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Talofa Ms Simpson,

**RE: PARTICIPATION REPORT - IPBA 2012 ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE NEW DELHI**

*Thank you very much!*

Thank you to you and your committee for inviting me to participate at the Inter-Pacific Bar Association's (IPBA) 2012 Annual Meeting and Conference in New Delhi, India. Thank you also for sponsoring that participation. I felt extremely privileged to have experienced the event which I found to be a real 'eye-opener'.

*Purpose of Report*

This is not a legal dissertation nor is it a discussion of substantive legal issues covered during the course of the conference. It is a report on my participation, my objectives in participating, whether or not I achieved them, and the value that I took away from participating at this event.

*My objectives for participating at IPBA 2012*

When I applied to the IPBA Scholarship Committee for funding to attend IPBA 2012 I indicated that my objectives were to;

- Represent the Pacific Island region,
- Pursue professional and personal interests in particular substantive areas of law,
- Engage with professional peers from across the Asia-Pacific region, and
- Establish a network of professional contacts across the Asia-Pacific region.

*Did I achieve my objectives?*

Yes I believe that I did achieve my objectives in the following ways.

- Each day of the conference I wore common work-attire for the Pacific Region, an *ie faitaga* and a business shirt, which might loosely be described as our modernised traditional dress. I made conscious decision to present myself that way, as opposed to donning a business suit like others, even though I knew it would appear 'out of place'. The net effect of that decision was to draw attention to myself and, in effect, my region. I received many enquiries – mainly directly but sometimes less so – about my attire and, as a natural flow on from that, where I was from (country and region), the legal system and specific substantive legal considerations/issues in my country and around the region.
- I tried to absorb as much legal substance as possible by attending the Plenary Session and as many Working Committee meetings as possible. It was impossible to get to all Working Committee meetings as so many ran concurrently. It was also difficult to prioritise one Working Committee meeting over another. There were so many sessions of interest but unfortunately again they were run concurrently. The Working Committee meetings I attended were *Regulatory Challenges Faced by Global Institutions; The Rising Significance of Cross-Border Employment : Issues, Difficulties & Solutions; Legal Trends, Thoughts & Times - Tax & Regulatory - Effective Cross Border Finance; Legal Trends, Thoughts & Times - Recent Issues with Cross-Border M&A and Private Equity Investment; and Legal Trends, Thoughts & Times - Recent Issues with Cross-Border Franchising*. There were so many substantive areas being covered that I was interested in that clashed from a timing perspective which made it difficult to take full advantage of the expertise available. That noted, the organised social events provided an excellent opportunity to follow up with specific presenters one-on-one in a slightly more relaxed environment. The opportunities to engage 'in the margins' were fantastic.

- A simple measure of whether or not I was able to engage with peers from across the Asia-Pacific Region and establish a network of contacts can be reflected in the number of other people's business cards that I returned to Samoa with. I returned with just over 100 business cards. With some of them my exchange had been 'fleeting' and with others it had been more substantive. That notwithstanding, I did email all of them. That is, at the end of each day of the conference I emailed every person from whom I had received a business card that day. The vast majority responded by email or sought me out the following day to continue discussions. On my return to Samoa I was still in touch by email with a just over a dozen people, some on a personal as well as professional level, and with 3 contacts discussions over professional collaboration were initiated with one resulting in a joint bid for a project.

*Comments*

From my perspective, I thought that participating at IPBA 2012 was indeed a valuable exercise and I am extremely grateful that that participation was facilitated by the IPBA Scholarship Committee. My objectives were clear and, as noted above and on the previous page, I was able to tick all boxes in that regard.

I noted earlier that being that event was a real 'eye opener' for me. Indeed it was particularly in terms of scale. Everything that we were exposed to at IPBA 2012 was just so much bigger than what I am used to in Samoa. As a single example to demonstrate the magnitude of the scale, Samoa has a population of 180,000 people. In India there are now 1,000,000 lawyers admitted to the bar! The comparisons also extended, without being limited, to firm size, transaction dollar value, annual revenues, transactional revenues and fees. Even the size, physical and number of courts, at the High Court was in a different league to what I am used to. We have 4 Supreme Courts and 2 District Courts throughout Samoa. The High Court of Delhi was comprised of 2 buildings each hosting 30 court rooms. The level of security applied just to gain access to the Court House was also an 'eye opener'. We have no such requirement in Samoa.

When applying for the IPBA scholarship I was required to note how I could promote IPBA in Samoa. The answer I provided then remains valid. That is, I think there are at least two (2) ways that I can help promote IPBA in my country, across the Pacific region and perhaps even over a larger geographical footprint. For example, subtle promotion is possible through the inclusion of an IPBA link from my office website, as well the appearance of IPBA logos and basic contact details on my office stationery (e.g. business cards, letterhead and with compliments slips). Slightly more overt promotion would be possible, where appropriate, through say public speaking engagements such as the Samoa Law Society's biennial law seminar.

Thank you again very much for enabling the Pacific to be represented at the Inter-Pacific Bar Association 2012 Annual Meeting and Conference.

Yours faithfully





Jason Annandale  
(Partner)