> <p>d. It may advise, based on early experience, whether further reforms are necessary.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, due to financial resources and heavy commitments, the secretariat has been unable to convene these meetings</p>	<p>Director SEPPF and Management Advisory Group</p>
	<p>PLACING SPC WITHIN A PACIFIC-WIDE ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE CONTEXT</p> <p>9. Initiate a more substantive debate about streamlining regional meetings and regional mechanisms (including CRGA and Conference) and further enhancing the complementarities, efficiency and effectiveness of the CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) system as a whole. This could include:</p> <p>a. Exploring opportunities for efficiency gains in hosting joint/concurrent regional meetings, recognising some adjustments may be necessary to reflect differing memberships. This work should take into account and complement similar initiatives in the Pacific.</p>	<p>This is ongoing and, where possible, the secretariat has participated fully in joint CROP work, such as the Review of the CROP Working Groups; finalisation of the TORs for the review of regional governance and finance, and finalisation of the Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP)</p>	<p>Management Advisory Group and Senior Leadership Team</p>

	b. directing SPC's Director-General to liaise with the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, as CROP Chair, to explore the feasibility of commissioning a joint study on how regional complementarities could be enhanced and regional mechanisms and meetings improved.	As above	Director-General and Director SEPPF
AGENDA ITEM 4 – MEMBERSHIP POLICY AGENDA ITEM 4.1 – TIMOR-LESTE MEMBERSHIP			
<p>CRGA 43 and the 8th Conference of the Pacific Community adopted a resolution extending the territorial scope of the Pacific Community to include Timor Leste and thereby accommodate a potential formal request for membership of the organisation. According to the process, the resolution comes into force after one year, assuming that no member lodges an objection. On 19 November 2014, the one-year period will expire. If no objections have been received, the Pacific Community can then invite Timor Leste to join. SPC proposes the following procedure: on 20 November 2014, SPC will contact the Government of Australia to ensure that no objections have been received. Assuming there are no objections, SPC will extend an invitation to Timor Leste on behalf of all members to join the Pacific Community. SPC will then undertake negotiations with Timor Leste on the financial implications of membership, noting that Timor Leste has already been informed it would fall into category 1 for assessed contributions. Once Timor Leste formally accedes to the treaty, the membership will be informed. This will then be formally recognised at the next Conference, assuming the process has been completed by then.</p>	<p>CRGA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. approved the proposed procedure for extending membership to Timor Leste; ii. welcomed Timor Leste's statement reiterating its wish to become a member of the Pacific Community; iii. Authorised the secretariat to continue to liaise with Timor Leste on all matters related to its interest in becoming a Participating Government of the Pacific Community. 	<p>The territorial scope was officially extended in December 2014</p> <p>Following a mission to Timor-Leste in June 2015, Timor-Leste have indicated the requirement to follow national approval processes before lodging the formal instrument of membership to become a participating government</p>	<p>Director-General, Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management and Chief of Staff</p>

AGENDA ITEM 4.2 – UPDATE ON SPC MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

<p>8.) CRGA 43 mandated the secretariat, together with a working group composed of member countries and territories, to explore how new categories of Associate Member and Observer might be created and to develop an SPC policy on membership and observer status. In particular, the formal creation of new membership categories was seen as a means to respond to the shared desire of SPC and the European Union for greater institutional recognition of the EU's role as an important partner of the Pacific Community. Several exchanges between founding members have since taken place due to a difference of opinion on the legal procedure for effectively creating such new categories and some outstanding issues remain to be resolved. Further work will be done to attempt to resolve these issues to the satisfaction of all members. As an alternative means of providing the secretariat with a tool for recognising more institutional forms of partnership, and to take account of recent discussions with EU, the secretariat proposed the adoption of Permanent Observer Status, consistent with the United Nations practice, and the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with EU to reflect the close partnership between EU and SPC.</p>	<p>9.) CRGA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. mandated the secretariat to conclude a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding with the European Union to recognise the special partnership between EU and SPC; II. decided not to amend the Canberra Agreement at this time to provide for new categories of Associate Member and Observer; III. endorsed the secretariat's proposal to follow United Nations practice and allow for Permanent Observer Status to be granted to states and intergovernmental organisations by means of unanimous resolution; IV. mandated the working group on membership to develop an SPC Policy on Permanent Observer Status, which would set out the criteria, admission procedure, rights and obligations of any entity wishing to request such status with the Pacific Community, and to provide this policy to the 9th Conference of the Pacific Community for adoption; V. mandated the working group on membership to consider the specific case of the European Union and make recommendations that would ensure a harmonised approach between Permanent Observers and the EU. 	<p>The EU Pacific Community Partnership was signed in July 2015</p> <p>Consultation has continued to take place on policy documents</p> <p>Policy documents will be presented to CRGA 45 and the 9th Conference</p>	<p>Director-General and Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management</p>
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**AGENDA ITEM 6.2 – STRATEGY FOR CLIMATE AND
DISASTER RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC**

<p>15.) The draft Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) is a new regional policy instrument aimed at building the resilience of Pacific Island communities, including vulnerable groups, through integrated management of climate change and disaster risks. Development of the SRDP has included extensive engagement and consultation (face-to-face and online) with stakeholders at national and regional levels – Pacific Island governments and administrations, CROP agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector, and development partners. This process has been guided and supervised by a steering committee comprising representatives from regional governments and administrations, the private sector and civil society. After it is endorsed, the SDRP will succeed the current Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006–2015 and Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action 2005–2015. CRGA noted the planned development of a results-based management framework as a tool for SRDP monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning and stressed the need for careful use of existing resources and institutions in implementing the strategy when it is finalised and endorsed.</p>	<p>16.) CRGA: directed the Director-General of SPC to liaise with other CROP heads to discuss the manner in which the Pacific Resilience Partnership is to be supported and resolve any concerns prior to the 2015 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting;</p>	<p>Pacific Islands Forum Leaders decided further consultation was needed on the SRDP before final approval</p> <p>The SRDP will be further considered in 2016</p>	<p>Director-General and Geosciences Division</p>
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**AGENDA ITEM 6.3 – SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC BOARD FOR
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT (SPBEA) REPORT**

<p>17) The CRGA Joint Working Group on the SPBEA Review presented to CRGA 43 was commissioned to 'further assess</p>	<p>18) CRGA:</p>		
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<p>the optimum approach and resources required to take the recommendations forward'. It was established in February 2014 and chaired by the Kiribati High Commissioner in Fiji, with other members from Australia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, and SPC. (Note: SPBEA – Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment became SPBEQ – Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Quality in early 2014.) The report by the Working Group highlighted the organisational and staffing structure changes made to align operations with the review recommendations. In view of financial and human resources constraints, it was agreed that a phased implementation approach should be adopted, and following a rationalisation exercise, a schedule and resourcing options were drawn up. The total number of positions recommended by the original review was reduced from 72 to 38, requiring 10 more staff to be recruited in the 2014–2016 period. Full implementation of the phased programme will depend on the availability of funds as detailed in the resourcing options section of the report. The SPBEQ Strategic Plan 2014–2016, which reflects the expanded mandate of the board with the strategic goal of improved quality of education, was tabled for approval by CRGA</p>	<p>I. directed the secretariat to further analyse and refine the phased implementation plan developed by the Joint Working Group, noting the need to stay within the resources currently available;</p>	<p>A paper will be presented to CRGA 45</p>	<p>Director-General</p>
	<p>II. endorsed in principle the SPBEQ Strategic Plan 2014–2016 subject to the results of recommendation ii.</p>		
<p>AGENDA ITEM 7.2 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2013 AND STATUS OF MEMBERS' ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS AND HOST GRANTS</p>			
<p>21) In accordance with SPC's financial regulations, the secretariat presented the audited 2013 SPC financial statements and audit reports for the consideration of CRGA, noting that the records for both SPC's overall finances and the staff provident fund had received unqualified audit opinions for the 18th year in succession. CRGA was also updated on the status of membership contributions: as at 7 October 2014, 16 of SPC's 26 members had fully settled their assessed contributions to</p>	<p>22.) CRGA:</p>		
	<p>I. requested those members with outstanding contributions, in particular those with arrears, to settle these as early as possible;</p>	<p>Good progress has been made</p>	<p>Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management</p>
	<p>II. requested members in financial difficulties to agree on a payment plan with the secretariat;</p>	<p>Work in progress</p>	<p>Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management</p>

<p>SPC. The majority of members had made significant efforts to make payments in full or part during the year. Three members had not made payments in 2014, with one member having been in arrears for over 14 years. The secretariat has made active efforts over several years to encourage members with long-standing arrears to enter into a payment plan and acknowledged the payments made by Nauru under such a plan. CRGA recognised that payment of contributions was important in reflecting ownership and support of SPC.</p>	<p>III. Directed the Director-General to lead a mission focused on the issue of long-standing arrears to explore all options and present these to CRGA 45 and the 9th Conference in 2015.</p>	<p>Work in progress</p>	<p>Director-General and Deputy Director-General, Operations and Management</p>
<p>AGENDA ITEM 7.4 – REPORTS ON HUMAN RESOURCES: STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION</p>			
<p>25) A recent survey of SPC staff engagement showed a high level of commitment to SPC’s mission and purpose. Nevertheless, SPC experiences difficulties in attracting and retaining the best possible talent for development in the Pacific Islands. These difficulties include salary levels for internationally recruited staff and lack of job security resulting from fixed-term contracts. The maximum length of contract for all employees is three years. For staff recruited internationally, contracts may be renewed after three years but positions must be advertised after six years (the ‘six-year rule’). This practice creates uncertainty for staff, who may be world specialists in their fields, can promote early resignation, generates a heavy recruitment workload and costs (1,300,000 CFP units in 2014) and adversely affects staff development opportunities. For all of these reasons, the secretariat requested CRGA to allow flexibility of contract renewal for internationally recruited staff in salary bands 8 to 14 (excluding Director-level staff and above) and longer-term tenure for locally recruited staff. It was noted that the proposal was not to offer open-ended contracts but to introduce a more flexible system of contract renewal, underpinned by an enhanced SPC performance management system and based on the organisation’s skill needs.</p>	<p>26) CRGA:</p>		
	<p>i. Requested that the Director-General share this approach with CROP heads for discussion, in the spirit of harmonisation.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Director-General</p>