



**FFA**

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY - PO Box K2749, Pohnpei 96941 Federated States of Micronesia.  
Tel +691 320 3749 Fax +677 23995/20092 email: [pohnpei@ffa.int](mailto:pohnpei@ffa.int) [www.ffa.int](http://www.ffa.int)

## **Report on FMI Campus, Yap, FSM – July 2013**

**Prepared by Timothy J Costelloe – Subregional Observer Coordinator, FFA Pohnpei**

### **Background**

FFA/SPC recently conducted a sub-Regional Observer Training at the Fisheries and Maritime Institute (FMI), Yap as part of an initiative to engage or re-engage colleges in the Micronesian area in the provision of Observer training adjacent to Maritime Programs. To this end an assessment was made of the training facility and the training provided at this location to encourage a dialog going forward on ways to increase such trainings at the Yap facility. The scope of this short report is to comment on that which was well provided, and areas where FFA may be able to assist the facility to improve delivery of Observer training programs.

The assessment was made via a personal visit to the campus while training was underway, a focus group with trainees and trainers, and meetings with Campus management.

### **Positives**

The FMI campus is in a quiet location at a distance from distractions, and therefore is conducive to learning. The staff was friendly and hospitable. The Sea Safety and Generic training was, by all accounts, of the highest caliber with excellent equipment and facilities. Trainees and Trainers felt welcome and were comfortable with the location for training purposes.

Internet Access was free and trainees appreciated the sports and training facilities nearby. The environment was secure and there are accommodation facilities on site. The classroom facilities were well appointed and there was an adequate computer lab open for trainees to use.

### **Issues**

The main issues that trainees and trainers had were internet bandwidth and limited access, accommodation quality, the quality of the food served, transportation, and lack of printers.

**Internet** - I had a discussion with the FSM Telecom Station Manager while I was there, who informed me that the provision of a Wi-fi hotspot at the campus would cost almost nothing. We have to balance this against the fact that total bandwidth for the whole island is currently only 20GB shared between all users, due to the expensive satellite reception. The Station Manager further informed me that there are two options for Yap, a fiber optic cable from Guam is planned and in the interim there is some suggestion that low orbit satellites may be used to increase bandwidth and reduce cost. Notwithstanding, there is a possibility to establish a wi-fi hotspot at the Campus to increase access to the internet.

**Accommodation** – There were a range of issues here, some of which should by now be resolved. Trainees complained of bed bugs in the mattresses, old bedding and sheets, mosquitoes not properly screened out of rooms, no lockable lockers, no chairs to study in rooms, and noise disturbance from other

hostel residents, including loud music during bed and study hours. They also complained that there were no shower curtains and betel nut waste on the floors not properly disposed of.

The Campus Director informed me that the bedding and beds were due for replacement, but there may be room there for FFA to assist with an upgrade to the accommodation area. Free Mosquito coils were provided by FMI.

**Food** – This was a significant area of complaint and something that we will need to address for future courses, especially as FFA paid a substantial amount for catering. Trainees indicated that they would sometimes go to bed hungry because they couldn't face the food being served. Specifically they complained that the menu lacked variety and was not particularly healthy, with canned mackerel being served 3-4 times a week. When the cooks were asked about this they said that they didn't have the money to buy food. It was also reported to me that other trainees from other FMI courses told the Observer trainees that the meals had improved since the Observer trainees had arrived, thereby implying that we were subsidizing meals for other courses. Trainers reported going off campus to get their meals on many occasions. Food was reported to be processed food with very little local food added.

This matter was not specifically discussed with FMI campus management, but possible solutions include engaging outside catering, or setting clearer guidelines for menu expenditure and preparation for future courses. Again this has to be balanced against what is actually available locally, but some further discussion on this would be welcome.

**Transportation** – this need was underestimated from the FFA side and we will need to revisit transportation requirements for future courses.

**Lack of Printers** – The nature of Observer training requires a great deal of printed material and work sheets. Trainers indicated that it was hard to get anything printed on campus as the printers available were not designed for anything but low volume printing, and were not suitable for the course requirements.

#### **Conclusion**

On the whole we were well satisfied with the facility as a suitable place to conduct Observer training and would be happy to develop the relationship further. The classroom facilities and equipment, apart from printing, were definitely well suited to our training. We are happy to discuss the other issues as above, with a view to assisting COM/FMI to upgrade where required.

Timothy J Costelloe  
Sub-Regional Observer Coordinator  
Forum Fisheries Agency  
Pohnpei