



**21st PACIFIC ASSOCIATION OF SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTIONS
(PASAI) CONGRESS**

CANUNGRA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

28 - 30 AUGUST 2018

PASAI COMMUNIQUÉ

21st PASAI Congress
Canungra, Queensland, Australia
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1. The PASAI 21st Congress took place at Canungra, Queensland, Australia from 28 to 30 August 2018. The theme for the Congress was “Embracing the digital future”. The Congress was attended by representatives of 19 PASAI member country, state or territory auditors from Australia, Chuuk, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) , Fiji, French Polynesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, New South Wales, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Pohnpei, Queensland, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Victoria. Observer representatives were the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), China National Audit Office (CNAO), Commonwealth Ombudsman Office, European Union (EU), INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI), INTOSAI Journal, Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Center (PFTAC), South Australia Auditor-General’s Department, Teammate, United Nation Development Program (UNDP), Office of the Auditor-General for Western Australia, and World Bank (WBG). PASAI Secretariat staff were also present.
2. PASAI 19th Governing Board meeting was also held in Canungra, Queensland, Australia on 27th August 2018.
3. SAI Heads **expressed** their deep gratitude to the Auditor-General and staff of Australia SAI (ANAO) for the excellent arrangements made in hosting the 21st PASAI Congress, and for the kind hospitality extended to them during their stay in Australia.

Embracing the digital future

4. SAI Heads **agreed** that the key message they are taking back with them is that mutual sharing of data analysis experience will benefit all SAIs in enabling them to identify effective strategies and contemporary data analysis tools so that SAIs remain relevant in this age of challenging digital transformation. This would in turn strengthen accountability and transparency across the region.
5. SAI Heads **reaffirmed** the application of the principles of ISSAI 12: ‘Promote Values and Benefits of SAIs through embracing the fast technological

development in their audit process to remain relevant to citizens and their stakeholders.’

6. SAI Heads **recognised** the impact of technology on SAIs activities, the pace of changes to Parliament, Government and SAIs’ work from new digital technology and the need to understand digital structure in SAIs’ environment.
7. SAI Heads **noted** that SAI values do not change but **acknowledged** the importance of defining what these relationships are in relation to digital data.
8. SAI Heads **agreed** that there is an effect on SAI organisational structure and the need for clear leadership and new skill sets to respond to the digital era and to determine ways to sustain that skill base.
9. SAI Heads **committed** to a continued focus on activities to enhance technological reach through a range of actions such as:
 - a) Developing/reviewing and implementing SAI data analysis strategies;
 - b) Investing in technology to advance the SAI in implementing its mandate;
 - c) Updating their websites, social media channels and other digital communication forms such as blogs, podcasts and video; and
 - d) Enhancing the accessibility and ability to find and source information across all digital outputs.
10. SAI Heads **commended** the proposals for steps to establish digital parliamentary communications especially the possibility for the digital tabling of annual reports. SAI Heads **recognised** how this would assist in the timely production of annual reports and (in time) in-year reports, and that further digital analysis tools could assist auditors in risk assessment and comparisons between agencies.
11. SAI Heads **identified** the main challenges of embracing the digital future, especially in the field of data analysis and strategies, including:
 - a) Capability of SAI staff in terms of data analysis skills, and training staff to drill information as “efficiency is not the sole criteria. Scrutiny is the key.” (Quote from Senator Dean Smith)
 - b) The effects of digital expansion in terms of recruitment, retention, upskilling and workplace issues;
 - c) Maintaining a credible database;
 - d) Providing visual and relevant information that engages the reader and directs them properly to digital information;
 - e) Ensuring data analysis capabilities remain robust and relevant;
 - f) Establishing trust and maintaining ethical standards while using increasing amounts of sensitive data.

12. SAI Heads **recognised** and **agreed** on many challenges facing them in the Pacific context to achieve digital advancement and optimal use of technology, and that for many in the region the common issues they faced with their digital progression were:
 - a) knowledge and capacity to keep up with technological advancement;
 - b) lack of resources such as personnel and technical ability, and
 - c) balancing budget priorities to place emphasis on data analysis.
13. Congress **resolved** to undertake a stock-take of IT audit and data analysis capability across the region for consideration by the Governing Board in February 2019, with the goal of better informing SAIs' strategic plans and PASAI support programs.

SAI PMF

14. SAI Heads **agreed** that outstanding tasks of SAI PMF assessment teams should be completed by end of December 2018, understanding the importance of their completion to inform their strategic planning processes. SAI Heads **noted** the importance of the SAI PMF assessment work which will continue with four countries participating in 2019.

Twinning program

15. SAI Heads **appreciated** the active twinning between some PASAI and ACAG members and shared experiences and success stories. SAI Heads **agreed** those PASAI members that have an existing twinning arrangement share the menu of partner activities with other PASAI members to facilitate broader take-up of twinning opportunities. SAI Heads **agreed** to explore opportunities for twinning for those SAIs who do not participate at present.

Status of Financial Statements of Government (FSG) Audits

16. SAI Heads **noted** the status of FSG audits at 30 June 2018 and **agreed** that the Secretariat continue the updating of the FSG audits database and report on a regular basis.
17. SAI Heads **acknowledged** with appreciation the technical and financial assistance by ADB to the Financial Audit Secondment Technical Support (F.A.S.T.S.) program for SAI Nauru and **thanked** the SAIs of Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga for their support in providing the secondees for the program.
18. SAI Heads **valued** the ongoing partnership with PFTAC in supporting Public Financial Management (PFM) reform activities in the region to improve accountability and enhance transparency.

SAIs contribution to 2030 Agenda

19. SAI Heads **noted** the status of the IDI/PASAI 6th Cooperative Performance Audit of preparedness for implementation of SDGs program and **encouraged** participating SAIs to ensure meeting the set timeline to complete the required reports.

Future Secretariat Considerations

20. SAI Heads **recognised** the need to discuss the future location of PASAI Secretariat and **tasked** the Secretariat to conduct a business case for continuing or relocating the PASAI Secretariat from its current location in Auckland, New Zealand, with the findings to be presented to the Governing Board in February 2019 for recommendation to the Congress.
21. Many SAI Heads and other stakeholders were **interviewed** by Riselia Bezerra of Bezerra International Consulting as part of PASAI's Mid-Term Review of its Strategic Plan 2014 – 2024, in progress since June 2018.

Engagement with Development Partners and other Stakeholders

22. SAI Heads **appreciated** the ongoing commitments to the Pacific from development partners and other stakeholders and the work that they are doing in the region in relation to PASAI programs and development. SAI Heads also **valued** the discussions on funding opportunities, operational matters, reporting and areas for future partnerships.
23. SAI Heads **acknowledged** the unique collaboration with DFAT and MFAT in strengthening the region's institutions, strategy, financial oversight, legal frameworks and independence, all driving towards achieving the vision of independent SAIs and transparent, accountable public institutions. With experience of technological projects in the region, SAIs Heads **appreciated** the breadth and reach of DFAT's and MFAT's skills and experience in the challenge of embracing the digital future.
24. SAI Heads **welcomed** with appreciation the recent commitment by the EU to support the PASAI strategy through UNDP, particularly the ongoing implementation of PASAI programs.
25. SAI Heads **noted** the presentation by IDI on the Professional Education for SAI Auditors (PESA) to be piloted in the INTOSAI community. In particular, SAI Heads **recognised** the valuable ongoing IDI-PASAI co-operation in SAI capacity development and IDI Global programs in PASAI. IDI acknowledged the work of PASAI in developing enhanced skills within the region particularly in areas, such as co-operative audits, and activities to improve SAI ability to access digital future through e-learning programs.
26. SAI Heads **thanked** the guest speakers for their valuable contributions to the Congress.

PASAI General Business

27. SAI Heads **conducted** the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of PASAI Incorporated on Tuesday, 28 August, 2018, at 11:30am, at O'Reilly's, Canungra, Queensland, Australia. SAI Heads **approved** the PASAI Annual Report 2017-18 including the audited PASAI financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2018. SAI Heads also **noted** the approved Operational Plan 2018-19 to 2022-23 and the Budget Forecast 2018-19.
28. SAI Heads at Congress **appointed** SAI Pohnpei State to represent the Micronesian group to PASAI Governing Board for a term of three years from August 2018 to August 2021
29. SAI Heads **reconfirmed** the critical significance of the collection of all member contributions over the next few months, both to avoid under-funding of PASAI activities and to enable SAs to plan payment around their budget processes.
30. SAI Heads **acknowledged** with great appreciation the ongoing support from development partners that continues to enable the implementation of the PASAI strategy.
31. SAI Heads **recognised** that funding of PASAI programs in the future is critical to the continuity of PASAI operations. SAI Heads **approved** the PASAI Secretariat to complete current funding contract negotiation and continue with preparing a negotiation strategy for next round of funding beyond 30 June 2019.

Host of the next PASAI Congress

32. SAI Heads **confirmed** that the 22nd PASAI Congress in 2019 will be hosted by SAI Fiji.

Canungra, Queensland, Australia
30 August 2018