



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Consolidated Report on the Review of Sugar Cane Growers Council 2007 – 2018 Annual Reports



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
Parliamentary Paper No. 279 of 2020

December, 2020

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

Table of Contents

Chairperson’s Foreword..... 3

1.0 Introduction..... 4

1.1 Background 4

2.0 Findings and Recommendations 5

4.0 Conclusion 7

Chairperson's Foreword

The Standing Committee on Economic Affairs is pleased to report to Parliament, the consolidated Review report of the Sugar Cane Grower's Council 2007 – 2018 Annual Reports.

Sugar Cane Growers Council is recognized as the peak grower's organization that represents the interest of all cane growers of Fiji. Despite the continuous challenges faced by the sugar industry, the Committee commended the efforts by the Council to continuously provide its mandated services. It is also noteworthy that its offices are conveniently set up and strategically located to assist farmers effectively in all cane growing districts in Fiji.

The Committee visited the Sugar Cane Grower's Council Headquarters earlier this year to be able to better understand the functions and operations of the Council. During the visit, the Committee noted the various essential services provided by the Sugar Cane Growers Council to the farmers. These include but is not limited to providing legal and advisory services, conducting Grower consultation meetings, resolving gang disputes, distribution of farm supplies, assisting in income tax returns and renewal of land leases.

While scrutinizing the reports, the Committee noted that in November 2009, in an effort to facilitate efficiency in terms of costs and implementation of programs, Councilors were replaced by grower's representatives. Following this, the growers were relieved of the burden of paying a levy of approximately 29 cents to 44 cents per tonne when the government replaced the levy with an annual grant.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to all Stakeholders for their valuable input. The Committees would like to acknowledge the CEO of SCGC and his team members for being prompt in answering the various queries and questions raised by the Committee.

Finally, I would like to thank our Committee Members who were part of the team that produced this report: - Deputy Chairperson Hon. Veena Bhatnagar, Hon. George Vagnathan, Hon. Inosi Kuridrani and Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Parliamentary Staff who have given us invaluable support.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs, I commend the review report of the Sugar Cane Grower's Council 2007 – 2018 Annual Reports to Parliament.

..... 

Chairperson – Hon. Vijay Nath

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Sugar Cane Grower's Council (SCGC) was established under the Sugar Industry Act 1984 and is recognized as the primary Cane Growers organization representing and protecting the interest of all registered cane growers in Fiji.

SCGC works with the mission to provide effective representation, leadership and service to cane growers in order to secure long term viability for them in the industry. Thus, the SCGC remains the sole legal representative body for Cane Growers in Fiji. The Council's major functions include taking necessary steps to protect and develop the industry as well as to represent grower's interest, both collectively and individually on matters relating to cane farming.

The Sugar Cane Growers Council has a clearly defined list of objectives it aims to achieve by conducting information sessions with new and existing growers, facilitating contracts for engagement of cane cutters and holding consultations to discuss issues related to harvesting, milling and transportation.

Committee Remit and Composition

The Committee is made up of five (5) Members of Parliament, three (3) of which are Government members and two Opposition members. According to Section 109(2) (a) the Standing Committee is responsible to look into matters related to economic development, finance, banking and taxation.

2.0 Findings and Recommendations

1. Given the changes in structure and governance, the Committee recommends an internal organization review to determine its needs as mandated and optimum resources to achieve its objectives.
2. The Committee recommends that a Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism be put in place by the SCGC in collaboration with Ministry of Sugar and Fiji Sugar Corporation to ensure all capital grant programs are monitored effectively.
3. The Committee noted that the Sugar Cane Growers Council is recognized as the peak grower's organization that represents the interest of all cane growers of Fiji. Despite the continuous challenges faced by the sugar industry, the Committee commends the efforts by the Council to continuously provide its mandated services.
4. The Committee acknowledges the important roles played by SCGC and appreciates the fact that its offices are conveniently set up and strategically located to assist farmers effectively in all cane growing districts in Fiji.
5. The Committee believes that in order to maintain harmony and cooperation between the growers and stakeholders, continuous information sessions, awareness programs and forums must be held to educate and strengthen collaboration between all stakeholders.
6. The Committee is of the view that to assist in the sustainability of the sugar industry in the long run, SCGC could play a vital role in attracting young and willing entrepreneurs towards venturing into the sugar industry.

3.0 Gender Analysis

The Committee noted that Sugar Cane Growers Council has been very supportive of gender diversity in the work place with equal treatment, acceptance and promotion of both females and males in the organization as reflected in their staff composition.

4.0 Conclusion

The Committee commends the overall performance of the Sugar Cane Grower's Council and its commitment in achieving its goals and objectives.


However, to ensure growth and sustainability of the sugar industry, the Committee encourages SCGC to continuously enhance the quality of services they provide to the growers.

Members Signature



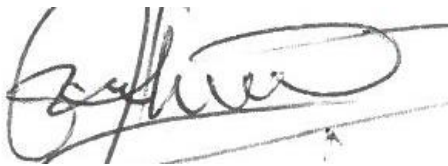
.....

Hon. Vijay Nath (Chairperson)



.....

Hon. Veena Bhatnagar (Deputy Chairperson)



.....

Hon. George Vegnathan (Member)



.....

Hon. Inosi Kuridrani (Member)



.....

Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau (Member)