



Australia Pacific Judicial Partnership

Australia Pacific Judicial Partnership (APJP) | Regional Newsletter

Issue 1, July 2026

Welcome to the first edition of the Australia-Pacific Judicial Partnership newsletter. Many of us have worked together over many years, and it is a privilege to continue that collaboration through this Partnership.

Launched in December 2025, the Partnership is a four-year collaboration with 15 Pacific Island nations, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and managed by the Federal Court of Australia. The Partnership reflects priorities identified by partner Chief Justices, organised across four pillars: leadership, case management, court administration, and digital readiness. A central focus remains supporting practical, locally led reform across jurisdictions. Work across all pillars is underway, with several key activities already delivered:

- In February 2026, we co-hosted the Chief Justices Leadership Forum in Fiji.
- In May, three Pacific female judicial officers were supported through a pilot Judicial Collegium to spend two-weeks with Australian judicial colleagues in Adelaide.
- In June, in concert with Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence, we hosted a Regional Case Management Workshop in Port Moresby.
- Also in June, the Mana Grants facility was officially launched.

Thank you for your continued engagement and leadership. We look forward to working closely with you as the Partnership progresses.

Helen Burrows

Director, International Programs | Federal Court of Australia.

Chief Justices Leadership Forum February 2026

Chief Justices across the Pacific gathered in Nadi, Fiji in February for the annual Chief Justices Leadership Forum. Hosted in collaboration with the Fijian judiciary, our sister program across the Tasman - the Pacific Justice Sector Program, the Forum brought together Chief Justices from 13 Pacific partner nations and the Chief Justice of New Zealand. The program featured a series of high-level discussions focused on strengthening judicial systems and addressing emerging challenges.



Chief Justices Leadership Forum, February 2026, Fiji.

Gender responsive courts

During the same week as the Forum, the Pacific Association of Women Judicial Officers (PAWJO) held its inaugural annual general meeting in Fiji. We extend our congratulations to the newly inaugurated PAWJO including its newly elected executive committee members. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with PAWJO to support its important objectives of promoting gender competent and responsive court benches across the Pacific region.

An element of that support is provided through the Partnership's **Judicial Collegium** which aims to strengthen female judicial leadership, support professional growth and contribute to stronger judicial institutions across the Pacific region. The program is designed to create trusted relationships, improve access to networks and help address barriers faced by female judicial officers in professional advancement, access to opportunities and participation in senior judicial roles. The pilot program commenced in May, hosting three judicial officers - one each from Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia – for a two-week residency in Adelaide. Tailored programs were developed for each participant, combining one-to-one support, court observation, institutional discussions and attendance at the International Association of Women Judges Conference. While these partnering arrangements will continue remotely for several months, we are reviewing the pilot to refine and strengthen the program for broad, regional launch.



Left: PAWJO President Chief Justice Tetiro Semilota Moaniba and some executive committee members, February 2026 in Fiji

Right: Justice Charlesworth, Federal Court; Justice Gray, Supreme Court; Judge Dunlop, District Court; Senior Magistrate Mailangi, Tonga, Associate Judge Kabua, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Principal Magistrate Beneteti, Solomon Islands attending a farewell lunch at the end of the Collegium residency.

Regional Case Management Workshop

Between 3–5 June, in partnership with the Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence, the Partnership convened a **Regional Case Management Workshop** in Port Moresby. Bringing together 26 judges and registrars from 13 Pacific jurisdictions, the workshop focused on identifying and diagnosing systemic delay and developing practical, locally tailored solutions to address them.

Chief Justice Gibbs Salika opened the workshop with a keynote address entitled '[The Cost of Delay](#)', emphasising that delays in the justice system cause serious human, social, and institutional costs, undermining the rule of law and harming both citizens and judicial wellbeing. Chief Justice Salika called for proactive case management, stronger judicial ownership, effective use of mediation and data, and a regional commitment to efficiency without sacrificing quality.

Through structured group work and peer exchange, each jurisdiction developed a country-specific action plan to address procedural bottlenecks and improve efficiency in case management. The workshop also established clearer pathways for continued regional collaboration and technical support, reinforcing a practical, peer-led approach to reform. Two further regional workshops, together with in-country and remote support, will provide an ongoing platform for shared learning and sustained improvement.

The **Mana Grants facility** has been launched to support activities driven by locally identified reform priorities. Providing flexible grants of up to \$20,000 per initiative, the facility is designed to ensure that regional dialogue can be translated into tangible outcomes at the national level. See the guidelines and application form [here](#).



Left and Right: Participants during discussion at the Regional Case Management Workshop in Port Moresby.

Resources

Under the Federal Court of Australia's bilateral Memorandum of Understanding with the Supreme and National Courts of Papua New Guinea, Justice Perry and Judicial Registrar Cody of Federal Court of Australia delivered a webinar on "[What do Judicial Officers Need to know about Artificial Intelligence](#)". During the 18 June webinar, Justice Perry discussed the three key risks associated with AI usage in the legal sphere: bias in historical datasets; unpredictable outputs; and a lack of transparency and due process in judicial reasoning. Judicial Registrar Cody discussed examples of current regulations to address AI usage in Australian Courts, including Practice Notes and Court Notices. She also provided case studies on recent uses of AI by American judges in judicial decision-making workflows. The webinar was hosted by the Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence and supported by DFAT. The webinar recording can be accessed [here](#).

Upcoming Events

8-10 September

APJP Pacific Regional Court Administration Workshop, Suva, Fiji

28-30 October

[International Access to Justice Forum 2026 | Victoria Law Foundation](#)

17-19 November

APJP Pacific Regional Digitisation Workshop, Honiara, Solomon Islands

Date TBC

Regional Online Research Training, via three, 45-minute webinars

For more information and updates, please follow our website [Australia Pacific Judicial Partnership Program](#)

www.fedcourt.gov.au/apjp

