



Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON)
Update from the PILON Secretariat 2020
5th November 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PILON Secretariat is pleased to provide PILON Member countries with an update on Secretariat work activities over the past year.

The closing of international borders and our member country lockdown because of COVID-19 pandemic starting February this year, resulted in the postponement of all proposed PILON conferences, workshops and meetings for 2020.

All our WG meetings were held virtually, mostly through zoom technology. Our webinars also were conducted the same way with links created for members to access from their own countries.

FOCUS AREA 1: Support Implementation of PILON Strategic Plan

A. PILON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met twice this year and were informed on the progress of all the existing WG activities and were briefed on the webinars and online trainings proposed for delivery before the end of the year. They also said a fond farewell to *Lemalu Herman Retzlaff* and welcomed his replacement Ms Savalenoa Mareva Betham-Annandale, who has taken on the Chair role. Lemalu acknowledged the work of PILON and thanked all the EC members and PILON for a successful comradeship and fellowship throughout the years.

B. 2020 Working Group Activities

- i. All four (4) Working Groups (WG) met virtually in 2020 and this is a brief summary of their work and activities for this year.

PILON WG ACTIVITIES	
1	SGBV Working Group (WG) i. The WG will be holding a webinar panel discussion on <u>Friday 13th November</u> and panellists invited are Marcia Kalinoe, Coordinator Family Sexual Violence Action Committee PNG, Stephanie Dunn from the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and Frank Fuaava from the Pacific Transnational Crime Cooperation Centre in Apia. This discussion will be chaired by Samoan Attorney General, Savalenoa Mareva Betham Annandale, Chair SGBV WG. The theme of the panel discussion will focus on the impacts of COVID-19 on women across the Pacific on the challenges they face during this period, from their perspectives and how it is impacting on access to law and justice for women and girls. ii. The WG postponed a regional training in August 2020 to further explore the policy behind the Model Provisions, with a view to preparing Explanatory Material for the Provisions.

	Nauru showed interest to host this training however, due to border closures the hosting of an SGBV meeting by Nauru has been postponed. There were already discussions on progressing the meeting Agenda and sourcing of speakers. iii. The WG successfully completed the compilation of explanatory text for the Model Provisions for amending Evidence Acts or Criminal Procedure Acts to incorporate special measures for vulnerable witnesses to Sexual and Gender Based Violence offences. The SGBV Booklet is now ready for launch at this annual meeting. iv. The WG also intend to compile a video presentation of stories from around the Pacific on experiences in supporting vulnerable witnesses. This should be available in late 2020.
2	Cybercrime – Vanuatu 27-31st May 2020. i. The WG worked with the COE and AAGD on progressing an Online delivery webinar on <u>Tuesday 10th November</u> on cybercrime-related law and justice in the context of COVID-19. The theme of the webinar is Cybercrime and electronic evidence, and is proposed to be held on Tuesday 10th November. Speakers have been identified and contacted, and the WG will be inviting PILON members and the public in general to attend and access the webinar online. ii. The WG also completed and will be launching the Mutual Assistance Handbook during the annual meeting. iii. Following the launch, a webinar is being organised in <u>late November</u> on the following topic “Mutual Legal Assistance: Cybercrime & Electronic Evidence”. The WG envisage that this webinar will showcase the Handbook as a tool for law enforcement, prosecutors and the justice sector on cybercrime investigations and prosecutions.
3	Corruption Working Group (CWG) i. The WG invited Annika Wythes of UNPRAC to present at the Annual Meeting Corruption Working Group Event on UN-PRAC’s observations of the effects of COVID-19 on corruption, particularly in the Pacific region. This webinar is scheduled on <u>Thursday 12th November</u>. ii. The WG Q&A event on the evidentiary challenges of prosecuting corruption, with guest speakers Thomas McPhee and Rachel Olutimayin was hosted on <u>Friday 30th October</u> on the topics of; • Prosecuting Corruption: Evidentiary Sources & Pathways –Thomas McPhee, former Australian Prosecution Adviser in Papua New Guinea, discusses evidentiary sources and pathways to consider in corruption prosecutions. • Prosecuting Corruption: Analysing & Presenting Evidence in Court –Rachel Olutimayin, Solomon Islands Director of Public Prosecutions, discusses practical tips for prosecutors to follow when analysing and presenting evidence for trial, and discusses the evidentiary challenges of a Solomon Islands case involving larceny, embezzlement and money laundering (<i>R v Philip Bobongi</i>).
4	PILON Drafters Steering Committee i. The WG reviewed and finalise the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the PILON Legislative Drafters’ Committee (PLDC) and Legislative Drafters Steering Committee (LDSC).

	ii. They have also met to review their Draft Work Plan 2021-2023 and members of the broader Drafters Forum have been informed to provide any further comments and feedback.
	iii. The WG also endorsed the Policy Toolkit and will present it to this annual meeting.

The Secretariat support for these meetings, including taking minutes and recording decisions has supported the Chairs of the working groups and Executive Committee to implement PILON's strategic plan and progress regional initiatives to contribute towards PILON's three strategic priorities.

ii. **Report on Teleconference Meetings – October 2018-October 2019**

	Working Groups	Teleconference	Virtual Zoom meeting	Webinar and Q & A session
1	Executive Committee	1	1	-
2	SGBV WG	1	2	-
3	CWG	1	3	3
4	Cybercrime	1	4	1
5	PDC	-	2	-
	TOTAL	4	12	4

The Secretariat has arranged about 20 teleconference/webinars and virtual meetings for all the WGs in this year, including development of agendas, minute taking and providing support to the Chairs to drive working group engagement. The Secretariat develops agendas and ensures that the appropriate information is distributed for input and engagement of working group members. The Secretariat also follow up with working group members on all activities of the WGs throughout the year, and seeking input on a wide range of topics, including case studies for the prosecution manual, input to the SGBV Model Provisions and legislative review and comments on the Prosecution of Corruption and many more.

FOCUS AREA 2: Facilitate information sharing and communication

The development and launching of the new PILON website has been a big focus for the Secretariat this year. The improved and faster website contains more information, regular updates and considerably expands PILON's digital footprint, which is becoming more vital than ever in these times. There is a member's zone for all country member representatives and we encourage you to sign up to gain access to all PILON news and draft documents.

The new website provides members with a central point of focus for all things PILON and we hope that you find it useful and informative.

The Secretariat continues to support members by emailing information, including on upcoming webinars, and regular posting on Facebook. If you don't already follow us on Facebook, please like

our page and follow us for regular updates on items relevant to the law and justice community in the Pacific, including job opportunities.

The new website is at www.pilonsec.org.

The Secretariat also now has its own dedicated office space within the Samoan Attorney General's Office – this will enable the Secretariat to hold more and more meetings using the Zoom format – and help each of you to continue to engage with each other throughout this period of restricted travel. If you need assistance using Zoom, the Secretariat may be able to dial you into the meeting by phone, please let us know if you need any assistance engaging with PILON virtually.

C. PACIFIC/MEMBERS ENGAGEMENT

Focus Area 3: Promote Collaboration between PILON and regional Organisations

- D. The Secretariat was engaged with the following regional and international partners on areas of mutual interest.

Regional Institution	Comments
Meeting with PIFS,	PILON Secretariat continues to attend the FOC-Sub Committee on Regional Security Meetings. The main agenda item was PIFS to be updated by partners and members on the implementation of the BOE declaration. One important outcome was the inclusion of the PHP-C (<i>Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19</i>) work under Strategic Focus Area 2 on the 2020 and 2021 priorities; and the acknowledgement of the significant impact COVID-19 has had on the implementation of the 2020 priorities for the BOE Declaration, with most priorities delayed until 2021.
Pacific Fusion Centre	The secretariat continues to receive information from the PFC. These updates are posted on our Facebook page.
APGML	The Secretariat continues to be updated with virtual AML/CFT technical assistance and training activities.
COE	We continue to work with COE on our Cybercrime WG activities.
Commonwealth Secretariat	We were invited to attend a Rule of Law webinar series on Legislative responses and law enforcement in a COVID-19 Commonwealth.
GPEN	We sent out invitations to PILON members informing them of the 7 free webinars organised by GPEN through our IAP partnership.
IAP	The Secretariat continues to receive weekly webinars. These webinars are mentioned in Annex A.
ICRC	We participated in the World Humanitarian Day in August, OCHA, in collaboration with the Fiji National Disaster Management Office who was co-hosting the commemoration of WHD with the wider humanitarian community in Fiji.
IFRC	We also received invitations to attend IFRC webinars held on COVID 19 and Legislations. The Secretariat have also been invited to attend the Risk Governance for Resilient Development Technical Working Group virtual meetings.
IUCN	We received an enquiry from IUCN requesting us on information on becoming an Observer member of PILON
PICP	The Secretariat recently engaged with PICP, AAGD and PIFS on the Get Safe Online Programme run by the UK Commonwealth Cybersecurity Office.

PIDC	The Secretariat and PIDC continues to be engaged in discussion related to FOC Sub-Committee on Regional Security hosted by PIFS. Both are key non-CROP regional bodies.
Public Service Fale (NZ)	This initiative from NZ included PILON in their virtual trainings and have been one of our main attendants in our virtual Q & A sessions for the Corruption WG webinar series. on www.publicservicefale@publicservice.govt.nz
SPC/UNDP	The Secretariat was invited register to SOLEVAKA which is a Pacific SDG partnership to implement the SAMOA Pathway. Information most shared include E-Consultation on the Pacific Climate Action. UNDP will host Solevaka in its first year of operation along with interested partners and key stakeholders. https://solevaka.org
UNODC	We also received from UNODC Advisory Notes on COVID-19 and Corruption in the Pacific and these information were shared with the Corruption WG and also all PILON members.
UNPRAC	Apart from being invited as speakers for our AM webinar series, we have also been receiving invitations to participate in their online virtual trainings.
UNPRAC	We continue to liaise with UNPRAC on the sharing of their reports and factsheets for our members to access. They have also been selected as speakers for the Corruption WG slot in the Annual meeting. Annika Wythes will be presenting on UN-PRAC's observations of the effects of COVID-19 on corruption, particularly in the Pacific region.
Zyberglobal	Esther George, the CEO Zyber Global Centre include PILON in their series of webinars on their Stay Safe Online Webinars. https://zyberglobal.com/

Focus Area 4: Support technical assistance, capacity building, training and mentoring opportunities

The PILON Secretariat has engaged with a number of Pacific Island countries and territories on our virtual meetings and now recently the webinars by each WGs. We will continue to implement a virtual training schedule until travel restrictions ease.

Focus Area 5: PILON Administration

The Secretariat continues to keep detailed records of all teleconferences, virtual meetings and PILON activities. Survey results following training activities have been collated by the Secretariat and reports completed. The Secretariat undertakes financial acquittals after each PILON activity and completes comprehensive financial records each financial year. The Secretariat continues to manage PILON's budget and ensures that all activities are managed in accordance with the available resources.

The Secretariat consults with the Chairs to compile agendas for all meetings, both teleconference and face to face, with about 19 formal meetings this year we have an equivalent sets of minutes, agendas and Chair briefings.