



### 3. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/AGREEMENT:

a. Minutes of 29 January 2024 meeting

The Chair moved that the amended minutes of the PLDC Steering Committee minutes for 29 January 2024 be endorsed. Samoa (Liu) seconded the motion.

b. Develop an Annual Circular on general drafting aspects and development in the Pacific [PLDC WORK PLAN ACTION 1.4] – PILON Secretariat item

The Steering Committee considered a draft proposed outline for an Annual Circular developed by the PILON Secretariat. The Secretariat spoke to the purpose of the item, which is to launch an annual publication through which PLDC members can share and read about legislative drafting developments in the Pacific region.

The PILON Secretariat referred the Steering Committee to the PLDC Implementation Plan 2024-26 and drew attention to the proposed May 2024 date for the compilation of the First Edition and the proposed spotlight on Micronesian developments, with the PILON Secretariat to seek input from as many legislative drafting offices as possible from the Republic of Nauru, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Palau. The PILON Secretariat would also contact all PLDC members to seek content from all PILON member countries.

The Chair thanked the PILON Secretariat for its work on the template Circular and moved that the template be approved with updates to capture the meeting input from Steering Committee members. New Zealand (Nicholson) seconded the motion.

**Action 1:**

**PILON Secretariat** to update the PLDC Circular template to incorporate Steering Committee member input for consideration at the next Steering Committee meeting.

c. PLDC Topic for Discussion – legislating in Pacific languages – Chair and PILON Secretariat item

The Chair and the PILON Secretariat facilitated a fruitful discussion among Steering Committee members on the practices of individual Pacific island countries on the preparation, tabling and debate on Bills and Acts in English and/or local Pacific island languages.

Fiji (Andrews) shared that it was in the early stages of providing for the publication of Acts in English, Fijian and Fijian Hindi. Fiji also noted that translators may not be legally qualified in Fiji. New Zealand (Nicholson) shared that New Zealand is developing its ability to publish its laws in Maori and English. Tonga (Katoa) shared that all legislation in Tonga must be developed in English and then translated in the Tongan language and if any discrepancy arises between the English and Tongan text, that the Tongan meaning prevails in the courts. Tonga also noted that its translators typically had a high school level of education and were legally qualified. Samoa (Liu) shared that its practice was the same as Tonga's and that charges read out in the courts must be read in Samoan. Others were aware that drafting in the Solomon Islands occurs in Pidgin.

Given the interest and importance of the topic, members agreed to add a standing heading on 'Drafting in local/Pacific languages' to the Annual Circular template.

d. Update on proposed online legislative drafting training module – New Zealand (Talamaivao)

New Zealand (Talamaivao) provided an update to the Steering Committee on its development of a pilot legislative drafting training course for legislative drafters at the NZ PCO to develop an understanding and skills-based approach to drafting sentences in line with plain language standards. New Zealand share some key observations about its first delivery:

- New Zealand conducted the course with two online participants and six in-person participants. The course worked well with the smaller audience of eight.
- The training goals took account of the target audience, which was new drafters.
- The format was interactive, encouraging participants to ask questions and test and share their knowledge in two x 45-minute sessions with small exercises.
- Each participant had homework to complete in the two-day break between the sessions, with the instructor providing feedback on the homework at the second session.
- New Zealand is willing to run a pilot of the training course with members of the Steering Committee to test the content and seek input ahead of offering an online training option to legislative drafting offices in Pacific island countries.
- To ensure any proposed course would be fit for purpose, New Zealand raised the need to know what different drafting offices teach on drafting sentences in their home countries. In some cases, the existing content may be fit for purposes as it. In other cases, it may need to be tailored.

The Chair thanked New Zealand for its update on its training at NZ PCO and its progress towards a future pilot of online legislative drafting training with Steering Committee members at a time to be decided by New Zealand.

e. Update on Progress of Action Items (1-5) - 29 January Minutes – PILON Secretariat

The PILON Secretariat provided an update on progress against the Action Items recorded in the 29 January 2024 minutes:

**(1) PLDC WORK PLAN ACTION 1.1 – Legislative drafting conference.**

- **Action Item 2: Underway** – Secretariat to develop a Concept Note (with support from Australia) to guide planning for the PLDC Conference and seek input from members, including nominations for host for consideration at the April 2024 meeting.
- **The PILON Secretariat will work with Australia to develop this paper and introduce it at a future Steering Committee meeting.**

**(2) PLDC WORK PLAN ACTION 1.3 – Sharing of information and raising awareness on social media.**

- **Action Item 3: Complete** - Samoa to prepare a short social media post on an item of interest for legislative drafters and send it to the PILON Secretariat to publish in the Private PLDC Facebook Group (Legislative Drafting in the Pacific) in February 2024.

**(3) PLDC WORK PLAN ACTION 1.4 – Develop annual circular on general drafting aspects and development in the Pacific**

- **Action Item 4: Complete** – Secretariat (with support from Australia) to prepare a template for the annual circular and circulate to PLDC Steering Committee members for input into key headings to guide suggestions for content, with country authors for each edition to ultimately decide on the most useful content for publication. First edition Micronesian and Australasian Edition.

**(4) PLDC WORK PLAN ACTION 2.6 – Compile a list of consultant drafters (with CVs) and publish on Drafters’ section of the PILON website**

- **Action Item 5: Underway** – Secretariat to develop a paper (with support from Australia) to seek PLDC input into the set of parameters/factors to guide who to include on the list of consultant drafters (e.g. mandatory minimum qualification requirements) as a step to support the eventual compilation of a list of consultant drafters among PILON member countries.
- **The PILON Secretariat will work with Australia to develop this paper and introduce it at a future Steering Committee meeting.**

**4. Next meeting date**

The next meeting is scheduled for **11:00am-12noon Fijian time, Tuesday, 23 April 2024.**

**5. Close of meeting: 12.10pm Fijian time**