

Summary of key questions raised and responses provided during the draft design briefing for the Australia Pacific Security College

2 August 2018

This summary is provided to inform Industry of the key questions raised and answers provided during the draft design briefing. Readers must note the design process is still underway and as such these answers should be read as indicative only and will be subject to change in the final design.

Q: Would it be possible to leverage off the facilities of the Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC)?

A: The APTC provides vocational training, whereas the Australia Pacific Security College (APSC) will provide high level, strategic training for senior officials. While it may be possible for the APSC to use APTC facilities, it would first be necessary to ensure the training and learning environment were appropriate for senior attendees.

Q: Does the budget for the APSC include the cost of transport and travel logistics for students' travel?

A: Yes. Managing the students travel logistics will be a significant part of the APSC's work.

Q: If the APSC is facilitating courses for other agencies, how would the funding work?

A: The APSC will have an annual work plan. Ideally, courses run by other agencies would be notified in advance and incorporated in the work plan, and, therefore, the APSC would either fund (within the existing contract limit) and deliver them or would provide logistical support. It is expected that some flexibility may be incorporated in APSC annual workplans to respond to unanticipated needs (within the Contract limit).

Q: Will APSC be responsible for implementing the Biketawa Plus Declaration?

A: Implementation of Biketawa Plus would be managed by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), however, the APSC would need to demonstrate how it has supported PIFS in implementing the declaration.

Q: Will the APSC seek to enhance domestic law enforcement? Does security include internal security, or is it limited to external security?

AT: The APSC will cover domestic security. Australia has a strong record of working with Pacific countries to strengthen their internal security. In addition to leadership training, APSC will support Pacific countries to develop and implement their National Security Strategies, which would also include internal security.

Q: The College will be Australia-led, but you also mentioned a relationship with New Zealand and the United States. How will that work?

A: Australia and NZ are both PIF members and work closely together in the Pacific. The APSC is Australian-led and funded. However, there is interest from several partners, including NZ, which could, for example, contribute technical expertise and courses. The APSC should benefit from engagement with likeminded partners in the Pacific.

Q: During your regional consultations, how much interest have you seen in countering corruption and money laundering, and how should this interact with APSC's work?

A: Like our Pacific partners, Australia sees effective governance and anti-corruption as critical issues. We would be pleased to see coverage of these issues in the course curriculum.

Q: What is the role of the Advisory Board, and who will make decisions about how the courses are delivered? Will DFAT be the ultimate decision maker?

A: The final design will have more detail on this. We anticipate there will be two kinds of courses APSC provides: those facilitated by other Australian government agencies, and bespoke APSC developed courses tailored to Pacific needs. The Advisory Board will provide high level oversight.

APSC must be responsive to the needs of the Pacific. To ensure this, DFAT will work with APSC to develop a work plan each year. We will jointly identify issues and gaps, in consultation with Pacific countries, and address priorities identified in their respective National Security Strategies.

DFAT will not be involved in the day-to-day running of APSC.

Q: How final will the consortia be? Will you mandate that organisation A partners with organisation B?

A: No, it will be up to individual organisations to decide which organisations they wish to partner with. DFAT will support this process though making the register of interested organisations available to those organisations shortlisted to progress to the tender stage.

Q: How will the requirement for security clearances work?

A: This is a requirement for one or two key APSC personnel to be able to obtain NV2 security clearances. This is to ensure APSC personnel can access government meetings about the regional security landscape.

Q: What will be the role of other government agencies already involved in providing external training?

A: APSC should make use of existing networks as a way to find course attendees, and begin to establish its own alumni network of Pacific security decision makers. We are interested in APSC also working with other government agencies to seek technical input and deliver training.

Q: Are you looking for short courses and face-to-face contact?

A: Both. We want the APSC to address capacity gaps, including those identified in the National Security Strategies of Pacific countries.

Q: What is the location for the Secretariat?

A: The Secretariat will be located in Australia. DFAT expects the Secretariat to liaise effectively with DFAT and other relevant government agencies, which are largely Canberra-based. Canberra would be a convenient location; however, the Secretariat does not have to be located in Canberra. In Step

2 (the RFT), Tenderers will need to demonstrate how the Secretariat would work effectively with Australian government agencies.

Q: Is there capacity to leverage existing structures, such as DFAT's learning management systems?

A: We are open to exploring this idea, where feasible. Our consultations in the region have highlighted that many Pacific countries do not have access to the same information (databases, journals) we are able to access. A stock of online resources would be valuable, if it was specific to the Pacific.

Note other questions were raised and will feed into considerations during the design process for APSC.