

U.S. ALL ISLANDS CORAL REEF COMMITTEE

# COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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CREATED BY

Members of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee

WITH INPUT AND GUIDANCE FROM

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*Cover photos courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*

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*Special appreciation to Michael Hamnett, PhD and Takiora Ingram, PhD for their efforts on the original (2007) Communications Plan, upon which this Plan is based.*

## Definition and Abbreviations

AIC = U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee  
FAS = Freely Associated States  
POC = Point of Contact

SecED = AIC Secretariat Executive Director  
USCRTF = U.S. Coral Reef Task Force

Advisor	An expert who provides support and information that may include, but not be limited to, issues and initiatives such as science, policy, and management of the resources
Affiliate member	Non-voting POC representing one of the three freely associated states: Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and Republic of the Marshall Islands
AIC Chair	Main representative and spokesperson for the AIC; elected by full member POCs; 2-year term
AIC Member	Governor or President appointed Points of Contact from the seven U.S. coral reef jurisdictions and three Freely Associated States
AIC Vice Chair	Serves as Chair in the absence of the Chair and assists as necessary in performing executive duties of the AIC; elected by full member POCs; 2-year term
Consensus	Decision-making process by which the AIC operates. Consensus is fundamental agreement and does not have to be unanimous. Consensus is reached when each full member can say, "Even though the decision may not be exactly what I want, I can live with and support it."
Full member	Voting POC representing one of the seven U.S. coral reef jurisdictions: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Florida, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands
Jurisdiction	Any State, Territory, or Commonwealth members of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
Points of Contact (POC)	Governor or President-appointed Coral Reef Initiative representative
Secretariat	Responsible for administrative aspects of coordinating shared tasks, tracking implementation of AIC recommendations, and assisting in duties consistent with all relevant authorities of the AIC; comprised of the Executive Director, Advisors, and Secretariat staff
Voting	Decision-making via a consensus process.

## Purpose

The plan's overall purpose is to enhance coral reef management and conservation through effective communication and collaboration both internal and external to the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC). This plan is intended to guide and improve communications of AIC Points of Contact (POCs) with:

- Governors (or their designee), Presidents (or their designee) as well as relevant agencies and organizations within each state, territory, commonwealth, and country.
- Each other and with the AIC Secretariat, and
- Federal agency members of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, key members of the U.S. Congress, and other supporters of and partners in coral reef ecosystem management and conservation.

Additionally, this plan supports the vision and mission of the AIC:

- **AIC VISION** - Thriving coral reef ecosystems, effectively managed to protect their cultural, environmental, and economic value for future generations.
- **AIC MISSION** - To be a unified voice for the effective management of coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. and Freely Associated States.

This Communications Plan was developed as a blueprint for ensuring efficiency, clarity, and responsibility for the members of the Committee, the Committee as a whole, and the Secretariat for the Committee. This plan is intended to be a working document, written for and by POCs, and updated, as needed, through AIC consensus by the Secretariat Executive Director.

## Background

The original AIC Communication Plan was created and approved in 2005 by AIC Points of Contact (POC) and submitted to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) by the AIC Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee.

The format and content of this plan was updated between July 2013 and **February 2016** with input and feedback from the POCs, Advisors, and Secretariat Executive Director.

## Structure & Maintenance

This plan is formatted into four main sections: 1) Internal communications, 2) External communications, 3) Outreach, and 4) Communications infrastructure. Each section begins with a brief overview of the current communications situation (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The AIC Communications Plan is structured into four main sections.

The section on **internal communications** includes all communications within the AIC, its members, Advisors, and Secretariat as well as communications at the jurisdiction-level. **External communications** includes all AIC communications with partners such as the USCRTF, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of the Interior, and members of Congress. The **outreach section** includes general guidelines on AIC informal outreach. The **communications infrastructure section** of the plan includes descriptions and current status of all of the AIC communications resources and tools.

The Communications Plan will be maintained and updated, as needed, by the Secretariat Executive Director, with guidance provided by the AIC Advisors, and review and feedback

provided by the POCs. The plan and any updates/modifications will be approved through AIC consensus.

The Secretariat Executive Director (SecED) will work with POCs to track the progress and performance measures for the plan and present an update to the POCs in each AIC Secretariat Report, to be included, as applicable, in the AIC Chair's Report. A copy of the AIC Secretariat and Chair's Reports should be posted in the AIC Document Repository.



## Internal Communications

### BACKGROUND

The AIC is a dynamic committee in terms of membership. POCs from each jurisdiction periodically change as do Governors, Presidents, and agencies involved. Additionally, POCs are spread across both U.S. and Freely Associated States time zones, crossing the Date Line. All of this requires a flexible and equally dynamic Communications Plan.

Inherent challenges in effective communication arise because of the nature of this Committee, as mentioned above. These challenges include, but are not limited to, personality, political, cultural, and communication style differences, turnover in POCs, breadth of time zones, and minimal co-location of members, Advisors, and Secretariat Executive Director.

### POCs AND SECRETARIAT COMMUNICATIONS

#### General SOPs

To help address some of the inherent challenges within the AIC, the following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were created:

- Use of “away/out of office” message on email and phone so others know when you are not in the office or on travel.
- Acknowledge receipt of AIC-related communications.
- Highlight or call-out decisional communications (e.g., email subject header: DECISION ITEM), as applicable.

#### Updates and news

The AIC Chair and SecED will ensure that POCs are kept apprised, in a timely manner, of all important communications.

#### Common requests

One of the primary functions of the SecED is to liaise and coordinate between the POCs, the USCRTF, federal partners, NGOs, and other relevant regional, national and international entities on issues related to coral reef conservation (see AIC Charter). Information or decisions are often

requested from the AIC with a fairly quick turn-around. As the AIC operates via consensus-based process, decision items will typically require additional turn-around time, even under the best circumstances.

To facilitate effective communications between the POCs and SecED, the following SOPs were created:

- SecED will notify POCs of requests in a timely and clear manner, providing clear and reasonable deadlines for requested tasks.
- POCs will acknowledge receipt of communications from the SecED and respond to e-mails, phone calls, and text messages from the SecED in a timely manner and by the deadline set.
- As needed, the SecED will use an AIC Call or Meeting to discuss and gain POC feedback and come to consensus (or not) on a decision item.
- SecED will make the best effort to follow-up on requests to POCs with a phone call (not rely on email) and will appropriately utilize other forms of communication (e.g., text message).

#### **“Fire drill” requests**

USCRTF and Congressional business sometimes requires a very quick turn-around (*aka* “fire drill”) on a decision or information from the AIC. Sometimes, these decisions are critical to the jurisdictions and FAS.

To facilitate effective communications between the POCs and SecED for “fire drill” requests, the following SOPs were created:

- SecED will inform POCs that a decision requires their immediate attention and flag this communication as an “URGENT DECISION ITEM”.
- SecED will provide POCs a clear deadline for response.
- If no response from POCs is received by the due date, the SecED will provide a “final warning” to POCs and attempt to make phone calls to as many of the POCs as possible to get their input.
- If still no response is received, a statement of “no comment” will be assumed, unless otherwise stated.
- At that point, a summary of POC input and discussion will be sent to the Chair, who will make the policy call on behalf of the AIC.

## NEW POC COMMUNICATIONS

To minimize the impact to the AIC from POC turnover, the following SOPs related to new POCs were created:

- POCs must ensure that any time there is a change in administration or when a change in a POC is made that the co-chairs of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF), AIC Chair, and Secretariat are formally notified in writing (see AIC Charter; template letter available).
- An AIC POC orientation packet and presentation is maintained (copies on AIC Google Drive) and used in on-boarding for all new POCs.
- The AIC Secretariat, with assistance of POCs, will ensure that new POCs have a clear understanding of what the AIC is as well as their POC responsibilities by doing a thorough on-boarding with them.
- An *AIC POC Acknowledgement Statement* (Appendix A) should be signed by the new POC and a copy provided to the AIC Chair and SecED.
- Current POCs will help to mentor the new POC, particularly through their first Task Force meeting.

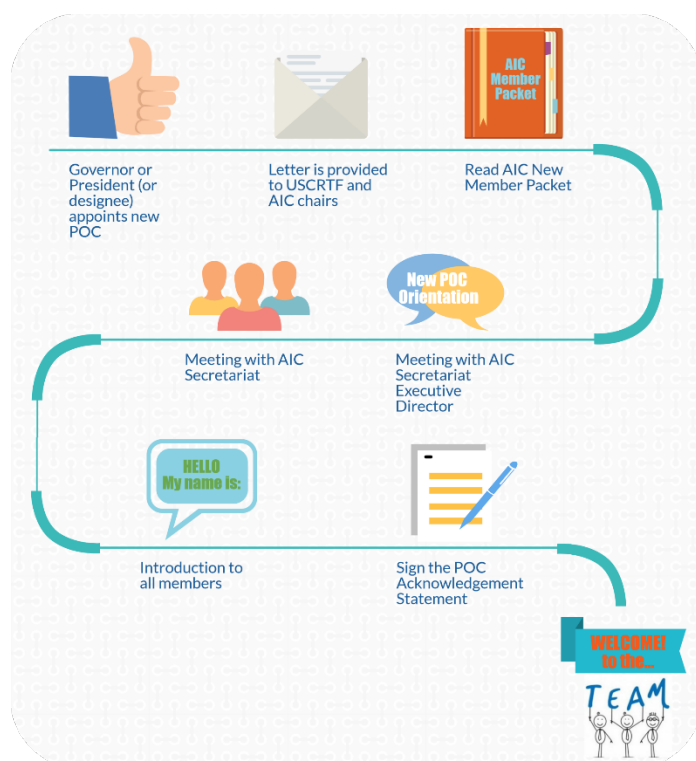


Figure 2. The new POC onboarding process.

### On-boarding Process

1. The SecED will coordinate a phone call or in-person meeting with the new POC and Advisors to ensure they have a clear understanding of what the AIC is, its history, current policies, and plans.
2. The SecED will coordinate a second phone call or in-person meeting with the new POC to explain components of the AIC communications infrastructure, such as AIC document repository, listserv email, etc.
3. Time will be spent during the next AIC monthly call or meeting introducing the new POC to the members and Advisors and vice versa. At that time the new POC is encouraged to ask questions to clarify any of their roles, responsibilities, or AIC documents/plans.
4. Once the above are done, the new POC will be asked to sign the AIC POC

## Acknowledgement Statement (Appendix A).

### New AIC POC Orientation

#### New Member Packet

This packet will be provided immediately, by the SecED, to the new POC either in paper copy or electronically.

- Letter from the Chair\*
- Internal AIC Contact List\*
- AIC Charter\*
- AIC Communications Plan\*
- 1-pager on AIC + priorities, current issues
- 2007 AIC Strategic Plan (08-13)
- 2010 AIC Strategic Plan (08-14)
- 2015 AIC Strategic Plan (2016-2020)\*
- Executive Order 13089
- National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs, 2000
- National Coral Reef Action Strategy, 2002
- U.S. Coral Reef Task Force website & general information
- POC Acknowledgement Form\*

*\*This document is an internal document of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC) and should not be shared externally without consent from, at a minimum, the AIC Chair.*

#### New Member Presentation

The presentation will be used during the New POC Orientation with the SecED and/or entire Secretariat. The AIC Secretariat (mainly the SecED) will maintain the presentation and ensure its accuracy. A copy of the most recent presentation is available on the AIC Google Drive.

### GOVERNOR / PRESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

POCs are appointed by their Governors or Presidents (Freely Associated States) to serve on the AIC. They are responsible for ensuring that their Governors are kept current on AIC and U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) issues and activities.

To ensure that Governors and Presidents (FAS) are kept apprised of priority AIC and USCRTF issues, the following SOPs were created:

- POCs will encourage their Governors or Presidents to actively participate, in-person if possible, in USCRTF meetings.
- POCs will brief their Governors or Presidents (or designees) prior to and during Task Force meetings.
- POCs will staff their Governors or Presidents (or designees) at meetings.
- Secretariat and the POCs will work with the USCRTF Steering Committee to ensure effective use of their Governor's or President's time during Task Force meetings.

## LOCAL CORAL REEF WORKING/ADVISORY GROUP COMMUNICATIONS

Each jurisdiction and FAS has a coral reef working or advisory group that helps establish local priorities for coral reef management. Each POC is responsible for consulting with their local working/advisory group and keeping the AIC and USCRTF apprised of current priorities, issues, and projects. The SecED will visit the participating jurisdictions and attend working/advisory group meetings as needed and when feasible.

POCs will provide the SecED with an updated description (1/2 page document), as needed, of the working/advisory group structure and any communication protocol that has been established within their jurisdiction or FAS.



## External Communications

### BACKGROUND

The partners of the AIC, such as NOAA and DOI, are extremely important. The main partners of the AIC include the federal agency members of the USCRTF, namely NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program and the DOI Office of Insular Affairs. The AIC also has partners outside of the USCRTF, which include the Coral Reef Institutes and academia as well as NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy and Coastal States Organization. At times, communication with external partners can be confusing between priorities and issues of the overall AIC versus individual jurisdictions or FAS. For this reason, clear external communications protocols are needed.

## PARTNER COMMUNICATIONS

### Speaking for the AIC vs. Jurisdiction/FAS

POCs, AIC Chair and Vice Chair, SecED, and AIC Advisors must be very careful to characterize policy positions and opinions of the AIC so that the levels of consultation among POCs and with the Secretariat on specific issues are very clear.

As a matter of policy, the AIC Chair is responsible for communications on behalf of the AIC, unless otherwise delegated. Individual POCs can only make representations on behalf of their jurisdictions or FAS. When communicating with partners such as NOAA, DOI, or other USCRTF agencies, it is important to qualify any opinions or policy positions by stating the level of consultation on any particular issue.

Care should be taken when speaking about AIC consensus topics, particularly if the POC's or their jurisdiction's views on that same topic are not entirely aligned with the AIC's. In a case like that, the POC should share their jurisdiction's view on the topic, making it clear that is the view of the jurisdiction. They should also mention that while their jurisdiction's view on the topic is what it is, they still support the consensus decision of the AIC on that topic.

### “Trust Protocol”

This “trust protocol” was developed by POCs during the February 14, 2015 AIC Meeting. The protocol was developed in acknowledgement of realistic response time of POCs to the Secretariat, mainly SecED. This protocol sets standard guidance on how the AIC, mainly the SecED, should handle various external communication requests.

#### **1) Topics without AIC consensus decision yet:**

- a. If an AIC consensus decision has not yet been made on a topic of known great importance to the AIC (e.g., coral funding), the responder should let the requester know that consultation with all POCs is required and a consensus decision must be achieved before anything on behalf of the AIC can be shared. The responder should work to ensure that adequate time is allowed for the AIC consensus process.
- b. If the topic has been discussed amongst the POCs; however a consensus decision has not yet been made, the responder may state what they have heard in POC conversations thus far, but make it clear that a formal AIC consensus decision must first be made before any official statement can be made or stance taken by the AIC. The responder should work to ensure that adequate time is allowed for the AIC consensus process.

#### **2) Topics with AIC consensus decision:**

- a. The responder may share the AIC’s views on this topic or issue in accordance with what was decided and come to consensus on between voting member POCs.
- b. It is the responsibility of each voting member POC to, as soon as possible, notify all other POCs and the AIC Secretariat should their stance or opinion on a consensus decision item change.

### Lead-time on Responses

POCs, AIC Chair, and Vice Chair should impress on NOAA, DOI, and other USCRTF agencies that lead-time is essential for both requests for information from jurisdictions and from the SecED. In many cases, POCs have an obligation to their stakeholders and their local coral reef working/advisory group to consult with them on matters of policy or coral reef funding and activities. The SecED has an obligation to consult with all of the POCs. Travel schedules and other commitments often make it difficult for POCs to respond immediately to requests for information from the jurisdictions or FAS. When possible, lead-time required should be specified and time allowed for negotiations of a new deadline, as needed.

### POC and Secretariat formal correspondences

POCs will copy the SecED on appropriate formal correspondence with the USCRTF Steering Committee, granting agencies, and other agencies related to or impacting coral reef protection and management efforts in the jurisdictions. Such correspondence could include final grant proposal submission, 6-month grant reports, state of the reef reports, accomplishments

reports, etc. In addition, POCs will provide the Secretariat with any plans, strategies, or formal guidance documents that impact jurisdictions' coral reef management and conservation.

The Secretariat and/or SecED will copy the AIC Chair and Vice Chair, and as appropriate, POCs, on appropriate formal correspondence with and reports to members of the USCRTF Steering Committee, requests from Congressional staff, and other organizations involved in coral reef protection and management issues affecting AIC jurisdictions or FAS.

### AIC Key Messaging

Key messaging and talking points may be crafted, as needed, for a certain topic area priority of the AIC. In particular, talking points are drafted for POC use during Task Force meetings and meetings with high-level federal representatives.

POCs typically request the AIC Secretariat's assistance in drafting key messages/talking points. Draft messages are discussed for POC consensus before being finalized for use.

Consistency in key messages/talking points is critical across POCs, the Secretariat, and in all related documents. The SecED helps to ensure consistency, but it is also up to POCs to ensure they are knowledgeable of the most up-to-date key messages/talking points.

## USCRTF COMMUNICATIONS

### USCRTF Co-chairs

The AIC should always take advantage of the opportunity to meet with the co-chairs of the USCRTF during the week of each Task Force meeting. The SecED will coordinate a meeting (through Task Force Secretariat) between AIC POCs and the USCRTF co-chairs. The SecED will work with Advisors, Chair, Vice Chair, and POCs to ensure an effective meeting through adequate planning (e.g., agenda setting, key message crafting).

### USCRTF Members (Business Meeting & Executive Session)

The AIC should always take advantage of the opportunity to speak to the Membership of the Task Force, whether about priority issues and concerns or successes and accomplishments. Key messages and topics are decided in advance of the Task Force meeting via POC consensus and with input from the Secretariat. Those messages should be included in the AIC Chair's Report and reflected in the AIC Chair's presentation.

### USCRTF Steering Committee

All POCs should participate in meetings and monthly calls held by the USCRTF Steering Committee. At a minimum, the SecED, AIC Chair, Vice Chair, or another POC designated by the Chair will participate on every monthly conference call, particularly if there are any issues relevant to jurisdictions.

The SecED will work with the USCRTF Steering Committee co-chairs to ensure that agendas for Steering Committee meetings, including conference calls, are provided to the POCs. The SecED

will inform POCs if decisions are pending on any issues critical to the AIC and POCs will respond by acknowledging receipt of the communication and if possible, providing guidance and input on issues of importance.

### USCRTF Working Groups

Jurisdictional representatives (POC or other) will participate in working group calls and meetings, as appropriate. The SecED may, as appropriate or as delegated by the AIC Chair, participate in conference calls and meetings of the various working groups of the USCRTF. Relevant information will be shared to POCs.



## AIC Outreach

### BACKGROUND

The AIC does not yet have a fleshed out Communications and Outreach Strategy; however this type of communication is extremely important to the AIC. Outreach is, in many cases, critical to gaining support for an issue or priority and an important component of the AIC Strategic Plan. Because of the limited time and resources of the Secretariat and POCs, outreach must be effective, strategic, and targeted. In lieu (and in the meantime) of an AIC Communications and Outreach Strategy, the following guidelines are provided.

### OUTREACH MESSAGES

The SecED, working with the Chair, Vice Chair, Advisors, and POCs, will craft the AIC's key outreach messages. These messages will be used by all members of the AIC and be reflected in all AIC materials. The following guidelines will be used in crafting key outreach messages.

**Clear**—Messages will clearly convey information to help ensure the audience's understanding and to limit the chances for misunderstanding. Any information that is not critical to the understanding of a key message should be eliminated.

**Consistent**—Messaging will strive to be as consistent as possible. Inconsistency in messaging can result in diminished trust of the AIC and the appearance that the AIC is not cohesive or representative of a unified voice. Where consistency cannot be achieved, the AIC should reconsider the use of that particular message.

**Main points**—The main points in a key outreach message should be stressed, repeated, and never hidden within less strategically important information.

**Tone and appeal**—Message tone may depend, at times, on the audience and subject-matter; however messages should strive to always be truthful (based on sound-science), honest, and as complete as possible.

**Audience need**—Key messages should be based on what the target audience perceives as most important to them, what they want to know, and *not* what is most important or most interesting to the AIC. This is particularly relevant for Congressional outreach.

## OUTREACH MATERIALS

The SecED will maintain, and develop as appropriate and needed, general AIC outreach materials for non-targeted uses (e.g., materials table during the USCRTF Business Meeting). The SecED will also develop, as needed, specific AIC outreach materials, such as Congressional briefing 1-pager. The SecED will create effective and visually-appealing outreach materials with the resources and staff available to them.



## Communication and Outreach Tools

### BACKGROUND

In order to ensure successful and effective communications within and external to the AIC, particularly due to the wide distribution (time and space) of members and partners, a communications toolkit is critical. This section outlines the various tools that make up the AIC communications infrastructure.

The SecED has developed and will maintain, with POC review to ensure accuracy, this communications infrastructure to support the AIC. This infrastructure can be added to and modified, as appropriate, and with the approval of the AIC Chair.

## WEBSITE

The Secretariat will maintain an AIC website. The website will be linked to individual jurisdiction websites, but will also include the following information for each jurisdiction, as applicable and available:

- Contact information for the AIC Point of Contact;
- Project highlights;
- Agency and partner links;
- Other coral reef management activity plans;
- Accomplishment reports; and
- Other information supplied by the Points of Contact.

The website will also provide links to the USCRTF website and other coral reef websites developed by agencies participating in the USCRTF. The website and content will be updated on a regular basis.

**Status:**

- *Developed, 2012:* [www.allislandscoral.org](http://www.allislandscoral.org). Created by AI Design Studio on contract for \$2090.00. Site expired 8/2/13.
- *Developed **Wordpress-based website**, July 2013:* <http://allislandscommittee.org/>. Created by SecED on Wordpress.com. Annual domain fee (\$18/year, August 5<sup>th</sup>) and Custom Design package (\$30/year, September 16<sup>th</sup>) paid for by the AIC.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The Secretariat will maintain applicable social media platforms for the AIC. This may include a blog, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

**Status:**

- *Developed **Facebook page**, August 2013:* <https://www.facebook.com/AllIslandsCommittee>. Maintained by Secretariat.
- *Developed **Wordpress Blog**, August 2013:* <http://allislandscommittee.wordpress.com/>. Maintained by Secretariat.

## DOCUMENT REPOSITORY

The Secretariat will maintain a document repository for AIC documents, plans, and reports developed by each of the jurisdictions participating in the Committee. Historical documents (e.g., complete set of pre-1998 coral reef initiative activities), as appropriate, should be included. Applicable documents will be made available through the AIC website.

**Status:**

- *Developed **AIC Google Drive**, July 2013:* <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B7qVNJjaZGv-fi1ZakcORm5FTzRjUTFjYWl2cF90NS00R1hQT0lEMmk5aGk4UTE2M0wxeW8&usp=sharing>. The Drive is maintained by the SecED and mainly used for sharing internal-AIC documents. POCs have full editing rights.

## AIC INTRANET FOR POCs

The SecED will maintain a hidden, password-protected Intranet page on the AIC website, accessible only by POCs, Secretariat, and POC assistants. The page will contain, at a minimum:

1. Due Dates & Current Efforts
2. Upcoming USCRTF & AIC Meetings
3. Important Dates
4. AIC Monthly Call Schedule
5. Recent Task Force Communications
6. AIC Calendar
7. AIC Plans & Charter

**Status:**

- *Developed **AIC Intranet**, March 2015:* <http://allislandscommittee.org/internal-poc/>. The Drive is maintained by the Secretary and mainly used for sharing internal-AIC documents. POCs have full editing rights.

## CALENDAR

The Secretariat will maintain, 1) an external AIC calendar highlighting jurisdictional events and 2) an internal AIC calendar of key meetings, grant and spend plan deadlines, POC/AIC action item due dates, and milestones for AIC, CRCP, and USCRTF. The Secretariat may request information from the POCs on important local events to be posted on the external AIC calendar, website, or social media platforms. Dates of USCRTF meetings and AIC meetings will be posted on both the external and internal calendars.

**Status:**

- *Developed ‘**All Islands Coral Reef Committee**’ Google Calendar, July 2013:* Public. The calendar is cross-linked to the AIC website and is maintained by the SecED. The calendar is linked to a Google account: [aiccoral@gmail.com](mailto:aiccoral@gmail.com), also maintained by the SecED.
- *Developed ‘**AIC INTERNAL-Members Only**’ Google Calendar, November 2014:* POCs, Secretariat, POC assistants only. Contains all due dates and upcoming AIC-related meetings and calls. The calendar is linked to a Google account: [aiccoral@gmail.com](mailto:aiccoral@gmail.com), also maintained by the SecED.

## OUTREACH MATERIALS

The SecED will develop and maintain outreach materials to increase local and national awareness of the AIC and coral reef activities in each jurisdiction represented on the Committee. These outreach materials may include 1-pagers on the AIC, Local Action Strategies, each jurisdiction, or be issue-specific. As the need arises, these may also include materials targeted towards a specific audience, such as Congress. All 1-pagers will be available to POCs on the AIC Google Drive. Appropriate materials should be made available on the AIC website.

All outreach materials should have a consistent look for branding of the AIC. The SecED will maintain the “brand” of the AIC.

**AIC News & Updates E-Newsletter:**

*Developed in November 2014:* Maintained and distributed by the AIC SecED every 2 weeks on Friday. Distribution list is maintained by SecED.

<https://allislandscommittee.org/whatwedo/publications/news-updates/>

## PRESS RELEASES

The Secretariat will prepare press releases as the need arises or following USCRTF meetings and AIC meetings, as appropriate. A regular format is used and drafts will be circulated to POCs before they are issued.

**Boilerplate:** Formed in 1996, the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC) represents the combined voice of the coral reef jurisdictions of the U.S. and Freely Associated States. AIC member jurisdictions include American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Florida, Guam, Hawai'i, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. AIC affiliate members include Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau.

### AIC LETTERS AND POSITION PAPERS

POCs may task the AIC Secretariat in preparing appropriate AIC letters and position/white papers on issues of priority for the AIC. Position papers will be reviewed and approved via consensus by the POCs prior to distribution or use. The AIC Chair will be signatory on all AIC letters.

### BI-ANNUAL AIC CHAIR'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION TO USCRTF

An AIC Chair's Report is presented to the USCRTF by the AIC Chair at each Task Force meeting. The report is compiled by the SecED, with input and review by POCs. It is the responsibility of the POCs to raise any important issues and provide their jurisdiction updates to the SecED at least one month prior to each USCRTF meeting.

The goal of this report is to highlight the current issues of importance to the AIC and related statements or asks of the Task Force and its agency members. Additionally, the report contains updates from each jurisdiction and Freely Associated State on any progress, challenges, and actions undertaken since the previous Task Force meeting. This report supplements the AIC Chair's presentation to the members of the Task Force during the Business Meeting. This is an opportunity for the AIC to speak directly to the Federal Task Force members on issues of importance to the jurisdictions. A copy of the AIC Report should be posted in the AIC Google Drive and website.

### BI-ANNUAL SECRETARIAT REPORT TO POCs

The Secretariat will compile all accomplishments and updates in a bi-annual report to be presented to the POCs at each AIC Meeting. This report should primarily reflect activities completed under the SecED's Scope of Work.

### AIC STRATEGIC PLAN

The Secretariat will work with POCs and applicable partners every five years to update the AIC Strategic Plan. During the five years between plans, the Secretariat will work with POCs to track the progress and performance measures for the plan. A copy of the AIC Strategic Plan should be posted in the AIC Document Repository and made available on the AIC website.

#### Status:

- *Developed AIC Strategic Action Plan, 2008-2013 in 2007:* The plan development was led by the Secretariat with input from all POCs and with assistance of AIC Advisers.

- *Updated AIC Strategic Action Plan, 2008-2013 in 2009.*
- *Extended AIC Strategic Action Plan, 2008-2013 in August 2013 for one year.*
- *In process: AIC Strategic Plan, 2015-2019*

## APPENDIX A. AIC POC Acknowledgement Statement

### BACKGROUND:

Each POC, upon their designation by their Governor or President, will receive an AIC POC Orientation Packet (paper or electronic) and must participate in the on-boarding procedure of the AIC.

This statement form is to ensure that all Points of Contact (POC) of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC) thoroughly understand what the AIC is, its policies, procedures, and plans.

### STATEMENT:

I understand that as a coral reef Point of Contact ("POC") and member of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee ("AIC"), I have a responsibility to act in a manner that reflects the highest standard of ethical and professional conduct.

I certify that I have received, read, and understand the contents of the AIC POC Orientation Packet, including the AIC Charter, Communications Plan, and Strategic Plan. Upon completion of the AIC on-boarding procedure, I will sign this form indicating that I have received, read, understand, and agree to comply with the AIC Charter, Communications Plan, and Strategic Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name