



**PACIFIC ISLANDS LAW OFFICERS' NETWORK
(PILON)**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2024-2026**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (PILON) is a network of senior law officers¹ from 19 Pacific island countries and territories² and 16 observer members from international and regional organisations.³

PILON provides a forum for members to address law and justice issues common to countries and territories within the Pacific region. PILON focuses on advancing specific legal issues relevant to PILON members which are not addressed in other Pacific policy fora. PILON also enhances cooperative relationships and collaboration between Pacific law officers and the importance of collaboration between prosecutors and police in achieving law and justice outcomes. Its high-level membership means it is also a useful consultative body for Pacific law reform, and a forum through which legal capacity building initiatives can be progressed.

The PILON Strategic Plan 2024-26 has been developed by the PILON Secretariat following consultation with, and input from, PILON member countries and territories. It was prepared after receiving responses from PILON members via a survey, consultation with the PILON Executive Committee and further consultation with PILON member countries and territories on a draft prior to its adoption at the 42nd PILON Annual Meeting held in Nauru in October-November 2023. The Strategic Plan reflects in-depth consideration of broader regional priorities, other regional work programs and available resources.

To build on the strong, cogent workplans delivered by PILON under the 2019-21 Strategic Plan, which was rolled over for a further two years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, PILON member countries and territories have determined to retain PILON's current three strategic priorities for the 2024-2026 period. These are:

- corruption (a focus for members since 2013 in various manifestations including proceeds of crime (2013–2015) and environmental crime (2016–2018))
- sexual and gender based violence (a focus for members since 2013), and
- cybercrime (a focus for members since 2016)
 - with a focus on building technical skills and capabilities under each priority.

¹ Senior law officers include Attorneys General, Solicitors General, Directors of Public Prosecutions and Secretaries for Justice in respective jurisdictions.

² American Samoa, Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Pitcairn Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Commonwealth Secretariat, Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), South Pacific Lawyers' Association (SPLA), University of the South Pacific (USP), Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PacLII) and Pacific International Maritime Law Association (PILMA).

Each strategic priority will be driven forward by a Working Group. Further, in recognition of the foundational role played by legislative drafters in preparing legislation which gives effect to legal policy, PILON will also continue to support the PILON Legislative Drafters Committee (PLDC).

The Strategic Plan should be read alongside the PILON Charter,⁴ which establishes PILON and its Secretariat and sets out its membership and other governance arrangements. A diagram setting out PILON's governance structures is at Annexure 1.

2. SCOPE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

This fourth PILON Strategic Plan provides a framework to deliver on PILON's priority areas of focus over the next three years. It also sets out how the Secretariat will support PILON to achieve its objectives. The Strategic Plan 2024–2026 sets PILON's vision, establishes its strategic direction and creates a road map for how PILON will pursue those strategic priorities over the life of this Plan. This Plan highlights how PILON's members will work together to find innovative and practical solutions for some of the common challenges facing Pacific law and justice officials. Over the life of the Strategic Plan, at each PILON Annual Meeting, PILON will review the achievement of progress under the Plan (achieved predominantly through its Working Groups and the PLDC), and consider next steps under the Plan, including through collaboration with other regional organisations, to contribute to regional goals.

The PILON Executive Committee will assume responsibility for regular monitoring of progress in implementing the Strategic Plan, based on reports provided by the PILON Secretariat on a quarterly basis and the Chairs of Working Groups and the PLDC. This Strategic Plan will be reviewed and reconsidered at the 2026 PILON Annual Meeting.

The Strategic Plan applies to PILON as a whole: PILON members, PILON Working Groups and the PLDC, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. Achieving its objectives will depend on the active participation and enthusiastic commitment of all PILON member agencies and their officers, supported by the Secretariat.

3. REGIONAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Under the [Pacific Islands Forum's Framework for Pacific Regionalism](#),⁵ adopted in 2014, Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders embraced Pacific regionalism as a common identity and purpose, intended to lead progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources and markets, with the purpose of complementing national efforts, overcoming common constraints and enhancing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as a whole. The Framework acknowledges the importance of standing together as a Pacific region because there are significant benefits to sharing and combining resources to leverage Pacific voice, influence and competitiveness and to overcome geographical and demographic disadvantages.

⁴ [PILON Corporate and Governance Resources – PILON – Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network \(pilonsec.org\)](#).

⁵ [Framework-for-Pacific-Regionalism_booklet.pdf \(forumsec.org\)](#).

Under the Framework, PIF Leaders committed Pacific nations to working together to address common challenges and harnessing shared strengths, to ensure that Pacific individual and collective advancement brings practical benefits to all Pacific people. Leaders also agreed on values that include good governance, rule of law, the promotion of human rights and gender equality, justice, and peaceful, safe, and secure communities.

PILON contributes towards these values, through its promotion of regionalism in the forms of coordination, cooperation, collaboration and harmonisation and in promoting values including good governance, the rule of law, gender equality, justice and human security.

In 2015, Pacific member States committed to the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#), including Goal 16, to:

*promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*⁶

Pacific law and justice sectors – including PILON members – play a key role in the implementation of this sustainable development goal.

Building on the values established under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, in 2018 PIF Leaders committed to the [Boe Declaration on Regional Security](#),⁷ recognising a desire to maintain a region of peace, freedom and independence in an increasingly complex regional security environment. The Boe Declaration sets out a broad concept of security which incorporates human security, environmental and resource security, transnational crime and cybersecurity. The Declaration calls on regional law enforcement bodies, such as PILON, to identify and address emerging security challenges through a lens of continued cooperation and collaboration. PILON makes a useful contribution to PIF Leaders' commitments to strengthened information sharing, open dialogue and regional approaches to the development and implementation of Pacific security initiatives.

PILON's work also aligns with the 2019 [Boe Declaration Action Plan](#).⁸ Addressing corruption and sexual and gender based violence are key components of ensuring human security. Environmental and resource security is threatened by corruption and corruption is also a key element of transnational crime.⁹ Cybercrime and cyber-enabled crime is a key area of priority under the Action Plan.

⁶ Adopted by UN Member States at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, 25-27 September 2015. See text at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7891Transforming%20Our%20World.pdf>

⁷ [Boe Declaration on Regional Security – Pacific Islands Forum \(forumsec.org\)](#).

⁸ [BOE-document-Action-Plan.pdf \(forumsec.org\)](#)

⁹ For the purposes of the Action Plan transnational crime includes environmental crime, drug trafficking, corruption, money laundering, financial crimes, human trafficking, people smuggling and forced labour. In distinction, the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) seeks to criminalise serious crimes undertaken by organised criminal groups of three or more persons operating in two or more countries seeking to obtain a financial or material benefit and includes money laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice.

Similarly, PILON’s priorities align with those of other international and regional bodies including the UNODC in relation to corruption¹⁰ and cybercrime.¹¹ The Pacific’s commitment to tackling corruption was elaborated under the 2020 Teieniwa Vision.¹²

In 2022, PIF Leaders adopted the [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#).¹³ Building on the PIF’s Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the 2050 Strategy also recognised that regional cooperation and a shared commitment to work together provides an important platform for achieving the greatest benefits for people in the Pacific. It also set out a series of values for the Pacific including embracing ‘...good governance, the full observance of democratic principles and values, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies’ and ensuring ‘peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring robust security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific’. The 2050 Strategy supports ‘full inclusivity, equity and equality for all’ as well as ‘effective, open and honest relationships and inclusive and enduring partnerships—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond’. The 2050 Strategy notes the central role that peace and security plays in ensuring the realisation of a safe, secure and prosperous region and adopts the Boe Declaration’s expanded concept of security.

PILON’s work aligns with the values and objectives in the 2050 Strategy by facilitating the sharing of expertise and experiences in a respectful, effective and open way through partnership with each other and others and by strengthening regional cooperation on key law and justice issues including a commitment to the rule of law and good governance. PILON, through its Strategic Priorities, also seeks to address challenges identified in the Boe Declaration.

4. PILON’S VISION AND COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL APPROACH

Law and justice officers in the Pacific work in a unique political, social and cultural environment. The legal systems of Pacific island countries face a number of common challenges that can be exacerbated by limited resources, remoteness and isolation. To help combat the impact of these issues, and consistent with the common themes arising from the regional strategic context, PILON encourages Pacific law and justice officers to share their experiences with, and learn from, each other and work collaboratively together to address key challenges. In this way, PILON members work together to take a regional approach to promoting good governance, justice, the rule of law, community safety and security in the Pacific.

PILON plays a unique role in the regional Pacific law and justice community, with its [vision](#) of:

Working together across the Pacific to strengthen justice and the rule of law, and contribute to peaceful, safe, secure and prosperous Pacific communities.

¹⁰ <https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/what-we-do/anti-corruption/index.html>.

¹¹ <https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/what-we-do/toc/cyber-crime.html>.

¹² https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/pacific/2021/Teieniwa_Vision_PUAC_post_LEADERS.FINAL.pdf.

¹³ [PIFS-2050-Strategy-Blue-Pacific-Continent-WEB-5Aug2022.pdf \(forumsec.org\)](#).

PILON also improves the effectiveness of Pacific law and justice institutions through networking and knowledge sharing, strengthening regional policy and operational cooperation, delivering capacity building programs and facilitating new policy initiatives and their implementation, in collaboration, where appropriate, with other regional bodies.¹⁴

In bringing together senior law officers from across the Pacific, and building networks across their agencies to enable ongoing collaboration, PILON has a complementary role to that of other Pacific regional bodies including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC), the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) and the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC). For the purposes of PIFS, PILON is classified as a 'Regional Law Enforcement and Legal Secretariat'. PILON works closely with other regional bodies on issues relevant to PILON's strategic priorities as determined from time to time.

PIF Leaders established the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) in 1988 with a mandate to improve cooperation, coordination and collaboration among the various intergovernmental regional organisations to work toward achieving the common goal of sustainable development in the Pacific region. The CROP is constituted by nine regional technical secretariats and agencies.¹⁵ Of these agencies, the PIFS, PICP, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) are observer members of PILON. PILON collaborates with CROP agencies as required to progress particular issues or deliver activities where these align with PILON's Strategic Priorities. PILON is a consultative body for CROP agencies on legal policy, prosecution and law enforcement issues affecting the Pacific. A diagram explaining PILON's role in the regional Pacific architecture is at Annexure 2.

5. PILON SECRETARIAT

The PILON Secretariat is based in Apia, Samoa, and is the coordination mechanism for the network. The Secretariat supports PILON and its Chair, the Executive Committee, Working Groups, PLDC and any other committees formed by PILON to progress the PILON Strategic Plan. Specifically, the Secretariat supports PILON's activities through the organisation of the PILON Annual Meeting and other events, workshops and meetings (in-person and online) and facilitates implementation of outcomes adopted by PILON and its associated bodies. The Secretariat maintains official PILON records, manages PILON's financial resources and acts as a coordination point for PILON members, other regional organisations and development partners. It also provides limited Secretariat support to the Pacific Prosecutors Association (PPA).

The Secretariat also responds to capacity needs of PILON member countries and territories by facilitating dialogue and cooperation on regional approaches to law and justice issues and circulating

¹⁴ See Article 2 of PILON's Charter for more detail regarding PILON's purposes, available at http://pilonsec.org/images/stories/Documents/AboutPILON_Members/piloncharter.pdf.

¹⁵ PIFS, SPC, FFA, SPREP, USP, South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), Pacific Power Association, Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) and Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP).

legal information and resources, providing an opportunity for government lawyers to develop their capacity in litigation and technical legal skills, legislative drafting and law reform. Further details of the Secretariat's responsibilities are set out in Annexure 3 while its general responsibilities are listed in Article 6 of the PILON Charter.¹⁶

The Secretariat reports to the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis on PILON's activities and progress against the Strategic Plan, allowing the Executive Committee to monitor achievements and make strategic decisions to further PILON's advancement of its Strategic Plan. Further details of the Executive Committee's role is set out in Article 5 of the PILON Charter.

6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To work towards its vision, PILON must proactively determine its agenda and related priorities and articulate clear strategies to pursue these. This assists senior law officers to communicate a clear and constructive perspective on regional legal issues, both domestically and with other regional fora. A clearly defined strategic legal policy agenda also promotes allocation and prioritisation of resources and focus, and agreement around where the Secretariat and members are best placed to contribute.

As noted above, PILON members have agreed three strategic priorities for the term of this Strategic Plan in addition to the PLDC:

- corruption
- sexual and gender-based violence, and
- cybercrime.

Working Groups support each strategic priority, the terms of reference for which are set out in Annexure 4. Each Working Group and Committee will also focus on building the skills and capability of PILON members and participants in PILON events under that priority.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) is a global issue that governments around the world are striving to address. Research shows that prevalence in the Pacific region is higher than the global average.¹⁷ SGBV in the Pacific can take many forms, including sexual and physical assault, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, servitude, domestic violence and sorcery related accusations and violence. Violence against women and girls imposes a substantial burden on Pacific law and justice systems and limits the ability of women to fully participate in social, political and economic life.¹⁸

¹⁶ See [PILON Corporate and Governance Resources – PILON – Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network \(pilonsec.org\)](#).

¹⁷ World Health Organisation Violence Against Women – [Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women Fact Sheet](#) and Asian Development Bank [Gender Statistics: The Pacific and Timor Leste](#).

¹⁸ Australian Aid [Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development](#).

Worldwide commitment to the eradication of gender based violence is reflected in UN Sustainable Development Goal 5¹⁹ to ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’. It is recognised by the UN that ‘achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will require more vigorous efforts, including legal frameworks, to counter deeply rooted gender-based discrimination’.²⁰ Global research shows that much of the violence against women and girls stems from an unequal power balance between men and women and a view that women are secondary to men. Customarily held beliefs about a man’s right to control women makes women more vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual violence. The development of legal frameworks that promote gender equality and awareness raising and challenging of gender norms play an important role in combatting SGBV.²¹

Pacific leaders acknowledge the prevalence of SGBV in the Pacific and the risk it poses to human security through destabilising communities. At the 40th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in 2009, leaders committed to eradicating SGBV and to ensuring all individuals have equal protection of the law and equal access to justice.²² In 2012, leaders adopted the [Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration](#) in which they committed to ‘enact and implement legislation regarding sexual and gender based violence to protect women from violence and impose appropriate penalties for perpetrators of violence’.²³ The 2nd Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting was held in 2023, where leaders considered a revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration. The expanded concept of security agreed by Pacific Leaders in the Boe Declaration includes human security, and combatting gender based violence is a key part of this concept.

PILON’s focus on SGBV as a strategic priority contributes to a collective approach to meeting the region’s security challenges and supports leaders’ commitments to prioritise this issue. Securing effective law and justice responses to SGBV has been a key priority for PILON since 2013 and a working group was convened to address this topic in 2014. Following a survey of members on the implementation of SGBV legislation conducted in 2014, it was evident that both police and prosecutors faced a number of implementation challenges including policing culture, limited resources, lack of legal knowledge, lack of specific training, lack of professional standards and lack of special operating procedures for handling SGBV complaints and prosecutions. Since then there have been significant legislative reforms in most PILON member countries and territories, including the introduction of special measures in dealing with vulnerable witnesses in SGBV cases, SGBV specific legislation such as domestic violence and protection order schemes, and the removal of discriminatory practices in existing legislation. But the effects of

¹⁹ Adopted by UN member states at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, 25-27 September 2015. See text at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>.

²⁰ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>.

²¹ World Health Organisation [Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women](#).

²² Forum Communiqué – 40th Pacific Islands Forum; Cairns, Australia; 6 – 9 August 2009 (<https://www.daghammarskjold.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/40th-PIFS-Cairns-Outcome.pdf>). This commitment was reiterated by Forum Leaders at their 2012 meeting in the ‘Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration,’ Forum Communiqué – 43rd Pacific Islands Forum; Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 28-30 August 2012 <https://www.forumsec.org/2012/08/30/plged/>. Further in their meeting communique in 2013, Forum Leaders ‘Called for accelerated efforts to fulfil the Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration priorities’.

²³ www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2012-Forum-Communique_-Rarotonga_-Cook-Islands-28-30-Aug.pdf.

stressful situations such as climate change and COVID-19, have seen violence against women and children dramatically increase in recent years.²⁴

All these factors combine to impact the effectiveness of Pacific law and justice systems to successfully prosecute SGBV offences. An effective law and justice response and the imposition of criminal consequences for engaging in this type of crime are critical to eradicating SGBV and are becoming increasingly expected by women across the globe, including the Pacific. In 2017, to address some of the issues faced by women seeking justice through the criminal system, PILON adopted *Guidelines for Obtaining the Best Evidence from Vulnerable Witness to SGBV*. These principles set out a range of considerations and special measures that can be put in place to assist the complainant (and other vulnerable witnesses) during the criminal process from complaint to trial. Since 2018 the SGBV Working Group has continued to focus on measures to ensure the court hears a complete account of the evidence in SGBV matters. In 2021 the SGBV Working Group published *Model Provisions and Explanatory Text: Supporting Vulnerable Witnesses in Cases Involving SGBV*. In 2022, under the direction of the SGBV Working Group, an Advisory Panel was established to develop and draft Regional Guidelines, which provide best practice procedures for supporting vulnerable witnesses throughout the prosecution of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) offences. The Regional Guidelines will be launched at the 2023 PILON Annual Meeting. The continued focus on SGBV under this Strategic Plan, will see PILON support members to implement the Regional Guidelines in their jurisdictions, starting by hosting a regional Implementation Workshop in early 2024. PILON member countries and territories will focus on sharing successful approaches to implementing special measures for vulnerable witnesses and the Regional Guidelines, including by monitoring and evaluation of law and justice responses to SGBV to identify further areas for capacity building to embed strengthened responses.

Cybercrime

While faster and better internet access driven by ever-increasing mobile penetration and network connectivity continues to open up greater social and economic possibilities for the Pacific, it also enables cybercriminals to seamlessly and instantaneously reach across the globe to commit new crimes, or old crimes in new ways. As technology continues to provide a platform for the reach of global crime trends into the Pacific region, collaborative action to combat cybercrime remains a priority under this Strategic Plan.

²⁴ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat - Pacific-Security-Outlook-Report-2022-2023.

Cybercrime describes a range of circumstances in which technology is involved in the commission of crime, both within and across jurisdictions. It includes:

- crimes directed at computers and other information communication technologies (ICTs), such as attacks against computer systems, which may disrupt power supplies or other critical infrastructure, and
- crimes where computers or ICTs are an integral part of an offence (such as online fraud, identity theft and distribution of child exploitation material).

The complexity and growing prevalence of cybercrime is a huge challenge for the global community, including the Pacific. The PIFS 2022-2023 Pacific Security Outlook Report, claims that ‘Cybercrime has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, as more Pacific islanders venture online for entertainment, education and business activities’.²⁵ In our region, expanding internet access provides a vector for the spread of a range of transnational cyber-enabled crimes such as online child sexual exploitation, money laundering, ransomware, scams and many others, while simultaneously requiring intensified regional law enforcement cooperation to combat transnational threats.

Countries around the world continue to make significant investments in their laws, institutional frameworks, and digital literacy education and awareness campaigns to ensure they are prepared and capable of withstanding cyber-attacks and other cyber-enabled criminal enterprises. Pacific Island countries remain particularly vulnerable to cybercrime activities due to a lack of effective legislative frameworks, low digital literacy in many communities, and the high level of skills and expertise required to investigate and prosecute cybercrime, including in relation to obtaining evidence of such crimes. With expanding internet access, even the most physically remote communities are vulnerable to cybercrime.

The borderless nature of cybercrime means it can occur anywhere there is access to the internet, making international cooperation, technical capability, and harmonised substantive and procedural legislative provisions of paramount importance for our region. Pacific leaders have acknowledged that cybersecurity is a rapidly growing threat and, in the Boe Declaration, have called for an increasing emphasis on regional cooperation to address it. PILON is responding to this call by continuing to promote greater regional cooperation and collaboration in the efforts to address cybersecurity through its focus on cybercrime (consistent with Strategic Focus Area 5 outlined in the Boe Declaration Action Plan), particularly those aspects that require a regional and collaborative approach, such as information sharing and mutual assistance.

Under the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan, the PILON Cybercrime Working Group continued its efforts to build the awareness of PILON members of how to tackle cybercrime from a regional perspective. These efforts have concentrated on the development and implementation of best practice legislation, evidence gathering powers and international cooperation mechanisms with regional and international partners,

²⁵ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat - Pacific-Security-Outlook-Report-2022-2023.

including in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (the Budapest Convention).

PILON's Cybercrime Workshops held from 2017 to 2022 supported member countries and territories to develop their understanding of relevant regional crime trends, build networks to facilitate regional and international cooperation, and participate in practical sessions to build key technical investigation and prosecution skills.

Recognising that technology continues to outpace the legislative response in this field, the continuing focus on cybercrime under this Strategic Plan will enable member countries and territories to continue building their legislative frameworks and technical capability to effectively investigate and prosecute cybercrime and empower member countries to effectively respond to implementation challenges specific to cybercrime legislation. The work plan activities developed under this Strategic Priority may take the form of publications, online resources and active engagement in online training courses on issues such as digital forensics.

Corruption

This strategic priority builds on the work of the Working Group under the 2019-2021 strategic plan. Corruption in the Pacific is a real and immediate challenge to the security and prosperity of Pacific Island peoples. Corruption undermines the stability and security of societies, erodes democracy and ultimately undermines the rule of law. PILON, as a senior law officers' network, is committed to supporting transparent and accountable legal frameworks in the region and upholding the rule of law. The importance of the issue of corruption to the region is reflected in the reaffirmation by Pacific Leaders in the Boe Declaration of the importance of the rules-based international order founded on the UN Charter. PILON's focus on corruption as a strategic priority provides a collective approach to support leaders' commitment to the *Biketawa Declaration* in upholding democratic processes; such as the rule of law, to support a more peaceful, secure and prosperous Pacific region.

In the Pacific region, tackling the issue of corruption is impacted by a number of specific challenges. The small size of island communities and likelihood of personal links between elected representatives, public officials and the general public can lead to an increased risk of bias and influence on decision-making. The risk of corruption is significantly heightened in environments where there is a lack of appropriate national laws, policies and procedures to provide checks and balances, for example strong and robust whistleblower protection frameworks. In the Pacific context, most corruption occurs at the domestic level but it can also be one of the crime types used by transnational and organised crime. Regional commitment to strong anti-corruption legislation and integrity institutions is essential to addressing corruption in all its forms.

Almost all PILON members are party to the United Nations Convention on Corruption (UNCAC), which entered into force on 14 December 2005. The Convention also has strong linkages to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16 on *peace, justice and strong institutions*. Significant work is

underway in the Pacific region to address corruption through the *Teieniwa Vision*²⁶ which aims to achieve Pacific Unity Against Corruption, as well as work being undertaken by the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APGML).

In 2017, the Working Group developed *Guiding Principles for Protecting Whistleblowers and Encouraging Protected Disclosures*. These guidelines set out the main elements for a protected disclosure, or whistleblowing, legislative framework to assist PILON members who might be considering developing such a framework. In 2018, the Working Group developed a booklet titled the *Who, What, Why of Whistleblower Protection for the Pacific*. This booklet is intended to further educate Pacific communities and public officials about the benefits of protected disclosure frameworks and provides a model internal whistleblower policy for PILON members to consider implementing in agencies, as appropriate. In building on this work, in 2021, PILON partnered with UN-PRAC to produce three webinars focussing on the protection of whistleblowers and feature in the June 2021 UN-PRAC newsletter.²⁷ In 2022, the Working Group developed two short animated videos about whistleblowing, which demonstrate the impact of corruption on the community, the process for reporting corruption and the importance of whistleblowing. In 2023, the Working Group was approached by the Public Service Fale with a request to collaborate on some training material that the Fale was developing. The Fale sought permission to promote the work being done by the working wroup and reproduce some of the Working Group's whistleblowing resources in their new Accountability training module. This collaboration will allow PILON's resources to reach a wide audience across the Pacific, and raise the profile of this important topic.

The continuation of corruption as a strategic priority will allow the Working Group to focus on the issues that its members have requested specific assistance on including investigating and prosecuting the domestic forms of corruption such as bribery, fraud and domestic money laundering actors. These are offerings that are not provided to the same extent by other organisations working in this area. It will also enable the Working Group to explore opportunities for further collaboration with UNCAC, UNDP and UNODC and develop stronger linkages with other key stakeholders, including APGML and the Pacific Financial Intelligence Community, tackling the issue of corruption in the region from new angles. The Working Group will seek to leverage from members' expertise and continue to deliver webinars and other activities to member countries and territories, so as to expand the skills and capabilities of members within the corruption space.

Pacific Legislative Drafters' Committee (PLDC)

At the 2019 PILON Annual Meeting PILON agreed to provide support to the Pacific Legislative Drafters' Technical Forum (PLDTF) by establishing a Committee under Article 8 of the PILON Charter. PLDTF was previously supported by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) since 2012. Prior to this, the network was coordinated by the Commonwealth Secretariat and with support from the New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel Office and the Australian Government Office of Parliamentary Counsel. Following

²⁶ Pacific Unity Against Corruption - Teieniwa_Vision_PUAC_post_LEADERS.FINAL.pdf (unodc.org).

²⁷ UN Pacific Regional Anti-corruption Project 2021.06.30_June_2021_newsletter.FINAL.pdf (unodc.org).

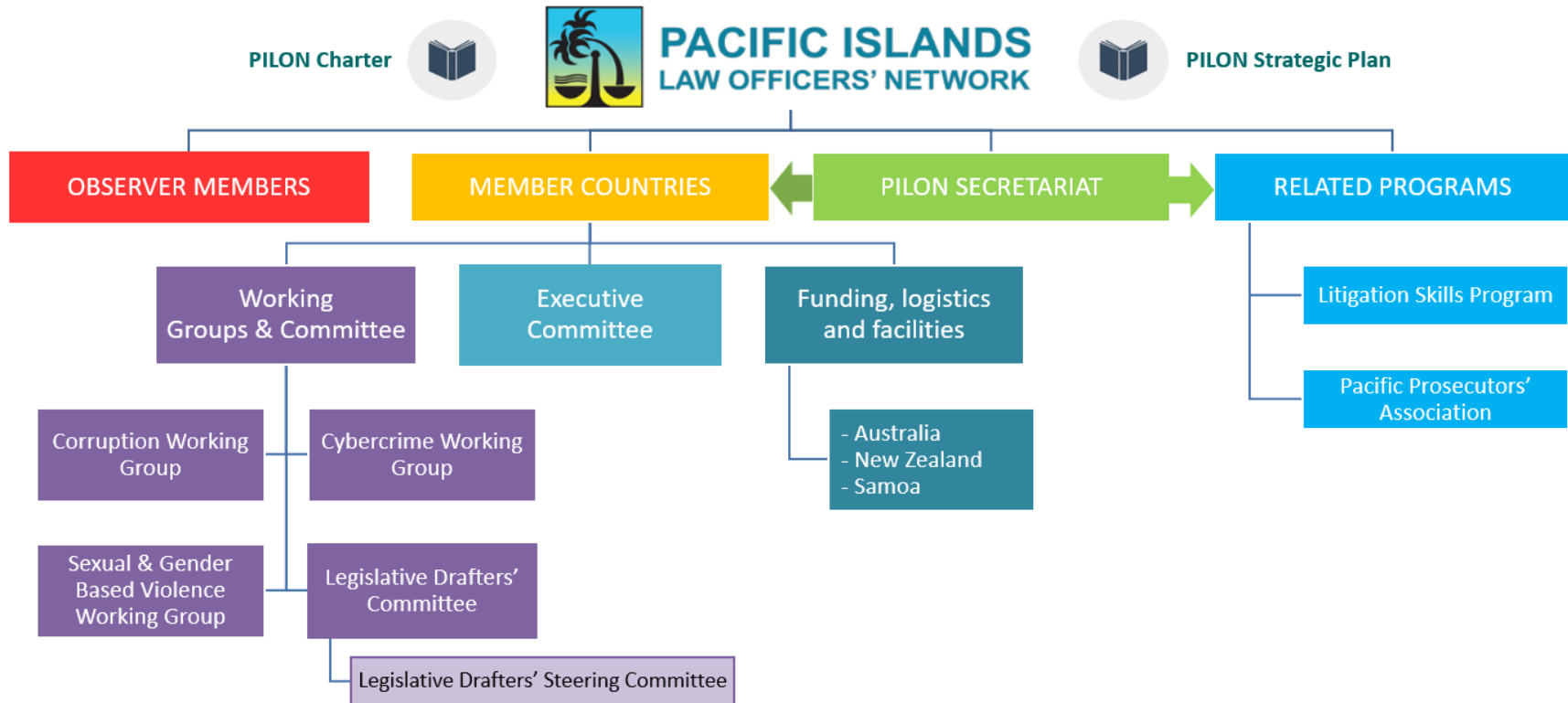
its adoption as a PILON Committee the PLDTF agreed to amend its name to the PILON Legislative Drafters' Committee (PLDC) to align with Article 8 of the PILON Charter. In accordance with Article 8.3 of the Charter, a Chair of the PLDC was appointed and a smaller Steering Committee was formed to support the strategic direction and activities of the newly formed PLDC²⁸.

The objectives of the PLDC are to:

- advance the skills and capacity of legislative drafters in PILON member countries and territories, and
- advance regional cooperation and networking amongst legislative drafters.

²⁸ 2019 PILON Annual Meeting Outcomes Report - PILON Annual Meetings Resources – PILON – Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network (pilonsec.org).

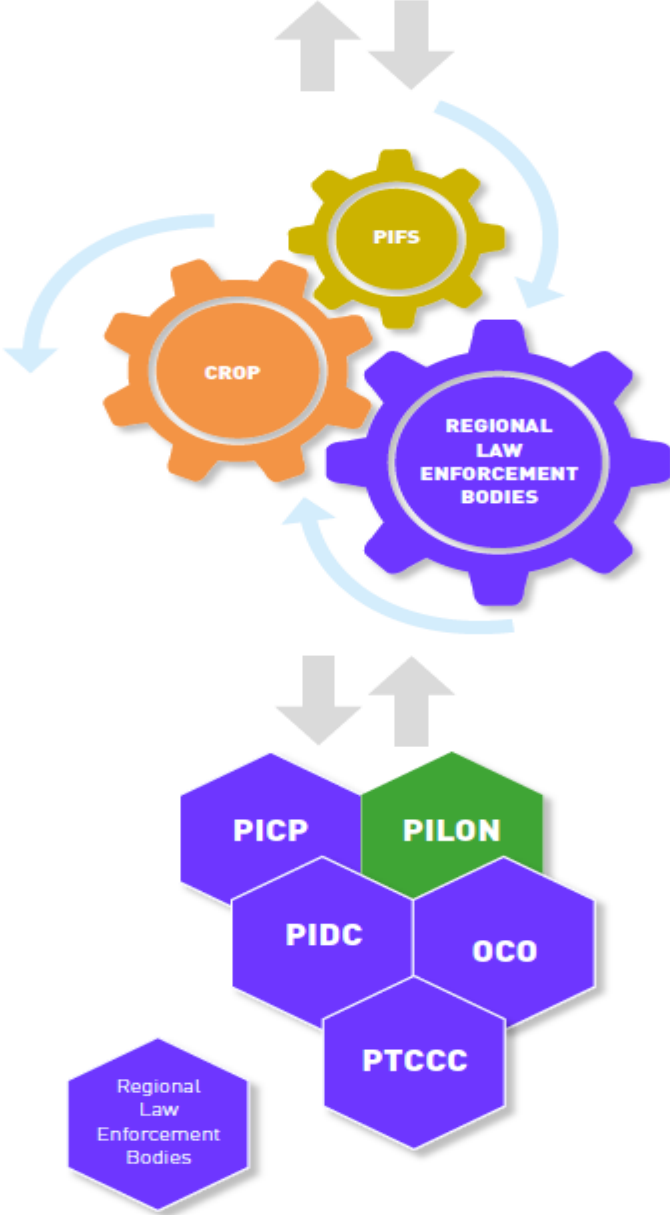
ANNEX 1 - PILON'S ORGANISATIONAL AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



ANNEX 2 - PILON'S REGIONAL CONTEXT

Framework for Pacific Regionalism

Pacific Islands' Forum Leaders set regional priorities – including re law and justice cooperation



ANNEX 3 - PILON SECRETARIAT RESPONSIBILITIES

FOCUS AREA 1: Support implementation of PILON's Strategic Plan

Strategies	Key Tasks	Timeframe	Performance Measure
1.1 Drafting PILON Strategic Plan (in collaboration with the Executive Committee and PILON member countries and territories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat researches emerging trends in the Pacific and keeps in touch with strategic direction of Pacific Leaders to identify key strategic priorities for the region • Secretariat identifies opportunities for PILON to direct its focus in a planned way that fits within broader regional priorities • Secretariat undertakes planning for development and delivery of PILON's future activities • Secretariat works with the Executive Committee to prepare a draft Strategic Plan for the next planning period for member endorsement 	Mid-late 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Strategic Plan drafted for PILON 2023
1.2 Assisting the Executive Committee to implement and monitor progress of the Strategic Plan once endorsed by PILON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat actively supports PILON Working Groups and Committees and the Executive Committee to advance PILON's strategic priorities. • Secretariat actively monitors progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan and provides reports in this regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Executive Committee, to review throughout the year, and ○ PILON members, for review and discussion at the Annual Meeting 	Ongoing Bi-Annually Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PILON Working Groups and Committee progress key projects • Reports provided and implementation of Strategic Plan assessed
1.3 Facilitating activities of PILON and its Working Groups and Committees (including facilitating the implementation of resolutions passed by PILON)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat follows up with PILON Working Group and Committee Chairs and the Executive Committee to ensure that meetings are scheduled in a timely manner • Secretariat ensures Working Group and Committee decisions, action items and resolutions are followed up to ensure relevant action is taken • Secretariat provides updates/running sheets to Working Groups and Committees and Executive Committee as required to ensure corporate knowledge is maintained • Working Groups and Committees work with the Secretariat to identify and report back to members regarding potential approaches, cooperation or recommended developments in relation to issues 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group and Committee meetings are held regularly • PILON and its Working Groups and Committees and the Executive Committee have clear records of past decisions • Action items are tracked and reported to Annual Meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat prepares briefing and discussion papers for PILON, its Working Groups and Committees as required to facilitate decision-making 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Groups and Committees provide reports to Annual Meeting • Briefing papers and discussion papers prepared as required
1.4 Developing and implementing the Secretariat's Work Plan and assisting the Executive Committee to monitor progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat actively monitors progress in implementing its work plan, and provides reports in this regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Executive Committee, to review throughout the year, and ○ PILON members, for review and discussion at the Annual Meeting 	<p>Bi-Annually</p> <p>Annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports provided and implementation of work plan assessed

FOCUS AREA 2: Facilitate information sharing and communication

Strategies	Key Tasks	Time Frame	Performance Measure
2.1 Providing an information sharing and communications network concerning relevant law and justice issues to PILON country members, observer members and other relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat provides PILON members relevant information regarding events, technical assistance and training opportunities • Secretariat provides updates regarding regional law and justice issues, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ preparing law and justice news updates on PILON website ○ drafting and circulating a quarterly PILON newsletter (Talanoa) ○ maintaining a PILON Facebook page and YouTube Channel, and ○ maintaining message boards/forums for prosecutors, drafters and other PILON members 	<p>As required</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>As required</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information circulated as required • Updates to the PILON website, Facebook page, YouTube Channel and PILON newsletter produced
2.2 Facilitating dialogue and cooperation between PILON members on regional approaches to law and justice issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat maintains email lists that enable PILON colleagues to seek advice and assistance from one another on an ongoing basis • Members provide Secretariat with information regarding domestic legislative and other relevant updates in relation to priority issues, for circulation within network (as appropriate) 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message boards, email lists are maintained and information received and circulated • Information circulated as required

<p>2.3 The PILON website is maintained as a resource for information sharing and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat ensures website content is expanded with useful legal resources and kept updated • Secretariat explores opportunities to further develop website as a tool for information sharing and communication between members • Secretariat maintains a ‘members only’ section of the PILON website • Secretariat compiles resources on the PILON website in relation to each priority issue, including links to/copies of key regional or international statements, instruments and resources 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website is up to date, comprehensive resource; • Website statistics demonstrate consistent use • Members only page maintained • Website contains comprehensive resources regarding each priority issue
<p>2.4 The PILON Annual Meeting is the key forum for the network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat works with Executive Committee and members to develop Annual Meeting agendas, reflecting in particular, current strategic priorities • Members present country reports at Annual Meetings and submit written reports to the Secretariat, addressing the strategic focus areas outlined in the reporting template provided by the Secretariat 	<p>Annually Annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation undertaken, and feedback received, regarding agenda topics • Country Reports presented

FOCUS AREA 3: Promote collaboration between PILON and regional and international organisations

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Key Tasks</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>
<p>3.1. PILON actively engages with other regional and international organisations to identify appropriate linkages for PILON to progress its law and justice agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat liaises with relevant organisations, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ identify opportunities for collaboration, in particular in relation to strategic priorities and technical assistance opportunities, and ○ ensure members are kept updated about relevant initiatives • PILON Secretariat provides secretariat support to the Pacific Prosecutors’ Association 	<p>Ongoing Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with lead organisations undertaken, and reported • Regular updates provided regarding activities of relevant organisations

3.2. PILON is represented at key forums, meetings, conferences and working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat facilitates representation of PILON (where appropriate) at relevant regional law and justice fora,²⁹ through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attending or supporting a PILON member’s attendance ○ the provision to the relevant meeting of a report outlining PILON’s activities, ensuring PILON member interests in issues are being considered, and ○ any associated recommendations in relation to these. • Secretariat reports back to members regarding key outcomes of meetings, through website or email reports and reports to the Annual Meeting 	Annually / as scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views and interests of PILON members sought in advance of meetings • PILON is represented, and relevant reports provided, at key forums • PILON members are updated regarding outcomes
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FOCUS AREA 4: Support technical legal assistance, capacity building, training and mentoring opportunities

Strategies	Key Tasks	Time Frame	Performance Measure
4.1 PILON members are supported in accessing appropriate technical and capacity development assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources such as manuals/guidelines/model laws circulated to members and uploaded to website 	As required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information regularly provided to members • Email alerts sent to members
4.2. PILON members are informed and kept up to date regarding technical legal assistance, training and mentoring opportunities and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat maintains technical legal assistance database (and related lists) on PILON website • Advice regarding technical legal assistance opportunities is emphasised in information sharing by Secretariat 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and current database maintained • Information regularly contained in Secretariat publications

²⁹ Such as, Pacific Prosecutors’ Annual Conference; Pacific Legislative Drafters’ Technical Forum meeting; Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) Annual Meeting; and other meetings which are of relevance to PILON’s purpose and within budgeted travel expenditure.

<p>4.3. Through information sharing and discussion, PILON contributes to coordination, identification and development of quality technical assistance and training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country reports at Annual Meetings include information outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all technical assistance and training received/delivered each year ○ member countries and territories' main training priorities, and ○ specific forms of assistance regarded as most beneficial or valuable 	<p>Annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information included in country reports
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FOCUS AREA 5: PILON Administration

Strategies	Key Tasks	Time Frames	Performance Measure
<p>5.1 Provides administrative support to PILON, the Executive Committee, the PILON Chair and any PILON committees or working groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat organises logistics (including travel, venue bookings and other arrangements) for virtual and physical meetings of PILON including annual or special meetings, Working Group and Committee meetings and those of the Executive Committee. • Secretariat sends invitations and drafts agendas, in consultation with each Chair, for PILON activities within timeframe specified in Charter (3 months for annual or special meeting or two weeks for other) 	<p>As required As required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meetings organised and efficiently prepared
<p>5.2 Maintains official PILON records, including records of all PILON meetings, meeting outcomes and appropriate budget and financial records</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat maintains up to date contact lists • Secretariat ensures all PILON records are backed up and filed in a timely manner • Secretariat ensures sound financial management and that all expenditure is acquitted within a two month timeframe • Secretariat maintains accurate financial records and provides budgets and financial reports on a regular basis 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All PILON records up to date and accurately recorded • Financial records maintained

ANNEX 4 – TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

Working Group and Committee objectives

PILON Working Groups and Committees comprise the knowledge, skills, commitment and energy of PILON members to undertake tasks and accomplish PILON's strategic objectives in accordance with its Strategic Plan. The Working Groups and Committees are the implementation arm of PILON. They:

- focus the parameters of PILON's strategic priorities
- consider and consult on the strategic priority areas identified
- secure resources and agree actions to support the PILON membership to effectively address the strategic priority areas
- progress practical measures to advance the strategic priority areas
- build skills and capability of Working Group and Committee members and participants of activities, and
- report back to the PILON membership on outcomes.

Working Group and Committee membership

PILON members are encouraged to nominate for membership of any or all of the Working Groups and Committees that are of interest to their countries and territories. Nominating countries are not required to have particular expertise in the relevant subject matter as Working Group and Committee members are expected to share experiences and learn from each other regardless of their legal and institutional starting point.

The number of PILON member countries and territories represented on any Working Group and Committee is not restricted. However, nominating members are asked to designate one primary and one secondary contact, to provide consistent points of contact for other Working Group and Committee members, as well as the Secretariat.

Benefits for Working Group and Committee members include:

- having the opportunity to focus the scope and activities of the Working Group or Committee
- being part of a network of practitioners, sharing experiences and learning from each other
- being kept up to date on developments and best practice
- preferenced participation in sponsored capacity building activities relevant to the Working Group or Committee, and
- leadership on the development of action plans and resources for the region.

Working Group and Committee responsibilities

Each Working Group and Committee, in conjunction with the Secretariat, is responsible with respect to their strategic priority for:

- identifying, implementing and monitoring the implementation of activities
- being PILON’s ‘Expert Reference Group’ and referring requests or projects on specific areas of law to an expert within the Working Group or Committee or broader PILON membership
- assisting with *capacity building* by way of:
 - providing assistance or advice on request
 - providing information on request
 - convening technical workshops, and
 - developing tools such as reports, manuals and templates for upload onto the PILON website and circulation to PILON members, for their information and use.

Working Group and Committee Chair Responsibilities

Each Working Group or Committee Chair, with the support of the Secretariat, is responsible for:

1. developing and progressing an appropriate annual work plan, in consultation with Working Group or Committee members, the Secretariat and the Executive Committee as appropriate and PILON members more broadly at the Annual Meeting
2. calling regular meetings of the Working Group or Committee, in person or online, on a quarterly or more frequent basis, to drive implementation of the work plan, including developing agendas (in consultation with the Secretariat) and action items and ensuring follow up, and
3. reporting on the activities of the Working Group or Committee and progressing against the work plan (what has been achieved/what remains to be done) to the Executive Committee as requested and on an annual basis to the PILON Annual Meeting.

Working Group and Committee Member Responsibilities

To meet Working Group and Committee responsibilities, each Working Group or Committee member will commit to:

- actively contribute their time, skill, knowledge and experience
- carry out tasks assigned by the Chair
- take part in meetings called by the Chair of the Working Group or Committee, and
- contribute to the development of Working Group or Committee products and activities.