

High Level visit to the Federated States of Micronesia Pohnpei, FSM, 9 - 10 February 2026

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2026

WP 3

Encourage new membership of the IHO

High level summary:

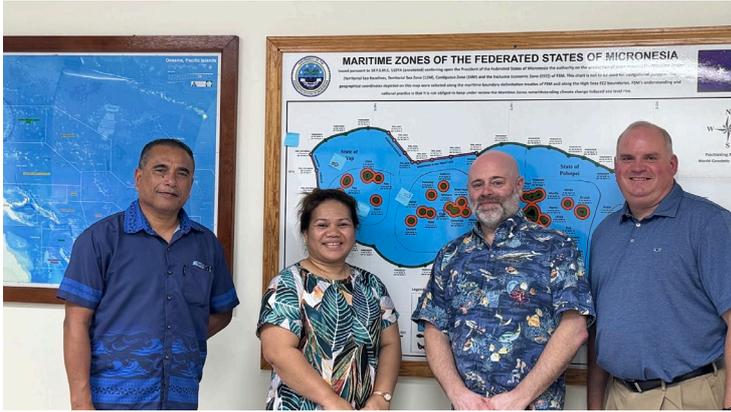
- Met with ministry level officials in the FSM to encourage new membership of the IHO
- Established contact between the FSM authorities and their Primary Charting Authority
- Encouraged Associate Membership and future participation in the SWPHC
- Explained the benefits of hydrography to ministry and other government officials in the FSM
- Assessed basic hydrographic capabilities and potential solutions in the FSM

Details:

Mr. Keith Dominic of the U.S. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and Dr. John Nyberg, Director of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), with generous support from the U.S. Department of State, undertook a significant high-level visit to Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on 9 and 10 February 2026. During this strategic engagement, Mr. Dominic and Dr. Nyberg provided a comprehensive introduction to the IHO, outlining the substantial benefits of IHO membership and emphasizing the critical importance of establishing effective collaboration with the nation's Primary Charting Authority, US-NGA. These discussions were held with senior FSM government officials, including Secretary T.H. Leonito Bacalando Jr. of the Department of Justice, CDR Peter Stuart of the FSM National Police Maritime Wing, Ms. Josaphine Joseph of the Department of Justice, and other key representatives from across the FSM government.

The FSM delegation actively engaged in the dialogue, raising important questions regarding the procedures for updating hydrographic products, the specific requirements and obligations associated with IHO membership, and practical pathways through which the Federated States of Micronesia could strengthen its working relationships with both the United States as PCA and the IHO. In response to the constructive discussions and evident interest from the FSM representatives, the visiting delegation strongly encouraged the Federated States of Micronesia to pursue Associate Membership in the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) as a practical and valuable first step toward deeper engagement with the international hydrographic community.

Secretary Bacalando and the team responded positively to the meeting, showed very strong interest in working more collaboratively with their PCA, and was willing to consider FSM participation as an Associate Member of the SWPHC and an eventual member of the IHO.



***CDR Peter Stuart, Ms. Josephine Joseph, Dr. John Nyberg,
and Mr. Keith Dominic***



***Mr. Keith Dominic and
Dr. John Nyberg***

Following the productive meeting with Secretary Bacalando, Mr. Dominic and Dr. Nyberg visited the facilities of the FSM National Police Maritime Wing to provide technical assistance with an Electronic Navigational Chart (ENC) installation issue affecting two of their maritime patrol vessels. During this hands-on engagement, the group explored the valuable possibility of equipping each vessel with echosounders, which would enable the systematic collection of bathymetric data during routine patrol operations. This initiative would not only enhance the vessels' navigational capabilities but also contribute valuable hydrographic information from waters under FSM jurisdiction. Mr. Dominic committed to maintaining dialogue with FSM officials regarding practical options for echosounder procurement and installation, procedures for regular chart updates, the process for inclusion in the IHO Yearbook, and opportunities for participation in future IHO capacity-building activities and regional collaboration initiatives.

