



The 5th Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific (PRF-P) 23-25 July 2012, Nadi, Fiji

SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. The 5th Meeting of Policy and Regulatory Forum for Pacific (PRF-P) was held from 23 to 25 July, 2012, in Nadi, Fiji. The Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) organized the Forum which was hosted by the Ministry of Communications, Government of Fiji, and supported by the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA).
- 1.2. A total of 80 participants representing APT Members, Associate Members, Affiliate Members and other international/regional organisations attended the event.

2.0 Opening Session

- 2.1 Opening Address was given by Mr. Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary General, APT. He welcomed all the delegates to the Policy and Regulation Forum for Pacific. He thanked the Government of Fiji and PITA for their efforts and the excellent arrangements. He noted APT organizes Policy and Regulation Forum for the Pacific region recognizing that the Pacific has its own unique issues.
- 2.2 In his speech, he highlighted the importance of telecommunication and ICT to a nation's economy and social development. In view of the new technologies and services that are now inundating the market place, there is a need to review telecommunications policies and regulations including the challenges and harmful side effects that had been brought about by these new services. He also noted that many governments are currently focusing on the broadband infrastructure in order to improve their broadband capacity. The broadband policies by Governments from both the developed and developing countries highlight the greater role by the governments in providing the backbone infrastructure
- 2.3 He hoped that this Forum would be valuable to all the participants and their countries and encouraged active participation in the meeting so that the participants will derive the greatest benefit from the Forum. The full text of the address is attached in Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-28.

- 2.4 Mr. Ivan Fong, President of PITA, delivered his Opening Address. He welcomed the delegates to Fiji and thanked APT for arranging the Policy and Regulation Forum for the Pacific. He also thanked the Government of Fiji for hosting the Forum. In his speech, he mentioned that although many countries try to achieve the free market status, there are many issues that are not effectively addressed. Regulation has the role to prevent the unintended side effects. He also mentioned different regulatory issues including competition, licensing, global connectivity, cybersecurity and consumer issues. He said that no one solution fits all and that the Forum could benefit the community by bringing ideas together. He believed that participation in the Forum would continue to improve and deliver more benefits to the Pacific. Lastly, he wished all participants a fruitful outcome from the Forum
- 2.5 Ms. Elizabeth Powell, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Fiji, delivered the inaugural address on behalf of Honourable Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Attorney General and Minister for Public Enterprises, Communications, Civil Aviation, and Tourism, Fiji. She welcomed participants to Fiji. In the address, she mentioned that Pacific had many challenges and that the Pacific could not be left behind. She mentioned the importance of broadband technology and the widespread use of mobile phones, even in the far-flung areas. She also mentioned the potential of broadband in different areas including education, public health, and environment. Importantly, broadband would help the Pacific end the isolation. She gave examples of e-government services including the registration to vote that helped the exercise of democracy in Fiji. By joining together, the Pacific islands countries can gain from the economies of scale. She also stressed the importance of cybersecurity, and the capacity building within the Pacific which would be addressed in the Forum. She also said that the Government of Fiji is proud to host the meeting and is also willing to host it for the next 3 years. Lastly, she wished all participants a successful meeting.
- 2.6 Mr. Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary General of APT, presented a token of appreciation to Ms. Elizabeth Powell, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Fiji, as a recognition of Fiji's contribution to the event.
- 2.7 A group photo was taken at the end of the opening session.
- 3.0 Session 1: Review of Telecommunication in the Pacific**
Chairman: Mr. Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary General of APT
- Adoption of Agenda**
- 3.1 The Agenda and the programme of the PRF-P were adopted.
- 3.2 **Follow Up on the Bali Plan of Action** was presented by Mr. Stuart Davies, Telecom Expert, APT (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-17).

The presentation went through the Bali Plan of Action and Action items that are related to the PRF-P.

- 3.3 **Formation and Structure of Tonga Cable Limited** was presented by Mr. Robert S. Bolouri, Managing Director, Tonga Cable Limited, Tonga. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-07)

Ownership and management of cable systems can be a challenge for small countries with a small number of operators. Tonga has faced such situation and formed Tonga Cable Limited to be an independent entity to provide wholesale capacity to all operators in an open and fair basis. The presentation covered the various areas of the formation of Tonga Cable Limited.

4.0 **Session 2: Capacity Building for the Pacific Islands**

Chairman: Ms. Elizabeth Powell, Permanent Secretary of Public Enterprises, Communications, Civil Aviation and Tourism, Fiji

- 4.1 **Pacific ICT Regulatory Resource Centre – An Introduction** was presented by Mr. Muhammad Aslam Hayat, Director, PIRRC (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-11)

The presentation provided the background of the Pacific ICT Regulatory Resource Center (PiRRC). It discussed the regulatory challenges in the Pacific and the establishment of the resource center in response to these challenges. It also listed out benefits of the center and advised on the next steps.

- 4.2 **Capacity Building and ICT Policies, Regulatory and Legislative Frameworks for the Pacific Island Countries (ICB4PAC)** was presented by Ms. Gisa Fuatai Purcell, ITU-EC Project Coordinator, ITU, Fiji. (Doc. No. PRF-P/5/22)

The ICB4PAC project has provided regional capacity building workshops, conducted assessment reports on the present situation of licensing, national ICT policy, cybersecurity, universal access and services, Interconnection and Cost modeling, numbering and mobile roaming, in Pacific Island countries. The project is also providing in-country support in the same topics. The presentation outlined what has been done and the way forward.

- 4.3 **Report of the APT's HRD Expert Meeting** was presented by Mr. Stuart Davies, Telecom Expert, APT. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-18).

The presentation reported on the outcome of APT's HRD Expert Meeting, which discussed the possible improvement and future steps of the APT HRD programme to address the changing needs of the region. Recommendations made at the meeting covered the following areas:

1. Meeting Member Countries Needs
- 2: Possible Restructure of APT Training Program
- 3: Fellowship Arrangements
- 4: Evaluation of training courses and KPI's
- 5: Classroom Training versus Online Training
- 6: Implementation of Online Training

An HRD Experts Working Group, that will work online, was formed to action the recommendations.

Q&A

- Dr. Pramanik from JTEC commented on the small number of participants from Pacific island countries in the training courses and sometimes they did not turn up.
- Dr. Pramanik queried on the diverse level of expertise of the trainees. Mr. Davies responded that the required qualification for trainees attending the training course has to be clearly defined to address the issue.
- Mr. Asamu from Samoa commented on the needs to collaborate between PiRRC and ICB4PAC. On the fellowship issues mentioned by Mr. Davies, he suggested that this be discussed in the next MC and some warning should be issued to the nominating country.
- Ms. Powell suggested that incentives needed to be provided to retain the local staff that were trained within the Pacific.

4.4 Chairman then summarized the session.

5.0 Session 3: Policy and Regulation issues on Internet ***Chairman: Mr. Ivan Fong, President, PITA***

5.1 **Pacific Islands CERT (PacCERT)** was presented by Mr. Kisione Finau, PacCERT Board Member (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-05)

PacCERT was established to facilitate, coordinate and monitor activities related to cyber security and to provide a fast and effective response to cyber security threats. The presentation provided the background of PacCERT, its structure and current status including the challenges of establishing a CERT in this region. Mr. Kisione Finau also made a passionate appeal for funding assistance for PacCERT.

- 5.2 **Policy development in TLD space** was presented by Mr. Save Vocea, Manager, Regional Relations, ICANN (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-09).

The presentation shared and raised awareness of policy decisions of the new generic Top Level Domains (new gTLD) program and trends in country code Top Level Domains. It also discussed how local Internet stakeholders can participate in policy development at national, regional and global forums.

- 5.3 **IPv6 Deployment Status** was presented by Ms. Elly Tawhai, APNIC. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-03)

This presentation updated the Pacific on what is happening with the Internet numbering resources. Included were the current statistics on IPv4 and IPv6 address delegations, updates on Internet resource policies, implementation of IPv6 and the way forward.

- 5.4 **Broadband Service Quality: Diagnosing the Bottlenecks** was presented by Dr. Rohan Samarajiva, CEO, PiRRC. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-06)

Broadband consumer numbers are growing, but tests performed by LIRNEasia show that many users in developing countries experience poor quality in terms of throughput (upload speed, download speed), jitter, latency and packet loss. Diagnostic software, which allows performance checks across three domains: within a ISP; within the country but on a different ISP; and up to the Internet cloud, permits the identification of bottlenecks. Based on these findings, remedies such as encouraging regional Internet exchanges can be identified.

Q&A

- On the query regarding the cost to set up a CERT, Mr. Finau responded that the equipment, development of appropriate skill, and the connection to other centers are the main expenses.
- Mr. Fong added that sustaining the center with high operational costs is a very hard task.
- Mr. Satola from WorldBank, recommended all governments to join the Internet GAC (Governmental Advisory Committee). He also underscored the re-delegation of ccTLD. He said that the two-letter string is not owned by governments and that the re-delegation should be by contract instead of by law.
- Mr. Appi from Nauru queried PacCERT on whether it had involved the private sector. Mr. Finau from PacCERT replied that PacCERT had coordinated with and asked for contributions from all sectors including the private sector.

- Mr. Kila from PNG queried Dr. Samarajiva on the recommended regulatory response on the problem and the next step for the study.
- Dr. Samarajiva replied that the study is diagnostic. On the regulatory response, he explained by giving the examples that the high cost of broadband lies partly in getting connection to the domestic cable station that is in the realm of regulator. Other factors are, e.g., excessive charges in accessing the consortium cable. He mentioned that the issues for the most part are domestic.
- Dr. Samarajiva also added that the broadband should be driven by the demand side. He suggested that one should not try to discourage the demand.

6.0 Session 4: Cybersecurity

Chairman: *Mr. Stuart Davies, Telecom Expert, APT*

6.1 The Latest Update Security Threats in Social Network and Mobile Computing was presented by Mr. Prinya Hom-Anek, CEO, ACIS Professional Center, Thailand. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-20)

The issues on security incidents against privacy are being challenged, especially by Gen-Y people, via their lifestyle hacking behavior. With this concern, social analytics and monitoring tools, such as the next generation firewalls, were discussed. The session also highlighted some of the techniques such as a “clickjacking” and “drive by download” that an “attacker” can use to abuse many of the popular social network sites.

In recent years, the industry has witnessed the explosive growth in mobile data usage, with the boundaries between the PC and mobile devices blurring. Consumers and enterprises alike are increasingly relying on the mobile handset to keep and conduct their personal information and business transactions. With these new trends, a new breed of security threats facing the mobile networks is emerging and the number increasing every day as criminals are attracted to target attack the expanding mobile world. Smartphone security threats, viruses and privacy breaches are making media headlines more than ever before.

Day 2: 11 July 2012

7.0 **Session 5: International Connectivity for the Pacific Islands**

Chairman: Mr. Charles Punaha, CEO, NICTA, PNG

7.1 **International Connectivity – the Pacific Scene** was presented Mr. by John Hibbard, CEO, Hibbard Consulting Pty Ltd., Australia (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-02).

Broadband Internet is the key to the economic development and the social wellbeing of a country. Effective broadband use requires an abundant and less expensive connection to the global Internet. Submarine cables are the key for many countries and the presentation provided an update on the submarine cable status in the Pacific and identified some of the issues that Regulators face.

7.2 **A revolution in connectivity over satellite** by Mr. Imran Malik, Vice President Asia Pacific, O3B. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-15)

The Pacific Islands geographic and economic nature makes medium earth orbit satellite an option for providing international connectivity in terms of linking the Pacific islands to main population centres and to the Internet. The presentation addressed how O3b's constellation of satellites could bring cost effective 3G services to the Pacific and also act as a direct replacement or back-up for submarine fibre optic cables.

7.3 **International Connectivity for the Pacific Islands** was presented by Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, CEO, Fintel, Fiji (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-08).

The development of communications and applications of information and communication technologies in the Pacific has, over the decades, previously relied solely on satellite and radio based systems. The recent deployment of Submarine Cable Systems is bringing a new and refreshing change to how the Pacific now interconnects and communicates.

The need for well-developed telecommunications infrastructures is recognized as a basic catalyst for economic development and in the Pacific, this need is well acknowledged. The demand for increased penetration and improved service provision in the region should be a priority for policy makers.

Q&A

- On the query on the cost of the establishing and maintaining an O3b earth station, the speaker replied that the cost of earth station is more than a geostationary earth station. As O3b is Ka-band system, the antenna system is of a small size. In terms of tracking, Mr. Malik replied that the equipment used is the legacy system used in US DoD, but a new mount is

used. For the 1.8m antenna, only minimal maintenance is required. For the 4.5m antenna, twice a year maintenance is required.

- The 1.8m antenna station costs approximately 50-60K USD. The 4.5m has substantial cost and not recommended for a 300 Mbps type of circuit.
- On the query regarding the submarine cable cost / kilometer, Mr. Hibbard replied that it costs around 25-30K USD/km.
- Mr. Siaosi raised the point on the sub-regional connectivity arrangement that should be considered.
- On the query regarding the regional coverage and the size of spot beam, the speaker responded that this depends on the power density that can be distributed over the area. He explained that the spot beam is 700 km but it can be stretched to a maximum 900 km.

8.0 **Session 6 : Facilitating Broadband and its Application**

Chairman: Mr. Shivnesh Prasad, Acting Director, Ministry of Communications, Fiji

- 8.1 **National Broadband Network** was presented by Mr. Mark Heazlett, A/G First Assistant Secretary, Telecommunications Division, and Elizabeth O'Shea, Assistant Secretary, Stakeholder Engagement, Telecommunications Division, DBCDE, Australia. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-01)

The presentation provided an overview of the Australian Government's National Broadband Network (NBN) policy and associated regulatory reforms. The role of NBN Co Limited, the company established to build and roll out the network, was also discussed and the presenters advised on the progress to date.

Q&A

- On the query regarding if the ultimate goal of the gradual structural separation of Telstra would be similar as what happened to BT, Mr. Heazlett from DBCDE replied that the end result would be that Telstra operates as a retail operator.

- 8.2 **Cloud Computing** was presented by Dr. Sunil Lal, USP, Fiji. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-04)

As a technological revolution, cloud computing has become a buzzword, often used incorrectly, or mistaken for other concepts such as virtualization. The presentation provided an introduction to the cloud fundamentals in the hope of clearing the air on some of the misconceptions as well as some predisposed concerns about issues such as security. The presentation included case studies as well as advising cloud architecture and deployment options.

- 8.3 **Transforming a nation with broadband** was presented by Mr. Guillaume Mascot, APAC Public Affairs Director, Alcatel-Lucent. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-10)

The development of the digital economy is considered a key factor for the EU economy growth and competitiveness with the Internet and broadband being at the heart of the digital engine. Nearly 100 countries have announced a broadband development strategy or guidelines and provided substantial support for their broadband infrastructure. A successful digital strategy requires a mature ecosystem for future development and a strong input from government.

- 8.4 **e-Government: Way Forward** was presented by Mr. Siaosi Sovaleni, Manager, Pacific ICT Outreach Programme, SPC. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-14)

e-Government – the use of ICT to deliver government services efficiently and effectively- is a priority for Pacific countries as endorsed by Pacific ICT Ministers and officials in various other fora. The presentation discussed the current status of e-Government in the Pacific.

Q&A

- Mr. Hibbard from Hibbard Consulting queried as to how important the wiring and the infrastructure is in the e-government. Mr. Sovaleni replied that each country needs to identify what is appropriate for their need. The trend is to focus on infrastructure before the application.
- Mr. Patrick from PacCERT commented that the e-Government can attract cyber-attacks and e-government should be closely tied to the CERT development in the country. There should be plans to address the need for a CERT within the e-government project.
- Ms. Esther from USP added that there should be link between and Ministry of Communication and education. She mentioned that there is a concern on the security issue for the children in the education sector.
- On the query regarding the reason for the legislative approach to cybersecurity as most of the problems are coming from outside the region, Mr. Siaosi replied that there need to be measures in place to prosecute. He mentioned that it is a matter of how to criminalize the cyber attack.
- Legislation must be in place in the country of attacker and victim. It is suggested that there should also be legislation to protect critical infrastructure.
- Mr. Hayat commented that the existence of cybercrime legislation was important. Otherwise, the county could become a haven for cybercrime activities.

9.0 Session 7: Roles of Regulators

Chairman: Mr. Tuaimalo Asamu Ah Sam, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, Samoa

- 9.1 **Update of TAF Activities** was presented by Ana Tuionuku, Advisor, Telecommunications Authority of Fiji, Fiji. (Doc. No. PRF-P-/INP-23)

The presentation provided an update on TAF activities, which included Telecom Licence Migration from monopolised to the unified licensing regime, National Numbering that is under development, and Capacity Building. It also touched on technical assistance and capacity building from World Bank funded activities.

- 9.2 **NICTA 20 months on - Our Experiences & Challenges** was presented by Mr. Charles Punaha, CEO, NICTA, PNG. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-16)

NICTA was established on 29 October, 2010 as the ICT Regulator in Papua New Guinea. The presentation outlined PNG's experiences and challenges in its endeavours to establish NICTA as the converged ICT Regulator.

- 9.3 **Working Together to Drive Consumer Benefits** was presented by Mr. Andrew Kidu, Senior Legal & Regulatory Counsel, Digicel, Pacific (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-25)

The presentation talked about the role of the regulator in general. Regulation has its costs and regulatory measures should be balanced against the investment.

- 9.4 **Update on Number Hijacking activities and Preparations for WTSA and WCIT** was presented by Mr. Kila Gulo-Vui, Director, NICTA, PNG (Doc. No. PRF-P/5/24)

Number hijacking is the incident where calls to the destination (Pacific island countries) are diverted without the knowledge of the calling party, the called party or the local operator. It is fraudulent and forces many international operators to stop sending outgoing calls to these Pacific Island countries. This measure affects the potential incomes for the affected countries. The presentation discussed the Number Hijacking issues, the relevant ITU-T Recommendations & Resolutions and the current status of the proposals as inputs to the WTSA/WCIT preparation process.

Q&A

- On the issue of costing, given the limited resources of PICs, the view was sought on whether the PICs should have one regulator for each sector

such as energy, ICT, etc. or a multi sector regulator. It was suggested that multi-sector regulation will be a more economical model for small island states.

- Mr. Punaha shared the experience in PNG that PNG had problems with multi sector regulator that due to the lack of expertise in other sectors, the revenue from the ICT sector was used for paying for consultation expenses for the other sectors.
- Mr. De Freitas from Samoa also shared the similar experience that with multi-sector regulation, there was a dispersion of the focus of staff and the revenue from the ICT sector was used in other sectors.
- Mr. Siaosi from SPC commented regarding the small number of support from the Pacific to the PACPs on number hijacking and other ICT issues, could be because there might not be enough briefing of ICT issues to the government.

10.0 Session 8: Closed Regulator Discussion

Facilitator: Mr. Donnie Defreitas, Regulator, Samoa

Members that were present: Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

- . 10.1 This session was conducted in an open discussion format with the candid exchange of views and experience sharing among the regulators in the Pacific on the topics that are of interest in the Pacific region:

Discussion points included:

- **Short overview on existing legislation for smaller regulators** – Assistance from PiRRC and Donnie available
- **Spectrum Issues** – General advise was to allocate licenses using an Administrative procedure (open Market - best come/best served) and not to use auctions which should only be used if you are looking for an economic output.
Also noted was the APT 700 MHz band plan is available if Members required it.
Comment was also made the countries should be aware that the next WRC will include the proposals for IMT frequencies and the need for Pacific Islands to ensure that the satellite C Band frequencies are protected.
- **Templates for Regulators** – No one size fits all. PiRRC can possibly assist with Human Resources plans requirements
- **Competition regulation** – Post or ex-ante. Donnie recommended members to take a ex-ante approach

- **Multi sector Regulator** – the decision to look at a multi sector regulator is specific to each country and both are successful in different countries. As a general comment, a multi sector regulator is more appropriate for a small country while a specialised single sector regulator is more appropriate for a large country
- **Benchmarking of tariffs** - Bench marking can be used if it was cost based and appropriate for your country. Otherwise regulators should use a cost based methodology. There is a need to decide whether to use a fully allocated costs methodology or a LRIC methodology.
A further comment was the need to study IP costing methodology which is quite different.
- **Lessons learnt** – Share experiences in fora such as this forum and make use of the expertise and legislation already available in the region
APT also has a Study Visits program which can be used.
- **Litigation and dispute resolution** - Donnie made reference to the importance of process.
Mr. Eric Braun, EMB Legal Pty. Ltd., was then invited to give a brief overview of the various aspects of litigation issues that regulators should be aware of.

Day 3: 12 July 2012

11.0 **Session 9: Current Status of Telecommunications in the Pacific Islands** *Chairman: Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, CEO, Fintel, Fiji*

11.1 **The impact of competitive change in the Pacific: benchmarking mobile and Internet prices** was presented by Dr. Suella Hansen, Principal Consultant, Network Strategies, New Zealand (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-13)

Telecommunications services have undergone major changes in many Pacific Island countries, with a move away from monopoly service provision and opening of markets to allow the introduction of competition. An important indicator of the success of the competitive change is the impact on prices for the consumer. The presentation provided a comparative review of trends in mobile and Internet prices across Pacific Island countries.

11.2 **Intra-Region IDD Charges & Roaming within Pacific Island Countries** was presented by Ms. Shivanjni Anamika, Research Assistant, PiRRC. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-12)

The Pacific ICT Regulatory Resource Centre (PiRRC) has benchmarked international call and roaming rates among Pacific Island countries. The main objective of this exercise was to compare IDD and roaming rates for intra-calling within the 14 Pacific countries and to be able to show the price disparity within the region.

- 11.3 **Pacific ICT Development: Experiences and Prospects** was presented by Ms. Natasha Beschorner, Senior ICT Policy Specialist, Global Information & Communications Technology Department, World Bank. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-21)

The Pacific Islands region has experienced dramatic growth in access to telecommunications/ICT services in the past five years and due to the government efforts across the region, helped liberalise the telecommunications markets. New regulatory institutions have also been established and are working to ensure equitable access and pro-competitive behaviour by the telecoms industry. Improved access to ICT has already had multiple social benefits and is contributing to broader economic development and service delivery. The World Bank has, with other development partners, been assisting governments with sector reforms and institutional development and is currently advising governments in the northern Pacific. Looking ahead, the main challenges will be securing faster, cheaper broadband Internet access throughout the region to support multiple applications, ranging from ICT in education, to Government e-Services. In the coming years the World Bank will be working with partners to support improved regional connectivity and collaboration/harmonization on regulatory reforms, including on electronic transactions, e-security and related matters.

Q&A

- Mr. Maher from Telecom Cook Islands queried the WorldBank report regarding statement that an increase in broadband penetration results in an increase in GDP. The speaker replied that the impact of broadband is more significant in developing countries and the study had indicated that Internet creates jobs directly and indirectly, which increases income. The investment in IT also increases. She also mentioned that there have been similar reports with similar results done by other organizations.
- Dr. Hansen added that the data in the report was only collected up to 2006. It would be interesting to see the result of the study with the up-to-date data.
- On the query regarding the suggestion of the role of regulator to improve affordability in a low income country, Dr. Hansen replied that the introduction of competition in the private sector and market liberalization could help. However, the low income issue is not going to change in a short period of time.

12.0 Session 10: Policy and Regulation for the Consumer ***Chairman: Mr. Alifeleti Tuihalamaka, Deputy Secretary,*** ***Ministry of Information & Communications, Tonga***

- 12.1 **Consumer Issues** was presented by Mr. Ivan Fong, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Telecom Fiji Ltd., Fiji. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-26)

The presentation discussed the consumer issues that an operator typically faces and the way to resolve the issues. It also provided some perspectives on the issues from the operator's point of view and that there should be balance of interests between the investors, consumers, and the regulator.

12.2 **APT IMR Working Group Report** was presented by Mr. Stuart Davies, Telecom Expert, APT. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-19)

The presentation reported on the APT activities in IMR and the IMR Working Group report, which was the major output. The Report contains the final recommendations on the various aspects of IMR including:

1. Transparency of IMR Information which consists of Guidelines for both Operators and Regulators
2. Measures to Address Mobile Bill Shock
3. Substitutes for IMR Services
4. Bilateral or Multilateral Arrangements for IMR
5. Sharing of APT's works on IMR with other regional and international organizations

12.3 **Challenges posed by VoIP** was presented by Mr. Jules Maher, CEO/MD, Telecom Cook Islands, Cook Islands. (Doc. No. PRF-P-5/INP-27).

VOIP and other applications present both opportunities and threats for the telecommunications operators and challenges for policy makers and regulators. There is also the need to understand the long term implications and applying appropriate controls.

Q&A

- Mr. Horne commented that Skype drives the broadband connectivity uptake and helps the operator earn a fixed monthly fee from the broadband service. He recommend regulators not to regulate Skype.
- Mr. Hibbard commented that consumer can look at the price per-MB and select the best price for services such as SMS when compared with other services such as the Internet and smartphone services.
- Mr. Fong replied that the operator can control and allow customers to choose the service with different service quality. The operator can look at the demand and then decide on pricing to meet the demand.
- Mr. Iaone from Fintel commented that VoIP has been treated differently before and after liberalizing the market. Fintel did not ban Skype after the

liberalization. His view on Skype was that there are certain areas need to be addressed by regulation.

- Mr. Maher from TCI added that there are also some other issues with Skype such as the capability of intercepting and tracing calls, especially for emergency calls.

13.0 Session 11: Future Outlook and Summary of the Forum

13.1 Panel Discussion: The Way Forward

Facilitator: Mr. Stuart Davies, Telecom Expert, APT

Panelist:

- **Mr. Charles Punaha, CEO, NICTA, PNG**
- **Mr. Mac Mokoroa, Chief of Staff, Office of the Prime Minister, Cook Islands**
- **Mr. Tuaimalo Asamu Ah Sam, CEO, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, Samoa**
- **Mr. Alan Horne, Regulator, Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator, Vanuatu**

13.2 The session consisted of general discussion on the next step going forward for the Pacific region with the panellists.

13.3 As a result of the discussion, the following comments and suggestions were made :

- Mr. Punaha commented that the Pacific is making progress. He said that the challenges are on the high cost of infrastructure and measures that should be taken to address the issues. Capacity building is required. The region, especially the small islands states, need assistance from PiRRC. The region should identify the issues to be addressed.
- Mr. Mokoroa from Cook Islands spoke on behalf of the small island states which have a population of less than 20K. He said that the issues are, high cost, lack of human resource capacity and the international connectivity choices between O3b and submarine cable. He requested APT and ITU review the contribution fee to join their organizations.
- He also requested APT to help seek extra funding assistance from donors for SIS.
- Mr. Horne from Vanuatu said that there seems to be rivalry between many organizations. He suggested taking stock of organizations and responsibilities of each organization. He mentioned, as examples, ITU, SPC, APT, ICB4PAC, PiRRC, PITA, CTO, EU, etc. He commented that APT, ICB4PAC, and PiRRC are the real experts in the area. He sought an economic policy for ICT

which supports other sectors of the region. He suggested that SPC to coordinate for ministerial support while APT and smaller organizations are the lead for more detailed plans, tools, and capacity building.

- He requested all relevant organizations to work together and segment the work for the benefit of the region.
- Mr. Asamu from Samoa commented that the future is in mobile, Internet, and broadband. In terms of institutional changes, the region has seen reforms and privatization in many countries such as Samoa. There are a lot of challenges in the region. He acknowledged the good work of APT. In moving forward, countries are at different stages of reforms. In some countries, there are still monopolies and some still do not have regulator. He stressed the good points of competition.
- He suggested that policy development of APT in collaboration with other organizations such as ICB4PAC and SPC should be continued.
- Mr. Davies summarized the following points :
 - o need for capacity building,
 - o the plea for more assistance to the SISs,
 - o the coordination between agencies,
 - o the future of ICT is in Internet and mobile,
 - o the need for ICT policy development.
- Mr. Horne added APT should have activities on applications such as e-government, applications in health, and the education sector, and how applications help the broadband to grow.
- Mr. Asamu added that Cybersecurity should be made a priority. He said that one should look at the social impact of new technologies such as Facebook. There should be sense of responsibility together with their promotion.
- Mr. Punaha stressed the importance of networking among PICs. He suggested that bigger and more developed countries should avail themselves to assist other smaller countries in the region.
- Mr. Davies mentioned the role of PITA who have funds available to facilitate the more developed countries assisting smaller countries in a program known as Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries (TCDC).

14.2 The Forum has discussed and provided input for the work activities for relevant items of Bali Plan of Action. For detail, please refer to Doc. No. PRF-P-5/OUT-01.

15.0 Closing Session

15.1 Ms. Blanche Salli, on behalf of PITA, delivered her closing remarks.

15.2 Ms. Elizabeth Powell, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Fiji, on behalf of Government of Fiji, delivered the closing remarks.

15.3 Mr. Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary General, APT delivered his closing address. He thanked PITA for co-organizing the meeting and Government of Fiji for hosting the Forum and Digicel for hosting the welcome dinner. He also thanked all participants for their active participation and the speakers and panellists for their contributions. He suggested that the Forum consider developing the structure of the Forum by having office bearers, working methods and a document approval procedure so that the Forum can have a more solid basis to produce tangible outcomes. Finally, he wished all participants a pleasant journey back home.

15.3 Mr. Yamada then declared the Forum closed.
