



STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Review of the Fiji National Sports Commission August 2017 – July 2018 Annual Report



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP



Chairperson

Hon. Viam Pillay MP
Government Member



Deputy Chairperson

Hon. George Vegnathan MP
Government Member



Member

Hon. Alipate Nagata MP
Government Member



Member

Hon. Salote Radrodoro MP
Opposition Member



Member

Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu MP
Opposition Member

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the report of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs on the Review of the Fiji National Sports Commission August 2017- July 2018 Annual Report.

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 received written and supplementary responses from the Fiji National Sports Commission 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.

The committee undertook this review in accordance with Standing Order 109(2)(b) which mandates it 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 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018, conducted into: The Commission's administration; structure; budgetary allocation; programmes and activities; policies; challenges; highlights; priorities for the coming years; and its implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

At this juncture, I wish to thank the Executive Chairman, Mr. Peter Mazey and his staff for their assistance in this review process. I also extend my gratitude to my Committee colleagues namely: Hon. George Vagnathan (Deputy Chairperson), Hon. Alipate Nagata, Hon. Salote Radrodoro, and Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu for their contributions. Finally, I thank the Secretariat, Ms. Sheron Narayan, Ms. Marica Tuisoso, and Ms. Atelaite Leba for the assistance provided during the committee's deliberations

I, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, commend the Review Report on the Fiji National Sports Commission August 2017 - July 2018 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

COVID-19 Pandemic	-	Novel Coronavirus
FNSC	-	Fiji National Sports Commission
FY	-	Financial Year
MP	-	Member of Parliament
NSO	-	National Sports Organisation

RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has conducted a review of the Fiji National Sports Commission August 2017 – July 2018 Annual Report and recommends that Parliament take note of its report.

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Fiji National Sports Commission August 2017 – July 2018 Annual Report was tabled in Parliament during the February 2020 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.

Furthermore, 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.*

2.0 ABOUT THE FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION

The corporate objectives of the Fiji National Sports Commission is established by the Fiji National Sports Commission Act 2013 and the Sports Commission's aim is to enrich the lives and health of all Fijians through physical activity and sports at all levels outlined in the Commission's Vision.

The commission's corporate objectives, as decreed and approved by the Commission Board are to:

1. Guide and enhance the delivery of sports development programs in Fiji through a coordinated approach in partnership with Government, statutory bodies and the community;
2. Institute a clear and manageable framework to effectively deliver sports programs in Fiji;
3. Provide coordination and direction, and commit to the development of sports in Fiji;
4. Establish high standards of excellence in all aspects of sports delivery;
5. Improve the health of the nation through organized physical activities at all levels;
6. Support and encourage performance excellence in athletes and coaches by developing sports science and encouraging research in high performance athletes;

7. Provide support and financial assistance to national federations in the development of their sport and their high performance athletes; and
8. Recruit the best and the most qualified people and provide them with the appropriate training, environment, and support to enable them as a team, to achieve the Fiji national Sports Commission's objectives.

3.0 ISSUES RAISED

3.1 NEED FOR GREATER BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TO THE SPORTS COMMISSION FOR SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The Sports Commission informed us that the budgetary allocation for the various Sports development programs for 2017 – 2018 was insufficient. However, FNSC was able to work within what was allocated to achieve the results expected and faced challenges that were expected. It was also brought to our attention that the budget allocated for Outreach Programs in the following years has been reduced to \$200,000 annually hence; the Sports Commission has been required to reduce the number of programs conducted accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Commission work closely with National Sports Organisations, donor agencies and other stakeholders to fund its sports development programmes so as to extend the coverage of its programmes to rural, peri-urban, and urban communities.
2. That the Sports Commission, in consultation with other sporting bodies and local communities, draw up cost effective development programmes.

3.2 STRENGTHENING SPORTS GOVERNANCE IN FIJI

The Sports Commission stressed to us the importance of sports governance in Fiji for which training at community level is a prerequisite. This will assist in the integrity of a sport community association, its clubs, the national sporting organization or the game itself. This has been identified as a key area to address and more training are required for the established Community sports association and club levels in the community. We observe that the Train the Trainer program needs more seed funding to close this gap that the Commission has identified.

This will be mutually beneficial to the National Sporting Organizations as well as the Commission as it strives to address the gaps in sports governance as a whole from the grass-root level to high performance sports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Sports Commission work in close collaboration with all National Sporting Organisations in the formulation of their Strategic Plans so as to strengthen their governance processes and systems.
2. That the Sports Commission continues to partner with national sporting bodies in promoting good governance at all levels.
3. That the Sports Commission rigorously conducts workshops and sports training programmes at the community level.

3.3 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

3.3.1 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Sports Commission

We note that the COVID–19 pandemic has had substantial impact on the Sports Commission’s sports development programs and grants. This was highlighted in its current annual report 2018 – 2019 from the auditor general. All its sports development programs for the 3rd and 4th quarter of the financial year were cancelled. Similarly, all overseas sports tour programs were postponed indefinitely due to overseas restrictions in many countries including Fiji. All international tournaments were cancelled to prevent mass gatherings and documented adjustments were immediately activated in accordance to the Fiji Ministry of Health Guidelines and phases of lock down protocols.

All Funds that had been released for national sports organizations had to be refunded due immediately. No grants under any grant allocation were released during this period.

The Commission’s Sports Development program was put on hold and the sports development unit was tasked to update their sports development manual guidelines to include revisions for Safe Sports: COVID-19 Sports program reboot in communities.

Subsequently, the proactive approach the commission took with meetings with the Ministry of Health resulted in the Commission being given the responsibility for the certification of all National Sporting organization under the New NORMS of Safe Sports Fiji. This certificate would then allow Sporting bodies to participate and hold competitions under guidelines set out under the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Frame work.

3.3.2 Way forward for the Sports Commission in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

With the reduction in Budgetary allocation to FNSC in 2020/21 FY, we enquired the Sports Commission on how it will prioritize its Sports Development Program whilst maximizing its reach to youth and sportspeople. The Sports Commission informed us that the reduction in budgetary allocation on Sports development has increased its partnerships with other Ministries, Civil Society Organizations and Non-Government Organizations. The Sports Commission and its stakeholders have the same realization that collaboration in programs need better planning with stakeholders to achieve goals required for program specifics and the way funds were been unitized. This was mutual as many had their budget allocation reduced as well.

FNSC had to use other platforms of communication to conduct and hold workshops online as well. Thus internally it had to train its staff on how to conduct webinars and meetings using the Web Conferencing and holding divisional NSO training workshops on Safe Sports in Community Programs for all national sporting organization sports development officers.

RECOMMENDATION

1. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent reduction in budgetary allocation to the Sports Commission, the committee recommends that it appropriately plan and prioritize its programmes and activities according to available resources.

4.0 FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE

The Standing Committee has fulfilled its mandate given by Parliament to examine the August 2017-July 2018 Annual Report of the Fiji National Sports Commission.

The principal activity of the Sports Commission is to guide and enhance the delivery of sports programmes through a coordinated approach at all levels of participation by government statutory bodies and the community and to ensure the development of sports in Fiji.

The committee in its review, identified certain challenges faced by the Sports Commission relating to its operations and administration. In addition, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been greatly felt by the Commission and its National Sporting Bodies. As the way forward, FNSC needs to re-strategise and reprioritize its sports development programs according to the availability of funds and resources.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

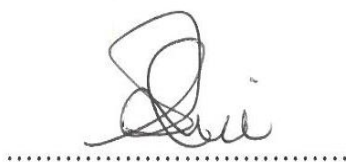
We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:



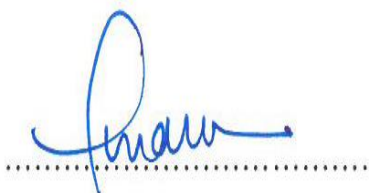
Hon. Viam Pillay
(Chairperson)



Hon. George Vignathan
(Deputy Chairperson)



Hon. Alipate Nagata
(Member)



Hon. Salote Radrodoro
(Member)



Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu
(Member)

APPENDICES

Published written evidence

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