

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

EIGHTEENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 4 - 8 August 1986)

NOTES ON APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR COUNTRIES WISHING TO  
NOMINATE CANDIDATES TO SPC FISHERIES TRAINING COURSES

A large number of training courses are now being run by the SPC Regional Fisheries Training Project. In recent months for a number of courses some "technical hitches" have resulted in selected applicants arriving late or missing out altogether. In order to avoid recurrence of this situation in future the following notes are offered for guidance.

1. SPC training courses or activities are developed in response to recommendations from the annual Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries or to requests from individual countries or groups of countries. Any country wishing to conduct courses in cooperation with SPC or seeking advice on courses in general should contact the SPC Fisheries Training Officer.
2. Once initial planning is under way, notification of the intention to run the course together with preliminary details of the training offered will appear in the Fisheries Newsletter, also a letter of information may be circulated. At this stage the course is still unofficial.
3. It should be noted that the Regional Fisheries Training Project itself has only a limited budget to run courses and in most cases additional funds must be obtained from other sources. This can lead to delays and some uncertainty in finalising course starting times.
4. All SPC activities are formally announced to member governments by official SPC Savingsgrams. This is forwarded to the official SPC contact point in each country, usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or equivalent. Copies of all Savingsgrams relevant to fisheries training and other marine-resource related activities will also be sent informally to fisheries departments or divisions to avoid delays in the receipt of this information.

9. It is important to note that many SPC courses are also suitable for private sector applications and it is incumbent on Fisheries Departments to put forward the most suitable candidate. Any private sector candidate must have government approval.
10. It is difficult for SPC to make the final course selections if details on all candidates are not available; good candidates have had to be rejected from past courses because sufficient details were not available in sufficient time. Careful attention to the procedures suggested above should help overcome most of these problems in the future.
11. As soon as the student selections are finalised, countries will be notified by telex. This again must be through the appropriate Department of Foreign Affairs, but if we have a telex number for the nominating body, i.e. usually Fisheries Department, we will also send a telex to them.
12. Travel details will be arranged by SPC and when these are complete a P.T.A. for air travel will be telexed to the nearest airline office. Notification of where the ticket may be collected will be sent by telex to the fisheries division or sponsor concerned. It is exceedingly important that SPC knows it is telexing the correct person and that it receives immediate notification that tickets have been collected. If there is any doubt that SPC may not have the correct telex address, this should be reconfirmed with the SPC Fisheries Adviser.
13. Formal notification by letter will be sent subsequently, together with student course and travel information if time permits.
14. Sufficient funds should be advanced to the student to cover incidental travel expenses. These will be reimbursed to the student on arrival at the course venue at SPC student per diem rates or on production of satisfactory receipts. The responsibility of repaying loans from his government rests entirely with the student.
15. All students will require a passport current until the end of the course. Visas to the host country can usually be issued on arrival but where possible, countries having easy access to appropriate embassies should obtain a visa themselves at an early date. U.S. territories require a visa for transit passengers, so please ensure the student has this where necessary, otherwise he will not be allowed out of transit.

16. The SPC will insure students for the time they are "in country" attending the course. Insurance for travel is the responsibility of the student or nominating body. Any excess baggage costs shall be solely the responsibility of the student.

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5. Every effort will be made to ensure that as far as possible such Savingsgrams are issued at least four months before the courses commence in order to give countries adequate time to meet all required internal student selection and administrative procedures. Once internal selection procedures have been completed by the fisheries department or division, it would be helpful if informal telex notification of the nomination(s) could be sent to SPC with brief details of the educational and work history background(s) of the candidate(s) to enable preliminary planning to proceed. This should include passport details (if the candidate does not have a passport, adequate time should be allowed for him to obtain one). The nominations must be formally endorsed by, and channelled through, the country's official SPC contact point, usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or equivalent. Again, where time is short, this should be by telex in the first instance followed as quickly as possible by the original(s) of the completed SPC application form (please note this as we have to make copies for donor agencies) with a letter from Foreign Affairs.
6. In cases where, as part of the established national selection procedures, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs endorses the application, this process of this endorsement should be formally conveyed to the Secretary-General by letter from Foreign Affairs, with their agreement for the SPC to accept nominations directly from the appropriate body or agency: this will then simplify procedures for subsequent courses. This point is very important and in the past has held up the selection of some very good candidates.
7. Please note that SPC courses are usually of a specific nature and that students will be selected with regard to the criteria contained in the Savingsgram to ensure that they are suited to and can benefit from the course. These criteria should be studied carefully as most of the SPC courses are oversubscribed and selection of any candidate simply on country recommendation is not automatic. Selection is made by SPC Management strictly on merit, taking into account the suitability of the candidate and the benefit he and his country will gain from participation in the course.
8. In cases where there is more than one suitable candidate for a particular course, all should be listed. This ensures that all qualified candidates are considered for selection, and provides a valuable indication of total country demand for this type of training.. Where required, further courses can then be planned. Candidates should be listed by order of preference, and if possible with reasons for this order.