



23 May 2024

Honourable Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu
Speaker of Parliament
Parliament of the Republic of Fiji
Government Buildings, Suva

Attention: Secretary General

Dear Hon. Speaker,

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

Pursuant to Standing Order 45(3), I hereby submit a response to the Written Question 86/2024 asked by Honourable Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure, on Thursday, 23 May 2024, as referred below:

"86/2024 Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure to ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications – Can the Deputy Prime Minister update Parliament on the number of indigenous owned businesses that were awarded Government Contracts from 2010 to 2022."

RESPONSE:

Engagement of local businesses including indigenous owned businesses is important to support the local economy, contribute to business growth, fostering community support and many more benefits.

The regulation on government procurement was established in 2010 (Procurement Regulation 2010) in which procurement of all goods and services above \$50k needs to be approved by the Government Tenders Boards with the Fiji Procurement Office under the Ministry of Finance as the Secretariat to the Board. As such, it would be necessary that the procurement from 2010 to be directed to the Honourable Minister of Finance.

The Reform of ITC Act came into place in 2013 which established the ITC Steering Committee chaired by the Minister of Communications. The Committee is tasked to approve all procurement of ICT goods and services for all government ministries.

All procurement of ICT goods and services are undertaken in-line with the Government Procurement Regulations and its guidelines and processes. This includes identification of needs, development of tender documentation or statement of requirements, publication of tenders, clarification and pre-bid meetings, submission of bids, bid opening, evaluation of proposals, selection of preferred supplier, contract signing and implementation.

In this process, all companies including indigenous owned business are publicly invited to participate and the selection of vendor will be based on the most compliant vendor. There is not such policy on selection of Indigenous owned business and the process is undertaken in a fair and transparent manner which is aligned to international best practices.

ICT sector is an area of interest where indigenous owned businesses will need to tap to or delve more in-order to thrive against other competitors. Since the established of the Reform of ITC Act in 2013, there has not been any indigenous owned business awarded any contract in this space but there is opportunity available if they fulfill all requirements of the procurement. However, I can confirm that there are many local owned businesses that have been awarded Government tenders or procurement of ICT goods and services.

Thank you.



Honourable Manoa Kamikamica
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Cooperatives, SMEs and Communications