



FFA
PACIFIC ISLANDS
FORUM FISHERIES
AGENCY

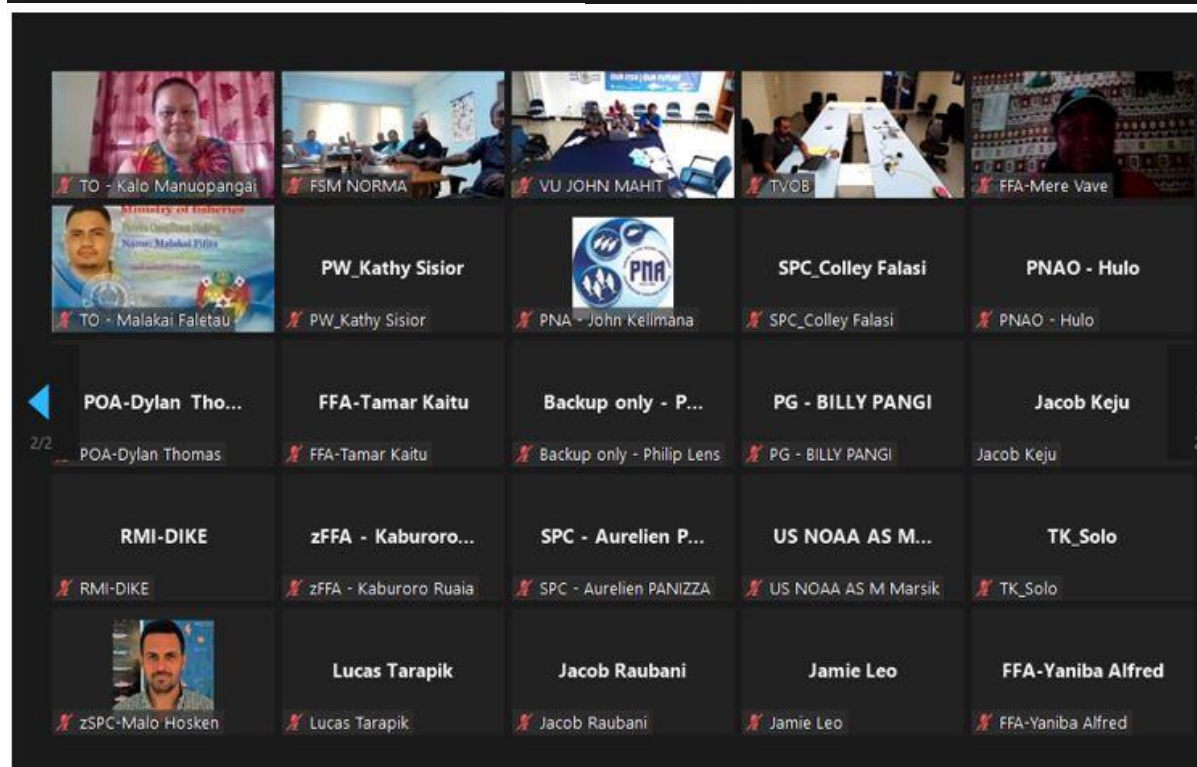
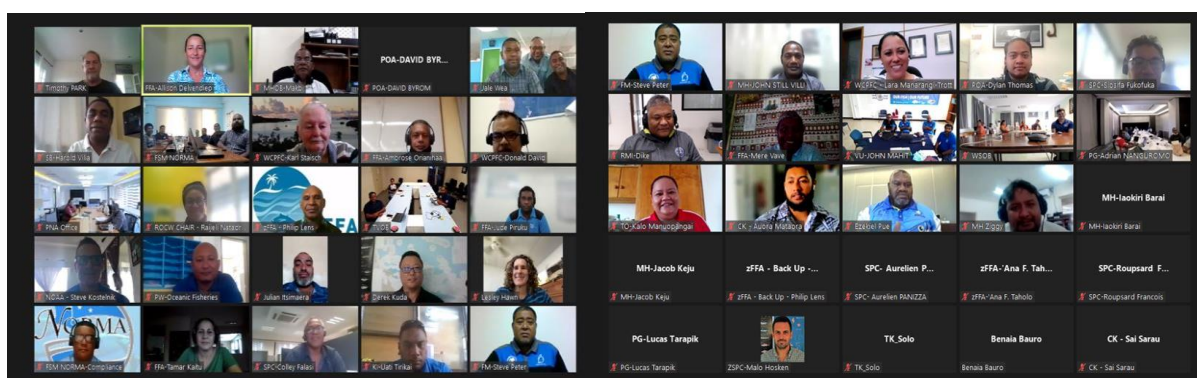


**Pacific
Community**
Communauté
du Pacifique

22nd REGIONAL OBSERVER COORDINATORS WORKSHOP
(VIRTUAL MEETING)
1 – 4 March 2022

THEME – ENHANCING OBSERVER SAFETY AND REDEPLOYMENT PLAN

RECORD OF MEETING



DAY 1 - TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2022

1 Opening of Meeting

Fiji opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Director of Fisheries Operations provided opening remarks highlighting the importance and the objectives of the workshop including the key roles observers play in fisheries management. DFO also stressed the work the Secretariat is doing in collaboration with partners including members to ensure observers are safe to be deployed back to sea.

2 Conduct and Meeting Approach

The Chair Lady briefly explained how the meeting will be conducted including some housekeeping messages.

3 Apologies & Adoption of Agenda

There were no apologies, and the meeting agenda was adopted.

Theme – General Updates

4 Observer Programme Updates

National Observer Programmes (NOPs) provided country statements and programme updates, including updates from the FFA US Treaty programme, the NOAA Pago Pago Observer Programme, POA and the SPC Observer Training team

4.1 Cook Islands Observer Programme Update (CIOB)

CI Observer Coordinator, Ms Latishia Maui, recently left the programme. Sai and AJ will take over coordination until a new coordinator is recruited.

CI has six observers currently active: 2 based in Fiji, 2 in the Cooks, 1 based in Apia, and 1 based in Pago Pago. The programme has one debriefer and no debriefer assessors, nor trainers. CI is working with SPC to upgrade the debriefers to Debriefer Assessor in the week following the ROCW22. One observer that is based in Pago Pago is still requiring repatriation from the Philippines, but American Samoan borders are closed to non-nationals.

Only three trips were made in 2021 on domestic vessels; one placed in Fiji, one in Cape Town on CI flagged vessels. There was only one trip last year on the one vessel operating out of Rarotonga. The CI programme also works with other foreign programmes to cover CI-flagged vessels that are based in

Cape Town and Mauritius. The Cook Islands programme is developing COVID-19 safety measures for placements; however, these are difficult to implement for trips initiated in foreign ports. Cook Islands-based observers are deployed on local vessels and conduct port sampling. Recent alternative training of observers included a boat master certification. The Cook Islands does not have an institution that can conduct sea safety training. All six observers are fully vaccinated.

4.2 Fiji (FJOB)

The Fiji programme has been suspended since the second week of April 2021. Most observers engaged in frontline support of COVID-19 mitigation activities by the government.

The Fiji observer programme is working on putting together protocols for observer redeployments, part of the process was receiving PPEs for observers. The Ministry of Health approved the resumption of placements in November 2021. Their requirements include vaccination and medical certificates for observers, and a negative swab test before placement. Now over 50% of observers are working again. During the suspension, FJOB conducted national observer refresher training with SPC, and CIA incident training held by FFA.

4.3 FSM Observer Programme (FMOB)

FSM's pool of active observers has reduced from 50 in 2020, to 45 in 2021, and now at the beginning of 2022, the active pool is 41 observers. Many have left the FSM Observer Program for better opportunities in state governments and the United States. Despite the loss of observers, FMOB is fortunate that our number of debriefers, debriefers assessors, and trainers remains the same. Moreover, in 2021 the FSM Observer Program had to adjust its priorities and work. Observers were assigned work on a rotation schedule to equally share work opportunities.

All FSM Observers are fully vaccinated

To maintain Observer's services a refresher training was held in 2021. FSM also held its first national longline EM analysis training for observers. FSM noted its appreciation to Fiji for sharing its EM experiences. FSM further expressed their interest in training support and workshops for observers.

4.4 Kiribati Observer Programme (KIOB)

Kiribati currently has 169 observers active and still engaged with the Ministry, of these, 24 are based on Christmas and 145 in Tarawa. Their vaccination status is that 58 observers have had one dose only, and 87 have completed both doses.

Alternative incomes for observers include eligibility to access the support fund for the unemployed, they are also engaged with the Ministry in various duties such as patrolling the port's transshipment area. They are also engaged with the Coastal Fisheries MCS team to enforce fisheries laws both in Christmas Island and in Tarawa. Refresher training has been conducted using national training staff.

4.5 Marshall Islands Observer Programme (MHOB)

The Marshall Islands currently does not have a coordinator, staff are working as a team in observer operations. The Marshall Islands Observer programme currently has 42 active observers, three left for alternative employment (one to the USA). There are six certified debriefers, of which 2 are debriefer assessors. There are also 7 trainee debriefers.

In response to the pandemic, 33 of the observers are fully vaccinated, of which four have also had a booster, nine are not vaccinated. Longline observer placements recommenced on 15 September 2021; 24 trips were assigned but only 22 were completed (1 missed trip, 1 incomplete trip). Port monitoring was carried out at the dock for 15 unloadings, but no transshipments of purse seiners were monitored due to pandemic restrictions. MIMRA is working to produce SOPs to allow observers to be placed safely communicating with the National Health.

4.6 Nauru Observer Programme (NROB)

While Nauru has had 45 observers certified, its active pool is now 24 observers. Most observers already had a second occupation even before COVID, however, a few do not. Four observers have been employed within our Oceanic Division to assist us with our data collection and observer report assessments.

Nauru has one Certified Debriefing and Observer Trainer, Assessor, two Certified Debriefers, and 11 Debriefers Trainees. Travel bans have prevented placements since the start of the pandemic.

All people in Nauru, including the observers, are now fully vaccinated. Nauru is expecting borders to reopen soon and so are preparing for operations.

While waiting for Nauru borders to reopen, sea safety and observer's refresher training are scheduled to be conducted, however, Nauru does not have the capacity to conduct sea safety training locally, so may need to wait for borders to reopen to conduct the training. Nauru would like assistance to run the sea safety refresher course. The programme also requires PPE (COVID) equipment to be supplied.

4.7 Palau Observer Programme (PWOB)

Palau's Observer Program ceased making placements in 2018, due to observers retiring and transferring to other offices. Additionally, the implementation of Palau's National Marine Sanctuary has significantly reduced fishing activity within Palau's EEZ.

The Division of Oceanic Management has been going through restructuring and reclassification of current positions. Thus, the hiring of new observers remains on hold until our office is officially reorganized. Everson Sengebau is in transition to coordinate Palau's national observer program. Everson is currently the only certified observer in the Palau observer programme.

Once the restructuring is complete Palau will be seeking to restore the observer program and conducting training. More than 95% of Palau is vaccinated and strict Covid protocols are in place domestically.

4.8 PNG Observer Programme (PGOB)

Domestic placements resumed on 1st August 2020 in the PNG EEZ and archipelagic waters. PNG borders are now open as of 16 February 2022.

Only 51 observers are vaccinated of the pool of 256. Vaccination is voluntary in PNG.

All observer data are collected via ER using FIMS since 2019. A debriefing module will start to be developed next week.

Currently, PGOB is recruiting Critical Incident Analysis Officer and Debriefing Assessor. Observer livelihood activities include hiring observers in other roles including compliance, CDS, and fisheries management.

4.9 Solomon Islands Observer Programme (SBOB)

Pre-Covid, the Solomon Islands observer programme had a pool of 86 observers. This then declined to around 50 active observers in 2021, and now in 2022, there are only about 30 available: 16 observers, 11 Debriefers, and 3 Debriefing Assessors. Five of the observers are trained as EM analysts.

There were 34 observers placed in 2021 on Noro domestic purse seine and pole and line trips. There were 98 trips conducted, these trips comprised 25 pole and line trips and 73 purse seine trips; Of the 73 purse seine trips, 39 trips were ER trips, which was an increase from previous years in the application of observer ER reporting.

During the lockdown, 11 observers were employed doing port monitoring duties in Noro and Honiara. Four observers were engaged in the digital e-port project in Noro.

Five trainee debriefers attended subregional debriefing part A training. A general refresher training was held in March 2021 and 30 observers attended MSC training in June.

Only 20 of the observers have valid sea safety certificates, the programme is looking to renew the others through the maritime college this year.

All active observers are fully vaccinated, and some have received their booster. PPEs have been received from FFA, SPC, and PNAO. In the SB Public Service, only staff with a current negative test are permitted into the office, so currently, the observer programme is limited to three staff in the office. When debriefing returns, observers and debriefers will need to be tested. Some observers are working elsewhere but with written consent that they will return to the programme when placements resume.

4.10 Samoa Observer Programme (WSOB)

There are four fully accredited Fisheries Observers; 2 males and 2 females, of these one, is a trainee debriefer, and another is a trainee trainer. Five trainee observers took the online training course in 2020 and we are waiting for the face-to-face component to complete their PIRFO accreditation.

No trips were carried out in Samoa's programme last year as there was a shift in focus to transshipment monitoring of foreign fishing vessels due to COVID restrictions. Our observers are also doing various other monitoring activities such as market landings and even going out to sea for our FAD productivity studies and FAD deployment. We are fortunate that our fisheries observers are full-time staff at fisheries and so continue to be employed.

It is also important to note that all fisheries observers and trainee observers are fully vaccinated. This is a requirement for working, especially working on the international wharf, monitoring transshipment activity.

4.11 Tokelau Observer Programme

Tokelau does not have a national observer programme. But do intend to send trainees to future observer training.

4.12 Tonga Observer Programme (TOOB)

In 2021 there were nine foreign fishing vessels licensed to fish in Tonga's EEZ, but there were only two fishing remaining at the end of the year. There are two domestic fishing vessels. There were 29 observer deployments in 2021. The programme has nine active observers, seven of which are fully vaccinated, two are waiting for their second dose. One observer passed away in 2021, his loss is significant for the programme. There are three active debriefers.

4.13 Tuvalu Observer Programme (TVOB)

Tuvalu has a total of 80 active observers, in 2021 10 new observers were recruited. There are 22 certified debriefers, nine trainee debriefers, four debriefer assessors, and three trainee trainers. Six observers left the programme because of COVID, 71 observers have been fully vaccinated.

Last year TVOB ran a few refresher training courses. This year's priority training will be an ER refresher, sea safety, and e-debriefing training. Observer placements are still suspended since 2020. Tuvalu has not yet developed a redeployment plan shall do when TA returns from leave.

4.14 Vanuatu Observer Programme (VUOB)

Observer placements continue from last year, coverage has decreased from 100% to 20% in 2021. VUOB uses the FFA-developed safety protocols for deployments. Vanuatu has 52 active Observers, 9 trainees Debriefers still waiting to complete their Part B and C, and 1 Trainee trainer.

VUOB have 28 Observers fully vaccinated and are waiting to get their booster jab sometime this month. Alternative livelihoods for observers include monitoring the sea cucumber harvest, helping to deploy Covid PPEs.

4.15 NOAA NMFS

Steve Kostelnik, the operations coordinator, presented the NOAA summary. Lesley Hawn was introduced as the new programme supervisor, also Derek Kuda the Office Biologist and the Multilateral Tuna Treaty data focal point. His role includes sending the vessels' catch and unloading documents to FFA to upload onto TUFMAN2.

The Pago Pago office has been working remotely since 2020. Vaccinations in Pago Pago are over 80%, however, the first community-acquired case in American Samoa was last week, so now the territory is in 'Code Red'.

There have been no FFA or purse seine placements since 2020. There were three longline trips in 2021, one by the staff biologist Michael Marsik. A local observer had been stuck in California for almost two years but was able to make two trips after returning in 2021. Derek Kuda noted that the US multilateral treaty fleet was down to a little over a dozen vessels now.

4.16 PNA Observer Programme POA (FAOB)

The POAM9 Chair, Harold, will give a more detailed summary of the meeting later in the agenda. MRAG is looking at resumption strategies to get placements to restart, three of the parties are looking to restart observer placements very soon.

4.17 FFA Observer Programme (TTOB)

FFA is not placing observers as they rely entirely on members' observers. The US fleet is now reduced to 13 purse seiners. The treaty extension (6 years) will end this year, fourth renegotiations will commence sometime mid-year.

4.18 SPC Monitoring, observer programmes' support

The monitoring group in FEMA/Offshore Fisheries has formed a Monitoring team that is involved broadly in fisheries monitoring processes, so this will include Sifa, Malo, Leontine, my replacement, and myself at this stage. So, a slight restructuring but essentially the same faces at SPC to deal with. A new staff member is Leontine Baje who is joining the team from NORMA, FSM. Leontine will be our Fisheries Advisor (EM). Malo is also doing EM technical work, Sifa is still with observer training, etc. Activities in 2021, we were still providing programme and training support to the national observer programmes in 2021. ER implementation has been mainly in the French territories, ER for port sampling and longline observer monitoring will be further implemented this year. Developing regional EM standards is also a focus of the team for 2022.

[Please refer to Annex 6 for the country updated in reaction to COVID19 and brief statements]

ROCW22 noted the statement and updates provided by NOPs

5 MCSWG24 Outcome – IP1

The Secretariat presented six key recommendations from ROCW21 to MCSWG24. The Secretariat informed the meeting that there was no substantive discussion on the paper but the report and the outcomes of ROCW21 were noted. Five of the key recommendations were implemented by the Secretariat and partners; however, the recommendation to review Observer and PIRFO Trainer's pay rates was delayed. The Secretariat was concentrating on priority matters and will consider this work in the coming months.

FSM NORMA commented on recommendation number 3, noting they have adjusted redeployment SOPs for returning to FSM and debriefing virtually. Observers are required to return to their homeport rather than Pohnpei. Recommendations 4, Observers declared frontline workers. Recommendations 5 training on how to use PPEs.

ROCW22 noted the outcomes of MCSWG24, and the work progressed on the ROCW21 recommendations.

6 DCC outcomes – IP2

SPC Senior Fisheries Adviser presented DCC Outcomes (IP.2). A Data Collection Committee Planning Workshop (2022) was held virtually via Zoom on 16 February 2022.

The DCC Planning meeting was held to plan or guide the DCC's work in 2022 towards a DCC12, based on requests for DCC attention to data issues. Issues discussed included

- developing a new DCC Strategic Plan,
- necessary changes to vessel logsheet fields and data protocols,
- a review to rationalise observer data fields in light of new CMMs and PNA initiatives,
- a need for field trials to assess new draft longline EM and transshipment data fields.

Samoa raised if data standards for transshipment had been agreed to? If there is a form for transshipment monitoring other than FC1 and FC2? SPC confirmed that they are commencing a trial to determine if the draft fields can be collected before disseminating them as DCC adopted fields for collection. Samoa has been monitoring TS for LL in Port and Samoa is willing to offer assistance in determining what collection can be collected and to develop draft standards.

ROCW22 noted the outcome of DCC and thanked SPC for the presentation

7 New CMMs and Other Relevant Observer Issues from WCPFC – IP3

WCPFC Regional Observer Programme (ROP) Manager presented an update on CMMs, Observer coverage, cross-endorsement and audits. The four new CMMs for this year, two of these required elements of monitoring by observers, the CMM2021-01 tropical tuna

measure, and the bluefin measure required observers to report on catch and size data. In addition, observers needed to report on SSI mitigation and handling, including relatively new SSIs like mobulid rays.

WCPFC ROP highlighted that longline observer coverage is not suspended, and programmes may place their observers if safe to do so. NOPs are encouraged to review the 13th Annual ROP Report, accessible on the website; <https://www.wcpfc.int>

SPC noted that SPC has distributed its Shark and Ray Manual which includes agreed guidelines on the safe handling of rays and mobilids noting that this is the responsibility of the crew.

SPC further highlighted that the DPG code was introduced for observers to record if the agreed safe handling guidelines were being followed by the crew. The SPC Shark and Ray manual outline the safe handling of SSI for observers and crew to be aware of.

WCPFC informed the meeting that the ROCW report includes SSI catches. Meeting participants are encouraged to look at this report and the corresponding slides.

PW thanked WCPFC ROP for delaying their audit until they fully resume operations. WCPFC offered assistance while setting up, especially to assist them to meet the minimum standards.

ROCW22 noted the ROP update and acknowledged WCPFC for the presentation

8 POAM9 outcome – IP4

The Chair of POAM9 presented the outcome of the PNA Observer Coordinators Ninth Meeting held virtually the previous day. POAM9 Chair detailed the six recommendations to resume observer coverage at the earliest possible time.

CK requested clarification on the strategy relating to observers boarding their own Home Party's vessel. Does the observer data belong to the Observer programme or the Flag? PNAO responded the data will belong to the coastal state where the vessel is operating. The PNA has an agreement on how data collected under the FSMA can be shared among Parties.

CK followed to clarify if a vessel fishes in other states' waters does the data belong to the PNA. PNAO clarified that the data collected from vessels operating in PNA waters belong to the Coastal States and this refers to those vessels fishing under the FSMA.

FFA commented that the PNAO holds the data and requests may be made via the PNAO for data. For members seeking information from another EEZ, a request will be sent to the other party for permission to share the data.

FFA further sought clarification on PNA's views on the Commission's suspension for observer coverage on purse seiners and transshipment vessels, which is due to end on March 15. Did the POAM19 have views on this? PNAO noted that the current suspension does not prevent programmes from making observer placements, the problem is getting the observers home. The national health authorities are presenting challenges to redeployment. PNAO recognised the rollover of the suspension may continue.

SPC sought clarification on the timeline to address the 15 March suspension deadline noting it is now the beginning of March. POA clarified that the POAM9 Recommendation 7 is assuming the suspension will roll over therefore it is recommended that PNA Observer coordinators should meet 6 weeks before the next deadline.

SPC further requested clarification on how debriefing will be managed with back-to-back +- trips and how the 'summary report' fits into the regional debriefing procedures. The summary report is produced by POA, it is used to guide debriefers to address actions which are then sent to POA and onto the Flag or Coastal State. This report is completed when a full debrief is performed in Port.

ROCW22 noted the outcome of POAM9 and support the recommendations

9 Impact of the Continuous Suspension of Observer Coverage– DP1

The Secretariat presented discussion paper 1 on impacts caused by the intersessional decision to continuously suspend the 100% observer coverage requirement. The meeting noted the paper. There was no discussion or comment from the floor.

ROCW22 noted the paper with no recommendation

10 Observer Safety Recommendations

10.1 Sea Safety Certificate Revalidation Course – WP1

FFA presented a paper recommending sea safety revalidation courses noting STCW sea safety certificates are valid for three to five years. A recent survey found many Observers hold expired sea safety certificates. Observer Coordinators are encouraged to seek training for Observers, future trips will be given only to Observers with valid certificates. Funding is available for training via FFA. This funding is available until June 2022.

FSM sought clarification on the number of Observers trained. FFA clarified that the reference to 308 Observers relates to how many Observers the Secretariat's funding can support. This is the number of Observers from the nine NOPs known to have expired certificates. Members are encouraged to source their own funding in the event there is insufficient funding from FFA.

FSM further informed that domestic travel is possible, so FSM observers can travel to Yap for training and welcomed further discussions with FFA to discuss the training of Observers.

Fiji Informed the meeting that they continue to wait for Fiji Maritime Academy's response regarding training opportunities. Fiji noted that five Observers have had their fees cleared and can now attend further training. Fiji also highlighted that Observers trained in Vanuatu did not have their sea safety certificates recognised by Fiji and therefore they will redo their sea safety training upon their return to Fiji.

SPC remarked that if the Vanuatu sea safety training was not being recognised, they will follow up with the Vanuatu Maritime College (VMC) and Fiji.

CK echoed that, if the safety training is delivered according to the STCW standard then it should be recognised worldwide. In response, VU mentioned that they have no idea about this and will contact Vanuatu Maritime College to confirm.

The FFA Secretariat will also be contacting VMC including all Marine institutions in the region to ensure the Sea Safety courses are IMO certified.

SPC further reminded the Observer Coordinators to submit their trainees' sea safety assessment results so PIRFO CMC can maintain a record of who has passed and qualified.

Recommendation 1:

ROCW22i

- i. urged NOPs to communicate with the FFA secretariat on training arrangements,
- ii. suggested NOPs to consider sea safety training in the national programme budget; and,
- iii. Agreed for the Secretariat to identify and confirm the Maritime schools in the region that are IMO certified to deliver SOLAS/STCW courses

10.2 Portable Tracking Devices – IP5

The FFA Secretariat presented the information paper on portable tracking devices. FFA raised the concern that the safety devices are not worn when on deck and it is acknowledged that these devices are expensive and funding to purchase these limits the supply within programmes.

FFA strongly encouraged Members to communicate with the Secretariat if they need funding assistance to purchase devices. Funds are available through the Secretariat and the WCPFC, FFA staff are on hand to support proposal development.

WCPFC reiterated that the issuing of the two-way device and the PLB are mandatory under the ROP, and they also can complement ER. It was further noted that these safety devices should be part of NOPs cost recovery budgets. The programmes operating in the ROP are encouraged to meet the minimum requirements' ongoing costs in their recurrent budgets.

SPC sought clarification on how many sea safety units are required, had this been quantified? FFA confirmed they have sparse information, being limited to the UST. FFA agrees this is important information and will seek the necessary details from Members.

PNAO highlighted that when determining budgets there is a cost to purchase the units and a monthly subscription cost to use them.

Solomon Islands agreed with the importance of the devices and stressed programmes to issue these devices to Observers.

Recommendation 2:

ROCW22

- i. Urged NOPs to review the list of portable tracking devices provided by the Secretariat and others that are on the market and explore funding opportunities to source them; and
- ii. Encouraged Members to seek the Secretariat assistance to develop funding proposals if required.

DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2022*Theme – Observer Safety Study Recommendation Update***10 Observer Safety Recommendation (cont.)****10.3 COVID19 PPEs – WP2**

FFA presented on COVID19 PPEs noting this item came out from the MRAG Safety Study report issued last year. NOPs are encouraged to provide Observers with basic COVID PPE. Essential PPEs include face masks, hand sanitiser and gloves. Additional PPE may include face shields and thermometers. NOPs are encouraged to look toward cost recovery mechanisms to cover these costs.

FFA highlighted the need for timely responses to requests for information. FFA's funds are time-bound and timely responses from NOPs will ensure assistance.

FSM NORMA thanked the FFA for assistance in the supply of PPE. FSM secured 50 boxes of masks, 50 boxes of gloves and 50 bottles of sanitizer. FSM also updated SOPs to include issuing of the PPEs during deployment.

Recommendation 3:

ROCW22

- i. Urged NOPs to provide updates on the PPEs supplied by FFA and SPC; and,
- ii. suggested members factor the COVID19 PPEs into the national Observer programme budgets

10.4 Onboard Surveillance Cameras update – WP3

The Sec presented the WP3 on 'surveillance cameras onboard Vessels' to update the members and referred to the Observer Livelihood and Safety Study conducted by MRAG. It

advised that not much progress has been made in a trial implementation of this project at the national level. It emphasised that trial implementation at the national level would be much easier than at a regional level. The paper also outlined a few key outcomes which include:

- For safety purposes around the area where observers will be performing their duties.
- Capturing of reliable footage as evidence if needed for the investigation, noting an increase in incidents involving Observers being mistreated whilst on board.
- Provide support to other investigations on compliance matters.

The Secretariat recognises there is a cost to install cameras, however, FFA is seeking funding.

PNG asked if the project is for Purse Seine fishing vessels only, Longline vessels, or both. The Secretariat advised it is for both.

Solomon Islands supported the project, it is a good initiative and noted that this has already been implemented by some vessel operators, but cautioned on two factors – first, the likely resistance of vessel operators, and secondly, the cost for installation of the cameras and whether this would be recovered from vessel operators on a cost-recovery approach.)

Marshall Islands reiterated Solomon Islands' concern and emphasised the need to work closely with vessel operators, noting the potential pushback by vessel operators.

The Secretariat advised that it would explore the possibility of a separate study to investigate the feasibility of the project, in parallel with the current work on the EM project, which might also address the concerns that have been raised. The Secretariat also recognised the cost which will impact the industry and the necessity to involve them in this process.

In response to WCPFC's question whether these cameras would be turned on all the time, or only at certain times, the Secretariat advised that this issue will also be addressed following the trial implementation of the project at the national level and by a planned study for this project to consider potential issues.

FSM reminded that many cameras would be required, and this will add more costs. In this regard, has there been any thought of using body cameras by Observers? The Secretariat advised that the option of body cameras has been raised earlier and this will also form part of the study that the Secretariat is planning to carry out in support of this project. The recommendation for body cameras is also echoed by SPC.

The Secretariat further clarified that; it is not intending to install additional cameras if they are already on a vessel.

Recommendation:4

ROCW22

- i. Noted the update on the paper and work of the Secretariat to progress the project; and
- ii. suggested interested Members who are willing to take part in the trial to communicate with the Secretariat.

10.5 Regional Asset Tracking Hub update – WP4

The Secretariat presented the paper on the regional asset tracking hub and advised that this project is based on one of the observer livelihood and safety study recommendations. This has been discussed internally and with other related bodies to enable integration of the current information system to support the project. Last year, the project was discussed but held off due to funding issues. The Secretariat was also tasked to explore funding options with keen donors and this work is continuing this year. Operationalising this project is a challenge, but the Secretariat has already started working on specific operational procedures and rules to ensure information about the equipment used by Observers are accounted for at all times. This would require a system of operation that would also assist in tracking Observers whilst they are at sea.

Solomon Islands expressed support for the project and shared its experience after working with the POA where a data-set system is in place to monitor the movements of Observer equipment from the time they are issued to Observers until they are returned. It found the system working very well and urged Members to support this project, especially in the establishment of a central tracking hub.

Fiji also supported the project and shared its experience of having to deal with missing equipment because of the absence of a system to track them, noting that it still has one FFA life vest in its possession and wondered whether the FFA Secretariat is aware of it. FJ further informed the meeting that they hold some callipers and an FFA lifejacket, found on a PS.

POA echoed the words of FJ and SB and strongly emphasized the importance of tracking safety gear. It is essential observers receive their safety gear and tracking these assets is critical to that supply. POA thanked Solomon Is and Fiji for sharing their experiences.

The Marshall Islands supported the project and encouraged the Secretariat to progress it, noting the importance of keeping track of the equipment and the Observers for their safety.

The Secretariat advised that it would continue to work closely with key partners, including SPC, PNAO, and POA to progress the project.

In response to FSM's inquiry about a list of items to be tracked, the Secretariat will provide this, noting that some equipment had already got serial numbers which should be easy to incorporate as part of the tracing system.

MHOB noted the difficulties in tracking assets that are issued out and not retrieved. MHOB further supported the development of a regional asset tracking hub and the POA system.

MH sought clarification on the list of assets compulsory to be issued to Observers. FFA confirmed this equipment includes callipers, safety equipment and other additional equipment supplied by the programme.

SPC further noted that the SUP-1 form also included the recording of equipment/assets and it may be worth considering putting this information into ER observer systems such as iFIMs and Ollo.

The Secretariat thanked the participants for the comments and informed the meeting that they will work with partners and discussed internally with the FFA IT and RFSC to progress this work.

Recommendation 5:

ROCW22

- i. noted the status of the project and the ongoing work of the Secretariat to progress the project; and,
- ii. agreed that the Secretariat to further explore how the centralised asset tracking hub would operate and report back to the Members

10.6 Observer Insurance update – IP6

FFA presented the paper on Observer Insurance. The Secretariat highlighted that an insurance scheme monitoring committee will be set up and this will include representatives from FFA, including the DG, the ROCW Chair and an outsourced insurance expert. The scheme aims to provide coverage where there are gaps over incidents and accidents not covered by national insurance policies. Issues remain to be resolved including funding the scheme and the inclusion of insurance on vessels in the HMTCS.

PNG asked if the US \$250,000 was for a programme for an individual observer? FFA clarified this is the cost of the insurance premium. These funds will be accessible when there is a claim and use

PNG asked if there will be an annual fee or a one-off payment. The Secretariat clarified this is a one-off payment to pay for the insurance premium/policy to commence the scheme. In the event of any drawdown from the scheme to pay for a claim in a year, this will be recovered from the concerned vessel and put into the scheme bank account administered by the Secretariat through the FFA existing financial arrangement.

FSM NORMA raised a concern in respect to the additional 5%. Currently, FSM NORMA has insurance coverage with the vessels and extra coverage paid through cost recovery. However, the additional 5% imposed upon vessels will be an additional burden on the industry. Paying twice for the same service. FFA noted the concern and highlighted that the scheme is to cover the gaps not fulfilled by the vessels.

THE Solomon Islands supported the recommendation to develop a regional insurance scheme noting that SBOB had not progressed this at a national level.

MHOB noted that a few observer programmes do not provide insurance at the national level and queried if the FFA scheme would provide full coverage?

FFA further noted that if all members did not agree with the 5% increase to the Observer levy, then other sources such as donor funding will be sought if the scheme is adopted.

WCPFC sought an understanding of gaps that will be covered? FFA informed the meeting of the insurance minimum requirement noting that it is door-to-door cover. FFA will forward the minimum requirement report to Members.

RMI was in support of the scheme however they had concerns in respect of the additional 5% levy. MHOB further noted the need to push this through FFC for action. FFA acknowledged MH's comments and agreed that FFC will consider this issue to make a decision.

Recommendation 6:

ROCW22

- I. noted the update and acknowledged the Secretariat's effort in establishing the centralised insurance scheme, and
- II. agreed that a proposed additional 5% increase on the observer levy was already tabled at FFC and should be revisited for a policy decision to reach an agreement:

10.7 Safety of Observers Transferring between LL Vessels at Sea – IP7

FFA presented the paper on the safety of Observers transferring to LL vessels at sea recognising the report produced by Deidre Brogan. The issue raised is the lack of safe methods to transfer and the act of transferring is to be discouraged.

SPC highlighted that Deirdre's concern was that data fields that observers collect during transshipments are considered to avoid unnecessary transfer of the observer between vessels.

WCPFC echoed there is no requirement for the Observers to cross over. The data fields are not mandatory, they are guidelines and if necessary, the Observer can request for logbooks to be transferred to the carrier vessel.

The Solomons acknowledged the report by Deidre, noting some of the concerns in transferring and the sampling; however, in respect of the work, there is no requirement to transfer to the other vessel. SBOB encouraged all NOPs to avoid transferring and use other methods to access data and necessary documents. It was also noted that Observers are also transferring to bunkers and other vessels at sea for personal purposes (e.g. securing cigarettes or alcohol).

Recommendation 7:

ROCW22

- I. Noted the paper on the safety of Observers transferring to LL vessels at sea; and
- II. encouraged Members to review the report provided by Deidre Brogan and provide feedback

Theme – Observer Livelihood Study Recommendation Update

11 Observer livelihood recommendations

11.1 Observer Redeployment Approach – DP2

The Secretariat presented the discussion paper on the redeployment approach and invited members to review the redeployment minimum requirement for observer redeployment and provide

RMI pointed out the importance of members communicating their COVID strategies. RMI has vaccinated over 1000 crew members. FSM has also vaccinated over 1000 crewmembers, and they have shared this information among themselves. RMI noted the importance of also sharing this information with other government agencies to help them gain confidence in the fishing industry. Also, to make the public aware of safety measures being put in place to protect them.

Samoa supported RMI's comments.

FSM supported the importance of getting vessels vaccinated and sharing this information. SB agreed from their experience, that with the four approaches to be considered, that there was a need to establish a high-level dialogue with the authorities as the situation with fisheries was not yet well understood by the senior government. SBOB also suggested that the fees for vaccination and testing currently applied to locally-based foreign fishing vessels are too high for companies. This has led to vessels not visiting ports, to avoid costs.

SPC noted that in the Maritime school seminar run by FFA, strong feelings from FFA on the mitigations and protocols document and the role of various stakeholders play in the risk mitigation process. Deployment of observers was easy, but repatriating is a problem. We need a risk assessment on placing observers.

RMI added that of the minimum requirements for redeployment, they were yet to recertify their observers' sea safety accreditations.

Solomons noted there were difficulties in deploying observers as vessels were not coming into port to tranship.

WCPFC responded that Suspensions are for:

- the purse seine 100% observer coverage requirement.
- at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels,
- and at-sea transshipment observers

WCPFC noted when the member countries look at whether they will extend the suspension on observer coverage, they shouldn't just roll over all three suspensions they should give serious consideration to whether they still need to suspend at sea transshipment for purse seiners. Whilst the coverage of 100% suspension might be still valid, you still can put observers on vessels if you choose. Purse seiners should be made to come to the port to tranship, albeit with whatever country covid restrictions might have, so observers can be placed if they want to place an observer. This would assist the problem SBOB and others have with placing observers, also it might create some work for observers as port samplers.

PNG highlighted that the vessels returning to ports other than the port of embarkation is a challenge. Also, since vaccination is voluntary in PNG, redeployment was going to be an issue unless there were minimum requirements for observers to be vaccinated. This requires pre-deployment protocols. Also, alternate placement options such as placing observers using the vessels' helicopter.

FFA noted that most programmes were using their placement protocols.

SBOB also suggested that there was a cost in quarantining returning observers, he suggested that this should not be the cost of the vessel, it should be covered by the observer provider, and programmes should plan for it.

RMI asked if the Solomon Islands were charging for vaccinations as FSM was not charging for vaccination of crew.

Recommendation 8:

ROCW22

- I. supported the approach described in the draft Redeployment plan;
- II. Encouraged members to continue to provide further updates based on evolving COVID19 situation nationally, regionally, and globally,
- III. Strongly supported that the temporary suspension of the 100% purse seine observer coverage and at-sea transshipment observers should be lifted in 2022 provided it's safe to do so, and
- IV. Supported lifting the suspension of the obligation relating to at-sea transshipment by purse seine vessels (CMM 2009-06 paragraph 25) in line with FFA Members position at WCPFC18.

11.2 Temporary on-shore jobs for observers – WP5

The Secretariat provided a working paper regarding temporary onshore job opportunities for observers and encourage Members to continue utilising observers with any onshore activities that suit them. This was a recommendation of the observer livelihood study report in 2021.

FFA recognised the financial constraint faced by NOPs which was the contributing factor for not being able to hire observers for temporary shore duties.

The Solomons noted that they had been contacted by an FFA consultant regarding using observers onshore but have not heard anything back from the consultant and FFA on that project. That is a similar expression from other NOPs as well. The Secretariat explained that the fish market survey comes under the FFA Fisheries Development Division and will find out from them and get back to the respective NOPs.

SPC noted that they had some coastal MCS positions advertised, and some coastal compliance monitoring training being offered at the moment, and this would be put on the jobs board.

Recommendation 9:

ROCW22

- I. noted the paper and also recognised the financial difficulties faced by members to hire observers for onshore duties; and,
- II. agreed that observers be found alternative opportunities until they are redeployed back to sea at the earliest time possible taking into account the COVID mitigation protocols.

11.3 PIRFO Job Board update – IP8

SPC presented an update on the status of the “PIRFO Job Board” and did a demonstration of the site. The Meeting acknowledged the update. FFA asked if there is a possibility to link the PIRFO website with the Job Board website. SPC noted the question and agreed to consider the request. The Secretariat informed the meeting that there will be a training session for the users as soon as FFA and SPC identify a suitable date and will inform the member.

The Secretariat further asks SPC if the current SPC Coastal MCS officers’ vacancies can be uploaded to the PIRFO Job Board for interest observers to apply online.

Recommendation 10:

ROCW22

- I. noted the update and thanked SPC and FFA for creating a platform which observers can log in to look for job opportunities; and,
- II. Agreed for SPC and FFA to facilitate a user training session for NOPs

11.4 Training Recommended from the Observer Livelihood study – WP6

The Secretariat presented a working paper referring to the observer livelihood and safety study training recommendation. The Secretariat reiterates by stating that member members should look at identifying institutions or individuals who can deliver these recommended training and communicate back to FFA.

FFA further informed the members that Banks may provide financial literacy training, while the red cross and church groups may assist with mental health and conflict resolution training needs.

The Solomons noted that they had failed on their part to respond to the email, they will try to apply this year. SBOB asked if there were people in SPC or FFA to do this training. FFA responded that they did have some financial experts and SPC noted that they had a health division but whether these were appropriate or available was another issue.

Vanuatu had identified some areas where training was wanted, but they needed funding to hold it. FSM noted that they had identified their education institutions that could run courses on report writing, financial literacy and sea safety. But others had not identified where they could be done.

SPC (SF) asked if any of these topics were covered in PIRFO training. SPC (TP) responded that there were elements of maintaining health in 'working effectively and safely as an observer.

Recommendation 11:

ROCW22

- I. urged NOPs to expedite the request by the Secretariat to identify institutions that can deliver the recommended training and communicate back to the Secretariat; and,
- II. agreed for the Secretariat to explore training that can be delivered online and make necessary training arrangements.

DAY 3 - THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2022

Theme – COVID19

12 COVID19 related update – IP9

Dr Salanieta Saketa, Senior Epidemiologist from SPC's Public Health Division presented an update on the COVID19 situation. Dr Saketa highlighted the need to get vaccinated and get the booster. COVID19 continues to be in our community and evolve. Participants are strongly encouraged to use masks and follow hygiene and COVID safe protocols.

The Solomons thanked Dr Sala for the presentation and noted the presence of the virus across the Pacific and the effects it is having on placements. SBOB encourages all NOP Managers to get their vaccinations to enforce the vaccination and boosters across respective Observer programmes, moreover, we can't tell Observers to vaccinate when we have not been fully vaccinated.

SPC highlighted that full vaccination is considered as double vaccinated, however, some countries are requiring the third dose, and a fourth dose is now administered in Israel. SPC posed the question; how many doses are recommended? Dr Sala informed the meeting that

the third dose is more common at this time and continues to be recommended noting that evidence has shown that immunity wanes after the second dose. Dr Sala further informed the meeting that the vaccination and boosters are important for those over the age of 50 and those with underlying conditions to avoid serious hospitalisation. SBOB noted that their observers were starting to get boosters to enable placements to start when travel restrictions are lifted.

SPC also sought clarification on the most suitable test for Observers when disembarking, the PCR or RAT. Dr Sala noted that every country has a protocol and supplies are not limitless. The RAT is commonly available over the counter and suitable for those with symptoms however confirmation of symptoms is done via PCR.

WCPFC questioned the mixing of brands noting the booster can be different when compared to the original first and second doses received? Dr Sala informed participants that there is no problem in mixing brands. Many countries have used AstraZeneca as the first and second dose and this has been followed by Moderna for the booster.

ROCW22 noted the COVID 19 update and acknowledged Dr. Sala's time in providing these very important and informative updates

Theme - PIRFO Training

13 PIRFO Training 2021 and Online Training update – WP7

SPC updated participants on recent developments in PIRFO training. SPC highlighted training has developed on the FFA Moodle and the positive and negative experiences with online training. SPC encouraged the use of online training however noting that Observer training is competency-based and face-to-face training remains an important element particular for assessments.

FSM NORMA noted their interest in the Moodle platform and the challenges with delivering training online. Can SPC provide Moodle training for FSM to develop their online lesson plans. SPC noted that they are using the FFA Moodle, and development is in the early stages and FFA may assist with training. FFA noted FSM's request and supports the need for training both within the FFA Secretariat and among Members.

WCPFC questioned the sign off certification and the assessment process.

PNG gave their thanks for the presentations, but had a quick query on the certificates after training, who or how do facilitators sign off. Certificates can be signed off during face-to-face training once travel is allowed.

FSM expressed an interest in using the Moodle platform as they see opportunities to provide diverse training opportunities. They asked if SPC had looked at the time required for the training in the number of days? FSM national trainers were finding using Moodle a challenge

and FSM would like to look at creating their lesson plans, especially for remotely based observers. SPC agreed this was an aspect that the time required had not been assessed as they were still building the course with FFA's assistance.

While SPC has a Moodle account the observer training material was on FFA's Moodle platform. The plan was for trainees to use the online material and then to complete training with face-to-face training and assessments.

FFA noted that while Moodle was free, their Moodle host provided support, e-Creators, who cost \$7500 per year for this service. FFA agreed that face to face training was still needed and Moodle like Zoom resulted in fatigue. Students needed a guide of the amount of time per week to study.

FSM noted that another problem they had was an inconsistent internet connection.

RMI thanked Sifa for the presentations and Allison for explanations. Sifa, just to ask how do we get arrangements for assistance trainers to come online/zoom if face-to-face is not possible? Sifa responded that it can be arranged through online Zoom training.

RMI noted they only have one certified trainer and one trainee-trainer. RMI questions how can the trainee-trainer be certified as a trainer considering his efforts to date including his attachments. RMI stressed the need to certify trainers considering the time that has passed since this was first raised. SPC thanked for raising this issue and noted that the Chair of the CMC, Tim Park, has been provided with all the necessary documentation to consider certification.

WCPFC agreed the Moodle platform is a very good way to train observers and others based on course interest. WCPFC supports the work of FFA and hopes to see all programmes utilize online training for capacity-building needs. WCPFC highlighted that face-to-face sessions (1 to 2 weeks) done by zoom are a challenge to assessors to get all the assessing criteria from participants. FFA agreed with the value Moodle is to train and will investigate the potential to open the FFA Moodle to all Members as course creators, tutors and teachers.

Recommendation 12:

ROCW22 agreed:

- I. For SPC/FFA to Investigate the potential to open the FFA Moodle for all members as course creators, tutors, and trainers and to source suitable training.

14 Units of Competency in the PIRFO Training Framework – IP10

FFA Training Adviser presented IP.10, on the recent review of the PIRFO Training Framework. The purpose of the review was to identify duplicated units, update unit templates to current the format and recommend new Units of Competency and potential qualifications for a broader fisheries management and development training package.

SPC (TP) suggested this was a key part of a greater needs analysis for programmes as they transition back into operations. FFA agreed and clarified that the TNA recommended in the presentation was focused on assessing the job roles of the Observer and ensuring the Units of Competency align correctly with these roles.

SPC (SF) acknowledged the volume of work by Ms Cooper and recommended this be provided to PIRFO Trainers in advance of a Trainers Workshop. This view was supported by FFA (PL), who will endeavour to identify suitable dates for such an event.

WS and SB support the review of the PIRFO framework. WS noted that the breaking down of units will indeed make it better in terms of identifying the skills set and also make it more flexible. This would also benefit others that will not be observers and open this up to fisheries officers/ enforcement officers that might want to do species ID only as an example.

MHOB supported the recommendations and offered assistance in the revision process.

Recommendation 13:

ROCW22

- I. Agreed FFA, SPC and PIRFO Trainers to review the PIRFO Training Framework and the recommendations presented by Maxene Cooper and report back to the Members; and
- II. Agreed for SPC/FFA to identify a suitable date for the review

Theme – SPC's Special projects & updates

15 Biological sampling – IP11

SPC presented IP.11, an update on a biological sampling of tuna and bycatch species during 2021 and the plan for 2022. SPC also encouraged Members to continue sampling in port and at sea wherever possible and highlighted that new demonstration videos will become available.

The Solomons noted that returning Observers to longline activities has been difficult and they acknowledge they have not been doing port sampling. However, it has been raised at a higher level to return to this work.

FSM NORMA questioned how the samples, currently held in various Offices, may be shipped to New Caledonia. SPC recognised the difficulties in freight and noted freight issues that led to the large-scale sampling efforts by PGOB and SBOB. SPC requested Members to explore sea freight options and to communicate with their office to discuss other options.

FJ informed members of the sampling ongoing in-country and thanked SPC for the OLLO training and noted FJ has commenced with the bio-sampling and communications will be

made with results. FJ also raised a request for training on the use of drills and cutters to extract otoliths.

Recommendation 14:

ROCW22 noted the presentation with some members wanting to involve in the biological sampling to provide an alternative income for their observers waiting for redeployment

~~16 Biodegradable FADs – IP12~~

[This agenda item cancelled]

17 Observer Data Management Update – IP13

SPC provided an update on the status of data and work on Observer reporting tools. SPC highlighted the decrease of data due to the suspension of observer placements. Improvements to OLLO and TUFMAN2 were also shared with the meeting.

FSM NORMA questioned if OLLO was used for both frozen and fresh LL trips. SPC confirmed that the OLLO App is a way to replace paper forms and is suitable for both trip types. The trial of OLLO was conducted in NC on short trips (10 to 15 days) but frozen or fresh is not confirmed. FSM noted a majority of their trips are 60 to 70 days on frozen longline trips and they would be willing to participate in a trial to assess the App's performance with the volume of data they gather.

SPC highlighted the speed of the App slows as the volume of data increases. SPC recognised the volume of data the App may affect the performance of the tablet and further trials are required. Furthermore, the battery performance and the resilience of the tablet to handle, and the wear and tear on the equipment in the ocean environment are not fully known. SPC agreed further trials need to be done to consider these longer trips.

SPC further noted that both OLLO and hard copies of observer forms be used if longer trips on frozen longliners are to be carried out, though this requires observers to double enter the data.

FSM NORMA also raised the option to use the InReach two-way communication devices to send data during the trip. SPC noted a lack of communication between the InReach device and the tablet however the suggested was noted and something that may be investigated.

FFA highlighted that FFC agreed to adopt ER by 2022 and it is encouraging to see members using OLLO and iFims. FFA urged Members to utilise these ER tools and to reach out to FFA, SPC or PNAO for any assistance needed to meet this 2022 ER target.

ROCW22 noted the presentation and acknowledged SPC for the effort in providing annual data management updates

18 New sampling approaches on purse seiners – IP14

[This agenda item cancelled]

Day 4 – Friday 4 March 2022

19 Any Other Business (AOB)

19.1 Human Rights at Sea – Observer Survey – IP15

Dr Bianca Haas from the University of Wollongong (UOW) presented her human rights at sea Observer survey. The purpose of the survey is to better understand pre-departure experiences (such as aspects of your contract and/or employment arrangements), onboard experiences while performing your job responsibilities, and post-trip experiences (such as reporting incidents of abuse and harassment), due to the ongoing risks for fisheries observers on board of vessels. Observers are encouraged to take the survey. The survey is 30 minutes long and responders are anonymous.

SPC (TP) questioned how the information will be used. Dr. Haas confirmed a paper will be presented to FFA and WCPFC to highlight issues to improve the conditions of Observer. Dr Haas informed participants they are seeking information from all Observers regardless of the vessel type they are on.

FSM NORMA supported the Observer survey however noted that many Observers do not have internet access and may use the survey to complain about a lack of ability to engage. FSM again reiterated their support and emphasised the requirement that responses be anonymous, and the results made publicly available. Dr Haas noted the concerns and assured the meeting that the survey will be anonymous, and steps have been taken into consideration in respect of responses that may identify a respondent due to the unique nature of their location.

Solomon Islands highlighted a concern for the potential for the survey to be used as a platform for complaints and therefore negatively impacting the industry. SBOB strongly encouraged the survey results to be considered for this impact before releasing the data. Dr Haas recognised Solomon's and FSM's concerns and offered to send the questionnaire in advance to consider any potential issues.

WCPFC informed the meeting of a request for DCC to look at a suite of fields for observers to collect on Crew conditions.

Dr Haas thanked participants for their time and encouraged Members to make contact with any further questions or to receive the survey questions beforehand. Email: bhaas@uow.edu.au

Recommendation 15:

ROCW22

Agreed to participate in the survey provided the information was confidential.

19.2 Revisiting Outstanding Items**19.2.1 Observer Deployment (supplementary discussion)**

FFA (AT) revisited the discussion on Observer redeployment seeking the meeting's views on the upcoming date to potentially commence redeployment or continue the suspension of Observers on vessels. There is a desire to return Observers to see however national administrations are required to consider the safety aspect of redeployment.

SPC sought clarification on the prohibition of transshipment of purse seine vessels at sea. FFA informed the meeting that some of the Ports are closed and generally transshipment of purse seiners at sea is not permitted. It was recognised that several administrations were continuing to permit transshipment in Port therefore there are discussions to progress to lift the suspension on 15 March and permit transshipment in Port.

SBOB agreed most countries have not been utilising the suspension of purse seine transshipment in Port and further agreed that if the suspension is lifted it will return the vessels to Port and also enable Observer redeployment plans. SBOB supported the lifting of the suspension on the prohibition on purse seine transshipment at sea.

WCPFC ROP thanked FFA for raising these issues noting that each of the three suspensions must be considered separately. WCPFC ROP agreed lifting the suspension of the prohibition on purse seine transshipment at sea will allow for Observers to board and improve Port Sampling. The suspension on longline at-sea transshipment monitoring is also something to consider lifting as this will enable the return of Observer transshipment placements.

Regarding the Purse, Seine coverage Members are informed that Observers may be placed on vessels if safe to do so but this is a decision to be made at the national level.

SPC sought clarification on the at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels noting this is a regional agreement however it is a national decision. FFA agreed many Administrations continue to accept transshipment of PS in Port, the suspension does allow for the Port State to designate an area in the event a PS cannot go into Port however again this is not fully utilised therefore there is interest in lifting this suspension.

PNAO highlighted their primary concern is the lifting of the suspension of Observer purse seine coverage. PNAO inquired into the variation of wording in the decision to read that national administration are permitted to place Observers on vessels if they feel safe to do so. The purpose of this is to prompt a phased approach. This was supported by SPC (SF).

FFA clarified the texts coming from the Tropical Tuna Measure which is a binding measure and in various meetings Members are informed regularly that Observers may be placed on vessels if they feel it is safe to do so and agreed to note PNAO's and SPC's comments.

WCPFC MCS thanked meeting participants for their engagement and encouraged FFA and PNAO to draft a paper on these decisions which emphasises the concerns of redeployment. WCPFC noted that this decision is being worked through carefully and a paper urging a change to this decision is strongly encouraged. It is further recommended that any paper developed is shared as early as possible to fully inform the Chair and secure national support.

SBOB queried the ability to modify the wording of the text to reflect a more phased approach as described by the PNAO. WCPFC responded noting that the circulars invite written comments, and this is an avenue to submit modifications to decisions it is encouraged that Administrations reach out to the Chair to discuss further.

SPC (TP) acknowledged the short time frame and the next meeting of the MCS Working Group. SPC recommended that further discussion be held with FFA to formulate a response to this issue before the March 15 deadline.

FFA thanked the meeting participants for their views on the presented suspension of Observer placement and further dialogue will be held with SPC and Members to develop a position paper for the Commission.

19.3 Recognition of Vanuatu Maritime College Certificates

The meeting recalled the issue raised whereby Fiji Maritime Academy would not recognise the certification of Observers trained at the Vanuatu Maritime College (VMC).

In response, VMC replied via email informing the meeting that Vanuatu is on the IMO Whitelist and on the IMO Governing Council, the first Pacific Island nation to achieve that status. VMC trains to the latest STCW standards and passed IMO audits in 2013 and 2018, with no faults raised as to the standard and content of the courses. The next audit is due in 2023.

VMC further conveyed there is a Regional MOU whereby all Pacific Island Countries and Territories recognize each other's Certificates. This has been handled by SPC in Suva.

SBOB thanked SPC for seeking clarification on this issue and asked the Secretariat to discuss with the maritime colleges their current training standards and communicate the MOU.

Recommendation 16:

ROCW22

Agreed that the status of Maritime colleges to provide observer sea safety training would be verified with SPC's Maritime division.

Theme – Clearing Records & Closing

20 Next Meeting/Clearing Records/Close of Meeting

20.1 Next Meeting

The meeting tentatively agreed to have the next meeting in Australia in the first week of March 2023, with a venue yet to be confirmed. The rationale to have it in Australia is for Members to also participate at the International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference in Hobart, Tasmania just after ROCW23.

Recommendation 17:

ROCW22 tentatively agreed that the next meeting is to be held in Australia in the second week of February 2023.

20.2 Clearing of records

The Secretariat facilitated the clearing of meeting records focusing on the recommendations. The Draft record will be circulated to participants for comments before a clean record will be circulated to members before MCSWG25

20.3 Closing

The FFA Observer Programme Manager closed the meeting with a few remarks on behalf of the Director-General.

Annexe 1 – indicative Agenda

22nd REGIONAL OBSERVER COORDINATORS WORKSHOP

(1000 - 1500 Hrs, Solomon Island Time)

REVISED - INDICATIVE AGENDA

ITEM #	AGENDA	LEAD	TIMES (SBT)	PAPER
DAY 1 - TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2022				
1	Opening of Meeting	DG/DFO	1000-1010	
2	Conduct and Meeting Approach	Chair	1010-1020	
3	Apologies & Adoption of Agenda	Chair	1020-1030	
Theme - Updates				
4	Programme updates	NOPs	1030-1200	
BREAK – 1 HOUR				
5	MCSWG24 Outcome	Phil	1300-1320	ROCW22/IP.1
6	DCC outcome	Tim	1320-1340	ROCW22/IP.2
7	New CMMs and Other relevant observer issues from WCPFC.	Karl	1340-1400	ROCW22/IP.3

8	POAM9 outcome	POAM9 Chair	1400-1420	ROCW22/IP.4
<i>Theme – Impact of Observer Coverage Suspension</i>				
9	Impact of the Continuous Suspension of Observer Coverage	Phil	1420-1500	ROCW22/DP.1
DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2022				
<i>Theme – Improving Observer Safety</i>				
10	Observer Safety			
10.1	Sea Safety Certificate Revalidation Course	Jude	1015-1030	ROCW22/WP.1
10.2	Portable Tracking Devices	Jude	1030-1045	ROCW22/IP.5
10.3	COVID19 PPEs	Jude	1045-1100	ROCW22/WP.2
10.4	Onboard Surveillance Cameras update	Phil	1100-1115	ROCW22/WP.3
10.5	Regional Asset Tracking Hub update	Phil	1115-1130	ROCW22.WP.4
10.6	Observer Insurance update	Phil	1130-1145	ROCW22/IP.6
10.7	Safety of Observers Transferring to the LL Vessels at Sea	Phil	1145-1200	ROCW22/IP.7

BREAK – 1 HOUR***Theme – Observer Livelihood Study Recommendations update***

11	Observer Livelihood			
11.1	Observer Redeployment Approach	Phil	1300-1330	ROCW22/DP.2
11.2	Temporary on-shore jobs for observers	Phil	1330-1345	ROCW22/WP.5
11.3	PIRFO Job Board update	Colley	1345-1415	ROCW22/IP.8
11.4	Training Recommended from the Observer Livelihood Study	Phil	1415-1500	ROCW22/WP.6

DAY 3 - THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2022***Theme – COVID-19***

12	COVID19 related update	Dr.. Sala	1000-1030	ROCW22/IP.9
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Theme – PIRFO Training

13	PIRFO Training 2021 and Online Training update	Sifa	1030-1130	ROCW22/WP.7
14	Units of Competency in the PIRFO Training Framework	Allison	1130-1200	ROCW22/IP.10

BREAK – 1 HOUR***Theme – Special Projects & updates***

15	Biological Sampling	Francois	1300-1330	ROCW22'/IP.11
16	Biodegradable FADs	SPC	1330-1400	ROCW22/IP.12
17	Observer Data Management Update	Aurelian	1400-1430	ROCW22/IP13
18	New Sampling Approaches on Purse Seiners	SPC	1430-1500	ROCW22/IP14

DAY 4 - FRIDAY 4 MARCH 2022***Theme - Any Other Business***

19	Any Other Business			
19.1	Human Rights at Sea – Observer Survey	UOW	1000-1030	ROCW22/IP.15
19.2	Revisiting outstanding items	all	1030-1200	

BREAK – 1 HOUR***Theme – Clearing Records & Closing***

20	Clearing of Meeting Records & Closing			
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20.1	Next Meeting		1300-1310	
20.2	Clearing of Records	Secretariat	1310-1410	
20.3	Closing	FFA	1410	

Annex 2 - Provisional Agenda

22nd REGIONAL OBSERVER COORDINATORS WORKSHOP

1 – 4 March 2022

REVISED - PROVISIONAL AGENDA ITEM

DAY 1 - TUESDAY 1 MARCH 2022

- 1 Opening of Meeting
- 2 Conduct and Meeting Approach
- 3 Apologies & Adoption of Agenda

Theme – General Updates

- 4 Programme Update
- 5 MCSWG24 Outcome – IP1

DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2022

- 6 DCC outcome – IP2
- 7 New CMMs and Other Relevant Observer Issues from WCPFC – IP3
- 8 POAM9 outcome – IP4
- 9 Impact of the Continuous Suspension of Observer Coverage– DP1

Theme – Observer Safety Study Recommendation Update

- 10 Observer Safety Recommendation
 - 10.1 Sea Safety Certificate Revalidation Course – WP1
 - 10.2 Portable Tracking Devices – IP5
 - 10.3 COVID19 PPEs – WP2
 - 10.4 Onboard Surveillance Cameras update – WP3
 - 10.5 Regional Asset Tracking Hub update – WP4
 - 10.6 Observer Insurance update – IP6

10.7 Safety of Observers Transferring to the LL Vessels at Sea – IP7

Theme – Observer Livelihood Study Recommendation Update

11 Observer livelihood recommendations

11.1 Observer Redeployment Approach – DP2

11.2 Temporary on-shore jobs for observers – WP5

11.3 PIRFO Job Board update – IP8

11.4 Training Recommended from the Observer Livelihood study – WP6

DAY 3 - THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2022

THEME – COVID19

12 COVID19 related update – IP9

Theme - PIRFO Training

13 PIRFO Training 2021 and Online Training update – WP7

14. Units of Competency in the PIRFO Training Framework – IP10

Theme – SPC's Special projects & updates

15 Biological sampling – IP11

16 Biodegradable FADs – IP12

17 Observer Data Management Update – IP13

18 New sampling approaches on purse seiners – IP14

Day 4 – Friday 4 March 2022

19 AOB

19.1 Human Rights at Sea – Observer Survey – IP15

19.2 Revisiting Outstanding Items

Theme – Clearing Records & Closing

20 Next Meeting/Clearing Records/Close of Meeting

20.1 Next Meeting

20.2 Clearing of records

20.3 Closing

Annex 3 - List of Documents

22nd REGIONAL OBSERVER COORDINATORS WORKSHOP

(VIRTUAL MEETING)

1 – 4 March 2022

LIST OF MEETING DOCUMENTS

21 INFORMATION PAPERS

PAPER NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	TITLE
ROCW22/IP.1	5	MCSWG24 Outcome
ROCW22/IP.2	6	Data Collection Committee Outcome
ROCW22/IP.3	7	New CMMs and Other Relevant Observer Issues from WCPFC
ROCW22/IP.4	8	POAM9 outcome
ROCW22/IP.5	10.2	Portable Tracking Device
ROCW22/IP.6	10.6	Observer Insurance Update
ROCW22/IP.7	10.7	Safety of Observer Transferring to LL Vessel at Sea
ROCW22/IP.8	11.3	PIRFO Job Board Update
ROCW22/IP.9	12	COVID19 Update
ROCW22/IP.10	14	Units of Competency in PIRFO Training Framework
ROCW22/IP.11	15	Biological Sampling

ROCW22/IP.12	16	Biodegradable FADs
ROCW22/IP.13	17	Observer Data Management Update
ROCW22/IP.14	18	New Sampling Approaches on Purse Seiners
ROCW22/IP.15	19.1	Human Rights at Sea – Observer Survey

22 Working Papers

PAPER NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	TITLE
ROCW22/WP.1	10.1	Sea Safety Certificate Revalidation Course
ROCW22/WP.2	10.3	COVID19 PPEs
ROCW22/WP.3	10.4	Onboard Surveillance Cameras update
ROCW22/WP.4	10.5	Regional Asset Tracking Hub update
ROCW22/WP.5	11.2	Temporary On-Shore Jobs for Observers
ROCW22/WP.6	11.4	Training Recommended from the Observer Livelihood study
ROCW22/WP.7	13	PIRFO Training 2021 and Online Training update

23 Discussion Papers

PAPER NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	TITLE
ROCW22/DP.1	9	Impact of the Continuous Suspension of Observer Coverage

ROCW22/DP.2	11.1	Observer Redeployment Approach
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Annex 4 - Participant List

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OBSERVER REDEPLOYMENT PLAN

PURPOSE

The purpose of the observer redeployment plan is to ensure observers can be safely redeployed on fishing vessels to undertake observer work and safely repatriated back to their homeport after a fishing trip without contracting or spreading COVID-19.

The observer redeployment plan is a guideline that provides minimum requirements to assist Members' considering the safe redeployment of observers on fishing vessels and covers the three phases of observer placement - pre-deployment, during deployment, and post-deployment. FFA members have agreed on these minimum requirements.^[2]

OBJECTIVES

The observer redeployment plan is guided by three main objectives:

1. To keep observers safe;
2. To prevent the risk of observers contracting COVID-19; and,
3. To prevent transmission of COVID-19 from observers into Pacific communities.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR OBSERVER REDEPLOYMENT

The minimum requirements outlined below in this Plan are consistent with the FFA Regional COVID-19 Safety Protocol for the Fishing Sector in the Pacific.

Pre-deployment

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Observer awareness of the FFA COVID19 Protocols <i>(Sourcing and training on PPEs and COVID-19 Testing and Vaccination Pre-deployment)</i>
COVID risk analysis on Vessels before redeployment <i>(Conduct background checks, COVID-19 risk analysis on Vessels using the tools provided in Annex 1 page 15 of Protocols)</i>

Implementation of the FFA COVID-19 Protocols

(Maintain Good personal hygiene, Practice physical distancing on board vessel, Maintaining, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces on the vessel, Regular health checks, Monitoring vessel contact) or equivalent and/or stringent protocols on fishing vessels by all personnel involved in fishing operations)

Issue observers with appropriate PPEs and training on how to use them

Medical certificate from observers to ensure they are certified as medically fit for observer work

(Need assurance of no underlying conditions that might make them particularly vulnerable to Covid-19 if infected)

Observer to undergo refresher training before redeployment

Observer vaccination and evidence of vaccination

Observers to undergo sea safety re-certification training before redeployment

Vessels to pick up observers at home port, unless otherwise agreed with the Observer Provider

Fishing vessel crew vaccination and evidence of vaccination

During Deployment

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Implementation of the FFA COVID-19 Protocols

(Maintain Good personal hygiene, Practice physical distancing on board vessel, Maintaining, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces on the vessel, Regular health checks, Monitoring vessel contact) or equivalent and/or stringent protocols on fishing vessels by all personnel involved in fishing operations

Require vessels to report on aspects of the FFA COVID-19 Protocols such as crew change at sea, submission of daily crew and observer temperature records, and records of interactions with other vessels at sea

Vessel to implement national, regional, or own COVID-19 protocols

Mandatory Observer weekly reporting on welfare and wellbeing

Vessels to disembark observers at home port, unless otherwise agreed with the Observer Provider

Post - Deployment

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Implementation of the FFA COVID-19 Protocols or equivalent and/or stringent protocols on fishing vessels by all personnel involved in fishing operations when disembarking the vessel

An observer taking COVID-19 test on disembarking the vessel

Quarantine Cost for observers

REVIEW

The minimum requirements contained in this Plan will be continually updated based on Member's feedback and the evolving COVID-19 environment in the Pacific and globally.

FSM COUNTRY STATEMENT

“Distinguish Coordinators, Secretariat, Colleagues, Ladies & Gentlemen. A warm Kaselehlle from the garden island of the FSM. I am very pleased to deliver a brief statement on behalf of the FSM. Without any further ado....”

As you all know, we all are going through a difficult time together, and all thanks to COVID-19.

As FSM continues to navigate its way through this challenging time, we had a pool of active observers from 50 in 2020 to 45 in 2021. However, a more significant impact occurred at the beginning of this year 2022 when our current active pool is now 41 as some left the FSM Observer Program for better opportunities in our state government and the United States. Despite the significant impact on our Observers Pool, we are fortunate that our number of debriefers, debriefers assessors, and trainers are the same. Moreover, I am also pleased to report that all FSM Observers are fully vaccinated.

Perhaps it is also worth noting that throughout the year 2021, our FSM Observer Program had no choice but to adjust its priorities and work. This includes assigning work to Observers with a rotation schedule to ensure an equal opportunity is shared across the FSM Observer Pool. In addition to 2021, Observers generic training is continued to be provided either at our level or collaboration with the POA MRAG, FFA, SPC, FIMs, SatLink, & DOS.

As for EM, we completed the first National EM training for observers. Training includes EM data analysis collected from longline fishing vessels and has eventually enabled observers to participate in EM data analysis while onshore. FSM also wishes to extend its appreciation to Fiji to share its EM experiences with FSM and openness on gaps or concerns that could be addressed either at the national or regional level.

And as for ER, a total of 18 individuals train on ER through an online platform set up by PNG MRAG and further has increased ER certified observers to a total of 32 ER certified observers.

We see the need to maintain Observer’s services for future observer placement should the extension WCPFC suspension related to observer placement be lifted. Therefore, FSM Observers have refreshed again in 2021 with valid certifications. However, at the margin of this workshop, ROCW22, we are also keen to share our interest again to request and seek support for training and workshop particulars to Observers to be avail and facilitated either at the national or regional level.

With the extension of WCPFC suspension on Purse Seine Observer Coverage & At-Sea Transshipment Observers again to March 15, 2022, our Observer Program will continue to do all it can to provide any means of support to retain our FSM Observers while ensuring all activities adhere to FSM National and its respective state public health emergency declaration.

Thank you, Secretariat for the preparation for this ROCW this year.

We look forward to fruitful discussion through this workshop and we like to ask if the Secretariat can provide other papers that are yet to be submitted online so all members can be effective in delivering their feedback.

To conclude my brief Statement, on behalf of the FSM, let's continue to work together and navigate together through this difficult time. Thank you!

KIRIBATI COUNTRY STATEMENT

Good morning, Chair, Secretariat, and All,

Just a brief update on where we are with our national observer programme.

Overall, we have a total of 169 observers who remain active and still engage with the Ministry. Currently, there are 24 based on Christmas and 145 here with us in Tarawa. On the status of vaccination, so far, we have 58 observers completing their first doses only, and 87 have completed both doses.

On the support to all observers, all observers are eligible to access the support fund for the unemployed which they received monthly and engaged with the Ministry in various works like patrolling the port's transshipment area 24/7. They are also engaged with Coastal Fisheries MCS Team daily to enforce fisheries laws nationally both in Christmas Island and here in Tarawa. On the training side, various observer training was conducted by our trainer and trainee trainers. These are mainly on refresher training on PS and LL forms, Debriefing Part A, B, and C, SSIs, FADs, Safety Equipment and E-Reporting.

Those are some updates from Kiribati.

Thanks, Chair.

MARSHALL ISLANDS COUNTRY STATEMENT



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

MARSHALL ISLANDS MARINE RESOURCES AUTHORITY
PO BOX 860 MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS 96960

RMI OBSERVER PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT
SUMMARY-2022

Colleagues,

Greetings from the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The following is the summary of our current standing as a member of the Pacific Island Fisheries Observer (PIRFO) family. This summary will also show our efforts in the previous year and status up to date.

Head count

The program has a total of 42 active observers. We lost three observers in the previous year. Two found employment elsewhere and one migrated to find other opportunities in the US. We have 6 certified debriers of which 2 are debriefer assessors. We also have 7 debriefer trainees. The standard ratio for debriefer/observers will dramatically improve once we certify these 7 debriefer trainees. 33 of our observers are fully vaccinated with 4 having taken the booster shot. 9 still need to take the first shots.

Trainings

The program conducted training in the previous year. We held a couple of ***Refresher Trainings*** to address the changes to the workbook. These trainings were used to address the changes on both Longline and Purse Seiner. We also conducted two training sessions for ***Sea Safety(STCW 2010)***. Thirty-three of our observers have renewed their ***STCW*** certificates. We also sent our observers to have refresher training on the iFims App. We still have 9 observers that will need to attend the STCW revalidation training later this year.

2021 efforts

The program assigned 24 longline trips during the previous year. Only 22 longline trips were completed (1 incomplete trip/ 1 missed trip). Longline deployment commenced on September 15, 2021. The last trip ended on January 2, 2022. We also carried out 15 port monitoring but these are limited to the docks. No transshipment between purse seiners and carriers was carried out due to the pandemic restrictions.

Challenges

Like every program in the region, the RMI Observer Program is facing deployment issues with border closures due to the Pandemic. We have deployed observers on longline vessels to give our observers opportunities to earn a living but due to a late start it was not enough to give everyone a fair share. The assistance from the US that sustained our observers has ceased. We also face the challenges of conducting training(PIRFO-Basic Observer Training). Our goal is to have at least 100 observers but things have been stalled due to the pandemic.

Solutions

MIMRA is in the process of working with the RMI Government to formulate a safe plan to have our observers back onboard purse seiners. Details of the plans and SOP for this work is not readily available since this is still in the early stages. Longline deployment will resume once we have a Memorandum of Understanding with the longline fleet operator. With these two developments we are hoping that we may deploy our observers on longline and purse seiners by the late March.

Conclusion

Our hope is that we can have our people on vessels before the end of the first quarter of this year. We are looking forward to that time that all borders will be opened so we can go back to our normal operations. It has been a little over two years since the pandemic hit and our people are anxiously awaiting the end to all of this.

PALAU COUNTRY STATEMENT

Hello and alii everyone, I hope everyone is doing well. My name is Everson Sengebau and I'm in transition to be the head of Palau's national observer program.

A brief history of Palau's national observer program until today; in 2018, Palau's observer program became stagnant due to observers retiring and transferring to other offices. Although efforts have been made to improve Palau's observer program, our office has been short-staffed. Additionally, with the full implementation of Palau's National Marine Sanctuary, there have been lower fishing activities within Palau's EEZ. This is partially the reason why the observer program has remained as it is throughout the previous years.

Our office of the Division of Oceanic Management has been going through restructuring and reclassification of current positions. Thus, the hiring of new observers remains on hold until our office is officially organized. Through this, Palau will be seeking help in the many observer's programs and training.

I'm glad to say that more than 95% of Palau's population is fully vaccinated. There are very strict COVID19 protocols in place, so the hiring of new fully-vaccinated observers is more likely to occur in the coming years. Until then, I'm the only certified observer in our office. Our office acknowledges the importance of the observer program, and we anticipate the growth of our nation's observers' program with improving fisheries.

Thank you!

SAMOA COUNTRY STATEMENT

Talofa Philip,
As requested, Samoa's update for ROCW

Program Update - WS

Thank you madame chair and a good morning and afternoon to all.

Small update from Samoa. There are 4 fully accredited Fisheries Observers which consists of 2 males and 2 females, from these 4, there is also 1 trainee debriefer and 1 trainee trainer. 5 trainee observers took the online training course in 2020 and we are waiting for the online component to carry on this activity and complete their PIRFO accreditation.

No trips were carried out in Samoa's program last year as there was a shift in focus to transshipment monitoring of foreign fishing vessels since COVID began. Our observers are also doing various other monitoring activities such as market landings and even going out to sea for our fad productivity studies and fad deployment. We are fortunate that our fisheries observers are also, at this moment, also staff at the fisheries department.

It is also important to note that all fisheries observers and trainee observers are fully vaccinated which is a requirement for doing work, in particular when monitoring transshipment activity. To conclude, Samoa would like to thank FFA and SPC for the immense support given to this program during COVID times in the form of various training, covid safety equipment support, and in general advice to this small program. Samoa looks forward to working with everyone during these COVID times.

Thank you, madam chair.

Blessed day,

SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY STATEMENT

2021 updates

Since COVID 19 started in 2020, we have not been in contact with many of our Observers. They have gone back to their islands and villages but many are still able to hang around in Honiara and Noro.

Observers

From the initial count of 86 Observers, we have gone down to around 50 active Observers and to date only around 30. We used 34 Observers last year in purse seine and pole and line trips out of our Noro domestic fleets. As of 2022, we have 16 Observers, 11 Debriefers, and 3 assessors

Trips

25 were pole and line trips (approximately 25% of total trips) while 73 were purse seine trips. From the 73 purse seine trips, 39 trips were ER trips (53% of PS trips and approximately 75 % of total trips), which was an improvement from previous years in terms of ER.

Onshore engagements

4 –ePort, 11 in port monitoring duties (Noro and Honiara), 5 Observers as EM analysts since 2021

Vaccination

All active Observers/Debriefers/Assessors are fully vaccinated. Free of charge since SIG's Health Ministry is targeting all Public Servants including Observers.

PPE's

Received assistance from FFA/SPC/POA on basic PPEs in 2021

Training

Debriefing Part A in February 2021 (Regional)

General Refresher Training in March 2021

PNA MSC Refresher Training for 30 Observers

Only 20 Observers currently with valid sea certificates. Negotiations are still ongoing for the rest.

Issues

Observer office only to be entered after the test result is negative. Most have done tests or swabs to know their status. A few have got Booster doses already-could not get the exact number as those who did so did not report to SBOB.

Inactive Observers are now engaged in the Seasonal scheme in NZ and AU. Some are working on passenger vessels, others as security guards and taxi drivers, most as market vendors.

We need our Observers to contact us to know their status.

TOKELAU COUNTRY STATEMENT

Not an active program and will look at training our observer when the borders open the door.

**Zoom Online Meeting, 28th February 2022
Meeting Recommendations**

Recommendation 1

Recognising that:

- Parties are at different levels of preparedness to resume observer placements;
- Sourcing of observers from national programs other than the Home Party of the vessel is not practically possible in the current environment of COVID-19 related travel restrictions;
- Recommencing some level of observer placement would have considerable benefits for scientific data collection, compliance monitoring, and observer livelihoods;

Coordinators recommended that those Parties ready to resume placements should consider placing PNA observers (including Home Party nationals) on Home Party vessels from March 15th, as a short-term measure under relevant national SOPs and COVID-19 Protocols.

Coordinators recognised that this measure would be a short-term measure until either (a) observers from other national programs become available or (b) the temporary suspension of the WCPFC ROP requirements is lifted.

Recommendation 2

The compliance notification process should be incorporated into an automated system through FIMS, under the supervision of the PNAO Compliance Officer.

Recommendation 3

A pilot project should be instigated by POA to investigate and develop observer fixed communication devices onboard vessels, with the aim of replacing InReach devices.

Recommendation 4

POA should work on a research project that investigates the potential advantages and disadvantages of a phased introduction of MOB devices to replace the current PLBs, which will expire in 2026.

Recommendation 5

Coordinators request that PNA Officials endorse the Observer Accommodation Standard for FSMA vessels and that on the recommencement of observer placements, the CEO write to vessel operators outlining the minimum standards.

Recommendation 6

PNA officials were invited to endorse and adopt the "POA Debriefing Guidelines for Completing the Debriefing Summary Report" as prepared by the POA Coordinator Working Group.

Recommendation 7

In the event that the current temporary suspension of WCPFC ROP requirements is rolled over, PNA Observer Coordinators should meet at least 6 weeks prior to the suspension period end date, to review current circumstances and provide advice to Parties on the operational preparedness of programs individually and collectively to resume placements.

ANNEX 8 - COVID – 19 RELATED SURVEY QUESTIONS CONDUCTED BY NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

	Survey Questions	CK	FJ	FM	KI	MH	NR	PW	PG	WS	SB	TK	TO	TV	VU
1	Did your NOP incorporate the FFA COVID19 protocol for your national observer deployment safety measures?	Domestic NOP redeployment safety measures	YES, its contents exist within our national COVID 19 protocol	Not yet.	Yes, but observer redeployment has not been confirmed	<i>We are drafting our deployment SOP to be used We will integrate part of the SOPs that were sent to us by both FFA and POA.</i>	No, as Observer Deployment is still closed.	Not Active Program	<i>NO, using NFA National COVID-19 protocol</i>	Yes	YES	Not Active program	Not yet	Not yet	Yes
2	Do you need FFA's assistance to develop your national observer placement safety protocol? If so please contact FFA.	will get in contact	NO	Will contact FFA	Yes, to be shared with the Ministry of Health as an SOP to allow for the redeployment of observers	<i>Not yet will contact FFA</i>	Yes		<i>This is acknowledged. We will advise FFA should there be a need</i>	WS Observer Program will contact FFA eventually in the development of various protocols, policies, and SOPs	NO		Yes	Yes	No
3	Did any of you have been contacted by FFA Consultant to utilize any of your observers for the Fish Market Survey in-country, if so, how many observers and for how long?	No	NO	No	No	NO.	No		<i>5 fisheries observers based in Port Moresby had a Zoom conference with the consultant covering all major fishing ports within PNG</i>	No	10 Observers attended a zoom call by the consultant and that was the end of it.		No	Yes	No
4	Have you utilized your observers for any other on-shore activities while they are	port sampling and data entry	YES, in port sampling and other Ministry activities.	NO	Yes, patrol of the transshipment area in port and assist Coastal	<i>we had a program to give the observers ways to earn a living. We had to stop when they</i>	Yes, only four. Most Observers already have a second job.		<i>Yes, 15 plus observers were engaged with other sections within NFA for monitoring and surveillance</i>	Yes currently being utilized for transshipment monitoring, FAD	Yes 34 Observers/Debriefers were deployed on trips in 2021		Yes	Yes	Yes

	in port due to COVID? If so, many are being utilized by each activity?				Fisheries MCS.	<i>started receiving financial assistance from the Public Unemployment Assistance(PUA) program.</i>			<i>including watch keep purposes</i>	construction, port sampling, and market landings survey	4 Observers were engaged in Noro ePort Project (Nov 2021 to March 2022) 11 Observers were used in the monitoring of port unloading (8 in Noro, 3 in Honiara)				
5	Have you already started using the regional observer medical check-up form for your observers	once on our last observer placement will use to contract observers from other ROPs.	NO. Safety certificates is done by our Ministry of Health, Health Clinics/Center s. Observers on our fishing vessels going outside Fiji waters need clearance from MHMS	No, we have our own.	will use the regional medical check-up form upon resumption of placements.	<i>No. The program is using a form we received from our local college, identical to the FFA form.</i>	No, yet to have a reason or a planned deployment		<i>NO, we are using our own National seafarer's medical check-up form as approved by the National Maritime Safety Authority (NMSA)</i>	Utilizing the regional observer medical check-up form, we have started to design something similar in nature to do WS Observer Program own medical form	No, we used government forms only		No	No	Not yet
6	What medical facility did you identify at the national level to do a medical check for all your observers, please provide the name of the medical facility?	Cook Islands Ministry of Health doctors and Medical Services Foreign ports will be using recommended doctors	Ministry of Health and Medical Services	State hospitals and private clinics	Tungaru Central Hospital	<i>Lerooj Atma Zedkiah Memorial Hospital.</i>	Have not identified one yet, but it would be the Nauru General Hospital		<i>Maranatha Medical Centre is authorized by NMSA to carry out medical check-ups for all seafarers in PNG, and Others</i>	Samoa's National Hospital has been identified as the primary area of doing medical check-ups. However, the senior observer team is currently working on sourcing a private doctor (given	Ministry of Health and Medical Services		Health	Hospital	Hospital

										experience compared to new doctors at the national hospital)					
7	Did your national fishing licensing conditions make the issuance of PPEs for observers compulsory?	No But PPEs a requirement for the vessel safety checklist	Not in licence conditions but under SOPs of observer placement	NO	under the SOPs for placement of crew and observers.	<i>Our proposed protocols require that no observer will board a vessel without any PPE.</i>	No		NO	A review of the national fishing licensing conditions is set to be done soon and will incorporate these conditions. Currently, it is being provided by the National Office	Not in licence conditions but under current COVID 19 SOPs		Not yet	No	No
8	What are the minimum PPEs for COVID as required by your national requirements?	PFD, Face Mask, Gloves, Hand Sanitiser	Hand gloves, masks, and sanitizers (includes soap and water)	Facemask and hand sanitizers. gloves.	YTB Once redeployment of observers is allowed, the Ministry of Fisheries will work with the Ministry of Health on drafting a new SOP for observer placement.	<i>Coverall, Mask, Gloves, Overboots.</i>	Since Nauru is under a travel ban, these were never considered		<i>Program at this stage does not provide PPEs, hand sanitizers/masks/quarantine, etc are provided by companies</i>	sanitiser, gloves, safety glasses, and face masks	Face masks, hand sanitizers, and hand gloves		Hand sanitizers, Mask, Hand gloves	Mask, hand gloves, hand sanitizer	Hand Sanitizer, Face Mask, Face Shield, Hand Glove
9	If your programme made the vessel owner responsible to purchase the PPEs for your	No	No	No	No.	No	No		<i>PPEs like hand sanitizers/mask's/quarantine etc are provided by companies</i>	No, it is currently sourced by the Ministry and not provided by	This is not enforced but vessels themselves provide basic PPEs for all on board		No	No	No

	observers, if so, what are the basic PPEs?									the vessel operators.					
10	If you have not yet provided the quotation of the PPEs, please do so ASAP so FFA can purchase them for your observers.	OK	PPEs purchased by FFA	PPEs purchased by FFA	KIOB will write to FFA.	<i>We are looking for a vendor that can supply the needed PPEs.</i>	Not yet and will do accordingly		<i>We acknowledged this support from FFA and we will advise anytime on this matter</i>	PPEs purchased by FFA	PPEs Purchased by FFA		PPEs purchased by FFA	PPEs purchased by FFA	PPEs purchased by FFA
11	Please provide the name list of all your observer with INVALID sea safety certificates and or those will expire soon?	6 listed	25	All 45 active observers have invalid sea safety certificates. certificates issued without expiration date.	Not yet provided	<i>Not yet provided.</i>	Most if not all		<i>all observers attended National Fisheries College for their renewal of all their certificates in firefighting/Navigation/first aid/radio communication etc (SOLAS) and all are valid for the next five(5) years.</i>	<i>, At the moment, all Fisheries Observers do not have valid sea safety certificates but there is a training coming up soon in collaboration with the World Bank that will include. This fisheries observers</i>	10		0	9	0
12	Do you have any institution that can deliver Sea Safety training in-country, if so, please provide information to FFA?	No	YES. Fiji Maritime Academy - Fiji National University	FSM Maritime College - Yap	Marine Training Centre, Betio, Tarawa, Kiribati.	<i>The College of the Marshall Islands is conducting all Sea Safety Training.</i>	None, seeking FFA's assistance in this regard.		<i>The PNG National Fisheries College & PNG Maritime College</i>	The National University of Samoa, Maritime School	SINU Maritime		Yes	Yes	Yes

13	Did you identify an institution or service provider who can deliver asset management training? if so, please provide the information to FFA.	None	USP Pacific TAFE- Supply Chain	Not Yet.	KIOB will look into this.	<i>We are still working with our local College to see if they can cater to this sort of training.</i>	No		<i>We do have in the country but we have to explore and advise at a later date</i>	No institution has been identified yet,	No		Not yet	Not yet	Yes
14	Did you identify an institution or service provider who can deliver basic Psychology training? if so, please provide the information to FFA.	None in Country	We're thinking of Empower Pacific but have yet to reach out to them	Not yet.	KIOB will look into this.	<i>We will have to talk to our local college to see if they can provide this kind of training.</i>	No possibly the Nauru USP Campus		<i>Yes. Laloki psychiatric hospital and Dr. Ami Umba</i>	The Mental Health Unit of the Health Division has been identified, but more will be provided after consultations with them	No		Not yet	Not yet	Yes
15	Those without any marine schools in the country, do you have any entity that still delivers sea safety training, if so, please provide information to FFA.	None in Country	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No, USP can facilitate but a qualified trainer is not available on Island		N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A
16	Did you identify an institution or service provider who can deliver Financial Literacy training? if so, please provide	None in Country	USP Pacific TAFE- Finance for Non-Finance Personnel	Not yet.	KIOB will look into this.	<i>We can address this with MIMRA management to bring in someone from the local college to conduct a seminar or we can facilitate</i>	No possibly the Nauru USP Campus		<i>PACIFUND who is delivering FLT since last year for all our fisheries observers. Commencing 11 to 13 Jan 22, the first 4 batches of 30 participants will undergo this</i>	No institution has been identified yet	No		Not yet	No	Yes

	the information to FFA.					training through our local college.			training. So far, we've covered 150 participants both observers and officers. this year we will complete all officers and observers						
17	Did you identify an institution or service provider who can deliver Conflict Resolution training? if so, please provide the information to FFA.	None in Country	Not Yet	Not yet	KIOB will look into this.	No.	No possibly the Nauru USP Campus		We have in the country but need to identify a suitable service provider	No institution has been identified yet,	No		Not yet	No	Yes
18	How many of your observer has already left the programme because of COVID19, if so, how many?	NIL	Those that left, left not entirely because of Covid-19, some secured other job offers, others have migrated overseas	Five (5)	No KIOB listed observers were confirmed to have left the programme.	Three Two left for jobs elsewhere and one migrated to the US>	Cannot be determined as deployment is still closed		N/A	. Nil	So far only one left. The rest (82) have been released by the government but those who are interested to be engaged do so by applying for short contracts of engagement		0	6	9
19	Did you apply for funding through the WCPFC process, if so for what activities?	No	Yes. For technical assistance not limited to training but to acquire assets, pay for airtime of our Garmin 2-way communication devices	Yes, for EM Project	None at this stage.	NO	No		N/A	No	Yes, for refresher and upgrade training		Yes	Yes	Yes

20	Do you need assistance from FFA to write your proposal to WCPFC? if so, do you need to provide information on what you wanted to apply for?	No	We'll get back to you on this	Not at this time.	KIOB will request FFA when necessary.	Yes after looking at our priorities so we can address these one at a time.	Maybe, if a project is identified		This assistance is acknowledged and we will advise	Consultations will be done internally to discuss the needs required before approaching FFA for assistance	No		No	No	Not yet
21	Did you identify any personal tracking device in the country like the risk band that the observer can wear? if so, provide the information.	Nothing in the Cooks	here are some but not durable, We'll get back to you on this	Not yet	No providers in the country.	NO	No		N/A	No	No		No	No	No
22	What is your current ACTIVE number of observers, Debriefers, Assessors, Trainers?	Observer – 6, Debriefers – 2, Assessor – 0, Trainer - 0	23 observers, 7 debriefers, 3 debriefer assessor & 1 trainer	Forty-seven (47) active observers, two (2) certified debriefers, four (4) trainee debriefers, two (2) trainee trainers who are also debriefing assessors, and 1 certified trainer and debriefing assessor who is also the observer coordinator.	165 active observers, 10 certified debriefers, 1 assessor, 1 trainer.	42 active observers. 6 debriefers 2 of which are debriefer assessors.	26 Observers (Including the below) 4 Debriefers 1 Assessor 1 Trainer		256 which includes those on suspension pending decision on their fate, Debriefers 51 (inclusive of assessors), Assessor 30, Trainers 1	4 actives with 4 trainees	16 Observers, 11 Debriefers, 3 Assessors, No trainers		22	80 (22 certified debriefer, 9 trainee debriefer, 4 debriefer assessor & 2 trainer trainee)	52 active Observers , 9 Debriefers still waiting to complete their Part B and C, and 1 Trainee trainer.

23	Did any of you already contact MRAG for the ROCW21 to agree to the trail fixed two-way communication device onboard the vessel?	No	Not yet	No	No.	<i>Not yet.</i>	No		NO	No communication with MRAG yet. But Samoa is interested and would be keen to participate in this	No		No	Yes	No
24	Did your observers start taking the COVID19 Vaccines? If so, how many have been fully vaccinated?	All 6	100% of observers vaccinated	100% observer vaccination	87 observers, data is incomplete after lockdown.	<i>Out of 42 total observers, 33 are fully vaccinated. Only four have been boosted. Nine have not received any shot.</i>	100%		<i>51 out of 256 observers</i>	100% fully vaccinated	Yes, 58 completed already.		22	65 of 85	28