



REPUBLIC OF PALAU
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 492

“To amend the membership and mandate of the Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Working Group established through Executive Order No. 475.”

WHEREAS, the Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Working Group was established through Executive Order No. 475 on September 21, 2022, in response to the need for an integrated approach to managing national border security and public health protocols and procedures; and

WHEREAS, the CBM Working Group, which was initially established for a two-year period, is mandated to emphasize coordination and mutual assistance among various government agencies, as the effectiveness of border security and management depends heavily on cooperation and mutual assistance between and among all relevant internal and external partners and requires efficient information exchange; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2024, President Surangel S. Whipps, Jr. signed Executive Order No. 489, extending the term of the CBM Working Group indefinitely; and

WHEREAS, while the CBM Working Group has made great progress in modernizing procedures and taking advantage of new technologies to help secure our borders, many migration issues persist which have not been addressed; and

WHEREAS, in particular, Palau’s systems for immigration and foreign labor can be better integrated to filter out bad actors while simultaneously easing the process for Palauan businesses to hire legitimate workers; and

WHEREAS, many of the necessary reforms will require changes to the Republic’s laws and regulations, and the CBM Working Group should be driving such reforms by making recommendations to the President regarding legislation to propose and regulations to be implemented; and

WHEREAS, the members of the CBM Working Group have recommended the inclusion of the Postmaster General, recognizing that the Post Office serves as a significant channel through which goods, and occasionally contraband, enter the country, and thus plays a critical role in border management; and

WHEREAS, the members have also recommended the inclusion of the Director of the Bureau of Agriculture to provide essential expertise in natural resources and biosecurity, and to



ensure that border management efforts align with applicable environmental laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, it has also become evident that it would be useful for the Financial Intelligence Unit to be part of the CBM Working Group, as many migration-related issues, such as immigration fraud, have a significant financial component, requiring coordinated efforts to detect and disrupt illicit financial flows linked to fraudulent activities;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the Republic of Palau pursuant to the Constitution and applicable laws of the Republic, I hereby order that the CBM Working Group shall be reconstituted as follows:

1. **Establishment.** The Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Working Group (“Working Group”) is hereby reestablished. The Working Group shall be comprised of the following members or their designees:

- (a) The Minister of Finance;
- (b) The Minister of Public Infrastructure & Industries;
- (c) The Director of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection;
- (d) The Director of the Bureau of Aviation;
- (e) The Administrator of the Palau National Aviation Administration;
- (f) The Director of the Bureau of Marine Transportation;
- (g) The Director of the Bureau of Public Health and Human Services;
- (h) The Attorney General;
- (i) The National Security Coordinator;
- (j) The Director of the Bureau of Public Safety;
- (k) The Director of the Bureau of Human Resources;
- (l) The Director of the Bureau of Tourism;
- (m) The Director of the Bureau of Agriculture;



- (n) The Postmaster General; and
- (o) The Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit.

The Membership of the Working Group may be amended or expanded, provided that such expansion is approved by a majority vote of the Working Group members and reported in writing to the President of the Republic.

The Committee shall have two Co-Chairs. The Minister of Finance (MOF) or his/her designee shall serve as one Co-Chair of the Working Group. The Minister of Public Infrastructure and Industries (MPII) or his/her designee shall serve as one Co-Chair of the Working Group. The Minister of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism & Development (MHRCTD) shall designate one Vice Chair from among the designated Working Group members from MHRCTD.

2. **Functions.** The Working Group shall advise the Co-Chairs and make recommendations for the President to consider when reviewing border management matters. The Committee shall also carry out all responsibilities set forth in section 3 below.

The Co-Chairs shall be assisted in their efforts by the management and staff of the other member agencies of the Working Group, as identified, in writing, by the Working Group. The Co-Chairs shall pursue recommendations, studies, consultancies, and the implementation of programs and policies as directed by the Working Group. The Co-Chairs shall also coordinate, along with other appropriate members of the Working Group, or other governmental agencies and employees, as identified by the Working Group, the negotiations with regional and international border management and trade partners regarding the development and implementation of policies and programs directed at improving Palau's border management system.

3. **Duties and Responsibilities of the Working Group and the Co-Chairs.** The Working Group shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. Development and implementation of a Coordinated Border Management Strategic Plan and any related Standard Operating Procedures, focusing upon:
 - i. Assessment and gap analysis regarding present capacities for coordinated border management;
 - ii. Facilitation and risk-management measures for the movement of goods and people, including measures for drug interdiction;



- iii. Coordination of public information regarding border processes;
- iv. Development and deployment of a single window approach to trade facilitation;
- v. Migration management and related policy development and coordination;
- vi. Improvements to core border management information systems, including considerations around interoperability and/or data exchange or verification;
- vii. Implementation of electronic trade and migration management reforms to introduce e-government processes, visas and permits, applications, declarations, authorizations and payments;
- viii. Electronic passenger data exchange with carriers;
- ix. Improving management data, reporting and analysis;
- x. Improving and ensuring authority for interagency collaboration, cross-delegation and joint operations, and information exchange;
- xi. Governance and legislative review, harmonization, and reform;
- xii. Organizational and budgetary reform;
- xiii. Human capability assessment and development; and
- xiv. Developing effective border entry programs applicable to Palau's security partners.

B. Convening regular meetings to:

- i. Conduct structured reviews ("hot washes") of all immigration and/or border-related incidents since the last meeting, including but not limited to interceptions of contraband, crimes committed or alleged to have been committed by non-citizens, and suspected or confirmed incidents of immigration fraud. These reviews should provide a comprehensive assessment of each incident, identifying what went well, what challenges were encountered, and any operational, tactical, or procedural shortcomings. Discussions should focus on lessons learned, opportunities for improvement, and actionable steps to enhance future responses. Particular attention should be given to coordination among agencies, adherence to protocols, and any resource or training needs that could strengthen border enforcement efforts.



- ii. Respond to requests from the President or the Co-Chairs of the Working Group for information, analysis, evaluation, or advice;
 - iii. Solicit information and ideas from a broad range of stakeholders on CBM;
 - iv. Serve as an advisory committee to the President and Cabinet;
 - v. Consider cross-agency budgetary and funding strategies;
 - vi. Consider and authorize cross-agency capability development measures including joint training and capacity-building initiatives;
 - vii. Provide advice from stakeholders in response to requests from the Working Group;
 - viii. Review the CBM Strategic Plan;
 - ix. Respond to requests from the Subcommittees;
 - x. Put in place official measures, mechanisms and communication channels to ensure that regulatory processes are streamlined and effective.
4. **Authority and Interagency Collaboration.** To the extent permissible by existing law, officials of member agencies are, respecting agency management controls, hereby authorized to access border management systems, and/or share between them necessary official data, documentation, evidence and intelligence as is justified to facilitate and inform official border operations including joint operations, processing of goods and travelers, immigration and non-resident work permits, statistical and management reporting, and investigations into breaches of administrative or criminal law.

To the extent permissible by law, the Chairs of the Working Group jointly with the relevant other Ministers are authorized to delegate officials of member agencies with powers and functions of other member agencies, once appropriately trained, as is deemed necessary to most efficiently manage the border in a coordinated manner.

The Director of the Bureau of Budget and Planning shall provide budget and statistical support to the Working Group, as needed.


5. **International Coordination.** At the request of any responsible agency, the Minister of State shall communicate with international partners to coordinate the requirements of activities of this Executive Order.



6. **Private Sector and Carrier Collaboration.** All relevant agencies shall work to keep the public, business and the tourism industry, carriers, shipping companies and agents, and the yachting community well informed about efforts to prevent and respond to border management measures, including health requirements. The Bureau of Tourism and the Palau Visitors Authority shall coordinate with private sector partners, including the Chamber of Commerce, to encourage best practices throughout the local business community.
7. **Meeting.** At the call of the Co-Chairs, the Working Group shall convene within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Executive Order, and thereafter shall convene quarterly or more frequently upon the call of the Co-Chairs.
8. **Reporting Requirements.** The Working Group shall report to the President of the Republic of Palau on their work and progress on an annual basis or as requested by the President. The Working Group shall also submit:
 - (a) Annually, a review of the CBM Strategic Plan and any established Standard Operating Procedures.
 - (b) Within 75 days of this Executive Order, the Working Group shall send the President a report with specific recommendations of how the laws and regulations of Palau could be amended to improve border procedures. In particular, this review should focus on areas where the law does not align with current practice and areas where immigration and foreign labor processes can be streamlined.
9. **Cooperation of the Executive Branch Ministries and Agencies.** The Working Group shall receive the full cooperation of all appropriate Executive Branch Ministries and agencies and is encouraged to call upon said agencies for any assistance they may provide.
10. **Term.** The Working Group shall remain in effect indefinitely or until dissolved through subsequent Executive Order.

This Amendment to Executive Orders No. 475 and 489 shall take effect immediately upon issuance and shall remain in effect unless otherwise amended, superseded, or rescinded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 7th day of May 2025, in Koror, Republic of Palau.



Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau