



“Science to Services for a Resilient Pacific”

Fifth Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-5) Working Papers

7-9 August 2019
Apia
Samoa

Agenda Item: Progress on the Regional Training Centre Feasibility Study

Purpose:

1. Acknowledgement of the process and findings of the Feasibility Study for the Pacific based WMO accredited Regional Training Center funded by the Government of Russian Federation through the UNDP RESPAC Project.
2. Review of the feasibility study recommendations and approve University of the South Pacific, SPREP as Parent Body for the PMC and the Fiji Met Services to carry out the next steps in the establishment of the Pacific RTC.
3. Delegate the PMC Chair, the PIETR Panel Chair and relevant partners and donors to work collaboratively and mobilize resources towards setting up of the RTC by 2021.

Background:

1. The First Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology was held on 24th July 2015 in Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga. The communique released on the 28 July 2015 requests the “Education, Training and Research (PIETR) Panel of the PMC to work with PICTs’ NMHSs, USP, SPREP, SPC and other regional organizations, and WMO to address the education and training needs of NMHSs in PICTs with a possibility to establish a WMO Regional Training Center (RTC) and the development of regional research capacity.
2. The 4th Pacific Met Council Meeting held in Honiara, Solomon Islands in August 2017 acknowledged the progress made by partners and further noted the joint progress reported by the Fiji Meteorological Services and the University of South Pacific.
3. In May 2018, UNDP RESPAC project supported the Government of the Russian Federation recruited, Dr. Geoff Love, Dr. Maria Mamaeva, and Mr. Jeff Wilson in conducting a feasibility study on the Pacific based Regional Training Center. An initial report was discussed in August and report of the findings were presented to stakeholder and WMO members at the Regional Area V meeting in October 2018 in Nuku'alofa.
4. In June 2019, the Chair of PIETR panel presented the outcomes of the Feasibility Study to the WMO World Congress.



RTC Findings in Brief

The key finding of the RTC Feasibility Report is that there is a scope or feasibility for setting up a Pacific Based Regional Training. It further makes a total of 11 recommendations (attachment 1) which can be categorized into 4 groups:

1. RTC Framework – The 3 key contributors according to the report in terms of advancing the RTC Agenda will be SPREP as the parent body for the Pacific Met Council, the University of the South Pacific (USP), and the Fiji Meteorological Services (FMS). In taking the role of the RTC forward, the three will need to collaborate with partners include Bureau of Meteorology's COSPAC Project, NIWA and University of Hawaii, Pacific Island Training Desk(PITD) to provide support for the introduction of the BIP – MT and the BIP M courses.
2. Implementation – Recommendations 4, 5 & 6 looks of the feasibility report suggests a 3 tier training programme:
Certificate Level 2 – for Basic Observers and Instrument Technicians
Certificate Level 3 – For advanced level Meteorological Technicians
Certificate Level 4 – For Senior Level Meteorologists
3. Linkage to Pacific Climate Change Center as a potential way forward to launch advanced level courses and provide space for advanced research and analysis in the climate change discipline.
4. The final 2 recommendations (10 & 11) looks into adequate backstopping arrangements for the RTC. Since this is already been in some form by the PMC and its associated panel, it is recommended to keep the structure rather than reinventing until in the future should be a clear demand.

Update:

1. The findings of the Feasibility Report have been discussed in various forums, most recently in the Pre-PMC Meeting held in Apia Samoa on Thursday August 1 at the Sheraton Hotel. Participants to the Panel have expressed appreciation for the work carried out by the consultants and look forward to future implementation of findings.
2. UNDP has secured some additional funds approximately USD60,000 from the RESPAC project to subcontract USP to carry out additional preparatory work most specifically on curriculum development and preparation of the Basic Instructional Package (BIP) for Meteorological Technicians (MT) and BIP- for Meteorologists (M) courses for approval by the USP Council.
3. Fiji Government through the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MOIT) and the Fiji Meteorological Services (FMS) are now working to upgrade infrastructure facilities at the Laucala Office in anticipation of future collaboration with the University of the South Pacific to deliver the BIP M and BIP MT courses.

Recommendations:

The Meeting is invited to:

- Note the progress made since the PMC 4 and the work carried out by the consultants in terms of addressing the issue of feasibility of the RTC for the Pacific;
- Recognise the contribution of the UNDP RESPAC project and the funding provided from the Russian Federation.



- Recommend SPREP, USP and FMS to collaborate and work according to the framework prescribed and carry out assigned roles and the timelines proposed for introduction of classes by 2021 ;
- Request other Donors and partners to contribute funding or in kind resources to ensure that the RTC can commence implementation ASAP.

Attachment 1: RTC Feasibility Recommendations

Recommendation One

That the PIETR Panel / PMC pursue the creation of a specialist education and training institution in the Pacific to address the education and training demands of the 15 NMHSs. Furthermore it is worthwhile for the 15 NMHSs to seek WMO recognition of this training institution as a WMO Regional Training Centre (RTC).

Recommendation Two

The PMC consider options for creating a small task group responsible for operationalizing the findings of this report. Ideally a partner would be identified who could provide full time staffing and financial support for up to 12 months to move the proposal forward.

Recommendation Three

That the stakeholders in the RTC include following institutions in addition to the 15 NMHSs and the students: the Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) and its parent organisation SPREP. Ideally these institutions would either partner or closely liaise with NOAA's Pacific Island Training Desk and the Meteorology Department of the University of Hawaii (UH).

Recommendation Four

FMS and USP partner to develop and deliver a three level accredited BIP-MT course (i.e. providing the knowledge and skills to support the relevant WMO Competency Frameworks) (certificate level 2 for junior (entry level) meteorological technicians, certificate level 4 for middle level meteorological technicians and a diploma level course for the senior level meteorological technician course. Detailed examination by an implementation team may result in adjustment to these levels.

Recommendation Five

USP and FMS continue to build their capacities in terms of teaching staff and training courses while also seeking other university partners such as UH or the University of the West Indies to assist in developing and delivering a BIP-M course for the Pacific that has an operational focus (i.e. providing the knowledge and skills to support the relevant WMO Competency Frameworks) and is at a graduate diploma level.

Recommendation Six

FMS to provide in-service operationally focussed courses in weather and hydrology. Ideally, FMS would be able to partner with a donor such as JICA to provide financial support to participants.



Recommendation Seven

The PCCC, potentially with support from COSPPac, provide in-service courses in climate data and climate services. The Study Team encourage the PCCC to coordinate with FMS and USP to ensure seamless transition for the students who will take climate data / services / change courses across the three institutions.

Recommendation Eight

That SPREP in coordination with the other prospective partners take the lead in identifying providers for in-service courses covering areas such as leadership, management, project management, occupational health and safety, and grant applications.

Recommendation Nine

That the RTC has an oversight board comprising at least one representative from each of the learning institutions, several Directors of the NMHSs, several students (current and recent), the PR of the host country, a representative from the Pacific Met Desk and chaired by the most recent chair of the PMC. The oversight board should report to the PMC and the PMC report RTC activities and plans to the PIMMM. The role of the oversight board could include:

- Identification of generic courses and course levels based upon the generic job roles and staff categories in each of the 15 NMHSs
- Linking the generic Pacific job roles, courses, course levels and competencies with the WMO standards and recommended practises and those of relevant global and regional organisations
- Developing and maintaining an inventory of the skill sets and qualifications of the staff of every NMHS to assist with the planning for and scheduling of in-service training (implementing and maintaining a Learning Management System for education and training across the 15 NMHSs may be the best way to organise this)
- Monitoring learning opportunities in the region and external to the Pacific for areas that the RTC cannot cover. Additionally from time to time having students attend courses outside of the RTC will help the RTC benchmark its courses against others providing similar opportunities. Similarly inviting students from other areas to the RTC courses will help benchmark courses.
- Promoting RTC opportunities in and out of the 15 NMHSs
- Planning, reporting and monitoring activities and impact of the RTC courses for the NMHS Directors, the PMC and WMO

Recommendation Ten

A small secretariat or RTC Office is created to ensure that the actions identified by the oversight board are carried out and to provide the day-to-day coordination and liaison with the learning providers and out to the NMHSs and other users.

Alternatively these duties could be carried out as part of the ongoing duties of an existing organisation such as the SPREP Pacific Met Desk.



Recommendation Eleven

That the PIETR Panel, through the RTC Secretariat, request support from the PacTVET project for the development of the accreditation framework and standards, and for assistance in achieving regional adoption of the accreditation framework and standards.



Attachment 2: Proposed Action Plan 2019 – 2021

Month - Year		Recommended Actions (to be considered by PMC)
August 2019	→	PIETR Panel to review RTC Feasibility report and provide recommendation to PMC Directors
August 2019	→	PMC Directors to review PIETR Panel recommendation
August 2019	→	Endorsement of RTC at PMC/recognizing work underway and recommending continuance with view of final proposal going to WMO Executive Council
September 2019	→	UNDP USP LOA finalized with funding released (US\$60,000)
October 2019	→	Letter of support from WMO, as acknowledgement of the process taken the recommendation from the feasibility study
October 2019	→	Finalize TOR and recruitment of consultant for curriculum design for BIP-MT in accordance to WMO standards and USP requirements
January 2020	→	Feedback from consultant
June 2020	→	Approval from USP to offer BIP-MT
August 2020	→	Inform WMO on the commencement of the accreditation process
August 2020	→	Recruitment of BIP-MT trainers
January 2021	→	Offer BIP-MT course
September 2019 -	→	Begin work on possible offering of BIP-M – 2021

Links

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