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Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative Newsletter

Issue 9 | June 2021

PJSI Update!

The PJSI team have been busy continuing to operate remotely throughout the Pacific region. While we are currently preparing a small suite of activities for the remainder of 2021, this newsletter is an opportunity to provide an update of recent PJSI activities. Highlights include the launching of several new online learning resources, piloting the newly developed Remote Court Proceedings Toolkit in multiple countries, and running a 5-day Gender and Family Violence Workshop in the Solomon Islands.

Read more below!

Mr Lorenz Metzner
PJSI Team Leader

New Online Learning Resources

PJSI Training Adviser, Ms Margaret Barron, has recently created three interview-style resources on topics relevant to Judicial Officers. These resources may be utilised by Partner Courts in their ongoing orientation trainings. The video's are available on the [PJSI website](#).

These interview-style resources, include an open discussion on the topics of: [Transition to the Bench](#); [Judicial Ethics and Conduct](#); and [Evidence](#).

PJSI wish to extend our sincere thanks to Honourable Chief Justice Sir Albert Palmer CBE, Honourable Justice Debra Mortimer and Dr Livingston Armytage for their time and valuable knowledge.



7th Chief Justices Leadership Forum & 10th Initiative Executive Committee Meeting

The seventh Chief Justices' Leadership Forum (CJLF) and tenth Initiative Executive Committee Meeting were held remotely in April. The CJLF provided an opportunity for PJSI to engage with the heads of jurisdiction in our Partner Courts. During the Forum, PJSI provided an overview of the activities implemented to date and presented the 2020 Court Trend Report for discussion and feedback. The Forum facilitated discussion of Court-University partnerships, and how PJSI activities will be implemented during the extension period.

The tenth Initiative Executive Committee Meeting allowed PJSI to brief the Committee on the Initiative's progress; MFAT to present the findings and recommendations from the regional justice sector evaluation and provide an update on any future programs of assistance; and an opportunity to discuss and endorse the Chief Justices' recommendations.

These meetings are integral to the operation of PJSI and help ensure that activities are delivered in line with the key development priorities of the region.

Solomon Islands: Gender and Family Violence Workshop

In April, PJSI delivered a 5-day remote workshop to Judges, Magistrates and Court Staff of the High Court of the Solomon Islands. The workshop, facilitated by PJSI Gender and Family Violence Adviser, Mr Tevita Seruilumi, aimed to strengthen the judiciaries understanding of gender relations, family violence and court responses. Judges and Magistrates reflected that the workshop improved their understanding of family violence and that this would be applied to how they respond to cases, deal with perpetrators, advocate for victims and improve sentencing remarks on family violence cases.

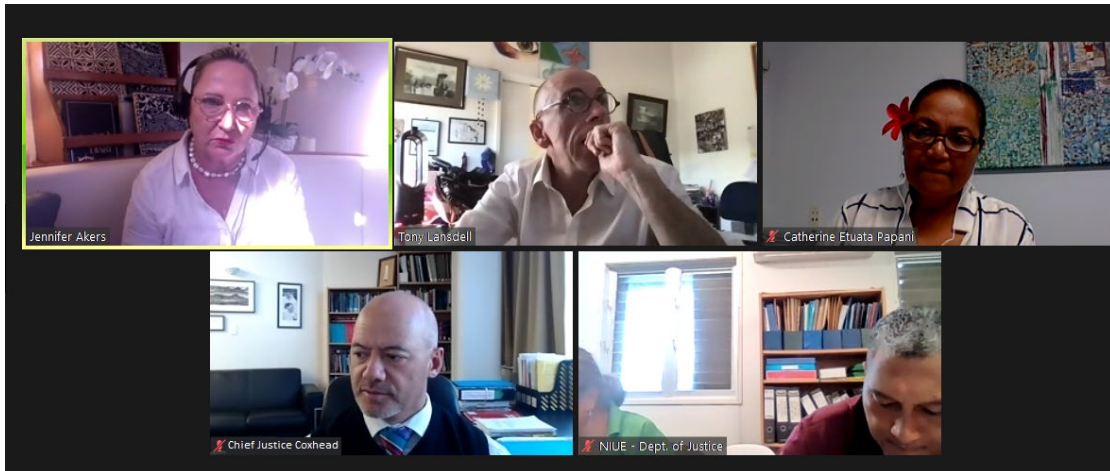
PJSI is grateful for the leadership of Honourable Chief Justice Sir Albert Palmer CBE and the enthusiasm and participation of senior Judges and Magistrates which made this 5-day remote workshop a success.



Remote Court Proceedings Toolkit Pilot

Across April and May, PJSI Advisers Mr Tony Lansdell and Ms Jennifer Akers conducted four Remote Court Proceedings Toolkit Pilots with the courts in Niue, Cook Islands, Tonga and Solomon Islands. The discussions detailed how each participating court might improve the procedural and technical quality of remote court proceedings already being conducted, expand their technical capacity to conduct more of these proceedings, and identified the legal and procedural implications and requirements around conducting remote court proceedings.

As a result of these discussions, each court has produced an action plan identifying key steps to improve their use of remote court proceedings.



Coming up in 2021

The following regional activities are scheduled for delivery in 2021:

Community Engagement Guidance Note Webinar Launch: 24 June

This online discussion will introduce and explain PJSI's new guidance note on conducting and using community consultations to promote access to justice and improve the quality of judicial service delivery. The discussion will also include contributions from courts across the region, to share experiences and lessons learned in promoting access to justice through community consultations.

Eighth Chief Justices Leadership Forum: 3 November

The remote eighth Chief Justices' Leadership Forum will provide an opportunity for PJSI to engage with the heads of jurisdiction in our Partner Courts to present PJSI's final completion report and evaluation of 10 years of consistent support. It will also allow PJSI to formally farewell the region's Chief Justices and MFAT to officially transition to the new project team.

Eleventh Initiative Executive Committee Meeting: 4 November

The remote eleventh Initiative Executive Committee Meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the Final Project Completion Report, the progress of activities and the transition to the new project team.

For a complete list of our upcoming activities, please see the [Activity Schedule.](#)

Leadership Incentive Fund

The LIF aims to support the achievement of national courts' objectives not otherwise met by PJSI, through the provision of grants. LIF applications are currently open on a first come, first served basis. Please note, with PJSI due to end in December, all LIF supported activities will need to be locally implemented, acquitted and reported on **by 1 October, 2021**.

Please email your applications and any enquiries to: Nicole.Cherry@fedcourt.gov.au

Comments and Feedback

We welcome and appreciate comments or contributions from everyone involved in a PJSI activity.

If you have any feedback or require further information, please contact our PJSI team on: pjsi@fedcourt.gov.au

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