

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

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## Background Paper 12

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# Overview of Activities of the Training Section 1996–1999

Training Section  
Marine Resources Division  
Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
Noumea, New Caledonia



## **FISHERIES TRAINING SECTION**

### **OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD August 1996 – August 1999**

This paper provides an overview of the activities carried out by the Fisheries Training Section since RTMF 26 (August 1996). Its aim is to facilitate discussions with meeting delegates in order to receive constructive feedback on the Section's past and current activities as well as to prioritise future inputs of the Section in the development of the region's fisheries sector.

#### **Staffing and funding**

During the reporting period, the staffing level of the Section remained unchanged. The Section consists of three full-time staff: the Fisheries Education and Training Adviser (FETA) position filled by Michel Blanc, the Fisheries Training Specialist (FTS) which remained vacant between September 1996 and July 1997 when it was taken up by Terri Luciani, and the Project Assistant position (PA/FTS) filled by Christine Briffa since 1995. An additional position, the Fisheries Information and Training Associate (FITA), is shared with the Information Section.

The governments of Australia and France continue to kindly meet the Section's operational budget as part of their financial contribution to SPC extra-budgetary funds. The positions of FETA and PA/FTS are funded by Australia, while the FTS and FITA posts are funded by France. Securing the funding of new training initiatives is an important task for Section staff and, overall, our efforts have been successful. Recent and current training activities have received substantial financial support from the governments of New Zealand, the ROC/Taiwan, Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Foundation, and the United Nations Development Programme.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of the Section were reviewed and redefined at the 1992 RTMF. These objectives continue to be valid and to guide Section staff in their work. They can be summarised as follows:

##### *Co-ordination of fisheries training*

Act as a vehicle for enhancing the transfer of fisheries-related skills and knowledge to Pacific Island national by co-ordinating fisheries training opportunities and promoting the exchange of relevant information on fisheries training;

##### *Fisheries training planning*

Assist Pacific Island countries to plan and implement training programmes in the fisheries sector, and to make best use of available training opportunities;

##### *Implementation of training activities*

Develop training programmes in areas where Pacific Island country requirements are not fully satisfied, particularly in vocational areas not addressed by established training programmes, and non-formal or hands-on training for individuals who may not have extensive educational backgrounds.

#### **Activities undertaken from 1996 to 1999**

The Section's current work programme follows the above objectives and was adjusted in August 1996 to take account of the recommendations made at the 26th RTMF. The following provides an overview of recent and current activities, in relation to RTMF26 recommendations.

##### Recommendation No. 1

*"...The meeting also acknowledged the need for increased collaboration between the different Sections that make up the Coastal Fisheries Programme, and between the CFP and other relevant organisations....."*

## **Collaboration with other CFP Sections**

The Training Section works very closely with three other Sections of the CFP.

The collaboration with Capture Section has, over the last three years, included a series of national workshops on sashimi-tuna handling and grading (PNG, Tonga, Kiribati and Fiji), the participation of a masterfisherman in the practical module of the SPC/Nelson course and, the regional course on vessel operation management for commercial fishing skippers (February 1998) for which in-country followups were carried out by SPC masterfishermen.

Collaboration with the Community Fisheries Section is more recent but is likely to increase as a result of the temporary unstaffing of the Post-harvest Section. Both Sections have jointly co-ordinated the 1999 regional course on seafood business operations and management for PI women. Staff of both Sections have also collaborated for the development of SPC policy on gender training.

The position of Fisheries Information and Training Associate makes an obvious link with the Information Section. In addition, the publication of the revised version of the "Onboard handling of sashimi-grade tuna" manual was completed as a joint exercise between both Sections.

A proposal for the funding of the Capture, Community Fisheries, Information and Training Sections' activities and/or operational costs has been submitted to AusAid. If approved, this proposal would result in an increased collaboration between those Sections.

As part of its co-ordination role, the Training Section is required to interact with most, if not all, national and regional institutions engaged in fisheries training. This interaction is ongoing and varied:

### **Transfer and exchange of relevant information on fisheries training**

Over the last few years, the Section has developed and co-ordinated a network of fisheries training providers via the Fisheries Training Directory and the SIG bulletin on Fisheries Education and Training.

The Fisheries Training Directory database lists programmes and institutions of interest to Pacific Island fisheries personnel. This database is maintained and kept up-to-date by H  l  ne Lecomte (Secretary/Director Marine Resources Division). A hard copy of the Directory is printed and distributed at regular intervals (the latest version was printed in June and is available to meeting representatives).

The Section's bulletin on Fisheries Education and Training is one of ten Special Interest Group bulletins initiated by the Information Section. It is published twice a year and its aim is to link national and regional training institutions, training users and the private sector. Over the years, the bulletin has become a popular means for advertising and reporting the training initiatives for the region's fisheries personnel.

### **Development of regional training programmes**

The implementation of new training initiatives often requires the Section to seek inputs from institutions based outside of the region. This is particularly true for areas new to the region such as fisheries enterprises management training or STCW95-compliant training for vessel crew.

The ongoing collaboration between SPC and the New Zealand School of Fisheries is illustrated by the annual six-month Pacific Island Fisheries Officers course which has celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1999 and trained over 240 persons between 1979 and 1999. More recently, this collaboration made possible the implementation of a regional training programme on the management of fisheries enterprises. Four courses targeting managers, skippers and women managers have been run between March 1997 and May 1999.

SPC is also collaborating with Australian training institutions for the development of teaching materials in support of statutory certificates for vessel crews. In 1998, the Australian Maritime College (AMC) was contracted by the SPC Maritime Programme to develop a comprehensive set of course materials in line with STCW95 and the certification structure adopted by the region. The Training Section, in association with the Maritime Programme, is co-ordinating the development of materials for the certificates that relate to crew (Safety certificate) and skippers (Class 6 master/engineer certificate) of fishing vessels of less than 15 meters. To that effect, a consultant from the Australian Fisheries Academy (AFA) worked with the Section for two weeks in July 1999.

### **Advisory services to national and regional institutions**

Section staff, as well as other CFP staff, have taken part in the advisory committee which has assisted USP in developing a training strategy for the CSPODII-funded Post-harvest Fisheries Development Project.

Similarly, the Section continues to provide advisory services to national training institutions. Areas of assistance have included pre-sea training for new entrants (Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Marshall Islands, Kiribati), strategic planning and HR development (PNG, Vanuatu and FSM), institutional linkage (New Caledonia/Vanuatu), small vessel certification and legislation (Tonga, Samoa and FSM).

Consultation with FFA on the issue of crew employment onboard US purse-seiners made possible the development of two-week safety course aimed at screening potential recruits. The course was run by the Kiribati Fisheries Training Centre in February 1999, with assistance from the Training Section.

#### Recommendation No 4:

*“...the Meeting recommended that SPC further assist with the strengthening of national training capacities and, wherever possible, should collaborate with local institutions. This assistance and cooperation should include, but not limited to, activities such as tutor training and planning of staff development, the production of resource materials and the development of new programmes.”*

As mentioned under recommendation No 1, the Training Section has, during the reporting period, worked very closely with national training institutions. A list of activities targeting those institutions is given below:

#### **Development of new programmes**

- Pre-sea safety and fishing course

This 2-week course was developed in 1997 at the request of the Vanuatu Fisheries Training Centre. Its aim was to give young Ni-Vanuatu basic safety and fishing skills to help find jobs on Taiwanese longliners. The second objective of the course was to screen those participants who are suitable for the rigours of life on an oceanic longliner. The Section developed the resource materials for the course which was run for the first time in August 1997. Two additional courses were run in Vanuatu in 1998 and, as a result, many of the participants have been employed on Taiwanese longliners. The course outline was circulated to other training institutions and, early in 1998, Fiji and Tonga ran the same programme. Later in 1998, a modified version of the Vanuatu course was produced to target purse-seine vessel crew and, in February 1999, the Kiribati Fisheries Training Centre ran its course.

- Statutory certificates for fishing vessel crew

As part of SPC's efforts to assist countries with the introduction of STCW95 requirements in their legislation, the Maritime Programme has developed a standardised certification structure with corresponding course materials. While the certification requirements for the bigger vessels need to follow IMO guidelines, countries have the possibility to put in place, for their smaller vessels, a legislation and certification structure that reflects specific vessel designs, types and areas of operations. The SPC Training Section is thus concentrating its present efforts on modifying some of the materials by the SPC Maritime Programme for certificates that are or will be required for small vessel crew and skippers.

At the request of national training institutions, the Section started, in 1997, with the production and distribution of course materials for the Pacific Island Qualified Fishing Deckhand (PIQFD) certificate. More recently, the Section has co-ordinated the development of a three-day safety certificate which is likely to be the entry point in the certification structure of several countries including Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. The materials for the 3-day course include a trainer's guide with learning outcomes and guidelines for assessment and delivery. In addition, a trainee's manual covers the course content through a large amount of illustrations and minimum text so that it can be easily translated in local languages. With regards to the certification of small vessel skippers, the Section is developing additional modules for the Class 6 master/engineer course. Extra modules cover Basic boat handling for small vessels, Basic diesel engineering and Basic outboard motor engineering. It is expected that this wider range of materials in modular form will give the countries more flexibility to develop a small-vessel legislation that is relevant to their specific context.

### **Production of resource materials**

During the reporting period, the Section has produced a range of resource materials to assist training institutions. These materials include:

- A package for the two-week pre-sea safety and fishing course: teacher's reference materials, delivery guidelines, 16 videos, overheads and laminated pictures, a trainee's manual "Safety Aboard Fishing Vessels";
- A package for the three-day Basic safety course: trainer's guide and trainee's manual;
- Three SPC training videos: "Better Safe than Sorry", "Survival at Sea – A Kiribati Tale", and "Fishy Business";
- A practical guide for crew members "On-board handling of sashimi-grade tuna";
- Some public awareness materials on safety for small boats: four posters, a safety gear check-list in sticker and laminated-card forms, eight video clips for TV stations, one audio-tape programme for radio stations, one trainer's guide for workshops targeting FAD fishers;
- A package for running workshops on the financial management of small fishing businesses: trainer's workshop guide, "Fishy Business" video, fishing vessel log-book;
- A trainer's guide for workshop on fish handling for FAD fishers.

### **Tutor training**

As part of the Fisheries Programme's mandate to implement strategic training activities, the Training Section has undertaken to organise, on request, subject-specific training for individuals through attachments or short courses. Since August 1996, the majority of training attachments and short courses have been organised for individuals from either fisheries administrations or the private sector mainly in the area of aquaculture. Several activities have targeted staff of training institutions:

- Peter James, manager of the Vanuatu Fisheries Training Centre, attended a four-week course on the management of training centres, in June 1998. The course was hosted by the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand;
- One consultant-tutor from New Zealand supervised the initial pre-sea safety and fishing course in Vanuatu and Tonga. The consultant co-ordinated inputs from the local tutors and advised them on ways to improve course delivery;
- In February 1998, SPC Fisheries Training Specialist, supervised the initial pre-sea course for potential crew on US purse-seiners in Kiribati. Local tutors delivered the course with advice from SPC staff;

- Nare Wolu, fisheries instructor at the newly created Vanuatu Maritime College, attended a two-week Qualified Fishing Deckhand course in New Zealand in July 1999. The course was followed by a one-week training on teaching skills development.

Recommendation No 5:

*“...the meeting recommended that SPC continue to implement training programmes for artisanal and industrial fisheries sectors. Priority areas for include, as far as possible, all aspects of technical and management skills required to successfully operate commercial fishing enterprises”*

Although national fisheries administrations remain a primary target group through the Section’s longest training course -the annual 6-month SPC/Nelson Fisheries Officers course-, the private sector has received increasing assistance in recent years.

**Enterprise management training**

Fishing enterprises in the Pacific are changing from small-scale inshore to larger-scale offshore ventures. This change requires experienced personnel at all levels, especially in those areas where an understanding of business management practices is needed. It is essential that these new fishing enterprises succeed, not only for the employment they generate, both at sea and ashore, but also to demonstrate that a fishing enterprise is a good investment of time and capital.

In response to the recommendation made at RTMF26, funding was obtained to develop and implement a regional training programme on the management of fisheries enterprises.

In March 1997, a two-week regional course for managers of medium-to-large size fisheries enterprises was run by the Section and the New Zealand School of Fisheries (NZSOF) in Nelson, the biggest fishing port in New Zealand. This course, the first of this kind to be organised by SPC, exposed participants to modern fishing industries and management practices. The training was well received by the participants who recommended that the course is repeated for other staff within their enterprises. In addition, they underlined the need to give their skippers a better understanding of the financial management of a fishing vessel and to expose them to new ideas and new technology which could improve their catching performance. As a follow-up to the pilot course, the Community secured UNDP-funding and ran a two-week training course on vessel operation management and electronic aids for commercial fishing skippers. The course was held at the NZSOF in February 1998.

The ongoing collaboration between SPC and the New Zealand School of Fisheries made possible the implementation of a second regional workshop for managers, in August 1998. A third course is scheduled for October 1999, with funding from the government of ROC/Taiwan. By the end of the year, 36 fisheries enterprise managers will have benefited from Nelson-based experience and expertise in areas such as business planning and accounting, seafood quality, charters and joint ventures, vessel operation management, marketing...

Taking advantage of New Zealand seafood industry’s experience, the Training Section and the NZSOF ran, in April/May 1999, a four-week course for 13 women currently responsible for the management of a seafood. The course, very “hands-on”, focussed on business management skills, seafood safety and quality systems, product development and marketing.

The Training Section would like to continue offering enterprise management training in association with the NZSOF. To that effect, several funding proposals have recently been put forward to aid donors.

**Technical skills training**

As a consequence of the development of domestic tuna longline operations in the region, there is an increasing training need in the area of tuna handling, grading and value-added products. Following the request of some member countries and territories, SPC organised and ran two regional sashimi-tuna workshops in FSM (August 1995) and Tonga (August 1997). As a follow-up, the Training Section has organised a series of national workshops with funding assistance from ROC/Taiwan.

Between May 1997 and July 1999, eleven workshops have been run in six Pacific Island countries and territories (Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, French Polynesia, Kiribati, and Fiji), with a total attendance of 189 persons. Although the primary target group was the crew of tuna longliners, a number of shore staff (including fish packers, fish retailers, tuna exporters) as well as some fisheries officers have benefited from the workshops. Most of the workshops have been run in conjunction with Capture Section staff.

With the current non-funding of the Post-harvest Section, the Training Section is likely to become more involved in post-harvest training. While USP and the Community Fisheries Section run workshops and provide advisory services for coastal fishing communities, the Training Section could co-ordinate training activities and advisory services for the commercial seafood enterprises, in areas such quality systems, marketing and product developments.

## **Conclusion**

During the 1996-1999 period, the Training Section has based its work programme on the recommendations made at RTMF 26. As a result, collaboration with other CFP sections and relevant institutions has increased and strategies to assist training institutions and the private sector have been developed and their implementation has started.

There has been significant progress in some areas (vessel crew certification, pre-sea safety training, enterprise management training) but efforts are still required to consolidate the initial work. The continuation of these programmes will be dependent on additional funding being secured. The Section is therefore seeking assistance from the meeting to prioritise its current activities.

The Section is also seeking ideas from the meeting participants on potential new areas of work. For instance, Section staff, with their strong aquaculture background, are interested in becoming more involved in aquaculture training. Also, as mentioned previously, the Section could, if required, increase its training involvement in seafood quality systems, marketing and product developments.