

Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

Ministry of Civil Service

Role and Functions

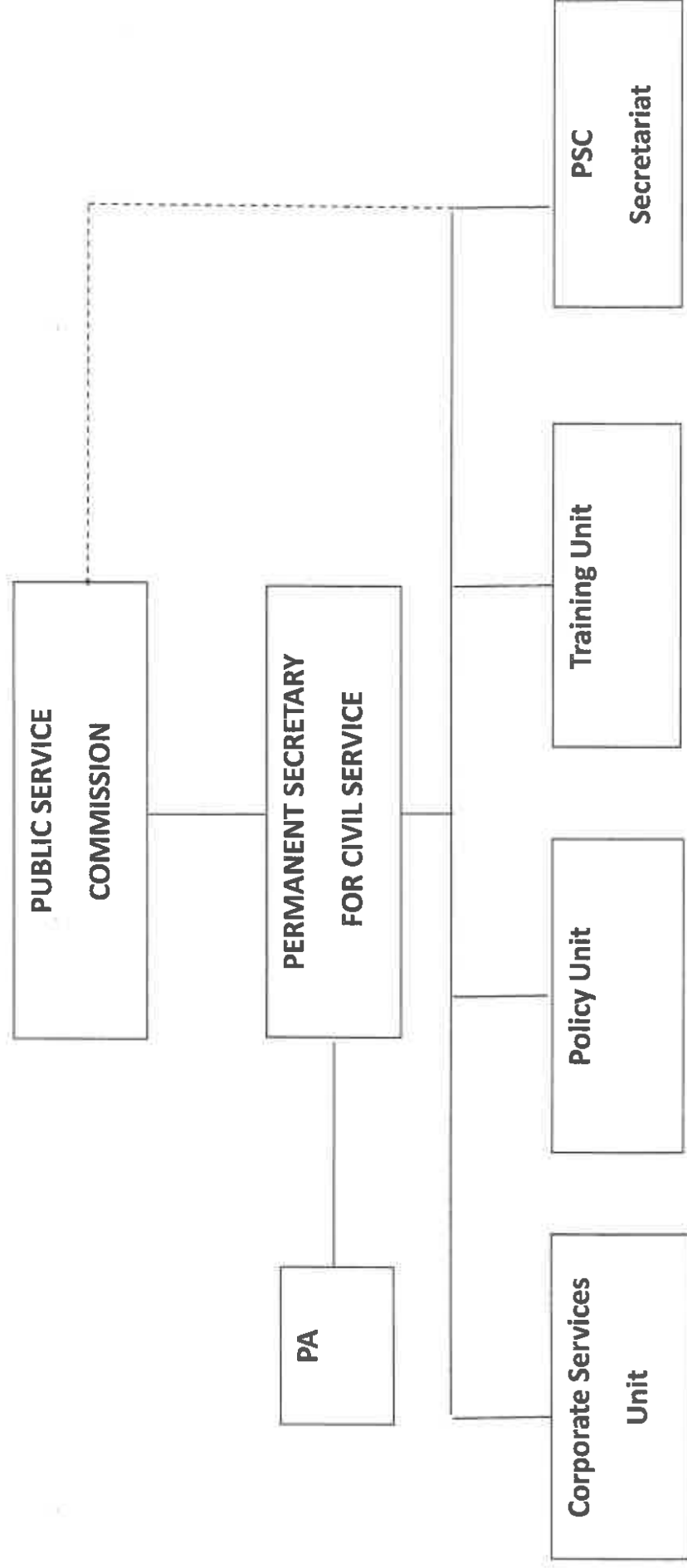
To support Ministries to carry out their Constitutional responsibilities while maintaining central coordination of key areas to ensure consistency across the Civil Service.

This will be achieved through firstly, providing training in the areas of civil service HR reform (such as merit based recruitment, performance management, discipline and training) and other core skills training required across the Civil Service. The purpose of the training program will be to help build effective, enlightened and accountable leadership and to enhance public sector efficiency, performance effectiveness and service delivery.

The Ministry will also have a policy unit that will coordinate and monitor the application of Civil Service guidelines to ensure consistency (such as changes to employment terms and conditions).

A Corporate Services Unit will provide corporate support to the Ministry.

A Secretariat will provide support to the Public Service Commission in carrying out its role recruiting and overseeing the performance of Permanent Secretaries.



Honourable Ashneel Sudhakar
Chairman
Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights
Parliament of the Republic of Fiji
PO Box 2352
Government Buildings
Suva.

11 May 2016

Dear Sir

RE: PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2014

I refer to your letter dated 11 April 2016 and submit the following responses to the Committee questions.

(A) Training and Workforce Development Division

What is the current policy now?

The PSC Training and Bonding Policy of 2014 is the most recent policy, however it will need to be reviewed in the context of the creation of the Ministry of the Civil Service.

Why were those nearing the retirement age being sent for training?

Under section 127 (7) and (8) of the Constitution, Permanent Secretaries (PS) have authority on matters pertaining to employment. Selection of nominees for training courses is the responsibility of the relevant PS. The former PSC role was to facilitate and implement those nominations.

Nominations for overseas training came from Ministries & Departments. The final selection was made by Development Partners. Some nominations came through the PSC and others, where ministries had direct relationships with development partners, would happen without PSC involvement.

Offers from Development Partners contained conditions such as training being tied to particular types of roles. The number of nominees could be limited by (for example) a lack of available officers who had not previously attended the training. Any officer nearing retirement who attended one of these courses was expected to impart the knowledge to their successor. Officers nearing retirement age would only have been sent on training in exceptional circumstances.

Overseas/local scholarship bonds - have those who were awarded these scholarship served their bond

As per the provisions of the PSC Training and Bonding Policy of 2014, respective PS are required to bond their staff and monitor the bond arrangement. This applies to local and overseas scholarships implemented through the PSC in-service scholarship or the pre-service scholarship implemented by TSLB.

What is the criterion for selection of personnel to proceed on training?

The 2014 Policy was current in 2015 for in-house short term training.

Donor funded short and long term training criteria is generally specified by the Donors in their offer letters (depending on the type of training).

Selection of personnel is vested with respective PS and HOD.

Ministries and departments continue to deal with offers coming straight to them from their bilateral partners.

(B) Office Accommodation and Government Housing

[a] Total Number of Quarters

The total numbers of quarters administered and managed by OAGHD are as follows;

Type of Quarters	Central Division	Western Division	Northern Division	Eastern Division	Total
Pool Quarters	320	347	260	136	1,063
Institutional Quarters	657	550	441	219	1,867
Total	977	879	701	355	2,930

Pool quarters were administered by PSC (now (MOF) and Institutional Quarters by respective ministries.

[b] Allocation of maintenance and repair work; to contractor; instead of PWD;

Prior to the reform on the administration and management of government quarters in 2010, all major and minor maintenance of government quarters was carried out by PWD.

In relation to pool quarters that were managed by PSC in the 2014 budget year, all maintenance and repairs were outsourced to private contractors.

PWD (or Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport) conducts their own assessment of quarters and manages repairs and maintenance (in relation to institutional quarters).

[c] Is there a monitoring system in place for the maintenance of quarters?

[d] Criteria for Outsourcing of maintenance and repair work; to contractors.

There is a monitoring system in place for the maintenance and repairs of quarters.

Every year PSC issued a circular to Ministries, Departments and Divisional Commissioners for submission of requests for urgent maintenance of quarters. Following that PSC conducted an annual inspection of those government quarters identified for urgent maintenance and prioritised the maintenance works based on their condition and the available budget.

PSC kept a database for all the quarters. In addition a database was kept for quarters that were repaired or renovated.

All the renovations work managed by PSC was outsourced. There was a standing operating procedure (SOP) on the outsourcing of maintenance and repair works.

PSC monitors the outsourcing of maintenance and repairs of quarters through the contractual agreement between PSC and the Contractor. The agreement specifies the Scope of Works and the payment schedule.

Other questions

The following business units have been divested after the creation of the Ministry of Civil Service:

- i. Office Accommodation and Government Housing – transferred to Ministry of Finance;
- ii. Fiji Volunteer Services - transferred to Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations;
- iii. Government Service Centre - transferred to Department of National Planning; and
- iv. Student Loan Recovery Unit - transferred to Ministry of Finance.

I will be leading the team appearing before the Committee and will be accompanied by Deputy Secretary of the former Public Service Commission Mr Iliesa Lutu and former Director Training Mr Ajay Singh. Former Director Office Accommodation and Government Housing Mr Sanjeshwar Singh will be attending from the Ministry of Finance.

In addition I will be briefing the Committee with the roles and functions of the new Ministry of Civil Service.

I am looking forward to briefing your Committee on Wednesday 11 May 2016 at 10:30am.

Yours faithfully,

Bernadette Welch

Permanent Secretary for Civil Service