



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®)  
1315 East West Highway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Melissa Iwamoto  
Director  
Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS)  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa  
1680 East West Road, POST 815  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear Ms. Iwamoto,

Congratulations, this letter is formal notification that NOAA has approved your application to be (re) certified as a Regional Information Coordination Entity (RICE) for a term of five years. This decision was made after careful and considerate review of all information that you provided on July 10, 2020, September 10, 2020, and October 12, 2020, about your organizational structure and operations.

Review of your application demonstrated that PacIOOS meets all of the requirements to be certified as a RICE, as identified in the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System implementing regulations to Certify and Integrate RICEs (15 C.F.R. §§ 997.13 *et seq.*). PacIOOS will formally be integrated into the National Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System upon completion of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NOAA and PacIOOS.

In reviewing your application, we have determined that the following individuals meet the criteria to be considered employees of a certified RICE, as defined in the rule:

- Melissa Iwamoto - Individual responsible for overall RICE management.
- Charles Young - responsible for observations systems management across the region.
- Pierre Flament - responsible for observations systems management across the region.
- Kim Holland - responsible for observations systems management across the region.
- Margaret McManus - responsible for observations systems management across the region.
- Jim Potemra - responsible for the coordination and management of observation data across the region.

For the purpose of certification, NOAA approves these individuals as employees of PacIOOS, a certified RICE.

In reviewing your application, we determined that the following individuals do not meet the criteria to be considered for employees of a certified RICE, as defined in the rule:



- Fiona Langenberger is the PacIOOS Communications and Program Coordinator. In this role she independently manages program projects and oversees outreach, communications, and stakeholder engagement throughout the Pacific Islands region. She also supervises students working with PacIOOS management to increase outreach and engagement efforts. Under this requirement, a RICE is requested to “identify, as applicable, the individual(s) responsible for overall RICE management.” The position description for Lagenberger does not satisfy the requirements listed in 997.26(c) to be considered employees of a RICE as defined in the rule.
- John Maurer is the secondary DMAC lead and is the PacIOOS Data System Engineer. However, he is not responsible for the overall management of data operations. A RICE is requested to “Identify, as applicable, the individual(s) responsible for observations system management across the region.” The position description for Maurer does not satisfy the requirements listed in 997.26(c) to be considered employees of a RICE as defined in the rule.

We also determined that:

- PacIOOS noted that there were delays to archival of near shore sensor and wave quality buoy data, due to file format changes. Progress has resumed and PacIOOS anticipates archiving these datasets in fall 2020.
- Although not raised as a concern by the Office, the PacIOOS application references the Operational Plan, which is to include more operational objectives and information, and is in the process of being completed. In approving the PacIOOS as a certified RICE, NOAA recognizes that PacIOOS has agreed to make the final document available on the website.

This approval letter does not formally establish PacIOOS as a certified RICE. When the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is signed by both the U.S. IOOS Office and PacIOOS, PacIOOS will then be formally certified as a RICE.

Please confirm to me and Oriana Villar (Oriana.Villar@noaa.gov), via email or letter, that you agree to the conditions listed above. Upon receipt of this consent, we will initiate the MOA process, sending the draft MOA to you for review.

On confirmation that you agree with the terms of the MOA, the U.S. IOOS Office will submit the agreement on PacIOOS’ behalf to the National Ocean Service. Upon NOS’ approval, after NOAA clearance, PacIOOS will be asked to sign the MOA followed by the U.S. IOOS Office. This is important because PacIOOS will not have civil liability protection until the MOA is signed by both parties.

Sincerely,

Carl Gouldman  
Director, U.S. IOOS Office