



---

# STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

## Review of:

Fiji Roads Authority 2015 Annual Report

Fiji Roads Authority January – July 2016 Annual Report



**Parliamentary Paper No. 119 of 2019**

*November 2019*

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

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD .....	4
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	5
RECOMMENDATION .....	6
INTRODUCTION .....	6
Committee Members .....	6
FUNCTIONS OF THE FIJI ROADS AUTHORITY .....	7
ISSUES RAISED .....	7
Vehicle Overloading .....	7
Recommendations .....	7
Resource Availability .....	7-8
Recommendation .....	8
Design and Construction Capability and Capacity .....	8
Recommendations .....	8
Uncontrolled Urban Development .....	8
Recommendations .....	9
Improvements to 'Irish Crossings' Underway .....	9
Recommendation .....	9
Improvements Needed to Outer Island Roads, Bridges and Jetties.....	9
Recommendation.....	9
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS .....	10
Recommendations .....	10
GENDER ANALYSIS .....	11
Recommendation .....	11

CONCLUSION.....	12
COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE .....	13
APPENDICES	
Witnesses .....	14
Published Written Evidence .....	15

## CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the report of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs on the annual review of the Fiji Roads Authority for the period January – December 2015 and January – July 2016.

In accordance with its established Annual Report review process, the Committee examines Annual Reports of agencies, in order to investigate, inquire into, and make recommendations relating to the agencies' administration, legislative or proposed legislative programme, budget, functions, organisational structure and policy formulation. As part of this process, the Committee conducted public hearings to gather additional information.

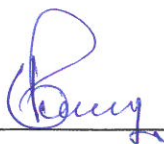
The process has proven to be an effective means of gauging its progress and maintaining a high level of scrutiny of the agencies under review.

This review 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 2015 to July 2016, conducted into: The Authority's administration; structure; budgetary allocation; programmes offered; policies; challenges; highlights; priorities for the coming years; and its implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank the Chief Executive Officer of the Fiji Roads Authority, Mr. Jonathan Moore, and his staff for their assistance in this inquiry. I also extend my gratitude to my Committee colleagues Hon. George Vegnathan (Deputy Chairperson), Hon. Alipate Nagata, Hon. Salote Radrodoro, and Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu for their contributions as well as to Hon. Simione Rasova for availing himself as an alternate member for those Members who were unable to attend the committee meetings. Finally, I thank the Secretariat namely, Ms. Sheron Narayan, Mr. Tevita Tuivanuavou, and Mrs. Atelaite Leba for the assistance provided during the committee's deliberations.

I, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, commend the *Fiji Roads Authority 2015 Annual Report* and the *Fiji Roads Authority January – July 2016 Annual Report* to Parliament and request all members of this August House to take note of the Committee's Report.



---

**Hon. Viam Pillay**  
**Chairperson**

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

FRA	-	Fiji Roads Authority
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
LTA	-	Land Transport Authority

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has conducted a review of the following Annual Reports:

- Fiji Roads Authority 2015 Annual Report
- Fiji Roads Authority January – July 2016 Annual Report

The committee recommends that Parliament take note of its report.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The 2015 and the January – July 2016 Annual Reports of the Fiji Roads Authority were tabled in Parliament during the May 2019 meeting and referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, for its scrutiny.

Standing Orders 109(2)(b) allows the 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 Vagnathan (Deputy Chairperson)
- Hon. Alipate Nagata (Member)
- Hon. Salote Radrodoro (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. Simione Rasova



## **FUNCTIONS OF THE FIJI ROADS AUTHORITY**

The function of the Fiji Roads Authority is to manage the current vested assets related to Roads, Street lighting, Traffic Signals, Bridges, Crossings and Jetties throughout the Fiji Islands.

Under this obligation, the Authority carries out Periodic Maintenance to all Asset classes and delivers Capital Improvements to provide a more efficient transportation network.

## **ISSUES RAISED**

### **VEHICLE OVERLOADING**

Overloading has been an issue in Fiji for many years. Over the past twelve months, FRA has worked with LTA to cease the historic allowance of manufacturers' recommended specifications and enforce the LTA regulations set in 2000.

However, the regulations set in 2000 did not consider larger combination vehicles that are now present in Fiji. As such, FRA has assessed over 2000 applications for combination vehicles and approved exemptions in line with what is allowed on the standard network in New Zealand. These loading allowances are in line with the design standards that FRA constructs road and bridge infrastructure to. Heavy Haulage Zones near Fiji's ports have been established which allow additional weight to be moved so that imports and exports are not disrupted.

The Authority has informed the committee that in time, these routes will be reconstructed to a higher design standard to accommodate this weight.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Fiji Roads Authority strengthen its partnership with the Land Transport Authority and other key stakeholders (such as, the Fiji Police Force, Logging companies, manufacturers, and Transport companies) to strictly enforce the LTA regulations set in 2000 to address problematic issues brought about by the importation of oversized and larger combination vehicles and subsequent overloading on our roads.
2. That the Fiji Roads Authority and Land Transport Authority work in partnership with other key stakeholders in conducting awareness programmes on oversized vehicles and overloading issues.

## **RESOURCE AVAILABILITY**

Ensuring high quality assets requires the availability of materials. The committee notes that FRA is challenged with accessibility to raw materials. The road materials it does have however, are of

the appropriate quality for its works. The challenge with these materials is quantity and the processes to go through to manage their extraction.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

We note that the Fiji Roads Authority is considering stopping the use of river gravel and using hard rock as a source of replacement. As such, we recommend that:

1. Thorough research be undertaken by key stakeholders (such as, the Department of Environment, Department of Lands and Minerals Resources, etc.) to avoid over extraction and destruction of our environment especially in maritime islands.

## **DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY**

The committee notes that there is a very small group of contractors which have worked with a group of designers, and FRA is not keen on bringing in overseas consultants and contractors continually as it is very expensive and not necessarily a guarantee of better quality. FRA has had great success with many of its local contractors however, the design and social capacity of the industry is low. As such, FRA is currently working on improving the capability of its team and local contractors.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Fiji Roads Authority's performance be monitored and assessed to ensure value for money for all resources that has been allocated.
2. That the Fiji Roads Authority engage in prudent recruitment (due diligence) of overseas contractors to avoid the early termination of contracts.
3. That the Fiji Roads Authority allow for greater participation of local contractors.

## **UNCONTROLLED URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

Uncontrolled urban development is a major issue at present. The committee notes that there is complete inadequacy of parking throughout the country in the urban centres which has led to major congestion.

As such, the following plans are underway to reduce road congestion in the country:

- Increasing lane-space within the current right-of-way.
- 3-way highways with flow direction related to peak hour traffic.
- Supporting Park and Ride schemes.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That there be a holistic review of Fiji's urban development that takes into account importation of all vehicles with roads' construction and conditions.
2. That the Fiji Roads Authority work in partnership with key stakeholders in developing proper bicycle and motorbike lanes.
3. That the Fiji Roads Authority together with the Town and Country Planning develop free to use car parks and encourage motorists to use public transport and carpooling.
4. That inland and access roads be developed and maintained regularly to ease traffic congestion.

## **IMPROVEMENTS TO 'IRISH CROSSINGS' UNDERWAY**

The committee notes that work to improve the 'Irish Crossings' is already underway. Over the past 12 months, the Authority has replaced five previously flood prone low-level crossings with new and more durable crossings.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Fiji Roads Authority build more durable and sustainable bridges to replace existing 'Irish Crossings'.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO OUTER ISLAND ROADS, BRIDGES AND JETTIES**

In the period under review, FRA continued to arrest deterioration and restore the roads, bridges and jetties in outer islands to an acceptable standard.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Fiji Roads Authority ensure the upkeep of roads, jetties and the construction of passenger waiting sheds.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The committee notes that FRA's work is closely aligned to progress the SDGs. In particular, FRA aligns itself to SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation and SDG 11: Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In aligning to the two SDGs, FRA contributes to SDG 1: No Poverty.

The Authority is building resilient infrastructure and providing access to the rural community. This relates to access to basic services and reducing vulnerability to climate-related extreme events, other economic, social and environmental shocks.

Sustainability is a serious consideration for the Authority. FRA recognizes the limitations that it faces in Fiji on resource availability and takes this into consideration by re-using materials wherever possible. Sub-grade materials can be re-worked, with minimal need for additives, to provide the foundation for a new road surface.

FRA also recognizes the impact that a lack of consideration for sustainability can have on the environment. With this in consideration, the Authority is planning to ban the use of River Gravels in Road works from 2020.

The Authority also recognizes the link between durability and sustainability as such, in all of its works, it opts for the best 'whole of life' solution.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Annual Report does not make any reference to the SDGs nor does it specify which SDG it relates to. The Committee recommends that the Fiji Roads Authority:
  - Change the format/layout of the Report to facilitate understanding of SDG information.
  - Explicitly link results with relevant/priority SDG goals and targets.
  - Include a section explaining how the Authority is prioritising action on the SDGs.
  - Report on the challenges faced with the implementation of the SDGs.
2. That the Authority work in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy for capacity building of staff to enable a better understanding of issues relating to the Sustainable Development Goals and its linkages to the Authority's work.

## **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 notes that FRA's recruitment (new hires and promotion) process is merit based. Candidates are shortlisted based on entry requirements regardless of gender. Furthermore, training provided is based on the Training Needs Analysis matrix jointly agreed to by the employee and manager.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That future Annual Reports present a breakdown of gender equality and participation in the positions held within the Fiji Roads Authority.



## CONCLUSION

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has fulfilled its mandate approved by Parliament which was to examine and review the following Annual Reports:

- Fiji Roads Authority 2015 Annual Report
- Fiji Roads Authority January – July 2016 Annual Report

The Fiji Roads Authority was established in January 2012 to manage the country's roads, bridges and public jetties. The FRA manages Fiji's road network through outsourcing maintenance and construction contracts to the private sector, a system that has proven to deliver efficiency, accountability and international standards.

The review of the Authority's Annual Reports was conducted in a very tactful and comprehensive manner. 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, hereby agree with the contents of this report:



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



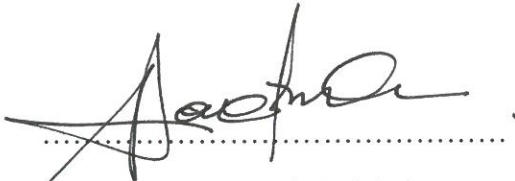
.....  
Hon. George Vegnathan  
(Deputy Chairperson)



.....  
Hon. Alipate Nagata  
(Member)



.....  
Hon. Salote Radrodru  
(Member)



.....  
Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu  
(Member)

## APPENDICES

### Witnesses

---

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 9 July 2019**

Fiji Roads Authority

**Jonathan Moore**, Chief Executive Officer, **Robert Sen**, Chief Financial Officer, **Sainiana Rokovucago**, Acting Manager Communications and Public Relations, and **Zafya Shamim**, Communications and Public Relations Officer.

## **Published written evidence**

---

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