

Pacific workshop draws Court Leaders



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Pacific Judicial Development Programme participants from throughout the region deliberate at a workshop being held on Rarotonga this week.

A five-day Pacific Judicial Development Programme (PJDP) workshop in Rarotonga this week brings together court and judicial leaders from throughout the Pacific to discuss the enhancement of services and procedures.

Among those visiting the Cook Islands for the workshop are Kiribati chief registrar Tetiro Mate, Nauru resident magistrate Peter Law, Samoa supreme court justice Clarence Nelson, Tonga chief registrar Manakovi Pahulu and Federated States of Micronesia court administration director Kapilly Capelle.

Those from the Cook Islands taking part are senior Justice of the Peace John Kenning and JP Tangi Taoro.

Kenning is a member of the PJDP programme executive committee (PEC) and Taoro is the Cook Islands national coordinator of the programme.

In total 15 national coordinators from the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Niue and Tokelau are participating in the workshop.

Seven PJDP resource personnel are also attending from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

They include a judicial monitoring and evaluation advisor, customary dispute resolution advisor, codes of judicial conduct expert and the PJDP team leader Dr Livingston Armytage.

Kenning says the workshop is an opportunity for national coordinators to better understand what resources are available within the programme, how those resources can best be engaged and what programme founders expect from participating nations in terms of judicial development.

He says national coordinators will then be able to report back to their respective judicial development committees.

The whole concept is to improve governance throughout the region by up-skilling judicial officers and court staff.

Yesterday workshop sessions focussed on codes of judicial conduct and customary dispute resolution.

Kenning says it is the first time a PJDP national coordinators workshop has been held in the Cook Islands and he expects participants will again meet before June next year to discuss continuation of the programme.

PJDP is funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme and operates in 14 countries throughout the wider Pacific region.

It follows previous programmes established for the same purpose which have been implemented during the past 15 years.

The programme is funded until June next year and those involved hope it will be extended into the future.

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