

**Attachment A****Noumea SRC Report to CRGA 51****Summary**

This report addresses our work in 2021, ongoing staff issues, some ideas for 2022 and expresses our appreciation to our members and partners.

**Reminders of welcome progress made in previous years**

- Local staff with 12 years of service awarded open-ended contracts in both Noumea and Suva and an internal mobility policy is on the way to help offer continuing employment when possible.
- SPC now has affiliation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Administrative Tribunal as an independent arbitrator if internal processes do not produce a mutually acceptable outcome.
- Institutionalised health and safety function with the recruitment of full-time staff at both campuses.
- Greater focus on staff well-being throughout the organisation, with an engagement survey including well-being indicators every two years to track progress.
- Comprehensive new suite of Human Resource management policies.

**Introduction**

SRC Noumea is happy to again include this contribution to the Director-General's report to CRGA and Conference on human resource issues in 2021, as we did last year.

We wish to acknowledge the understanding, compassionate but also effective way staff in this location have generally been managed through the Covid-19 health crisis and the three lockdown events which have affected life in Noumea. All positions have been maintained, staff have been assisted to work as efficiently as possible from home or at the campus, messages of sympathy and support have been provided and relevant information has been regularly issued by senior management, with willing assistance from the volunteers who form the SPC neighbourhood warden system.

The Social Club has also continued to offer popular physical and relaxation activities in virtual mode throughout.

While the Noumea committee's activities have inevitably been hindered by the current health crisis and slowed by our wish not to divert executive attention from more pressing crisis management matters, a good dynamic has still been built up within the committee through its expanded and engaged new, diverse, local and international membership, well-attended meetings and the inception of working groups. The original intention was to work more with our Suva counterparts in general and on specific issues, but peoples' busy calendars have not been favourable to this, as hopeful as we remain that this can become the case the near future.

We wish to reiterate the value we attach to the regular meetings the Noumea co-Chairs have with Director-General Stuart Minchin. As previously mentioned, a staff committee can only operate reliably if it has the trust of staff and the confidence of senior management. The current committee's officeholders bear this in mind constantly.

Our intention is to conduct a survey of staff priorities for the committee's work in the coming year so that we remain true to staff thinking.

We have (with some delays) posted meeting minutes to our SharePoint page and also reached out earlier in the year to all the staff in 'remote' offices (other than Noumea and Suva) who, for Human Resources (HR) management purposes, are considered to come under the responsibility of the DD-G Operations and Management in Noumea, so that this group also feels it has a channel for representation on staff issues.

Our new Constitution was approved early in our mandate. We elected 11 members rather than the minimum seven for more effectiveness and greater outreach and diversity.

We appreciated the drafting assistance from the SPC Legal Team.

### **Specific issues under consideration**

#### **The Performance Development System (PDS)**

A working group has met and started to develop ideas designed to be fed into consultations that could help improve the current system to meet both executive and staff concerns.

A briefing by the Director-General (DG) and involving the new HR Director and the Suva and Noumea committees pointed to a cultural shift designed to foster equity and consistency, initially through a well-thought-out modified rating and comment moderation process, as well as a commitment to helping people grow and develop in their positions and aspire to a higher level of employment when moving on.

SRC Noumea welcomes this thorough initiative.

Considerations that staff have raised over the years include a desire for a consistent rating approach across the whole of SPC, the need to generate as much agreement as possible on the ultimate outcomes between manager and staff member, access to final manager comments (before or after moderation), a possible change in the balance between Key Results Areas (KRAs) and behaviours depending on the position, more objective and measurable KRAs in some cases, access to professional development opportunities and upskilling in general (resources permitting) and a reward and recognition system that includes incentives other than salary or bonuses. These remarks are offered in a constructive spirit.

We recognise the substantial efforts already made in these areas.

#### **Local staff terms and conditions, mobility and the new policy.**

SRC saw a promising draft of a new policy on internal local staff mobility designed to give every opportunity to local staff, whether or not on open-ended contracts, to move to other positions in SPC if their post is due to disappear at the end of a project life cycle or they just seek self-improvement.

We have set up a working group on this topic and look forward to finalisation and implementation of the policy.

### **Salary and benefits packages for expatriate staff**

A working group exists but has not yet met substantively.

It is noted that a high standard of accommodation is offered to eligible staff.

We would however note that the Noumea housing allowance for entitled staff finding their own accommodation has not changed in many years, despite the obvious upward trend in costs, as measured in the local cost-of-living index. We feel that care is needed to make these situations equitable between staff housed by SPC and those housing themselves.

### **Salary and benefits packages for local staff**

A working group has met and come up with some proposals for future consideration.

### **Review and renewal of medical insurance policy from 01/01/2022**

SRC Noumea understands that the renewal is imminent, whether with Allianz or another contractor, but could have been consulted as part of the tender preparation and assessment process, in the light of the importance that staff attach to their medical cover.

### **Joint activities with Social and Environmental Responsibility (SER) Unit**

Joint activities have been undertaken with the social and environmental responsibility staff in the Climate Change and Environmental Science programme (CCES) programme, including work on the very important engagement survey well-being indicators and on staff well-being in general.

More well-being related indicators are now being included in the biannual engagement survey in a welcome development.

### **Access to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) notes**

The availability of these on the Intranet is a major signal of transparency in the way the organisation is run.

### **Plans for 2022**

- Cooperation with the Social and Environmental Responsibility Programme in general and on well-being indicators in the Staff Engagement Survey in particular.
- Involvement in joint initiatives on working conditions with HR.
- Availability for consultation on any new draft staff policies.
- Continuation of support and advice to colleagues on personal issues.
- Further development of cooperation with SRC Suva.
- Local staff mobility policy implementation support.

### **Acknowledgements**

Our gratitude goes to the committee members, the SER Programme, the Director-General, Human Resources and the Legal Team for their help and understanding.