BACKGROUND

The Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) endorsed the creation of a Women’s Advisory Network (WAN) in 2003 in recognition of the need to improve the representation and participation of women in Pacific police services. Since this time, strong networks of women in police have developed within the 21 PICP member organisations, providing support to their membership at a local level and an increasingly connected regional network.

At its foundation, the WAN Strategic Direction 2020–2024 commits to stronger and more meaningful partnerships between the WAN and their Chiefs. In the PICP Strategic Plan 2020–2024, the Chiefs confirm their collective view that:

Policing workforces that are diverse, and reflect the communities they police are essential to gain and maintain the trust and confidence of Pacific communities. The recruitment, promotion and retention of women in policing is a high priority of the PICP.

The PICP WAN unreservedly agrees with this statement and is committed to supporting the Chiefs achieve their goals of ‘Diversifying the workforce’ and ‘Maximising the potential capability of the entire workforce’. The Chiefs and their WANs will connect through the fundamental and shared understanding that if we make policing better for women, we make policing better.
Where equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful, equality is treating everyone the same. Equality aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help. Equity, on the other hand, identifies the differences and tries to reduce the gap between groups. In short, as noted by Sandesh Adhikari (2017), “equity cannot be achieved through equality, whereas equality can be achieved through equity”.

The PICP WAN shares and upholds the six stated values of the PICP. One of these values is equity, which is sometimes confused or mistakenly conflated with the term ‘equality’.

**PICP WAN VALUES AND A QUICK NOTE ON EQUITY**

**1. Fairness**
We will remain impartial and without bias, acting to empower others to protect their lawful rights to natural justice, equal opportunities and equitable outcomes. We will carry out our duties without fear, favour, malice or ill will.

**2. Respect**
We will act courteously, respecting the rights and dignity of others. We will respect each other as equals, and we acknowledge the rights of individuals to privacy and confidentiality.

**3. Trust**
We are entrusted with authority and responsibility. We will return that trust by exercising a duty of care and acting with dependability and professionalism at all times.

**4. Honesty**
In carrying out the business of the PICP WAN, we will be honest and ethical in all decisions and actions that we take.

**5. Accountability**
Through our transparent and consistent behaviour, we are accountable for all our actions and decisions and for the actions and decisions of others working at our direction.

**6. Equity**
Accepting and valuing diversity and the strengths it brings, we will strive to create a workplace that gives every member what they need to be the best they can be.
Our vision:
THE PICP WAN SHARES THE VISION OF OUR CHIEFS –
OUR BLUE PACIFIC: SAFER TOGETHER

Our mission is to strengthen policing across our Blue Pacific through the equal and full participation of women.

The PICP WAN will achieve our mission and contribute to our collective vision of a safer Blue Pacific through this five-year Strategic Direction. Our Strategic Direction was developed alongside the PICP Strategic Plan 2020–2024 to ensure they are well aligned and complementary and, most importantly, that the PICP WAN is clearly and directly supporting the higher-level PICP goals. It is based upon three key pillars.
This pillar acknowledges the unique beauty of the WAN as a living entity with intrinsic value to its membership above and beyond its ability to engage with Chiefs and address strategic challenges. It was strongly agreed that this strength cannot be lost or diluted and should be recognised as the foundation upon which the WAN will realise its potential as a force for positive change. A strong fellowship of women both locally and regionally supports women and gives courage to address inequity.

This will be realised by achieving the following four goals:

- **Connected WANs with effective communication** – our Blue Pacific is a vast and diverse place. To ensure the value of our network is maximised, we must be able to link up and overcome the barriers to frequent and effective communications. We must also ensure that our own WAN members are included in local networks to maximise our potential in our own countries.

- **Sustainable funding** – many local WANs are proud to have maintained themselves with no funding from their police budget to date. However, there is a limit to what can be achieved on a purely voluntary and unfunded basis. In partnership with Chiefs and other stakeholders, establishing a sustainable funding model will enable all WANs to operate with increased confidence and achieve the highest priority outcomes for their organisation.

- **Strong coordination and management of WAN business** – strong and active governance of PICP WAN resources, projects and activities will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the PICP WAN.

- **An active WAN membership** – the WAN’s strength is in its membership. The bigger and more diverse this membership, including members of the police senior executive and male champions, the more powerful it will be as a force for positive change.
This pillar recognises that, no matter how strong a WAN might be, without the full support of its Chief, it will have little or no ability to influence change. It also recognises that the PICP WAN derives its authority and mandate from the PICP and needs to work in support of the Chiefs’ goals. It further recognises that the Chiefs greatly value the input and advice of their WAN Chairs to drive their business forward. This pillar encourages each WAN and its Chief to work together to share knowledge, solutions, resources and authority to make positive changes.

This will be realised by achieving the following two goals:

- **A strong connection between Chiefs and WANs** – through closer engagement, shared respect and a common understanding of the challenges facing women in policing and policing more broadly, a true partnership between the Chiefs and their WAN will maximise their combined potential to effect positive change.

- **Chiefs champion and drive the WAN agenda** – police organisations are, by nature, hierarchical. Strong leadership from the Chief, including active support for women police and gender equity, will encourage similar positive attitudes and behaviours throughout every level of the organisation and grow a culture of support.
This pillar recognises that better policies, practices and cultures that enable the equal and full participation of women will not only create a better police service for women but will create a better police service in general. It recognises that the WAN provides a vital source of advice to Chiefs and that many of the necessary changes are unlikely to be made in the absence of such advice and advocacy. It recognises that changing our organisations to achieve gender equity strengthens policing for a safer Pacific.

This will be realised by achieving the following two goals:

- **Management decisions are informed by WAN advice** – management decisions made in the absence of WAN advice may miss opportunities to advance gender equity or even inadvertently disadvantage women in police. The regular inclusion of WAN advice will increasingly normalise management exposure to these considerations.

- **Policies and procedures support gender equity** – genuine and sustainable equity will be underpinned by an increasingly comprehensive suite of commonly understood and consistently applied policies that proactively consider gender dimensions and their impact.
DELIBERY
The PICP WAN has agreed to deliver against this five-year Strategic Direction through activities specified in a series of annual Action Plans. The Action Plan will be submitted for review and approval to the PICP Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Meeting each February and actively monitored throughout the year by WAN Chairs, their Chiefs and the WAN Management Team.