

Parliament of the Republic of Fiji: 2018-2019 Annual Report – Responses to the Additional Issues Raised by the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights

1. **Reference is made to the response to Question 7. The Committee notes the process of submission on the Back to Office Report (BTOR) and queries whether any process has been established previously, given that the response indicates that it (the BTOR process) will be reviewed and strengthened. Please provide in detail.**

I can confirm that process has been reviewed and following that review, the following were rolled out –

- (a) Templates were created for BTORs for delegations and accompanying staff to follow for more effective and efficient submission upon return;
- (b) Timeline for submission of reports upon return is at the discretion of the Hon. Speaker;
- (c) Accompanying staff to participate in Knowledge Management Initiative (KMI) sharing sessions with all staff and emphasis is placed on lessons learnt;

Under the guidance of the Hon. Speaker Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu, the following is being observed for official parliamentary travels –

- (d) Tabling of back-to-office reports in Parliament for Honourable Members perusal and reference. These are all kept in the Library;
- (e) Recommendations in the back-to-office reports must be followed upon and implemented accordingly.

2. **The Committee notes the high staff turnover over the period to date and seeks clarification if there is any strategic approach by the Department to retain staff given that most have done overseas training and possess institutional knowledge.**

The Fijian Parliament has always practiced not holding any officer back from seeking greener pastures elsewhere. We understand that the move is part of their career progression and, in the long term, a better life for their family.

Whilst we appreciate that the period in question is for the 2018 – 2019 financial year, we wish to provide the consolidated statistics from 2018 to March 2024. Forty-five (45) officers resigned from office. Out of the forty-five (45), twelve (12) had migrated, twenty-five (25) moved on promotion to higher positions in the public and private sector, two (2) proceeded on expatriate posts with the Nauru Parliament and six (6) for other reasons.

For current staff, the standing policies allow for the following –

- (a) Internal EOI – Expressions of Interest are sent out internally to allow staff to apply for acting appointments for vacant posts. This increases the chance of the post being given to staff within the organisation given their exposure and learning on-the-job.
- (b) Individual EOI – Staff are allowed to express their interest in acting in a higher post within the organisation through the EOI process. Acting posts may also be given through the manager's recommendation and waiver of the EOI process; approval for this is at the

discretion of the Secretary-General and which is provided for under the Parliament's OMRS Guideline; and

- c) Implementation of Study Assistance for the Parliament Secretariat through the provision of study leave with pay. Currently, we have two staff who are on study leave with pay, and they are both studying in Canberra, Australia.

The HR Unit is currently analysing the following –

- (d) Identify and strengthen career progression for staff through training and mentoring from Managers and Senior Officers; and
- (e) Identify and implement re-skilling and up-skilling programmes/training to help staff reach their full potential and empower them to take on more challenging and rewarding roles within the institution.

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