



**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**  
**Fourteenth Session**  
Electronic Meeting  
7 – 15 December 2020

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**HEADQUARTERS MATTERS**

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**WCPFC17-2020-FAC14-08**  
**17 November 2020**

**Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to present for the information and consideration of FAC the issues concerning the operations at the Commission Headquarters in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. They include headquarters' property, security, telecommunications, travel, environmental responsibility, medical care and utility services

**Operational Issues**

Telecommunications and Internet

2. This year the communication systems and services were available with minimal downtime. In addition to the fibre-optic connection to the Headquarter's building provided by FSM Telecommunications Corporation, the office established a backup satellite connection with Kacific which launched internet services in FSM in 2020.

Utility Services

3. As in previous years, there continues to be a significant number of blackouts, brownouts and electrical power surges in Pohnpei. Although most of the IT infrastructure is protected, these electrical problems have caused damage to other equipment and appliances both at the Headquarter's building and staff residences.

Headquarters Building

4. The headquarters building remains in good condition due to regular maintenance. The Commission approved terms of reference and budget for the consultancy to undertake a building survey and the development of a maintenance plan for the Commission buildings (WCPFC15-2018-FAC12-09). The consultant that was selected to undertake this work was scheduled to travel to Pohnpei in the first quarter of 2020. Unfortunately, the consultant was not able to travel to Pohnpei due to COVID-19. This work will commence once the travel restrictions related to COVID-19 in FSM have been lifted.

COVID and Medical Care in Pohnpei

5. FSM remains one of the few COVID free countries in the world. FSM shut its borders to disembarking passengers in March 2020 and as of the date of this paper, no passengers have been allowed to disembark on any international flights. The office implemented a four-stage plan in response to the pandemic. Additional details on the Headquarters impact and preparations to the pandemic can be found in the 2020 Annual Report of the Executive Director (WCPFC17-2020-04).

6. Medical care in Pohnpei has been a serious concern for both local and professional staff during the pandemic. Due to a contract dispute with the Pohnpei state government, a number of doctors have resigned from the public hospital in the last few months. With the current travel restrictions, no new doctors are expected in the near future. In addition, due to the contract dispute, recruitment of new doctors may be problematic once travel restriction are removed.

#### Security

7. The headquarters' compound maintains 24-hour security through directly hiring security guards. There was one instance of laptop theft from a vehicle. The laptops were meetings support items, not carrying sensitive information and as per best practices, the laptops were encrypted so no data could be compromised. The theft was reported to the police. There were no security incidents reported at professional staff housing over the last year.

#### Travel

8. Due to COVID, all regular flights have been cancelled this year. United Airlines has been servicing Pohnpei on an irregular schedule and no passengers are allowed to depart in FSM.

#### Environmental Responsibility

9. The Secretariat continues to be conscious of the impacts of the operations of the WCPFC HQ building on the environment. The Secretariat has greatly reduced its use of non-recyclable items and has worked to recycle as much waste as possible.

10. The Headquarters power is now primarily generated by solar energy with roughly 80-90% of the power consumed from solar power. Apart from the reduced impact on the environment, the costs saving to the Secretariat have been significant. In 2020, the headquarters building, with funding assistance from the US, was able to expand the solar system.

#### IT Audit update

11. The annual IT Audit for 2020 was delayed due to the inability of the auditor to travel to Pohnpei. The 2019 report was finalized in 2020 and the IT/VMS Security Audit Report is available on the secure section of the Commissions website (Circular 2020/124)

#### **Recommendation**

12. The Committee is invited to discuss and note the paper.