



**The Government of the Republic of Marshall Islands (GoRMI)**  
**Ministry of Public Works, Infrastructure and Utilities (MPWIU)**  
**RMI Urban Resilience Project (RMIURP) - P177124**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Building Regulation Specialist</b> (Individual Consultant)
<b>Location:</b>	Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands
<b>Hiring agency:</b>	Ministry of Public Works, Infrastructure and Utilities (MPWIU), Government of RMI
<b>Duration:</b>	18 months; may be extended based upon needs and performance of the consultant.
<b>Expected start date:</b>	<b>June 2026</b>

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## **1. Background**

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is one of the world's smallest, most isolated, and vulnerable nations. The nation is a small-island, large-ocean state, comprised of 29 coral atolls and 5 single islands, with a total land area of only 182 km<sup>2</sup>, spread across over 2 million km<sup>2</sup> of ocean. There are 24 inhabited atolls and islands, which are mostly remote and lie merely 2 m above sea level on average. Its population is estimated at approximately 60,000 with over 70 percent living in the rapidly urbanizing areas of Majuro (Majuro atoll) and Ebeye (Kwajalein atoll), which are among the most densely populated urban centers globally. These atolls and islands form two groups: the Ratak Chain and the Ralik Chain.

Uncontrolled urbanization is occurring across the Pacific region and the GoRMI needs targeted strategies and investment planning tools to address these risks. RMI's primary urban centers offer increased prosperity through economic, health and education opportunities, yet rapid uncontrolled development increases the risk from natural hazards to people, assets, and infrastructure. Rapid urbanization, if not planned strategically and regulated, creates additional risks and growing exposure to natural hazards through the increased concentration of people and assets. The vulnerability of building assets in these urban areas, including approximately 5,800 buildings in Majuro and 1,800 buildings in Kwajalein atoll, is exacerbated by increasing densification of built-up areas and limited building code compliance and regulation. In addition, the lack of formal development controls and spatial plans lead to uncontrolled development, with new developments often exposed to coastal and other natural hazards.

The issues of rapid urbanization and poor-quality housing stock in RMI will be further exacerbated by the long-term effects of climate change and natural disasters. For example: (i) sea level rise will cause property damage, displace urban residents, and damage transport networks in low-lying Marshallese settlements; (ii) increasing frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones will further disrupt city services and economic activity, as well as cause loss of life and damages to assets; (iii) heavier precipitation events will cause serious flood in urban areas, often already subject to poor urban drainage and unregulated over-development; (iv) increasing frequency of freshwater shortages during the dry season that limit access to safe freshwater resources year-round; and (v) increasing occurrence of extreme heat events that may become intensified by the overuse of impermeable surfaces in urban areas, increasing urban air temperatures

Integrated land planning on a national and local level has been identified as critical to managing the issues related to urbanization and climate change. This will require strong participatory processes with relevant stakeholders (e.g., landowners, public authorities, private sector and local communities) to look at how to better manage current land use as well as building the capacity for sustainable land management in light of climate change adaptation.

The Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (GoRMI), through the Ministry of Works, Infrastructure and Utilities (MWIU), is implementing the RMI Urban Resilience Project (RMIURP), a World Bank-funded project aimed at strengthening the resilience of select urban areas in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. The project includes four components<sup>1</sup> as set out below:

- **Component 1 - Risk-informed adaptation planning:** This component will strengthen the Government's institutional and technical capacity on risk-informed adaptation planning through enhanced spatial planning, capacity building support for implementation and compliance of the building code, and development control policies or guidance that consider disaster and climate risks
- **Component 2 - Coastal resilience investments:** This component will finance targeted coastal resilience measures which will protect select government infrastructure and/or prioritized assets in Majuro.
- **Component 3 - Resilient public facilities:** This Component will finance investments that are demonstrative of resilient, inclusive, and sustainable standards that may be achieved in future public facilities in RMI.
- **Component 4 - Project management and implementation support:** This component will support day-to-day coordination, management, and implementation of the project, while building institutional capacity to sustain investments beyond the project's closure such as through technical training
- **Component 5 – Disaster Preparedness and Response:** This component will support national-level initiatives to enhance the preparedness of urban communities to disasters, including through a disaster management information system and investments in atoll-level disaster planning, training, and sirens.

The engagement of the Building Regulation Specialist is being supported as an additional activity under Component 1 – Risk-informed adaptation planning through the Additional Financing for the RMI Urban Resilience Project.

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank. (2022). Marshall Islands – RMI Urban Resilience Project. Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/285091651270771293/marshall-islands-rmi-urban-resilience-project>

The Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has adopted the RMI National Building Code (2021) and enacted the Building Code Act (2025) to establish a national framework for regulating building design, construction, and safety. The Building Safety Regulation Division (BSR) within the MPWIU is responsible for administering the building permit system, including receiving applications, coordinating technical reviews, issuing permits, and conducting construction inspections.

The building permit process also requires coordination with several government approval agencies responsible for utilities, environmental regulation, fire safety, land administration, and other development approvals. Administrative procedures, permit review workflows, and inspection systems are currently being implemented within the BSR as part of the establishment of the national building regulatory system. These systems are at an early operational stage and continue to be refined as the building code is implemented. To support the ongoing implementation and operation of the building permit system, MPWIU seeks to engage a Building Regulation Specialist with appropriate qualification and relevant practical experience working within a building regulation office at the national or subnational level.

## **2. Implementation Arrangements**

The Building Regulation Specialist will be based within the MPWIU, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands. The specialist will work directly with the BSR and will provide day-to-day hands-on support to BSR staff through capacity building and training activities. The Consultant will be embedded within the BSR office, working alongside government staff to support the development and implementation of the building regulatory system. The Consultant will also be expected to assist BSR with the management of a consulting firm, also hired under the Urban Resilience Project, that will support BSR through the provision of coordinated multi-disciplinary expertise for the interpretation and application of the National Building Code.

## **3. Purpose of the Assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to support the implementation of the building regulatory system administered by the BSR of the MPWIU through both institutional strengthening and capacity building. The Consultant will provide hands-on practical expertise to support the effective functioning of the building permit administration and construction inspection system established under the RMI National Building Code 2021 (NBC)<sup>2</sup> and the *National Building Code Act 2025*.<sup>3</sup> The role focuses on strengthening the day-to-day administration of the NBC regulatory system and institutional capacity within BSR, (not the provision of engineering or design services) by establishing policy and procedure framework for BSR (to enhance continued institutional capacity beyond this project) and developing a capacity building and training program for BSR and other relevant stakeholders. This will entail hands-on support to help establish and implement building permit administration processes, technical review coordination procedures, and construction inspection systems.

## **4. Objective of the Assignment**

The key objectives of this assignment are to: a) Support the effective operation of the building permit administration system within the BSR Division; b) Establish a mechanism for the coordination of technical reviews and approval agency inputs within the building permit process and develop procedures and tools to support its implementation; c) Support the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://rmimpwiu.com/building-code/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://rmi-parliament.org/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2025/2025-0036A/2025-0036A\\_1.pdf](https://rmi-parliament.org/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2025/2025-0036A/2025-0036A_1.pdf)

implementation of construction inspection procedures in accordance with the NBC; d) Strengthen administrative procedures, documentation systems, and regulatory workflows used by BSR; e) Provide mentoring and on-the-job support to BSR staff and other GoRMI stakeholders administering building permits and inspections.

## **5. Scope of Services**

The Building Regulation Specialist will provide the following services:

### **5.1 Permit Administration Processes**

- Advise on, prepare procedures and tools (e.g., checklists), and establish workflow processes for the implementation and refinement of administrative procedures for receiving and processing building permit applications.
- Advise on, prepare procedures and tools (e.g., checklists), and establish workflow processes for the operation of building permit application intake procedures and submission requirements.
- Advise on, prepare procedures and tools, and establish workflow processes for the operation and improvement of internal document management and application tracking systems.
- Develop a procedure and workflow for process for BSR to maintain permit records and documentation associated with the permit process, and train BSR on the procedure.
- Advise on and support the development of building permit fee structures for BSR, for subsequent legal review and submission to Cabinet as a regulation.

### **5.2 Coordination of Technical Reviews**

- Advise on a procedure and assist with managing the coordination and ongoing operation of technical reviews of building permit applications from approval agencies and other technical experts that may be engaged by BSR.
- Develop review checklists and permit assessment workflows and train BSR on applying them in practice.
- Develop a procedure/tool and establish a formal mechanism to coordinate permit review inputs from relevant government approval agencies responsible for utilities, environmental regulation, fire safety, land administration, and other development approvals. Assist BSR with the coordination of inputs for building permit applications received while the Consultant is based in BSR.
- Develop a policy/procedure and appropriate tools (e.g., decision-making tree) to seek and coordinate technical inputs from technical experts that may be engaged by BSR.
- Advise BSR on facilitating communication and information exchanges between BSR, approval agencies, and permit applicants to support timely review of applications.
- Develop a procedure and tools for managing requests for information (RFIs) and communications with applicants and assist BSR with responding to these RFIs while based in BSR.
- The specialist will not be expected to undertake complex detailed technical engineering reviews, which will be undertaken by the multidisciplinary technical advisory team but should have sufficient expertise to review small scale routine projects in house.

### **5.3 Construction Inspection Systems**

- Develop procedures and tools (e.g., inspection checklists aligned with the NBC) for the implementation and refinement of construction inspection procedures, and carry out training with BSR and other stakeholders on how to apply these procedures and tools when carrying out construction inspections.
- Develop and establish a procedure for managing inspection scheduling and documentation procedures, and train BSR on the procedure.
- Develop and establish a procedure for maintaining inspection reporting formats and compliance documentation, and train BSR on the procedure.
- Develop and establish a procedure for maintaining inspection records and compliance tracking systems.

#### 5.4 Standard Operating Procedures

- Finalize and document standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the building permit system, including those mentioned above.
- Propose and review defined internal BSR roles and responsibilities within the permit process, including for planned new staffing positions in BSR.
- Provide detailed and practical recommendations, suited to RMI's context, to improve efficiency and transparency in permit processing.

#### 5.5 Construction Practitioner Registration System and Supporting Systems

- Develop and implement a Construction Practitioner Registration System for electrical and plumbing trades in line with the National Building Code Act (2025), including:
  - A registration framework covering practitioner categories, eligibility criteria (including transitional arrangements), and registration processes and documentation requirements
  - Draft supporting regulations in a form suitable for legal review and Cabinet submission
  - Administrative procedures for maintaining and operating the practitioner register
  - Defined linkages between practitioner registration, the building permit process, and initial categories of restricted work
- Design and implement a practitioner register database appropriate to the scale and capacity of BSR, including:
  - Practitioner records, registration status tracking, and unique registration identifiers
  - Alignment with permit and inspection records
  - Basic reporting and data extraction functionality
- Consult and coordinate with Marshalls Energy Company and Majuro Water and Sewer Company to:
  - Establish a light-touch approach for recording practitioner information through existing utility connection processes
  - Enable information sharing to support BSR monitoring and compliance activities
  - Ensure no additional regulatory or enforcement responsibilities are placed on utility providers

#### 5.6 Capacity Building and On-the-Job Training

- Provide day-to-day practical mentoring and on-the-job training to BSR staff and other relevant stakeholders (as decided by BSR).

- Share and document good practice approaches to administering building regulatory systems within small island contexts.
- Provide training to BSR staff in developing familiarity with ICC code structures and regulatory processes.

## 6. Reporting Obligations

The Building Regulation Specialist will report to the Assistant Secretary of the BSR within the MPWIU. The Consultant will work closely with BSR staff and will coordinate with the multidisciplinary technical advisory team planned to be engaged to support technical reviews of building permit applications.

The Consultant will prepare monthly progress reports summarizing activities undertaken during the reporting period based on the agreed scope of services. These reports will include progress in the implementation of permit administration procedures, coordination of technical reviews and approval agency inputs, construction inspection activities, and capacity-building and training support provided to BSR staff.

The Consultant will also be required to work closely with the Project Manager for the Urban Resilience Project, including providing progress reporting inputs, recommendations to support ongoing improvements to the building regulatory system, and technical advice on BSR mandates as they relate to other project activities such as public buildings and spaces.

### 6.1 Indicative Deliverables and Expected Outputs

The following indicative schedule outlines the anticipated outputs and deliverables expected from the Consultant over the duration of the 18-month assignment. The schedule may be refined by MPWIU and BSR during implementation to reflect operational priorities and evolving project requirements.

Month	Focus Area	Expected Output/Deliverable
1	Mobilization and baseline assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception meeting completed</li> <li>• Detailed implementation workplan submitted</li> <li>• Baseline assessment of permit administration, inspection and records system completed</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement plan prepared</li> </ul>
2	Permit administration review and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing permit administration workflows reviewed</li> <li>• Gap assessment completed</li> <li>• Draft permit intake procedures prepared</li> <li>• Initial permit tracking requirement identified</li> <li>• Submission requirements and checklists prepared</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft application workflow finalized</li> </ul>
3	Approval agency coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal mechanism for approval agency inputs established</li> <li>• Communication protocols developed</li> </ul>
4	Practitioner registration framework; SOP manual draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction practitioner framework developed</li> <li>• Registration categories and eligibility criteria established</li> <li>• Administrative procedures drafted</li> <li>• Draft SOP prepared</li> </ul>
5-6	Construction inspection procedures, systems, implementation, and inspection capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction inspection procedures developed</li> <li>• RMI-NBC aligned inspection checklists completed</li> <li>• Inspection scheduling procedures prepared</li> <li>• Inspection reporting templates established</li> <li>• Compliance documentation procedures developed</li> <li>• Inspection records management system introduced</li> <li>• Inspection training delivered</li> <li>• On-site mentoring undertaken</li> <li>• Compliance tracking procedures operationalized</li> </ul>
7	Technical review coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedure for coordinating technical reviews prepared</li> <li>• Inter-agency review process developed</li> <li>• Initial review coordination meeting facilitated</li> </ul>
8	Practitioner database implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practitioner register database established</li> <li>• Registration tracking and reporting functionality operationalized</li> <li>• Integration with permit systems completed</li> </ul>
8	Technical assessment tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit assessment checklists finalized</li> <li>• Technical review workflow implemented</li> <li>• Decision-support tools prepared</li> </ul>
9-10	Permit operations support; SOP manual draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical implementation support to BSR delivered</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOP manual draft completed</li> <li>• Workflow refinements completed</li> </ul>
11-12	Regulatory and registration systems; SOP review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft supporting regulation prepared</li> <li>• Registration application process completed</li> <li>• Transitional arrangements documented</li> <li>• SOP review and refinement completed</li> </ul>
13-17	Capacity building and institutional strengthening, system consolidation and transition; final SOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured training program delivered</li> <li>• ICC code familiarization completed</li> <li>• Good practice guidance documented</li> <li>• Permit and inspection systems refined</li> <li>• Transition and continuity arrangement prepared</li> <li>• Final SOP package completed</li> </ul>
18	Assignment completion and handover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final implementation report submitted</li> <li>• Final recommendations report submitted</li> <li>• Handover of procedures, templates, databases and tools completed</li> <li>• Final stakeholder workshop and close-out completed</li> </ul>

## 7. Duration of Assignment

The Building Regulation Specialist will be engaged for a period of 18 months, with the possibility of extension subject to performance and the operational needs of the BSR. The assignment is expected to commence following completion of the procurement process and contract negotiations.

The position will be based in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Consultant will work on a full-time basis within the offices of the MPWIU. The Consultant may be required to undertake occasional travel within the Republic of the Marshall Islands, including travel to outer islands, in connection with building permit administration activities, coordination with approval agencies, and construction inspection activities.

## 8. Performance of the Consultant

During the term of engagement, the Consultant shall perform the required duties in a diligent and professional manner and to a high standard acceptable to the MPWIU.

The Consultant will work during normal government office hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) unless otherwise agreed. Additional hours may occasionally be required to accommodate meetings, permit processing activities, inspection schedules, or other urgent matters related to the administration of the building permit system.

The MPWIU reserves the right to evaluate the Consultant's performance during the assignment. Performance evaluations may be undertaken periodically to assess the quality of services provided and progress against the objectives of the assignment. Satisfactory performance of the Consultant will be considered when determining any extension of the assignment.

The Consultant may be required to maintain appropriate records of activities undertaken during the assignment, including records of permit administration activities, inspection coordination, and capacity building support provided to the BSR.

## **9. Data, Services and Facilities to be Provided by the Client**

The MPWIU will provide the Consultant with access to relevant documentation, including materials related to the implementation of the building regulatory system. The MPWIU will provide office space within the BSR in Majuro, including basic office furniture, access to internet services, and access to office equipment necessary, for the performance of the assignment. The Consultant will be required to provide their own laptop for the assignment.

The Consultant will be provided with access to existing permit administration systems, records, and documentation relevant to the building permit process. The Consultant will be responsible for personal expenses associated with local transportation to and from the office and other normal living expenses while based in Majuro.

## **10. Required Qualifications and Experience**

The Building Regulation Specialist shall demonstrate practical experience working within a government or local authority building regulatory environment responsible for administering building permits and construction inspections.

### **10.1 Mandatory Qualifications and Experience**

#### Education

- A qualification in building surveying, construction management, architecture, civil engineering, building inspection, or a related built environment discipline, or
- A recognized professional certification in building inspection, building control, or building surveying, AND
- Extensive professional experience working within a government or municipal building regulatory authority.

#### Professional Experience

- Minimum 10 years' experience working in a building control, building consent, or building regulation office within a municipal or national government authority.
- Direct experience processing building permits or building consents within a government or local government authority.
- Demonstrated experience administering building inspection programmes during construction.
- Experience implementing or improving building permit administration systems, inspection regimes, and regulatory procedures.
- Experience supporting the implementation of building codes based on the International Code Council (ICC) framework.

#### Technical Knowledge and Skills

- Strong understanding of building permit administration, compliance review coordination, and construction inspection processes.
- Experience implementing inspection procedures, inspection checklists, and compliance documentation systems.
- Working familiarity with International Code Council (ICC) codes and referenced standards.
- Knowledge of current construction practices and building technologies relevant to code compliance.

#### Information Systems and Data Management

- Permit management systems, databases, and digital record-keeping systems used in building regulatory offices.
- Data management and reporting systems for tracking permit applications, inspections, and compliance outcomes.
- Use of mobile inspection tools or inspection applications for recording site inspections and compliance checks.
- General proficiency with information technology systems, including database platforms, document management systems, and spreadsheet reporting tools.

#### Communication and Public Interface

- Experience working in public-facing regulatory roles, providing guidance to applicants, designers, contractors, and the public.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Ability to clearly explain permit requirements, inspection outcomes, and compliance expectations to applicants and contractors.

### **10.2 Desirable Qualifications and Experience**

- Experience working in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) or similar regulatory environments.
- Experience working in the Pacific region.
- Experience supporting the implementation of new or emerging building regulatory systems.

