



SOCIAL AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

Review Report of the Committee on the Fiji Higher Education Commission's 2013 Annual Report



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
Parliamentary Paper No. 10 of 2016

11th February, 2016

Table of Contents

Chair’s Foreword	3
List of Recommendations	4
Introduction	5
Findings.....	6
Gender Analysis	8
Conclusion.....	9
APPENDIX	11

Chair's Foreword

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to present the Report of the Social Affairs Standing Committee on the review that was undertaken on Fiji Higher Education Commission's 2013 Annual Report. Last year, during the July sitting the Commission's 2013 Annual Report was tabled in Parliament and referred to the Committee to scrutinize.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee under the 2013 Constitution and Parliament Standing Orders aims to enhance transparency and accountability by public agencies and officials. The Standing Committee on Social Affairs is a standing committee of the Fijian Parliament and was established under Section 109(2) (b) of the Standing Orders (SO) of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji. The Social Affairs Standing Committee is mandated to examine matters related to health, education, social services, labour, culture, media and their administration.

The Committee had consulted the Fiji Higher Education Commission and identified major areas of concern that affected the Commission. The review exercise that was undertaken by the Committee on the Commission's 2013 Annual Report covers the area of budget, administration, policies, organization structure, functions and programs in 2013.

In conducting the review, the Committee identified that the Commission requires an increase in its budgetary allocation to support its plan in achieving its key output areas. Also identified, that the Commission needs a review in its staff remuneration which was justified on the case of high turnover rate of Commission's staff in 2013 and the past years.

For these reasons, the Committee have compiled recommendations that would facilitate the areas of concern which were identified during the review.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the sterling effort of the Honourable Members and the Secretariat team who were all involved in the review exercise and the finalization of this report: My Committee colleagues Hon. Salote Radrodro MP (Deputy Chairperson), Hon. Veena Bhatnagar MP (Member), Hon. Vijay Nath MP (Member) and Hon. Anare Vadei MP (Member).

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, it is an honour to commend this Committee report to the Parliament.



Hon. Viam Pillay
Chairperson

List of Recommendations

In conducting the review on Fiji Higher Education Commission's 2013 Annual Report, the Committee recommends the following:

Recommendation One:

That the Commission's budgetary allocation be increased to support the Commission in fully achieved its key output areas.

Recommendation Two:

That the Commission's Staff Remuneration be reviewed to resolved the high turnover rate of staff which was experienced by the Commission. This issue had affected the investment made by the Commission in developing its human resources.

Introduction

The Fiji Higher Education Commission's 2013 Annual Report was tabled in Parliament on July last year and was committed to the Social Affairs Standing Committee for its scrutiny.

Standing Orders 110 (1)(c) authorizes the Standing Committee to scrutinize 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, rationalization, restructuring, functioning, organization, structure and policy formulation.

The review involved the collection and sighting of available information and data from the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), meeting with the Executive management of the Commission in order to understand the overall operations and performance of the Commission in 2013. The review was focused on the Commission's budget, administration, functions, policies and programs/projects in 2013.

The review report would include the Committee's recommendation, review findings and the conclusion.

In summary, the information of this report was obtained through:

1. Thorough assessment by the Committee on the Commission's 2013 Annual Report;
2. Powerpoint Presentation by the Education High Commission Executive Chairman, Mr. Richard Wah with Acting Team Leader, Executive Office, FHEC; and
3. Social Affairs Standing Committee Members face to face interviews with the Executive Chairman.

Further to the above, the Committee noted the **Vision** of the Commission which is for Fiji being a premier, world class higher education destination, and the **Mission** is to ensure that higher education institutions pursue an indispensable level of quality, excellence and relevance in higher education that is globally competitive and internationally recognized.

The Committee in its review findings will outline the overall performance of the Commission and the areas of concern that were detected by the Committee.

Findings

The review exercise identified that the **Fiji Higher Education Commission** are responsible on the following areas:

1. To register and regulate higher education institutions according to provisions of the Promulgation;
2. To foster and safeguard the national interest, the interest of students and parents and also of local higher education providers;
3. To establish national standards for different qualifications;
4. To oversee the review process of higher education institutions;
5. To provide assurances that programmes developed by institutions meet national standards;
6. Promote the development of Fiji as a knowledge society;
7. To allocate government funds marked for higher education annually for higher education institutions according to transparent and well publicized criteria for allocation;
8. To foster cooperation among higher education institutions and linkages between higher education institutions and industry;
9. To maintain a database of higher education information;
10. To develop or cause to be developed an academic broadband facility for use by higher education institutions;
11. To make recommendations to the Minister with respect to issues consistent with its functions including special projects.

The Committee also identified 3 ways of how the Commission sets the programmes standards and this included the following:

1. Developing National Qualifications
2. Accrediting Provider Qualifications into the Fiji Qualification Framework (FQF)
3. Continue to improve on the Fiji Qualification Framework

The Committee had also noted that the National Qualifications that were developed by the Fiji Higher Education Commission are outlined below:

1. Automotive Mechanic
2. Fitting & Machining
3. Panel Beating
4. Carpentry
5. Plumbing
6. Cookery
7. Joinery & Cabinet Making
8. Printing
9. Marine Engineering
10. Navigation & Seaman
11. Saw Doctor
12. Agriculture
13. Automotive Electrical
14. Electrical Fitter Mechanic
15. Electronics,
16. Welding & Fabricating
17. Aircraft Maintenance,
18. Refrigeration & Air Conditioning,
19. Heavy Mobile Plant Mechanic,
20. Heavy Commercial Vehicle Mechanic
21. Baking & Patisserie,
22. Bus Driving
23. Tour Guides
24. Beauty and Therapy
25. Mining
26. Security

The evidence of the Committee findings on Fiji Higher Education Commission are as follow:

1. The Commission was responsible on the establishment of national standards for different qualifications;
2. Each tertiary institutions determine the awarding of their credit points;
3. The Commission also provides assurance that programmes developed by institutions meet national standards and also international the international standards;
4. Also noted that one of the main challenge of the Commission was the high turnover rate of staff which was affecting the output delivery; and
5. The Committee noted that the budgetary allocation of the Commission does not fully met the project/programs implementation cost which affected the productivity level of the Commission in fulfilling its obligation.

Gender Analysis

Under SO 110(2), where a committee conducts an activity listed in clause (1), the committee ensures full consideration will be given to the principle of gender equality so as to ensure matters considered with regard to the impact and benefit on both men and women equally.

The Committee considered range of issues including programmes and policies that were coordinated by the Commission and how it affects both male and female in Fiji. In particular, the Commission ensures that policies and qualification standards that were set and implemented are aligned with its mandated responsibilities and ensuring that its impacts are equally distributed amongst the target groups including both men and women who study at any tertiary institutions in Fiji.

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has fulfilled its mandate approved by Parliament which was to examine the Commission's 2013 Annual Report. The Committee had conducted its consultation to gather all available information on the Commission's performance in 2013.

The Committee review findings had outlined few areas of concern which was affecting the overall performance of the Commission.

Finally, the Committee had satisfied with its assessment on the Commission's 2013 Annual Report and noted the overall performance of the Commission in 2013.

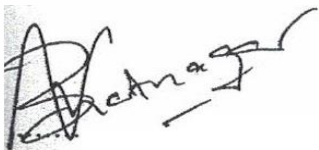
SIGNATURES OF MEMBERS OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS



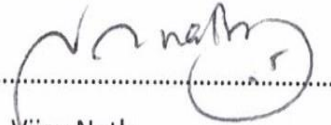
Hon. Viam Pillay
(Chairperson)



Hon. Salote Radrodro
(Deputy Chairperson)



Hon. Veena Bhatnagar
(Member)



Hon. Vijay Nath
(Member)



Hon. Anare Vadei
(Member)

03 / 02 / 16

(Date)

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: VERBATIM

Appendix 1: Verbatim

VERBATIM REPORT OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS ON THURSDAY, 16TH JULY, 2015 IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, EAST WING, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AT 9.30 A.M.

Present:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Hon. Viam Pillay | - | Chairperson |
| 2. | Hon. Salote V. Radrodro | - | Deputy Chairperson |
| 3. | Hon. Vijay Nath | - | Member |
| 4. | Hon. Veena Bhatnagar | - | Member |
| 5. | Hon. Anare T. Vadei | - | Member |

In Attendance: Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC)

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|--|
| 1) | Mr. Richard Wah | - | Executive Chairman, FHEC |
| 2) | Ms. Charmaine Kwan | - | Acting Team Leader, Executive Office, FHEC |

Secretariat

Mr. Savenaca Koro	-	Secretariat
-------------------	---	-------------

Honourable Members, I welcome you all to our meeting. I also welcome Mr. Richard Wah and Ms. Charmaine, who are with us this morning, and I would like thank them for their presence in a very short time.

(Introduction of Members by Chairman)

We are now looking at your 2013 Annual Report which was tabled in Parliament and committed to this Committee. You will take us through the Report and at the end of your presentation, honourable Members may want to ask you questions and seek clarifications if there are any.

We now give you the floor for your presentation.

MR. R. WAH.- Mr. Chairman and honourable Members of the Committee, we are really grateful for this opportunity to present on behalf of the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC). This is the first time we appear to any of the Parliamentary Committee so please bear with us as we go through our presentation.

We will give you a snapshot of what we have been doing from 2010 and right up today, and in between, you will see the kind of things that are mentioned in the Report. I think in that way, you can get some good background of the Report.

Basically those are the things we want to talk about; the Commission itself, its relation to economic development; the kinds of reforms Government is doing in Higher Education;

the impact on industries and communities on the work that we are doing; the funding model that Government has agreed to; the highlights and then conclusion and questions.

In terms of the Commission and its background, before the FHEC came into being, there was an Advisory Board in 2008 that worked together to get the draft promulgation which became an interim law in 2008 which is the major legal document for us. Then there is the other two – the Fiji Higher Education Regulation 2009 and Fiji Higher Education Regulation 2010. We used to do the Fiji Qualifications Framework from 2003 to 2010 but since the Commission came into being, we have taken it over and the previous Minister for Education (Mr. F. Bole) launched that in 2012.

There are 11 functions of the Commission and the ones that we (Commission/Industries/Government) are very concerned about is the quality of higher education and the access to higher education. We very strongly promote the second function which is, to foster and safeguard the national interests, the interest of students and parents and also of local higher education providers. That is something that encompass most of the things that happen in this area, and you will see as I go through, honourable Members, the kinds of things that we are trying to do.

Functions 3 and 5 are two other important functions, and they are:

- 3) To establish national standards for different qualifications; and
- 5) To provide assurances that programmes developed by institutions meet national standards first of all, and possibly international ones.

Functions 7, 9 and 11, I will talk a little bit more on that later on as they are the key functions that I would like to highlight to this Committee.

Pre-2010 as you can see from the graph, there were various programmes being run by many institutions in Fiji without any standards or without any guidance of standards for accreditation or qualifications. Government, therefore, puts in FHEC to set minimum standards and that is the major thing about jobs - minimum standards so that we can bring in institutions with the kinds of things we are doing above the minimum standards, and we can bring their programmes above the minimum standards. Those are two major things, Mr. Chairman and honourable Members, and I will try and explain how we have done that.

Institutions above the minimum standards, we have two recognition processes which is basically Recognition and a Registration processes which is much more involving staff actually going out a number of times. Registration takes about two years to happen, Recognition might take six months or so. Recognition has 13 criteria, Registration 53 criteria. It is a long difficult process and it goes on. Once the institutions are above the bar and at the moment, we have about 82 institutions in this country and only 24 have gone fully above the bar and 10 provisionally above the bar. Those are the first two processes.

In terms of accreditation of programmes, once they passed the bar, then we look at the programmes and this is why we are rather slow, Mr. Chairman, I need to make that point. This is why we are slow in ensuring the quality of our qualifications; we need to get them above the bar first, before we can consider their programmes and that is, the accreditation. We are moving at that very quickly and this year, we have worked with MFATs to get consultants across to help us re-organise the programmes and do that fast.

For the information of the Committee, there are about 1,300 programmes in Fiji. As a Commission and with the amount of funds we have, we can do 50 a year. That will take us 26 years to cover that 1,300 that we have. We need to work out a way of doing that and we are currently working on ways of increasing the accreditation process so that we can finish them, at least, within the next five years to finish all the accreditation. That is a long process.

However, besides that, we can also carry out quality audits any time on any institutions operating in future. The law allows us to do that. We have just finished a quality audit of one of our institutions because of complaints and we will continue to do that, honourable Members.

The ways of setting programme standards, first is that, we develop National Qualifications. As I have said, we have 1,300 programmes, perhaps too many for a small country like Fiji. People are confused; our industries are confused about which qualification is the appropriate standard, which one has the right things inside. We want to develop National Standards and I will talk a little bit about this later. That is one way of setting the Standards.

We have a Fiji Qualifications Framework that I talked about which was launched in 2012. We accredit provider qualifications, for instance, USP Programmes, FNU Programmes, et cetera, we will accredit them. If USP says, they have a programme at Level 4, we will accredit them against our Framework and see that it is really Level 4, and that process, we have been enlightening the universities and other providers, and we are starting that process very urgently, especially this year with USP and FNU. We also want to continue our Framework and I will talk a little bit about that soon.

This is our Framework and as you can see, we have parts to it – the school, the TVET section and the Higher Education section. We think it is blurring and causing a lot of problems in our country. This started in 2003, we want to have one Framework, not separate TVET from Higher Education, so that the emphasis and our people in our country can realise that higher education should not be the only area of target for their children. The TVET section is a major area, and I will talk about this later.

The Industries Standards Committee, our National Qualifications are developed by industries. We do not only consult them but we actually ask them to write what is required in the curriculums and I have a few pictures here to show you the different groups of people. As you will notice from the pictures, we do not just use local people. There are people in the country who have international standings in this area, we invite them to be in our committees, and that has been very helpful for us.

So, these National Qualifications that I talked about earlier, are qualifications that are developed by the ISAC (Industry Standards Accreditation Committee) who work out what standards industries want. As you can see from the Annual Report, there is a list of names. We put that out to ensure the credibility of this National Qualifications. Industries know this. When we go through the National Qualifications and it takes about 18 months to get one of this done, we take them to the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation for their clearance, we take them to the various licensing bodies in the country to get their clearance before we let them go. We have recently become members of the Suva Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and we are also inviting them to be part of this process, to ensure that the National Qualifications meet the requirements of industries within our country. As I have said, the

National Qualifications, we have given Standards, so these are broken into small pieces of teachings that are done, a cohesive set of them are brought together and defines the National Qualification at a particular level.

We set the qualifications, for instance, if the industry wants to develop a qualification at Level 4 Automotive, we tell the ISAC's Committee what are the requirements for Level 4 in terms of the generic skills and trade skills that are required and when industries set the competencies, they set it against those standards. So, the National Qualifications Standards are pre-set against that. These are not curriculum that we develop, these are inner standards just competencies. Let us say; "If you have a Certificate Level 4, the students must be able to do these straight things and have these other additional skills". The institutions then take those standards as you can see on dot-point form, and develop their own curriculum. So, USP might take some of the Unit standards and develop a curriculum which might be quite different from what FNU develops, but the competencies the students get at the end, that is, the minimum standards. USP can do a little bit more, FNU can do a little bit more but not less than what is specified in the National Qualifications.

The other thing about the National Qualifications, we have independent assessors who are trained by the Commission and these are independent people out there in the community, industry people and people in higher educational institutions and they will provide the standards and ensure that they are independent of the institutions.

We are developing an online assessment system whereby we can actually capture the competencies as people are doing them and put them on the net where our assessors around the country can see them. At the moment, sending assessors to the site is very expensive, that is why we are developing this. We see this as another added advantage where we can open this up for a fee to the industry and they can see the actual competencies of people with those qualifications.

These are the national qualifications that have been developed. You can see 14 are in black. Those have gone through the process that I had talked about. The other two - mining is just about to complete. The programme has gone through the Fiji Commerce and Employers, it has gone through the licencing body and is just about being finalised now. The security one, we are still going through those processes. (14.19)

As I have said, and I talked about this already; to be able to teach National Qualifications, besides going through the recognition and registration process, they need to go through an additional set of processes to ensure that they can teach and have the equipment to teach these national qualifications. Too often in our reports to Government, we noticed the mismatch between applicant skills and the requirements, and this is the reason why we are trying to do this, following on from what TPAF used to do.

The links with the Ministry of Education, we are a body corporate, we report directly to the Minister via myself, as Vice Chair of the position. The status of our staff, conditions and terms, we are still under development. We are not quite sure whether we fit in the civil servants or whatever system, and we are working with the auditors to try and work out how that happens.

We have very strong links with the TEST Section and the Ministry of Education. As I have said, this is the area that we are targeting, the country really needs skilled workers and we are spending a lot of our resources to look at Level 1 to Level 6 on the Framework.

The funding, as you know, honourable Members comes through the Ministry of Education where operating grants to a tune of \$18.7 million a year for the institutions' operating grants. Unfortunately, special grants have historically gone directly from institutions to various higher education providers and that is usually outside our radar. We are catching some other now and we are bringing them back to Government and all these operating grants should come through the Commission. We also had some special grant given by the former Minister for Education, Mr. Filipe Bole, to a tune of \$3 million in 2013. That grant money will finish at the end of this year, and that will be an issue for us and that, I will explain later.

One of the things everyone keeps asking us is; how can we assure the qualifications? The Fiji Qualifications Framework which is, if I can just say, is this one (indicating on the slide) is linked to the Pacific Framework where Samoa, Tonga and PNG are all linked to the Pacific Framework and from there, we can link to the Framework internationally. There is a lot of discussions that are happening. Outside that process, Fiji can go directly to Australia and New Zealand where we will link our Framework against them and we are having extensive discussions with them to do that. So, our issue of finances to the Higher Education Sector is very slow and I will talk little bit about that further.

Minimum response of institutions to adapt to changing market requirements, we say to them; "This is the kind of thing Government wants. These are the developments" but they are slow to react so we are pushing them from the Commission to react a bit faster. We have lots of inappropriate curricula as you can see from the NEC data. We are working with institutions to see if NEC shows this from these universities, et cetera, why is this happening? We know there is a problem with lack of employment opportunities, but we are telling our institutions; that they should provide entrepreneurial skills as a backup to our graduates.

There is a high level of attrition among academic staff. There is inadequate and inappropriate funds available for technologies to put for Level 1 to Level 6. This is especially true of our national universities, and this is one of the reasons why they do not have the appropriate skills to have a ...

The reluctance of our institutions to have the mission of supporting the economy. Too many of our institutions, especially the bigger ones talk about a lot about academic freedom, et cetera, but they are not talking about supporting the socio-economic development of the country. The Commission is working very strongly with them to ensure that they revise that, and we are trying to use the funding model as a carrot, to get them to do these types of things.

Other issues in terms of economic development, the lack of the National Human Resources Development Strategy, there is one but the kinds of directives in them are not very clear, so one of the things the Commission is doing this year is that, we have had extensive consultations and we will do more to set up what we call the Tertiary Education Strategy for the country. So, if we can have some clear signals to all the players of where Government wants to go, and if they want to come on board, they come on board on those things and if they can be funded through the various sources of funding from Government.

The other things, I will not talk about. I am going to jump ahead. One of the key things that we are finding in Higher Education is that, we do not have critical national thinkers. We have different people coming up with Bachelor's Degree, et cetera, who cannot think outside the box. So, we are telling our institutions; "You better do something about this" and they are working hard at this.

As you know, we are moving from elitist type of education that we had in the past, to mass education due to Government strategies but this has come with its own problems. That, we have to ensure that we get these people trained appropriately to respond to the needs in our country.

Honourable Members will know our strategy with the current Government and how we are trying to do these things. We want to move the vocational schools to the Higher Education Sector. Ministers talk a lot about these things.

I just want to jump to this slide (powerpoint) which will show you the socio-economic problems that we have in our country. The data is dated 2007, just yesterday I called Bureau of Statistics again to see if they have the 2013 data, they still do not have them. However, with your indulgence, just over 0.5 million over the age of 15 in 2007, almost half of that were not economically active in 2007 and that is the problem. As we go down this chart, you can see more of that. This gives you an indication, honourable Members, if 20,000 (and that was what happened in 2010) came into our schools, by the time they go into Year 13, there were about 6,000/7,000 left. Out of that 6,000/7,000 left, only one-third, about more than 250 are left. So, we have major major problems. What happens to all these people? That is the social thing that I want to bring to your attention here, and that is why we are concentrating more on TVET in the Higher Education Sector.

We have the marketing team that goes out to provincial councils, to the Hindu, Muslim and Christian Education Authorities, advocating to them the Levels 1 to 6. We have visited Serua, Namosi. We have talked to the Education Committees of Provincial Councils, Education Committees and even some schools, especially the ones in the rural areas, to try and explain those issues to them. Serua, Namosi, Bua, Kadavu, we are going to Lomaiviti soon and the others. Basically, what we are doing is, we are targeting the provinces that have lower numbers.

We want to rationalize our qualifications like New Zealand did, 13,000 we want to bring it down to about 600, so that we have comparable programmes across. So people know that if they are sending their child to do Bachelors in Accounting, it should be irrespective of whether they go to USP or wherever else. We are working hard with the Vice Chancellors to ensure that we do get that.

The National Qualifications will give us the minimum standards. We are moving more to graduate profiles so that the programmes say exactly what the students would be able to do, know and be when they come out. Currently, the way our educational institutions work, they have content and say; "These people are going to study these things. They need these prerequisites to do that." We are saying; "We should not be talking about how much time they spend. We should not be talking about prerequisites, we should be talking about what attributes the graduates would come out with" and that is what we call the "new graduate attributes".

In the Tertiary Education Strategy, we are telling institutions that we are giving them five years from next year to set up graduate profiles in all our programmes so that people will know what they will be able to do, know and be after that. Their parents will be able to know and there are further openings.

We have the technical colleges that we are trying to do with no entry requirements and with other higher education institutions, we are trying to do that there. The universities are a bit stuck and slow to respond but we are working with them.

Workplace experience is a big problem for social development in this country. Some of our institutions do theory, give them a two week's break and a strong letter and ask them to find work experience. This is unfair. We are working in the Commission on a policy to be able to say to the institutions; "You have the money that you charge as tuition so you cannot only teach theory, you must mix theory and practice." That will come into law slowly.

We are saying to institutions; "You are training people to become technicians, technologists and professionals and we should have various training." So, our first graduates should be upskilled when they get into the industries. As I have said, we are working very closely with the various industry groups, to try and see that their voices are heard strongly in our institutions. We are telling them to clearly define what they want. Too often, they say it is not right, but they do not defend it. We are challenging industries to do that. We hope we will have a conference later on next month where we invite 200 industry people, 50 providers and 50 other stakeholders to thrash this issue out.

Just some highlights, you might not know, we have a Vice Chancellors Committee called the Committee for the Accreditation of University Qualifications. Instead of arguing with the universities as to the level of their Bachelor's Degree and above, we are setting the three Vice Chancellors to argue amongst themselves so that they can rationalize the Degrees. We started this year, so any new programme from this year onwards will have to be approved by that Committee. The Universities just cannot go ahead and do these things from now on. So, once we finish all the new ones, we will go back and start doing the older ones. At least, this Committee will and this Committee will report to the Commission and the Commission will approve or otherwise.

For your information, we have links internationally with the Pacific Regional Qualifications Framework, the Asia/Pacific Quality Network, with INQAAHE which is the highest body in the world for Quality Assurance and Higher Education. We have just had an audit with the Asia/Pacific, the first of its kind internationally for that Association which is of credit to us. To show our international linkages, we are bringing two international conferences to Fiji next year. One is the INQAAHE, that is the highest body to bring them back to back and the other one is the Asia Pacific Framework. Most of these will be done in May, 2016 at the Inter-Continental. So, that is a big achievement for us in Fiji. As we have seen, we have done the audits and other things, we have talked about.

The major challenges, if you look at page 14 of the Report, Sir, there are 26 staff and we have already lost nine of those, and that is one of our major challenges. As I have said earlier, we do not know where we are, whether we are civil servants or not. Civil servants get pay rises in the Government budget, we do not get any pay rise and so our budget is a one-line budget item which causes us major problems, and that is a real issue for us. For instance, last year, FNU got a 10 per cent increase, we did not get any, and we lost staff. Quite a few

of our own staff went to FNU. We spend a lot of time training, these are very specific areas that we have to train officers, in-house training and external training, and we send them all over the world to get those training. It is hard to keep them, even though they are committed to their country but they need to feed their families.

Sir, if I can come to our finances, when we started in 2010, we had a budget allocation from Government of about \$0.5 million. In 2015, we had about \$1.5 million but as I have said, the money from the grant was \$3 million in 2012. We have been using about \$1 million every year and this year, it will finish. So, we really need our operating grant to be \$2.5 million rather than the \$1.5 million that government gives us. If we do not get even near that amount, we will not be able to do the kinds of things that we have done in the past, and this is one of the reasons why I wanted to show this.

In 2010, we had four staff, 2013, we had 34. The amount of work has increased drastically and we are not sitting on our laurels, we have gone out to try and get funds from other sources. For the second half of this year, we got NZ\$100,000 almost unpegged so that we can use it for most of the things that we define ourselves, in the way we define it and with whom we define it. We do not need to get in NZ consultants. The grant has been very useful for us. We have had ongoing discussions with MFAT to give us more money next year, and we hope that we can do something like that a lot more to do more developments.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and honourable Members, for your indulgence.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much, Dr. Richard, for your presentation. I will request honourable Members if they have any questions.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Mr. Chairman, first of all, I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Richard Wah and the team for educating us on the functions/roles and all those legal issues relating to the FHEC because as we know, it is something new to us. I am interested in the funding and Dr. Wah mentioned that they have been inadequately resourced. What is the role of the FHEC in terms of governance or oversight because the Government gives a lot of budget to the FNU and also to USP?

DR. R. WAH.- The funding by Government is 70 per cent of the members' contribution. There are three allocations to USP. Members' contributions as fees and the third one as contributions from Australia, New Zealand and each one of them make about one-third each. So, we have 70 per cent of one-third of USP's budget is what we give in the operating grants.

We also give a lot of money in the TELS and scholarships (Toppers). In terms of governance, by promulgation, we are able to access any information that they want as per the law. In practice, when we have asked, they have stated all sorts of things and got lawyers in place, but I must say, Mr. Chairman, that they have been very forthcoming. So, our dealings with them have been good. As I have said earlier, we did an audit. When students complain, there is a complaints system whereby we send a complaint, we read the systems of either staff or student grievances and either respond directly to the person or if it cannot, then we take it further. If there are problems, we will investigate the institution.

We have powers under the Promulgation to do these things. So, we can either do a special audit, a review and we have the registration process which is done every five years.

Within the next five years, they will have to go through that again. We also do quality audits as appropriate.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I have another question. Now, that you have mentioned about the TELS, what is the Commission's role in terms of the distribution of the new scholarship system, the Toppers in relation to the socio-economic benefits for Fiji?

DR. R. WAH.- We do not have any direct dealings with the allocations but as the Government arm that looks after monitoring within the education sector, one of the things we will do with TELS is to see where they are spending this money and against the allocations that Government has set. For instance, Government says; "These are the major areas and these are the many people we need to be trained in those areas". We will get the data from TELS that has been approved by the Office of the Prime Minister, and we will look at that and then report to Government whether these are being done appropriately. We had a little difficulty with getting these data last year because of the transition stage of that Committee, this year we are having advanced discussions with TELS to be able to get that data so that we can report to Government on the usage of that money.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Can I just on another question in relation to that, there seems to be a gap because the unemployment of graduates is quite high but I hear that there is a close synchronization of the qualification and the industry requirements. If that is the case, maybe can we have an explanation as to why the unemployment rate is still high as registered with NEC?

DR. R. WAH.- I think the relationship is not as close as we would like it to be. The institutions have advisory boards with industry, but they are advisory boards. The providers listen but do not necessarily follow so, when we have our consultations with industry, that has always been the complaint. That is one of the reasons why we have tried to form the National Qualifications and rationalize our programmes from Levels 1 to 6, so that these are national and not consultations between FNU and the industry or USP and the industry. We are saying to the three of them; "Look, let the consultations be at a national level", so these consultations that we are having in two months' time are joint of consultations between USP, FNU, NTPC, Higher Education Commission, Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation and the Suva Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is a combined one, so we are saying to them; "Look, when you do institutional ones, they say something" but we are trying to build a full national one this time. We are hoping that we can get true participation and collaboration. So, there is a lot of work being done on ground at the moment by the staff in the Commission to try and ensure that we get this closer collaboration.

That is one of our functions that I did not allude to, Mr. Chairman, it is one of our functions to ensure that we have these linkages; to foster cooperation among higher education institutions and linkages between higher education institutions and industry. We know that it is not as good as what we wanted to be, it could be a lot better but the professional associations are complaining. The programme that we are trying to set, we want to set up a lot more professional associations in the country. We have had discussions with these major people who are talking in the newspapers, we have actually sent our staff out there, talk to them and we are saying to them; "Don't just say we have bad tile layers, tell us what is wrong with them so that we can go back to the industry". So we are trying to do right and the Commission staff are actually going out to do that at the national level. We are saying to

FNU and the others; “Let us get the national. Let them see some information”. I do not think we have good enough co-operation yet.

The industry needs to define that and one of the things, Mr. Chairman, that I forgot to mention, the ISAC Committee that we have, we are making sure that 60 per cent of that are made up of the industry. That is the reason why I gave you the numbers for that Committee, 200. This room that we are going to hire for this place will have 300 spaces, 200 of them is for the industry. We want to make sure that the industry feels that they can contribute to the development of our country.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the team for their presentation this morning. I thank the Commission for their alignment to the international standards. What are the costs in aligning our national standards to international standard and who paid for those costs?

DR. R. WAH.- The cost of our staff going there to have discussions with them, what we have to do is we have preliminary discussions first, and once those preliminary discussions set the parameters, we send our documents there.

There are two sets of documents that we need to send, so these do not really cost much money. In fact, there are no costs associated in terms of paying membership fee or anything like that. What will happen at the end of all these discussions and checking, we will probably get a consultant to do the mapping, and once that is done, that will probably be the only cost. After that, we will write a MOU. Say for instance, we do with New Zealand, then all our qualifications on our framework will map against the New Zealand ones. In that way, we should get something going but maybe, I should say this; that is from a government to government level, institution to institution, we still have hiccups and we will continue to have hiccups.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- One we align to those standards/conventions, my question is on the awarding of credit points by various institutions that we have here. The credibility of awarding these points, who monitors that and how?

DR. R. WAH.- The credit points, the way the Commission does it is, any institution can do their own credit points. Let me just explain; Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 on the Framework, we say the minimum number of credit points has to be 40 credit points to get one of those. That is credit points.

The difficulty that happens in our institutions is not the credit points, it is the number of learning hours associated with the credit points. For instance, a one- year programme in any of our three universities has 120 credits, which is not a problem. The number of learning hours is very different. FNU talks about 120 x 18; USP talks about 120 x 12 or 15, it depends; the University of Fiji is trying to do what we do and what most places do internationally – 1 to 10. The difference is in the notation. We say; “one credit point = notional hours”. FNU talks about one credit point = 18 learning hours, that is very different. The FNU’s 18 learning hours, for instance, says there will be six in, for example, practical; ten in lectures, et cetera, so they actually define the learning hours. The notional hours is defined like this; it says, an expert in an area will decide how much time a student and average student will require. That is the definition. So, only the expert in that subject area

can define something at Level 4 and say; “This is a physics course at Level 4, an average student (not the bright ones nor the weak ones) in the bell shaped curve, will need 10 hours to do this. That is what I meant by pre-set those, so they pre-set it at that level.

Our universities have not grappled with this idea. We have had many presentations with universities. Credit points are not learning hours as such, credit points are levels of difficulty, so they define how difficult these things at different levels. It has been something that we have spent a lot of time to set up those meetings and FNU said they are still grappling with those. This is an ongoing problem and it is not only in Fiji, that is international but the way we solve that is, we see it in ours it is one to ten. When FNU wants to accredit their qualifications and they have to, if they want to get international recognition through this Framework. We will take their one to eighteen and have our calculation and put in on here, so everything that comes on to our Framework will be one to ten national hours on credit points. That is how we make them into apples and oranges become mandarins, I guess. They will become common on our Framework. That is what this Framework is for.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Just to add on to my earlier question, some of these universities are splitting the Units from what they are doing now, and increasing the number of Units. It is affecting the students economically, financially and socially. Can you explain what control measures are you taking in regards to this?

DR. R. WAH.- As I have said earlier, when we do the programme of accreditation, we are telling all of them; “This is the Fiji Framework, these are the Unit standards, these are the credit points. Do whatever you like there but when we take them and put them on this Framework, then you will see whether they are really in Level 3 or 4”. We have done a few in practice, and we are finding variations. So, this is above the minimum benchmarks that I showed you earlier on for programmes. So, this is where we need money, Sir. As I have said, we have 1,300 Programmes, we can only 50 a year, it will take us 30 years to finish there. We need to speed up that process and one of the things we are trying to do is outsource – train people, outsource them and get them to come and help us do this thing quickly but there are various modalities that we are looking at.

HON. V. NATH.- First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Wah for a comprehensive presentation today. My question is; would you like to elaborate more on the online programmes?

DR. R. WAH.- Mr. Chairman and honourable Members, there are two parts to this question – the online courses that are offered by our institutions in the country. If you take USP for instance, they have a lot of online courses and a lot of credit courses. Rather than calling them online, what they are doing is they calling them blend mode. So, really when the certificate comes out, there was no difference – it does not say whether this student did online or do it face-to-face or whatever. In fact, a lot of face-to-face courses have a lot of online components to it.

When we look at the accreditation process, you can get on to our website is like a full set of things where one of the things we look at is that particular questions of delivery mode. We are trying to look at that. We do not want to take up too much of micro-managing up there of the institution, we expect their senates to do a lot of that. However, the CAUQ (Accreditation of University Qualifications) Committee which accredits at that level (Levels 7-10) will look at those. Our Fiji Qualifications Council will look at Levels 1-6. It might

look like I am sidestepping the question but basically, what we are saying to the institutions; “If you give them credibility, we will look at it based on the criteria that we used so far, and take them through”, that is the Fijian ones. The ones that come from overseas, we have no way of monitoring them at the moment because this is the internet. They just come online and come into our country and people can do them. If an institution tries to come in, like for instance, when we have the University of Central Queensland, they were here, they did online courses. Those ones we can monitor and go in and do exactly the same thing that we are going to do to USP. So, we have that problem.

One of the things that we are spending quite a bit of our resources on is open learning resources. We have heard the Minister for Education talk a lot about the difficulties on textbooks, et cetera. The Commission is seeing that many of our textbooks for our higher education institutions are very expensive and we are trying to become part of this group of open education resources. All our materials, the Unit standards, et cetera, that we put out, we are going to put them on what we call the common security of licence, so anyone can use them internationally.

We are trying to become part of that community of educators that provide free access and in that way, once we do that, then we can accept it. The condition is the hour of the Ministry of Education – Open Education Resources. The Minister has asked us to do that on behalf of the whole Ministry. We are trying to push that kind of thing and that is all tied up with open learning. That is why I mentioned that, Sir. I hope I have answered your question.

We are a bit worried about this and as you can see, there are a number of things we can get a bit more of support, we can push into that.

HON. V. NATH.- Than you for your analysis.

My next question is; what awareness measures are you putting in place for people of Fiji so that they know whether they are enrolled in a proper MQR?

DR. R. WAH.- Are you talking about our students to qualifications outside of Fiji?

HON. V. NATH.- That is right, Sir.

DR. R. WAH.- We have very little control of that. I can give you some examples and because we are new, many arms of Government do not know the kinds of features that we are undertaking, one of which is the recognition of foreign qualifications. The group that looks after the accreditation of programmes look at foreign qualifications also. So, when people come into the country with foreign qualifications, we take them, send those foreign qualifications to our counterparts in their national countries and we say, for instance, we are doing a lot of these like with Georgia, the ones that PSC is getting for PSC scholarships forms. It causes a bit of problems because we have said to PSC and the other scholarship providers; “Please, tell us before you send out people so that we can check out these places”.

There has been too many withdrawn. They come back and PSC says; “Can you validate this qualification? We will look into this.” We say; “Why did you not tell us before? We could have validated that for you” because we have the networks as I tried to mention earlier, links with our international partners in this kind of area. So, we have a unit – Foreign Qualifications and they are doing that.

HON. V. NATH.- Thank you, you have answered my question. That is what I was asking, an awareness programme to our people.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a question regarding our medical schools whether they are under your microscope as well or not?

DR. R. WAH.- Both medical schools and the two nursing schools are under Us, and we have carried out a lot of work with them. The Umanand Medical School has come under a lot of fire and for your information, they have undergone five international reviews. That shows the strength of the programme that they have. Their approach is very different from FNU, their approach is more the traditional approach of clinical medicine. They learn the theory first, then they do clinical which is what FNU Medical School used to do when it was the Fiji School of Medicine. They did theory and then practical. Now, they are doing a problem solving approach which is a little bit different. So, we have the two approaches that we are looking at carefully. In fact, we have done our own review on one of these two institutions.

We have done some 'quick and dirty' research on the nursing schools so we just look at the competencies of their graduates and we are finding some interesting things coming out there.

HON. V. BHATNAGAR.- When I was looking through the status of the Higher Education institutions; some are registered, et cetera, and taking that into consideration, I was wondering whether uniformity is actually there in the standard of teaching throughout the institutes and if there is a monitoring system in place?

DR. R. WAH.- The uniformity as per the law comes out in the registered institutions. If the institutions are registered, after their programmes are accredited, then we can get uniformity – when the programmes fit on to our Framework. As I have said, there are about 1,300 Programmes, only about 16 are on the Framework at the moment. So, those are the only ones we can see that they are uniformity. When people say that one university is not as good as the other, I keep asking them; "How do you know?" because no one has any measure except for FHEC and we have not done the measure yet. We have anecdotal evidence but in our stage in development in Fiji, anecdotal evidence is not enough, we need real solid verifiable evidence which is what we are trying to do when we do the accreditation process.

HON. V. BHATNAGAR.- As you mentioned TELS, if you can give a little clarification as to how this works. As far as I know, once students go into TELS, they do not pay back. Is there a timeframe for how long and suppose a person is unemployed for one year or two years, are they required to pay back or the guarantor required to pay back?

DR. R. WAH.- The TELS does not come under the Commission, so I cannot answer that.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- What are your views regarding the qualification locally or internationally to our labour market, the comparative analysis? I find that most of the industries take international rather than our local?

DR. R. WAH.- To answer that, if we can just do it on a round-about way. Yesterday, I was in front of the University Grants Committee and one of the questions they asked is; “In your own view (like you just asked) what would you suggest for the development of the University?” I answered; “You need to improve their research that will impact on our country”. They are doing all sorts of things but their research should impact. In the same way, I am saying the same thing here; in terms of the impact, when we talk to people in the industry, they say to us; “If I get a graduate from here, he can hit the ground running. If I get a graduate from there, he cannot”. It is not the written documentation of the systems we have in both, it is the way the learning outcomes and competencies are defined. If I can give you an example, Sir.

We did a National Qualifications for aircraft maintenance at FNU. Students who go through, after four years, sit two exams – the Australian one and the Fijian one. Most students passed the Australian one and I asked them; “What is the vision for that? Is it hard?” They said; “No”. They have defined very clearly what the competencies that are required, so the lecturers know what to teach, the students know what to learn and that is what we are trying to do here in Fiji. That is the difference in the two styles and that is what we are trying to overcome. Hopefully, we can do that over the next five years. We cannot speed it up, it is just going to crack the system. We are going to do it piecemeal and fix it. We have been spending quite a bit of time trying to look and see what the problem, everyone has been hiding; “This is my turf, you are you to come and say this” but slowly, I think we have unravelled that and now, we are putting strategies into place to get it done.

HON. V. NATH.- I want to share an experience with you, Dr. Wah. Once I was in Australia and I went with a friend to an interview, and there were five people sitting for interview. Four was from Australia and one from Fiji and it was a mechanical interview. The Australian guy said; “You Fijians”. I said; “How can you tell me that”. He said; “The people from Fiji are jacks of all trade. They know everything”. However, in Australia, if you are serving a vehicle, you only know about serving the vehicle. So, you are true, Dr. Wah.

DR. R. WAH.- I talked about the national qualifications. When we set national qualifications and we pre-set them, what we do, say for instance, they want to do something in automotive at Level 4. What we do is, we go to the Australian and New Zealand Unit standards for Level 4. We bring them in, get their Level 5 and bring them in, and show them to our Industry Committee that we have set up and say to them; “This is what Australia and New Zealand do”. Can you see which ones we should do and which ones should not. Invaluably, we take a lot of Level 5s to develop our Level 4s. The reason we do that is because we want to make sure when we do the accreditation that you are talking about, they know what is listed in ours but that we have done it properly. We have to do that. Australia and New Zealand are big countries. When people look at their qualifications, they accept it.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- I note that majority of the institutions are sitting at yet to be recognised and recognised. For them to get registered, is it the aim of the FHEC to see that these institutions do get registered?

DR. R. WAH.- Without registration, they are not allowed to operate. So, they must be recognised and registered to be able to operate. Recognition is a one-off process, registration is, as I have said, for every five years but they must be able to operate.

All the ones that the honourable Minister pointed out, have not been registered, there is a clause in the Promulgation 2008 which says; the Minister can provide blanket provisional registration” to allow them to work through and finish that. That has been happening for the last five years. One of the things I said to the Director last week is; “You better pull up these people and tell them if they do not register, we are going to close them down” and that is what they are working through at the moment.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Yes, that was actually my question because they are in operation and we need to get them registered in terms of their contribution to Fiji’s economy. My other question is; in terms of enforcement of your legislation to ensure that they do get registered, what kind of assistance that Government is giving FHEC to ensure that these institutions get registered?

DR. R. WAH.- We have been through to the Solicitor-General’s Office at length to try and work out what their enforcement processes are. One of the lines in the Promulgation is that; “No institution can close down unless they give us 12 months’ notice.” If they do, the fine is \$250,000. One institution closed so we actually went through the SG’s Office, DPP’s Office, and then we had to go to the Police. The Police did their due diligence and the file is with DPP’s Office now. That is the process that we are using, so we do the preliminary work based on our own legislation, then we pass it to the Police to investigate and then they will pass the file to the DPP’s Office on whether or not to prosecute.

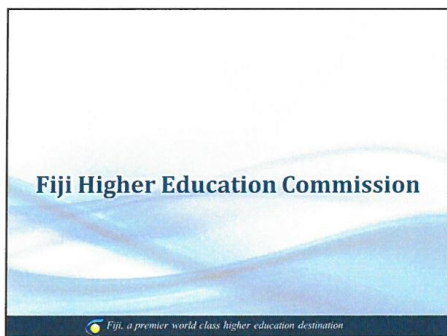
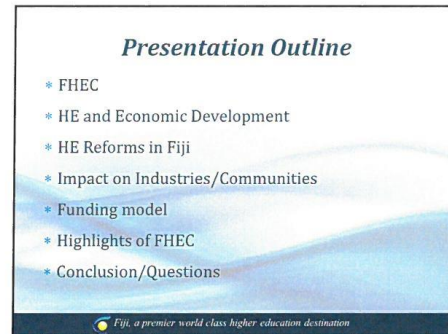
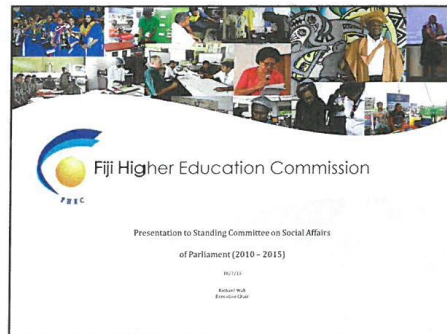
(Vote of Thanks by Chairman)

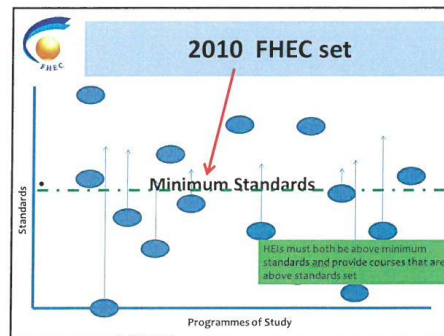
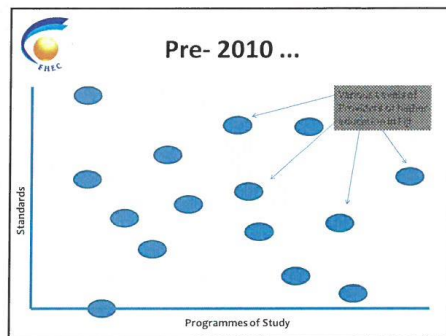
The Committee adjourned at 9:30am on Friday 17th July, 2015 and the meeting ended at 12:30 p.m.

**APPENDIX 2: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION BY
THE FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION
COMMISSION**

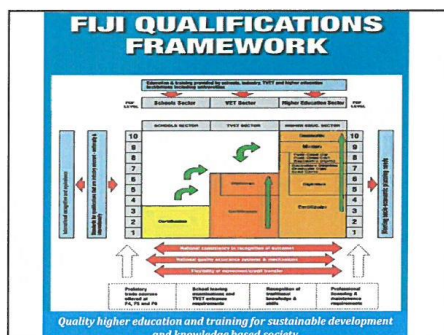
Appendix 2: Powerpoint presentation by the Fiji Higher Education Commission

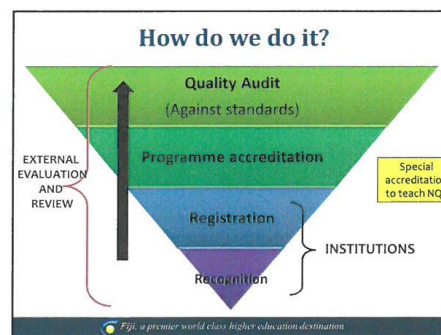
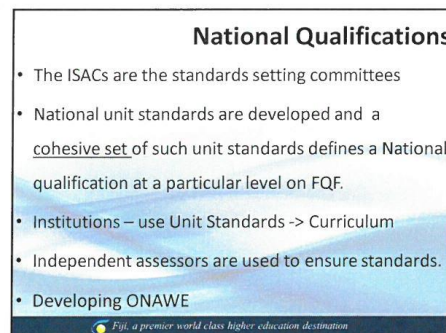
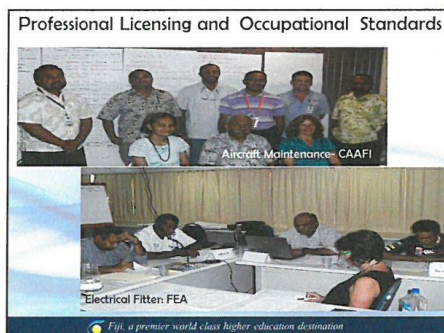
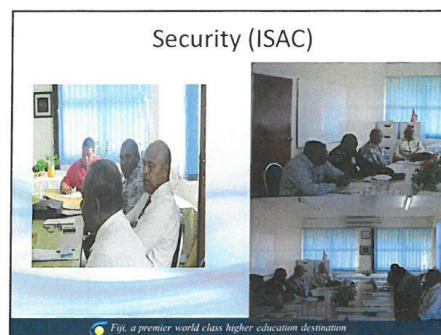
2/10/2016





- Main Ways of setting programmes standards**
1. Developing National Qualifications
 2. Accrediting Provider Qualifications onto the FQF
 3. Continue to improve the FQF
- Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination



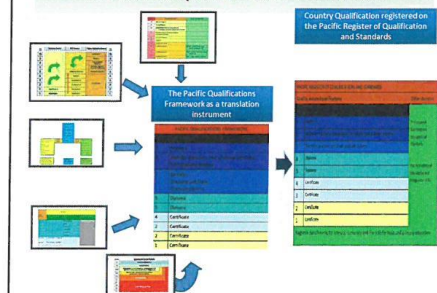


FHEC links with MoE

- FHEC is a body corporate that reports directly to the Minister of Education via Executive Chair.
- Status of its staff – conditions of work – underdevelopment
- It has strong links with TEST section of MoE
- It funding is channeled via MoE, as are funds for operating grants HEIs, special grants for funding model 2013, and special grants from TPAF 2012.

 Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

The Pacific Qualifications Framework



Some issues of HE on Economic Development

- The slow growth of financing higher education.
- Minimum response of institutions to adapt to changing labour market conditions.
- Inappropriate curricula - leading to high levels of graduate unemployment.
- High levels of attrition among academic staff.
- Inadequate and inappropriate technology.
- A reluctance to adopt the mission of supporting the economy.

 Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Some issues of HE on Economic Development (cont)

- Lack of a strategy for national HR development.
- Difficulty in empowering HEIs in a context of appropriate accountability mechanisms to increase opportunities for system differentiation and institutional innovation.
- How to reform financing arrangements to offer incentives for attaining policy goals while providing the stability necessary for institutions to plan strategically.
- Entrance requirements into HE without norm referenced assessments.

 Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Some issues of HE on Economic Development (cont)

- HEIs supporting the third mission – socio-economic development
- Searching for lower-cost delivery alternatives for tertiary education for remote Fijians.
- Different definitions for terms across sector.

 Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

The key issues and challenges faced by the institutions of higher education in Fiji.

The need for critical national thinkers to:

“Think outside the box as it is critical to adapt to the evolving terrain of higher education in Fiji and globally”.

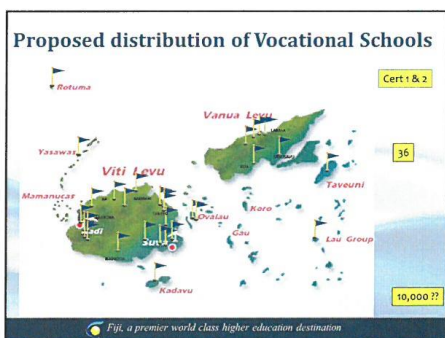
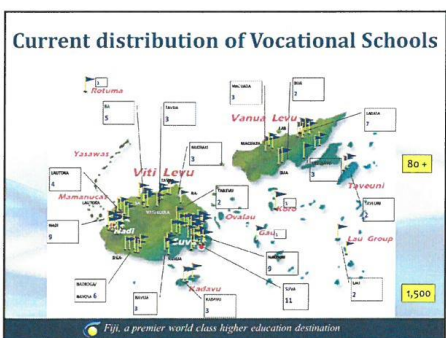
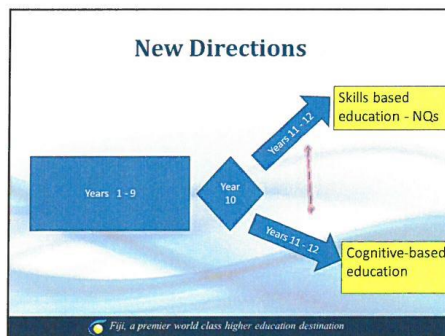
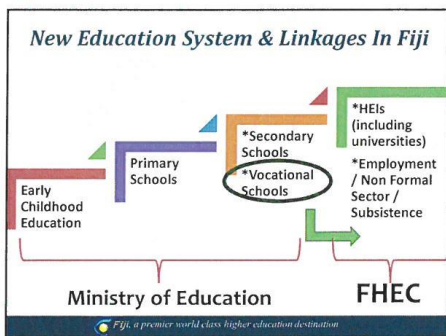
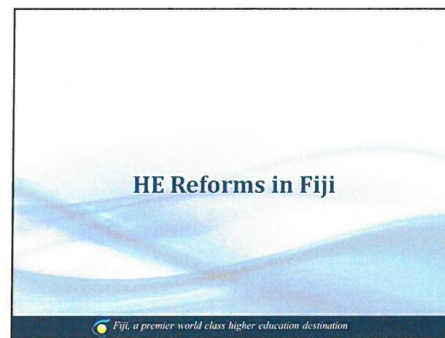
Need to question current practices in HE as we are shifting from elitist education to education of masses; from multi-standards to national standards

 Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Programme Distribution of 3 Universities (FNU, UoF, USP)

Discipline	No. of Programmes
Commerce	344
Expressive Arts	21
Engineering	80
Humanities	407
Medicine	74
Science	240

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination



Functions of FHEC - QA

QA has two main functions:

1. Quality Enhancement

The maintenance and continual enhancement of the secretariat's operations, as well as ensuring that the roles and functions of the Commission are carried out effectively and efficiently.

With the HEIs the maintenance and continual enhancement of the teaching, learning and research, and its entire institutional framework

IQA

2. Accountability

the demonstration of quality and value to external stakeholders (governments, students, parents, employers, society) for different reasons, including legal requirements.

EQA

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Accreditation of Programmes

- Accreditation of a programme means that it has passed certain criteria and is therefore placed at a particular level on the FQE

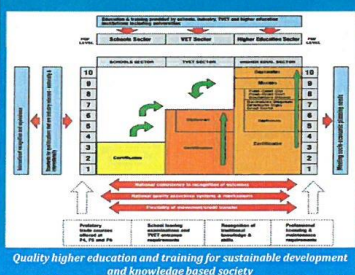
● Criteria includes:

- Level descriptors.
- Credits,
- Programme of study,



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

FIJI QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK



Responsibility for Accreditation of Programmes onto FQE

FQC and CAUQ

(1 – 6)

(7 – 10)

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

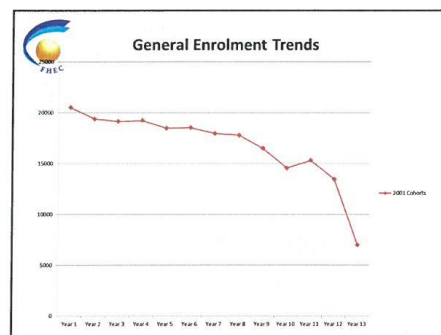
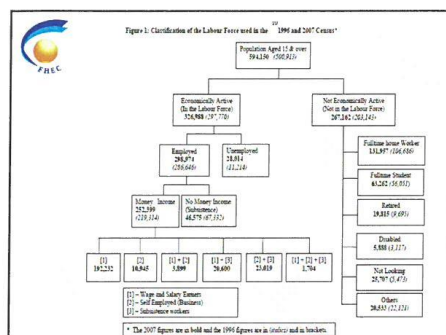
Impact on Industries/Communities

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Certification, Accreditation, Licensing

- Institutions – (FNU, UoF) - Certification – MBBS, BA (Acc)
- Accrediting authority – (FHEC) – Accreditation of MBBS
- Licensing Bodies – (Fiji Medical Council, Fiji Institute of Accountants) – Licensing of holder of MBBS; BA (Acc)
- Legislation in Fiji needs to be modernized in these areas

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination



Emphasis on level 1-6 (TVET)

- Dynamic Marketing Team – Provincial Councils, Hindu, Muslim and Christian Educational Authorities
- Rationalising of Qualifications 1300 – 600?
- NQs – minimum standards
- CBT, competencies rather than time spent or pre-requisites – graduate profiles – (do, know, be)
- Technical Colleges and other HEIs – TSLB
- Work place experiences

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Need Industry and HEIs to be On the Same Page

Employers, youth, providers - conceptualize – fresh graduate:

1. Professional
2. Technologist
3. Technician

Same perception

Upskilling of fresh graduates by Industry and RPL by HEIs

Involvement of FHEC with FCEF and other industry groups

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

SOME STRATEGIES

Closer working relationship of FHEC and HEIs with industry

- Competencies required clearly defined by industry so HEIs can be accountable
- Improved assessment of competencies and learning outcomes
- Industry inputs into teaching/learning
- Better prepared graduates
- Improved supply and demand data – tracer data

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Highlights of FHEC

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

A word about CAUQ

- Recent agreements
 - New programme – 7th October – for 2015
 - Old programmes will also be accredited by CAUQ



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Highlights of FHEC

- Recognition – 69 HEIs
- Registration
 - Full – 23 HEIs
 - Provisional – 10 HEIs
- Provider Programmes Accreditation – 14
- National Qualifications Development
 - Completed – 24
 - Draft – 2
- National Qualifications Up-taking – 7
- HEIs Undertaking National Qualifications – 3
- HEIs assisted through Funding Model – 9 (2014) \$80.7m and 9 (2015), FHEC recommended 18.



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Highlights of FHEC

- Database Development
 - Services - USP/FNU/UoF
 - OER (Creative Commons)
- Compliance/Continuous Improvement
- Complaints Processes
- International Linkages
 - PRQS, APQN, TQF, AQF, NZQA, MQA
 - INQAAHE (2016 INQAAHE Forum)
 - APQN (2016 Forum)
 - APQR - audit
 - 1983 Convention Recog Foreign Quals
- Industry Linkages
 - ISACs
 - FCEF and SCCI
 - Professional bodies
 - One on one meetings/discussions with industry groups
- Community linkages
 - Dynamic marketing teams



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Challenges

- Staffing Issues – 9/26
- Non-collaboration from HEIs
- Non-uniformity within HEIs in terms of data collected and measured
- Lack of awareness on Promulgation and regulations
- Politics and work in progress



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Future Outlook

- Recognition and Registration of Vocational Schools ... Technical Colleges
- Capacity Building with HEIs on IQA in preparation for EER
- Implementation of EER in 2015
- Completion of Registration of Existing HEIs by end of 2015
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Continued Advocacy on NQs to increase uptake from HEIs
- Capacity Building of staff to note global trends in Higher Education and apply same to local context
- Increase # of HEIs funded through Funding Model



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

FHEC Finances

- Budget is a one line item, following General Orders
- Steadily risen from \$500,000 (2010) - \$1,500,000 (2015)
- The TPAF grant in 2012 of \$3,000,000 for professional services of FHEC, FQF and NQs – depleted end 2015.
- \$500,000 for funding model depleted in 2014
- Staffing 4 (2010) – 34 (2015)
- 2016 – need operating grants of at least \$2.5 million
- 2015 – support from MFAT NZ\$100,000
- Actively seeking other funding sources


Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Conclusion

The main focus is on measuring quality, showing strengths and weakness in the following areas:

- Knowledge
- Skills and competencies
- Values and attributes
- Entrepreneurial skills

Post-Accreditations:
Continued Progress



Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

Further Information

 www.fhec.gov.fj

 www.facebook.com/fhec001

 fhec@fhec.org.fj

Fiji, a premier world class higher education destination

