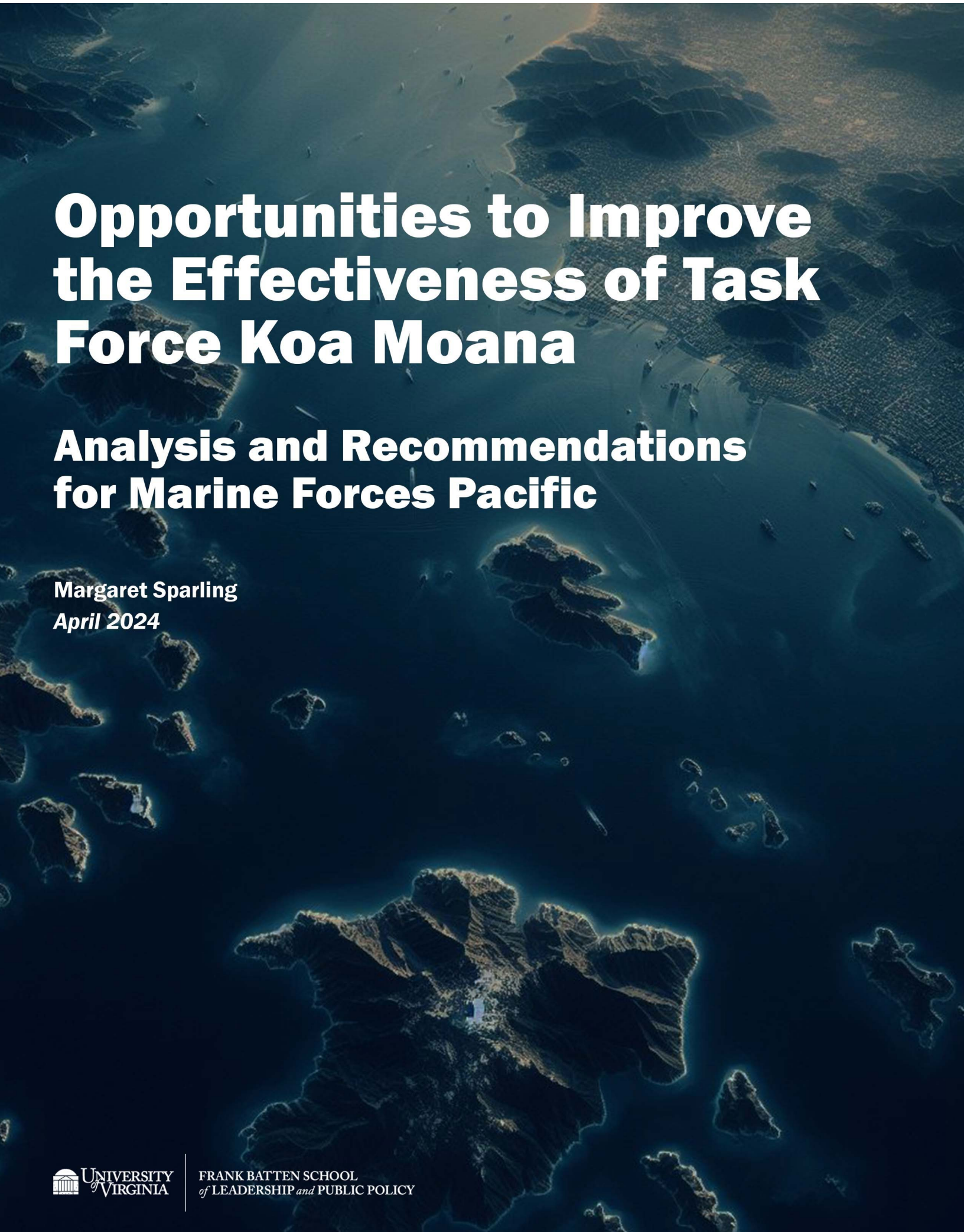

Opportunities to Improve the Effectiveness of Task Force Koa Moana

Analysis and Recommendations for Marine Forces Pacific

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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

Task Force Koa Moana is a Marine rotational force dedicated to strengthening US relationships with Pacific Island countries through annual deployments to the Pacific. Planned and executed by Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) and the first Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), Koa Moana's activities include both traditional security cooperation activities and extensive community engagement.

The United States is invested in strengthening ties with Pacific Island countries because they are vital for US interests in the Pacific. In the event of a kinetic conflict over Taiwan or elsewhere in the Western Pacific, the United States will depend on these islands for logistical resupply operations and for bringing US forces and assets into the theater. Additionally, they sit astride major trade routes and are important for Pacific economic security; they connect markets in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea with other US partners. Furthermore, the Pacific Islands are situated alongside strategic undersea internet cables. Some of these cables serve as the primary means of connecting US military bases in the Pacific with command centers in Hawai'i and the broader Pacific region. The United States is therefore highly motivated to maintain strong ties with these countries.

This study is being completed for the Australia and Oceania desk at MARFORPAC G5. The office is interested in improving the task force's effectiveness, and this study aims to provide a series of policy recommendations intended to achieve this goal. More specifically, this study addresses the following problem:

> Despite US Indo-Pacific Command's (INDOPACOM) understanding of the importance of US-Pacific Island relations, the existing task force planning and execution practices within MARFORPAC and I MEF limit the long-term effectiveness of Task Force Koa Moana's relationship-building efforts. Failure to adjust these practices to better align with the US Marine Corps' comparative advantage and US regional strategy risks limiting the development of deeper US-Pacific Island relationships. These relationships are vital to US and allied security in the Indo-Pacific and need to be strengthened.

To address this issue, the study first engaged in a substantive research task focused on identifying existing limitations and areas of improvement. Through a combination of an academic literature review, case studies, and semi-structured interviews, it identified three primary challenges for the task force: (1) the need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region, (2) the need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities, and (3) the need to reduce the continued militarized of US engagement with partner countries.

The study then developed and analyzed five policy options designed to address these issues. These five options include: (1) integrate Koa Moana planning efforts with the embassy interagency planning process, (2) connect Koa Moana's annual activities to a regional partner engagement strategy, (3) develop an assessment, monitoring, and evaluation (AM&E) plan, (4) narrow the focus of Koa Moana's activities to traditional security cooperation activities, and (5) include Pacific stakeholders in planning efforts.

Using the evaluative criteria of political feasibility, administrative feasibility, a two-pronged assessment of effectiveness, and cost, this study recommends that MARFORPAC implement policy options 1, 2, 3, and 5. All four options score high on both effectiveness prongs and score high on at least one of two feasibility measures.

While in theory, option 4 appears well poised to address key aspects of the three primary challenges, the study analysis indicates that it is likely to increase adversary influence in the Pacific Islands and create significant gaps in US engagement with the Pacific. As a result, it becomes even more important to pursue the four other options. The combination of these options contributes to more effective bilateral relationship building over the long-term and can help stop or at least reduce the further militarization of US partner engagement.

If, however, budget constraints or other factors limit the number of policy options MARFORPAC is able to implement, the command should prioritize policy option 1, integration with the interagency process. This is a low-cost option, and it has high political feasibility. It also addresses two of the three underlying issues in a highly effective manner: the need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region and the need to reduce the continued militarized of US engagement with partner countries. It is also a pre-requisite step for many other collaborative efforts.

The ultimate goal is to strengthen US relations with Pacific Islands countries and improve the US deterrence posture in the Pacific. The analysis and recommendations included is this study are all designed to advance this effort.

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Introduction

Task Force Koa Moana is a Marine rotational force dedicated to strengthening US relationships with Pacific Island countries. It is a vital part of the US Marine Corps' engagement in the region. Not only does it advance US security interests in the Pacific but it contributes to the United States' long-term relationship building with key allies and partners. This report analyzes the task force and its engagement in the region and provides a series of recommendations on how to improve the long-term effectiveness of its work.

The report begins with a brief summary of the problem statement and an overview of the client. It then discusses the study's methodology and approach to addressing the identified challenges. This is followed by a detailed background section, which addresses regional history, the strategic importance of the Pacific Islands for US security interests, and the task force itself. It also includes a detailed assessment of limiting factors and areas in need of improvement. It then offers a brief methodological section on the four evaluation criteria used to assess the proposed policy options before providing a detailed analysis of the five policy options considered in this study. The findings of this analysis are summarized in an outcomes matrix, and the subsequent recommendations and implementation steps are detailed in the final sections of this report.

To note, this report is meant to be a comprehensive summary of the study's work and will thus include details and information that may be well-known to certain audiences while novel to others. Readers more familiar with the background and context are encouraged to skip to the policy options section.

Problem Statement

Despite US Indo-Pacific Command's (INDOPACOM) understanding of the importance of US-Pacific Island relations, the existing task force planning and execution practices within Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) and the first Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) limit the long-term effectiveness of Task Force Koa Moana's relationship-building efforts. Failure to adjust these practices to better align with the US Marine Corps' comparative advantage and US regional strategy risks limiting the development of deeper US-Pacific Island relationships. These relationships are vital to US and allied security in the Indo-Pacific and need to be strengthened.

Client Overview

This study was completed for LtCol Evan Zach Ota and Justin Goldman at MARFORPAC G5, Australian and Oceania desk. MARFORPAC is the Marine service component of command within INDOPACOM. It is headquartered at Camp Smith in Hawaii. MARFORPAC G5 is the policy, plans, and strategy division within the command, and the Australia and Oceania desk is a subgroup of the division focused on regional affairs and policy planning in the South Pacific. The desk is comprised of foreign affairs military officers and civilian staff.

Task Force Koa Moana is one part of the desk's portfolio. The staff works in coordination with uniformed Marines and civilians at I MEF to organize, plan, and execute Task Force Koa Moana. I MEF is home to the Marine's security cooperation shop and is thus the primary stakeholder responsible for planning the annual activities and deploying Marines to the region.

Study Methodology

Rather than identifying and addressing a single problem facing Task Force Koa Moana, this study adopts a holistic approach. It assesses Task Force Koa Moana writ large and seeks to identify ways to improve its overall effectiveness. This study aims to answer several research questions: How can the United States strengthen its deterrent posture in the Pacific and simultaneously improve bilateral relationships with Pacific Island countries via Task Force Koa Moana? What are limitations to the task force's current operations? How can MARFORPAC adjust existing planning and execution practices to address these limitations and allow the United States to more effectively develop bilateral relations with the Pacific Islands over the long-term? To answer these questions, this study engaged in five research tasks.

The first task involved the identification of existing limitations and areas of improvement, which was split into three research tasks: an academic literature review, case studies, and a series of semi-structured interviews. The literature review focused on articles from academic and theoretical work on interagency coordination, cross-functional teams, and collaboration across silos. The case studies provided more detailed and nuance analysis on specific instances of interagency coordination. Best practices identified in this literature and the case studies were pulled and served as the "gold standard," or target, for what the task force should aim to achieve. Simultaneously, the author conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with regional subject matter experts and Koa Moana stakeholders. These conversations provided a baseline understanding of existing Koa Moana planning and execution practices. Of note, these conversations were conducted on a not-for-attribution basis and thus the identities of the people interviewed for this task are obscured. From there, the author identified gaps between existing operations and "gold standard" practices. These gaps became the limitations or areas of improvement for the rest of the study.

The second study task developed five policy options meant to address these areas of improvement. The design for these options drew heavily on the conceptual models identified in the first study ask and were created to be binary in nature. This means that instead of developing the policy options to be alternative methods of addressing a single challenge, they serve as a menu of options for MARFORPAC to improve Koa Moana's overall effectiveness.

The third study task focused on the analysis of the five policy options, comparing each of them against the status quo. To conduct this analysis, the study relied on four evaluation criteria: political feasibility, administrative feasibility, a two-pronged measure of effectiveness, and cost. Political feasibility refers to a calculation of the likely acceptability to policymakers or stakeholders of proposed policy options. Administrative feasibility refers to the ability of a department or agency to implement the policy and the relative ease of implementation. Effectiveness assesses potential outcomes. In this study, effectiveness was bifurcated into two prongs. The first prong assesses whether the proposed policy increases US security interests in the Pacific. The second prong assesses whether the proposed policy strengthens bilateral US-Pacific Island relations. Finally, the cost criterion provides an estimated value of any additional accounting costs related to the recommended programmatic or process changes. A more detailed discussion of the assessment methodology and the data used to support each criterion's analysis can be found in the Evaluative Criteria section. The final element of task three involved the creation of an outcome matrix, designed to present a summary of the findings.

The fourth study task took the findings from task three and built out a series of recommended actions for MARFORPAC. This task focused on the most viable options, addressed the trade-offs, and offered recommended prioritization for the command.

The fifth study task addressed implementation considerations. It involved the development of an implementation timeline and guidance on initial action steps.

Background and Context

To anchor this problem more concretely in the historical and political realities of the Pacific, the following paragraphs provide an overview of the most important issues. This background will begin with a short history of US engagement in the Pacific Islands followed by a discussion of their strategic relevance to US policy today. It will then situate Task Force Koa Moana and the problem statement within these broader themes, providing an overview of the task force's work and its engagement with the Pacific. This section will then be followed with a discussion of the findings from task 1, focusing on the identified limitations and areas of improvement.

History

While the United States has had a strategic interest in Hawai'i for almost two centuries, US interest in the Pacific Islands more broadly began during World War II. During the war, the United States adjusted its strategy in the Pacific theater, opting to pursue a strategy of "island hopping." Instead of fighting over the most heavily fortified islands, US forces would 'hop over' them and seize more lightly defended locations. While this strategy ultimately proved successful in countering Japanese forces in the region, it resulted in some of the Pacific theater's most fierce fighting (Kennedy, 1999).

Following the conclusion of the war, a United Nations mandate placed the countries within the Micronesia region (see Figure 1) under the control of the United States in what became known as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. For a few decades, this agreement meant the US Navy provided for the region's defense and the US Department of the Interior governed all of the islands' administrative issues (Grossman et al., 2019).

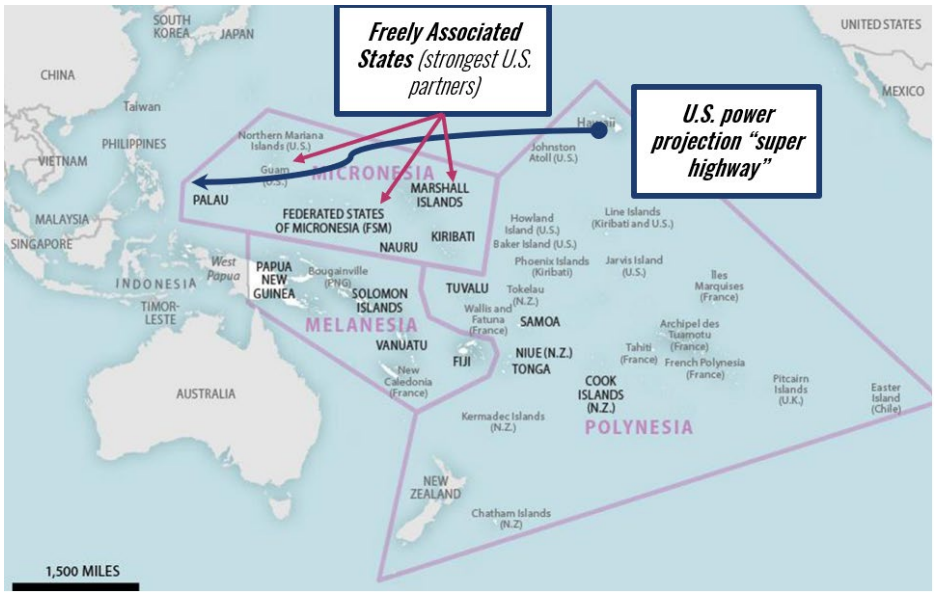

Figure 1: Map of the Pacific Islands and US Security Interests
Source: Lum and Vaughn, 2017 with author additions

During this Cold War period, the Pacific Islands played a prominent role in US security policy in the Pacific. Most detrimentally, the United States conducted several nuclear tests within the Marshall Islands, and the impact from these tests are still felt by local communities today (O'Brien, 2021). Beyond nuclear tests, the Pacific Islands were also a site for geopolitical competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Towards the later part of the twentieth century and fueled by the power of global decolonization movements, the United States offered the people of Micronesia a choice: they could become US territories or declare independence and become sovereign states. Sovereign states would then be given an option to sign a Compact of Free Association with the United States; this agreement would provide extensive US assistance to the country in exchange for granting the United States the ability to make decisions affecting mutual security interests and giving the United States sole access to military bases within its borders. While some Pacific Islands became US territories (like the Commonwealth of the Northern Marina Islands), Palau, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia pursued independence and subsequently signed a compact agreement with the United States in 1986, 1994, and 1994, respectively (Lum, 2020).

These twenty-year agreements were set to expire in 2024. While Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia negotiated updated agreements in a timely and relatively smooth fashion, the US negotiation with the Marshall Islands became subject to intense debate, as the Marshallese delegation demanded greater compensation for Cold War nuclear testing on its islands (O'Brien, 2023). US negotiations with the Marshall Islands missed the initial September deadline, but negotiators finally reached an agreement in October 2023 (Brunnstrom and Martina, 2023). Congressional appropriations to actually implement these agreements, however, became extremely delayed due to Congress's inability to pass a budget bill. Several months later on March 8, 2024, Congress finally passed a $459 billion spending bill that included the Compact of Free Association funding (O'Brien, 2024).

Strategic Relevance of the Pacific Islands Today

Today, the Pacific Islands are central for US interests in the Pacific for three primary reasons. First, from a military and strategic perspective, the Pacific Islands—and the Freely Associated States more specifically—create a "power-projection superhighway" (Grossman et al., 2019). In the event of a kinetic conflict with the PRC over Taiwan or elsewhere in the Western Pacific, the United States will depend on these islands for logistical resupply operations and for bringing US forces and assets into the theater (Dionne and Sparling, 2022).

Second, the Pacific Island countries sit astride major trade routes in the Western Pacific, connecting markets in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, and other US partners. These trade routes are important for regional economic security and the livelihoods of local communities. Third, the Pacific Island countries are situated alongside strategic undersea internet cables; some of these cables serve as the primary means of connecting US military bases in the Pacific with command centers in Hawai'i, Australia, and the broader Pacific region. If the United States is unable to protect these lines, they can fall victim to adversary surveillance, sabotage, and data exfiltration efforts, threatening both US and regional security interests (Dionne and Sparling, 2022; Dionne and Sparling, 2023).

Overview of Task Force Koa Moana

Task Force Koa Moana is one of MARFORPAC's key initiatives in Oceania. Each year, Marines and Sailors from I MEF deploy to the region to strengthen US relationships in the Pacific Islands. The task force engages in several activities aligned with traditional security cooperation activities, including improvements for advanced naval bases, support for maritime command centers, enhanced command and control architecture, explosive ordnance disposal, and military exercises (I MEF, 2023).

Koa Moana's activities, however, extend beyond these traditional activities. Given the focus on relationship building, the Marines and Sailors engage in several community outreach efforts, including sports diplomacy, community medical support, and educational engagements (I MEF, 2023; White, 2023). While these engagements are well received from local communities, most of these activities require the Marine to perform tasks outside of their occupational specialties (White, 2023).

Task Force Koa Moana has traditionally focused on strengthening relationships with the Freely Associated States, and many of the deployments over the past few years have centered on these countries. During the 2023 deployment, Marines and Sailors deployed to Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia (two of the three Freely Associated States) but also included deployments to Papua New Guinea (White, 2023). This addition of Papua New Guinea likely reflects the United States' increasing prioritization of US-Papua New Guinea relations following the May 2023 signing of a defense and maritime pact.

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement

Task 1 focused on the identification of existing limitations and areas of improvement, which was split into three research tasks: an academic literature review, case studies, and semi-structured interviews. This section discusses the findings from this task and details the three main challenges the Koa Moana planning team currently faces: (1) the need for better integration with broader US defense strategy and non-defense engagement in the region, (2) the need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement, and (3) the need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short- and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's activities.

Academic Literature Review

As discussed in the Project Methodology section, the academic literature focused on work addressing cross-functional teams and collaboration across silos, two relevant characteristics for the Task Force Koa Moana planning team. This sub-section provides an overview of the main findings from this task.

Cross-Functional Teams: The cross-functional teams literature offers four main takeaways relevant for potential interagency efforts.

First, clear support from higher authority figures is integral to team success. This higher authority figure can define team purpose and mission, empower the group, and ensure access to key resources (Orton and Lamb, 2011; Piercy et al., 2012). Research specifically from a military

context emphasizes that this factor becomes even more important within the military's highly hierarchical structure. Without a well-organized team with a clear mandate and institutional support, creating a cross-functional team can back-fire (Dyson, 2020). Having clear support from the authority figure is often coupled with a clear lead-agency guiding interagency efforts and coordination (Pope, 2014). A lead agency is necessary to manage interagency boundaries and resource coordination.

Second, organizational structure impacts group effectiveness. Structural factors must be in place to support cross-team integration (Piercy et al., 2012). Existing evidence suggests that the co-location of team members, regular meetings, consistent informal interactions, and clear operational boundaries are key aspects of team success (Orton and Lamb, 2011; Dyson, 2020).

Third, and specifically within public sector cross-functional teams, the success of these efforts depends heavily on a willingness to break with the status quo, overcome organizational and personal resistance to change, and engender cultural change (Orton and Lamb, 2011; Piercy et al., 2012; Pakarinen and Virtanen, 2017). These mindset and cultural shifts are particularly important when coordination requires civilian-military cooperation (Pope, 2014; Carter, 2015; Dyson, 2020). As such, Pakarinen and Virtanen (2017) suggest that smaller cross-functional teams can be more effective. The authors note that these smaller teams pose "less of a threat to basic functional organizational," because they demand less change.

Fourth, the length of tenure matters (Dyson, 2020). The existing literature suggests that the creative and problem-solving capabilities of team members rise until the fifth year of tenure. After the fifth year, these benefits decrease because group members become too closely connected with each other (Holland et al, 2000). In military settings, however, most personnel rotate out of a position within two to three years. This prevents military personnel from being able to maximize contributions to the group. This also contributes to issues related to the loss of institutional knowledge and challenges of incorporating learning from previous experiences into subsequent planning efforts (Dyson, 2020).

Collaboration Across Silos: There is also an extensive literature on collaboration across silos, or "horizontal collaboration." While much of this literature comes from outside of a military or interagency context, it still offers valuable insights for efforts to improve Task Force Koa Moana's effectiveness.

Before discussing the benefits of working across silos, it is important to note why silos exist. Briody and Erickson (2014) write that silos enable teams to focus on their own area of routine expertise, encouraging greater efficiency and reducing the "noise" that can arise from horizontal collaboration. These benefits are vital for organizational functioning and ensure societal needs are met in a resource-efficient manner. Nevertheless, not all problems can be solved through a siloed approach. Sometimes, a problem is multi-faceted and requires an integrated solution.

To build successful cross-siloed efforts, several components are needed.

First, responsibilities need to be clearly delineated. Policy and legislation are often needed to provide the structure for this collaboration (Wilkins et al., 2015). This often involves establishing a central agency with overarching responsibility; this type of body can provide the clear day-to-day delineation of responsibility and build accountability structures.

Second, leadership buy-in is critical. Senior leadership needs to be open and willing to incorporate interagency elements within their team (Briody and Erickson, 2014). They need to create a culture of collaboration, modeling how to ask questions and maintain a posture of curiosity (Stone, 2004; Casciaro et al., 2019).

Third, culture matters and relationships between the silos impact mission success. These relationships, however, take time to develop. Trust cannot be built overnight, and many organizations fail to allocate enough time for these processes (Wilkins et al., 2015; Urban, 2018). Without this trust, collaboration breaks down. Even mere perceptions of relationship barriers to collaboration affect attitudes, breed mistrust, and perpetuate rigid organizational structures (Lau et al., 2018).

Fourth, horizontal collaboration requires interoperable IT systems and data sharing mechanisms. Typically, a lack of interoperable systems and restrictive data sharing practices become the limiting factor to effective cross-silo collaboration (Urban, 2018). Organizations often cite privacy or security concerns as justification for maintaining control over their information. To remedy these issues, policy needs to be established to ensure the free flow of information between stakeholders, and systems need to be built to allow cross-silo interoperability (Wilkins et al., 2015). Recent innovations in technology offer promising solutions for this type of collaboration.

Fifth, a "cultural broker" may be necessary for initial collaborative efforts. These are people who "usually have experiences and relationships that span multiple sectors, functions, or domains and informally serve as links between them" (Casciaro et al., 2019). They help maintain the efficiency of individual silos while also serving as an easy touchpoint for collaboration.

Sixth, incentives matter. Employees need to see the tangible benefits of collaboration if they are to invest valuable time and resources into horizontal collaboration efforts (Stone, 2004; Briody and Erickson, 2014). Traditional incentives and reporting structures often *dis*incentive horizontal collaboration. These structures need to be changed if cross-siloed efforts will succeed.

Case Studies

The second part of this research task assessed two case studies. The case study selection process and a full analysis is included within Appendix B while the summary discussion is included below.

The first case study is the Joint Interagency Task Force—South (JIATF-S), a task force created in 1999 to coordinate counternarcotics efforts in the Caribbean and Latin American region (Pope, 2014). JIATF-S involves five US military services, three US law enforcement agencies, five US intelligence agencies, and 14 international partners. Despite the large number of stakeholders, it is widely heralded as the "gold standard" for interagency coordination.

This success is due to several factors.

(1) JIATF-S's field-level (i.e., tactical-level) coordination is key. Participating agencies and personnel are co-located, "enabling the organization to cut across traditional agency stovepipes and facilitate rapid, integrated action" (Pope, 2011)

(2) JIATF-S has a clear mandate from a higher authority. This provides the task force with much-needed legitimacy, a clear lead-agency, and a pathway for resource collection (Munsing and Lamb, 2011).
(3) JIATF-S's lead agency, the Department of Defense (DOD) is well-versed in its partners' strengths and limitations. It builds the horizontal and vertical networks across the interagency, carefully manages civilian-military relations, and ensures that its organizational structure and chain of command support rather than detract from its mission (Fishel, 2009; Munsing and Lamb, 2011).

The second case study is the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG) within each of the global combatant commands. Following 9/11, the Joint Staff requested, and the National Security Council approved, the establishment of a JIACG within the combatant command structure. These groups were initially designed to coordinate interagency counterterrorism plans and align them with host-nation efforts (Cardinal et al, 2002).

While the JIACGs were initially successful in several combatant commands, today, they are minimally staffed and do not play a prominent coordination role. They serve as a counterexample to JIATF-S's success. The following factors contributed to this outcome.

(1) The JIACGs' initial success and credibility was heavily dependent on the level of seniority of the JIACG Director and Deputy. It was difficult, however, to convince rising military officers to potentially risk promotion opportunities to lead these relatively new bodies—especially when institutional buy-in was weak (Schwarzenberg, 2011).
(2) The JIACG structure created a talent drain on non-defense agencies, as most lacked enough qualified personnel and excess resources to support this type of effort (Pope, 2014).
(3) The JIACGs lacked mission clarity and a clear understanding of the coordination group's role on the civilian and military sides. This made it difficult for agencies to allocate resources to the coordination effort (Pope, 2014).
(4) Many JIACG participants felt that the JIACG structure was overly DOD-centric and contributed to the militarization of US foreign policy. These interagency representatives thus worked against the collaboration process (Schwarzenberg, 2011; Pope, 2014).

While a complete analysis of these case studies is beyond the scope of this assignment, they offer two primary takeaways in the context of the academic literature. First, a clear, narrow mandate is integral to success. In the context of high-paced, high-intensity environments, broad missions fail to generate the level of attention needed to make meaningful change. Second, interagency buy-in is critical. The DOD can lead the effort, but it cannot pursue it independently. Interagency success occurs when all stakeholders share the understanding that more can be accomplished through collaboration and are willing to share their knowledge and resources.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts and Koa Moana stakeholders served as the final component of this research task. These conversations were conducted on a not-for-attribution basis; as a result, their identities are masked. Table 1 provides an overview of the various types of subject matter experts and stakeholders consulted in this research task.

Table 1 Summary Statistics for Semi-Structured Interviews

	Direct Koa Moana Knowledge	General Subject Matter Expertise
Department of Defense	5	1
Department of State	0	3
Department of the Interior	1	0
Academic or Research Institution	1	4
TOTAL	**7**	**8**

Five primary insights emerged from these conversations. Each of these conclusions is represented by several different stakeholders or agency perspectives.

First, in general, the Koa Moana team and other non-defense US government stakeholders welcome opportunities for interagency engagement. There is a common understanding of the limits to a Marine-led effort, the need for more diverse engagement with the Pacific, and the unique expertise of the Marine Corps' inter-agency partners. Despite this conceptual understanding, existing practices do not make this type of engagement a reality. The current lack of defense-civilian synergy deepens the impact of siloed organizations, limits the ability to build collaborative efforts, and contributes both to gaps in engagement with partners in the Pacific Islands and program duplication.

Second, Koa Moana's planners can receive nebulous guidance. The annual activities are often developed in isolation rather than integrated into a broader strategy. Additionally, planners often rotate through positions quickly, which contributes to a loss of institutional knowledge.

Third, efforts like Task Force Koa Moana can be viewed as an "economy of effort." The Marines can engage across the Pacific and provide tangible benefits to communities faster than other US agencies. Task Force Koa Moana is good at relationship building—at least over the short-term—and is generally well received by US Pacific partners. Koa Moana does, however, rely heavily on a militarized presence, which can increase the long-term militarization of US engagement with Pacific allies and partners.

Fourth, Task Force Koa Moana lacks a deliberate means to measure the effectiveness of its activities, and it is at times unclear to what extent Koa Moana's activities align with US interests. The planning team also lacks the tools to capture the developments and lessons learned from each deployment. Learning and documentation need to be better incorporated into the task force's processes.

Fifth, at present, the US military is the best resourced entity to conduct engagement with Pacific Island countries. It is thus incumbent on the US military to reach out and begin interagency coordination.

Identified Challenges for Task Force Koa Moana

Based on the findings from the first research task, this study identified four main challenges or areas of improvement for Task Force Koa Moana if it hopes to more effectively build long-term and enduring relationships with US allies and partners in the Pacific Islands.

First, Koa Moana's planning and execution practices need to be more clearly integrated with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region. Better integration of practices both within the defense enterprise and across the interagency process avoids both gaps in US engagement and duplicated efforts.

Second, Task Force Koa Moana is part of a broader trend of militarized US partner engagement. Resource imbalances and structural factors often mean that the US defense enterprise is the best-resourced entity to engage in regular partner engagement. Continued engagement in this fashion or a further militarization of US partner engagement may risk the strength of the long-term relationships with key partners in the Pacific.

Third, the Koa Moana team needs mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of its annual activities relative to broader defense aims and whole-of-government goals. Without these processes, it is difficult to develop iterative activities, build partnerships with other agencies, and work towards common goals.

What Is at Stake?

Strengthening the United States' relationships with its allies and partners in the Pacific Islands is necessary for several reasons and from multiple perspectives.

From a democracy-building perspective, these relationships matter. The Pacific Islands are home to some of the world's most democratic countries (in some cases, scoring higher than the United States) (Freedom House, 2023). When the United States and its democratic allies withdraw resources and engagement from the region, it created an opening for the People's Republic of China (PRC) to expand its influence. Many Pacific Island communities prefer relationships with the United States due to the value alignment. However, if the United States fails to provide the necessary support, the countries are forced to turn to the PRC simply to meet their development needs. While not all PRC engagement is problematic, it is often associated with election interference, a decline in media freedom, and increased state control—all of which threatens democratic stability (Dionne and Sparling, 2022).

From a humanitarian and development perspective, getting the right agencies to engage and support local communities is necessary to ensure local needs are met in the most effective and efficacious manner possible. Community interests are best met when the agency with the appropriate comparative advantage can lead engagement activities.

From a Pacific Islands' perspective, militarized engagement can intersect negatively with colonial histories in the region. It can also contribute to the perception that the United States is only engaging with the region because it wants to stop the PRC's expansion rather than out of concern for regional needs and relationship building.

From a US taxpayers' perspective, there is a strong incentive to avoid program duplication and provide resources to the agency who can generate the greatest impact in the most efficient manner.

From a US security perspective, maintaining access to and close relationships with the Pacific Islands is imperative should a kinetic conflict emerge in the Pacific. As previously discussed, these islands are necessary for US force projection and force sustainment. Without this access, the United States will be unable to protect its interests and allies in the Western Pacific. The US national security establishment should therefore be interested in finding ways to ensure these relationships endure over the long-term and that Pacific communities continue to prioritize relations with the United States.

Evaluative Criteria

To evaluate the anticipated outcomes of the proposed policy options, this study uses four evaluative criteria: political feasibility, administrative feasibility, a two-pronged measure of effectiveness, and cost. Definitions for each of these criteria are included below along with a discussion of the methodology guiding each criterion's assessment.

Political Feasibility

Political feasibility refers to a calculation of the likely acceptability to policymakers or stakeholders of proposed policy ideas or alternatives. It will be operationalized with a high, medium, and low rating. Options will score low on political feasibility when less than 50 percent of the identified stakeholders have expressed support for the proposal. Options will score medium on political feasibility when 50-70 percent of the identified stakeholders have expressed support for the proposal. Options will score high on political feasibility when more than 70 percent of identified stakeholders have expressed support for the proposal.

Data to support this assessment will come from secondary source literature and conversations with Koa Moana stakeholders.

Administrative Feasibility

Even if one of the proposed changes is politically acceptable, administrative constraints may limit the viability of the proposed recommendation. As such, administrative feasibility—or the ability of a department or agency to implement the policy—is included as a criterion.

Administrative feasibility entails four aspects: capacity, authority, resources, and complexity. Capacity addresses personnel requirements. Do the existing offices have the necessary personnel to carry out this recommendation or will additional staffing be necessary? Authority refers to whether implementation falls solely within the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team or if higher support is necessary. Resources addresses processes, physical resources, and travel. Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel? Complexity addresses the number of stakeholders needed for implementation of the policy option. Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?

The overall score for administrative feasibility will be operationalization with a low, medium, or high rating. Options will score high on administrative feasibility when they receive a "no" on each of the four categories outlined with the rubric in Table 2. Options will score medium when they receive a score of "no" in two to three categories on the rubric. Options will score low when they receive a score of "no" in zero or one category on the rubric.

Data for this assessment will come from a combination of insights from conversations with Koa Moana stakeholders and an internal assessment of the policy proposal.

Table 2 Administrative Feasibility Rubric

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	
Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	
Administrative Feasibility Score	

Effectiveness

It is important to assess how the proposed changes contribute to the overall effectiveness of Koa Moana. Effectiveness, however, can be a vague concept and difficult to articulate. This study adopts a two-pronged approach.

The first prong of effectiveness focuses on the policy option's ability to improve US security interests in the region. Conceptually, this is measured by the policy's ability to strengthen the US deterrence posture. The second prong of effectiveness focuses on the policy option's ability to strengthen bilateral US-Pacific Island relationships. Conceptually, this is measured by post-implementation changes in local perception of the United States.

This approach, however, creates several evaluation challenges. Most urgently, success of changes to the US deterrent posture is measured by what does *not* happen. A policy succeeds if it deters an adversary from acting. Establishing a causal relationship in these types of circumstances is conceptually and practically challenging. At present, there is no direct data to support this evaluation for the type of policy options considered in this study.

Similarly, there are data gaps that limit the ability to measure changes in local perceptions. Ideally, baseline public opinion data would be compared against post-implementation assessments of local public opinion from similar case studies. However, public opinion data for these types of bureaucratic changes does not exist.

Given these limitations, the study adopts the following evaluation approach.

Each policy option was included based on the premise that it could improve the US security posture in the region and/or improve US bilateral relationships with Pacific Island countries. The

analysis for each alternative therefore begins with a theory of change model, demonstrating conceptually how various inputs and activities can lead to desired outputs, outcomes, and long-term impact.

From there, the analysis articulates several assumptions that uphold the premise for each model. Each assumption is subsequently interrogated to see if the existing literature and conversations with subject matter experts uphold its validity. If all the assumptions hold, the model is deemed valid and the alternative scores high on effectiveness. If some of the assumptions hold, the alternative scores medium on effectiveness. If none of the assumptions hold, the alternative scores low on effectiveness. A further articulation of what high, medium, and low scores mean is included in Table 3.

Table 3 Effectiveness Categorizations

Effectiveness – US Security	
High	Strengthens the US deterrent posture in the Pacific region
Medium	Neither strengthens or weakens the US deterrent posture in the Pacific region
Low	Weakens the US deterrent posture in the Pacific region
Effectiveness – Partner Relationships	
High	Increases positive perceptions of the United States and its allies among relevant partner nations.
Medium	Neither increases nor decreases positive perceptions of the United States and its allies among relevant partner nations.
Low	Decreases positive perceptions of the United States and its allies among relevant partner nations.

Cost

Any policy change requires cost estimates due to the inherent nature of limited resources. As such, this study considers the cost of programmatic or process changes. Cost will be operationalized by assessing the additional accounting costs related to these changes.

Policy Options and Analysis

This section provides the outcomes and conclusions from tasks 2 and 3—the development and assessment of the five policy options designed to improve the effectiveness of Task Force Koa Moana. These options include: (1) integrate Koa Moana planning efforts with the embassy interagency planning process, (2) connect Koa Moana's annual activities to a regional partner engagement strategy, (3) develop an assessment, monitoring, and evaluation (AM&E) plan, (4) narrow the focus of Koa Moana's activities to traditional security cooperation activities, and (5) include Pacific stakeholders in planning efforts.

Policy Option 1 Interagency Planning Process

Each year, Koa Moana's activities are planned within the I MEF security cooperation office in coordination with the Australia and Oceania desk at MARFORPAC G5. Koa Moana's planners meet three times throughout the year for an initial (November), mid-term (February), and final planning conference (April).

This option involves the alignment of these planning meetings with the interagency planning process via the country team meetings at the US Embassies in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia. Country team meetings are regular interagency meetings hosted by the embassy team. They include representatives from all other non-defense agencies operating in the region. Under this policy option, one Koa Moana planner will physically attend at least two embassy country team meetings during the course of the Koa Moana planning process and an additional meeting post-summer deployment. These meetings will occur around the time of the initial and mid-term planning conferences, and the post-deployment meeting will occur within six weeks post-deployment. For the meetings in which a Koa Moana representative is not present, Koa Moana planners will request meeting notes from the defense attaché stationed at the embassies. Coordination through the embassy country team meetings would reduce information asymmetry, avoid duplication of efforts, and facilitate better interagency coordination, allowing for more effective engagement with regional partners.

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement	Does this policy option address the problem?
Need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region	Yes
Need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement	Yes
Need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities	No

Political Feasibility Analysis

Score: High

The primary stakeholders involved with this policy option are MARFORPAC, I MEF, and the State Department embassy teams. All three stakeholders have indicated at least conceptual support for and interest in this option. Secondary stakeholders include USAID and the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (DOI OIA). DOI OIA has also expressed interest in country team engagement with the Koa Moana planning team. While USAID representatives were not available to discuss Koa Moana or Pacific Island efforts, USAID has a well-documented history of collaborating with the defense community. USAID currently sends a senior foreign service officer to INDOPACOM. It also has an Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation as part of its Bureau for Conflict, Prevention, and Stabilization. Institutional support and interest in collaboration through these efforts suggest USAID representatives would be at least conceptually interested in this policy option. As such, this recommendation scores high on political feasibility.

Stakeholder	Support?
MARFORPAC	Yes
I MEF	Yes
DOS embassy teams	Yes
USAID	Yes
DOI OIA	Yes
Political Feasibility	***High***

Administrative Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

While this policy option would not require any staffing changes, it would still involve a significant administrative burden. Authorization will be needed to send a member of the Koa Moana planning team to country team meetings. Additionally, process changes are needed if Koa Moana's planners are to incorporate interagency engagement in their planning efforts, and this will require additional travel as well. As such, this option requires an increase in resources. Furthermore, it requires coordination and continued engagement with the embassy staff at the US Embassies in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia. This type of continued engagement increases the complexity of the recommendation compared to status quo processes. As the table below indicates, this recommendation subsequently scores medium on administrative feasibility.

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	No
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation	Yes

require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	Yes
Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Administrative Feasibility	***Medium***

Effectiveness Analysis

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model depicted in Figure 2 demonstrates how deeper integration of the Koa Moana planning team within regional interagency structures could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and Pacific Island countries.

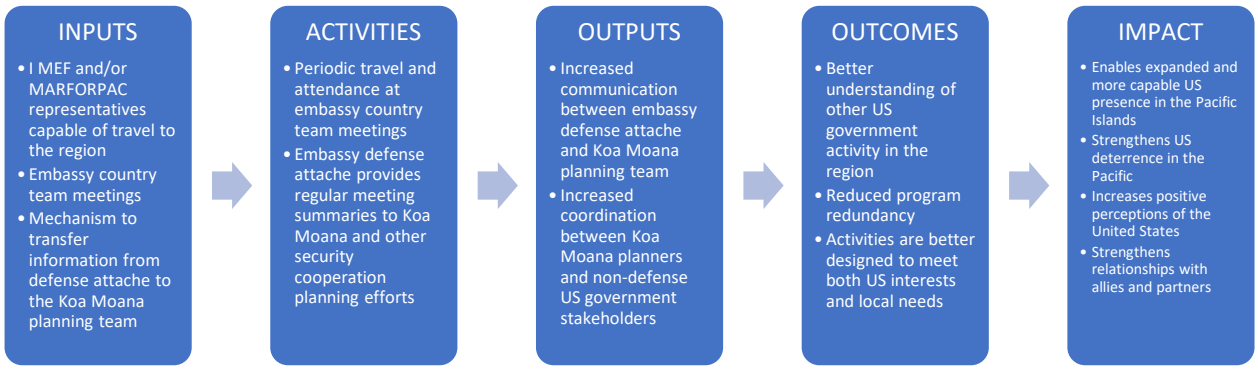

Figure 2 Theory of Change Model for Interagency Planning Process

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions must apply for the model depicted in Figure 2 to hold.

1. Koa Moana planners gain new information and a deeper understanding of interagency partners from country team meeting attendance that they otherwise would not have had.
2. Non-defense stakeholders are willing to work with military representatives and provide candid information.
3. Duplicitous efforts are undesirable.

A detailed analysis, which includes evidence either in support of or in contradiction to these assumptions, is included in Appendix C. The results suggest that all three of the model assumptions hold. As such, this policy option scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Costing Analysis

Accounting costs for the proposed change during the 2024-2044 timeline place the cost of this recommendation at approximately $103 thousand. A detailed breakdown of the costing analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy Development

Existing Koa Moana activities are not integrated into a long-term security strategy for the region. Ideally, Task Force Koa Moana should be executing a specific part of a broader MARFORPAC or INDOPACOM strategy rather than developing activities and plans in isolation. Better integration would ensure Koa Moana's resources are being efficiently allocated to long-term relationship building and actively working towards these goals.

This recommendation therefore calls for the development of a MARFORPAC partner and ally strategy to guide the Marine Corps' engagement with partner nations in the region. This strategy should encompass the entirety of MARFORPAC's area of responsibility and be integrated within INDOPACOM's broader theater strategy. A broader vision will allow Koa Moana's activities to be tailored to these overarching goals. It will involve strategy planners within MARFORPAC G5 working in coordination with the INDOPACOM J5 Strategy Director to develop a strategic-level plan. Strategic-level support for these activities would provide significant institutional support for Koa Moana's planners, an element the academic literature identifies as vital to the success of cross-functional teams (Orton and Lamb, 2011; Piercy et al., 2012).

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement	Does this policy option address the problem?
Need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region	Yes
Need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement	No
Need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities	No

Political Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

I MEF has expressed interest in the development of a regional partner engagement strategy to allow the planning team to better incorporate Koa Moana activities into a broader regional effort. Meanwhile, representatives from MARFORPAC see such efforts as duplicitous, arguing that broader supporting strategies already exist. These differing perspectives on the utility of this type of strategy mean this recommendation scores medium on political feasibility.

Stakeholder	Support?
MARFORPAC	No
I MEF	Yes
Political Feasibility	***Medium***

Administrative Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

Strategy design can be a complex and resource intensive process, but INDOPACOM's strategy development shop is familiar with this process and has dedicated personnel to support this work. As such, process changes are not needed. Additional staffing, however, will be required, as this proposal would expand the office's workload. Nevertheless, this would be a short-term staffing requirement, and thus the position and work could be contracted out to a private company or federally funded research and development center (FFRDC) equipped with the necessary subject matter expertise.

While coordination with INDOPACOM means this recommendation is a lighter resource lift for the Koa Moana planning team, it does increase the complexity of this recommendation and require authorization from higher authorities. Koa Moana planners would need to engage with additional offices—especially over the short-term until the new strategy is fully developed. These considerations mean this recommendation scores medium on administrative feasibility.

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	Yes
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	No

Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Administrative Feasibility	***Medium***

Effectiveness Analysis

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model depicted in Figure 3 demonstrates how the development of a regional partner engagement strategy could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and Pacific Island countries.

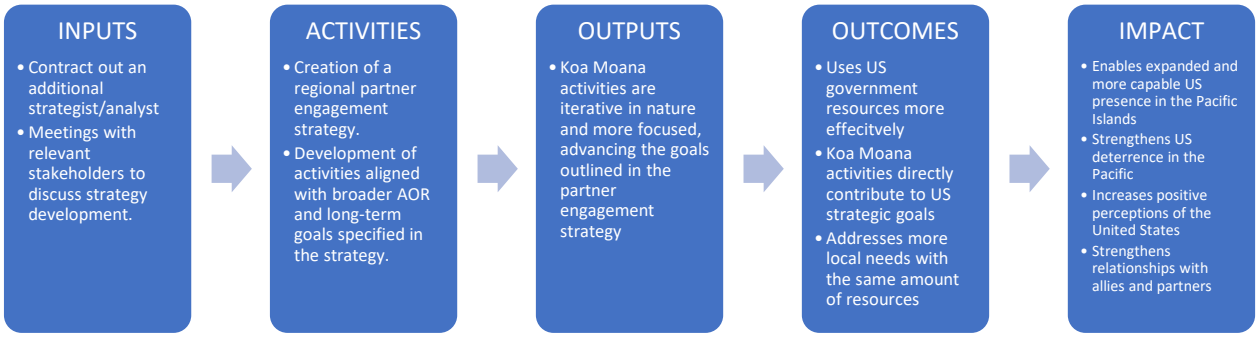

Figure 3 Theory of Change Model for Regional Strategy Development

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, one assumption must apply for the model depicted in Figure 3 to hold.

1. Iterative activities are more likely to advance regional security goals.

A detailed analysis, which includes evidence either in support of or in contradiction to this assumption, is included in Appendix C. The results suggest that the one assumption for this model holds. As such, this policy option scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Costing Analysis

Accounting costs for the proposed change during the 2024-2044 timeline place the cost of this recommendation at approximately $770 thousand. A detailed breakdown of the costing analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Policy Option 3 Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation (AM&E) Plan

While the Koa Moana planning team engages in a basic after-action review process, the security cooperation planning team lacks a deliberate means to measure the effectiveness of its activities over time. This option recommends the development of a Koa Moana-specific assessment, monitoring, and evaluation (AM&E) plan. This AM&E framework should reflect the goals outlined in the regional partner nation engagement strategy to allow planners to evaluate whether activities are meeting their intended goals and strengthening relationships with US allies and partners in the Pacific Islands.

The initial development of this AM&E plan should be contracted out to a private company or a FFRDC with subsequent assessments being completed within the I MEF security cooperation office. I MEF will complete these assessments in coordination with the security cooperation officer (SCO) at the embassies and the MARFORPAC G5 Australia and Oceania desk.

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement	Does this policy option address the problem?
Need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region	No
Need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement	No
Need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities	Yes

Political Feasibility Analysis

Score: High

Relevant stakeholders for this proposal include MARFORPAC and the I MEF security cooperation office. Both stakeholders are already familiar with the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act AM&E requirements and have been working to make necessary changes to their security cooperation programs (Skorupski, 2017; "Assessment, Monitoring," 2024). Within the security cooperation community more broadly, there has generally been a positive reception to the AM&E requirement. This suggests that Koa Moana's stakeholders would be interested in a Koa Moana-specific AM&E plan. This recommendation scores high on political feasibility.

Stakeholder	Support?
MARFORPAC	Yes
I MEF	Yes
Political Feasibility	***High***

Administrative Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

While processes for security cooperation AM&E assessments already exist within the combatant commands more broadly, there are no existing mechanisms within the relevant MARFORPAC and I MEF teams or personnel with the bandwidth to conduct an AM&E assessment for Koa Moana. These capacity constraints mean that the team must hire one additional analyst to conduct these assessments, and this hiring process requires authorization beyond the planning team. The AM&E analyst will also need office space, and their work will demand a high level of travel to collect the supporting data for this assessment. As a result, this is a resource-intensive recommendation. These considerations and the results from the table below indicate that this recommendation scores medium on administrative feasibility.

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	Yes
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	Yes
Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	No
Administrative Feasibility	***Medium***

Effectiveness Analysis

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 4 demonstrates how the development and implementation of a Koa Moana AM&E plan could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

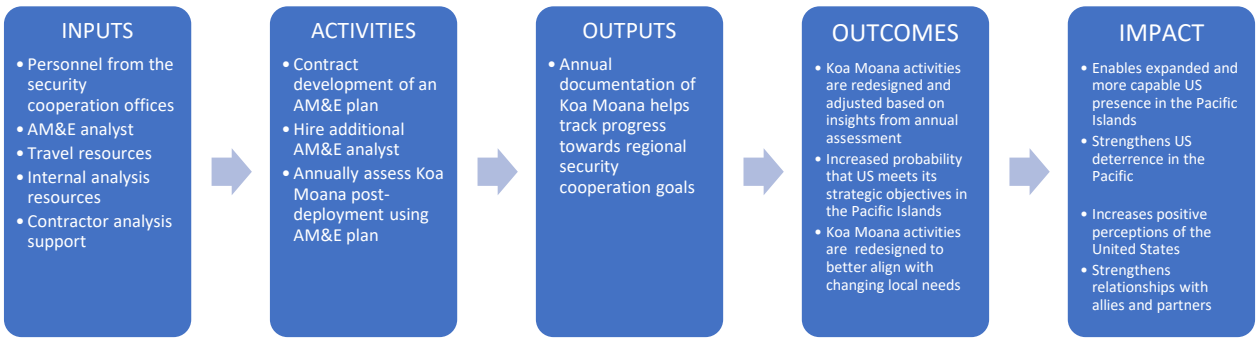

Figure 4 Theory of Change Model for AM&E Plan

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, a single assumption must apply to the model depicted in Figure 4.

1. Learning happens and changes to the annual activities are made in a timely fashion.

A detailed analysis, which includes evidence either in support of or in contradiction to this assumption, is included in Appendix C. The results suggest that the one assumption for this model holds. As such, this policy option scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Costing Analysis

Accounting costs for the proposed change during the 2024-2044 timeline place the cost of this recommendation at approximately $2.09 million. A detailed breakdown of the costing analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Policy Option 4 Focused Koa Moana Activities

The annual Koa Moana activities currently entail tasks beyond the skillsets and specialties of the task force's Marines and Sailors. While this is sometimes driven out of operational necessity, sustained community engagement in the form of activities like sports diplomacy and educational engagements go beyond the Marine Corps' comparative advantage. Consequently, this recommendation considers narrowing Marine activities to align with operational specialties and the service's comparative advantage. It would involve a focus on traditional security cooperation activities, a relegation of community engagements to non-defense personnel, and a programmatic restriction on the nature of the planned activities for the annual deployments. More focused activities can reduce the militarization of US engagement with partner nations, creating operational space for non-defense stakeholders to engage with Pacific partners.

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement	Does this policy option address the problem?
Need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region	No

Need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement	Yes
Need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities	No

Political Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

Relevant stakeholders include MARFORPAC and I MEF as well as the non-defense agencies who would fill the community engagement gaps (the US regional embassies, USAID, and the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs). The military members are the primary stakeholders of interest, whereas the non-defense agencies serve as secondary stakeholders.

The combination of INDOPACOM's extensive community outreach and general sentiments expressed during conversations with relevant defense stakeholders indicate that both MARFORPAC and I MEF would *not* be interested in narrowing the scope of Koa Moana's activities. They see these activities as critical to relationship building with allies and partners and thus would not want to eliminate them from Koa Moana's mission.

However, general sentiments expressed from members of the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs indicate potential interest in this type of proposal. USAID and State Department representatives are expected to have similar responses due to similar institutional biases. All three agencies represent communities with a strong interest in growing the United States' foreign aid budget and pursuing non-military means of engagement. As a result, this recommendation scores medium on political feasibility.

Stakeholder	Indicated Support?
MARFORPAC	No
I MEF	No
DOS embassy teams	Yes
USAID	Yes
DOI OIA	Yes
Political Feasibility	***Medium***

Administrative Feasibility Analysis

Score: High

Narrowing the scope of Koa Moana's activities will inherently be a light administrative burden. Existing processes can continue to operate as initially designed; the nature of the work they are planning will simply be a bit different. No additional personnel are needed for implementation nor is additional authorization necessary. Given these considerations and the rubric below, this proposal scores high on administrative feasibility.

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	No
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	No
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	No
Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	No
Administrative Feasibility	***High***

Effectiveness Analysis

Score: Low (US Security) and Medium (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 5 demonstrates how the narrowing the focus of Koa Moana's activities could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

Figure 5 Theory of Change Model for Focused Koa Moana Activities

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply to the model depicted in Figure 5.

1. US non-defense agencies are interested in and have the resources to increase their engagement with Pacific Island partners.

2. Over the long-run, US non-defense agency engagement leads to more positive interactions with local communities compared to military-led engagement.
3. The transfer of responsibility from the defense community to diplomatic and development efforts would not lead to a gap in engagement.

A detailed analysis, which includes evidence either in support of or in contradiction to these assumptions, is included in Appendix C. The results suggest that only one of the model's three assumptions holds. As such, this recommendation scores medium on the partner relationship prong of effectiveness and low on the US security prong of effectiveness.

Costing Analysis

Because this proposal requires a simplification of existing efforts and no additions to existing processes or personnel requirements, this proposal will cost MARFORPAC and I MEF $0.

Policy Option 5 Integration of Pacific Stakeholders

Annual Koa Moana activities are largely planned in isolation within the US military and defense community. Few interagency stakeholders are directly consulted in the activity planning process, and input from Pacific Island communities is basically nonexistent. Given Koa Moana's goal of strengthening ties with allies and partners in the Pacific Islands, this option recommends the inclusion of Pacific Island stakeholders in the planning process. This would involve an organized multi-day event, held alongside the Joint Committee Meetings.

In practice, this would entail the US defense presence at the US Embassies in Palau and Micronesia conducting semi-annual stakeholder meetings with a diverse group of local stakeholders from Pacific Island communities. These roundtable discussions would allow for the defense planners to learn more about local needs, increase people-to-people contacts, and better align Koa Moana activities with local needs. Results from these conversations would be shared with I MEF to support Koa Moana planning.

These discussions would include representatives from the Koa Moana planning team; the US embassy in the region; youth representatives from the United States, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia; government representatives from Palau and Micronesia; and academics from all three countries. Government representatives are necessary to ensure insights from the discussions are translated into policy outcomes. Youth representatives can play a key role in building relationships among the next generation of leaders (Horton et al., 2020). Academic representatives offer subject matter expertise and useful non-government perspectives on the issues. Overall, these conversations will increase people-to-people conversations and support the development of Koa Moana's annual activities.

Limiting Factors and Areas of Improvement	Does this policy option address the problem?
Need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region	Yes

Need to reduce the continued militarization of US partner engagement	Yes
Need to incorporate mechanisms or processes to evaluate the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Koa Moana's annual activities	No

Political Feasibility Analysis

Score: High

Relevant stakeholders for this recommendation include MARFORPAC, I MEF, the regional embassy teams, and representatives from the Palauan and Micronesian governments and societies. Representatives from INDOPACOM, the State Department, and the governments of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia already meet regularly, as outlined by the terms of the Compact of Free Association agreements (Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office, 2023). The presence and engagement in these forums highlight the US stakeholders' willingness to engage with local actors. Although this recommendation proposes Pacific stakeholder integration through a different forum, past success through the Joint Committee Meetings suggests a high political feasibility for this endeavor.

Stakeholder	Indicated Support?
MARFORPAC	Yes
I MEF	Yes
DOS embassy teams	Yes
Government of Palau	Yes
Government of Micronesia	Yes
Political Feasibility	***High***

Administrative Feasibility Analysis

Score: Medium

Integrating Pacific stakeholders in the planning process can be done without hiring additional personnel. It does, however, require higher-level authorization to host meetings alongside the Joint Committee Meetings as well as a substantial increase in travel and event planning resources. While this will entail an increased administrative burden, it will be offset by the fact that these meetings happen anyways; the Koa Moana team is not responsible for orchestrating the entire event. Sidelines meetings will, however, require extensive engagement with INDOPACOM and communities within Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia, thereby increasing the complexity of this option. As such, this policy option scores medium on administrative feasibility.

Component	Score
Capacity Does the planning team need additional personnel to carry out this recommendation?	No
Authority Does implementation of this recommendation require authorization beyond the authorities of the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Resources Does the recommendation require substantial changes to existing processes, a substantial increase in physical resources, or additional travel for members of the planning team?	Yes
Complexity Does this recommendation require coordination and continued engagement with stakeholders beyond the Koa Moana planning team?	Yes
Administrative Feasibility	***Medium***

Effectiveness Analysis

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 6 demonstrates how the incorporation of stakeholders from the Pacific Island could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

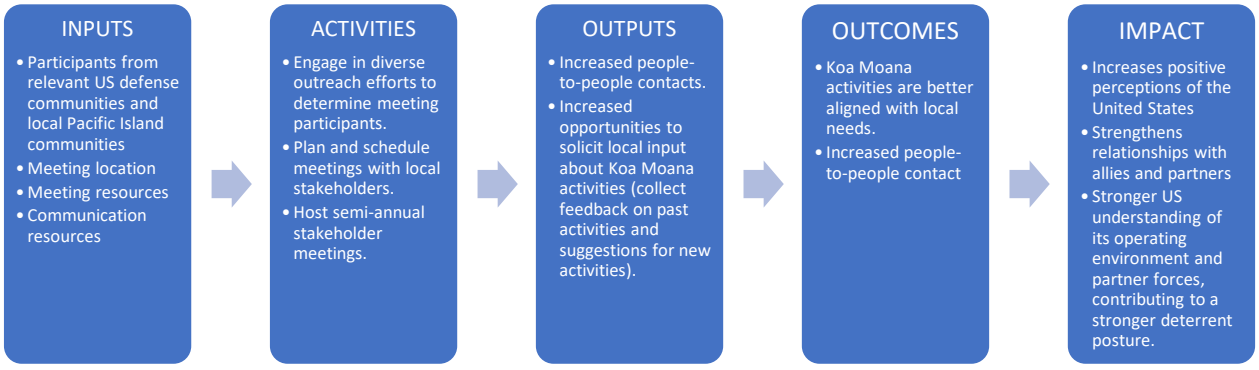

Figure 6 Theory of Change Model for Integration of Pacific Stakeholders

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply to the model depicted in Figure 6.

1. Local communities from the Pacific Islands want to participate in and engage in these discussions with defense stakeholders.
2. Learning happens from these discussions and is incorporated into the planning process.
3. People-to-people contact is a mechanism that leads to improved bilateral relationships and increased positive perceptions of the United States.

A detailed analysis, which includes evidence either in support of or in contradiction to these assumptions, is included in Appendix C. The results suggest that all three of the model's assumptions hold. As such, this recommendation scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Costing Analysis

Accounting costs for the proposed change during the 2024-2044 timeline place the cost of this recommendation at approximately $1.30 million. A detailed breakdown of the costing analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Outcomes Matrix

The table below provides a summary of the evaluation results for all five policy options. With the exception of the cost criteria, they are all categorized with a score of high, medium, or low.

Table 4 Outcomes Matrix

Policy Option	Political Feasibility	Administrative Feasibility	Effectiveness		Cost
			US Security	Partner Relationships	
Interagency Planning Process	High	Medium	High	High	$0.10M
Regional Strategy Development	Medium	Medium	High	High	$0.77M
AM&E Plan	High	Medium	High	High	$2.09M
Focused Koa Moana Activities	Medium	High	Low	Medium	$0.00M
Integration of Pacific Stakeholders	High	Medium	High	High	$1.03M

Recommendations

Ultimately, this study recommends that the Task Force Koa Moana planning team implement four of the five proposed policy options. These include integration with the interagency planning process, the development of a MARFORPAC partner and ally strategy, the creation and implementation of an AM&E plan, and the integration of Pacific stakeholders in the planning process. All four options score high on both effectiveness prongs and score high on at least one of two feasibility measures.

This study finds that narrowing the scope of Koa Moana's activities to traditional security cooperation activities (policy option 4) is not a viable option, as it scores low on both prongs of effectiveness and has a medium political feasibility. Consequently, it becomes even more important to pursue the four other options. The combination of these options contributes to more effective bilateral relationship building over the long-term and can help reduce or at least stop further militarization of US partner engagement.

If, however, budget constraints or other factors limit the number of policy options MARFORPAC is able to implement, the command should prioritize policy option 1, integration with the interagency process. This is a low-cost option, and it has high political feasibility. It also addresses two of the three underlying issues in a highly effective manner: the need for better integration with broader defense strategy and non-defense US engagement in the region and the need to reduce the continued militarized of US engagement with partner countries. It is a pre-requisite step for many other collaborative efforts, including policy option 5, the integration of Pacific stakeholders in the planning process.

Only pursuing this policy option, however, comes with trade-offs. Most importantly, it sacrifices the assessment and monitoring aspect of policy option 3, which is critical for building iterative programs and evaluating medium-term and long-term program effectiveness.

If MARFORPAC is able to do more than just policy option 1, the next priorities should be the development of a regional partner engagement strategy (policy option 2) and the creation of an AM&E framework (policy option 3). To note, these two policy options should be implemented in coordination with each other. The strategy's goals serve as the benchmark for the AM&E assessment. By implementing these two options in coordination with policy option 1, all three of the underlying issues are addressed.

Implementation

There are several implementation considerations to keep in mind. One of the most important aspects is the sequencing of the policy options. Several of these options build on each other or become pre-requisite steps for other policies. Table 5 presents the recommended sequencing of these policy options if all four recommended options are implemented.

Table 5 Recommended Sequencing of Proposed Policy Options

<table>
<tr><th>FY24</th><th>FY25</th><th>FY26</th><th>FY27</th><th>FY28 →</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Policy Option 1 Interagency Planning Process</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy Development</td><td colspan="2">Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy in Use</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Policy Option 3 AM&E Plan Development</td><td colspan="2">Policy Option 3 AM&E Plan in Use</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td colspan="3">Policy Option 5 Integration of Pacific Stakeholders via Semi-Annual Discussions</td></tr>
</table>

The sequencing of these options is critical. For example, the AM&E plan relies on having a clearly specified set of priorities and goals that the annual activities are meant to achieve. The regional partner strategy will provide a clear articulation of these overarching goals, but without it, the AM&E plan cannot come into fruition. Similarly, the nature and structure of the engagement with Pacific stakeholders depends on the goals outlined in the regional partner strategy. These meetings should not begin until the strategy development is completed.

A second implementation consideration is an assessment of who is responsible for the initial advancement of each of these policy alternatives. Table 6 outlines several of the key implementation actors and their associated tasking to move the four policy options forward. Of note, this tasking only focuses on initial action items.

Table 6 Implementation Roles

Policy Option	Stakeholder	Task(s)
Policy Option 1 Interagency Planning Process	I MEF	As soon as possible, contact the defense attaché at the US Embassy in the Republic of Palau and the acting defense attaché at the US Embassy in the Federated States of Micronesia to discuss the ability to attend country team meetings. Once contact is made, work with the defense attachés to schedule meeting attendance, a regular engagement plan, and a way to get notes from the other meetings.

Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy Development	MARFORPAC G5	Immediately begin work to hire a contractor to support the development of a partner nation engagement strategy. Contact INDOPACOM's strategy shop to coordinate development plans and include INDOPACOM planners in the process.
Policy Option 3 AM&E Plan	I MEF	Contract a study to develop an AM&E plan during the FY26 funding cycle.
Policy Option 5 Pacific Stakeholder Integration	MARFORPAC G5, Australia and Oceania Desk	Beginning in FY25, draft a list of stakeholders to include at the semi-annual discussions. Begin contacting the respective individuals/organizations to determine interest and ability to participate in these discussions.

A third implementation consideration is potential risks. For example, the command may find it difficult to get access to funding to contract a study to develop an AM&E plan. Additionally, geopolitical considerations could fundamentally alter the operating environment. For example, if the PRC was able to significantly expand its influence within either country's infrastructure development or media sector, then the ability of Task Force Koa Moana or other US government agencies to implement change and advance US interests would be severely constrained.

Ultimately, while there are potential implementation challenges, proactive planning and advanced preparation will help to mitigate these issues and risks.

Study Limitations and Areas for Further Research

This study has two primary limitations, which creates areas for further research.

The first limitation relates to the political feasibility analysis. This study adopted a binary support v. no support approach for the relevant stakeholders. This oversimplifies complicated perspectives. If better data could be collected via more extensive stakeholder interviews, the political feasibility analysis could be adjusted to provide more detailed levels of support as well as a spectrum of each stakeholder's influence in the process. Better data could also allow for greater incorporation of Pacific Island perspectives into the political feasibility analysis.

The second limitation relates to the effectiveness analysis. This study relies heavily on conceptual theory of change models. Ideally, there would be more empirical data or case studies to support the conclusions. The effectiveness methodology discussed in the Evaluative Criteria section discusses some of these issues and also details an ideal evaluation scenario if better data existed. Should this data become available, the analysis should be reconstructed to offer a more rigorous assessment.

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Appendix A: Acronyms

I MEF – First Marine Expeditionary Force

AM&E – Assessment, monitoring, and evaluation

DOD – Department of Defense

DOS – Department of State

DOI OIA – Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs

FFRDC – Federally funded research and development center

FY – Fiscal year

INDOPACOM – US Indo-Pacific Command

JIACG – Joint Interagency Coordination Group

JIATF-S – Joint Interagency Task Force-South

MARFORPAC – Marine Forces Pacific

PRC – People's Republic of China

SCO – Security cooperation office

USAID – US Agency for International Development

Appendix B: Case Studies

Selection Criteria

To select the case studies for analysis in this study, the following selection table was created. It includes the primary interagency case studies discussed in the literature reviewed for this project and is based on methodologies common in FFRDCs. For each of the case studies, data is included on its years of operation, nature of its mission, the number of interagency partners, the lead agency, its type of mandate, its level of work, and whether there are sufficient sources to support a case study analysis. This study prioritized an analysis of case studies that had the DOD as the lead agency and had sufficient sources to support a thorough analysis.

Interagency Case Studies for Potential Selection

	Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S)	**Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG)**	**Regime Crimes Liaison Office (RCLO)**	**Cybercrime Task Force**	**National Security Council**
Years in operation	1999-present	2002-present	2004-?	?	1947-present
Regional and/or functional area of responsibility	Indo-Pacific drug interdiction and counter narcotics	Indo-Pacific	Crimes from Saddam Hussein's regime	Cybercrime	US foreign policy
At least three inter-agency partners?	●	●	●	●	●
DOD as lead agency?	●	●	○	○	○
Broad or narrow mandate?	Narrow mandate	Broad mandate	Narrow mandate	Narrow mandate	Broad mandate
Strategic, operational, or tactical level work?	Tactical	Operational	Tactical	Tactical	Strategic
Codified in law and/or have higher institutional support?	●	○	?	?	●
At least three reputable sources analyzing the effort?	●	●	●	○	●

Key ● = yes ○ = no

Case Study: Joint Interagency Task Force–South (JIATF-S)

The Joint Interagency Task Force—South (JIATF-S) is a task force created in 1999 "to detect, monitor, and consign suspected narcotics trafficking targets to appropriate law enforcement agencies; promote regional security cooperation; and coordination US country team and partner-nation counternarcotics initiatives" (Pope 2014). The task force is housed within US Southern Command—one of the DOD's eleven unified combatant command responsible for US military engagement in Latin America—and involves coordination across the five US military services, three US law enforcement agencies, five US intelligence agencies, and 14 international partners.

The history of JIATF-S has its origins in President Ronald Reagan's declaration of a war on drugs. During this period, Latin American drug cartels were becoming increasingly powerful, leading US policymakers to redefine drug trafficking and counternarcotics missions as national security issues (Munsing and Lamb, 2011).

While the US government had a wide variety of tools and authorities to address the issue, there was a growing realization that these traditional approaches were failing to counter the power and heft of the drug lords. These issues crossed into multiple policy areas, which created two key issues. First, a dedicated and centralized authority would be needed to coordinate the multitude of stakeholders. Second, and as a result of increasingly sophisticated drug trafficking operations, policymakers began to realize that the law enforcement agencies traditionally tasked with these efforts lacked the hardware to conduct these missions; they needed more complex hardware (i.e., radars, ships, and planes) that only the DOD could provide.

With these realizations, lawmakers began advocating for an interagency solution. In 1981, and over the objections of some service chiefs, Congress passed a law that allowed the DOD to provide support for civilian law enforcement agencies as well as the US Coast Guard (Munsing and Lamb, 2011). This marked a notable departure from traditional US responses to drug issues. For years, the DOD had been barred from engaging in the drug war, but with this law, Congress overturned this precedent and ushered in a new era of DOD involvement in the drug war.

To coordinate the increasingly large number of agencies and stakeholders involved in the counternarcotics mission, several interagency coordination mechanisms were created. First was National Narcotics Border Interdiction System, although this effort quickly dissipated as each agency opted to pursue its own unilateral effort. Later came the Office of National Drug Control Policy within the Executive Office of the President, an office primarily responsible for coordinating strategic level policy and without the ability to compel interagency cooperation. Eventually, in 1989, Congress recognized the need for a lead-agency and placed the responsibility with the DOD (Munsing and Lamb, 2011).

With the authority to lead, the DOD created several Joint Task Forces to monitor and support different regions. These task forces underwent multiple iterations before the election of Bill Clinton, the death of Pablo Escobar, and the restructuring of US Southern Command's area of responsibility led the interagency process to be re-evaluated and re-structured. These processes resulted in the creation of JIATF-S, the leading body responsible for counternarcotics operations in the Caribbean and Latin America (Munsing and Lamb, 2011).

JIATF-S is a unique group. It acts as "part military command center, intelligence fusion center, law enforcement coordination center, and mini-UN" (Cann and Ploszaj, 2010). By adopting an

interagency approach, US agencies and their international partners could now work within their respective legal constraints and rules of engagement, merging disparate authorities and capabilities to address a complex, multidimensional threat.

The following example from Munsing and Lamb's (2011) work illustrates how these agencies work together. For much of the time, the US Navy conducts detection and monitoring operations within JIATF-S's area of responsibility. All observed vessels within this area are sorted by the task force's partners. When a vessel is suspected of engaging in drug smuggling missions, ships approach and "visit" the vessel using a well-documented procedure. If there is a reasonable suspicion that the vessel possesses drugs or illegal substances, JIATF-S switches from a detection and monitoring posture to law enforcement support. This involves a transfer of responsibilities from the Navy to law enforcement agencies, including the US Coast Guard. The Coast Guard places a law enforcement detachment under a Coast Guard flag on board a Navy vessel. This allows the Coast Guard officer to take control of the operations even as the Navy maintains command of the ship (these law enforcement operations are outside of the Navy's authorities) (Sparling, 2023). Once the at-sea law enforcement operation is complete, the Navy resumes its detection and monitoring mission within the area.

At-sea interdictions serve as just one type of mission that falls within JIATF-S's operational authority. This, as well as JIATF-S's efforts more broadly, are referred to as the "gold standard for interagency coordination (Munsing and Lamb, 2011). Few other interagency efforts operate as seamlessly and smoothly. As a result, many observers often visit the region, looking for lessons learned to apply to other interagency efforts within the US government. What, then, have observers attributed to the task force's success?

Pope (2011) notes that the JIATF structure facilitates mission success because of its field-level (i.e., tactical-level) coordination. Participating agencies and personnel are co-located, "enabling the organization to cut across traditional agency stovepipes and facilitate rapid, integrated action." This finding echoes the benefits of co-location discussed in Orton and Lamb (2011) and Dyson's (2020) academic work.

In conducting the first systematic study of JIATF-S, Munsing and Lamb (2011) uncovered several additional factors that contributed to the success of this interagency group. Having a mandate from a higher authority mattered; it provided the mission with much-needed legitimacy, offered clear direction on which agency was taking the lead (the DOD with a Coast Guard admiral as the director), and provided the basis for getting necessary resources. This echoes the academic findings of Orton and Lamb (2011) and Piercy et al (2012). Munsing and Lamb also found that JIATF-S succeeded because the lead agency, the DOD, knew its partners and understood their comparative advantages and limitations. This involved building horizontal and vertical networks across the US interagency and with the task force's international partners. It also involved managing civilian-military relations, and its organizational structure and chain of command helped ensure that these relations supported rather than detracted from its mission (Fishel, 2009).

It took years for JIATF-S to become fully operational and many more for a successful model to emerge. In their review of its operations, Munsing and Lamb noted several lessons the task force learned along the way. They found that when JIATF-S had segregated interagency staff in separate buildings, demanded binding cooperation agreements from the start, neglected to build a culture of trust and empowerment, commanded the presence of interagency personnel, and took

credit for collaborative success, interagency coordination mechanisms broke down and the team failed to achieve its mission.

Critics argue that JIATF-S's success is *not* a result of organizational structure but rather the personality and leadership style of its leaders. Munsing and Lamb (2011), however, repeatedly emphasize that the success of JIATF-S is overwhelmingly a function of its organizational innovations. These innovations create an incentive structure that is designed to encourage interagency partners to engage in the interagency effort; stakeholders gain more from cooperation than they do from unilateral action.

Case Study: Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG)

This case study focuses on the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG) within each of the global combatant commands. These groups are meant to "provide interagency advice and expertise…, to coordinate interagency counterterrorism plans and objectives, and integrate military, interagency, and host-nation efforts" (Cardinal et al, 2002). They are full-time coordination groups meant to provide a way to "integrate campaign planning efforts at the strategic and operational levels" (US Joint Forces Command, 2005).

The JIACG concept first emerged in the wake of 9/11. Policymakers quickly acknowledged that the attacks had happened, in part, as a result of government agencies' inability to communicate and coordinate with each other. In the face of these conclusions, President George Bush directed all agencies involved in the fight against terrorism to share information with each other and coordinate with each other (Schwarzenberg, 2011).

In response, the DOD created several interagency structures, including the JIACGs within the combatant commands. The JIACGs were designed specifically to support the United States' counterterrorism mission, facilitate coordination at the theater and strategic level, and address the operational void present in US regional-level foreign policy coordination (see Figure 3) (Smith, 2002; Pope, 2014). In theory, they were designed to be led by the JIACG Director, a civilian within the Senior Executive Service, and a JIACG Deputy, a military officer with a flag-level rank. Within the office, there would be liaison offices with representatives from the relevant agencies as well as several other military and civilian staff (see Figure 4) (Smith, 2002).

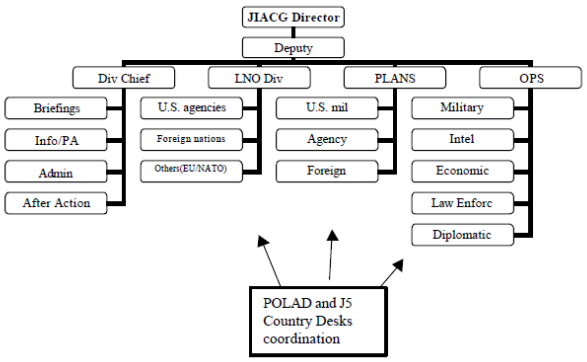

Figure 7 JIACG Command and Control Structure
Source: Smith, 2002

In practice, however, while the JIACGs were all created with the same initial mission, bureaucratic pressures, differing security needs across the combatant commands, and various leadership styles of the combatant commanders led to a divergence in JIACG implementation. Most moved beyond the counterterrorism mission and "morphed into supporting the full-spectrum of military operations" (Schwarzenberg, 2011). This looked different across the combatant commands.

In some combatant commands—like US Africa Command—the JIACG took on a prominent role, heavily influencing the formation and execution of US foreign policy in the region. In others—like US Pacific Command—the JIACG initially played an integral role in coordinating with the State Department and expediting policy review; a turnover in leadership, however, effectively ended this process. Meanwhile, in US Central Command, the JIACG served as a vital intelligence fusion center for the interagency (Schwarzenberg, 2011; Pope, 2014). These differing experiences demonstrate that JIACGs were far from a uniform operation and heavily reflected regional circumstances and the preferences of senior leaders.

Today, however, the reputation, influence, and senior leadership guiding the JIACGs is largely absent. They may continue to exist within the organization charts of the combatant commands, but they lack any real coordination power or collaborative influence. What, then, are the factors that contributed to the JIACGs' initial success, and what contributed to their later failure?

Schwarzenberg (2011) notes that the JIACGs' initial success was heavily dependent on the seniority of the JIACG Director and Deputy. Senior leaders brought a certain level of prestige to the interagency operations. It was difficult, however, to convince rising military officers to potentially risk their career and likelihood for promotion to lead these relatively new bodies. Schwarzenberg comments that like the Goldwater-Nichols restructuring, it would likely take a few generations of officers for these positions of authority to become fully accepted.

Similar dynamics played out on the civilian and non-military side. Pope (2014) notes that unlike the JIATF structure, the JIACGs were poorly received. Many civilian and interagency representatives feared this effort marked the erosion of their authority and autonomy. Based on interviews and anecdotal evidence, many described that once they arrived at the combatant commands, few possessed the authority to act on behalf of their agencies. Others feared that this approach overmilitarized US foreign policy and thus advocated against its implementation (Schwarzenberg, 2011). In a sort of catch-22 situation, many people across the interagency wanted to see tangible benefits of collaboration before they contributed to the mission, but without their engagement, these benefits could never be realized.

The JIACG structure also created a significant talent drain on non-defense agencies. Outside of DOD, most agencies lack enough qualified personnel and resources to contribute to this type of effort. The combatant commands tried part-time staffing, but this created significant continuity challenges and limited team-building efforts. They then tried to fund interagency personnel salaries with DOD funds, but when non-reimbursed agencies discovered they had not made the cut, they "became less inclined to continue providing representatives" (Pope, 2014). Pope further notes that JIACG lacked mission clarity, a clear understanding of the coordination group's role on the civilian and military sides, a lack of staff continuity, and an overly DOD-centric approach. These pitfalls contributed to JIACGs' failures. Thus, while remnants of JIACG exist within many combatant commands today, they are minimally staffed and do not play a prominent coordination role in any notable efforts.

Appendix C: Effectiveness Analysis – Discussion of Model Assumptions

Policy Option 1 Interagency Planning Process

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model depicted in Figure 8 demonstrates how deeper integration of the Koa Moana planning team within regional interagency structures could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and Pacific Island countries.

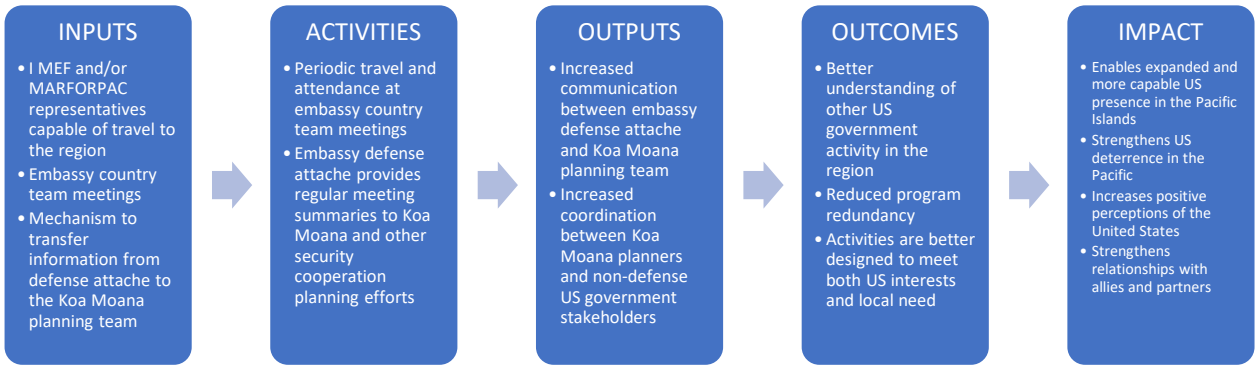

Figure 8 Theory of Change Model for Interagency Planning Process

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply for the model depicted in Figure 8 to hold.

1. Koa Moana planners gain new information and a deeper understanding of interagency partners from country team meeting attendance that they otherwise would not have had.
2. Non-defense stakeholders are willing to work with military representatives and provide candid information.
3. Duplicitous efforts are undesirable.

This assumption must hold in order for this model to be viable. The following paragraphs provide evidence to support or dismiss the above assumption.

Koa Moana planners gain new information and a deeper understanding of interagency partners from country team meeting attendance that they otherwise would not have had. In talking with stakeholders across the Koa Moana planning effort and non-defense stakeholders, there appears to be notable gaps in knowledge between defense efforts in the region and non-defense efforts. For example, few defense analysts and security cooperation planners were aware of USAID's programming in the region or the range of efforts led by the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (personal communication).

The State Department's 2022 Integrated Country Strategy for Palau echoes these sentiments, discussing the need for stronger civilian-defense cooperation in the United States' policy towards the Pacific Islands ("Integrated Country Strategy Palau," 2022). The State Department's work led to the addition of a defense attaché at the US Embassy in Palau ("Key Officers," n.d.). Such efforts coupled with the academic literature on the importance of co-location for cross-functional teams and collaboration across silos suggest that attendance at the country team meetings would significantly increase information flows between defense and non-defense stakeholders, allowing the planners to access new information (Orton and Lamb, 2011; Dyson, 2020). As such, the evidence suggests that this assumption holds.

Non-defense stakeholders are willing to work with military representatives and provide candid information. Non-defense stakeholders already work with the US military and defense community in a collaborative fashion via the Joint Committee Meetings per the terms of the agreement from the Compacts of Free Association. These meetings include representatives from the US State Department, INDOPACOM, and the government of Palau. To date, collaboration has been positive and successful (Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office, 2023). While this recommendation encourages collaboration via a slightly different mechanism, past precedent and experience with defense-civilian collaboration (e.g., JIATF-S or USAID-DOD collaboration on conflict stabilization efforts) suggests that this type of engagement would lead to a positive and collaborative working relationship. As such, the evidence suggests that this assumption holds.

Duplicitous efforts are undesirable. Duplicitous efforts "occur when two or more agencies or programs are engaged in the same activities or provide the same services to the same beneficiaries" ("2013 Annual Report," 2013). These efforts waste taxpayer dollars and limit the government's ability to address the maximum number of challenges possible with limited resources. Reducing duplication is a stated government goal; the Government Accountability Office releases an annual report of duplication in US government programs ("2023 Annual Report," 2023). As such, this normative statement is valid for the model and therefore the assumption holds.

Given that all of the specified assumptions for this model hold, this recommendation scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy Development

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model depicted in Figure 9 demonstrates how the development of a regional partner engagement strategy could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and Pacific Island countries.

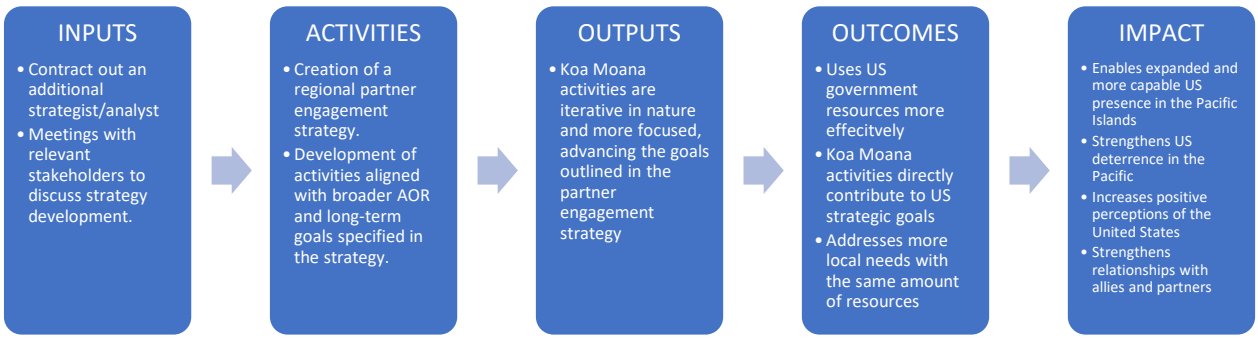

Figure 9 Theory of Change Model for Regional Strategy Development

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, one assumption must apply for the model depicted in Figure 9 to hold.

1. Iterative activities are more likely to advance regional security goals.

This assumption must hold in order for this model to be viable. The following paragraphs provide evidence to support or dismiss the above assumption.

Iterative activities are more likely to advance regional security goals. Most security cooperation activities and programs are iterative. For example, if the United States is looking to expand a partner nation's maritime security capabilities, the partner nation first has to develop the ability to monitor its waters and detect threats. Only then can it develop the capabilities to respond to these threats (Ross, 2016; Johnson, 2017). In other words, sequencing matters, and iterative activities are key to advancing broader goals. US experience from security cooperation programs suggests that this assumption holds for the specified model.

The assumption holds for this model. Therefore, this recommendation scores high on partner relationship effectiveness and US security effectiveness.

Policy Option 3 Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation (AM&E) Plan

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 10 demonstrates how the development and implementation of a Koa Moana AM&E plan could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

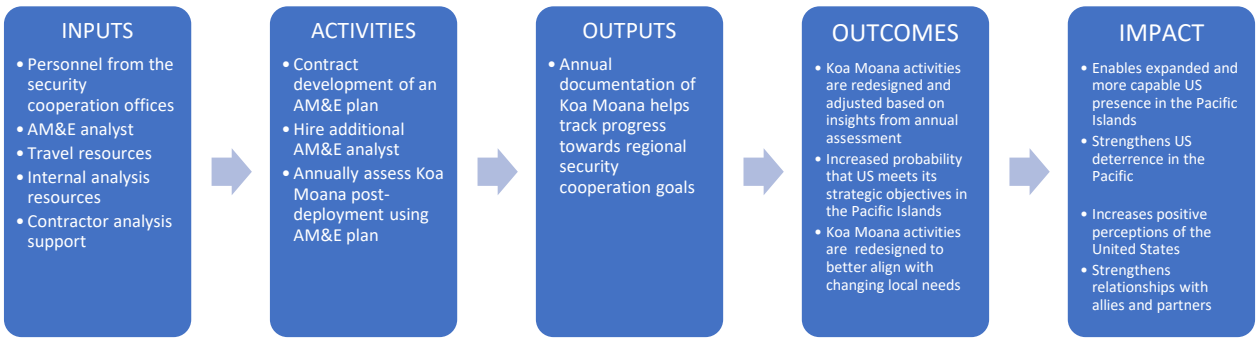

Figure 10 Theory of Change Model for AM&E Plan

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply to the model depicted in Figure 10.

1. Learning happens and changes to the annual activities are made in a timely fashion.

These assumptions must hold in order for this model to be viable. The following paragraphs provide evidence to support or dismiss the above assumptions.

Learning happens and changes to the annual activities are made in a timely fashion. The US Marine Corps is currently in the process of assessing Force Design 2030, its force restructuring plan designed to prepare it for near-peer conflict. This strategy has been both transformative and disruptive to typical Marine Corps concepts and operations. In the face of these changes, working groups and commands across the force are engaging in a variety of activities and exercises to test these concepts, make appropriate changes, and modify the concept to align with the broader US strategic vision (Reese, et al., 2024; Work, 2023; "Force Design 2030 Annual Update," 2023). This ongoing process and the innovative culture it engenders provides strategic-level evidence that learning and subsequent adjustment happen within the Marine Corps.

At a programmatic level, monitoring and evaluation is a widely used practice in the aid and development community, and practitioners both within and outside of the United States have found that it leads to better program outcomes (Phiri, 2015; Marquis, et al., 2016; Cumming and Forbes, 2012). They find that AM&E plans help organizations identify problems early, target resources to areas with the greatest needs, and track progress towards strategic goals ("The Role of Outcome," 2018). These benefits are most likely to be realized when organizations establish common definitions and goals for the AM&E process, provide proper training for the AM&E staff, offer strong incentives to participate and engage in the AM&E process, and have higher-level support for the AM&E goals (Marquis, et al., 2016). Based on the author's engagement with relevant project stakeholders and the broader defense security cooperation community, evidence indicates that these conditions are present within the Koa Moana planning teams. Consequently, learning and change are highly probably for a Koa Moana AM&E plan, thereby leading to the specified outcomes and impact. This assumption holds.

Evidence suggests that all assumptions hold for this model. As such, this recommendation scores high on both measures of effectiveness.

Policy Option 4 Focused Koa Moana Activities

Score: Low (US Security) and Medium (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 11 demonstrates how the narrowing the focus of Koa Moana's activities could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

Figure 11 Theory of Change Model for Focused Koa Moana Activities

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply to the model depicted in Figure 11.

1. US non-defense agencies are interested in and have the resources to increase their engagement with Pacific Island partners.
2. Over the long-run, US non-defense agency engagement leads to more positive interactions with local communities compared to military-led engagement.
3. The transfer of responsibility from the defense community to diplomatic and development efforts would not lead to a gap in engagement.

These assumptions must hold in order for this model to be viable. The following paragraphs provide evidence to support or dismiss the above assumptions.

US non-defense agencies are interested in and have the resources to increase their engagement with Pacific Island partners. Ever since the first US-Pacific Islands Summit in 2022, the State Department and USAID have worked to increase their presence in the Pacific Islands, expanding both personnel dedicated to regional affairs and reallocating funding to regional programs ("US Pours More," 2023). In 2022, USAID published its 2022-2027 Strategic Framework for the Pacific Islands, focused on strengthening community resilience, advancing resilient economic growth, and strengthening democratic governance. This framework highlighted the agency's expanded Pacific Islands portfolio ("Strategic Framework," n.d.).

Similarly, the State Department's 2022 Integrated Country Strategies (ICS) for Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia provide a strategic level vision that argues for increased US diplomatic, political, and economic engagement in the regio. For example, the ICS for Palau discusses the need to add a political-economic reporting officer to the embassy team, and both strategies highlight a broader range of issues the embassy team will now address ("Integrated

Country Strategy Palau," 2022; "Integrated Country Strategy Federated States of Micronesia," 2022). These changes mark a notable shift from previous years and highlight the non-defense agencies' interest in expanding engagement with Pacific Island partners.

Nevertheless, despite USAID and the State Department's increased resources and personnel for regional affairs, the resource imbalance between the DOD and the non-defense communities remains large. For example, there are roughly 375,000 US military and civilian personnel assigned to INDOPACOM's area of responsibility. This dwarfs the State Department's 13,790 foreign service members, which cover the entirety of the department's global operations ("About INDOPACOM," n.d.; Nutter, 2020). The better staffed US embassies in the Pacific Islands have a chief of mission and a staff of 4-10 people. The Marines, in contrast, deploy about 200 Marines and Sailors for Task Force Koa Moana alone ("Task Force Koa Moana 23," 2023).

This simple numerical discrepancy creates a basic resource and personnel constraint. USAID and the State Department simply lack the personnel to engage in some of the labor-intensive tasks that Koa Moana's sailors and Marines complete each year. Thus, while USAID and the State Department could pick up some of Koa Moana's responsibilities and engagement in the event of tailored Koa Moana activities and have the expertise to engage in the work, they cannot fill the entire gap. As such, the prevailing evidence indicates that this assumption does *not* hold for this model.

US non-defense agency engagement leads to more positive interactions with local communities compared to military-led engagement. In recent years, US foreign policy has become increasingly militarized. For example, Clarissa Forner, an academic in Brazil, highlights how US-Latin American relations have become "dominated by military perspectives and instruments." Not only have engagements become "militarized over time" but US military agencies like the DOD have also "become one of the leading faces of US foreign policy in the region" (Forner, 2023). This pattern is not limited to Latin America; militarization characterizes most of the United States' foreign policy presence around the world.

Militarized engagement—or relying on the military to conduct noncombat missions like stabilization, reconstruction, and relationship building—can result in a higher risk of failure (Adams and Murray, 2014). Often, these tasks do not lie within the military's comparative advantage, and the services lack the capabilities to effectively carry them out. If these activities were transferred to non-defense agencies whose specialties more closely aligned with the nature of the tasks, there would be a higher risk of success.

Military-led engagement can also lead to substantial public pushback within partner nations. One need only turn to the difficulty the United States had in finding a headquarters for US Africa Command and its subsequent placement in Germany. Many African governments were uneasy with the idea of a strong US military presence in Africa and decreased economic engagement after years of a primary US focus on economics and development support (Adams and Murray, 2014). These examples demonstrate that when US foreign policy is led by non-defense agencies, it generates more positive interactions with local communities (Toft and Kushi, 2023). Thus, the evidence suggests that this assumption holds.

The transfer of responsibility from the defense community to diplomatic and development efforts would not lead to a gap in engagement. Practical constraints such as staggered program start dates, resource delays, and variations in institutional knowledge mean that an immediate

transfer of responsibility will inherently lead to gaps in engagement. These gaps can have adverse consequences for US security interests and the health of bilateral relations.

The Pacific Islands are increasingly home to intense geopolitical competition between the United States and the PRC. Both countries are engaging in a hotly contested battle for influence, and the PRC has significantly increased its regional influence in recent years. The Pacific Islands used to be home to some of Taiwan's staunchest allies, but in 2019, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands flipped diplomatic recognition from Beijing to Taiwan (Dionne and Sparling, 2022). In January 2024, Nauru made the same decision (Ng, 2024).

The PRC's influence is not only expanding at the diplomatic and strategic level. Beijing is poised and ready to take advantage of any gap in Western engagement. For example, in 2014, Australia's government made significant funding cuts to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation—the country's national broadcaster—which sharply reduced its Pacific content. In 2017, it terminated Radio Australia shortwave broadcasts to the Pacific, cutting off its ability to produce news for geographically isolated communities in the Pacific Islands (Zhang and Watson, 2020). With Australian media stepping out, the PRC filled the void. One report notes that "China Radio International has begun broadcasting on as many as 10 frequencies once used by the ABC," highlighting one of many small examples in which the PRC is ready to fill soft power gaps left by the United States and its allies (Ahearn, 2022; Chan, 2018). This is a pattern that has repeated several times across the information, economic, diplomatic, and security realm.

Even if the transition in responsibility between the US military and the non-defense agencies happened over time, gaps in engagement will still inevitably emerge. This similarly creates opportunities for increased adversary presence and can harm US security interests and the strength of bilateral relations. As such, the prevailing evidence indicates that this assumption does *not* hold for this model.

All in all, evidence suggests that most of the assumptions fail to hold for this model. As such, this recommendation scores medium on the partner relationship prong of effectiveness and low on the US security prong of effectiveness.

Policy Option 5 Integration of Pacific Stakeholders

Score: High (US Security) and High (Partner Relationships)

The theory of change model included in Figure 12 demonstrates how the incorporation of stakeholders from the Pacific Island could lead to improved US security outcomes and strengthened bilateral relationships between the United States and the Pacific Islands.

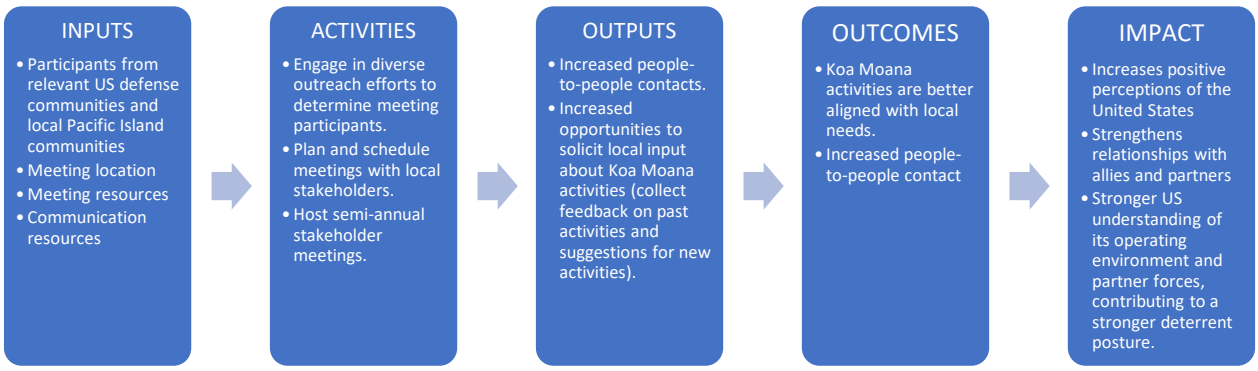

Figure 12 Theory of Change Model for Integration of Pacific Stakeholders

Beyond political and administrative feasibility, several assumptions apply to the model depicted in Figure 12.

1. Local communities from the Pacific Islands want to participate in and engage in these discussions with defense stakeholders.
2. Learning happens from these discussions and is incorporated into the planning process.
3. People-to-people contact is a mechanism that leads to improved bilateral relationships and increased positive perceptions of the United States.

These assumptions must hold in order for this model to be viable. The following paragraphs provide evidence to support or dismiss the above assumptions.

Local communities from the Pacific Islands want to participate in and engage in these discussions with defense stakeholders. Government stakeholders in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia have a deep history of engagement with US government representatives. As previously mentioned, government stakeholders routinely engage with US defense officials and State Department representatives during Joint Committee Meetings (Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office, 2023). Similarly, high level meetings with the US president now occur on a more frequent basis ("Fact Sheet," 2023; "Declaration on US-Pacific Partnership," 2022). This interest appears to extend to non-senior officials as well. For example, the National Bureau for Asian Research hosted a Track 1.5 Security Dialogue in 2022 with a variety of local stakeholders in the Micronesian region (Herlevi, 2023). Pacific interest in engaging with US officials in these forums suggests this assumption will hold.

Learning happens from these discussions and is incorporated into the planning process. While this recommendation is not equivalent to multitrack diplomacy (e.g., track 1.5 or track 2 dialogues), it operates in a very similar fashion. As such, insights about the learning from track 1.5 dialogues can serve as an analytic parallel.

Track 1.5 and track 2 dialogues are widely heralded as a successful option to resolve international conflicts. Participants and scholars note that they successfully incorporate grassroots and civil society participation, support peace processes, maintain open lines of communication, build trust, and can act as a forum to discuss difficult policy issues. These closed-door discussions can help policymakers better understand driving motivations and

interests, allowing all representatives to learn how policies are received by local communities (Staats, et al., 2019; Wolleh, 2007). These benefits indicate that track 1.5 and track 2 dialogues can generate significant learning among participants and lead to improved outcomes for the participating countries. This evidence suggests that this assumption will hold.

People-to-people contact is a mechanism that leads to improved bilateral relationships and increased positive perceptions of the United States. The premise that people-to-people contact can lead to improvements in bilateral relationships is the basis for Track 2 dialogues, government-sponsored exchange programs, and other trade and cultural exchanges. High-level programmatic evidence from the Department of State as well as case study specific evidence from examples such as US-Taiwanese commercial and cultural ties indicate that this assumption holds (Li, 2010; Bell et al., 2013).

Ultimately, the evidence indicates that all three assumptions hold for the Figure 12 theory of change. This recommendation thus scores high on both scores of effectiveness.

Appendix D: Cost Calculations

Policy Option 1 Interagency Planning Process

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	FY44
Transit Costs[1]	1,200	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600
Hotel Costs[2]	735	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205
Meal and Incidental Costs[3]	528	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584	1,584
Meeting Space[4]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 4%)**	2,463	7,105	6,832	6,569	6,316	6,073	5,840	5,615	5,399	5,191	4,992	4,800	4,615	4,438	4,267	4,103	3,945	3,793	3,647	3,507	3,372
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 7%)**	2,463	6,906	6,454	6,032	5,637	5,268	4,923	4,601	4,300	4,019	3,756	3,510	3,281	3,066	2,866	2,678	2,503	2,339	2,186	2,043	1,909
TOTAL COST	4% Discount Rate: $102,882 7% Discount Rate: $80,742																				

**Figures displayed in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar.*

[1] **Flight Costs**

- Roundtrip flight three times per year
- Flight from Hawaii or San Diego to Palau: $1200/person * 1 person/event * 3 events/year = $3,600/year
- Source: Google Flights

[2] **Hotel Costs**

- $245/night government rate for hotel costs in Palau
- 1 participant * $245/night * 3 nights/trip * 3 trips/year = $2,205/year
- Source: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

[3] **Meal and Incidental Costs**

- Government per diem meals and incidentals rate: $132/day
- 1 participant * $132/day * 4 days/event * 3 events/year = $1,584/event

- Source: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/

[4] **Meeting Space Costs**

- Hosted at the US embassy in Palau or Federated States of Micronesia, no additional meeting costs needed

Policy Option 2 Regional Strategy Development

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	FY44
Strategist Labor Costs[1]	0	800,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 4%)**	0	769,231	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 7%)**	0	747,664	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL COST	4% Discount Rate: $769,231 7% Discount Rate: $747,664																				

**Figures displayed in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar.*

[1] **Strategist Labor Cost**

- Because an additional strategist is only needed in the short-term, this position can be contracted out.
- Estimated cost of contract: $800k
- Source: based on author experience

Policy Option 3 Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation (AM&E) Plan

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	FY44
FFRDC Contract[1]	0k	450k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k
AM&E Analyst Hiring Costs[2]	0k	216k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k
AM&E Analyst Equipment Costs[3]	0k	0k	1k	0k	0k	0k	0k	1k	0k	0k	0k	0k	1k	0k	0k	0k	0k	1k	0k	0k	0k
AM&E Analyst Labor Costs[4]	0k	0k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k	103k
AM&E Analyst Travel Costs[5]	0k	0k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k	9k
AM&E Cost of Data Collection[6]	0k	0k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k	2 k
Total Annual Cost (NPV; 4%)	0k	640k	106k	102k	98k	94k	90k	88k	83k	80k	77k	74k	72k	69k	66k	63k	61k	59k	56k	54k	52k
Total Annual Cost (NPV; 7%)	0k	622k	101k	93k	87k	81k	76k	72k	66k	62k	58k	54k	51k	47k	44k	41k	39k	36k	34k	31k	29k
TOTAL COST	4% Discount Rate: $2,085,604 7% Discount Rate: $1,727,939																				

**Figures displayed in this table are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.*

[1] **FFRDC Contract for AM&E Plan Development**

- One-time cost
- Source: author knowledge

[2] **AM&E Analyst Hiring Costs**

- Evidence suggests that the total cost to hire a new employee is often estimated at 3-4x the position's salary. This study adopts a 3x number based on government v private sector differences.
- $72,000/year * 3x = $216,000

- Source: https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/talent-acquisition/real-costs-recruitment

[3] **AM&E Analyst Equipment Costs**

- Laptop: $1000
- Assumes replacement every five years
- Source: https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/how-long-do-laptops-last

[4] **AM&E Analyst Labor Costs**

- Wage: $72,000/year (GS-9 or GS-10 analyst with Hawaii COLA adjustment)
- Benefits: On average, the benefits for civilian federal employees cost 30% of total employee costs, placing the cost for benefits at $30,800/year
- Total Employee Cost: $102,800/year
- Source: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2024/HI.pdf; https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf

[5] **AM&E Analyst Travel Costs**

- AM&E analysis often involves traveling to visit stakeholders and conduct in-person interviews. This project assumes the analyst will travel to the I MEF security cooperation office in Camp Pendleton, CA twice a year and visit the field in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia once a year.
- Assumes 4-day, 3-night trips.
    - Source: author experience
- Trip to California:
    - Flights from Honolulu (HNL) to San Diego (SAN): average round trip cost $450
    - Government per diem hotel rate: $194/day * 3 nights = $582
    - Government per diem meals and incidentals rate: $74/full day and $55.50 for travel days: $55.50*2 + $74*2 = $259
    - TOTAL California cost: ($450+$582+$259)*2 trips/year= $2,582
- Trip to Palau:
    - Flights from Honolulu (HNL) to Koror, Palau: average round trip cost $2500
    - Government per diem hotel rate: $245/day * 3 nights = $735
    - Government per diem meals and incidentals rate: $132/day * 3 nights = $528
    - TOTAL Palau cost: ($2500+$735+$528) * 1 trip/year= $3,763
- Trip to the Federated States of Micronesia:
    - Flights from Honolulu (HNL) to Chuuk, FSM: average round trip cost $2,200
    - Government per diem hotel rate: $140/day * 3 nights = $420
    - Government per diem meals and incidentals rate: $85 * 4 days = $340
    - TOTAL FSM cost: ($2200+$420+340) * 1 trips/year= $2,960
- TOTAL TRIP COSTS/YEAR: $2960+$3763+$2582=$9305
- Sources: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/; https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp; Google flights

[6] **AM&E Cost of Data Collection Conversations**

- Assuming the analyst talks to 4 stakeholders per full day of travel (e.g., 8 stakeholders per visit) and each conversation lasts 1 hour long.
- Each trip involves 8 hours of conversation.
- Average employer costs for employee compensation for civilian workers averaged at $43.93/hour worked in 2023.
- $43.93/person * 8 hours/trip * 4 trips/year = $1,405.76 cost of travel conversation/year
- Assuming the analyst talks to each of these stakeholders for a 30-minute follow-up conversation. 32 conversations/year * $43.94/person * 0.5 hours = 703.04
- Total cost of conversations: $2,110/year
- Sources: https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf and author experience

Policy Option 4 Focused Koa Moana Activities

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	FY44
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 4%)**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 7%)**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL COST	4% Discount Rate: $0.00 7% Discount Rate: $0.00																				

**Figures displayed in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar.*

Policy Option 5 Integration of Pacific Stakeholders

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	FY44
Meeting Costs[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transit Costs[2]	0	0	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k	32k
Hotel Costs[3]	0	0	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k	31k
Meal and Incidental Costs[4]	0	0	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k	22k
Honorarium for Non-Gov Participants[5]	0	0	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k	18k
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 4%)**	0	0	95k	92k	88k	85k	81k	78k	75k	72k	70k	67k	64k	62k	60k	57k	55k	53k	51k	49k	47k
*Total Annual Cost (NPV; 7%)**	0	0	90k	84k	79k	73k	69k	64k	60k	56k	52k	49k	46k	43k	40k	37k	35k	33k	30k	28k	27k
TOTAL COST	4% Discount Rate: $1,301,346 7% Discount Rate: $995,366																				

**Figures displayed in this table are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.*

[1] **Meeting Costs**

- Hosted at the US embassy in Palau, no additional meeting costs needed

[2] **Transit Costs for Participants**

- 4 US government participants (one MARFORPAC, one I MEF, two local embassy representatives)
- 3 US non-government participants (one youth, two academics/non-government researchers)
- 7 representatives from Palau (one youth, four government participants, two academics/non-government researchers)
- 7 representatives from FSM (one youth, four government participants, two academics/non-government researchers)
- MARFORPAC Rep - Flight from Hawaii to Palau: $1200/person * 1 person/event * 2 events = $2,400
- I MEF Rep - Flight from California to Palau: $1200/person * 1 person/event * 2 events = $2,400
- US Embassy Reps - Assume $100 transportation budget per person: $100/person * 4 people/event*2 events=$400
- Non-USG Reps - Assume Flight from DC: $1200/person * 3people/event * 2 events=$7,200
- Reps from Palau - Assume $200 transportation budget per person: $200/person*7 people/event*2events=$2,800
- Reps from FSM - Flight from FSM to Palau: $1200/person * 7 people/event*2 events = $16,800
- TOTAL = $32,000
- Source: Google flights

[3] **Hotel Costs**

- $245/night government rate for hotel costs in Palau
- 21 participants*$245/night*3 nights = $15,435/event
- $15,435/event*2 events/year=$30,870
- Source: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

[3] **Meal and Incidental Costs**

- Government per diem meals and incidentals rate: $132/day
- 21 participants * $132/day * 4 days/event = $11,088/event
- $11,088*2 events/year = $22,176
- Source: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/

[4] **Honorarium for Non-Government Participants**

- $1000/participant
- $1000*9 non-government participants=$9000/event
- TOTAL: $9000*2 events/year=$18,000/year