

# PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

### REPORT ON ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC RENTAL BOARD, 2016



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## CHAIR'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the report of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs on the annual review of the Public Rental Board for the year ended 31st December 2016.

This review was based on the 2016 Annual Report of the Public Rental Board and was made in accordance with Standing Order 109(2)(b) which mandates the committee to look into issues related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

The review looked at nine key areas covering the period from January to December 2016, conducted into: Public Rental Board's administration; structure; budgetary allocation; programmes offered; policies; challenges; highlights; priorities for the coming years; and its implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Committee is generally satisfied with the operations of the Board and commends it for the continual delivery of quality and affordable rental flats whilst striving to meet its challenges to improve business efficiency, construct new rental flats and secure sustainability.

I thank the Acting General Manager Mr. Patrick Veu, and his staff for their assistance in this inquiry. I also wish to thank my Committee colleagues and Committee staff for their contributions and support.

I commend this report to Parliament.



**Hon. Viam Pillay**

**Chairman**

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

PRB	-	Public Rental Board
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals

## RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has conducted a review of the Annual Report of the Public Rental Board for 2016 and recommends that Parliament takes note of its report.

## INTRODUCTION

The 2016 Annual Report of the Public Rental Board was tabled in Parliament during the November 2018 meeting and referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, for its scrutiny.

Standing Orders 109(2)(b) allows Standing Committee on Social Affairs to examine matters related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

Standing Orders 110(1)(c) 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.*

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The substantive members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs are:

- Hon. Viam Pillay (Chairperson)
- Hon. George Vegnathan (Deputy Chairperson)
- Hon. Alipate Nagata (Member)
- Hon. Salote Radrodro (Member)
- Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu (Member)

During the Standing Committee's meetings, the following alternate membership arose pursuant to Standing Order 115(5):

- Hon. Simone Rasova
- Hon. Mikaele Leawere

## CORE BUSINESS OF THE PUBLIC RENTAL BOARD

The Standing Committee noted that the core business of PRB is to provide and manage affordable quality public rental properties for low income earners as well as to explore openings in order to cross subsidize low income earners.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The following table outlines how the operations of the Public Rental Board are aligned to the SDGs and the measures that are being taken by the Board to progress the respective Goals:

SDG	Goal	Measures taken
1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	PRB provides financially disadvantaged tenants with decent rental flats through Government subsidy for example, tenants who earn up to \$100 a week pay only \$5 as weekly rent.
2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	PRB encourages tenants to engage in backyard gardening to supplement their food supply in all its estates. This is also an initiative to assist tenants in saving money which can be directed to other needs.
3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Awareness programs are carried out in estates for medical checkups and presentations by medical staff. Inspections are also carried out by PRB representatives to ensure flats are in livable and acceptable conditions.
4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	PRB has established two Kindergarten facilities at Macfarlane and Nadera estates and have lately undertaken an initiative in collaboration with the Technical College to encourage school drop outs and unemployed youths of the estates to undertake vocational training programs.
7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	PRB has earmarked its headquarters for solar energy as a pilot project in 2019 which will subsequently be rolled out to its rental estates in the future.



## **GENDER ANALYSIS**

Gender is a critical dimension to parliamentary scrutiny. Standing Order 110 (2) requires committees to consider gender equality and ensure that the impact on both men and women is explored in all matters.

The committee noted that PRB's recruitment process is based on merit. PRB has 14 male and 12 female Established staff as well as 1 female and 15 males in unestablished employment (this is due to the nature of work as Tradesmen, Electricians and Plumbers).

It has been further noted that the following key positions have been given to female officers which were previously occupied by male officers:

- Manager Finance & Administration and Board Secretary
- Coordinator Finance
- Coordinator Human Resources and Administration
- Assistant Development Officer

However, the Committee noted that the Annual Report of PRB mentioned cross cutting outcomes in terms of gender equality but there was no breakdown of gender with the organisation.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That future reports present a breakdown of gender equality and participation in the positions held within the Public Rental Board.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs noted that the core function of the Public Rental Board is to provide and manage affordable quality public rental properties for low income earners as well as to explore openings in order to cross subsidize low income earners.

The review of the Board's 2016 Annual Report was conducted in a very tactful and comprehensive manner. After the review the committee forwarded questions to the Board on certain issues for further clarification.

This has enabled the committee for Social Affairs to submit to Parliament a more reliable and a cohesive report.



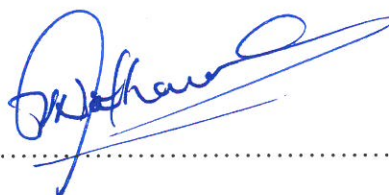
## COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs agree with the contents of this report:



Hon. Viam Pillay

(Chairperson)



Hon. George Vegnathan

(Deputy Chairperson)




Hon. Alipate Nagata

(Member)



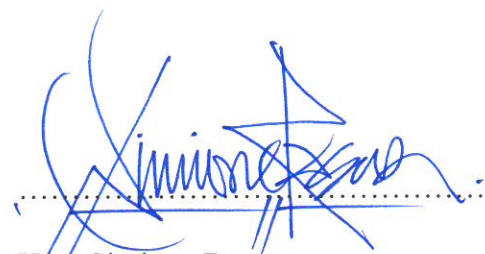
Hon. Salote Radrodro

(Member)




Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu

(Member)



Hon. Simione Rasova

(Alternate Member)



Hon. Mikaele Leawere

(Alternate Member)

# APPENDICES

## Witnesses

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The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

**Tuesday 29 January 2019**

### Public Rental Board

**Patrick Veu**, Acting General Manager, **Maloni Daurewa**, Manager Properties, Rental & Customer Service, and **Shalin Lata**, Manager Finance & Administration.

## **Published written evidence**

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Written evidence and supplementary information was received from the Public Rental Board and can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link:  
<http://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>