



**FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE  
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**PROPOSED REVISIONS TO REGULATIONS**

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**WCPFC14-2017-FAC11-08  
20 November 2017**

**Paper by Secretariat**

**Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to table for the consideration of the Committee a proposal to revise the Financial Regulations to provide for a deadline for requesting funding for travel to attend meetings of the Commission.

**Introduction**

2. Regulation 3.5 of the Financial Regulations stipulates that the Commission shall include the cost of “one representative from each developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions, to each meeting of the Commission and to meetings of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission.”

3. Under the Financial Regulation, there is no time constraint placed on requesting funding for this travel. Continued delays in receiving nominations for Commission funded participants to attend meetings is an ongoing concern for the Secretariat. Some requests are received one day prior to the commencement of travel. In other cases travellers have shown up to meetings without prior notification requesting payment of DSAs. In addition to the higher direct cost of purchasing tickets late due to late nominations for travel, additional per diem is required in some cases where participants have had to arrive earlier or stay later as a result of limited flight availability. The delays in receiving nominations also increase the uncertainty in transferring DSAs to the meeting venues as even days prior to meeting there is a large degree of uncertainty to the amount that will be needed at the meeting. This necessitates the transfer of excess funds to account for late nominations. Those funds are often unused and must be transferred back to the Secretariats Headquarters at a cost.

4. Therefore, the Secretariat proposes that the Financial Regulation 3.5 should be revised to include a deadline for finalizing travel to a meeting that is both reasonable

to travellers, maximized the budget and allows for the Secretariat to adequately prepare for meeting of the Commission.

### **Precedents for such assistance**

5. Amongst the regional organizations in the Pacific, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has a travel policy that states “Participants are expected to be responsive when confirming itineraries. If a participant does not confirm their itinerary by the set deadline (normally 30 days before the meeting or workshop) SPC will not pay for the travel. The participant (or their organisation) will need to bear the entire cost of the trip. Participants are to be advised of this policy when the invitations to the meeting or workshop are sent.”

6. The FFA Secretariat has in its travel a statement that "As a rule, the travel booking, approval and ticketing process must be fully completed no less than two weeks (14 days) prior to departure. This enables the Agency to secure significant overall savings. Forms submitted with less than two weeks’ notice must have adequate explanation provided for the Director General as to why the late application was received and this may still be rejected on a cost basis."

### **Proposed Revision**

7. It is therefore proposed that a new sentence is added to regulation 3.5 of the Financial Regulations that regulation 3.5 should now reads as follow:

*“3.5 The draft budget shall include an item specifying the costs required to finance the travel and subsistence for one representative from each developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions, to each meeting of the Commission and to meetings of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission. In order to receive the funding, travel itineraries shall be finalized two weeks prior to commencing travel.”*

### **Recommendation**

8. The Committee is invited to consider and adopt the proposed revision to the Financial Regulations contained in paragraph 7 above.