



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT DE LA REPUBLIQUE  
EN POLYNESIE FRANCAISE

----  
HIGH COMMISSIONERSHIP  
OF THE REPUBLIC IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

***Pacific Economic Cooperation Council “PECC International  
Project 2015-2016 - Managing the Blue Economy - Future of Port  
Management and Shipping in the Asia-Pacific”***

*Marie Baviile  
Director of the Office of the High Commissioner, French Polynesia  
October 19th /20th, 2015 - Papeete*

Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you for this invitation to join this meeting of Pacific Economic Cooperation Council dedicated to blue economy.

Indeed it is essential for the decision makers, either on administrative or political side, to benefit, about the projects that imply structure development works for a territory and about the key sectors of such territory, from a common and long term reflection of the professionals involved.

The ***Pacific Economic Cooperation Council*** French Polynesia's office plays this role with pragmatism and efficiency on lots of topics.

The maritime economy or « blue economy » is at the heart of the South Pacific economic life and as a result of the French Polynesia's economy, insofar as the French State is concerned.

The French State is present in the South Pacific through its communities, among which French Polynesia that benefits from a particularly advanced status of self-governed country.

The government of French Polynesia has jurisdiction for most of the issues regarding maritime economy: transportation and maritime equipment planning, economic development, fiscal matters, environmental protection, etc...

However, the free administration of its territory by the local Polynesian government does not mean that the French State is not interested in the Polynesian community and population concerns. On the contrary, the economic and social development of French Polynesia is at the heart of the State representative concerns.

Nonetheless, this intervention will be focusing on an essential and sovereign competence that remains under the state authority: safety and security.

Ensuring a stable environment for the populations and economic actors is one of the most essential missions of the State.

As a matter of facts, we cannot tell about maritime economy without mentioning marine security, marine surveillance or else harbor security and safety.

The maritime economy and commercial exchanges by sea depend upon the safety of the maritime links and also of the proper operation of harbor installations and equipment.

Even though these security issues may seem at first sight far enough from your economic, commercial, logistic concerns... there is no economic development or innovation without security.

This strong need for security may be found in any decision or investment project, or any economic development, or territory planning operation.

In a first stage, in the field of harbor security, we are getting today to the end of a process we initiated in 2004 with the Papeete Port Authority.

Indeed the international code for the ship and harbor installations safety (ISPS) was endorsed by France in 2004. This code, as you know, makes it mandatory to implement strict security standards in the harbors handling international ocean-going vessels.

Standards that are aimed at preventing or reducing the impact of possible ill-will action, from mere delinquency to act of sabotage or terrorism.

In practical terms, they are very simple measures, quite similar to those applied in the airport sector, making it possible to have access to a level of security that can be compared to that of the main international airports: *monitoring of the access to restricted areas, inspection/screening and scanning of the passengers, securing sensitive areas with physical protections, guarding and surveillance, video-protection...*

Since 2004, the High Commissioner services have identified and defined the whole of the harbor installations that fall within the application of the ISPS code in French Polynesia and has required the performance of assessment works and of security plans for all these terminals.

Of course, the Papeete Harbor is among them, but also the Uturoa wharf and certain moorings sheltering cruise ships in the archipelagoes.

This work carried out along with the French Polynesia maritime affairs and the Papeete Port Authority, was implemented while the regulations in force in mainland France were not yet totally applicable to French Polynesia

These port security measures have made it possible to rapidly have a number of port facilities available and registered in the international maritime organization (OMI) thus giving French Polynesia an international recognition, but also a guarantee as to the applied level of security.

This security level, as you can imagine, is carefully observed by the ship-owners, the shipping companies and international cruise vessel operators.

Security is not an end in itself. It puts itself available to more essential stakes for the community, and specially the economic stakes, whether they are of an industrial, commercial or touristic nature.

Concerning the latter stakes, our direction of the law and order take from now on specific measures for the prevention of the facts of crime (thefts, risk of aggression) in city center. These measures are strengthened during the presence of cruise passengers on the ground by police patrols dedicated to their safety and security.

Without any respect to the level of threat that may put the territory at risk, the harbor security and safety systems are essential as the good operation of the Port of Papeete is a condition for providing supplies to the whole French Polynesia territory: food, commercial goods or energy resources...

In a second phase, in the field of civil security, we also give particular attention to the Papeete international harbor zone as it concentrates certain technological risks (*storage of oil products, of gases, industrial activities*), and this in the vicinity of downtown Papeete.

A collective work between the Country, the Port Authority and the State services have resulted in last May in the signing of a memorandum of understanding along with the oil products suppliers in order to move away the current Fare Ute oil storage area which does not comply any more with the expected safety towards the east breakwater.

We also mean to respond to a double objective: optimizing the storage safety in installations that comply with the most recent safety and security standards, and maintaining the tanks away from the inhabited zone. The old Fare Ute storage shall be dismantled and de-polluted, so as to allow the reuse of the site once it has been returned to the port authority for a new use.

Adding to this memorandum of understanding is a new project aimed at assessing the dangers for the port zone launched by the Ministry of Equipment and that we will support in particular with all the staff concerned in my civil protection and security directorate with the aim of still enhancing the harbor zone security and safety.

Every day, the harbor professionals and users are committed to maintaining security, for example through the performance of repetitive exercises in which various types of incidents are simulated. This is a good way to check the capabilities of public and private services to cope with any event in a coordinated and efficient manner.

As to these security issues but also population protection or else public security concerns, I wished to remind that the State services, under the authority of the High Commissioner, will continue to support and help the actors of the maritime economy.

I thank you for your attention and now give the floor to Commander Rossignol, representing the armed forces in French Polynesia and who will complete my presentation by telling about the action and means of the French State in the field of security and maritime patrolling in the Pacific zone.