



PACIFIC ISLAND FISHERIES - ENFORCEMENT

TRAINING AND ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING

PROSECUTION & DOCKSIDE BOARDING WORKSHOPS

Fisheries, police and maritime navy officers participate in Prosecution and Dockside Boarding Workshops. These workshops enable staff to learn more about International law, National laws, Regional and Sub-regional Fisheries Agreements, fishing vessel boarding & evidence collections and court procedures.

By 2009, FFA has provided these workshops for Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu. In addition to fisheries and police or navy officers, crown law office staff and public prosecutions staff, officers in related roles such as immigration, customs and quarantine agencies have also attended the workshops. A total of 380 participants from 13 FFA member countries have participated from 2005-08.

Officers doing boarding, inspection and evidence collection need an increased understanding of how fishing vessels operate and changes to international law and measures adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, as well as their own national laws, to do their work effectively. FFA's assistance with some funding from the OFM Project provides expertise and training on the international legal instruments, regional agreements and national law to give officers a broader understanding of their work and its relation to prosecution of fishing vessels for offences. Workshops are also reviewed to examine possible improvements, including tailored programs for Pacific Island countries without access to patrol boats.

ADVANCED EVIDENTIARY WORKSHOP

The Evidence and Investigation Course is an important training Course for Fishery Officers hosted at the National Fisheries College (NFC), in Papua New Guinea, with instruction provided by Australian Fisheries Academy (AFA) facilitators and Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Resource Officers. Partial financial assistance for the course is provided by the Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project.

The training course is a joint initiative of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and SPC and in the past few years have been delivered jointly by AFA and FFA. The modules have been developed by AFA in close consultation with FFA and SPC to ensure that it remains relevant to the region. The aim of the course is to prepare Pacific Island Fisheries Officers to assist in the management of Pacific Island marine resources and in particular to attain the skills necessary to detect and hinder fisheries offences.

The course is very practically focussed and uses activities such as role playing, field trips and court visits to ensure the training is as realistic as possible. The trainers have extensive experience in investigation work and fisheries compliance operations and are able to bring "real world" experience to the program.