

Comparative Election Administration in the Pacific

Revised paper

Presented by

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Introduction

This paper attempts to assemble materials which describe the detailed process of election administration in the Pacific. It is developed from the research currently under way for the EPIC Project, a joint venture of International IDEA, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and UNDP to collect, systemise and make available information regarding electoral laws and regulations worldwide (www.epicproject.org). EPIC gathers information through a network of regional organisations: the EPIC partner in the Pacific is the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Election Administrators' Network (PIANZEA). Data is collected for a state or territory to be included in EPIC if that state or territory does not send elected representatives to a higher level elected assembly.

Why is electoral administrative detail of interest to a wider audience than election administrators themselves? When elections run well, nobody notices the electoral machinery – lack of interest is a sign of good news. But an election is a complex enterprise, in many countries the largest single organisational enterprise that ever happens. Legislators and electoral administrators have developed a rich range of approaches to the practical problems of delivering an election process, from registration through nomination, polling, counting, declaration of results and resolution of disputes. There is a great deal of scope for the sharing of ideas and good practice.

Cautionary examples

In addition, however good the decisions about the form of constitutions and electoral systems are and however inclusive the process of discussion and dialogue which has been used to shape them, the devil of electoral processes is truly in the detail. Matters which seem entirely technical can have serious political consequences. Here are two examples.

Cambodia in 1998 adopted a new election law which provided for the use of list proportional representation. The law itself did not specify which form of highest average or largest remainder formula would be used for seat allocation: this was left to regulations. A set of regulations were duly issued by the National Election Commission. A little while later, a second set of regulations was issued, with apparently minor changes: these revisions were contained in the middle of a large set of regulations made simultaneously. Nobody noticed the change.

The problem emerged as the tabulation of results progressed: it became evident that under the first formula the largest party had won 59 seats in a 121 seat National Assembly, whereas the revised formula gave it 64 seats. Unsurprisingly, the opposition cried foul, and there were many weeks of protests before they eventually decided to live with the results. Significant damage was done to the credibility of the electoral process.

Guyana in 1997 provided an even more stark example. The two major groups in Guyanese society are Guyanese of Indian and of African origin: voting patterns are very strongly ethnically based and the level of trust between communities is very low. The country is divided into ten districts: the district with much the largest single electorate is the capital, Georgetown, which is an opposition stronghold.

Tabulation was undertaken at district level, as is frequently the case in former British colonies. As results came in, nine districts were declared, leaving Georgetown last. This was as might be expected: the inevitable polling station which fails to deliver its results or needs rechecking is most likely to be in the biggest district. It is not, however, intuitive: the instinctive reaction of the opposition and of the Georgetown community was that results should arrive early from the district containing the National Election Commission office, and that therefore something fraudulent was going on. People took to the streets, and by the time the Georgetown result was finally declared, there was no hope of getting acceptance for the results – however accurate they may actually have been.

That is not to say, however, that election administration has to be perfect. There is always somebody whose registration has not been correctly processed! Real world elections are also limited by cost, especially in less wealthy countries where elections are a significant item of expenditure in the national budget. Cost limitations may dictate the synchronising of national and local elections despite possible political disadvantages. Administrative systems which are less good but less expensive may be more sustainable in the long run. Election administrators are also limited by time in a period of political transition. Politicians will always take the time they need to reach agreement on new systems, and negotiating concessions they make later are often more valuable than those made earlier.

The data

There is a wealth of material published about electoral systems themselves. However, little is available on other aspects of election administration, although the recent study of 63 countries by Blais, Massicotte and Yoshinaka (2004) is the first major contribution towards filling this gap. This paper draws on their work in the design of its presentation.

Information is presented about 16 Pacific states or territories which meet the EPIC criterion for inclusion. It addresses six areas: the form of the electoral management body (EMB), the electoral system and arrangements for boundary delimitation, the franchise and registration of electors, the nomination of candidates, arrangements for polling, and arrangements for counting and tabulation. The data captures technical information, but cannot in itself capture cultural aspects of the election environment: however, technical provisions may be moulded by the cultural environment, or may be

written to respond to it. The data is not yet complete, and the authors would welcome further additions, clarifications and corrections.

Colonial heritage

While a maximum sample size of 16 is too small for much useful statistical analysis, it is possible to identify trends. In common with many other parts of the world, the legacy of the colonial power is visible in Pacific administration systems, with the heritage of the US, of France and of the UK, and the development of the latter by Australia and New Zealand, all visible. Vanuatu's use of multiple ballot papers and ballot envelopes draws from the French model. Seven of the twelve systems for which data is provided conduct the count at district or regional centres rather than in the polling station – a characteristic strongly associated worldwide with British-inspired systems (Blais, Massicotte and Yoshinaka (2004): 147). It is perhaps true – though it requires a further depth of analysis than provided here – that the form of procedures, documentation and protocols is even more durable, lasting even when a political decision has been made to change the substance.

Election Management Bodies

Two of the three common forms of election management body are found in the region: the organisation of elections by or through a government ministry as part of the functions of the executive, and the establishment of an independent electoral authority or commission. The third model, with a commission supervised by a judicial authority, is common in Latin America but not in the Pacific. The dividing line between these two models is perhaps more blurred in small states. The size of the task and of the available resources means that the making of administrative policy and regulations by commissioners and the implementing role of a secretariat are frequently not separated. In addition, 'independent' commissions may be more or less independent in practice. This depends on the procedures for appointing (and firing) their members, as for example if the head of the secretariat is an appointment of the Minister of Home Affairs rather than the electoral commission. It also depends on the procedures for approving the budgets and expenditures of electoral bodies.

Electoral Systems

The electoral systems of the region belong heavily to the majoritarian family: eight contain at least an element of first-past-the-post, five include at least an element of block vote, and there are two examples of alternative vote. Many of these systems carry with them a requirement for boundary delimitation. The criteria for the drawing of boundaries laid down differ widely in detail, some based on population and others on totals of registered voters, some including geographic, cultural, language or communication considerations. In practice, however, the simplicity of the island as a single

electoral unit often rules out other options, even at the expense of malapportionment.

The term of office of elected members varies. Eight of fifteen cases where data is provided have four year terms. But Fiji, PNG and Samoa have five year terms, Nauru, Niue and Tonga have three year terms, and Pitcairn Island has annual elections.

Franchise and Registration

Outside Asia and the Pacific, 18 is almost universal as the minimum age for registration and voting (Blais, Massicotte and Yoshinaka (2004): 17): however, this holds in only ten of the fourteen systems for which data is provided, the exceptions being Nauru (20) and Fiji, Samoa and Tonga (21). Citizenship of the country is an almost universal requirement for registration, although the franchise in both the Cook Islands and Niue is wider. Other requirements, for example residence in the country or in the electoral district, and incompatibilities, for example incarceration or mental disability, vary in detail. Active registration, with officials going door to door or setting up village registration centres, is more common than passive registration, where intending electors have to go to an electoral office – but it is not universal. There is no common view on compulsory registration, with five of thirteen cases where data is provided adopting it, and eight regarding registration as voluntary. Perhaps again showing a characteristic of small states, registration is conducted by the electoral authority in all cases except one, Samoa – and the unification of registration with electoral administration is planned there also.

Nomination Requirements

Most countries require legislative candidates to be 21, although Nauru and Vanuatu set the minimum age at 25, and Micronesia at 30. All countries require candidates to be citizens, with Micronesia imposing the additional requirement of 15 years' citizenship. Residence requirements vary: the Solomon Islands only requires current residence, while Fiji requires 2 years, Niue and Samoa 3 years, and Micronesia and Palau 5 years. The Marshall Islands, Palau and PNG all have additional rules based on residence in the electoral district where candidacy is sought, with the Marshall Islands also allowing registration in respect of land rights – which has led to substantial moves of the registered electorate between districts for successive elections. Other necessary qualifications vary: Samoa requires matai title, Tonga requires literacy in Tongan, and several countries require registration as an elector.

Incompatibility provisions also vary – and may also be implicit in the qualification of registration as an elector. Incarceration is a common bar to candidature, although the length of sentence varies: mental disability, disqualification for electoral offences and bankruptcy are also frequently

found. Seven of the eleven countries where data is provided regard various forms of government or public office as a bar to candidature (as distinct from a bar to being elected).

The requirement for a monetary payment to accompany a nomination is a British legacy worldwide (Blais, Massicotte & Yoshinaka (2004): 61). Many Pacific states are unusual, however, in that the payment is a fee, sometimes used to assist with election costs, rather than the refundable deposit found in Samoa and common elsewhere.

Criteria for candidacy in direct presidential elections are unsurprisingly stricter than those for legislatures: Palau imposes a minimum age of 35 in addition to citizenship and residence requirements, while candidates in Kiribati have to be elected members of the legislature. Both countries impose term limits, with Palau allowing a maximum of two presidential terms, and Kiribati three.

Polling arrangements

Most Pacific countries allocate electors to specified polling stations: however PNG, for example, allows electors to vote at any polling station within the electoral district, controlling multiple voting by the use of ink. Five of eleven countries where full data is provided – Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau and PNG - have some form of domestic advance or off-site voting provisions. Three use postal voting, Niue uses advance voting at the election office, and the Marshall Islands uses mobile ballot boxes for those who are for example confined to hospital. In addition, Vanuatu allows proxy voting.

Overseas voting is becoming more prominent in debate on electoral systems worldwide, and has implications for electoral system design because of the differing complexity of the task of getting the right ballot papers securely to and from overseas electors. Again there is a variety of provisions: the Marshall Islands and PNG allow voting by post; Micronesia and Palau can set up polling stations in overseas embassies and consulates; Fiji allows both; and Vanuatu again has proxy voting. But there are no provisions in Niue, the Solomon Islands, Tonga or Tuvalu, and the overseas constituency in the Cook Islands is being abolished.

Twenty years ago this was not an issue. Today many Pacific countries now have significant overseas populations living and working abroad, with numbers large enough to possibly change election results. Where there are no overseas voting provisions, significant numbers of potential electors are effectively disenfranchised.

Ballot paper design in the region varies, although the British 'mark in the box' ballot paper is probably the most common. It would be useful to compare the percentages of invalid votes for different ballot paper designs in the region, but the data does not yet exist. Compulsory voting exists in Fiji

and Nauru, with both having probably been influenced by the Australian experience.

Some countries, for example the Solomon Islands, set a target maximum size for each polling station, in order that everyone can vote within the set polling hours if the station is well run. In contrast, PNG does not divide polling stations in larger communities but has more than one ballot paper issuing point within the station, and controls against multiple voting through the use of ink. In the Marshall Islands, neither approach is adopted, the close of polling hours sees not the close of the polling station but the close of the queue, and polling finishes only when everyone in the queue at the closing hour has voted.

Counting and declaration of results

As previously noted, Pacific counting procedures are divided between systems which count at the polling station, and systems which count at district or national counting centres. Where there is serious doubt as to the integrity of the electoral administration, polling station level counting is often adopted to provide parties, candidates and observers with the ability to verify the tabulation externally. There does not appear to be pressure in this direction in the Pacific, which can be interpreted as indicating a level of confidence in the administrators.

Five of nine countries where data is provided declare some form of preliminary results. While final results are declared by a central body, usually the EMB, in six of nine cases, in Fiji and PNG the declaration is made by each individual Returning Officer, and in Tuvalu by the Minister of Home Affairs. While all states have provisions for recounts, the criteria for requesting recounts, the persons who can request a recount, and the authority which can order a recount all vary.

PIANZEA

As a counter to the diversity of electoral administration and the isolation felt by electoral administrators in the Pacific, the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators' Network (PIANZEA) was established in October 1997 with the specific aim of:

Establishing a close association of Pacific Electoral Administrators within an established networking arrangement to facilitate and encourage the free flow of electoral information among member countries and to provide assistance where possible. (PIANZEA Network Goal, Fiji, 1997)

The past seven years has seen the strengthening of the network primarily through peer encouragement, advances in administrative practice and in reforms of legislation. These advances have most often stemmed from the PIANZEA Workshops, held every two years where election administrators from the region meet with each other to develop broad frameworks which they can then take back with them to implement in their own domestic situations. For example, the development of codes of conduct, principles of independence and transparency, professional development of their staff and key stakeholders through the implementation of projects such as the Building Resources In Democracy, Elections and Governance Project (BRIDGE) and the implementation of better practices such the computerisation of the electoral registers.

One of the key understandings which the EMBs within the PIANZEA Network hold is the need for strong, independent, transparent and domestically sustainable electoral institutions which are capable of not only facing the challenges of a changing region but who can contribute to the direction it may take by working as an equal partner with the other key stakeholders in the democratic process.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for electoral administrators is in the area of legislative reform. Whilst much of the legislation in the region is sound in principle, it has not kept pace with the rapid changes and challenges confronting the region. As the EPIC data demonstrates, the electoral structures and legislation reflect a colonial past, a past with larger bureaucratic structures, a past without computer technology and a past where many Pacific islanders lived and worked "at home" rather than overseas.

The key to such reforms is the need for electoral administrators to engage with legislators and other key stakeholders to produce legislation which is acceptable to the electorate, reflects their needs and translates their will into parliamentary structures.

The EPIC data is gathered as a resource for such debate. There are however limitations in the nature of the data collection, which can sometimes fail to illustrate the reality of what is happening. For example, EPIC shows that many electoral administration bodies are independent in structure, that is, not under the direct control of the government of the day, but the reality is that many are subject to enormous pressure and influence from their governments. Administrators can be appointed and removed from office by government ministers with little or no due process and very little transparency, their budgets are tightly controlled and proposed reforms which would level the playing field are not implemented. Politics in the Pacific is very personalised, and Westminster type legislation and structures are not always accompanied by the Westminster conventions which underpin them.

However, EPIC is a living document. As the legislation and administrative practices in the Pacific region change, so also will the information in the EPIC database, providing a valuable tool for researchers and practitioners alike.

References

Blais, André, Massicotte, Louis, and Yoshinaka, Antoine, *Establishing the Rules of the Game: Election Laws in Democracies*, University of Toronto Press, 2004.

EPIC Project, www.epicproject.org

Papua New Guinea	Independent	1	6 years	Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Directors of Policy, Election, Finance, Manager IT, 20 Provincial Election Managers, approx 45 general staff
Pitcairn Island				
Samoa	Independent	1	Unspecified	Electoral Commissioner - currently Clerk of Parliament ex officio
Solomon Islands	Independent	Chair (the Speaker of Parliament) plus 2 Commissioners	Life of Parliament - 4 years	Chief Electoral Officer appointed by Minister of Home Affairs + Elections Office
Tokelau				
Tonga	Government	1	Unspecified	Supervisor of Elections + Deputy + 2 staff
Tuvalu	Government	N/A	Period of the election	Returning Officer for each electoral district
Vanuatu	Independent	3	5 years	Principal Electoral Officer appointed by Public Service Commission

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 2: Electoral Management Body (2)

Country	Members nominated by	Electoral Management Body		Budget agreed by	Spending controlled by
		Members appointed by	Chair elected/ appointed by		
Cook Islands					
Fiji	Prime Minister consults Leader of Opposition and advises President	President	President	Prime Minister/ Legislature	Prime Minister's Office
Kiribati	Cabinet	President	President		
Marshall Islands					
		Public Authorities Commission		Chief Electoral Officer and the Ministry of Internal Affairs	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Federated States of Micronesia	Congress	President	President	Congress	National Election Director
Nauru					
Niue		Government		Parliament	Chief Electoral Officer and Treasury Department
Palau					
		President (who is formally Election Commissioner)	Commission	Legislature as part of government budget	

Papua New Guinea	Electoral Commission Appointments Committee made up of: a) The Prime Minister, or a Minister nominated by him, who shall be Chairman; b) The Leader, or in his or her absence the Deputy Leader, of the Opposition; c) The Chairman of a related Permanent Parliamentary Committee; and d) The Chairman of the Public Services Commission	Governor General	N/A	Parliament	Electoral Commission in conjunction with Department of Finance
Pitcairn Island					
Samoa	Public Service Commission in consultation with Prime Minister	Public Service Commission	Clerk to Parliament ex officio		
Solomon Islands	Governor General on advice from Judicial and Legal Service Commission	Governor General	Speaker of Parliament ex officio	Parliament	Electoral Commission in conjunction with Department of Finance
Tokelau					
Tonga	Legislature	Prime Minister	N/A	Legislature	Chief Returning Officer
Tuvalu	Minister of Home Affairs	Minister of Home Affairs	N/A	Secretary to Government through the Ministry of Home Affairs	Deputy Secretary to Government through Ministry of Home Affairs
Vanuatu	Government recommends to Judicial Service Commission	President	President	Government	Principal Electoral Officer

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 3: Electoral System and Boundaries

Country	Electoral System				Term of office	Are electoral boundaries drawn?	Boundaries What are the criteria for boundaries?	Who draws boundaries?
	Legislature size	Electoral System for Legislature	Maximum term of office	Electoral System for President (if directly elected)				
Cook Islands	24 (amended 2004)	FPTP	4 years (amended 2004)	N/A	N/A	Yes	Defined in the Constitution	N/A
Fiji	71	AV	5 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Equality of electorate, natural barriers, community of interest & conformity with local jurisdiction boundaries	Boundary Commission
Kiribati	41, plus 1 ex officio	TRS (SMDs & MMDs)	4 years	Plurality	4 years	Yes	Population	Electoral Commission
Marshall Islands	33	FPTP & Block	4 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Equality of electorate as prime criterion; then geography, community, existing boundaries, communications and population density	Legislature
Federated States of Micronesia	14	FPTP	4 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Language, culture, geography (in practice culture takes precedence and constituencies are island based)	Congress
Nauru	18	Modified Borda	3 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Defined in the Constitution	N/A
Niue	20	FPTP & Block	3 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	14 villages; Community of interest, equality of electorate	Parliament
Palau	16	FPTP	4 years	TRS (absolute majority, runoff)	4 years	Yes	Population	Reapportionment Commission
Papua New Guine	109	AV	5 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Population; physical features and communications; existing electoral boundaries; Local-level Government, Provincial and other administrative areas; and community and diversity of interest	Boundaries Commission
Pitcairn Island	4, plus 6 indirectly elected, appointed or ex officio	SNTV	1 year	N/A	N/A	No		
Samoa	49	FPTP & Block	5 years	N/A	N/A	Yes		Parliament
Solomon Islands	50	FPTP	4 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Population; cultural; natural barriers	Boundaries Commission
Tokelau	15, plus 6 ex officio	Determined by each atoll		N/A	N/A			
Tonga	9, plus 21 nominated or ex officio	Block & FPTP	3 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	All constituencies are separate islands	Legislature
Tuvalu	15	Block & FPTP	4 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Equality of electorate; geographical features; community of interest; existing boundaries; communications; and population density	Parliament
Vanuatu	52	SNTV	4 years	N/A	N/A	Yes	Equality; natural barriers; and a ratio of 1:1,500	Electoral Commission

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 4: Franchise and Registration

Country	Voting age	Qualifications to Register	Franchise and Registration Excluded from registering	Registration authority	Frequency of updating register	Process of registration	Compulsory registration ?
Cook Islands		a1) Commonwealth citizenship or a2) Permanent residence; and b) Residence for 1 year at some time; and c) Current residence for 3 months					
Fiji	21	Open and communal rolls; same criteria for both: a) Citizenship; and b) Residence for 24 months immediately preceding election	a) Current sentence of death or over 12 months' imprisonment; or b) Mental disability	Electoral Commission through Supervisor of Elections	Continuous	Door to door; or Appearance by elector at registration office	Yes
Kiribati	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence in the electoral district	a) Current sentence of over 12 months' imprisonment; or b) Mental disability; or c) Disqualification for electoral offences	Electoral Commission	Every 4 years prior to an election	Normally by appearance by elector at registration office but Chief Electoral Officer may set up registration in the community	No
Marshall Islands	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence for 2 years or a land right in an area	a) Criminal incarceration, parole or probation; or b) Certified insanity	Electoral Administration Office	Every 4 years prior to an election	Mobile registration teams	No
Federated States of Micronesia	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence of over 9 months in the country and over 3 months in the electoral district	a) Criminal incarceration; or b) Mental disability	Electoral Commission	Continuous (computerised register)	Completion of registration form by elector and lodgement with EMB over 30 days before election	No
Nauru	20	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence	a) Sentence of death or of imprisonment for at least one year; or b) Certified insanity; or c) Undischarged bankruptcy; or d) Holding public office				Yes
Niue	18	a1) Citizenship or a2) Permanent residence; and b) Residence of over 3 years. If overseas for more than 3 years removed from the roll. Reregistration is then allowed after 1 year of residence. If moving from one village to another reregistration is allowed after 3 months residence.	a) Criminal incarceration for 5 or more years; or b) Corrupt practice	Chief Electoral Officer	Periodic	Appearance by elector at registration office at a prescribed time over 4 - 5 days	Yes
Palau	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence	a) Criminal incarceration for a felony; or b) Mentally incompetent	Election Commission	Continuous	Registration centres: or Appearance at local Election Board	No
Papua New Guinea	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Full capacity (must be able to understand the voting process); and c) Residence within the electoral district for 6 months or more	Under sentence of death or of imprisonment for a period of 9 months or more	Electoral Commission	Continuous (computerised register)	Completion of registration form by elector and lodgement with EMB over 70-84 days before election	Yes
Pitcairn Island	18	Residence of over 3 years		Island Secretary	Annual (November)		
Samoa	21	Two electoral registers. Citizenship required for both. Territorial roll by universal suffrage. Individual roll only if not a holder of matai title, exercising right over customary lands, or married to a person who has either of these	a) Criminal incarceration; or b) Mental disability	Chief Registrar	Continuous	Door to door completion of registration form	No
Solomon Islands	18	a) Citizenship; and b) Current residence		Electoral Commission	Annual (computerised register)	Village registration centres: or Appearance by elector at registration office	No

**Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZE)
Page 5: Nomination: Legislature**

Country	Candidate Nomination - Legislature		
	Qualifications - candidate for legislature	Disqualifications - candidate for legislature	Nomination requirements - legislature
Cook Islands	Registration as an elector	a) Conviction for specified offences; or b) Bankruptcy	
Fiji	a) 21 years of age; and b) Citizenship; and c) Residence for at least 2 years; and d) Registration as an elector	a) Current sentence of death or over 12 months' imprisonment; or b) Offences against electoral law; or c) Bankruptcy or insolvency; or d) Mental disability; or e) Holder of incompatible Government contract	a) 250 signatures or 5% of the valid vote at the last election and b) Deposit of \$500.00 FJD
Kiribati	a) 21 years of age; and b) Registration as an elector	a) Current sentence of death or over 12 months' imprisonment; or b) Certified insanity; or c) Disqualification for electoral offences; or d) Holding public office; or e) Being an electoral official	Nomination form signed by three electors
Marshall Islands	a) 21 years of age; and b) Citizenship; and either c1) Residence for at least 5 years in the area where candidacy sought or c2) If not resident for 5 years have land rights in the area where candidacy sought	a) Current criminal incarceration or b) Certified insanity	
Federated States of Micronesia	a) 30 years of age; and b) Citizenship for 15 years; and c) Residence for at least 5 years; and d) Registration as an elector	a) Current criminal incarceration; or b) Criminal record; or c) Mental disability; or d) Holding local elective office or public office	a) Nomination form signed by 25 signatories and b) Fee of \$100.00 USD
Nauru			Written nomination signed by candidate and two or more electors of electoral district
Niue	a) Citizenship; and b) Residence for over 3 years. If overseas for more than 3 years, removed from the roll. Reregistration is then allowed after 1 year of residence. If moving from one village to another reregistration is allowed after 3 months residence.	a) Criminal incarceration for 5 or more years; or b) Corrupt practice	
Palau	a) 25 years of age; and b) Citizenship; and c) Residence for over 5 years; and d) Residence of over 1 year in the electoral district; and e) Registered elector in the electoral district	a) Member of Reapportionment Commission (for Senate); or b) Holder of public office	1. House of Delegates: a) Signatures of 25 registered electors or support of registered party and b) Fee of \$25.00 USD: 2. Senate: a) Signatures of 50 registered electors or support of registered party and b) Fee of \$50.00 USD
Papua New Guinea	a) 25 years of age; and b) Citizenship; and c1) Born in the electorate where candidacy is sought; or c2) have lived continuously in the electorate where candidacy is sought for two years immediately before nomination; or c3) have lived in the electoral district for five years at any time	a) Sentenced to a prison term of 9 months or longer or b) Have been dismissed from public office for Misconduct in Office under the Leadership Code of the Constitution; or c) Not of sound mind	a) Completed nomination form and b) Nomination witnessed by a voter from the constituency; and c) Deposit of K1000.00

Tonga	a) 21 years of age: and b) Citizenship: and c) Registration as an elector: and d) Ability to speak and write Tongan	a) Criminal incarceration or b) Criminal record or c) Unpaid debt under court order	a) Signature by 50 nominators and b) Fee of \$200.00 Tongan (\$100.00 USD)
Tuvalu	a) 21 years of age: and b) Citizenship: and c) Registration as an elector	a) Current criminal incarceration for 12 months or more or b) Detention or c) Disqualification for electoral offences or d) Mental health problems or e) Holding of government or public office or f) Multiple citizenship	Signature by 5 nominators
Vanuatu	a) 25 years of age: and b) Citizenship	a) Current incarceration or b) Disqualification for electoral offences or c) Bankruptcy or insolvency or d) Serving as President, judge or magistrate, member of the police, member of a national council of chiefs, public servant, teacher, or member of the Citizenship Commission	a) Signature and 5 sponsors and b) Fee of 50,000 Vatu

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 6: Nomination - President (Directly Elected)

Country	Candidate nomination - President (directly elected)		
	Qualifications - candidate for president	Disqualifications - candidate for president	Nomination requirements - president
Cook Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fiji	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kiribati	Elected member of the legislature	Having served three terms	Three candidates nominated by the legislature, or four candidates elected by the legislature using original Borda method
Marshall Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nauru	N/A	N/A	N/A
Niue	N/A	N/A	N/A
Palau	a) 35 years of age; and b) Citizenship; and c) Residence for over 5 years	a) Holder of public office; or b) Having served two terms	a) Signatures of 100 registered electors or support of registered party and b) Fee of \$100.00 USD
Papua New Guinea	N/A	N/A	N/A

Tonga	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tuvalu	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vanuatu	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (I
Page 7: Polling (1)**

Country	Target maximum size of polling district	Where can electors vote?	Polling Polling day: workday or holiday?	Hours of polling
Cook Islands	None			
Fiji		At any polling station in the same voting district. At embassies, consulates or by post if outside the country.		
Kiribati	None	At specified polling station for the locality where registered		7.00 am to 6.00 pm
Marshall Islands		At specified polling station for the locality where registered or by post	Can be working day or holiday	8.00 am to 7.00 pm
Federated States of Micronesia		At specified polling station for the locality where registered	Holiday	10 hours
Nauru				
Niue		Each village has their own polling station which can be a community hall or a pastor's house		9.00 am to 6.00 pm
Palau		At specified polling station for the locality where registered	Not specified (first Wednesday in November)	7.00 am to 7.00 pm, except 7.00 am to 9.00 pm in off-island polling stations
Papua New Guinea	None	At any polling station for the locality where registered	According to the electoral schedule	According to the electoral schedule
Pitcairn Island	N/A			
Samoa			Holiday	9 hours
Solomon Islands	750 electors	At specified polling station for	Holiday	

Vanuatu

None

At specified polling station for
the locality where registered

Holiday

7.30 am to 4.30 pm

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 8: Polling
(2)

Country	Identification needed to vote?	Form of ballot paper	Polling Authentication of ballot paper	Method of marking vote	Ink or marking of voters?
Cook Islands					
Fiji			Authenticated by polling official	Preferential: mark party list above the line or at least 75% of candidates of the party below the line	
Kiribati	No	Single ballot paper		Mark the ballot paper depending on how many seats to be filled	No
Marshall Islands	No	Single ballot paper, candidates listed in random order	Signed or otherwise authenticated by polling officials	Mark the ballot paper depending on how many seats to be filled ticking one to five candidates	No
Federated States of Micronesia	No	Single ballot paper, candidate photos, organised alphabetically, bilingual	Authenticated by polling official	Mark candidate of choice	No
Nauru					
Niue		Single ballot paper, organised alphabetically by family name, bilingual	Signed or otherwise authenticated by polling officials	Cross out the name of all candidates electors do not want to vote for	
Palau		Single ballot paper		Mark candidate of choice or write in candidate	
Papua New Guinea	No	Single ballot paper in the prescribed form	Presiding Officer to initial ballot paper on the back	The elector must place the numbers 1, 2, 3 against candidates' names in such a way as to indicate preferences clearly	Yes
Pitcairn Island					
Samoa	Yes				
Solomon Islands	No	Ballot not marked but	Authenticated by	Ballot not marked but placed in	Yes

Vanuatu

Yes - Voter card	Multiple ballot papers, one ballot paper per candidate: colour for individuals, black and white for parties	No	No marking, insert ballot paper of candidate into envelope and put envelope in ballot box, other ballot papers are left in the booth	Yes
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Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 9: Polling (3)

Country	Compulsory voting?	Polling			
		Advance or off-site voting - who?	Advance or off-site voting - how?	Overseas voting - who?	Overseas voting - how?
Cook Islands	No	Electors who will be away		No (abolished 2004)	N/A
Fiji	Yes	Disabled, people in remote areas, hospitalised persons, prisoners, electors who are overseas	Post	Electors travelling or working overseas	a) Post: or b) At embassies and consulates
Kiribati	No	No	N/A	No	N/A
Marshall Islands	No	Electors confined in hospital or otherwise unable to go to polling station	Mobile ballot box	Citizen residing overseas	Post
Federated States of Micronesia	No		Absentee ballots at designated polling places	Registered citizens working and living in designated areas	Designated polling places
Nauru	Yes				
Niue	No	All electors but need to apply	At election body office but only a couple of days before the election otherwise ballot papers not available	No	N/A
Palau	No	An elector who: a) is confined to home or hospital through illness or b) is at sea or absent or c) will be in Sonorol or Tobi 20 days before polling or on the day	Post	Electors who will be away, giving 3 days notice	Overseas polling places where established
Papua New Guinea	No	An elector who: a) will not throughout the polling period be within the electorate for which he is enrolled; or b) will not be within 16km of the nearest polling place; or c) will be travelling or be away; or d) is seriously ill or infirm; or e) is restricted or forbidden by religious beliefs to follow normal procedures; or f) is a citizen residing abroad	Post	Electors residing overseas	Post
Pitcairn Island	No				
Samoa	No	No	N/A		
Solomon Islands	No	No	N/A	No	N/A

Vanuatu

No

No, but proxy voting via proxy card if unable to attend

N/A

Citizens residing overseas or on vacation, students, and diplomatic staff

Special polling stations by proxy, plus one overseas polling station in Nouméa, NC

Pacific Election Administration Compared: Andrew Ellis (IDEA) & Alistair Legge (PIANZEA)
Page 10: Counting and Tabulation

Country	Initial count where?	Initial count procedures	Counting and Tabulation Consolidation of results - where?	Are preliminary results announced?	Where are results declared?	What triggers recounting?	Who orders recounts?
Cook Islands							
Fiji	Returning Offices (special counting centres)	Count conducted as soon as voting in the electorate is completed; ballots counted according to first preferences; if an absolute majority is not achieved by any candidate, the candidate with the least first preference votes is excluded and their second preferences distributed accordingly; the exclusion process proceeds until a candidate has an absolute majority and is declared elected	National Election Office	No	Returning Offices	Close margin: decision of Returning Officer or request by party or candidate	Returning Officers
Kiribati	Counting centres	No fixed procedure					
Marshall Islands	Special counting centres	a) preliminary count of all ballots b) ballots reconciled with voters c) each ballot paper held up for public scrutiny and announced aloud d) double tallying e) counting and sorting by hand f) observers permitted	Counting and Tabulation Committee appointed by Chief Electoral Commission	Yes	EMB	By request if a candidate challenges	Counting and Tabulation Committee: or Supreme Court
Federated States of Micronesia	Polling place	Ballots reconciled against number of voters and number of ballots received. Each ballot held up for public scrutiny, sorted into piles of individual candidates and counted by hand. Observers allowed	Counting centres		EMB at capital	Request by candidate on basis of possible fraud	EMB Counting and Tabulating Committee
Nauru							
Niue	Polling station	a) ballots and voters reconciled b) each ballot paper held up for public scrutiny and announced aloud c) single tally as votes are called d) counted by hand e) data fed into computer for calculation f) party agents are permitted to observe	National level	Copies of results are publicly posted at the counting site immediately on completion of the count	EMB over the radio	Always recounted on the Sunday after the election or by request to the Chief Judge	EMB
Palau	Counting centres		Counting and Tabulation Committee at counting centres	Yes, at counting centres	EMB	Request by candidate who believes fraud or error has taken place	EMB
Papua New Guinea	Counting centres	As soon as voting in the electorate is completed, ballots are counted according to first preferences; if an absolute majority is not achieved by any candidate, the candidate with the least first preference votes is excluded and their second preferences distributed accordingly; the exclusion process shall proceed until a candidate has an absolute	Provincial counting centres	Yes	Returning Officers	Where on the final count, the margin of votes between the candidate who polled the highest number of votes and the candidate who polled the next highest number of votes does not exceed 0.25% of the number of votes polled by the candidate who polled the highest number of votes, the runner up may	The Returning Officer for the electoral district. After announcement, Electoral Commission: or National Court

Pitcairn Island**Samoa**

Polling station

National level

Judge

Solomon Islands

Regional counting centre

Preliminary count of all ballots in ballot box, reconciliation against number of voters and against number of papers initially received, sorted into piles, counted by hand

Regional counting centre

Not officially

EMB at capital

Equality of votes

Returning Officer

Tokelau**Tonga**

Polling station

Number of ballots reconciled against number of voters and against number initially received, sorted into piles for each candidate, counted by hand, data fed into computer for calculation.

National level

No

Request by candidate plus fee of \$300 Tongan

Chief Returning Officer

Tuvalu

Special counting centres for each island

Number of ballots reconciled against number of voters and against number of papers initially received, double tally including tally by counting agents, totals counted by hand, observers allowed

District level

No

Minister of Home Affairs

When there is equality of votes: and By request

Returning Officer

Vanuatu

Polling station

Number of ballots reconciled against number of voters, each ballot paper held up, double tally including tally by party representatives, sorted into piles, counted by hand, observers allowed

National level

Yes - 3-4 days after

Electoral Commission

Electoral Commission if tally does not reconcile: and By Court decision following request

Supreme Court