



**NINTH REGULAR SESSION
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
Sixth Session
Manila, Philippines
01 - 06 December 2012**

HEADQUARTERS MATTERS

**WCPFC9-2012 –FAC6-08
31 October 2012**

Introduction

1. This paper discusses a number of issues related to Secretariat's operations in Pohnpei including the death of a staff member, headquarters property, security, telecommunications, travel and utility services.

Current Issues

Death of Staff Member

2. Administrative Officer Layleen Oliver passed away in May. The Secretariat attended the funeral ceremonies and the Director spoke at her wake. As per Pohnpei tradition, a gift of a pig, sakau and taro was presented to Layleen's family from the Commission. Life insurance was paid as per the Staff Regulations.

Telecommunications/Internet

2. Telecommunications and Internet have been stable over the last year. The Secretariat maintains a satellite communications link has been retained as a redundancy measure.

Utility Services

4. Since the last Commission meeting (WCPFC8) in March, the frequency and duration of blackouts has dramatically decreased. The cost of electricity per kilowatt has increased by 9.25% in the last 10 months.

Travel

5. Travel to Pohnpei continues to be difficult as United Airlines has ceased the Fiji to Guam route. The costs of flights using United, the sole carrier that services Pohnpei, have increased. United Airlines also introduced more advance purchase fares which means cheaper fares must be purchased 30 days prior to departure.

Security

6. The office has implemented 24 hour security through directly hiring guards. There have been no instances of theft at the Commission since the last annual meeting. There continue to be security incidents at professional staff residences. Since the last meeting, there have been three attempted break-ins and two successful burglaries.

Meeting Travel

7. Under Financial Regulation 3.5, “[t]he 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.” For the SC meeting, eleven developing States, Territories or possessions made their nominations in time. For the TCC meeting four developing States, Territories and possessions made their nominations in by the deadline. Delays in receiving nominations for meetings in a timely manner along with last minute cancelations cost the Commission an estimated USD22,700 this year for the SC and TCC meetings. Besides the direct cost of late ticket purchases, additional per diem was required in some cases when participants had to arrive earlier or stay later as a result of limited flight availability due to making last minute flight arrangements.

Directors House

8. In July, the Secretariat went to tender for the refurbishment of the Directors house. Bids were received from 7 contractors and Pacific Landscaping, Engineering and Construction was selected. The award was based on a fixed price of USD165,000. The contractor is currently working on refurbishing the Director’s house. The refurbishment is scheduled to be completed by December 23rd, 2012.

Recommendation

9. The Committee is invited to:
 - i. Note and discuss the report;