

Audit finds FSM struggling to meet teacher certification requirements

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 24, 2026

FSM - A new performance audit by the Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) has found that the Federated States of Micronesia has struggled for decades to meet legal requirements and national goals for teacher certification, citing widespread noncompliance, weak internal controls, and misuse of certification funds.

The audit, **FSM Faces Challenges in Meeting Teacher Certification Mandates and Goals** (Report No. 2026-04), reviewed the National Department of Education's (NDOE) administration

of the Teacher Certification Program from fiscal years 2022 through 2025 and concluded that improvements are needed to comply with the FSM Teacher Certification Law and achieve national education goals.

According to the report, FSM law requires that no teacher serve in an elementary or secondary school for more than 90 days without obtaining a National Teacher Certificate (NTC). However, the audit found that for more than 30 years this mandate has not been fully enforced. During the period reviewed, only about one-third of teachers across the FSM were certified, with certification rates ranging from 34% to 36 percent between FY2022 and FY2025, despite more than 1,600

teachers employed nationwide in some years.

The audit also found no evidence that sanctions or accreditation withdrawals were enforced against schools employing uncertified teachers, even though such penalties are authorized under the law. ONPA stated that the lack of enforcement has contributed to continued noncompliance.

One of the primary causes identified was inadequate funding. The NDOE requested \$4.7 million for teacher certification activities, but only \$1.91 million was appropriated and divided among multiple program units. Auditors noted that limited funding restricted training, monitoring, and



the administration of the National Standardized Test for Teachers (NSTT), particularly in outer islands.

In addition to funding constraints, the audit identified weak internal controls

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UN review urges FSM to strengthen education alongside wider human rights reforms

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 27, 2026

Geneva - The Federated States of Micronesia has received a wide-ranging set of draft recommendations following its recent Universal Periodic Review (UPR) before the United Nations Human Rights Council, with education emerging as one of several major areas raised during the review.

The FSM was reviewed on January 19 during the 51st session of the UPR Working Group in Geneva. The UPR is a peer review mechanism under which every UN member state has

its human rights record examined by other countries approximately every four and a half years.

According to UN documentation, the review was based on three advance reports prepared specifically for the fourth UPR cycle: a national report submitted by the FSM government, a compilation of information from United Nations agencies, and a summary of submissions from civil society and other stakeholders, both prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

During the interactive dialogue, representatives of 57 UN member

states made statements and put forward recommendations covering a broad range of issues. These recommendations were subsequently compiled by a "troika" of rapporteurs representing Albania, Cuba and Thailand into a draft outcome report and a chronological list of recommendations, which are still subject to review and editing.

Education featured prominently throughout the review. Multiple countries urged the FSM to strengthen access to free and compulsory primary and secondary education, expand early childhood education, reduce out-of-school rates, and improve education services on remote and outer islands.

Several recommendations also called for legislative recognition of the right to education and for measures to address corporal punishment and violence in schools.

Concerns related to education were echoed in the advance documents, including submissions from civil society organizations and UN agencies, which cited limited access to educational institutions, low enrollment rates, and gaps in early childhood education and vocational training, particularly outside the main centers.

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President Simina meets with Compact Trust Fund Committee and Cambridge Associates as Compact Trust Fund reaches \$2 billion milestone

FSM Information Services

January 20, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — On January 19, 2026 His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia and T.H. Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia, met with representatives of Cambridge Associates and the FSM members of the Compact Trust Fund Committee to review the performance, outlook, and long-term strategy of the Compact Trust Fund, underscoring the Simina-Palik Administration's commitment to intergenerational sustainability and fiscal responsibility.

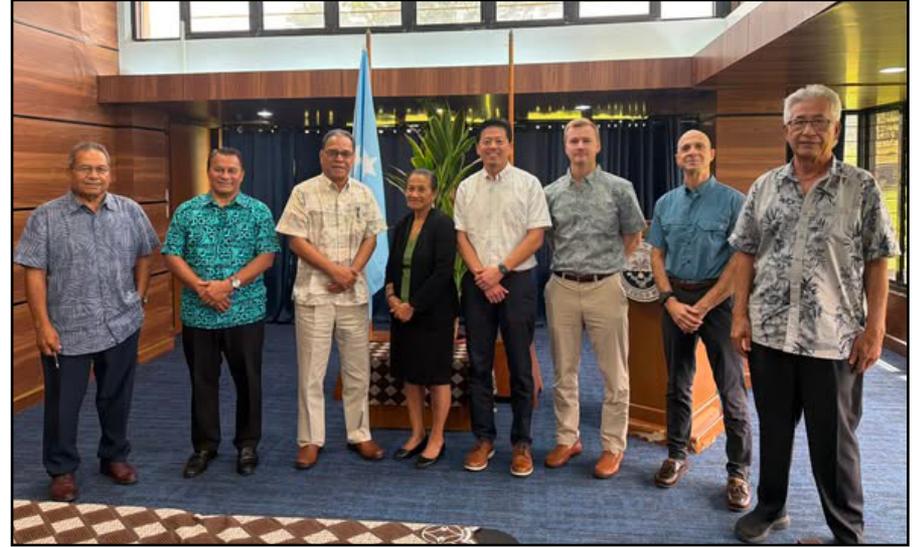
During the meeting, President Simina and Vice President Palik were briefed that the Compact Trust Fund closed out fiscal year 2025 standing at the \$2 billion mark, hitting a significant milestone in the Fund's growth and management. Updated modeling

projections presented during the session indicate that, if no significant and frequent distributions or withdrawals are made, the Trust Fund has the potential to grow to over \$9 billion by the end of the current Compact period, positioning it to eventually replace Compact sector grants during a transition and provide financial stability for the nation.

The discussion highlighted the Administration's strategic decision last year to transition the Fund's investment advisory services from Mercer to Cambridge Associates; a move aimed at aligning investment strategies with the FSM's long-term national interests.

President Simina emphasized that the Trust Fund is not only about financial resources, but a cornerstone of the nation's future.

"This Trust Fund represents our



responsibility to future generations of Micronesians," President Simina said. "Our priority is long-term sustainability, ensuring that long after Compact grants end, the FSM will have the capacity to support the five governments' operational budgets, essential services and national development through prudent and disciplined management of this Fund."

The FSM members of the Compact Trust Fund Committee and Cambridge Associates reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding the Fund through disciplined, long-term investment strategies designed to balance growth with stability, while protecting the Fund from premature withdrawals that could undermine its future potential.

The local FSM Trust Fund balance is reported at nearly \$600 million. Unlike the Compact Trust Fund, the FSM Trust Fund is financed through domestic sources and represents an additional layer of savings for the country's fiscal resilience.

The President reiterated that the Simina-Palik Administration remains focused on preserving both Trust Funds as legacy assets for future generations of the FSM that will help secure economic resilience, national self-reliance, and opportunities for generations to come.

Present in the meeting were the FSM members of the Compact Trust Fund Committee – Former President Manny Mori, Ms. Anna Mendiola, and Mr. Rensley Sigrah – Executive Administrator of the Compact Trust Fund Mr. Tony Costanzo, and Cambridge representatives Mr. Paul Liu and Mr. Dan Smith and staff.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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Monday, February 9, 2026

World Bank-Funded Agricultural building handed over at PICS High School

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 16, 2026

Pohnpei — A new agricultural building and classrooms at Pohnpei Island Central School (PICS) High School were formally handed over during a ceremony held on the afternoon of January 16, as part of ongoing efforts to expand technical and career education in the Federated States of Micronesia.

The facility was funded through the World Bank under the FSM Skills and Employability Enhancement Project (SEEP), a US \$17.7 million grant program aimed at improving access to quality technical and vocational education and strengthening pathways from school to employment across the nation.

Pohnpei Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, in his welcoming remarks, described the new building as an important step toward integrating technical and career skills development into the education system. He emphasized, however, that the real challenge lies beyond construction. “Building the facilities is probably much easier than what will take place in these facilities,” Joseph said, urging educators to focus on ensuring students gain practical knowledge that will make a difference in their lives after graduation.

World Bank Resident Representative for the North Pacific Omar Lyasset said the renovated agricultural building represents more than physical infrastructure. “It’s a symbol of opportunity and progress,” he said, noting that the facility will provide hands-on training in modern farming techniques, agribusiness, and sustainable practices — skills critical to food security and economic growth throughout the FSM.

Lyasset said SEEP is designed to address long-standing challenges in the FSM labor market, including youth unemployment and skills gaps, by investing in practical learning environments that prepare students not only for agriculture but also for broader technical trades and entrepreneurship.

FSM Vice President Aren B. Palik, delivering the keynote address,

described the handover as a proud moment for both Pohnpei State and the nation, noting that the PICS agricultural facility is the first completed construction project under SEEP. He credited the FSM National Department of Education with leading the project’s implementation and thanked Pohnpei State leadership for its support.

“For too long, career and technical education has been seen as a second or third option,” Palik said. “Today we are here to say clearly that skills, hands-on learning, and practical knowledge are crucial to our nation building.” He said improved learning environments help students see themselves as capable of building, fixing, growing, and creating their own futures.

SEEP is a nationwide initiative that combines school infrastructure upgrades, curriculum development, teacher training, and employment support programs. In addition to improving facilities at selected high schools, the project supports performance grants for technical programs, labor market information systems, and longer-term plans toward establishing a national skills academy.

Closing remarks were delivered by FSM National Department of Education Assistant Secretary Wayne Mendiola, who said the project reflects a broader commitment to providing conducive learning environments for students across all four FSM states. He told students that the presence of national and state leaders at the ceremony demonstrated the importance placed on education and future service to the nation.

The ceremony was hosted by PICS Vice Principal Rolter Oltor, who served as Master of Ceremonies. An opening invocation and blessing of the building and equipment were delivered by Deacon Pretrick Aldis. Among the dignitaries in attendance was Wu Wei, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the FSM.

Officials said the PICS agricultural building represents only the beginning of what is planned under the Skills and Employability Enhancement Project, with additional school improvements and skills-focused initiatives expected to follow as the program continues nationwide.



Audit finds weak cash controls at National Government offices in Kosrae

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 24, 2026

Kosrae - An inspection by the FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) has identified serious weaknesses in how national government funds are handled and safeguarded at several revenue-collecting offices in Kosrae State, including delayed bank deposits and inadequate secure storage for cash collections.

The findings are detailed in ONPA Report No. 2026-03, titled Deficient Handling of Deposits and Safeguarding Controls of National Government Funds in Kosrae State, which was issued on January 9, 2026. The inspection covered four national government collection offices in Kosrae: the Division of Customs, Tax and Administration (CTA), the National Treasury field office, the FSM Postal Services branch, and the Quarantine

Office at the airport.

According to the audit, CTA in Kosrae failed to deposit government revenues within the timeframe required by Financial Management Regulations. Auditors found that cash collections totaling \$925.25 received on July 4, 2025, were not deposited until July 25, 2025, and that only \$854.00 was reflected at the time of deposit, resulting in a discrepancy of \$71.25.

CTA management attributed the delays to operational issues related to the ASYCUDA customs processing system, explaining that receipts are generated only after import entries are fully completed. The audit noted that many customers require assistance to complete ASYCUDA entries, contributing to extended delays in depositing cash. ONPA concluded that holding funds for more than a week violated Financial Management Regulations and increased the risk of loss, misuse, or misappropriation of public funds.

The audit also found widespread deficiencies in the safeguarding of cash collections. At the Treasury field office, Quarantine Office, and Post Office, collections were stored in locked drawers or money pouches rather than secure safes. Auditors reported that requests for safes had been made but not acted upon, and that in some cases staff no longer had access to existing safes because combination codes were unavailable.

ONPA determined that these practices do not comply with Financial Management Regulations, which require that cash collections be secured in appropriate safes. While no losses were reported during the inspection period, the auditor emphasized that the absence of incidents does not eliminate the inherent risk posed by inadequate physical security.

Management responses included commitments to corrective action. The Department of Resources and Development reported that a secure

cash box was provided to the Kosrae Quarantine Office in November 2025, and FSM Postal Services indicated it is in the process of acquiring an appropriate safe for its Kosrae branch. The Department of Finance and Administration acknowledged the delayed deposits and stated that additional training and monitoring measures are being implemented to improve compliance with deposit requirements.

The Kosrae inspection is Part IV of a four-part nationwide series of surprise cash count inspections conducted by ONPA at national government collection offices in all four FSM states. Similar inspections were previously completed in Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap States.

Copies of the report have been provided to President Wesley W. Simina and members of the 24th FSM Congress, and the report is publicly available through the Office of the National Public Auditor.

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Audit finds serious financial control failures at U Municipal Government

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 23, 2026

U, Pohnpei - An audit of the U Municipal Government has identified significant weaknesses in internal financial controls, resulting in irregularities in cash collections, delayed deposits, poor recordkeeping, and non-compliant disbursements during fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

The audit, conducted by the Pohnpei Office of the Public Auditor (POPA), reviewed U Municipal Government's handling of cash receipts and disbursements to determine whether public funds were properly safeguarded, accurately recorded, and spent in accordance with applicable laws and financial management regulations.

According to the audit's executive summary, POPA concluded that U Municipal Government's internal controls were not adequate to ensure that collections and disbursements were properly recorded, safeguarded, and accounted for. Auditors reported "alarming failure of control activities and deficiencies in management oversight," which increased the risk of loss or misuse of municipal funds.

Late Deposits and "Borrowing" of Collections

One of the most serious findings involved the late deposit of cash collections and what auditors described as "borrowing" from collected revenues. The audit found that cash collections were often deposited days or even months after being received, rather than promptly deposited into the bank as required.

Auditors estimated that these practices resulted in un-deposited or unaccounted collections totaling more than \$27,600 during fiscal year 2024. In some cases, cash receipts were used before being deposited, receipts were not properly recorded, or deposit records were incomplete.

The audit noted that similar issues had been identified in a prior audit covering fiscal years 2020 and 2021, but that corrective actions had not been fully implemented. As a result, POPA reported that issues previously identified resurfaced again in fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

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FSM and United States reaffirm partnership during high-level consultations

FSM Information Services

January 21, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), joined by Vice President Aren B. Palik, welcomed a United States Government delegation led by Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Honorable Michael DeSombre, during high-level bilateral consultations in Palikir.

The visit marked the first official visit to the FSM by Assistant Secretary DeSombre and Mr. William Hague, Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs, underscoring the importance of the enduring partnership between the FSM and the United States, underpinned by the Compact of Free Association.

The U.S. delegation included Her Excellency Jennifer S. Johnson, U.S. Ambassador to the FSM; Mr. LaJunes Barnes, Chief of Staff, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs; Mr. Antone “Tony” Greubel, Director for Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands; Mr. Justin Rhee, Special Advisor, U.S. Department of the Interior; and Mr. Ryan Edgar, Education Policy Specialist and Grants Manager, Office of Insular Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior. Cabinet members and key staff from the Office of the President also joined the meeting.

The discussions focused on advancing shared priorities under the Compact of Free Association. Key areas of discussion included economic and commercial cooperation, infrastructure development, connectivity, environmental protection, and institutional capacity-building.

Economic and commercial diplomacy featured prominently, with emphasis on strengthening private sector development, improving the investment climate, and expanding opportunities for local businesses. Both sides also discussed ongoing efforts to enhance infrastructure and connectivity to support essential services, including healthcare and digital access.

President Simina underscored the importance of the Compact partnership in supporting the FSM’s long-term

development goals.

“I want to assure you of my continued commitment to the implementation of the Compact. I am encouraged by the spirit of collaboration through the various cooperation between our governments, and while there are challenges, I am confident that we will continue to work through them” President Simina said.

Assistant Secretary DeSombre emphasized the importance of the Freely Associated States and the longstanding and unique relationship with the United States, noting that commercial development remains a priority area for cooperation in support of sustainable economic growth.

“It is a priority for me to make this one of my first trips because I really believe in the importance of the Freely Associated States and the relationship with the United States of America,” said Assistant Secretary DeSombre.

President Simina highlighted the importance of continued technical collaboration in addressing environmental challenges, including concerns related to the oil leak in Chuuk Lagoon. In addition, President Simina expressed appreciation for the U.S. Coast Guard’s survey efforts, which support ongoing resource mobilization and response planning. The Government reaffirmed its commitment to continued coordination with partners on this matter.

President Simina expressed gratitude to Acting Assistant Secretary Hague and U.S. counterparts for support provided through grant assistance for the Pacific Connect Initiative with Google, noting its importance in enhancing digital connectivity and complementing telehealth services for FSM veterans.

Additionally, President Simina raised concerns regarding the revocation of commercial driver’s licenses (CDLs) for FSM citizens in the United States, noting the significant hardship it places on families whose livelihoods depend on such employment. Assistant Secretary DeSombre responded that he has addressed this matter with the US Secretary of Transportation and reaffirmed that COFA citizens under the Compact of Free Association should



remain eligible for commercial driver’s licenses.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing appreciation for the open and constructive dialogue and reaffirming their commitment to continued cooperation in support of peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.

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Australia Day celebrated in Pohnpei with diplomacy, music, and shared ties

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 24, 2026

Pohnpei - The Embassy of Australia to the Federated States of Micronesia hosted an Australia Day reception Friday evening at Mangrove Bay Bar and Grill, bringing together invited guests, dignitaries, and members of the Australian and Micronesian communities for an evening by the lagoon.

Australia Day, observed annually on January 26, commemorates the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove in 1788 and the beginning of modern Australia. The national observance serves as a time for reflection and celebration, recognizing the country's history, diversity, and shared values that were reflected throughout the evening's program.

The event began with the national anthems of the Federated States of Micronesia and Australia by Kaia Akinage, a senior at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School.

The anthems were followed by remarks from Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant and FSM President Wesley Simina. Those in attendance included President Simina and First Lady Simina, Vice President Aren Palik and Second Lady Palik, Pohnpei Governor Stevenson Joseph and First Lady Joseph, Kosrae Governor Tulensa Palik, Cabinet secretaries, senators, members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of the United Nations and international organizations, Australian nationals residing in the FSM, and members of the Australian Defence Force.

In her address, Ambassador Grant acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and welcomed guests to an evening focused on reflection, respect, and celebration. She also spoke on a solemn note about the recent terrorist attack at Bondi Beach in Sydney, expressing sympathy for the victims and their families and affirming Australia's commitment to unity, compassion, and resilience in the face of violence.

Ambassador Grant spoke about the long-standing partnership between Australia and the FSM, noting that the two countries have shared diplomatic



relations for 38 years. She referenced recent developments in the relationship, including the establishment of the FSM Embassy in Canberra, progress toward the East Micronesia Cable linking Kosrae and Pohnpei with Nauru and Kiribati, and cooperation with Japan and the United States on regional connectivity initiatives.

She also discussed Australia's support for aviation links through Nauru Airlines, collaboration with UNICEF and UNFPA to support stronger and safer families, assistance in maritime security through the provision of patrol boats, and cooperation in protecting fisheries resources. She also referred to the role of Australia Awards scholarships in supporting Micronesian students pursuing studies in medicine, nursing, law, aviation, and other fields.

President Simina congratulated the government and people of Australia and described Australia as a trusted friend and close partner of the FSM. He spoke of Australia's contributions to maritime security, education, climate resilience, and sustainable development, and reflected on the growth of the bilateral relationship since diplomatic ties were established in 1987.

President Simina also conveyed condolences to Australia following the Bondi Beach attack, condemning the violence and expressing solidarity with the Australian people during a difficult time.

Following the formal remarks, guests enjoyed Australian-style food, including sausages and lamb, along with other traditional dishes. The evening included live music performed by a four-piece band of local residents calling themselves "Shadow Sessionistas" playing popular Australian songs, as guests continued conversations in a relaxed setting overlooking the water.

President Simina administers oath of office for new NORMA Executive Director, Mrs. Camille Inatio

FSM Information Services

January 26, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — January 26, 2026 — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), administered the oath of office to Mrs. Camille Inatio, officially installing her as the new Executive Director of the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) during a ceremony held at the President's Office.



Mrs. Inatio's appointment marks an important milestone for NORMA as the Authority welcomes new leadership after an extended period.

In her new role, Mrs. Inatio brings extensive experience and a deep understanding of NORMA's mission. She previously served as a Fisheries Economist with the Authority and later as Assistant Secretary under the Division of Marine at the FSM Department of Resources and Development. Through these roles, she has developed strong expertise in fisheries economics, marine policy, and FSM's oceanic resource management framework.

President Simina expressed confidence in Mrs. Inatio's leadership as he administered the oath, noting that her appointment represents a continued commitment



to strengthening the FSM's stewardship of its vast marine resources. He congratulated Executive Director Inatio and highlighted the essential role NORMA plays in ensuring sustainable management, economic value, and long-term protection of the nation's fisheries.

Following the ceremony, Executive Director Inatio expressed gratitude for the trust placed in her and reaffirmed her commitment to upholding NORMA's mandate to responsibly manage FSM's oceanic resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

...Teachers

[continued from front page](#)

affecting both data reliability and financial accountability. Auditors found problems with NSTT administration, including incomplete and improperly recorded test materials. Of 927 NSTT answer sheets reviewed, 21 percent were recorded on incorrect forms and more than seven percent lacked required identification information. Inconsistent data reporting between national and state education offices was also noted.

Financial oversight weaknesses were another concern. The audit found that one Quality and Effectiveness Division account was not reconciled and lacked sufficient documentation,

with apparent overspending in some categories. Auditors warned that these deficiencies undermine transparency and reduce resources available for intended certification activities.

The audit also identified inappropriate use of teacher certification project funds. Of the \$205,000 appropriated for the Teacher Certification Project, \$13,123.59 was spent on activities unrelated to teacher certification, including travel to meetings, catering services, communication costs, office gifts, and fuel. ONPA stated that these expenditures violated project requirements and reduced funds available for training and testing teachers.

Operational challenges further limited certification progress. The audit found

that certified teacher attrition averaged nine percent per year from FY2022 to FY2025, while training for uncertified teachers consisted of only one week of summer instruction. A survey of 53 uncertified teachers found that all considered the training inadequate, and more than 40 percent cited NSTT content difficulty as a major barrier. Low salaries, high turnover, and the recruitment of individuals without education backgrounds were also cited as contributing factors.

The ONPA recommended that the NDOE propose revisions to the Teacher Certification Law, including reconsideration of the 90-day certification limit, which auditors said has proven unworkable for decades. Additional recommendations include strengthening internal controls,

improving data systems, enforcing financial policies, expanding teacher training, and using performance data to guide planning.

In its written response, the NDOE concurred with all four major audit findings and expressed appreciation for the recommendations. The department acknowledged concerns about data reliability and financial accountability and stated its commitment to improving administration of the Teacher Certification Program.

National Public Auditor Haser H. Hainrick said the report has been provided to the President and the 24th FSM Congress and is available to the public. ONPA indicated it plans to follow up to assess implementation of the recommendations.

President Simina receives JICA Data Collection Survey Team on passenger and cargo vessel assistance

FSM Information Services

January 15, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei – His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) received a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Data Collection Survey Team on a courtesy call at the President’s Office in Palikir on January 6, 2026.

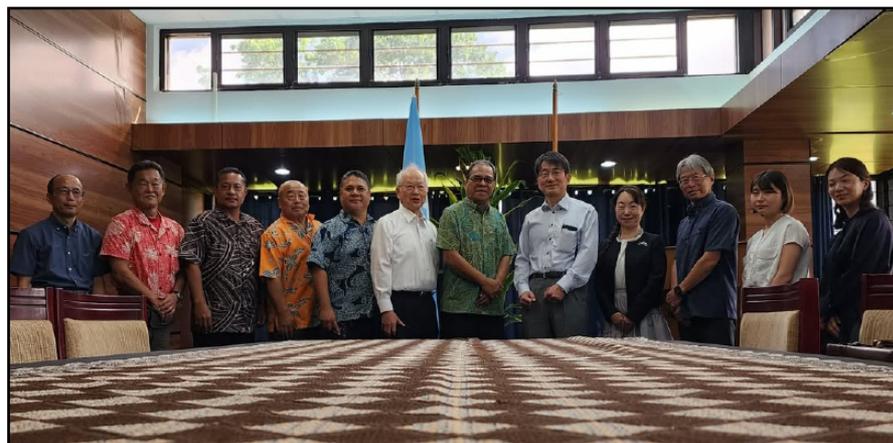
The visit of the JICA Data Collection Survey Team follows a formal request made by the Government of the FSM to the Government of Japan for assistance in the provision of a new passenger and cargo vessel to replace the MV Caroline Voyager, which was personally conveyed by President Simina during the visit to the FSM by the President of JICA in June 2024 and Tenth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) held in July 2024.

The objective of the survey is to gather information about the current vessel situation and identify potential

operational needs and technical specifications. The information gathered will support JICA’s project formulation process and inform potential future assistance for a passenger and cargo vessel that is well-suited to FSM’s operational needs and long-term sustainability.

During the courtesy call, President Simina welcomed the team and expressed his appreciation to the Government of Japan and the JICA for their prompt and positive response to the FSM’s request. The President noted that the dispatch of the Data Collection Survey Team reflects the strong and enduring partnership between FSM and Japan, as well as their shared commitment to practical and sustainable development cooperation.

President Simina underscored the critical importance of maritime transportation to the FSM, a geographically dispersed island nation that relies heavily on safe and reliable passenger and cargo vessels to connect



states and communities, support economic activity, and ensure the delivery of essential goods and services. The President also highlighted the history of maritime cooperation with Japan, which started from the provision of the Micro-class cargo-passenger vessels, followed by the MV Caroline Voyager.

President Simina further emphasized that the Administration’s vision is to enhance accessibility and connectivity between the central main island state and the smaller neighboring atolls to better serve the people of the FSM.

“The President concluded by thanking the JICA Data Collection Survey Team for their commitment and reaffirmed the FSM Government’s full support for the survey process, while expressing confidence that the survey’s findings would lead to the tangible realization of a passenger vessel to serve the people of the Federated States of Micronesia.”

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FSM strengthens ties with Japan during Parliamentary delegation visit

FSM Information Services

January 15, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) on January 8, 2026, welcomed a high-level Parliamentary Delegation from the House of Councilors of the National Diet of Japan, led by Mr. Toshiharu Furukawa accompanied by His Excellency Nobuo Kagomiya, Ambassador of Japan to the FSM, during a courtesy visit to the Office of the President. The visit reaffirmed the deep and enduring partnership between the FSM and Japan, founded on mutual respect, shared values, and long-standing cooperation.

President Simina expressed gratitude for Japan's continued engagement and support, highlighting recent cooperation through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), including the dispatch of a survey team at the FSM Government's request and discussions on the possible provision of a vessel to enhance national connectivity. He noted that the visit marks Japan's second Official Development Assistance (ODA)-related mission since the last engagement, underscoring Japan's strong and sustained commitment to FSM's development priorities.

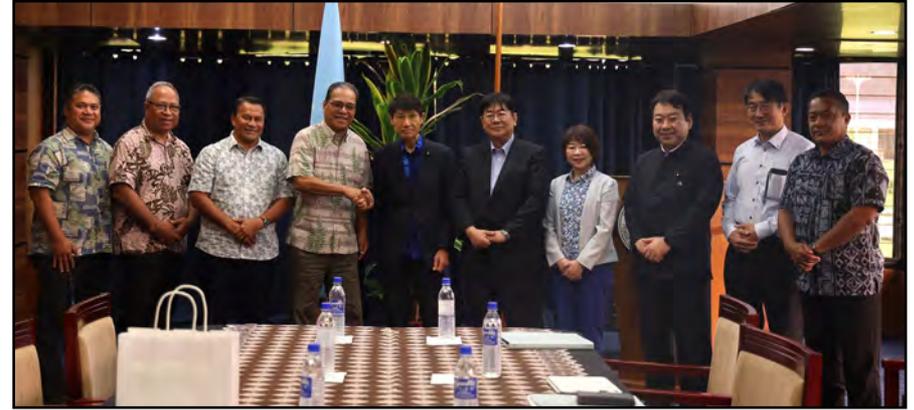
The President emphasized that Japan and the FSM share common values and priorities, including peace, security, and sustainable development. He conveyed appreciation for Japan's understanding

of the FSM's priorities and reaffirmed the FSM Government's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations and working closely with Japanese agencies and stakeholders.

Mr. Toshiharu Furukawa expressed appreciation for the warm welcome extended by the FSM Government and reaffirmed Japan's commitment to its longstanding partnership with the FSM. Mr. Furukawa further emphasized Japan's continued support for FSM's development priorities through ODA, including cooperation in infrastructure, maritime transportation, human resource development, and climate resilience. He also acknowledged FSM's strategic importance in the Pacific region and reiterated Japan's commitment to promoting sustainable development, regional stability, and a shared vision for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

The Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the FSM, also expressed appreciation for the delegation's visit and for Japan's willingness to listen to the FSM's priorities, conveying hope for continued assistance and expanded collaboration in areas that directly benefit the people of the FSM.

The Office of the President welcomed the visit as a meaningful opportunity to strengthen dialogue, deepen cooperation, and advance initiatives that deliver tangible benefits to the people of the FSM, reflecting a shared vision for continued partnership and shared prosperity.



...UN Review

[continue from front page](#)

Beyond education, the draft recommendations span a wide spectrum of human rights and development issues. Numerous States called on the FSM to strengthen protections for women and children, including measures to address domestic violence, sexual violence, child protection, child labor, and early marriage. Other recommendations focused on access to health services, maternal and child health, disability inclusion, and social protection, especially for communities living on outer islands.

Climate change and environmental

resilience were also recurring themes. Several countries urged the FSM to improve climate-resilient water and sanitation services, strengthen disaster preparedness, and integrate human rights considerations into climate adaptation and national planning, reflecting the country's vulnerability to droughts, sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

A significant number of recommendations addressed governance and legal frameworks, including calls to ratify outstanding international human rights treaties and to establish an independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles. These issues were raised consistently by UN agencies, civil society groups, and reviewing States.

The FSM government's national report outlined progress made since the previous UPR cycle, including legislative reforms, policy initiatives, and efforts to strengthen reporting and coordination mechanisms. It also acknowledged ongoing challenges related to limited financial and technical resources, geographic dispersion, and capacity constraints, and emphasized continued cooperation with development partners and UN agencies.

The draft Working Group report notes that all recommendations remain under consideration. The FSM will provide formal responses indicating which recommendations it accepts or notes at a later stage, no later than the 62nd session of the Human Rights Council scheduled for mid-2026. The recommendations themselves reflect the views of the States that submitted them and do not constitute collective endorsement by the Working Group.

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...U Audit

continued from page 5

Disbursements Not in Compliance

A second major finding involved disbursements that did not comply with the U Municipal Government's Financial Management Regulations (FMR) or accepted government accounting practices.

Auditors reviewed 278 disbursement transactions and found that:

107 transactions, totaling more than \$104,700, lacked supporting documents;

Of those, 54 transactions had missing checks;

29 transactions were not properly supported or approved; and

Files related to disbursements were disorganized and not properly maintained.

Because of these deficiencies, auditors said they could not provide reasonable assurance that the disbursements reviewed were made for valid municipal obligations.

The audit also noted that approximately \$7,304 in disbursements were processed in cash rather than through UMG's Treasury account, raising further concerns about compliance and accountability.

Causes and Risks

POPA attributed the problems to weak oversight by management, lack of effective supervisory review, insufficient segregation of duties, and inadequate training of

personnel responsible for financial management.

Auditors warned that these conditions increase the risk of abuse, theft, and loss of public funds, and undermine the municipality's ability to produce accurate and reliable financial reports.

Referrals and Investigations

The audit disclosed that some disbursement-related irregularities were investigated by the Department of Public Safety and referred to the Office of the Attorney General. Separately, irregularities involving cash receipts were investigated by POPA's Compliance Investigation Division and also referred to the Attorney General's Office.

Management Response

In a written response included in

the audit, U Municipal Government management acknowledged the findings and said steps are being taken to address the deficiencies. These include revising collection and disbursement policies, strengthening supervisory oversight, introducing checklists and tracking tools, improving recordkeeping, and providing additional training to staff.

UMG management said it is committed to restoring integrity and transparency in its financial operations and will continue working with oversight agencies to ensure compliance with financial management requirements.

POPA noted that U Municipal Government has submitted a corrective action plan and that progress reports are expected to be provided until all findings are resolved, not to exceed one year.

East Micronesia Cable nears service, expanding Internet access to Kosrae

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 22, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — Officials from the Federated States of Micronesia and partner countries gathered in the FSM President's Conference Room in Palikir for a Countdown for Service ceremony for the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) Project, an undersea telecommunications system that will provide submarine fiber optic connectivity to Kosrae, completing cable access for all four FSM states.

The US\$95 million project is jointly funded by the governments of the United States, Japan, and Australia and will also connect Nauru and Kiribati to the global internet network.

President Wesley Simina said the EMC reflects regional cooperation and national priorities aimed at improving access to services and economic opportunity, particularly for communities that have remained dependent on satellite-based connectivity.

Kosrae is the last FSM state to receive a submarine fiber optic cable. The other FSM states — Yap, Chuuk, and Pohnpei — have had undersea cable connections for years.

“For a remote island nation like ours, this connectivity is a lifeline,” Simina said. “Linking our people to opportunity, our communities to services, and our nation to the global economy.”

Japan's Ambassador to the FSM, Nabuo Kagomiya, said the cable will provide high-speed internet to Kosrae, Nauru, and Kiribati, helping reduce the disadvantages faced by island nations with limited communications infrastructure.

“Digital networks provided by submarine cable, if sufficiently utilized, would enable residents of the beneficiary areas to overcome these disadvantages,” Kagomiya said. He pointed to benefits including improved business activity, more efficient government services, expanded educational access, and stronger disaster preparedness.



Australian Ambassador to the FSM Jenny Grant said the EMC represents a long-term investment in digital infrastructure and regional cooperation.

“Australia and our close partners together have invested \$95 million in this community infrastructure,” Grant said. “This is money well invested with our close partner, FSM.”

Grant said the cable will improve redundancy for existing networks, support future growth in data demand, and help expand access to services such as health care, education, and government administration.

The ceremony coincided with the visit of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Michael George DeSombre, who participated in the event during his first official visit to the FSM.

“The United States is proud to have helped bring the East Micronesia Cable to Kosrae,” DeSombre said, noting that cable-based internet will enable telehealth, online education, remote

employment, and digital businesses.

DeSombre also referenced continued U.S. support for digital connectivity in the FSM, including funding for a future branching line of the Google submarine cable to Chuuk.

“With the East Micronesia Cable ready for service in FSM, Nauru, and Kiribati, this is not the end of our engagement,” he said.

Officials from all three partner countries said the EMC is intended to strengthen regional cooperation, improve resilience, and support long-term development across the North Pacific.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph honors tradition and service at 12th Menintiensapw Swearing-In Ceremony

Pohnpei Public Information

January 19, 2026

Madolenihmw, Pohnpei — On January 13, 2026, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attended the formal swearing-in ceremony for the 12th Menintiensapw (Legislative Council) of the Madolenihmw Municipal Government. The event marked a significant milestone in local governance, blending modern democratic responsibility with the deep-rooted traditional honors of Pohnpei.

The ceremony was graced by the distinguished presence of Pohnpei's traditional leadership, reflecting the enduring strength and respect of tradition and custom. Among the high-ranking traditional leaders in attendance were:

- Iso Nahnken of Madolenihmw
- Iso Nahnken of U
- Wasahi Madolenihmw
- Likend Madolenihmw
- Lepen Moar Madolenihmw

Members of the Madolenihmw delegation to the 11th Pohnpei Legislature also attended, along with

- Speaker Marvin T. Yamaguchi:
- Senator Hudson Abraham
- Senator Ricky Carl
- Senator Shelten G. Neth
- Senator Nelbert Perez

This legislative inauguration followed the swearing-in of the executive leadership, Meninkeder Lapalap and Keriau en Meninkeder Lapalap of Madolenihmw, which took place the previous day.

A Call to "City Upon a Hill" Excellence

During the ceremony, Governor Joseph was invited to deliver special remarks to the newly inducted Council members. Drawing inspiration from a historic 1961 address by President John F. Kennedy, the Governor referenced the concept of a "City Upon a Hill."

Governor Joseph challenged the members of the 12th Menintiensapw to view their roles through the lens of four essential character traits that define truly great public servants:

- **Courage:** The strength to make difficult decisions for the common



good.

- **Judgment:** The wisdom to weigh complex issues with fairness.
- **Integrity:** The commitment to remain honest and transparent in all dealings.
- **Dedication:** A tireless devotion to the welfare of the people of Madolenihmw.

The Governor's attendance underscores the Pohnpei State Government's commitment to fostering strong partnerships with municipal governments. By working in harmony with both the elected Menintiensapw and the Traditional Leadership, the State aims to ensure that development and cultural preservation go hand in hand.

The Pohnpei State Government extends its warmest congratulations to the members of the 12th Menintiensapw and looks forward to a productive term of service to the community.

Strengthening ties through partnership & culture

Pohnpei Public Information

December 21, 2026

Pohnpei - A momentous day at the Governor's Office as we welcomed a distinguished U.S. delegation to Pohnpei!

Lt. Governor Herolyn S. Movick escorted Assistant Secretary Michael G. DeSombre, Acting Assistant Secretary William Hague, and H.E. Ambassador Jennifer L. Johnson for a high-level dialogue with Governor Joseph and cabinet officials.

The conversation moved beyond traditional policy into exciting new territory, including:

- **Agriculture & Economic Growth:** Enhancing local food security and development.
- **Commercial Diplomacy:** Building stronger bridges for sustainable foreign investment.
- **Cultural Heritage:** A special discussion on the Pohnpei Urohs, focusing on intellectual property protections for our traditional designs.
- **MIF 2026:** Looking ahead to a successful Micronesians Islands Forum here in Pohnpei.

From economic strategy to the intricate threads of our Urohs, our partnership with the United States remains deep, respectful, and forward-looking.



Lieutenant Governor Herolyn S. Movick attends inauguration of Nett District government leadership

Pohnpei Public Information

January 19, 2026

Nett District Government, Pohnpei

— On behalf of the Pohnpei State Government, Lieutenant Governor Herolyn S. Movick, accompanied by her husband, Mr. James Movick, attended the inaugural services for the Nett District Government on January 13, 2026. The ceremony marked the official swearing-in of District Administrator Mr. Daniel Edgar and the newly elected members of the Nett District Council.

The event was held in the esteemed presence of Pohnpei's traditional leadership, led by Wasalapalap Pwoud Lepen Nett, Nahnmwarki of Nett, and the IsoNahnken of Nett. Their presence underscored the vital and enduring partnership between the constitutional government and the traditional leadership of Pohnpei.

A Gathering of Leadership and Diplomacy

The inauguration was attended by a broad spectrum of local and international dignitaries, highlighting the importance of Nett District in the state's political and social fabric. Key attendees included:

Members of the Diplomatic Corps: Representing international partners who continue to support Pohnpei's development.

Local Chief Executives: Mayors and administrators from sister municipalities across Pohnpei gathered to show solidarity.

State Officials: Joining Lieutenant Governor Movick to witness the peaceful transition of leadership. Commitment to Collaboration

The Pohnpei State Government extends its warmest congratulations to the people of Nett on this historic occasion and wishes the new administration a successful and impactful term of service.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph hosts Legislative Committee to Wait

Pohnpei Public Information

January 22, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpei — On January 14, 2026, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph received the Legislative "Committee to Wait On the Governor" at the Executive Building following the commencement of the First Regular Session of the Pohnpei State Legislature.

The Committee, led by Chairman Senator Ricky Carl, included Floor Leader Alfredson Ladore, Senator Mitaro Simina, and Legislative Staff member Ms. Lynn Carlos. Governor Joseph warmly received the delegation, extending his sincere gratitude for the Legislature's continued cooperation.

Session Commencement and Executive-Legislative Dialogue

Chairman Carl officially informed the Governor that the Legislature had convened for its First Regular Session, which is scheduled to run for 60 days.

Governor Joseph expressed his appreciation for the support of the Speaker and the Legislature. During the meeting, he proposed a Joint Leadership meeting to align State goals further.

The Strategic Development Plan

(SDP) and Appointments

A primary point of discussion was the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Governor Joseph sought an update on its endorsement, emphasizing that the SDP is a "living document" meant to be adjusted over time. He emphasized that the plan is a critical new requirement under the amended Compact of Free Association with the United States, specifically regarding economic provisions.

Chairman Carl informed the Governor that the SDP is currently under review by the Standing Committee on Resources and Development, noting the necessity of public hearings to ensure key stakeholders and community input.

Additionally, the Governor followed up on pending nominations for several key oversight bodies, including:

- Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) Board
- Board of Land Trust
- Sports Commission
- Public Services and State of the State
- The Committee engaged the Governor on several urgent public interest matters:

- Infrastructure & Environment: Discussions were held regarding another Pohnpei Clean-up Day, ongoing concerns at the dumpsite, and the critical need for land surveying services in the Outer Islands. The need for a Climate Commissioner was also relayed.

- Education: Senator Mitaro Simina, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Education, highlighted the urgent need for additional school buses to support student transportation.

- State of the State: In response to the Committee's inquiry, Governor Joseph announced that formal communications will follow to the Speaker's Office.

Moving Forward

Governor Joseph thanked the Committee for bringing these vital issues to his attention, reaffirming that his office remains "always open" to the leadership and members of the Legislature. He committed to sharing these concerns with the relevant Departments, Offices, and Agencies for immediate review and action.

The Governor concluded by noting his intention to meet with Speaker Yamaguchi to further discuss these matters and ensure the steady progress of the state's development priorities. Ex seniris; Catilii por locri pone

President Simina and Vice President Palik receive Committee to Wait following opening of Third Session

FSM Information Services

January 13, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei - President Wesley W. Simina and Vice President Aren B. Palik on January 13, 2026, received the Committee to Wait on the President following the opening of the Third Regular Session of the 24th FSM Congress, to discuss national priorities and outline next steps on several key matters, including emergency response, budget considerations, infrastructure initiatives, and cybersecurity among others.

The Committee was chaired by T.H. Fabian S. Nimea, with members T.H. Senator Yoslyn G. Sigrah, T.H. Senator Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, and T.H. Senator Andrew R. Yatilman.

President Simina welcomed members and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue. He conveyed greetings

from the Office of the President to the Speaker Esmond B. Moses and members of the 24th FSM Congress and outlined several priority areas for consideration.

Among the issues discussed was the proposed extension of the Declaration of Emergency related to the oil spill in Chuuk, with the President highlighting the importance of continued access to resources and coordinated efforts to address its environmental impacts. The President also raised the need for Congressional support for a supplemental budget to meet the shortfalls that were not considered in the passed FY26 budget.

The meeting included an update on the subsea cable infrastructure project, with the Administration noting that it is revising the project's financing structure in line with Congressional guidance and remains prepared to brief relevant committees.



Additional discussions covered pending bills, resolutions, and nominations, all of which are scheduled for review during the current session.

In response, Congressional leadership indicated that relevant committees will conduct hearings and further reviews to determine appropriate courses of action on the matters raised. Discussions also underscored the importance of advancing cybersecurity initiatives as part of national resilience efforts.

The meeting concluded with a shared understanding that committees will continue their work through hearings and deliberations to guide any decision-making.

The Simina-Palik Administration reaffirms its commitment to continued collaboration with the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia in advancing national priorities and serving the best interests of the people of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Japanese Diet Overseas Development Assistance delegation visits Pohnpei

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

January 23, 2026

Pohnpei - From January 8-11, 2026, a Diet Delegation from the House of Councilors ODA Committee composed of Mr. Toshiharu FURUKAWA (leader), Mr. Taro YAMADA, Mr. Jiro HATA, and Ms. Mami TAMURA, visited the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) to survey Japan's ODA assistance to the FSM.

On January 9th, the delegation visited the site of the Pohnpei Port expansion project, which is being implemented with Japan's assistance. This project is the largest assistance from Japan to the FSM and construction is currently underway. During the visit, gratitude for Japan's assistance was expressed by the General Manager of the Pohnpei Port Authority. Additionally, representatives from Wakachiku Construction Co., Ltd., which is undertaking the construction, and Echo Corporation, which manages the construction, provided an overview of the project. The delegation asked questions about the progress of the construction and exchanged opinions.

Furthermore, the delegation observed



the activities of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) overseas cooperation volunteers (in mathematics education, physical therapy, and baseball) active in the Federated States of Micronesia. The delegation asked questions about the volunteers' activities and the local situation in each field and exchanged opinions.

In addition, the delegation visited infrastructure facilities and schools that Japan had supported in the past.

The delegation also visited the Pohnpei Association Memorial Monument, which was erected to pray for the repose of those who dedicated themselves to the development and cultural enhancement of Pohnpei Island during Japan's mandatory administration and those who perished during the Pacific War, and offered prayers and flowers.

Governor Joseph and Japanese Parliamentary delegation discuss strategic priorities and ODA successes

Pohnpei Public Information

January 15, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Lieutenant Governor Herolyn Movick hosted a high-level delegation from the Government of Japan on January 9 at the Office of the Governor. The courtesy visit provided an opportunity to review ongoing cooperation and explore new avenues for the enduring partnership between Pohnpei and Japan.

The visiting party included His Excellency Nobuo Kagomiya, Ambassador of Japan to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and a Parliamentary Delegation from the House of Councilors, National Diet of Japan. They were joined by Mr. Calvin Ehmes from the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs and Ms. Yvonne Johnny, FSM Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Coordinator.

Governor Joseph and Lieutenant Governor Movick were supported by Chief of Staff Patterson Shed, Public Affairs Officer Patrick Pedrus, Public Information Officer Cynthia

Eliou Edgar, and Photographer Darsy Augustine.

A Broad Spectrum of Cooperation

The meeting covered a wide array of developmental topics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of Japan's support in the region. The delegation engaged in a comprehensive dialogue regarding infrastructure, the management of used vehicles imported from Japan, industrial waste disposal solutions, and the sustainable management of tuna and fishing resources.

Among the successful initiatives reviewed was the Pohnpei Port Expansion project, one of the largest infrastructure undertakings in the FSM. Governor Joseph highlighted the exceptional detail, cooperation, and transparency that defined the preparation phase of the port expansion. Ambassador Kagomiya confirmed that the project is currently on schedule and running smoothly toward its completion.

Aligning Assistance with Pohnpei's Priorities

During the exchange, Governor Joseph

shared the Pohnpei State Government's core strategic priorities, emphasizing four critical pillars:

- Food Security
- Energy Security
- Water Security
- NCD (Non-Communicable Diseases) Prevention

The Japanese delegation inquired into these sectors to better understand how future Overseas Development Assistance can be tailored to meet the State's specific needs. Both parties expressed a commitment to finding innovative ways to support these priorities, ensuring that the "Kizuna" bond between Japan and Pohnpei continues to foster resilience and health for all residents.

The visit concluded with a mutual pledge to continue working closely together to ensure that all ODA projects and future collaborations result in tangible benefits for the people of Pohnpei.



Pohnpei State government welcomes new JICA volunteer to Pohnpei

Pohnpei Public Information

January 19, 2026

Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Lt. Governor Herolyn S. Movick officially received a courtesy visit from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) today, welcoming the newest Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV), Ms. Mina Haga, to Pohnpei State. Ms. Haga, who recently arrived in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), is assigned to Saladak Elementary School in U Municipality, where she will be serving as an educator.

Strengthening the Partnership

During the meeting, JICA Resident Representative Mr. Takeshi Watanabe highlighted the enduring legacy of the volunteer program. He noted that Ms. Haga marks the 477th JICA volunteer to serve in the FSM since the program's inception. Currently, there are 22



active volunteers nationwide, with the majority—12 volunteers—dedicated to projects and schools right here in Pohnpei.

Mr. Watanabe was joined by JICA staff member Ms. Chihiro Arakawa, Volunteer Coordinator, and LaShaunda Wilson-Daniel, Program Officer, JICA-Micronesia.

A Personal Connection

Governor Joseph expressed his deep

appreciation for JICA's continued commitment to the development of Pohnpei's youth and infrastructure. In a heartfelt moment, the Governor shared a personal connection to Ms. Haga's assignment at Saladak Elementary, noting the importance of the school to the local community and his own ties to the area.

The visit concluded with an exchange of well-wishes as Ms. Haga prepares to begin her term at Saladak Elementary

School, continuing the long-standing tradition of Japanese-Micronesian cooperation.

About JICA in Pohnpei

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provides technical assistance, dispatching volunteers like Ms. Haga to support education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability, fostering mutual growth and cultural exchange between Japan and the FSM.



RMI Prepares for a Dengue Outbreak Before it Strikes

PIHOA

January 14, 2026

Majuro, RMI - On request and in coordination with the RMI Ministry of Health and Human Services (MOHHS), the PIHOA Secretariat conducted a Dengue Outbreak Readiness Workshop in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) from November 10–12, 2025.

The three-day workshop focused on strengthening RMI MOHHS' preparedness to detect, respond to, and prevent dengue outbreaks through the development of a country-specific Early Warning System (EWS) and enhanced operational response planning. Key objectives included establishing proposed epidemiological and entomological alert thresholds, developing a vector control response plan linked to EWS triggers, integrating lessons learned from tabletop exercises into updated standard operating procedures (SOPs), and strengthening inter-sectoral collaboration for outbreak preparedness.

A total of 16 participants, including five MOHHS public health staff and 11

Community Health Workers received hands-on training from the PIHOA Secretariat's vector management team: Dr. Limb Hapairai (Regional Medical Entomologist), Dr. Tomás León (Climate Scientist Consultant), Ms. Jacquelyn Lefagoyal (Data and Community Engagement Assistant Consultant), and Ms. Rosanna Yoon Rabago (Vector Management Improvement Technical Consultant). All 16 participants were from the outer islands and returned to their respective posts after the training. This will ensure that outer-island communities will have trained health workers competent in Dengue detection, prevention, and outbreak response. Participants represented a range of backgrounds, including public health, epidemiology, vector management, health planning and policy, preparedness, public information and education, and community health.

Workshop sessions covered dengue epidemiology, transmission, symptoms, and surveillance, as well as the importance of EWS in anticipating outbreak risk using climate data, mosquito habitat and abundance

indicators, and epidemiological trends, both within RMI and across the Pacific region. To support early action and coordinated response, epidemiological and entomological thresholds were established to guide timely activation of vector control measures by the Vector Control Unit.

As part of the workshop outcomes, 17 SOPs were reviewed and updated to standardize procedures for mosquito surveillance, vector control operations, risk communication, community engagement, quality assurance for pesticide and battery management, and data reporting, significantly strengthening RMI's operational readiness at both national and community levels.

"Our eleven students gained essential, up-to-date skills during the Dengue Outbreak Readiness Workshop, strengthening their capacity in data collection, analysis, and the use of SOPs for effective outbreak response," said Ms. Tavaita Suvirara, Community Health Outreach Worker Instructor and Supervisor, MOHHS. "They are

now better prepared to return home and support their communities through strong community engagement, source reduction, and dengue readiness activities."

The workshop also strengthened the capacity of frontline vector control staff responsible for implementing outbreak response measures.

"The Standard Operating Procedures developed during the workshop were instrumental in giving me a deeper understanding of my responsibilities in vector control and planning," said Mr. Bobson Solomon, Vector Control Officer, Division of Environmental Health. "They significantly boost our readiness to prevent future dengue outbreaks using the established early warning signals."

PIHOA will continue to work closely with the RMI MOHHS to support the implementation of RMI's dengue EWS and strengthen outbreak readiness through sustained technical assistance, workforce development, and regional collaboration.

Pohnpei State government welcomes newly elected Nukuoro Mayor Johnny Rudolph

Pohnpei Public Information

January 27, 2026

Peilapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph received a formal courtesy call from the newly elected Mayor of Nukuoro, the Honorable Johnny Rudolph, at the Executive Building in Peilapalap on January 19, 2026.

Mayor Rudolph, who was officially sworn into office on December 5, 2025, was accompanied by his Deputy Mayor and the Mayor's Representative. The visit served as a vital introductory dialogue to align the new municipal leadership's priorities with the State's broader vision for progress. Collaboration Through the Strategic Development Plan.

During the meeting, Mayor Rudolph submitted a formal outline of the needs



of the Nukuoro people to the Governor. A primary focus of the discussion was integrating these priorities into the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), ensuring that Nukuoro's development is supported by state-level coordination and resource allocation.

The dialogue also addressed the welfare

of the Nukuoro community residing on the main island of Pohnpei, with the Mayor and Governor discussing collaborative ways to support the social and logistical needs of the community members living away from the outer island.

Governor Joseph reaffirmed the

administration's commitment to inclusive governance, emphasizing that the Joseph-Movick leadership remains always open to the voices of municipal leaders.

Reflecting on the spirit of shared service and the sacred trust of leadership, Governor Joseph emphasized that the State holds the needs of the Nukuoro people in the highest regard, as the administration works to ensure no community is left behind.

Although Lieutenant Governor Herolyn S. Movick was unable to attend the meeting, the Governor spoke on behalf of the administration, ensuring that the Executive Branch stands unified in its support for the new Nukuoro leadership. The Joseph-Movick administration looks forward to a productive term working alongside Mayor Rudolph to enhance the quality of life for all Nukuoro citizens, both in the municipality and on Pohnpei.