

## REVIEW OF THE DIGITAL STRATEGY

### PEER REVIEW: TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2005, the Digital Strategy (DS) was established in response to an identified need to pool regional resources more effectively and accelerate the introduction of infrastructure. It was envisaged that this approach would encourage and support the use of ICTs in education, health, trade and commerce, security, governance and meet the social needs of the communities. The Strategy identified a number of key priorities, such improving access to ICTs, greater investment and building capacity, which would work to facilitate greater ICT development in the region.

*“The essence of the digital strategy will be identifying those areas where synergies exist – in regulation, market or standards - and promoting regional solutions, while identifying the needs for local action and providing support to local agencies”*

- 1.2 On 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010, the Secretariat awarded a contract for a Review of the Digital Strategy. The overall objective of the Project is to review the DS document and its implementation over the last four years and develop a new strategy to address the present and future potential of ICTs in the region. The Digital Strategy Review will:
- identify the current needs, gaps and shortfalls in ICT development and suggest any revisions to the DS to be put to Ministers for endorsement;
  - recognize the potential of the current and emerging connecting infrastructure to deliver services in education, health, government and commerce etc and, in doing so, identify approaches to maximizing the benefits of this connectivity and avoiding the downsides of the new technology;
  - identify and recommend appropriate partners and modalities for the implementation of the new strategies in the future leveraging the skills and capacities of each; and
  - specifically recognize the separate issues facing telecommunications, the Internet and broadcast media and the opportunities that converged technologies will offer. The project should also identify and address the potential of regional approaches to overcome the scale and dispersion issues facing PICs.
- 1.3 The project will be undertaken in two parts (**See annex A for full TOR**). Part A will provide a top level assessment of the current state of ICT capacity, usage and market structure in Forum Island Countries (FICs) and the ability for the region’s ICT capacity to meet future socio-economic needs. Part B will provide recommendations for a revised

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Digital Strategy based on Part A and wider stakeholder consultation, to be held in April 2010. The final report is due for submission in June 2010.

### **2.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the Peer Review is to provide an impartial critique on the methodology used, results and recommendations made, particularly to check for context, relevance and appropriateness, before the report is taken forward for Ministerial consideration. The peer reviewers will be acting in an advisory capacity and will also provide a mechanism for quality assurance.

2.1 The Peer Review will assess whether:

- the issues examined are relevant to Forum Island Countries (FICs) considering the TOR and various stages of economic and ICT development;
- issues identified and analysis undertaken has sufficiently provided an overview of the impact of the Digital Strategy since implementation;
- the conclusions and recommendations are an appropriate result of the data and analysis presented in the report;
- the conclusions and recommendations reported are appropriate for the various stages of FICs development based on presented analysis and progress of ICT development in the region.

2.2 The Peer Review will also check, for quality assurance purposes, that:

- The report is succinct, written in clear, plain English;
- Data used is clearly cited, is relevant and presentation is clear, fair and not misleading;
- Findings are relevant and interpretations and conclusions derived are based on analysis presented in the report;
- Where assertions have been made by the authors these are cited as thoughts of the author.

### **3 KEY DELIVERABLES:**

3.1 The Consultant will be required to successfully provide the following key deliverables:

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- The Consultant(s) will prepare a peer review report, titled: “A Peer Review of the Digital Strategy Review” The report will contain the following sections:
  - I. Recommendations for improvement to meet project objectives (as outlined in Section 2.1 above);
  - II. Recommendations for improving the quality of the report (with respect to areas identified in Section 2.2); and
  - III. Key areas identified to guide wider stakeholder consultation
- If the peer review finds that the Report meets any or all of the project objectives as outlined in Section 2.1 and quality checks (Section 2.2) this should be stated clearly.
- Recommendations made should be supported by reasonable justifications and the final report should be a minimum of 3000 words

### 3.2 Function of the Peer Review

It is intended that the Review of the Digital Strategy report will be circulated for consultations with members and relevant partner agencies with the view to help with implementation, as necessary. The peer review will provide an objective scrutiny of the report from others who are experts in the field which will be provided in an advisory capacity. The peer review will also identify key areas of the report that require wider stakeholder consideration. *The Secretariat is under no obligation to accept the opinions of the peer review.*

### 3.3 Scope of Work and Schedule

Due to the nature of the work, the Peer Review should not exceed 5 working days.

#### SERVICES REQUIRED:

4.1 The Consultant will be required to provide as a minimum the following capacities:

#### Essential ICT Strategy, Policy, Legislative, Regulatory analysis

- (b) Demonstrated understanding of the current and future directions of the sector, in the context of broader economic growth and development issues
- (c) Data collection and analysis capacity at a high level;
- (d) Understanding of Pacific socio economic realities;

#### Desirable

- (e) Previous experience in conducting peer reviews within the field of ICTs

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### 5. MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS:

- 5.1 The Consultant will report to the Forum Secretariat on all matters as they relate to the delivery of services as required under this RFT.
- 5.2 All Key Deliverables required under clause 3 above, will be submitted to the Forum Secretariat in a timely manner and in accordance with the provisions of the contract. The Forum Secretariat will be responsible for managing the disbursement of such Key Deliverables as necessary to development partners, particularly the ICT Working Group, and Forum Member Country Officials.
- 5.3 All and any contractual matters that may arise in the course of providing services must be presented in writing to the Forum Secretariat in the first instance.

### 6. TIMING AND DURATION

- 6.1 The commencement of the Project is scheduled for Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010
- 6.2 **Indicative Timeline**

Stage	Completed by
Consultancy Agreement finalised:	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2010
Peer Review begins	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2010
Deadline for report:	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2010

## Annex A

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### CONSULTANT OBLIGATIONS AND WORK TO BE PERFORMED

#### 1. **Consultancy Services - clause 1.1(c)**

*The Consultant shall perform the following services as set out here:*

#### **Part A: Research, Review and Consult**

##### **Technological Capacity**

- (a) **A top level assessment of the current state of Information Communication Technology capacity and usage in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs).** The assessment would include the sector governance, structure and ownership, the coverage, reach and penetration of connectivity, the extent to which the present connectivity is used for enhanced services and applications, and an in-depth focus on the degree to which converged services exist and are exploited for government, commerce and social purposes.
- (b) **A review of the potential of ICTs to meet current and future socio-economic needs in the PICs** detailing potential to improve productivity of the economy and delivery of new services.

The Consultants are expected to review (a) and (b), against the Digital Strategy (DS) objectives noting the nature of measurements used for the assessment and highlighting any gaps between the set objectives and current capacity. The Consultants should also review the contribution partners have made towards achieving the broad objectives set out by each component of the DS and identify those areas that are considered work in progress.

##### **Market Structure**

- (c) **A review of the current structure of partners and players in ICT to determine competitive advantage, leverage, access to resources and potential modalities of delivery of support.** The review would also include how the market structure impacts on issues identified in sections (a) and (b) above.

#### **Part B: Development of the Revised Digital Strategy**

- (d) **A Draft Digital Strategy II (DSII) for endorsement by Pacific Island Forum Members** which would include modalities for implementation drawing on the resources of the ever increasing raft of players in an expanding and converging ICT environment. The draft would also prioritise needs with respect to the gaps that need to be addressed (see Part A).

## **Annex A**

### **Scope of Work and Schedule**

The study will require wide consultation with all Pacific Island Forum Members through direct country visits, consultations with respective High Commissions and Embassies as well as liaison with relevant Government authorities, and with relevant development partners, and donors.

Travel to Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu agreed, other Forum member country representatives to be consulted at Pacific Meetings in February and April 2010. Travel schedule can be amended as necessary upon agreement between the Secretariat and the Consultant.

Presentation of results to be made at the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA) meeting in April 2010 and June 2010 ICT Ministerial Meeting, if this is held.

### **2. Contract Material - clauses 1.1(f) and 11**

#### **Description**

All material arising from the performance of the Consultancy Services (except Consultant Material and Secretariat Material) including in particular:

- A top level assessment of the current state of ICT capacity and usage in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs);
- A review of the potential of ICTs to meet current and future socio-economic needs in the PICs; and
- A Draft Digital Strategy II (DSII) for endorsement by Members