



Inquiry into Australia's Response to the Priorities of Pacific Island Countries and the Pacific Region

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's inquiry into Australia's response to the priorities of Pacific Island Countries and the Pacific Region.

AMSA is actively engaged with Pacific maritime and regional development stakeholders to enhance inter-agency cooperation and build capacity in areas such as maritime and navigation safety, marine environment protection and search and rescue.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES AND THE PACIFIC REGION

Pacific One Maritime Framework

The 5th Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers meeting in 2023 committed to developing a one-maritime framework with appropriate plans and solutions aligned to the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

The Pacific Community (SPC), in cooperation with, and using funding from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and European Union, is leading work to establish a Pacific One Maritime Framework (POMF). The framework aims to address and respond to the needs, priorities, challenges and emerging issues in the maritime sector in the Pacific focusing on safety and security, decarbonisation, environmental protection, digitalisation, and costs and access for remote communities. AMSA is represented on the drafting and steering committee for the POMF which is expected to be complete by early 2024.

Further details on this work can be found at [Pacific Regional One Maritime Framework | SPC Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division](#)

IMO Regional Presence Office for the Pacific

The IMO operates a global regional presence scheme to establish capability to assist with development, coordination and delivery of technical maritime assistance to developing countries.

The IMO has agreed to establish a Regional Presence Office in the Pacific, with the office to be hosted by the Government of Fiji. Australia (AMSA) played a significant part in securing the agreement and increased IMO funding to the Pacific region.

The Regional Presence Office will deliver targeted technical assistance across areas such as legislation, maritime safety and security, marine environment protection, decarbonisation and combatting marine plastic litter.

AMSA is working closely with regional partners to help define what an effective office should achieve, and the governance and system requirements needed. This group is also

In 2023, Australia (AMSA) provided funding to IMLI to support two students from the Pacific region, one each from Fiji and Vanuatu, to undertake the Master of Humanities or Master of Laws program.

IMLI is a leading centre for the training of specialists in international maritime law, with special emphasis on international regulations adopted by the IMO.

Implementation of international maritime law into domestic legislation is a common gap in the capacity of Pacific nations, and building the technical capabilities of legislative drafters in the Pacific region is fundamental to addressing these needs. IMLI's programs focus on this aspect as part of course requirements.

IMO Junior Professional Officer Program

In connection with Australia's support to establish the IMO Regional Presence Office (RPO) to the Pacific, AMSA provided funding to the IMO's Junior Professional Officer (JPO) program. Two positions were funded for one year for candidates from Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Two female officers were selected, one from the National Maritime Safety Authority of PNG and one from the Solomon Islands Maritime Authority. The JPOs assisted the IMO in the early stages of establishing the Regional Presence Office.

Australia's support for the JPO program has also raised the profile of International Day for Women in Maritime, with PNG's recipient Ms Maria Dolores Biaun featuring in PNG's *The National* newspaper on Friday 17th May 2024 article '*NMSA's Junior Professional Officer to IMO Regional Presence Office*'.