

MFAT Management Response to Programmatic Evaluation of the Oceania Customs Organisation

Recommendations for MFAT's Consideration	
Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
Continue funding the OCO to enable it to implement its strategic plan and mandate.	Agree – acknowledging the need for the OCO to address the issues raised below. MFAT will discuss with NZCS how future funding support can incorporate monitoring and evaluation processes to assess progress against those recommendations.
Consider providing the core funding via New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS), rather than via a Grant Funding Arrangement (GFA) directly with the OCO.	Agree
Engage and share information directly with the OCO as part of supporting increased regional security engagement.	Agree

Recommendations for NZCS's Consideration	
Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
Strengthen its governance role as the implementing partner for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MFAT in conjunction with the other tier 1 members – the Australian Border Force (ABF) and the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS).	For further discussion with NZCS

Recommendations for OCO's Consideration
MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
<p>Agree MFAT agrees with the recommendations in the report that outline possible changes that OCO could make to how it operates and to strengthen the governance of the Organisation. MFAT understands that some of these changes have already begun to be implemented by OCO. MFAT acknowledges that some recommendations will be a higher priority than others for OCO and commits to undertaking a prioritisation process as part of the design phase of NZ's next phase of funding to OCO.</p>
Evaluation Report Recommendation
Clarify the criteria for selecting delivery modalities against member priorities and apply consistently. This includes 'pushing back' and reframing development partner opportunities that do not meet member needs and providing stronger advocacy for members.
Review, consolidate and prioritise the work programme, based on agreed criteria, distribution of funding, small member needs, and where OCO versus partner organisations are best placed to lead.
Enhance strategic communications and reporting to build better a coherent narrative around its work programme and ability to demonstrate impact.
Continue to operationalise new policies and processes, namely, to rationalise travel and cement good management practices day-to-day.
Make improvements at a governance level and allow the Secretariat to effectively manage and be held accountable for implementation of the Strategic Plan's work programme.
Adopt a more flexible approval process to re-allocate funds between priority areas to respond to emerging needs in a timely manner.
Engage early in developing new strategic plans, that are co-designed with members and include a M&E Framework from the outset.
Provide sufficient resourcing incentives to support staff recruitment and retention, professional development and working conditions based on agreed staffing levels (including office).
Grow and support member interests in regional security as per the Declaration of Partnership, notably small craft vessels and drug identification.
Localise training and programmes where possible to best support member needs based on actual issues/member maturity and ensure sustainable, tailored and relevant implementation.

OCO to continue to expand both formal and informal information sharing mechanisms between members and partners.