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Performance Story Report- The Contribution of the TSSP Capacity Building Approach Toward Building Capacity in the Human Resource Department of the Papua New Guinea Ports Corporation Limited (PNG Ports)

Introductory note

This 'summary narrative version' is a companion report to the fully evidenced version of 'A Performance Story Report - The Contribution of the TSSP Capacity Building Approach Toward Building Capacity in the Human Resource Department of the Papua New Guinea Ports Corporation Limited (PNG Ports)' April 2010. The intention of the 'summary narrative version' is to provide a snapshot of the 'findings' from the fully evidenced and referenced report.



Figure 1 HR Department Team members and the TSSP adviser November 2009

The evaluation question

To what extent has the TSSP Capacity Building Approach contributed towards building capacity in the Human Resources Department in the Papua New Guinea Ports Corporation Limited?

The beginning

The Transport Sector Coordination, Monitoring and Implementation Committee (TSCMIC) approved a capacity building framework under the PNG-Australia Transport Sector Program (TSSP) in December 2007. As a result, TSSP assisted GoPNG agencies recruit to agreed adviser positions within national transport line agencies (Phase 1 of a three-phased technical assistance program). Five of a total 31 advisers were located within PNG Ports Corporation Limited (PNG Ports).

The five advisers within PNG Ports provided technical advice on Lae Port Operations, Ports Engineering, Strategic Management & Business Development, Financial Management and Human Resources. The Human Resource Adviser was responsible for providing capacity building assistance to the Human Resource and Development Manager and HR support staff and further strengthening their skills in human resource management and development.

PNG Ports appointed a new Chief Executive Officer in April 2008, who commenced an organisational re-structure with the aim of re-building organisational capacity, and better positioning the agency to operate as a sustainable corporate entity that continued to contribute to the economic growth of PNG.

“HR section was struggling as was and still are many of our sections. Every Division in this organisation has to be re- built from the ground up again, the foundation is in need of some serious work, care and attention. So HR was no different to that and HR is instrumental in getting all the others together as well, so not only across the organisation do we have a skills gap and a capacity problem, but processes, procedures, you name it...”

The PNG Ports CEO particularly relied on the HR Department to support and in some instances lead the required organisational change.

What happened

The Human Resources Adviser commenced in PNG Ports in May 2008. The Adviser initially identified the need to support the HR Department through processes which involved:

- Facilitating organisational change and developing organisational capacity through strategic planning of organisational structure
- Providing training, development and capacity building programs, and the introduction of a performance management process and implementing strategies with the aim of supporting required changes in organisational culture as well as business objectives;
- Strengthening the capacity of the HR department to support the PNG Port's change and capacity building initiatives;
- Developing effective HR policies, procedures and systems that reflected best practice, including occupational health safety and welfare, recruitment and selection; induction; performance management including the development of key performance indicators; HIV and AIDS; sexual harassment, equal opportunity, gender, grievance and dispute resolution; parental leave; confidentiality; code of conduct; staff loan policy; promotion and succession planning; and occupational health and safety.
- Creating stronger networks and developing cooperative arrangements with training providers and other stakeholders to improve options for training, development and building capacity.

As part of the 'day to day' approach for 'capacity building', the HR Adviser:

- Provided proactive advice and, as appropriate, often challenged the status quo and posing questions for discussion to assist HR staff to challenge established practices with the view to improving policies, procedures, systems and practices in line with corporate vision
- Assisted the HR Department to organise formal and informal meetings to discuss HR issues and share different points of view
- Assisted the HR Department to organise and conduct formal workshops and training sessions on new policies, procedures and systems including performance management and leadership
- Worked with HR staff on group and individual projects supported by coaching and mentoring
- Communicated regularly with all staff to check progress and encourage the achievement of work outcomes in line with HR strategic and annual work plans and to report to senior executive and the Board on progress
- Completed work activities to demonstrate sound practice in HR policies, procedures systems and practice

In March 2009, the HR Adviser facilitated workshops with the various workgroups within the HR department with the aim of providing an understanding and buy-in to engage with the staged capacity building model. All officers in the department participated in this process. The outcome of the workshops was agreement by the work groups to focus on improving the ability of those groups to complete the following activities:

- Implementation of an effective performance management system
- Review and update of HR, training and employee services policies, procedures and systems, to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and establish best practice
- Development and implementation of:
 - long term sustainable strategies for building the capacity of the organisation through schemes such as apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships
 - strategies to recruit and retain staff, including succession planning and career progression
 - a system to identify training needs
- Design and implementation of training programs aimed at improving skills, knowledge and productivity of staff
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of all training programs to determine their impact and effectiveness.
- Understanding and implementation of a Human Resource Information System in meeting the HR needs of the organisation
- Scoping and implementation of an electronic and hard copy filing system for all HR records that met the needs of the organisation
- Establishment and implementation of a system to provide adequate health and medical benefits for all employees.

The HR Adviser worked with and supported the HR Manager, with the development of a HR Strategic Plan for 2008 - 2011 and Annual Work Plans for 2008 and 2009. The vision of the strategic plan is '*Making sure that the PNG Ports Corporation Limited has the right people, in the right jobs, with the right skills and abilities, with a true sense of personal value, and a commitment to achieving the goals and objectives of PNG Ports Corporation Limited.*' Work currently is in progress to review the strategic plan and develop a

work plan for 2010 in line with the Board's strategic directives and the new PNG Ports Corporation Ltd Strategic plan.

The implementation of the HR Strategic Plan led to the restructure of the HR Department (the department) through 2008 and early 2009 into three teams; the Training team, the Human Resources (HR) team and the Employee Services Team.

"And then we had the HR strategy in place, for ..3 years ..and then we worked our way around the strategy there to re-structure the department."

Each team has a coordinator and has been formed with a mixture of existing staff and recruitment of new staff, including several graduates via the PNG Ports graduate recruitment program. Based in the evidence sourced during the gathering of information for this PSR, it is clearly apparent that the department has been revitalised as a consequence of the re-structure, the appointment of new staff and change in roles for others, the new and clear strategic directions and the support of the adviser to the benefit of the agency as a whole.

The three teams have all made good progress against their 2008 and 2009 annual work plans including the following achievements:

- Development of a Training Plan, preparation of a Training Needs Assessment and commitment of the organisation to a training budget – a systematic approach to competency based training including design of training materials. (Training is being implemented in line with priorities set in the Training Plan – *"currently we are training based on that plan."*)
- Preparation and implementation of policies for HIV/AIDS, Gender, Performance Management, Recruitment and Selection, Induction, Smoking, Betel Nut chewing, Drugs and Alcohol, Grievance and Dispute Resolution, Confidentiality, Sexual Harassment, Equal Opportunity, Attendance at Work, Cholera, Employee Loan Policy, Medical, TB, Timecard, Travel, and Workplace Bullying and Harassment.
- Development of a performance management system for officers within the Department, with clear job descriptions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which is being progressively rolled out to other departments
- Implementation of an Induction Course for new starters in PNG Ports.
- Provision of support to other departments for their own strategic planning and workplan preparation.

Knowledge & Skills Change

Having access to the mentoring and support provided by the Adviser has been assessed as assisting the officers in the department to develop their technical skills and knowledge, enabling them to perform their tasks and projects more effectively and finding their jobs more interesting and exciting.

Officers have identified the following Adviser activities as assisting to build their knowledge and skills:

- Mentoring individuals for changing from an operational role to a role in HR
- Overseeing preparation of new and relevant training materials for competency based training, including OH&S.

"...it required a lot of effort...support by the HR Adviser to put the documents and information together – now we have a way forward...that's what we have and it is something that we are proud of..."

"so this training is ongoing now, ...people begin to realise now that training is going to be for everyone –...management was good to the employees they actually allocated a lot of money to the training department – which actually ...kick started training for the officers."

- Supporting strategic thinking and change management for the design and implementation of the restructure of the department

"...it helped me to do things I wanted to do but previously I couldn't do"

- Provision of advice for effective running of meetings

"...and it was...a challenge in the first place...so they said go ahead and conduct a meeting – you chair the meeting – and I chaired a meeting..."

- Assisting individuals to understand their individual positions in the context of the team, the department and the organisation
- Facilitating organisational support for and commitment to competency based training, and
- Coaching individuals to empower themselves and build their own capacity.

"First time I came in mostly I was depending on [the adviser], but as time went by I was beginning to learn and go and explore more so I began to take on from where [the adviser] left..."

Attitude and Confidence Change

"The people's peoplewe are leading the department when it comes to managing people."

There is a "new openness" in HR, evidenced by both the attitudes projected by the Department throughout PNG Ports as well as the physical change to the offices occupied – physical walls have been removed and the new open plan arrangement is light and open. Attitudes to work and the workplace have become more positive and the confidence of individuals to perform their agreed tasks in the workplace increased in the HR department. Motivation of the team has increased. This can be plausibly associated with the influence and behavioral style of the Adviser.

"...that HR has really progressed – has changed its...attitude.."

"I think that I have gained some... confidence in performing some tasks compared to previous times."

"...it's not like before where we just come and do things and go home – now there have been changes and improvements done where we ...find it very exciting ."

"It has lifted staff morale a lot; it has boosted staff to like working here – to enjoy working hereIt has motivated staff to look towards, have aims ... to have aims and aspirations that they reckon the company has to offer them...and that is a good thing, when a person has an aim to work for that is a motivation in itself."

The Adviser has been found to have influenced individual's attitudes by the way he approaches and thinks about tasks and through his communication style.

"Well his way of thinking, I would like to capture from [the adviser], the way he approaches things, the way he talks to people..."

This observation has also been made about the other TSSP Advisers located in PNG Ports:

"...they are very good...not only for just helping the company but for teaching the Papua New Guineans, like disseminating all their wealth of knowledge and their expertise to the staff themselves and they are learning a lot from them."

"..but with the TSSP coming from outside they are coming in with experience, coming with qualities from outside so we are beginning to pick up from them and I have actually picked up quite a lot from the TSSP officers, just...sometimes observing – seeing the way they are doing things you know and not just about them putting things on paper but the attitude they display you know – the professionalism in them- it's good you know just observing – attitude is really important."

The process of implementing the Staged Capacity Building Practice Model within the department, which involves carefully facilitated group processes, has been reported as building individual and work group confidence to perform tasks. Through the process work groups come together to discuss tasks, identify challenges and to find solutions to achieve the required skill enhancement required to deliver specific tasks, and that can be replicated across other tasks and/or circumstances. It is evident that this approach has been adopted and applied more generally to become 'standard' work practice within the work group.

"So...Basically the team work and bringing everyone together and discussing and finding solutions is the main reason why it works..."

"...after that capacity building training, the HR team is more,... we easily communicate on any issues or discussions – that we need opinion from each other."

Officers observed that they now understand that their individual effort is contributing to the goals and objectives of the department and PNG Ports; they are able to set their own goals and are excited about

coming to work. Others reported increased motivation and improved staff morale; staff .. "enjoy working here".

"...but this has showed me that just my little bit helps – contributes to the whole organisation itself. Goals and objectives... So now I have kind of set my goals to perform to the best of my ability in the current position, which I am in."

Practice Change

Many individual and work group practices have changed within the HR Department as a result of working with the Adviser. This has resulted in improved departmental and corporation policies and procedures. Officers report that the capacity building approach has led to progress and positive "changes".

Reinforced by the PNG Ports CEO, HR Department work teams are:

- Moving towards an approach of evaluating training effectiveness by assessing performance based outcomes with individuals who have participated in training
- Using the new performance management system and assisting PNG Ports to implement the system
- Confidently conducting training programs and 'awarenesses' including OH&S training, inductions for new employees and HIV/AIDS awareness with around three quarters of the PNG Ports officers participating in these programs
- Designing a system for OH&S
- Improving employment conditions across the organisation
- Developing innovative solutions to providing resources e.g. the training of safety officers to deliver training.

" Our forward planning is that because we don't have trainers on the ground – we have safety officers and we thought we might pull them in and get them through some form of training for them to become trainersand what I have done is I have trained the safety officers myself.."

Consistent with staged and incremental capacity building, it is important to note that there remain systems and processes yet to be improved within HR, such as personnel records and the archiving system. That is, the change process, as would be expected, has some way to go.

"Since the [adviser] comes on board there has been a lot of changes that have been implemented, there are a lot of things that were not done but are now done – I think ...they were there for the good of the organisation when they were done; they were never done; they have now been implemented and they have now been scrutinized and we are now being guided and we now feel – have the comfort – that HR is in the hands of a comfortable..or resourceful..person to be operating comfortably."

"The new change that was brought about as a result of the recruitment, the involvement of TSSP's broader type of HR...different management styles ..the KPIs and the broadening of the old management styles and the new management and how best they can blend them to go forward. So those are the major changes I have seen and that is good for us."

Institutional Change

"There is a major major difference; across the organisationto make the cultural changes and the capacity building we have done here in this short period of time, it would not be possible without having these advisers in, and particularly in HR, the adviser has been a catalyst of change, it's hard not to over emphasise how important it has been..."

The restructure of the HR Department and the support provided by the Adviser has resulted in a more efficient and effective department. Along with the PNG Ports re-structure and the other TSSP Advisers, the improvements in capacity and process within the HR Department have been found to be contributing to improvements in capacity and process across PNG Ports.

"I see the new structure..the new HR team..the Human Resource department as more efficient than it used to be."

"There is communication going on and new direction going on and I think we are moving forward and again that's according to the advice that is coming from TSSP. Not only [the HR adviser] but some of the advisers ... you will find that if you go into other departments you will find that there is this openness and that has really helped us with communicating and in terms of customer service you can only be doing fine..."

The HR Department is considered to be leading by example with departmental level strategic and action planning, with one respondent noting that HR is seen as a "model of change". The broader PNG Ports Corporation is gradually accepting the changes and implementing new policies as they are developed. The new policies are leading to improved workplace practice for example the Moresby Port Manager reported improved safety in the Port as a result of the introduction of the zero-tolerance alcohol policy.

"After we got those plans in place we are now driving the plans for all the departments, we are driving the plans for the legal team, the operational team, engineering team – we are just basically driving that because each of them is to have their plans – their strategic plans and their operational plans."

Across PNG Ports officers report:

- Improved and increasingly interactive organisational culture
- Increased openness and communication
- Improved customer service from the HR department.
- Improved information sharing through regular management meetings.

"...the information sharing during management meetings, during regular management meetings every week... and this information sharing is important for everybody. HR continues to update us on what they do just for the information of the management for dissemination to all the other officers down the rank and file ...so now we are beginning to see that we have been well looked after, especially by the HR department and our needs are being addressed.."

Performance management policies and processes are reported to have helped individuals to better understand their roles and have assisted "*managers to manage*".

"...we are beginning to have these HR policies, which is actually giving people like me at the ports some directions and some guidance about how to go about certain issues that are facing the ports..."

TSSP Advisers generally and the TSSP HR Adviser specifically have been observed to have made a lot of positive "*impact*" across the PNG Ports. The HR Adviser is considered to have been a fundamental enabling factor in the organisational change process that has taken place – "*a catalyst of change*." Officers reported "*working in partnership with TSSP Advisers; with mutual understanding*". The adviser model is acknowledged and supported for its approach to '*mentoring*' and '*side by side*' skill transference.

Some senior officers observed that, whilst the changes have been positive that PNG Ports still needs to focus on developing leadership capabilities at the middle management level.

Sustainability

Despite the TSSP approach to capacity building within the HR Department being at a relatively early stage, with the adviser having been in place for 18 months, several of the HR officers who have been involved in the capacity building approach reported now having a vision for their own, and the organisation's sustainable future; of being able to perform their work effectively in the future without adviser support.

They report being motivated to improve their own individual input to the HR group now and into the future, acknowledging that there will be a time in the future when adviser support will no longer be required.

"With [the adviser] we have come so far and our aim now is to take back the work focus and take back the job descriptions on our own to go forward...so we - I would say for the future my personal view I want to work alone in the future and that would really show that advisers have helped. If I keep on staying with an adviser it doesn't show anything"

The overall findings

The preceding narrative has been developed from consideration of a comprehensive range of evidence in developing the Performance Story Report (PSR). The key findings include:

- ❖ There is clear evidence that having access to the mentoring and support provided by the adviser has assisted the officers in the department to develop their technical skills and knowledge, enabling them to perform their tasks and projects more effectively and finding their jobs more interesting and exciting. (Mentioned at least once by 9 interviewees)
- ❖ There is evidence that individual and work group attitudes have improved and confidence has increased amongst the officers of the PNG Ports HR &D Department as a result of support provided by the TSSP adviser and the concurrent departmental restructure providing a more effective operating framework. (Mentioned at least once by 9 interviewees)
- ❖ There is clear evidence that individuals and the HR&D work groups have changed the way that they operate as a result of training, new policies and supporting procedures, adviser support and the opportunities provided by the departmental and organisational restructure. (Mentioned at least once by 9 interviewees)
- ❖ There is strong evidence that the changes being experienced in the HR&D department are leading to broader institutional changes across PNG Ports. (Mentioned at least once by 8 interviewees)
- ❖ There is early evidence that individuals in the HR Department are looking forward to a future when they no longer need adviser support and will be self directing, supported by appropriate competencies and capabilities. (Mentioned at least once by 4 interviewees)

There is also strong evidence, particularly from senior managers and the CEO that the technical adviser model is appropriate as a method for building capacity. *"it's getting that ingrained and embedded and people working side by side with others and transferring the skills – it makes so much of a difference. Identifying the gaps, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of our employees down there and just making things move and the staff have come along great with it."*

Individuals who have participated in the process described by the Staged Capacity Building model have acknowledged it as an effective approach for assisting a work group to move forward and build collective capacity to undertake identified tasks. More significantly it was observed that the new skills and practices are flowing on and being adopted as part of normal practice.