



MCA-Vanuatu Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Type of Meeting: Regular Steering Committee
May 6th 2006
3pm
Department of Economic & Sector Planning

Board Members:

Present:

Chairman	Director-General, Prime Ministers Office
Member	Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Member	Government Statistician, National Statistics Office
Member	General Manager, Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce
Member	Representative of the Director of the Department of Finance
Member	Representative of the Director of the Department of Economics & Social Planning

MCA Vanuatu Legal Counsel
(Under invitation)

MCA Vanuatu Secretariat

Director Program Management
Economics Analyst
Infrastructure Analyst
Secretary & Support Staff

Apologies:

Member	Director of Department of Strategic Management
--------	--

Absent:

Vice-Chairman	Director General, Ministry of Finance & Economic Management
Member	Director General, Ministry of Lands
Member	Director General, Ministry of Infrastructure & Public Utilities
Member	Director, Public Works Department
Member	Head of Development Cooperation Foreign Affairs
Secretary General	VANGO Civil Society Representative

Quorum present? Yes

The meeting was quorate.
No voting members left during the course of the meeting.

Person Acting as Chairman: Director General of the Office of the Prime Minister

Person Acting as Secretary: Director, Program Management Unit

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 4pm by Chairman.

The Chairman noted that notice of this meeting was sent out by the Program Director via email as well as hand delivered the written notice on Tuesday 2nd May 2006 and attendance was confirmed by some members only.

Chairman with the agreement of all members made an amendment to the agenda item by adding a further matter as itemized below:

- f) Endorsement of certificates (sent to MCA Vanuatu by MCC)

No member of the Steering Committee attending the meeting objected to the calling of the meeting or the items on the agenda.

I. Discussion and Action Items

A. Introduction – Compact Entry into Force

Chairman made reference to the compact entry into force on 28th April 2006 for a five year period, also noted that the following agreements were already executed by the respective authorities: Procurement Agreement, Bank Agreement, Disbursement Agreement, Terms of Supplemental Agreements and Fiscal Agent Agreement.

The Steering Committee made note of the agreements have already been sign.

B. Procurement Agent Agreement

The Chairman noted that the Procurement Agent Agreement was negotiated with BCEOM with MCC's presence. Both parties agreed to the content of the Agreement. The Chairman requested the Program Management to identify to the Steering Committee the new changes that have been incorporated after the negotiation. The Infrastructure Analyst advised changes were made to Exhibit A4 and Exhibit A9. MCC were present during the discussion and were informed of the changes.

The Steering Committee adopted the revised version of the Procurement Agent Agreement (PAA)

The Director Program Management pointed out that the PAA will now have to be sent to MCC to obtain their 'no objection' response. MCC has 5 days to respond. Upon receipt of MCC's no-objection response, the PAA can be executed.

Introduction of BCEOM

The Chairman introduced Fredric Piquer of BCEOM to the Steering Committee. Mr Jone Rogara accompanied Mr Piquer as the Contract Manager.

Mr. Fredrick Piquier, a French national thanked MCA Vanuatu for having the confidence in BCEOM by selecting them to carry out the duties of the Procurement Agent. Mr Piquer presented his letter of Powers of Attorney to the Chairman.

The Steering Committee accepted Mr. Piquer's letter of the Power of Attorney.

C. Governance Agreement

The Director of the MCA Program briefed the Steering Committee members on the status of the Governance Agreement. The MCA Legal Counsel indicated he is still in dialogue with the MCC's Senior International Attorney over minor changes in the agreement. The changes are not substantial and will not materially alter the Agreement. There are no further comments by the steering committee members.

The Steering Committee unanimously accepted the amendments made to the Governance Agreement.

D. First Disbursement – Special Disbursement Request

The Program management informed the SC that the first disbursement will cover the costs of MCA Vanuatu, M&E activities, Procurement Agent and the Fiscal Agent. The program Management has to receive information on the costs of the Fiscal Agent. The Director indicated that he will prepare the Special Disbursement Request next week. When finished, the SC will be informed of the Special Disbursement Request by a flying a minute. The SC members will be expected to provide a 'no-objection' to the request before it is transmitted to MCC.

The SC was informed by the Director of Finance representative that their Department had drafted a letter for the Minister of Finance to issue instructions to Reserve Bank to open an account to facilitate receipt of the MCC funds.

E. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

The Chairman thanked the MCA Vanuatu and National Statistics Office for their input in the finalization of the M&E Plan. The Government Statistician made references to the changes in relation to the HIES budget prepared by the Economics Analyst of the MCA Vanuatu.

The Steering Committee unanimously endorsed the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

F. Endorsement of Certificates

The Director of the MCA Program inform the Steering Committee members that before any money is disbursement from MCC, MCA-Vanuatu has to submit certain certificates to MCC indicating that it has achieve most of the task it needed to achieve before the initial disbursement. The following is a list of certificates that has to be sign by certain individuals before it can be sent to MCC along with the disbursement request.

- 1) Formation Certificate, establishment of MCA Unit
- 2) Letter from the Minister of Finance & Economic Management on the VAT & Duty Exemption
- 3) Opinion Certificate – Certified by Legal Counsel
- 4) Initial Disbursement Request Certificate
- 5) Disbursement Certificate
- 6) MCA Vanuatu Disbursement Certificate
- 7) Certificate of MCA Vanuatu Steering Committee
- 8) Certificate of Incumbency

The Chairman proposed that the Steering Committee endorse these certificates presented by the Program Management and the Legal Counsel.

The Steering Committee unanimously endorsed these certificates and forms.

G. Staff Contracts

The Legal Counsel stressed the importance of having the Steering Committee execute the employment contracts as soon as possible. The Compact has now been ratified and all necessary documentation is in place giving the Steering Committee the necessary powers to enter into contracts with the employees.

The Chair proposed the Steering Committee waits for employment contracts being finalized by MCC. As soon as they are received the contracts can be executed. It was agreed that the Legal Counsel will draft the Chairman's letter to accompany any LPO for payment of the under-payment of the Economics and Infrastructure Analyst.

H. Response to Helen Hughes & Gaurav Sodhi Article of the Center for Independent Studies

The Chairman informed the Steering Committee members of the article that was prepared by the Center for Independent Studies concerning the MCA program in Vanuatu. The Director Program Management and Economics Analyst have prepared a 16-page response, which was copied to all Steering Committee Members, intending to publish it as their own individual paper. The Director of program management stated that because of the language used in their paper, it may be inappropriate for it be released as a Government response. The Steering Committee Members thanked the Director of Program Management and Economics Analyst for their effort.

The Chairman intends to go over the paper in detail and decide whether it be released as an MCA Vanuatu paper, or as a Government one.

The Chairman made references to the outstanding matters that they be circulated by flying minutes for immediate approval and endorsement.

The MCA Vanuatu Steering Committee meeting officially closed at 5.30 pm.

Certified by: /S/
Secretary, MCA-Vanuatu

Acknowledged by: /S/
Chairman of the Steering Committee