

APPENDICES

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Written Responses



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE , NATIONAL SECURITY AND POLICING

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RESPONSES TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND POLICING 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

RESPONSES TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. **One of the key pillars NDP/NSS is Maintenance of Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity - 22. 'Develop mechanism to allow for a legal and smooth transition of command should there be a need for RFMF Intervention'. (page 7) Has this mechanism been developed?**

The Ministry acknowledges the question raised and wish to inform that the RFMF and FPF continue to operate within the ambits of their respective legislation, however the Ministry is currently reviewing both the Police Act 1987 and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Act 1949 and part of the review will see the outlining of a callout and handover procedure between the FPF and RFMF during times of distress or emergency that would require RFMF intervention. This will also include provisions that clearly state the different levels of emergencies/threats that will require intervention from the RFMF.

2. **With reference to Outputs 14, 16, 17 on page 6-7, what is the current status?**

Output 14: Review of current FPF legislative framework to meet evolving internal security discourses:

The Fiji Police Force through the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing had launched the public consultation for the review of the necessary legislation, however this was put on hold due to the differences in documents that is required to

be consulted upon. Due diligence will need to be followed through with the relevant stakeholders regarding the consultation process and necessary approvals to be sort before public consultation is considered.

Output 16: Develop policies and contingency plans to assist in bolstering Fiji's border security and territorial integrity

Due to the pandemic and various variants being detected and spreading globally, it is pertinent that we enhance and strengthen security in an effort not to compromise our borders. The Ministry in collaboration with Border agencies and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) are working towards upgrading and digitising our border systems in pursuit of a contact-less process with a seamless flow of passengers.

A team from the Fiji Police Force with cyber capabilities are currently seconded to the Ministry carrying out the scoping of the current systems of all border agencies including the Border Health Protection Unit of MHMS with the goal of integrating all processes and system to facilitate easier exchange of information with the processing of each visitor entering our ports of entry, whether via sea or air.

A Cabinet paper was drafted with the assistance of the Ministry and MHMS will be submitted by the Office of the Prime Minister in relation to the upgrading of the system.

Whilst the Ministry works on upgrading Fiji's border systems, the Ministry also recognizes the need to develop an effective Incident Response Management Framework. This framework will greatly complement Fiji's border security policies and plans and will enhance our contingency responses in the event of a security threat to Fiji's territorial borders. It is envisioned that this framework will identify relevant agencies that are required to respond to any threat or security issue and will outline clear cut line of communications and decisionmaking points.

Output 17: Review of current RFMF legislative framework to meet evolving defence and security discourses

The Ministry wishes to advice that approval from Cabinet has been given for the review of the Republic of Fiji Military Force Act 1949 in order to be up to par with the evolving security landscape.

A legal team from the New Zealand Defence Force will assist the OSG, RFMF and the Ministry to carry out consultation in order to determine the articles in the legislation that needs to be amended.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION (CSD)

3. The Committee seeks clarification on page 13, what is the difference between Permanent Staff, Contract Staff and Transition Staff to that of the Staff Establishment?

The Ministry wishes to advise that the difference was made during the implementation of the Job Evaluation Exercise in 2016. The exercise was made to facilitate the transition to the new civil service pay structure.

1. Permanent Staff are officers without contract
2. Contract staff are officers who were on contract during this transition period

Transition – both permanent and contract staff who accepted to sign transition contract for the facilitation of the new civil service pay structure (Corporate to explain further on this).

4. The Committee notes five (5) staff resignations on page 14. Noted are the staff loyalties, experience, and capabilities. What is the Ministry staff retention policy? Are there avenues for staff educational local and overseas leave to further their individual professional and career development?

Staff resignations are mostly for greener pastures. Despite the demand in the employment market locally and overseas the Ministry continue to ensure that it provides the best to its employees. This is in terms of professional and personal level support. Although there are officers who choose to work in the Ministry on short term only, there are also officers who have been in the Ministry from 10, 20 and to 30 years.

Part of the Ministry's institutional strengthening program the provision of support for officer to undertake programs for capacity building purpose. This includes local and overseas under short- and long-term program. In the 2018 – 2019 a total of 8 officers were approved to undertake Masters' and Post Grad qualifications. Out of the 8 approved, 3 were for overseas studies while 5 were local programs.

SECURITY FORCES DIVISION

5. What is the status of the Search and Rescue Bill?

The Search and Rescue Bill is currently on its fourth draft. This has been circulated to its stakeholder with the Office of the Solicitor General vetting each version of the draft. The 4th draft is currently in circulation awaiting comments from the relevant stakeholder before finalizing the proposed draft.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE REVIEW

6. What is the follow-up action on the NSS Paper and Bill since 2016?

The National Security Defence Council (NSDC) by means of the NSDC Resolution 06/2017-2018, decided that a thorough review of the National Security Strategy 2016 and Beyond be undertaken.

A Review Committee was subsequently formed to undertake the review process. The members of the Committee comprised of:

- the Commissioner of Police;
- the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces;
- the Commissioner of Corrections for the Fiji Corrections Services;
- the Solicitor-General; and
- the Deputy Secretary for Defence and National Security.

The NSDC Secretariat provided the necessary support to the Committee. Moreover, the Secretariat conducted a series of multi-stakeholder consultations and strategy formulation processes.

The Secretariat has submitted two versions of the draft National Security Strategy to the Committee for its consideration. The first version was intended for public circulation while the second version was kept with the Secretariat and used as a monitoring and review resource. The Master copy which became the first draft of the document was used in the progression of consultation and when making the necessary amendments on its finalization. With the continuing guidance provided by the OSG, the document was properly formatted and updated, as the first draft of the document was submitted to the OSG in December 2018, and the same was finalised between the Ministry and the OSG in November 2020.

The draft documents were then presented to the NSDC who have endorsed the same subject to final vetting by the OSG by means of the NSDC Resolution 03/2019-2020.

As per NSDC Resolution 03/2019-2020, OSG completed vetting the National Security Strategy in November 2020. On 16 March 2021, the vetted National Security Strategy was presented to the NSDC for their final endorsement. The endorsement was granted by means of Council Resolution 14/2020-2021. However, the following corrections are to be made to the document, as highlighted by the NSDC:

- for Water Security, the line Ministry in charge of implementing this Agenda is the Ministry of Infrastructure and Meteorological Services, not the Ministry of Waterways and Environment;
- for Energy Security, the percentage of Fijians without access to Electricity is 4%, as confirmed by the 2017 National Census data, and not 11% as noted in the document.

In May 2021, the draft Cabinet paper was submitted to Cabinet Office for the approval of the NSS. We have been advised from Cabinet Office that further discussions will be had at Cabinet Level before the NSS is approved. We await the outcome of those discussions at Cabinet Level and the final approval of the NSS.

With regards to the NSDC Bill, we have been advised from the OSG vide email dated 04/07/2019 that the NSS has to be passed first before work on the NSDC Bill can continue.

7. What is the current status of the National Coordination Center (NCC) in terms of the establishment of the secretariat and staffing? Please elaborate.

The National Integrated Coordination Centre (NICC) is currently operating at minimal capacity at the moment. Whilst the NICC has been equipped, thanks to the Australian and New Zealand Government, and opened by the Director General of the Australia Secret Intelligence Service, Major General (Ret) Paul Symon on 22/10/2019, the same has yet to become fully operational.

As with the NSDC Bill noted above, we await the approval of the NSS at Cabinet level before pursuing the full and formal establishment of NICC, vide staffing and funding. However, the NICC has become a critical part of the Ministry's Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the same was used for virtual meetings between the Ministry officials with local as well as international stakeholders.

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORTS

8. For 'Travel and Communications' as noted 2018 is \$418,477 and 2017 is \$251,858 showing an increment. Please provide the breakdowns.

First and foremost, the increase in Expenditure was due to the increase in Budget. The Travel and Communications budget in 2017 was \$260,448 and in 2018 the Budget was increased to \$424,760. This increase has given way to the Ministry to expand their activities and enable more critical Official Travel, this includes Fiji's adequate representation to international disarmament forums and trainings. Summarily, this increase consists of the increase of Travel Budget by \$90,158; increase of Subsistence Budget by \$36,929 and the increase of Telephone Budget by \$37,225.

9. In the 'Special Expenditure Needs', in 2018 is \$1,811,434 and 2017 is \$625,434 increasing three-fold. Please explain.

The increase in Expenditure is due to the increase in Budget. In 2017 the Special Expenditure Budget was \$885,524 and in 2018 the Budget was increased to \$1,814,866. The increase is due to the increase of the Fiji Day Celebration budget, increase of Remembrance Day budget, inclusion of a new Human Trafficking budget, and the new inclusion of UN Military Advisor budget of \$431,150 in 2018. Overall, the increase in budget vote has supported the Ministry to expand its level of activities in this Special Expenditure Area.

10. In 'Operating Grants and Transfers' in 2017 \$50,265 and in 2018 \$43,366. There is a decrease. Please explain.

The Budget in this SEG was decreased from \$60,200 in 2017 to \$45,140 in 2018. While there was a decrease in budgetary allocation, it however did not deter the Ministry from facilitating the activities in this vote. Moreover, the Expenditure rate in this SEG was increased from 83% in 2017 to 96% in 2018.

Verbatim Report

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

[Verbatim Report of Meeting]

HELD AT THE

BIG COMMITTEE ROOM (EAST WING)

ON

MONDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2022

VERBATIM REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE HELD AT THE BIG COMMITTEE ROOM (EAST WING), PARLIAMENT PRECINCTS, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, ON MONDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2022 AT 9.30 A.M.

Interviewee/Submittee: Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing

In Attendance:

1. Ms. Sainitiki Ravuso - Acting Deputy Secretary
2. Mr. Savenaca Raiwalui - Director Corporate Services
3. Mr. Paula Naitoko - Senior Accounts Officer
4. Ms. Alesi Dau - Acting Accounts Officer

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Good morning, honourable Members, members of the public, the secretariat, ladies and gentlemen; a very good morning to you all and it is a pleasure to welcome everyone, especially the viewers who are watching us today.

At the outset, for your information, pursuant to Standing Order 111 of the Standing Orders of Parliament, all Committee meetings are to be open to the public. Therefore, please, note that this submission is open to the public and media, and is also being streamed live on the Parliament website and social media online platforms, and the Parliament channel on the *Walesi* platform. For any sensitive information concerning the matter before us this morning that cannot be disclosed in public, it can be provided to the Committee, either in private or in writing. However, please, be advised that pursuant to Standing Order 111(2), there are only a few specific circumstances that allow for non-disclosure and these include:-

1. National security matters;
2. Third party confidential information;
3. Personnel or human resource matters; and
4. Committee deliberation and development of Committee recommendation on reports.

I wish to remind, honourable Members and our guests, that all questions to be asked, are to be addressed through the Chair. This is a parliamentary meeting and all information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act. Please, bear in mind that we do not condone, slander or libel of any sort, and any information brought before this Committee should be based on facts.

In terms of the protocol of this Committee meeting, please, minimise the usage of mobile phones and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode while the meeting is in progress. I would like, at this time, to introduce the Members of my Committee. Unfortunately, our Chairman, honourable Alexander O'Connor is on Bereavement Leave and I am honourable Dr. Salik Govind, the Deputy Chairperson, who is going to Chair the Meeting for today.

(Introduction of Committee Members)

Today, the Committee will be hearing a submission on the Ministry of Defence and National Security 2017-2018 Annual Report. For the purpose of the viewers that are joining us this morning, I would like to give a brief explanation on what the Ministry's Annual Report is all about.

The report captures the organisational performance of the above fiscal year. It gives insight into the achievement of activities for the 32 outputs, identified under the six outcomes derived from the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Roadmap for democracy and sustainable socioeconomic development.

Before us, we have the Acting Deputy Secretary – Ms. Sainimili Ravuso and her team. I would like to ask them to introduce themselves and begin the submission after which, there will be question and answer session. Please also note if there are any question by the honourable Members of the Committee, they may interject or we will wait till the end of your presentation to ask the questions.

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, I would like to introduce the members sitting on this side.

(Introduction of the representatives from the Ministry of Defence and National Security and Policing).

In response to the substantive question, one of the key pillars of the NDP/NSS is the maintenance of sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Ministry acknowledges the question raised and wish to inform that the RFMF and the Fiji Police Force (FPF) continue to operate within the ambits of their respective legislation. However, the Ministry is currently reviewing both the Police Act 1987 and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Act 1949. Part of the review will see the outlining of the callout and handover procedure between the FPF and RFMF during times of distress or emergency that will require RFMF intervention. This will also include provisions that clearly states the different levels of emergencies and threats that will require intervention from the RFMF.

With reference to outputs 14, 16 and 17, what is the current status? Output 14 - review of the current FPF legislative framework to meet evolving internal security discourses. The FPF, through the Ministry of Defence National Security and Policing had launched the public consultation for the review of the necessary legislation. However, this was put on hold due to the differences in documents that is required to be consulted upon. Due diligence will need to be followed through with the relevant stakeholders regarding the consultation process and necessary approvals to be sought before public consultation is considered.

Moving on to output 16, Deputy Chairperson: Develop policies and contingency plans to assist in bolstering Fiji's border security and territorial integrity. Due to the pandemic and various variants being

detected and spreading globally, it is pertinent that we enhance and strengthen security in an effort not to compromise our borders. The Ministry in collaboration with border agencies and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, are working towards upgrading and digitising our border systems in pursuits of a contact-less process with a seamless flow passengers.

A team from the FPF with cyber capabilities are currently seconded to the Ministry, carrying out the scoping of the current systems of all border agencies, including the border health protection unit of the Ministry of Health. With the goal of integrating all processes and systems to facilitate and easy exchange of information with the processing of each visitor entering our ports of entry whether via sea or air. A Cabinet Paper was drafted with the assistance of the Ministry and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services will be submitted by the Office of the Prime Minister, in relation to the upgrading of the system.

Output 17 looks at the reviewing of the current RFMF legislative framework to meet the evolving defence and security discourses. The Ministry wishes to advise that approval from the Cabinet has been given for the review of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Act 1949, in order to be up to par with the evolving security landscape. A legal team from the New Zealand Defence Force will assist the Office of the Solicitor-General, RFMF and the Ministry, to carry out consultation in order to determine the articles in the legislation that needs to be amended.

The next question looks at our Corporate Services Division. Deputy Chairperson, the Committee seeks clarification on page 13 on what is the difference between Permanent Staff, Contract Staff and Transition Staff to that of the Staff Establishment.

The Ministry wishes to advise that the difference was made during the implementation of the Job Evaluation Exercise in 2016. The Exercise was made to facilitate the transition to the new civil service pay structure.

1. Permanent staff are officers without contract.
2. Contract staff are officers who are on contract during this transition period.

Transition are both permanent and contract staff who accepted to sign transition contract for the facilitation of the new civil service pay structure.

The Committee notes five staff resignations on page 14. Noted are the staff loyalties, experience and capabilities. What is the Ministry's staff retention policy and are there avenues for staff education locally and overseas to further their individual professional career development? Staff resignations are mostly for greener pastures. Despite the demand in the employment market locally and overseas, the Ministry continues to ensure that it provides the best to its employees. This is in terms of professional and personal level support. Although there are officers who choose to work in the Ministry on short-term only, there are also officers who have been in the Ministry from 10, 20 and to 30 years.

Under the Ministry's institutional strengthening programme, the provision of support for officers to undertake programmes for capacity building purposes – this includes local and overseas under short and longterm programmes. In the 2018/2019 period, a total of eight officers were approved to undertake masters and post-graduate qualifications. Out of the eight approved, three were for overseas studies while five were for local programmes.

In terms of the next question, Deputy Chair – what is the status of the Search and Rescue Bill? The Search and Rescue Bill is currently on its fourth draft. This has been circulated to the stakeholders with the Office of the Solicitor-General vetting each version of the draft. The fourth draft is currently in circulation awaiting comments from the relevant stakeholders before finalising the proposed draft.

In terms of the National Security and Defence Review - what is the follow-up action on the NSS Paper and Bill since 2016? The National Security Defence Council by means of the NSDC Resolution 6 (six) of 2017 to 2018 decided that a thorough review of the National Security Strategy 2016 and beyond be undertaken. A review committee was subsequently formed to undertake the review process. The members of the committee comprised of the;

1. Commissioner of Police,
2. Commander of the RFMF,
3. Commissioner of Corrections from the Fiji Corrections Services,
4. Solicitor-General and
5. Deputy Secretary for Defence and National Security.

The NSDC secretariat provides the necessary support to the committee. Moreover, the committee secretariat conducts a series of multi stakeholder consultation and a strategy formulation process.

The secretariat submitted two versions of the draft NSS to the committee for its consideration. The first version was intended for public circulation while the second version was kept with the secretariat and used as a monitoring and review resource. The draft documents were then presented to the NSDC who have endorsed the same, subject to final vetting by the Office of the Solicitor-General (OSG) by means of the NSDC Resolution 03/2019-2020.

As per the NSDC Resolution, OSG has completed vetting of the National Security Strategy in November, 2020. On 16 March, 2021, the vetted National Security Strategy was presented to the NSDC for their final endorsement. The endorsement is granted by means of Council Resolution 14/2020-2021, however, all actions were made to the documents as highlighted by the NSDC.

With regards to the NSDC Bill, we have been advised from the OSG via email dated 4th July of 2019, that the NSS had to be passed before work on the NSDC Bill can continue.

In terms of Question 7, Deputy Chairperson, – what is the current status of the National Coordination Centre in terms of the establishment of the secretariat and staffing? The NICC or the National Integrated Coordination Centre is currently operating at minimum capacity at the moment. Whilst the NICC has been equipped, thanks to the Australian and New Zealand Governments and opened by the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, the same has yet to be fully operational.

As with the NSDC Bill noted above, we await the approval of the NSS and Cabinet level before pursuing the full and formal establishment of NICC by staffing and funding. However, the NICC has become a critical part of the Ministry's information technology infrastructure, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic where the same was used for virtual meetings between the Ministry officials with local, as well as international stakeholders.

Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in terms of our audited financial statements and reports for Travel and Communications, first and foremost the increase in expenditure is due to the increase in Budget, the Travel and Communication Budget in 2017 was \$260,448 and in 2018 the Budget was increased to \$424,760.

This increase has given a way to the Ministry to expand their activities and enable more critical official travel, which includes Fijis adequate representation to international disarmament forums and trainings. Summarily, this increase consists of the increase of Travel Budget by \$90,158; increase of Subsistence Budget by \$36,929 and the increase of Telephone Budget by \$37,225.

In the Special Expenditure Needs in 2018, it was \$1,811,434 and 2017 it was \$625,434; increase in three-fold. The increase in expenditure is due to the increase in Budget. In 2017, the Special Expenditure Budget was \$885,524 and in 2018 the Budget was increased to \$1,814,866. The increase was due to the increased of the Fiji Day Celebration Budget, increased of the Remembrance Day Budget, inclusion of a new Human Trafficking Budget and the new inclusion of the United Nations Military Advisor Budget of \$431,150 in 2018.

Overall, the increase in Budget Vote has supported the Ministry to expand its level of activities in the Special Expenditure area.

Finally, Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in the Operating Grants and Transfers in 2017 - \$50,265 and in 2018 it was \$43,366. There was a decrease. The Budget for this SEG was decreased from \$60,200 in 2017 to \$45,140 in 2018. While there was a decrease in Budgetary Allocation, it however did not deter the Ministry from facilitating the activities in this Vote.

Moreover, the Expenditure rate in this SEG was increased from 83 percent in 2017 to 96 percent in 2018. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, and honourable Members of the Committee, the Team wishes to thank you for the opportunity to come and present and we stand ready to answer any further questions that you may have.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you, Acting Deputy Secretary for your presentation. Any other members would like to add on or contribute? We have some questions and I would like to raise the first one.

The Ministry is currently reviewing both the Police Act 1987 and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Act 1949, with the aim of an effective transition or handover of procedures between the Fiji Police Force and the RFMF during times of distress or emergency that would require RFMF intervention. What are some situations, where RFMF interventions will be required for this handover?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, Sir, thank you for the question, if we could go back and consult the office and come back to you with a more concrete response, please.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- All right, please feel free to send us the response. Honourable Members, do you have some questions to ask?

HON. S. ADIMAITOGA.- Thank you, Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the second question that I would like to ask to the submittees is, as alluded to in your reply of 23rd August, 2022, the original consultation on the review of the Police Act 1987, was halted and therefore, the Committee wishes to be advised as to when this is likely to be re-initiated?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, if I can respond to the question, if we can go back to the Office, consult and come back to your Committee, please.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Alright.

HON. L.S. QEREQERETABUA.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, my question is on Output 17, madam and your team. You mentioned that a legal team from the New Zealand Defence Forces is assisting the Ministry to carry out the consultation and the approval has been given from Cabinet but is there a kind of a timeline? Do you have a targeted timeline by which time the help from the legal team from the New Zealand Defence Force will have finalised their work and perhaps, the recommendations given back to Cabinet before we hear about it?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- At the moment, we have yet to receive any confirmation or timeline. They have gone back to New Zealand but we are waiting for a specific date, for them to come back and then discuss.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, just a question to the staff of the Ministry of Defence and National Security. In the Committee, we used to be advised on the outcome of the collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and other border agencies on the strengthening of this contact less processing of travelling and departure at all port of entries. Can you just

advise us on the contact less processing of arrival and departure of passengers in all ports of entries and its current situation?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, if I can come back to the Committee.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Alright, but please come back. The Committee notes and this is reflected in your Report on the Gender Chart that more women than men are employed in the Ministry, however, it will be useful to know at what positions most of these women are employed. And also are there any capacity building initiatives to promote women to senior management positions? So, it will be useful to know at what level women are employed in the Ministry.

MR. S. RAIWALUI.- Deputy Chairperson, if I may respond to the question. First of all thank you for the question. I believe in our response to one of the question that has already been presented by our Acting Deputy Secretary is the capacity building programme that we have but in detail, that includes women. If you may see that this morning, we have two representatives that are women holding senior positions within the Ministry. For now, as we speak, the figures in terms of the gender has changed and we have a sincere apology that we are not able to present the current figures that we have but we assure the Committee that we have women representative at senior levels and positions in the Ministry.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- In your written submission, it will be good if you can give us some figures from last year or year before on the level of women holding positions in the Ministry?

HON. S. ADIMAITOGA.- Deputy Chairperson, my question is, if the Ministry wishes to advise because the approval from Cabinet has been given for the review of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces Act 1949, in order to be up to par with the evolving security landscape. When is this likely to happen or has there been a timeframe earmarked?

MS. A. DAU.- Through you, Deputy Chairperson, I wish to respond to the question. As I have alluded to honourable Qereqeretabua that we have not confirmed a specific date. The New Zealand Legal Team has left for New Zealand, however, when they return then we will confirm a date on that.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, this is in regards to Output No. 16. I recall there was a Cabinet Paper, which was drafted through the assistance of the Ministry and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, as mentioned which will be submitted by the Office of the Prime Minister in relation to the upgrading of the system.

My question is, we were trying to get the grammar of the question; whether the Ministry of Health and Medical Services will be submitted by the Office of the Prime Minister or will be submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister? That is the first part of my question.

MS. A. DAU.- Deputy Chairperson, through you, I wish to respond to honourable Vosanibola's question. Our apologies, there may have been a typing error on that, the Cabinet Paper has to be submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister.

HON. P.W. VOSANIBOLA.- What was mentioned on that question, has this been achieved?

MS. A. DAU.- Not yet, Sir.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- I have a supplementary question on the status of the Search and Rescue Bill. According to your report, the Search and Rescue Bill is currently on its fourth draft and this has been circulated to stakeholders; with the Office of the Solicitor-General vetting each version of the draft. The fourth draft is currently in circulation awaiting comments from the relevant stakeholders before finalising their proposed draft. Is this the final draft or there will be other drafts? But it looks like draft after draft has been sent to stakeholders. When do you expect the final draft of the Bill?

MS. A. DAU.- Deputy Chairperson, I wish to respond to your question on the Search and Rescue Bill. At the moment, the Office of the Solicitor-General has circulated the draft that they have vetted. We have circulated that to the stakeholders and are awaiting their responses on this. Once it is cleared from the stakeholders, we will submit it again to the Office of the Solicitor-General for their final vetting.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- So the fourth draft is not the final one?

MS. A. DAU.- No, this is not the final draft.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- After the Solicitor-General makes comment to another draft.

MS. A. DAU.- I beg your pardon on the question. What was the question, Sir?

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- This is the fourth draft, so you are expecting another draft to come after this, or will this be the final?

MS. A. DAU.- This is not the final draft, Sir. They may have some comments on the Bill and that is going to go through the Office of the Solicitor-General again.

HON. S. ADIMAITOGA.- What is the follow up action on the NSS Paper and Bill since 2016? The National Security Defence Council by means of the NSDC resolution on 06/2017 to 2018, decided that a thorough

review of the National Security Strategy 2016 and beyond, be undertaken. What is the current status of the NSS?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, if I can respond to the Honourable Member's question. If we can come back to you with a more concrete answer.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- We can see that a lot of supplementary questions are being put in your report, we have seen that a lot of Bills and drafts are in progress, and we do not know when the final outcome of those Bills will come to surface. So, that is why a lot of supplementary questions we would like to bring it to the closure in our report, otherwise it will be like keep going year after year, as you can see. What I suggest is, I will ask our secretariat to give you a copy of our supplementary questions too and you can discuss with your senior staff and send us your written submission before we can conclude the report. So, we can give them a week or so, before we can finalise the report. Is it okay? They will make available for the supplementary questions. Is there any other question?

MS. S. RAVUSO.- Deputy Chairperson, the team does not have any further questions.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- If we do not have any questions, then we can conclude our meeting. At this juncture, I wish to essentially thank you all for availing yourselves for this meeting. We thank you for your time and hope that you will avail yourselves for any further queries that the Committee may have on this matter.

Stay blessed and safe and it is the Committee's hope and prayer that we will triumph in this transition period- post COVID-19 and push forward together to build a safe, secure and stronger Fiji. With this, I thank you all for your time this morning.

The Meeting adjourned at 10.04 a.m.

Update on the
pending
papers from
Ministry of
Home Affairs
and
Immigration

ACTIVITY DETAILS – FORMULATION OF DRAFT NSS (2020 TO 2024)

DATE	ACTIVITY	MINISTRIES
25.07.18	M & E Team Meeting with DG who instructed that all activities related to M & E be put on hold and team to focus on review of NSS 2016 and beyond	NSDC Secretariat chaired by DG
30.07.18	Approved framework for draft NSS circulated to all M & E Team members	NSDC Secretariat chaired by DG
08.08.18	Preliminary Meeting with Director CID and Team (Overview of work of CID in Law & Order)	Director CID & NSDC Secretariat Team lead by SPO Ms Pickering
17.08.18	Consultations with Pacific Island Forum (PIF) on regional security outlook	Director Policy (PIF) and Regional Security Advisor
21.08.18	Consultation One Disaster Management	Director NDMO & Team
22.08.18	Consultations One on Food & Nutrition Security [a.m.]	Manager NFNC & Senior Nutritionist
	Consultations on Climate Change Thematic Area [p.m.]	Climate Change Unit
23.08.18	Consultation Two on Food & Nutrition Security	Ministry of Agriculture
28.08.18	Consultations on Poverty Alleviation Thematic Area	Director Poverty Alleviation & Team
30.08.18	Discussions on Water Security Thematic Area Meeting attended by reps from Infrastructure and Transport, Health & Medical Services, Water Authority of Fiji, Local Government, Housing and Environment, Rural & Maritime Development, Meteorology & National Disaster Management, Lands and Mineral Resources, Waterways and Environment.	NSDC Secretariat chaired by Director (M&E)
04.09.18 to 06.09.18	Consultations with Colleagues from New Zealand Office of the Prime Minister (04/09 to 06/09) ; - Ms Catriona. Robinson and Ms Kate Puller	Office of the Prime Minister (New Zealand)
	Meeting conducted with the Fiji Police Force and Ministry of Defence (Mr Joji Washington) on the following areas; - Transnational Crime, Cyber Security, Human Trafficking, Money Laundering, Terrorism	Positions(s) of the Officer(s). 1. A/Manager Counter Terrorism Unit 2. Senior Research Officer 3. Officer from Cyber Crime Unit 4. Officer from Organized crime Unit 5. Officer from Transnational Crime Unit 6. Director M&E 7. Manager M&E 8. AO Contemporary Security 9. EO Contemporary Security
10.09.18	Meeting conducted with the following agencies;-Fijian Competition & Consumer Commission, Financial Intelligence Unit, Department of Immigration, Fiji Navy – RFMF(10/09 -13/09)	Positions of the officer(s). 1. Deputy CEO –FCCC 2. Manager Legal- FCCC 3. Director FIU 4. Senior Immigration Officer – Immigration 5. Maritime Commander- Fiji Navy 6. Director M&E 7. Manager M&E 8. AO M&E

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COUNCIL

NSDCP (2019/2020) : 1st Meeting
Date : 13/11/2019

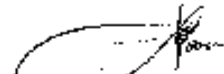
NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Extract from the Minutes of Meeting Held on Wednesday 13 November 2019 at 10.00am

2019/2020 03 **National Security Strategy**

The National Security and Defence Council has:

- (i) noted the content of the Memorandum;
- (ii) approved in principle the draft National Security Strategy 2019 – 2023 which is subject to vetting and comments from the Solicitor-General's Office; and
- (iii) directed that the Secretariat incorporate the comments from the Solicitor-General into the National Security Strategy and resubmit to the Council before seeking the endorsement of Cabinet.



[Manasa Lesuma (Mr.)]
Secretary to the National Security and Defence Council

2. National Security Strategy

The following is a narrative of the National Security Strategy for the period in question

The National Security Defence Council (NSDC), by means of the Council Resolution 06/2017-2018, decided that a thorough review of the National Security Strategy 2016 and Beyond be undertaken.

A Review Committee was subsequently formed to undertake the review process. The members of the Committee comprise:

- the Commissioner of Police;
- the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces;
- the Commissioner of Corrections for the Fiji Corrections Services;
- the Solicitor-General; and
- the Deputy Secretary for Defence and National Security.

The NSDC Secretariat provided the necessary support to the Committee. The Committee's approach to the review exercise is premised on the following:

- the Honourable Attorney-General's advice to the Council at its meeting on 19 January 2018; and
- the Solicitor-General's advice as was conveyed to the Committee at its meeting on 22 January, 2018.

The advice emphasised the need to ensure that the National Security Strategy:

- reflects the intentions of the Fijian Government through the National Development Plan and other Government policy documents;
- be written as a document identifying the strategies; outlining how they are to be implemented and also consider the financial implications; and
- aligns with strategic plans and is combined into one overarching plan.

In view of the above, the Secretariat conducted a series of multi-stakeholder consultations and strategy formulation processes.

A matrix reflecting the chronological account of all engagements and processes undertaken subsequent to Resolution 06/2017-2018, is attached as **Annex A** of this Memorandum.

The Secretariat has submitted two versions of the draft National Security Strategy to the Committee for its consideration. The first version is for public circulation. The second version will be kept with the Secretariat and used as a monitoring and review resource.

The two versions of the Draft are annexed as follows:

- the Executive Summary which has summarized the Strategy and reflects only those critical parts of the Strategy.
- the Master copy which is more comprehensive (and lengthier) as it contains a significant volume of Data obtained from the multi-stakeholder consultations convened over the past year.

Both versions of the draft NSS have been submitted to the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) for vetting.

However, further discussions with the OSG noted that it would be better to work with the Master copy, ensuring that both the OSG and the NSDC Secretariat were working with only one document when making the necessary amendments to finalise the same.

Thus, continuing with the guidance provided by the OSG, the document was properly formatted and updated, as the first draft of the document was submitted to the OSG in December 2018, and the same was finalised between the Ministry and the OSG in November 2020.

The draft documents have been presented to the NSDC who have endorsed the same subject to their vetting by the OSG by means of the Council Resolution 03/2019-2020 attached as **Annex B**. The Resolution also stated that the finalised documents are to be presented to the NSDC once the OSG vetting is completed.

As per **Annex C**, OSG completed vetting the National Security Strategy in November 2020.

On 16 March 2021, the vetted National Security Strategy was presented to the NSDC for their final endorsement. The endorsement was granted by means of Council Resolution 14/2020-2021 attached as **Annex D**. However, the following corrections are to be made to the document, as highlighted by the NSDC:

- for Water Security, the line Ministry in charge of implementing this Agenda is the Ministry of Infrastructure and Meteorological Services, not the Ministry of Waterways and Environment;
- for Energy Security, the percentage of Fijians without access to Electricity is 4%, as confirmed by the 2017 National Census data, and not 11% as noted in the document.

In May 2021, the draft Cabinet paper was submitted to Cabinet Office for the approval of the NSS. We have been advised from Cabinet Office that further discussions will be had at Cabinet Level before the NSS is approved. We await the outcome of those discussions at Cabinet Level and the final approval of the NSS.

3. National Security Defence Council (NSDC) Bill.

The following is a narrative of the National Security Strategy for the period in question

With regards to the NSDC Bill, the draft Bill was forwarded to the Office of the Solicitor General on 21/05/2018 for vetting. This is to ensure that a proper policy footing is in place before a legal framework can be adopted. A copy of this correspondence is attached as **Annex A**. We have been further advised from the OSG vide email dated 04/07/2019 that the NSS has to be passed first before work on the NSDC Bill can continue. This is to ensure that a proper policy footing is in place before a legal framework can be adopted. A copy of this correspondence is attached as **Annex B**.



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND NATIONAL
SECURITY**

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Telephone: 3211754/3211706. Facsimile: 3317721/3300346
Email: defence@govnet.gov.fj. Email: info@homeaff@govnet.gov.fj.

MEMORANDUM

From : The Permanent Secretary for Defence & National Security
To : The Solicitor-General
Date : 21st May 2018
Ref. : PS/OT-R/01
Re. : Draft National Security Defence Council Secretariat Bill

Ni sa Bula Vinaka!

Sir, with reference to the above-captioned, please find enclosed is the 'DRAFT National Security Defence Council Secretariat Bill.'

The Secretariat has completed the necessary changes and amendments and it has been cleared by the Director-General and is submitted herewith for vetting and further guidance please.

Vinaka.

.....
Osea N. Cawaru [Mr]
Permanent Secretary for Defence and National Security

MEMORANDUM

From: The Solicitor-General **Phone:** 330 9866
To: The Permanent Secretary for Defence, National Security and Policing **Date:** 5 November 2020
Subject: National Security Strategy 2020-2024

"CONFIDENTIAL AND LEGALLY PRIVILEGED"

Attention: Mr Akula Savu

1. We refer to the latest draft of the National Security Strategy ('**Strategy**') and the accompanying Cabinet Memorandum sent to our office by e-mail correspondence on 19 October 2020 by the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing ('**Ministry**') (Mr Akula Savu – Ministry / Mr David Solvalu – OSG).
2. We thank the Ministry for incorporating the changes recommended in our 5 October 2020 memorandum and discussed and agreed to between our offices in the meeting on 12 October 2020.
3. Please see attached the Strategy with no additional comments or feedback from our office.
4. Please also see attached the Cabinet Memorandum with a few recommended changes for your consideration.
5. Please note, we have not reviewed the Strategy and Cabinet Memorandum from a commercial or policy perspective and assume that the information and obligations set out in each are correct and acceptable to the Ministry. We have assumed that such information is true, correct and complete in all material respects.
6. Furthermore, please note that the Cabinet Memorandum may be submitted to Cabinet subject to the recommended changes. However, the Cabinet Memorandum should be resubmitted to our office for further vetting if any further substantive amendments are made to it, an assumption stated in this memorandum is incorrect, any information provided to our office is incorrect or details of any relevant fact or circumstance have not been provided to our office.
7. Should you require further clarification, please contact the undersigned.

Thank you.



David Edward Solvalu
Principal Legal Officer
for **THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL**

Attachment: National Security Strategy and Cabinet Memorandum (marked and unmarked copy)