



---

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

**REVIEW REPORT ON THE NATIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY 2012 ANNUAL  
REPORT**



**PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI  
Parliamentary Paper No. 5 of 2016**

*24 April, 2017*

---

*Published and Printed by the Department of Legislature, Parliament House, SUVA*

## Table of Contents

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD .....	3
RECOMMENDATION: .....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	4
Background .....	4
Review Mandate.....	4
Review Objectives & Scope .....	4
Review Methodology .....	4
Documentary Review – 2012 Annual Report .....	4
Consultation .....	5
FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW .....	6
Overview .....	6
2012 Achievements: .....	6
Challenges .....	7
Gender Analysis.....	7
CONCLUSION .....	8
APPENDICES .....	10
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	10
APPENDIX 2: Powerpoint Presentation by the National Fire Authority .....	12
APPENDIX 3:Verbatim notes .....	13

## **CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD**

I am pleased to present the Committee review report on the assessment made to the National Fire Authority (NFA) 2012 Annual Report.

The assessment made to NFA's 2012 Annual Report was done in accordance with Section 109 (2)(b) of the Standing Orders of Parliament, in which the Standing Committee on Social Affairs is mandated to look into issues related to health, education, social services, labour, culture, media and their administration.

Initially, the Committee after its internal deliberation on the Annual Report then invited NFA to present some of the key aspects for its performance. Some of the key areas that were presented to the Committee included NFA's budgetary performance, organizational structure, administration, major achievements and challenges.

The assessments made by the Committee revealed that out of the 95 fire incidents, majority (91%) of the fire incidents that had happened in 2012 were residential properties than the commercial fires (9%) related incidents. The Committee commended the work of NFA in 2012 which they had responded to a total of 2,798 fire incidents which has increased by 374 compared to NFA's 2011 fire incidents response.

The review Report is a bipartisan one which has the input of both sides of the Committee. The Committee has noted the contents of the annual report, and due to the time that has lapsed, the Committee anticipates that corrective actions have been taken by NFA to address the challenges and issues that were faced by the NFA in 2012.

The Committee acknowledges the efforts of the NFA in providing first-hand information to the Members in relation to NFA's performance as per detailed in the 2012 Annual Report. Also I would like to thank the Members of the Committee and all their substantial effort in the consultation as well as in the formulation of this bipartisan report.

Finally, I would like to also thank the Secretariat Team for their continuous support towards the compilation and the finalization of this Committee report.

With these words, on behalf of the Committee I commend this Report to Parliament.



**Hon. Viam Pillay**  
**Chairperson of the Social Affairs Standing Committee**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has conducted a review of the 2012 Annual Report for the National Fire Authority and have noted the contents of the report, and due to the time that has lapsed, the Committee anticipates that corrective actions have been taken by NFA to address the challenges that were faced by NFA in 2012.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BACKGROUND**

This report contains the findings of the review that was conducted on the 2012 Annual Report for the National Fire Authority.

### **REVIEW MANDATE**

The resolution from Parliament on the Annual Report was in line with the Standing Orders 109(2) (b) which allows the Standing Committee on Social Affairs to look into matters related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

### **REVIEW OBJECTIVES & SCOPE**

The review was confined to the following areas identified in the Section 110 (1) (c) of the Standing Orders of Parliament which authorises the Standing Committee to scrutinise the government departments with responsibility within the Committee's subject area, including by investigating, inquiring into, and making recommendations relating to any aspect of such a department's administration, legislation or proposed legislative program, budget, rationalisation, restructuring, functioning, organisation, structure and policy formulation.

### **REVIEW METHODOLOGY**

The following methodologies were utilised to gather information for the review:

#### **DOCUMENTARY REVIEW – 2012 ANNUAL REPORT**

The review was undertaken through assessment of NFA's annual report that was tabled in Parliament and referred to the Committee. The documents include:

- Annual Report;
- Annual Report Summary & Analysis from Research Unit;
- PowerPoint presentation from NFA; and
- Verbatim Notes from Hansard Office.

## CONSULTATION

The Committee during its consultation invited NFA officials to present and brief the Members on their performance in 2012 as well as to provide responses on some of the pertinent issues raised by Members which was found in their Annual Report.

The Committee had scrutinised the Annual Report before NFA officials were called in for a brief on their performance. The NFA was assessed based on their key performance indicators and during the review process the Members agreed to highlight in this report only the major achievements, major issues and challenges that had affected their deliverables in 2012.

The assessments made by the Committee revealed that out of the 95 fire incidents, majority (91%) of the fire incidents that had happened in 2012 were residential properties than the commercial fires (9%) related incidents. The Committee commended the work of NFA in 2012 which they had responded to a total of 2,798 fire incidents which has increased by 374 compared to NFA's 2011 fire incidents response. The Committee on its recommendation raised that due to the time that has lapsed, the Committee anticipates that the issues and challenges faced by NFA are addressed.

## FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

---

### National Fire Authority (NFA) 2012 Annual Report

---

#### OVERVIEW

This report has been prepared after scrutinising the NFA report for 2012. The presentation made by NFA highlighted some key aspects of its operation.

#### 2012 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There was a reduction of structural fires to 95 in 2012 when compared to 120 in 2011.
- NFA procured 6 second hand fire trucks from Country Fire Authority of Victoria, Australia which has boosted capability in few Stations.
- The NFA had also received a 20' container load donation of second hand fire tunics from the Country Fire Authority of Victoria, Australia.
- It has also purchased and installed 140 fire hydrants around the country.
- NFA also purchased a new Financial Management Information System to replace the manual accounts processing that they previously used.
- It also developed the new Strategic Plan for the next 5 years from 2013 to 2017.
- It has also strengthened the procurement process with the securing of Supplier Contracts with suitable Suppliers.
- NFA has secured the funding of \$40,000 from UNICEF for the Ministry of Education to develop a new Pupil's Activity Fire Safety Workbook for Classes 5 and 6.
- The NFA has also received \$25,000 worth of medical equipment from JICA and Matsusaka Fire Department of Japan.
- NFA has also received Emergency Medical Activity Training which was conducted by the Matsusaka Fire Department of Japan for the 47 local Firefighters. Also noted by the Committee that 60 Firefighters also underwent paramedics training and attachment at the CWM hospital.
- NFA 's training and awareness program in schools has been recognized after a Form 7 student, Mosese Volavola of Nadi was awarded a President's Bravery Medal after he rescued a toddler during a house fire in Nadi.

## CHALLENGES

Some of the issues that were highlighted by the National Fire Authority are as follows:

- **Funding streams** – NFA heavily reliant on insurance levies and the risk of reduction in insurance policy holders and premium.
- **Fire boundaries** – The delay on the expansion of boundaries and duplication of process was also an issue to NFA. This in terms of the Declaration of Town and City boundaries and any extensions thereof as Fire Boundaries would assist NFA's financial position.
- **Land acquisition** – The securing of appropriate land for NFA's expansion plans to adequately cover the whole of Fiji was also an issue and therefore, NFA raised that of all new developments there should be land allocation for Fire and Police Stations.
- **Government funding assistance** – The securing of sufficient funding for Capital projects was also an issue for the expansion of NFA's services to the community and enable coverage for the whole of Fiji.
- **Change in Community Attitude towards Fire Safety** – NFA further raised the assistance required from all levels in the community towards encouraging the adherence of fire safety measures.
- **Substandard fire fighting equipment and building materials** – The NFA also highlighted that the need to strengthen all control measures on the importation of substandard materials such as electrical appliances, insulation foils, etc., and firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, etc.
- **Review of NFA Legislation** – Finally, NFA highlighted the issue on determination of sustainable funding streams and adoption of the new NFA legislation to strengthen NFA's role.

## Gender Analysis

Gender is a critical dimension to parliamentary scrutiny. Under Standing Order 110 (2) where a committee conducts an activity listed in clause (1), the Committee shall ensure full consideration will be given to the principle of gender equality so as to ensure all matters are considered with regard to the impact and benefit on both men and women equally.

The Committee considered the issue of equal opportunity for all citizens including women and men during the consultation process of this Annual Report as well as during the deliberation and finalization of the Report.

The Committee is satisfied that the matters considered in this report will impact on both men and women equally in Fiji.

## **CONCLUSION**

The review that was conducted by the Committee on this Annual Report was conducted in a very tactful and comprehensive manner which covers all the aspects of the 2012 Annual Report. This has enabled the Committee on Social Affairs to submit to Parliament a comprehensive report.

The issues raised by the Members were discussed during the inquiry and most of the issues raised by the Members are currently being considered by NFA.

The response from NFA was positive in which they manage to clarify on the issues which were raised by the Members during the inquiry. Moreover, given the time that has lapsed the Committee does not have any recommendation but hope that NFA has taken appropriate actions to address the issues and challenges that were faced by the organisation in 2012.

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has fulfilled its mandates approved by Parliament which was to scrutinise the NFA's 2012 Annual Report. The Committee had consulted NFA and collected all the information that were needed to scrutinise its annual report and have no further comments with regards to the review that was undertaken.

Finally, the Committee is satisfied with the assessment done on NFA's 2012 Annual Report and noted the overall performance of the organisation.



**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ACRONYMS**

## List of Acronyms

JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
NFA	National Fire Authority
SO	Standing Orders of Parliament
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

**APPENDIX 2: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION BY THE NATIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY**



**NFA**  
Always Ready.

PRESENTATION TO THE  
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

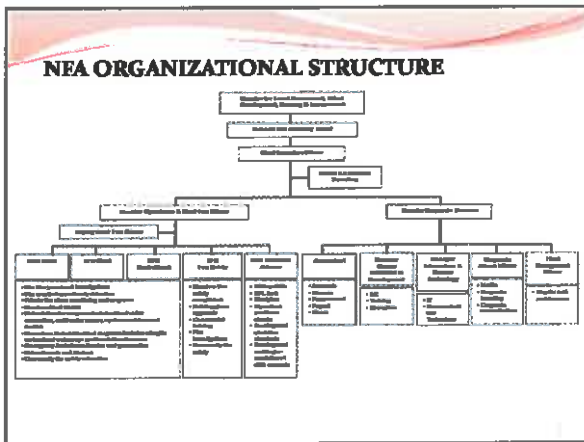
Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 2.00pm

### CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- The **National Fire Service Act, 1994** outlines the roles and responsibilities of the National Fire Authority and its Officers including the operational parameters for the effective daily management of the National Fire Authority.
- **Section 12 of the NFS Act** mandates NFA to:
  - To protect persons from injury or death
  - To protect property from fire damage
  - Establish and maintain permanent fire brigades and authorise the constitution of volunteer Fire Stations and provide suitable premises, fire appliances and equipment.
- The **National Fire Service (Amendment) Decree, 2009** strengthened NFA's enforcement and monitoring role for fire safety compliance.

### SCOPE OF PRESENTATION

- Introduction
- Corporate Governance
- Strategic Roadmap
- Strategic Objectives
- Core Roles and Coverage
- Operational Performance
- Financial Performance
- Achievements
- Challenges

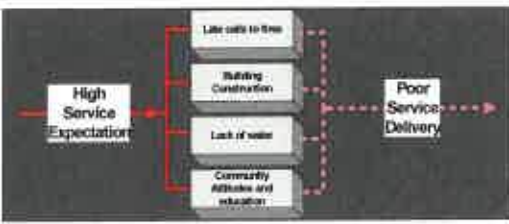


### INTRODUCTION

- NFA took over the provision of fire services from the Suva Board of Fire Commissioners and Municipalities in February 1995 under the new National Fire Service Act, 1994.
- Government policies that drive the Fire Service are:
  - **Section 38 (1) and (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji** to achieve the progressive realisation of the right of every person to health and to the conditions and facilities necessary to good health and to health-care services, etc and that a person must not be denied emergency medical treatment.
  - **Pillars 4 and 7 of the Peoples Charter for Change, Peace and Progress** aspiring towards:
    - Enhancing Public Sector efficiency, performance effectiveness and Service Delivery for the rebuilding of a better Fiji, and
    - Developing an integrated development structure at Divisional Level.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- In May 2007, Cabinet approved the development of a **Strategic Roadmap for Fire Safety and Mitigation in Fiji 2007-2012** paving the long term strategy for the nation's fire service delivery.
- The Roadmap identified external issues (roadblocks) that continued to impact NFA's performance and ability to effectively contain, control and mitigate the effects of fire. These are illustrated below:



The diagram illustrates the relationship between service expectations and delivery. On the left, a box labeled 'High Service Expectation' has a solid red arrow pointing to a box on the right labeled 'Poor Service Delivery'. In the center, four boxes represent external issues (roadblocks) that impede this process: 'Late calls to fire', 'Building Construction', 'Lack of water', and 'Community Attitudes and Education'. Dashed red arrows point from these roadblocks towards the 'Poor Service Delivery' box, indicating their negative impact.

### CORPORATE STATEMENTS - 2012

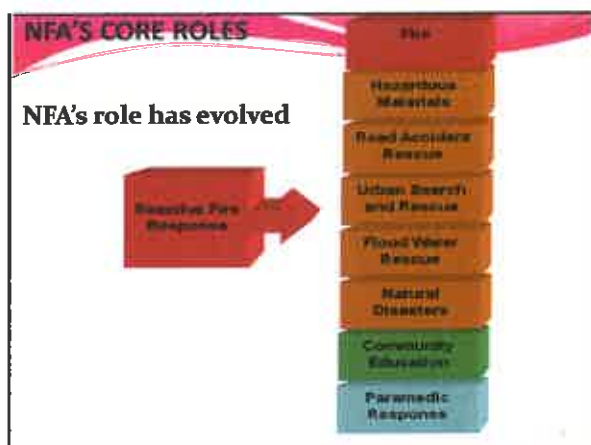
**NFA Corporate Vision**  
A community well prepared and supported to achieve minimal impact from fire and other emergencies.

**NFA Corporate Mission**  
Enhance community safety by:

- Preventing Fires and Incidents;
- Protecting People, Property and Environment;
- Responding professionally and quickly to Incidents;
- Building community capability and preparedness; and
- Ensuring the best possible use of the finite resources available to NFA.

**NFA Corporate values**

- Good Governance, Accountability, Transparency, Professionalism,
- Excellence, Efficient Service, Effectiveness
- Respect for Racial, Religious Diversity and
- Equal Employment Opportunities
- Loyalty pride in NFA teamwork, honesty, dedication, commitment
- Participating in higher performance teams
- Visionary and strong leadership



### OPERATIONS RESPONSE - 2012

Incident	2012	2011
Property fires	95	106
Grass/Bush/Cane/Rubbish	505	785
Special services/Malicious/Others	396	191
Private Fire Alarms	638	512
Ambulance response	1,164	830
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,798</b>	<b>2,424</b>

There were 2,798 emergency calls attended to in 2012 compared to 2,424 in 2011. The increase is mainly attributed to the increase in Emergency Ambulance calls.

- ### KEY STRATEGIES - 2012
- NFA's key strategic objectives are:
- 1 Strengthening NFA Capacity and Service Delivery
    - Availability of water for effective fire suppression
    - Improving Structural Fire Safety
    - Improving Community and Home Fire Safety
    - Expanded Fire Service Delivery Models
  - 2 Community education, marketing and engagement
  - 3 Fire service performance monitoring and reporting
  - 4 Partnerships and strong stakeholder relationships
  - 5 Appropriate legislative and policy framework.
  - 6 Appropriate and sustainable NFA funding arrangements

### FIRE INCIDENTS BY CATEGORY

Division	2012	2011
Commercial	9	18
Industrial	0	2
Residential	86	79
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>106</b>

- Majority of the fire incidents were residential properties.
- Commercial fires relate to fire incidents that occurred at the student dormitory in Levuka Public School, Vilisite's Restaurant in Sigatoka and the Warwick Hotel storeroom and Naviti Resort fires along the Coral Coast.
- There was a total of 12 fire-related deaths during the year.

### FIRE CAUSES - 2012

Causes of Fire	2012	2011
Electrical	22	19
Arson/Suspicious	25	29
Matches/Cigarette	11	15
Lit Candle	10	5
Unattended cooking	7	10
Mosquito Coil	7	3
Undetermined	7	6
Kerosene Lantern/Stove	3	8
Prayer Diya	2	7
Uncontrolled burning	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>106</b>

Electrical related causes constitute 23% of the total structural fires. Playing with matches, mosquito coils, lit candles and unattended cooking are the other major causes of fires (50%). Arson constitutes 27% of the total structural fires.

Our awareness programs are being targeted at parents and adults responsibilities and accountabilities in the wellbeing of their children and they must ensure that children are supervised at all times by a responsible adult.

### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - 2012

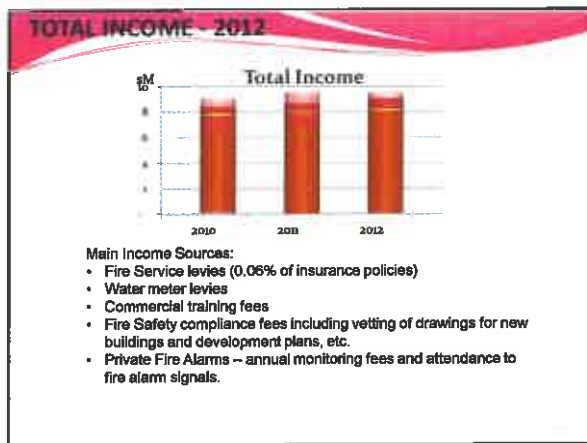
Year	2012	2011	2010
Revenue (\$)	9.5 M	9.6 M	9.1 M
Operating Cost (\$)	9.0 M	8.6 M	8.2 M
Surplus (\$)	0.5 M	1.0 M	0.9 M

### NFA HUMAN RESOURCE - 2012

Manpower numbers	Total
Permanent staff	273
Temporary/volunteer staff	58
<b>Total employees</b>	<b>331</b>

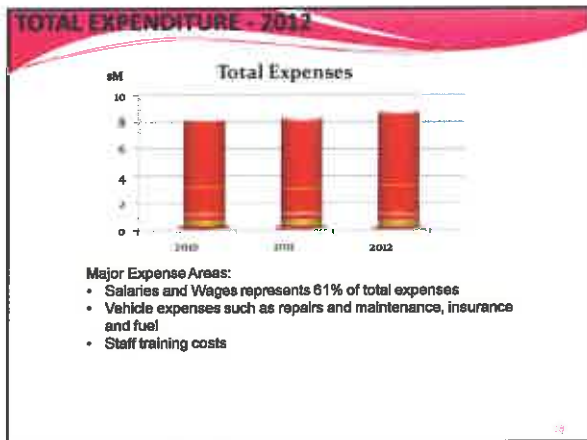
Composition	Total
Career firefighters	263
Volunteer firefighters	47
Administration staff	21
<b>Total employees</b>	<b>331</b>



### NFA VEHICLE FLEET

Vehicle Type	Total	% of Fleet
Fire Tankers	20	40%
Fire Pumper Trucks	11	22%
Rescue Trucks	2	4%
Light Rescue vehicles	3	6%
Ambulance vehicles	3	6%
Utilities and Admin vehicles	11	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Average age for NFA's fleet of operational vehicles is 20 years.



GOVERNMENT GRANTS			
Year	2012	2011	2010
Amount	\$1.0 M	\$0.9 M	\$1.2 M
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of second hand fire trucks</li> <li>• Purchase and installation of fire hydrants</li> <li>• Purchase of fire fighting equipment such as Fire tunics, BA sets, Rescue swimming suits, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase and installation of fire hydrants</li> <li>• Purchase of fire fighting equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase and installation of fire hydrants and</li> <li>• Purchase of fire fighting equipment</li> </ul>

- ### CHALLENGES
- **Funding streams** – Heavily reliant on insurance levies and the risk of reduction in insurance policy holders and premium.
  - **Fire boundaries** – Delay in expansion of boundaries and duplication of process. Declaration of Town and City boundaries and any extensions thereof as Fire Boundaries also will be of great assistance to NFA's financial position.
  - **Land acquisition** – Securing of appropriate land for NFA's expansion plans to adequately cover the whole of Fiji. All new developments should have land allocation for Fire and Police Stations.
  - **Government funding assistance** – securing of sufficient funding for Capital projects for the expansion of NFA's services to the community and enable coverage for the whole of Fiji.

- ### ACHIEVEMENTS - 2012
- Reduction of structural fires to 95 compared to 120 in 2011.
  - Procured 6 second hand fire trucks from Country Fire Authority of Victoria, Australia which boosted capability in Stations.
  - Received a 20' container load donation of second hand fire tunics from Country Fire Authority of Victoria, Australia.
  - Purchased and installed 140 fire hydrants around the country.
  - Purchased a new Financial Management Information System to replace the manual accounts processing.
  - Developed the new Strategic Plan for the next 5 years from 2013 to 2017.
  - Strengthened procurement process with the securing of Supplier Contracts with suitable Suppliers.

- ### CHALLENGES (Cont'd)
- **Change in Community Attitude towards Fire Safety** – Assistance required from all levels in the community towards encouraging adherence to fire safety measures.
  - **Substandard fire fighting equipment and building materials** – Strengthening of import controls on substandard materials such as electrical appliances, insulation foils, etc, and firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, etc.
  - **Review of NFA Legislation** – Determination of sustainable funding streams and adoption of the new NFA legislation to strengthen NFA's role.

- ### ACHIEVEMENTS - 2012 (Cont'd)
- Secured funding of \$40,000 with UNICEF for development by the Ministry of Education of a new Pupils Activity Fire Safety Workbook for Classes 5 and 6.
  - Received \$25,000 worth of medical equipment from JICA and Matsusaka Fire Department of Japan.
  - Emergency Medical Activity Training was conducted by Matsusaka Fire Department of Japan for 47 Firefighters. Also, 60 Firefighters underwent paramedics training and attachment at the CWM hospital.
  - President's Bravery Medal was awarded to Form 7 student Mosese Volavola of Nadi for rescuing a toddler during a house fire in Nadi.



**APPENDIX 3: VERBATIM NOTES**



**VERBATIM REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM (WEST WING), PARLIAMENT PRECINCTS, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, ON THURSDAY 30TH MARCH, 2017 AT 2.10 P.M.**

**Submittee: National Fire Authority**

**In Attendance**

1. Ms. Melita Seniroqa - Acting CEO
2. Mr. Q. Moceitai - CFO
3. Mr. Praneet Raj - Accountant

---

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Welcome back to the meeting, Honourable Members, and our guest, a very good afternoon to you all and *ni sa bula vinaka*. On behalf of the Honourable Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I am pleased to welcome the National Fire Authority (NFA) representatives. The floor is open for your presentation.

MS. M. SENIROQA.- Thank you, Deputy Chairperson.

In response to the invitation to present to this Standing Committee, the administration affairs of the NFA, it is my pleasure to present our organisation to the Standing Committee. If we may, the scope of our presentation is basically an introduction, corporate governance, the strategic roadmap that was applicable up to 2012, strategic objectives, the coverage of the NFA, operational performance, financial performance, achievements and challenges.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- I apologise, Madam CEO, just a reminder that today we are actually deliberating on the 2012 National Fire Authority Annual Report, so later on the questions will be based basically on the 2012 Report. You may continue, please.

MS. M. SENIROQA.- Our presentation is based on the 2012 achievements and operations.

Just a quick introduction, the NFA took over the provision of fire services from the Suva Board of Fire Commissioners and Municipalities in February 1995, following the enactment of the National Fire Service Act in 1994. The Government policies that drive the fire service is Section 38(1) and (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and basically to achieve the progressive realisation of the right of every person to health and to the conditions and facilities necessary to good health and to health care services, et cetera, and that a person must not be denied emergency medical treatment.

The second policy is from Pillars 4 and 7 of the Peoples Charter for Change Peace and Progress (PCCPP), aspiring towards the enhancement of public sector efficiency, performance, effectiveness and service delivery for the rebuilding of a better Fiji and the development of an integrated development structure at divisional level.

The NFA is actually governed by the National Fire Service Act 1994 which outlines the roles and responsibilities of NFA and its officers, including the operational perimeters for the effective daily management of NFA. Section 12 of the National Fire Services Act mandates NFA to:

- protect persons from injury or death;
- protect property from fire damage;

- establish and maintain permanent fire brigades;

- authorise the constitution of volunteer fire stations; and
- provide suitable premises, fire appliances and equipment.

The National Fire Services Amendment Decree 2009, strengthened NFA's enforcement and monitoring role for fire safety compliance.

The organisational structure; in 2012, the NFA came under the Minister for Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment. The Honourable Minister appoints the Board which comprises of a Chairman and six members, and the Board appoints the Chief Executive Officer who, in 2012 had a Director Operations and Chief Officer, that is one role, and the taking care of the operations or co-business whilst the other division was taken care of by the Director Corporate Services, who looked after the Corporate Services portion of the organisation.

In May 2007, Cabinet had approved the development of a strategic roadmap for fire safety and mitigation in Fiji for the five years from 2007 to 2012, paving the long term strategy for the nation's fire service delivery. The roadmap identified external issues or roadblocks that continued to impact NFA's performance and ability to effectively contain, control and mitigate the effects of fire. Basically the roadmap was developed, bearing in mind the high service expectation by the people of Fiji and the roadblocks that were identified were:

- late calls to fires;
- building construction;
- lack of water;
- community attitude; and
- the need for education which resulted in the poor service delivery by the fire service.

In developing the roadmap, the corporate vision that was carried until 2012 was, "A community well prepared and supported to achieve minimal impact from fire and other emergencies", and we also had a corporate vision and corporate values.

The roadmap also recognised the expansion of the role of the Nation Fire Service, the firefighters from just reactive fire response to include:

- hazardous materials' response;
- road accidents rescue response;
- urban search and rescue;
- flood and swift water rescue operations;
- assistance during natural disasters;
- community education; and
- the new paramedics response.

There were actually six strategies that were outlined in the roadmap and they were to:

1. Strengthen NFA's capacity and service delivery. In addressing that, they identified the availability of water for effective fire suppression, the improvement to structural fire safety, improvement to community and home fire safety and the expansion of the fire service delivery models.
2. Community education, marketing and engagement.
3. Fire service performance monitoring and reporting.

4. Partnerships and strong stakeholder relationships.
5. Appropriate legislative and policy framework.
6. Appropriate and sustainable NFA funding arrangements.

Those were the key strategic objectives identified under the Strategic Roadmap that was governing the NFA in 2012.

The coverage; at that point in time in 2012, NFA had 16 fire stations around the country. There were seven fire stations in the Western Division and basically those were located in Sigatoka, Nadi, Denarau, Lautoka, Ba, Tavua and Rakiraki. There were six fire stations in the Central/Eastern Division, basically the stations were located in Navua, Pacific Harbour, Suva, Valelevu, Nausori and Levuka. In the Northern Division, we had three fire stations; one in Taveuni, Savusavu and Labasa.

For Operations response in 2012; there were 2,798 emergency calls received by NFA Fiji-wide and also attended to, compared to 2,424 received and attended to in 2011. The increase is mainly attributed to the increase in emergency ambulance calls that we received.

For fire incidents by category, you will note in this table we had 106 property fires in 2011 and this decreased to 95 in 2012. Just focussing on the property fires, we categorised these fires and in 2012, there were nine commercial fires, there was no industrial fire but there were 86 residential fires, totalling 95 fires. Majority of the fire incidents were residential properties. The commercial fires relate to fire incidents that occurred at the student dormitory in Levuka Public School, Vilisite's Restaurant in Sigatoka and the Warwick Hotel Store Room and Naviti Resort fires along the Coral Coats. There was a total of 12 fire-related deaths during that year.

For fire causes in 2012, the highest fire cause was arson or suspicious. The next rating is 22 for electrical-related fires and all these contributed to the total of 95 fires that occurred in 2012. Electrical-related fire causes constitute 23 percent of the total structural fires in that year. Playing with matches, mosquito coils, lit candles and unattended cooking are the other major causes of fires which contributed 50 percent. Arson constituted 27 percent of the total structural fires for 2012.

Our awareness programmes are being targeted at parents and adults responsibilities and accountabilities in the wellbeing of their children, and they must ensure that children are supervised at all times by responsible adults.

In 2012, we had a total of 273 permanent staff, we had 58 temporary and volunteer staff, a total of 331 staff. Our composition as far as our firefighters, we had a total of 263 career firefighters in 2012, a total of 47 volunteer firefighters and administration staffing of 21, totalling 331.

For our vehicle fleet, we had a total of 50 vehicles allocated to each of the 16 stations around the country during that year. There were 20 fire tankers, 11 fire pumper trucks, two rescue trucks, three light rescue vehicles, three ambulances and 11 utility and administration vehicles. The average age for NFA's fleet of operational vehicles is 20 years.

Financial performance brief for 2012, the total revenue collected was \$9.5 million. The operating cost was \$9 million, with a surplus of \$0.5 million. Just expounding on that, the main sources for the total income during 2012 were from the fire service levies, water meter levies, commercial training fees, fire safety compliance fees and private fire alarms.

For expenses, the major expense areas were in salaries and wages which represented 61 percent of our total expense; motor vehicle expenses such as repairs and maintenance, insurance, fuel; as well as staff training costs. These were the major expense areas during 2012.

For Government grants, we also received Government grants and we received \$1 million from Government basically to purchase six secondhand fire trucks, installed about 140 fire hydrants and we purchased much needed firefighting equipment, such as fire tunics, breathing apparatus, rescue swimming suits, et cetera.

The achievements for 2012, Deputy Chairperson, I apologise, there is a typographical error here; there was a reduction of structural fires to 95, compared to 106 in 2011. The NFA:

- Procured six secondhand fire trucks for the first time from Country Fire Authority of Victoria, Australia which boosted capability in stations.
- Received a 20 footer container load donation of secondhand fire tunics from Country Fire Authority.
- Purchased and installed 140 fire hydrants around the country.
- Purchased a new Financial Management Information System to replace the manual accounts processing.
- Developed a new Strategic Plan for the next five years from 2013 to 2017.
- Strengthened the procurement process with the securing of supply contracts with suitable supplies through the tender process.
- Also secured funding of \$40,000 with UNICEF for the development by the Ministry of Education of a new People's Activity Fire Safety Workbook for Classes 5 and 6, which was developed in 2013 and implemented late 2013 and into 2014.
- Received \$25,000 worth of medical equipment from JICA and the Matsusaka Fire Department of Japan, which also conducted emergency medical activity training for 47 of our firefighters.
- During that year, 60 of our firefighters underwent paramedics training and attachment with CWM Hospital. We believe this is an achievement when we nominated for President's Bravery Award, a Form 7 student, Mosese Volavola of Nadi, for rescuing a toddler during a house fire in Nadi.

Some of the challenges that we faced are funding streams, we are heavily reliant of insurance levies and the risk of reduction in insurance policy holders and premium is a challenge for NFA because that will impact our revenue.

Fire boundaries, we have found that we have always been lagging behind in the legally defining and gazetted of our boundaries. The fire boundaries actually determine how much revenue our three insurance policies that NFA will receive.

Land acquisition, the securing of appropriate land for NFA's expansion plans to adequately cover the whole of Fiji. We are actually asking that all new developments should have land allocation

for fire and police stations that would really help in the establishment of these essential services for each development.

Government funding assistance is also a challenge in securing sufficient funding for capital projects to meet the expansion programme.

Change in community attitude towards fire safety is a major challenge for NFA and it is also a costly one for NFA. Assistance is required from all levels in the community towards the encouragement of adherence to fire safety measures.

Substandard firefighting equipment and building materials, we find this a challenge and that there is a need to strengthen import controls on substandard materials, such as insulation foils, electrical appliances and firefighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers. We believe that substandard materials are contributing to some of these fire incidents that we have been encountering.

The review of NFA legislation, it will determine a sustainable funding stream for NFA and the challenge is the adoption of this legislation to strengthen NFA's role in Fiji.

Deputy Chairperson and Honourable Members, that is basically our presentation on NFA.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much, Madam CEO, for the presentation. Looking at your 2012 achievements, congratulations! However, looking at your challenges, I would just like to know whether you have been able to meet or overcome any of the challenges faced in 2012?

MS. M. SENIROQA.- For the funding streams, we are still heavily reliant on insurance levies.

For fire boundaries, we are working with our line Ministry. We have been knocking on their doors just to ask them if they could declare the city and town boundaries as fire boundaries also. It will cut down on a lot of duplication of work and delay in time, and also with the expansion of the towns and cities, it is unbeknown to us. We are not involved in that process but I am glad that after having several meetings with them, they are willing to accommodate the NFA in their expansion of boundaries and also will take up to the Minister for the gazetting of town boundaries during expansion of their boundaries as well, the city and town boundaries as fire boundaries.

Land acquisition is still a challenge for us but we are just pushing if all new developments can allocate for fire and police as part of the essential service requirements.

As far as achievements, I think the review of the legislation has been completed and we are now just awaiting the Solicitor-General's Office to find an opportunity for Parliament to deliberate on the new Bill. Basically, that is where we are with the new legislation. It will actually involve a major change in the organisation.

We are looking at the rebranding of NFA because the new organisation, according to the Bill, would be called the Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA). It will actually bring to the forefront the other emergency services that we are involved in. Right now, everyone just knows NFA as fire authority but the new FESA Bill will actually bring to the forefront all the other emergency services that we are actually doing. We are talking about Road Accident Rescue Operations, Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat) Operations, Urban Search and Rescue, Flood and Swift Water Rescue Operations, Community Education Paramedics Response with the ambulances that we are now allocating into each of our stations. So basically the new Bill will bring to the forefront all those new roles that we are involved in.

It will also put a lot of pressure on us as well, to equip our people, to upskill them, and not only our people but also our stations with the necessary equipment. So as far as challenges are concerned, I think that is the upcoming one but I am glad that we have finished the legislative review and we are just awaiting on Parliament now to deliberate on the Bill.

The other challenges, we are working with our line Ministry to overcome.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you so much, Madam CEO. Looking at your achievements in 2012 again, the reduction of structural fires, 95 compared to 106 in 2011. At that period in time, do you think there was more awareness and if you are still continuing with your fire safety awareness?

MS. M. SENIROQA.- Thank you, Deputy Chairperson. The Fire Safety Awareness Programmes continue every year, it is actually a must for the NFA to bring down the number of fires. Community awareness is really a key component of reduction of fires. We have had to work with TV, we found that to be an effective mode of pushing the message of fire safety through but the only drawback there is that, it is a very expensive medium for NFA. Whilst it is effective, it is very expensive.

However, I think one of the most effective modes that we have seen in 2012 has been our house to house programmes, community awareness programmes that our own people conduct in their respective stations. We had to engage or bring in Smoke House Unit, their inflatable structures that children can get to actually practice. We have a awareness session and children can actually run into the house and practice what they have just been taught and we found that very helpful during this awareness programmes. Basically, this house to house programme that we had to conduct in 2012 actually contributed to the reduction in structural fires.

We find that we need to do that every year, we need to put that right on top of our agenda in creating community awareness. But we also realised that it is not only about NFA, it is about the need to change the attitude of our people to be fire safety conscious all the time and we need all levels of our society to be promoting that because it actually impacts the livelihood of a lot of people.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Madam CEO. Having NFA here and I am trying very hard because we are deliberating on the 2012 Annual Report and it is so difficult to refrain from asking because recent fire incidents is a growing concern. There is no pressure for you, we are deliberating on the 2012 Bill so basically we will stick to that but obviously may be off-the-cuff, we will ask you a few question because of the growing concern because I have just come back from Labasa attending the funeral of those three children who died in the fire. You know how it is in this day in time, I mean, everyday you hear of a fire incident. It is actually a growing concern but yes, I totally agree with you, that this has to be everyone's business, every individual's business, it cannot be only NFA's business, at all levels, in society, the community on the whole. We have to give it a holistic approach to curb these problems. The floor is open to the Honourable Members to ask questions.

HON. R.N. NADALO.- Thank you, for your presentation. Based on your key strategies 2012, how are you going about in your community education, marketing and engagement?

MS. M. SENIROQA.- For our community education in 2012, we were very fortunate to engage the assistance of UNICEF. UNICEF came on Board and granted us \$40,000 to develop fire safety workbooks and teachers' manual to teach to children in Classes 5 and 6. They managed to develop this manual and workbook, and they put it into the education curriculum which is very helpful.

We are also thankful that UNICEF continued their assistance and granted us another \$40,000 the following year for the development of the same education material but this time for the early child education for Classes 1 and 2. So for us, that was a big achievement because we believe if we start with our children, we are starting right, they will be our future generation and future leaders and it is good when we teach them fire safety education at a very early age.

I think one of the drawbacks that we have had is on the squatter settlements, how close they were, some of the homes. The squatter settlements, the close proximities of those settlements have been quite a challenge for NFA because when one house is set alight, there is a danger of it spreading very fast to the very next house because of their close proximity.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Seniroqa. We note that the 2012 Annual Report is now presented in 2017 and I also note that the Financial Statement and the Auditor's Report has been signed off in 2015. From an organisational perspective, that tells a lot about the performance of the organisation. What would have been your challenge in regards to having to, sort of, make good in the future reports?

MS. M. SENIROQA.- We appreciate your question and it is also a concern. However, I think there was initially a delay in the 2012 financials when there was change in the accounting reporting system to the IFRS system. That took up a lot of time in adopting to that new accounting system for us. However, we have completed the 2013 audit, that has been approved and we are just waiting on the Board.

At the moment, the NFA does not have a Board, we only have one member of the Board who is our Chairman, Commander Francis Kean. The other members have yet to be gazetted. Whilst they have been announced, they have not been formally appointed and gazetted. So as far as the NFA is concerned, we only have one member. The Board cannot sit, our accounts is just waiting for the Board to sit and for them to approve so that the Auditor-General can sign off and we can push on with the 2014 Audit and likewise, for the 2015 Audit. Actually, we are really trying to hurry it up as well because we realise it impacts a lot of our planning and the decision-making, however, that is where we are right now.

HON. A.T.VADEL.- I wish to thank the members from NFA in coming forward to present their 2012 Report. Going to the financial accounts on page 38 on the topic of motor vehicle, fuel and repairs, I saw there is an increase from 2011 to 2012. If we add the repairs and fuel for 2011, it comes down to \$539,084 and in 2012, it is \$580,612. Looking at that sum, it is quite an exorbitant amount. My question is, whether there are plans to change some vehicles there?

MR. P. RAJ.- Thank you, Honourable Vadei, for your question. Regarding our fleet, as our CEO has said that our fleet aging average is 20 years, so at the moment majority of our capital funding we are dependent on the Government grant. So basically what we have planned is, we will be phasing out all our aged fleet. We cannot dispose of all our fleet at once, so what we are planning, every year we are purchasing secondhand vehicles to support our aged vehicles that is causing the higher repairs and maintenance cost, looking at our roads and the location of the various stations.

HON. A.T.VADEL.- My second question is on page 5, the employee entitlement; a total of \$254,843 is accrued for annual leave and long service. Most of these will become payable at a future date. What will be the plans for those employee entitlements as you highlighted in your annual report?

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, we have to take into consideration that this is a 2012 Report and we are in 2017, actually we have come a long way from 2012. If you have



progressed in this area, you can just give an answer, otherwise if you do not have the information as of now, you can send it later on because I can understand this is 2012 report.

MR. P. RAJ.- Regarding the long service and annual leave, what we have encouraged our employees is to take their leave and as of now, there is a decrease in the figure which is stated there. So you can get the actual figures when we get back to our current reports.

HON. A.T.VADEL.- Since this institution is vulnerable to high risk, I did not see any report of accident to your employees or any insurance paid to your employees. Whether there was no injuries over those years or what? If you have answers in the office, you can send it to our secretariat.

MR. Q. MOCEITAI.- Thank you, Honourable Member. In giving an answer to that, we understand that NFA does not have any insurance that would give to each member if someone got injured or killed in the fire. However, we actually have our health insurance which can allow people if there is any injury that occurred during the operation, they can be taken to any hospital that they want to, even to be evacuated overseas.

Lastly the employer or NFA has other provisions to give benefits to each employee and we understand that there are also means of being given compensation if someone gets injured during work, so that is currently where NFA was in 2012.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you. Last question, Honourable Radrodro?

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Just a question on your level of preparedness in terms of each station. What is the level of preparedness on a daily basis to be able to deliver efficient and effective service delivery because I came across a case whereby the fire truck came and there was no water? In my view, if there was water when they came, they could have saved, at least, something of that property and it was a double-storey House. I watched in amazement because I was thinking that every truck would have water and how could they have taken off without knowing that there was no water. If you can just explain that level of preparedness to ensure that everything goes on smoothly?

MR. Q. MOCEITAI.- To answer that question, the fire service in every station is allocated two hours for daily training for fire and rescue training and that is a must. It is compulsory for each station to have two hours of training for preparedness. Also, we have provision too where our staff have to go out to their five boundaries and all areas they are covering, to look and try and evaluate the risk within those areas and also to look at the fire hydrants that are available that we can use, if there is a fire in an area.

Lastly, your comment on the fire truck to be responding to any fire with no water, in fire service it is illegal for us to have that and if anyone is caught driving a vehicle without water and attending to a fire call, he will be automatically dismissed because it is not allowed for any fire truck responding to any fire with empty truck.

The problem that the communities or the members are not aware of is the amount of water that is contained in a fire truck. At the moment, the maximum volume of water contained in a fire truck is 12,000 litres while some trucks have 800 litres. With that amount of water, the nozzle that we are using, the output of it is about 150 litres per minute while some are 750 litres per minute. The fire truck has 2,000 litres per minute where a fire truck itself got only 1,000 litres, so in that case, for someone to understand a fire truck, is that most of the trucks have more output than what is contained in that truck, so that is why most of the bystanders who look at how we are operating may think that the truck is empty. It is not that, just because of the level of fire at that moment and the amount of water we use to

extinguish the fire, that makes the water to dry up quickly. For a truck to dry out, it takes only two minutes to four minutes to dry out. So, we will need a secondary means of filling water into the fire truck. We cannot operate only one fire truck to extinguish a house on fire, we will need some more supplementary to be fitted into the truck.

In some cases where we do not have fire hydrants, that is where we have problems and the other way you have to do, is that we have to pump water from pump to pump, to be able to give more content of water to be able to extinguish the fire. That is what we are experiencing at the moment, and we are now helping the Water Authority of Fiji to install more fire hydrants so we are seeking grants from Government to help us install fire hydrants around Fiji.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- On the presentation, in terms of your evolving responsibilities, I really welcome those new responsibilities, but I am just wondering how are you going to tie that in with your challenges in terms of your funding streams? I mean, like you are going to be asking Government for more grant or how are you going to fund your new evolving responsibilities which is, in my view, very good that you also have to look after all those but my main concern is the funding, where are you going to get it from?

MS. M. SENIROQA.- That is also our concern and one of our challenges as well. Right now, we are just purely dependant on fire levies. The new FESA Bill has actually proposed for a few more revenue streams to help us fund our organisation and to also equip our people with the right equipment to be able to carry out these multiple functions, the operations that we have. But insurance levies is currently our main revenue stream, so we are pushing for the new Bill to be able to open up additional revenue streams.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Honourable Members, for your questions. Once again our best wishes goes to all the firefighters because we know the challenges that they face, the contributing factors and the risks that they go through in fighting fires. So God bless them and we wish them safe firefighting. Yes, like I said, there will always be challenges and hopefully together with the Government, we will meet the challenges and move forward.

Once again, Ms. Seniroqa and your Team, thank you very much for your presentation. On behalf of the Honourable Members and the secretariat, we invite you for tea before you leave.

The Committee adjourned at 2.57 p.m.

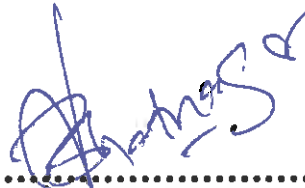
---

**SIGNATURES OF MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL AFFAIRS STANDING  
COMMITTEE**

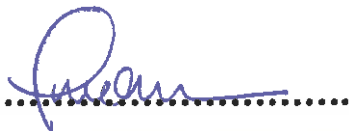
---



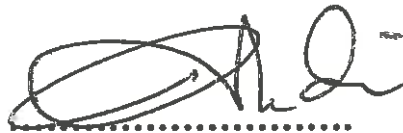
.....  
**Hon. Viam Pillay**  
**(Chairperson)**



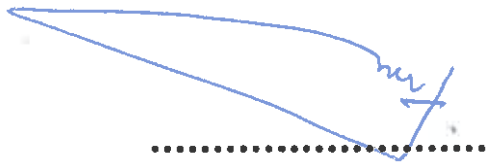
.....  
**Hon. Veena Bhatnagar**  
**(Deputy Chairperson)**



.....  
**Hon. Salote Radrodro**  
**(Member)**



.....  
**Hon. Anare T. Vadei**  
**(Member)**



.....  
**Hon. Ruveni Nadalo**  
**(Alternate Member for Hon. Mohammed M. A Dean)**