

Pacific Quality Infrastructure (PQI) Initiative

Pacific Islands Standards
Committee (PISC)

Terms of Reference

Version 7

FINAL



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Purpose

A regional quality infrastructure system represents the only viable and sustainable option for countries in the Pacific region to access a wide range of reliable and affordable QI institutions and services.

The Pacific Islands Standards Committee (PISC) is a core component of the governance structure of the PQI, the Pacific Quality Infrastructure. The Committee will coordinate standardisation activities across the region with the aim of harmonising and developing standards and making them more accessible to local stakeholders such as regulators, small and medium- sized enterprises, and consumers.

The Terms of Reference of the PISC sets out the scope and intention of the group in addressing the QI objectives of Forum Island Countries.

Mission and Objectives

- Promote quality culture in the Pacific region.
- Create a productive and efficient standardisation partnership amongst Pacific countries to grow together.
- Adopt standards to support the development of national and regional QI.
- Coordinate and knowledge share on standardisation related issues amongst Pacific countries.
- Build capacity and awareness of standards staff, stakeholders and the public and maximise their participation in standards development.
- Promote efficiency and trade competitiveness both nationally and regionally through recognition of regional standards.
- Support the value chain of Pacific products.



Membership

- Australia
- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji
- Kiribati
- French Polynesia
- Marshall Islands
- Nauru
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Niue
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Solomon Islands
- Tonga
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu

Membership is open to all Pacific Forum Island Countries. Members should come from the national organizations responsible for standards development.

Countries outside the Pacific Islands Forum may be granted observer status on condition of approval by the committee.

Technical agencies may be granted observer status on condition of approval by the committee.

Member states are responsible for covering the costs associated with in-person meetings; however, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat or other partners may provide funding as available.



Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
ARSO	African Organisation for Standardisation
CEN	European Committee for Standardisation
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
COPANT	Pan American Standards Commission
CROSQ	CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality
EAC	East-African Community
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
NSB	National Standards Body
PASC	Pacific Area Standards Congress
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PQI	Pacific Quality Infrastructure
QI	Quality Infrastructure
Quality Infrastructure	Quality Infrastructure refers to the system of organisations and processes that help ensure the quality of goods and services and facilitate access to global markets. It consists of key pillars like standardisation, metrology, accreditation, and conformity assessment. Collectively these systems help stimulate industrial development, trade competitiveness, innovation, and the efficient use of resources, while protecting human health and the environment
RSC	Regional Standards Committee
SARSO	South Asian Regional Standards Organisation
Pacific region	Referencing the area occupied by the members of the Pacific Regional Standards Committee
Technical standards	Any standard establishing a norm or requirement for a repeated task or set of rules
Voluntary	Non-compulsory and non-mandatory



Committee Terms of Reference

Scope (Area of Activity)

Quality Infrastructure refers to the system of organisations and processes that help ensure the quality of goods and services and facilitate access to global markets. It consists of key pillars like standardisation, metrology, accreditation, and conformity assessment. Collectively these systems help stimulate industrial development, trade competitiveness, innovation, and the efficient use of resources, while protecting human health and the environment. To promote quality and safe products, services, and processes in the Pacific Island region through the review, assessment, adoption and development of voluntary regional technical standards.

The work of the PISC is independent from the development, publication, and provision of national standards within Pacific Islands Forum countries and is not intended to contravene any national standardisation activities pursued by member countries. Rather the work of the PISC is intended to facilitate standardisation across the Pacific through coordination and harmonisation mechanisms between National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and the committee. In this way, all members have the opportunity to engage and benefit from standardisation activity

Exclusions and Distinctions with National Standards Body Work

The Pacific Islands Standards Committee does not compete with National Standards Bodies within the Pacific and does not create compulsory standards or enforce standards.

Normal functions

The Pacific Islands Standards Committee focuses on:

1. Harmonising national Standards within the Pacific where there is a shared need and interest in alignment for trade and quality purposes.
2. Initiating and coordinating the development of Pacific Standards with reference to products, services or processes of interest to Forum Island Countries.
3. Encouraging and facilitating the adoption of International Standards and developed Pacific regional standards by member bodies.
4. Promoting and facilitating the exchange of standardisation expertise, information and cooperation in training for standardisation activities.
5. Co-ordinating the views of its members at the ISO, IEC, CODEX, PASC and other fora for standardisation activities. Noting regional standards will endeavour to minimise duplicated efforts with CODEX's national committees coordinating standardisation activities in that forum.
6. Promoting and assisting the establishment of NSBs amongst member countries.
7. Monitoring the standardisation activity of member countries and informing members of general standardisation trends regionally and internationally.



The work of the Pacific Islands Standards Committee is independent from the development, publication, and provision of national standards within Forum Island Countries and is not intended to contravene any national standardisation activities pursued by member countries. Rather the work of the Pacific Islands Standards Committee is intended to facilitate standardisation across the Pacific through coordination and harmonisation mechanisms between NSBs and the committee. In this way, all members have the opportunity to engage and benefit from standardisation activity.

Liaison Organisations and Committees

- a. Pacific Regional Metrology Committee
- b. Pacific Regional Testing and Conformity Assessment Committee
- c. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
- d. Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC)
- e. World Trade Organisation
- f. Codex Alimentarius
- g. International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)
- h. International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
- i. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- j. Pacific Appliances Labelling and Standards (PALS)
- k. Coordinators for regional Free Trade Areas such as PACER Plus.
- l. Regional organisations where appropriate including but not limited to SARSO, CROSQ, CEN, COPANT and ARSO

Priority Sectors

1. Food and Food Products
2. Building and Construction
3. Environment and Climate Change
4. Information Technology (including E-Commerce and Cybersecurity)
5. Energy
6. Tourism
7. Non-tourism services (including, but not limited to digitally deliverable services)
8. Consumer products (incl., electrical appliances)
9. Health and Healthcare



Special Functions

The Pacific Islands Standards Committee may engage in the following special functions where needed and, on a task, specific basis.

- Advise, facilitate and/or develop regional standardisation strategy.
- Coordinate role for standardisation related regional initiatives.
- Engage in capacity building functions for members.
- Host forums to facilitate discussions on ideas for standardisation development.
- Provide a dispute resolution function whereby the Committee may address complaints related to regional standards.
- Provide an information sharing platform on standards related topics being developed or maintained by members.
- Update and review the standard development process.
- Engage and maintain International and Regional cooperation and collaboration with relevant stakeholder organizations.

PISC leadership and scope

- The PISC will be led by a Chair and Co-Chair nominated by PISC members.
- The Chair and Co-Chair will serve for a 2-year term.
- This Terms of Reference (ToR) will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure currency.



Roles and Responsibilities

Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for providing comprehensive support to the PISC, ensuring the effective coordination of activities, facilitation of technical expertise, and capacity-building support for member countries.

Administrative and Support Functions.

The Secretariat will provide organizational, logistical, and administrative assistance, including:

- Meeting Organization:
 - Schedule and arrange all PISC meetings, including venue and logistics.
 - Communicate meeting details and invitations to participants.
- Documentation Management:
 - Prepare and distribute meeting agendas, minutes, reports, and other relevant documentation.
 - Draft meeting papers, including technical and policy papers, in consultation with the Chair/Co-Chair, ensuring alignment with the committee's objectives and priorities.
 - Maintain an organized repository of committee records, including milestones, deliverables, and decisions.
- Stakeholder Communication:
 - Act as the primary administrative point of contact for the Chair/Co-Chair and committee members.
 - Facilitate interactions between member states, observers, and external stakeholders.
- Logistical Support:
 - Provide assistance to the Chair/Co-Chair during meetings and events.
 - Ensure smooth coordination of committee activities and events.



Oversight

The Secretariat will oversee the implementation of the PISC's work programme and track progress toward goals, including:

- Work Programme Coordination:
 - Advise on alignment between the committee activities and strategic goals and objectives of the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative.
 - Develop timelines and ensure timely execution of tasks.
- Progress Monitoring:
 - Track milestones, monitor deliverables, and ensure decisions are actioned.
 - Identify and report risks or challenges to the Chair and members.

Technical Support Functions

The Secretariat will provide technical expertise and ensure quality in the committee's outputs, including:

- Committee management
 - The Secretariat (PIF) may engage a Committee Manager to assist with administrative and support functions of the committee, as well as technical support functions.
- Technical Expertise:
 - Offer input on the development, adoption, and harmonization of standards.
 - Advise on global and regional trends in standardization, ensuring alignment with international bodies such as ISO, IEC, and Codex Alimentarius.
- Capacity Building:
 - Organize training workshops and technical assistance for member countries.
 - Support smaller member countries in developing technical capabilities related to standards.
- Advisory Role:
 - Provide guidance on technical discussions, ensuring informed decision-making.
 - Define the meeting agenda in consultation with the Chair/Co-Chair.
 - Draft, review, and finalize committee papers, ensuring quality and alignment with PISC objectives before seeking clearance from the Chair/Co-Chair for circulation.



- Provide guidance, define meeting agendas, and draft, review, and finalize papers of the Technical Committees, ensuring quality and alignment with PISC objectives before seeking clearance from the Chair/Co-Chair for circulation.
- Working as a leadership team with the Chair/Co-Chair to lead the facilitation of the standards development process.

Delegation of Responsibilities

While PIFS is the entity managing the Secretariat, it may delegate specific tasks or functions to other organizations or entities with relevant expertise to enhance the delivery of services.

Committee Chair/Co-Chair

Provides leadership to the committee, including by providing input into agendas, leading discussions during meetings, representing the PISC in other forums and providing overall strategic direction to the committee's work.

The principal responsibilities of a Committee Chair and Co-Chair are facilitating collaborative and focused discussions, managing the conduct of participants in committee meetings to ensure the required commitment is achieved and ensuring the objectives of the PISC are delivered. Their responsibilities include:

- Working with the Committee Members to establish and maintaining the PISC goals and objectives.
- Understanding and driving the committee's goals and objectives and providing overall strategic direction to the committee's work.
- Effectively managing the PISC work programme including by ensuring that meetings and activities that align with the committee's goals and objectives are progressed.
- Supporting the planning of committee meetings, including by providing input into agendas and topics for discussion.
- In conjunction with the Committee Manager, facilitating meetings in an organised manner and ensuring that all voices are heard, and discussions remain focused.
- Guide the committee in discussions to reach consensus on decisions and recommendations, ensuring that all viewpoints are considered.
- Ensuring that the committee's decisions align with the PISC objectives.
- Managing conflicts or disagreements within the committee in a constructive manner, facilitating discussions to find resolutions.
- Assigning responsibilities to committee members based on their skills and interests.
- Serving as the primary point of contact between the committee and other stakeholders, including Pacific officials, the PISC Technical Committees (TCs), and external stakeholders.
- Representing the PISC in other forums.
- Assessing the effectiveness of the PISC and the appropriateness of the committee's goals and objectives to identify areas for improvement.



Committee members

Attend and contribute to meetings by providing input and expertise into the committee's work on behalf of their country, making decisions, commenting and balloting.

The responsibilities of Committee Members are:

- Committing resources to delivering the PISC work programme.
- Attending PISC meetings whenever possible.
- Representing the interests and priorities of their economy, over personal or employer interests.
- Participating in all committee work and based on the member's knowledge and experience, providing technical input into discussions and activities.
- Voting and/or providing input during PISC decision or recommendation making processes, commenting processes or balloting.
- Declaring all conflicts of interest that may impact their work in the PISC to the Secretariat.

Observers

At the approval of the Committee, Observers may attend and contribute to meetings by providing input and expertise into the committee's work. Observers do not have voting rights in committee decision making.

PISC members will be notified of any parties wishing to observe ahead of the meeting and can submit their objections.

If any objections are received, the observer will not be granted access to the meeting.

Committee Code of Conduct

Members of the PISC and TCs are required to sign and abide by the Committee Code of Conduct.



