

TO: Representatives of Governments and Administrations
Directors of Health **No.:** 06/07

FILE: PRO 2/20/4/1 **DATE:** 8 June 2006

SUBJECT: **REGIONAL WORKSHOP : “LABNET 2006”**

1. Within the framework of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPSHN), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, with the financial assistance of ADB, will be organising the regional workshop “LabNet 2006” from July 31 to August 4 2006 in Noumea, New Caledonia.

TENTATIVE OBJECTIVES

2. The tentative objectives are:
 - i. to update the participants on the progress of LabNet development, which will include a discussion on lab-based surveillance activities.
 - ii. to assess the current situation of lab testing and specimen shipment with regards to PPHSN target diseases, and plan further developments particularly for pandemic flu preparedness
 - ii. to review and discuss the linkages and support available through reference laboratories of the Australian and New Zealand Public Health Laboratory Network.
 - iv. to discuss and clarify the technical aspects of laboratory tests available for the PPHSN target diseases.
 - v. to discuss participants experiences in the use of rapid tests (lepto, dengue and influenza).
 - vi. to further assess training needs of laboratory health professionals and to demonstrate test methods.

FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP

3. Format of the workshop will incorporate different presentations:
 - plenary presentations
 - hands-on training presentations with exercises and demonstrations
 - group work with shared discussions and outputs, recommendations and conclusions.

AGENDA

4. The provisional agenda will be provided to the participants when they are nominated.

LANGUAGE

4. The meeting will be conducted in English. Due to conflicts with other meetings French translation will not be available, however, the French speaking participants have been notified and they have stated that they will be comfortable with an all English workshop.

VENUE AND DATE

6. The Workshop will be held from July 31- August 4 2006. The venue will be the auditorium of the Institute of Research and Development (IRD), located in Anse Vata, Noumea., next to SPC.

NOMINATIONS

7. Governments of the twenty-two participating Pacific Island countries and territories are invited to nominate the laboratory professional of their EpiNet team or the Head of the National/Territorial laboratory **no later than 15 July 2006**. The nominations should be sent to:

Dr Tom Kiedrzyński
SPC Public Health Programme
Public Health Surveillance & Communicable Disease Control Section
B.P. D5 98848, NOUMEA CEDEX
New Caledonia
Fax: (687) 26 38 18
E-mail: tomk@spc.int

8. In order to facilitate communication, permission is requested from Governments for the SPC to correspond directly with the nominated participants. Unless advised otherwise, it will be assumed this arrangement is acceptable.

TRAVEL AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

9. SPC Public Health Programme's Public Health Surveillance and Communicable Diseases Control Section will be responsible for:
 - Return economy class air fares (at excursion rates if possible) to Noumea, New Caledonia, by the most direct route for the participants from American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis & Futuna;
 - Daily subsistence allowances for any necessary stopovers and for the duration of the stay in Noumea (transport, meals, airport tax) will be paid at SPC official per diem rates.
9. If participants choose to fly by an alternative routing to that provided by SPC, the participant or their Government or Administration will be responsible for any additional cost.
10. There is no airport departure tax in New Caledonia.

ACCOMMODATION IN NOUMEA

11. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community will arrange hotel bookings in Anse Vata, Noumea, close to the workshop venue. Accommodation in shared rooms (2 by room) will be possible, if requested.

VISA

12. A visa to enter New Caledonia is compulsory except for citizens of Australia (and all Australian passport holders), Canada, Japan, New Zealand (and all New Zealand passport holders), USA (and all USA passport holders) and European Union countries.

13. Participants from Fiji (holding Fijian passport), Papua New Guinea (holding Papua New Guinea passport) and Vanuatu (holding Vanuatu passport) are required to obtain visas to enter New Caledonia from their local French Embassies or Consulates well before departure as the Embassies need 2 weeks to process visas.
14. For delegates from the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu, the SPC will arrange for a visa to be issued on arrival in Nouméa providing that the Secretariat (eliseb@spc.int; Fax (687) 263818) is advised of the participants passport details **at least two weeks prior to arrival** in order to prepare the supporting documentation.
15. **IMPORTANT.** Participants transiting in New Zealand or Australia need a “transit visa”. They will have to obtain a “transit visa” themselves prior to departure, from the nearest Embassy/Consulate/High Commissioner.

INSURANCE

16. It should be noted that the Secretariat of the Pacific Community does not insure participants either during their stay or during travel to or from the meeting and decline any financial responsibility in the event of disease, injury, disability or death.

FURTHER INFORMATION

17. Enquiries for further information on arrangements should be addressed to:

Secretariat of the Pacific Community:

Dr Tom Kiedrzyński (tomk@spc.int), Epidemiologist
Albert Gurusamy (albertg@spc.int), Lab Specialist
Mrs Elise Benyon (eliseb@spc.int), Data Processing Officer
Public Health Surveillance and Communicable Diseases Control Section
Public Health Programme
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
B.P. D5 - 98848 Noumea CEDEX, New Caledonia
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for **Dr Jimmie Rogers**
Director-General

Original text: English