

MAFBNZ
Pacific Strategy

June 2008

MAFBNZ Pacific Strategy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an overarching strategy for MAFBNZ's engagement with the Pacific region. There are two main thrusts to this strategy:

- Decreasing the biosecurity risks to New Zealand associated with trade with Pacific Island Countries & Territories (Pacific) by pushing that risk off-shore.
- Providing input into sustainable technical assistance projects to improve the biosecurity, and trade opportunities of Pacific.

A working group, the MAFBNZ Pacific Activities Advisory Group (PAAG), was established to initiate this strategy and to coordinate its implementation. The Terms of Reference developed for this group is attached as Appendix 1.

This strategy document covers the following areas:

- Description of the present situation
- Mission statement
- Strategic directions and objectives
- Governance Structure
- Funding

2. Description of the present situation

Currently all the technical assistance directed toward Pacific countries undertaken by MAFBNZ has been on an ad hoc basis, with funding allocated to relatively short term projects. Poor communication between the sections of MAFBNZ involved has created a lack of coordination and cooperation in key areas.

Late in 2007, the Border Standards Directorate established a full time position dedicated to addressing the Pacific Island IHS requests. This position was created from MAFBNZ baseline funding with the assistance of NZAID funding.

MAFs Statement of Intent focuses on initiatives that move biosecurity risk off-shore. To achieve this there has to be commitment across MAFBNZ to develop a directed work programme in this area. The Import Health Standard (IHS) prioritisation process provides a useful example for coordinating and prioritising project work in the Pacific. The now established MAFBNZ PAAG is responsible for developing and driving programme coordination and prioritising. It is likely to be a key factor in achieving the best return on New Zealand investment in Pacific Biosecurity.

Current issues can be best described by looking at the problem from three different aspects: MAFBNZ, bilateral, and regional.

MAFBNZ

Current issues are:

- lack of coordination within MAFBNZ, and a subsequent lack of coordinated communication with major stakeholders such as the Pacific Islands Forum,

Secretariat Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Islands Trade & Investment Commission (PITIC) and AUSAID.

- lack of focus on formal relationships with major domestic interests in Pacific policies and engagement, notably NZAID and MFAT
- uncertainty around sustained engagement because of funding problems.
- need for areas of greatest risk to be targeted, while also giving priority to areas where New Zealand has influence and obligation.

Bilateral

Identified gaps include:

- the lack of an overarching process for planning capacity building and technical assistance activities that takes into consideration key areas of border risks, plus needs and priorities of the Pacific.
- The lack of engagement and relationship management strategies for key Pacific countries, across MAFBNZ.

Regional

Identified gaps include:

- there is currently no strategy underpinning MAFBNZ's engagement with regional organisations, including provision of sustainable funding.
- there is insufficient liaison with regional organisations which is needed to gain high level political support for border security initiatives.
- there is no formal mechanism in place to work with like-minded countries in the region who are also major donors i.e. European Union, Australia and the United States.
- there is no coherent plan to prioritise the various stakeholders, including both government and non-government and regional organisations in the Pacific and manage these relationships on a Ministry and national level.
- there is no formal mechanism (other than funding committees) for working with other NZ government agencies, including donor agencies involved in the Pacific

Links with MAFBNZ Strategic Plan

To follow the MAFBNZ Strategic Plan 2007-2012, this strategy will seek to achieve outcomes under:

Goal 3 – To have more effective interventions at the border.

- 3.1 Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of MAF pre-border and border interventions and push risk offshore where we can.
- 3.2 Improve the integration of MAFBNZ processes and systems with those of our partnership agencies.

Goal 4 – To work collaboratively across organisations for better biosecurity outcomes

- 4.2 Improve international stakeholder relationships and processes.

3. Mission statement

The mission for the MAFBNZ Pacific Strategy is:

To help protect New Zealand and the Pacific region from biosecurity risks through capacity building programmes directed at providing a coordinated and comprehensive biosecurity risk management systems.

The key areas of focus for the strategy are:

- Improving communication and coordination in MAFBNZ and external stakeholders.
- Building our knowledge of the risks arising from, and existing within, the Pacific region.
- Developing more sustainable engagement with countries that present the greatest risk to New Zealand's biosecurity and countries to which New Zealand has special obligations.
- Strengthening regional organisations' ability to positively influence the risk management development of the Pacific.

4. Strategic Directions & Objectives

The objectives used to achieve the strategic direction are listed below each 'Strategic Direction'.

Strategic Direction No. 1: Improved communication and coordination

The development of effective and efficient communication systems and processes, that promotes proactive, constructive and ongoing dialogue between all areas of MAFBNZ's involvement with the Pacific.

Objectives achieved through:

- Ensuring policy relating to the Pacific is consistent across MAFBNZ in terms of offshore capability planning and implementation.
- Implementing communication systems and processes to underpin MAFBNZ's Pacific engagement both internally and with regional organisations
- Developing a efficient communication process to ensure full and proactive involvement in the Pacific
- Providing information to improve the general understanding of New Zealand's biosecurity requirements.
- Providing training to enhance understanding of and compliance with New Zealand's biosecurity requirements.
- Enhance the formal working relationships with domestic donor agencies to provide biosecurity input for Pacific initiatives as appropriate.

Strategic Direction No. 2: Increased knowledge of biosecurity risks

Developing a more sustainable engagement with each of the Pacific countries that present the greatest risk to New Zealand's biosecurity and countries to which New Zealand has special obligations.

Objectives achieved through:

- Targeted risk assessment so that a common understanding of perceived and actual risks is gained.

- Undertaking further work to identify areas where there would be benefit in MAFBNZ working with other New Zealand border agencies to improve border processes and identifying any gaps or overlaps.
- Carrying out pest risk assessments and developing import health standards for commodities exported from the Pacific Islands to New Zealand.
- Providing where possible technical assistance to the Pacific Islands to develop better biosecurity systems capability.
- Continual identification of gaps in biosecurity management of issues common to New Zealand and the Pacific.

Strategic Direction No. 3: Sustainable capacity developing programmes with high risk countries

Identifying and implementing sustainable programmes that fit with this strategy and with the MAFBNZ PAAG prioritisation criteria.

Objectives achieved through:

- Further exploring the need for additional resources in identified risk countries, as a way to mitigate those risks e.g. interdiction or enhanced bilateral relationships.
- Identifying Pacific countries that present the greatest off-shore risk to New Zealand and developing proactive programmes that address those risks. This will underpin planning for capacity building and technical assistance activities taking into consideration key areas of border risks, plus needs and priorities of the Pacific.
- Ensuring development and maintenance of Pacific community involvement with MAFBNZ Pacific initiatives.
- Determining and implementing MAFBNZ approach to assisting and encouraging the Pacific to meet international standards and best practice relating to border security.
- Identification and implementation of a sustainable funding source.

Strategic Direction No. 4: Strengthening regional organisations

MAFBNZ will provide input, dialogue and involvement into regional agreements and organisations which are relevant to MAFBNZ Pacific objectives.

Objectives achieved through:

- Utilising MAFBNZ involvement in regional organisations to promote new ideas to the Pacific border agencies, thereby influencing their programmes for border management development.
- Assisting regional organisations to establish clear priorities and deliverables through MAFBNZ input into their proposed strategies and activities.
- Participating in projects that reduce biosecurity threats to the region e.g. Pacific Ant Prevention Programme.
- Channelling support through regional organisations in order to help them meet regional priorities.

Strategic Direction No. 5: Administration

Development of an efficient and effective PAAG administration system to assist in the administration of MAFBNZ input into the management of biosecurity risk in the Pacific. It will do this by:

- Identification and mobilization sustainable financial resources
- Efficient management of resources
- Coordination of information exchange
- Development of mechanisms to develop and implement bilateral and regional agreements

5. Governance Structure

The PAAG will drive the strategy's implementation, including coordination within each directorate with other stakeholders. The PAAG will coordinate reviews of the strategy when required.

The PAAG is the liaison mechanism for information transfer across MAFBNZ. Directorates that are considering Pacific projects will submit their projects to the PAAG through their representative. Each project will be assessed on the set of 12 criteria outlined below. Each project will need to:

- ❖ address gaps in biosecurity risk from the Pacific
- ❖ be sustainable
- ❖ provide mutual benefit (both NZ and the Pacific)
- ❖ ensure support / buy-in from the Pacific
- ❖ ensure funding is secured or potential sources identified
- ❖ provide communications planning / strategy to achieve integration with existing programmes
- ❖ ensure technical / logistical feasibility
- ❖ provide a cost-benefit analysis showing that the project is financially viable.
- ❖ identify and considered barriers and/or constraints
- ❖ be aligned with MAFBNZ business planning
- ❖ link to MFAT and NZAID strategic direction and have their support
- ❖ complement existing programme initiatives

Projects which meet the criteria are then assessed against the objectives of this document and then with agreement of the PAAG they will be presented to the Border Risk Management Committee for approval. A key objective of this strategy is in encouraging high-level organisational support for Pacific initiatives.

6. Funding

Pacific engagement is currently funded through a mixture of specific initiative funding, such as the Pacific Security Fund (PSF), NZAID projects, MFAT Trade Access Support Programme (TASP) funding, and contributions from MAFBNZ budgets. The MFAT Government Agencies Fund (GAF) fund is another as yet untapped resource. In assessing projects coming forward, it is expected that the PAAG will also

act to facilitate funding where needed through one or more of these potential funding sources.

7. Measures of Success

The ultimate measure of success will be achievement of the agreed MAFBNZ objectives set out in this strategy document. In part, a measure of success will be in the completion and implementation of those objectives. A formal process of review and measuring the success of the strategy has still to be defined.

A review of the implementation of the strategy should be undertaken in 2009 to assess progress towards achieving the objectives outlined, and to establish whether further changes are required.

MAFBNZ PAAG- Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of the MAFBNZ PAAG is to provide an ongoing and consistent approach to MAFBNZ's engagement in the Pacific region this engagement is to:

- Decrease biosecurity risks to New Zealand associated with trade with the Pacific and at the same time enhancing Pacific trade.
- Providing input into sustainable technical assistance projects to improve the biosecurity, and trade opportunities of the Pacific.

2. Context

Much of the work undertaken in the Pacific by MAF BNZ has been without focus or clear direction. Also, many projects were run and completed with little knowledge of other initiatives underway within MAF or the Pacific region. Generally, it could be said that MAFBNZ has been applying resources to projects in the Pacific region in an ad hoc manner. There has been no overarching and consistent approach.

In 2007 the paper "Analysis of Biosecurity Risks to New Zealand from Pacific Region", outlining these issues, was presented to ELT. The ELT agreed to the recommendations of the paper, specifically the proposal to develop the MAFBNZ PAAG.

3. Scope

MAF BNZ has indicated in its Statement of Intent that its focus will be on initiatives that move biosecurity risk off-shore. Working in the Pacific is essential if MAFBNZ is to successfully achieve this objective. Pacific engagement needs to be comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable in its approach. To achieve this there has to be commitment across MAF Biosecurity New Zealand to develop a manageable work programme in this area.

The PAAG will provide direction and guidance regarding:

- Managing off-shore biosecurity risks to New Zealand from the Pacific.
- Prioritising technical assistance from MAFBNZ to the Pacific.
- Raising awareness with the Pacific, International Organisations and other government agencies of MAFBNZ's priorities and criteria in the Pacific region.
- Managing and prioritising the increasing number of requests which are received from multilateral international organisations, regional organisations and individual countries to participate in Pacific projects.
- Assisting all Pacific projects to be coordinated within MAF and across stakeholder agencies.

3. Objectives

The overall objective is the management of risk associated with unwanted pests and diseases entering either New Zealand (from the Pacific) or into the Pacific. This includes a wide range of specific objectives such as:

- developing an overarching Pacific strategic plan.
- identifying the roles and responsibility of central government, international and regional organisations, other government agencies, linking and integrating them with the MAFBNZ work program.
- providing a MAFBNZ wide perspective on Pacific issues and projects.
- providing a one stop shop for Pacific related issues.
- developing clear and robust criteria for prioritising MAFBNZ responses to requests for Pacific biosecurity assistance which ensures good use of limited MAFBNZ resources.
- defining the capacity within MAFBNZ baseline funding to co-ordinate and participate in projects and seek senior leadership commitment through the reporting process.
- identifying information requirements and develop a management system needed to support the ongoing activities in the Pacific.
- developing comprehensive communication networks with external agencies involved in Pacific projects.
- ensuring projects are sustainable on a long-term basis with tangible benefits for the Pacific Islands.

4. Challenges Faced:

In undertaking this work, the PAAG will take into account the:

- Resource constraints for MAFBNZ, other government agencies and the Pacific countries.
- Need for long term sustainability of projects.
- Domestic and international political imperatives that are not always aligned with the biosecurity outcomes sought.

5. Participants

To ensure, that there is an opportunity for all areas of MAFBNZ to raise issues and agree on the approach MAFBNZ should take in the Pacific, the PAAG is to be made up of representatives from all Directorates:

- Post-Border
- Border Standards
- Passenger Clearance
- Cargo Clearance
- IDC
- Policy and Risk Directorate
- Other individuals who have specific PICT experience and knowledge can be seconded on an 'as needs' basis to the PAAG.

6. Meetings & Process

The PAAG will initially meet monthly during the set-up phase. It is envisioned that this will reduce to quarterly meetings.

In the set-up phase:

- Terms of reference will be defined and agreed by the PAAG.
- A stock-take of MAFBNZ activities in the region will be prepared.
- A robust set of criteria for prioritisation in the use of limited resources will be developed and agreed.
- A structure for managing Pacific project requests (includes communication, network development and information assimilation) will be established.

Ongoing:

- An overarching Pacific strategy will be developed.
- Development of yearly work plan for projects in the Pacific using the set of criteria developed in the set-up phase.
- Implementation of PAAG responsibilities within the work plan.
- Development of a Pacific Collaborative Biosecurity Initiative (international networking mechanism) which will bring together all Biosecurity related developmental projects and link donors – as much as is possible.
- Reporting back to Director Policy & Risk (to be reviewed in 6 months).

7. Reporting

International Coordination, Policy & Risk Directorate will coordinate and manage the PAAG meetings, Pacific strategy development, work plan and reporting.

The PAAG will report directly to the Director of Policy & Risk. This will be reviewed once the Deliverable Committees are more established and operating effectively.

The PAAG prioritization criteria, recommendations, strategy and annual work plan will require sign-off from the Border Risk Management Committee.