

STATISTICS BILL 2026
(Bill No. 11 of 2026)

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BILL NO. 11 OF 2026**A BILL**

FOR AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE COLLECTION, COMPILATION, ANALYSIS
AND PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN STATISTICAL INFORMATION AND FOR
RELATED MATTERS

ENACTED by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji—

PART 1—PRELIMINARY*Short title and commencement*

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Statistics Act 2026.

(2) This Act comes into force on a date or dates appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

“administrative data providers” means an entity that provides data collected primarily for administrative purposes and includes national and local authorities and the Reserve Bank of Fiji;

“authorised officer” means a person appointed under section 21;

“bona fide research” means research that is genuine, authentic, and conducted with integrity;

“Bureau” means the Fiji Bureau of Statistics continued under section 14;

“Council” means the Statistical Advisory Council established under section 5;

“data” means the uninterpreted raw observations, survey responses or administrative records collected by an agency;

“Government” means the Government of the Republic of Fiji;

“Government Statistician” means the Government Statistician appointed by the Minister under section 17;

“harmonisation” means the process of standardising and integrating data into more cohesive forms to improve its usability and accessibility;

“identifier” means a sequence of characters allowing unique identification of a statistical unit from its name, exact geographical location or identification number;

“individual data” means the most detailed level of data about statistical units;

“individual schedule” means an official questionnaire or survey form used to collect data from or about a single, distinct person or business;

“information” means data that has been processed, analysed or interpreted to be meaningful and useful for decision making, understanding or communication;

“microdata” means detailed, granular information about individual entities including people, households, businesses or the raw, tabulated data collected directly from individuals or entities, which can then be used to create custom tables and analysis;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for statistics;

“National Statistical System” consists of the Bureau and producers of statistics identified by the Council;

“official statistics” means—

- (a) statistics produced by the Government Statistician; and
- (b) statistics compiled and produced in accordance with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and in compliance with relevant statistical frameworks and guidelines approved by the Council and the Government Statistician;

“other records” means those records obtained or abstracted from sources other than a public record;

“private” means a business, an agency or entity that is not owned or controlled by Government;

“public record” has the same meaning as provided under section 2 of the Public Records Act 1969;

“public sector agency” means any Government ministry or department, local authority or statutory body, whether corporate or unincorporated;

“respondent” means a person who provides or is required to provide data;

“return” means any document, form, survey, record, or storage media completed by the respondent which contains data required for statistical purposes under this Act;

“statistical purposes” means the exclusive use of data for the development and production of statistical results and analyses;

“statistical release” means the dissemination activity by which official statistics, including revised statistics, become publicly available;

“statistical survey” means the primary collection of individual data from respondents of a given population carried out by the Bureau or a producer of statistics exclusively for statistical purposes through the systematic use of statistical methodology under the provisions of this Act; and

“users” includes the general public, the media, researchers and students, businesses, national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, international organisations and authorities of other countries who receive or access official statistics.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this Act is to provide a legal framework for the collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination of official statistics in Fiji, in accordance with international statistical methods and standards.

Objectives

4. The objectives of this Act are to—

(a) establish the Bureau for—

(i) the collection of data through various methods, including censuses, surveys, and administrative records; and

(ii) the compilation, analysis, and dissemination of official statistics;

(b) establish the Council to provide guidance and advice on statistical matters;

(c) promote data quality and ensure the accuracy, reliability and timeliness of official statistics;

(d) make official statistics accessible and usable for Government, businesses, researchers and the public to facilitate evidence-based decision making;

- (e) safeguard confidentiality by protecting the privacy of individuals, households and businesses whose data is collected; and
- (f) ensure coordination and collaboration among different Government bodies and other stakeholders involved in activities for which statistics are collected.

PART 2—STATISTICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Establishment of Statistical Advisory Council

5. This section establishes the Statistical Advisory Council.

Membership of Council

6.—(1) The Council consists of the following members—

- (a) the Government Statistician, as the chairperson;
- (b) a representative of each of the following Government ministries—
 - (i) ministry responsible for agriculture and waterways;
 - (ii) ministry responsible for education;
 - (iii) ministry responsible for employment, productivity and workplace relations;
 - (iv) ministry responsible for environment and climate change;
 - (v) ministry responsible for finance;
 - (vi) ministry responsible for fisheries and forestry;
 - (vii) ministry responsible for foreign affairs and external trade;
 - (viii) ministry responsible for health and medical services;
 - (ix) ministry responsible for immigration;
 - (x) ministry responsible for justice;
 - (xi) ministry responsible for public works, meteorological services and transport;
 - (xii) ministry responsible for rural and maritime development, and national disaster risk management;
 - (xiii) ministry responsible for strategic planning, national development and statistics;
 - (xiv) ministry responsible for tourism and civil aviation; and
 - (xv) ministry responsible for women, children and social protection;
- (c) a representative from each of the following, to represent other users—
 - (i) Fiji National Provident Fund;

- (ii) Fiji Revenue and Customs Service;
- (iii) Land Transport Authority; and
- (iv) Reserve Bank of Fiji; and
- (d) a maximum of 3 representatives comprising at least one representative each from a local research facility, tertiary institution or any other organisation deemed necessary by the chairperson.

(2) The Minister appoints the representatives under subsection (1)(b) to (d) as members of the Council.

Term of office

7. A member of the Council, other than the chairperson, holds office for a term not exceeding 2 years and is eligible for reappointment.

Vacancy

8.—(1) A member of the Council may resign from his or her office at any time by giving written notice of the resignation to the Minister.

(2) The Minister may remove a member of the Council, other than the chairperson, at any time on the basis of incapacity, non-performance, bankruptcy, neglect of duty or misconduct proved to the satisfaction of the Minister.

(3) Where there is a vacancy in the membership of the Council, the Minister must appoint a representative under section 6(1)(b) to (d), as the case may be, as a new member of the Council.

(4) The powers of the Council are not affected by any vacancy in its membership.

Functions of Council

9.—(1) The Council must perform the following functions—

- (a) provide advice and recommendations to the Minister on national priorities for the development of statistics;
- (b) assist the Minister with policy and law reforms by ensuring that the reforms consider the interests of the persons or classes of persons that the member represents;
- (c) assist the Minister to address the statistical needs of Government and other users;
- (d) advise the Minister on priority statistics to be compiled and surveys to be carried out which address new demands for official statistics to allow the efficient monitoring of the national development plan, and addresses Fiji's regular regional and international development policy and treaties' monitoring and reporting requirements;
- (e) provide strategic guidance on measures needed to improve the quality, timeliness and relevance of official statistics to assist the Minister in making informed and effective decisions;

- (f) where necessary, to advise for resources of staff, equipment and finance on behalf of the Bureau; and
- (g) assist the Minister to address and resolve any gaps in the service being provided by the Bureau.

Powers of Council

10.—(1) The Council has the power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done for the performance of its functions under this Act or any other written law.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the Council has the power to appoint committees and subcommittees to advise the Council on any matter, and may determine the membership, purpose and procedures of the committees or subcommittees appointed by it.

Meetings of Council

11.—(1) The Council must meet—

- (a) at least once every 6 months; and
- (b) at such times and places as the chairperson may determine.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the chairperson must preside at each meeting of the Council.

(3) The quorum required for a meeting of the Council is two-thirds of the membership of the Council.

(4) Where a question arises at a meeting of the Council, a majority of the votes of the members of the Council present at the meeting determines the question.

(5) At a meeting of the Council, the chairperson and any other member of the Council has a deliberative vote, and where there is a tie in the number of opposing votes, the chairperson has a casting vote.

(6) A written resolution of the Council that is signed or assented to by a majority of the members of the Council, whether through physical or electronic means, is valid and deemed to have been approved at a meeting of the Council.

(7) Subject to this Act, the Council may regulate its own procedures.

(8) A defect or irregularity in, or in connection with, the appointment of a member of the Council, or in the case of an acting appointment, the occasion for acting had not arisen or had ceased, the defect or irregularity does not invalidate an act or decision of the Council.

Annual report of Council

12. Without limiting the right of the Council to report at any time, the Council must, as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year—

- (a) publish an annual report on the performance of the functions of the Council under this Act during the year; and
- (b) submit a copy of the annual report to the Minister, who must table the annual report in Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable.

Protection from liability

13.—(1) No civil or criminal proceedings lie against the Council for anything the Council does or has failed to do in the course of the exercise or purported exercise of the powers or performance or purported performance of the functions of the Council, unless it is shown that the Council did not act in good faith or with reasonable care.

(2) No civil or criminal proceedings lie personally against any member of the Council for anything the member does or has failed to do in the course of the exercise or purported exercise of the powers or performance or purported performance of the functions of the Council, unless it is shown that the member did not act in good faith or with reasonable care.

PART 3—FIJI BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN

*Division 1—Fiji Bureau of Statistics**Role of Fiji Bureau of Statistics*

14.—(1) There continues to be a department of the Ministry called Fiji Bureau of Statistics.

(2) The Bureau is the central statistical authority and depository of all official statistics produced in Fiji and—

- (a) collects;
- (b) compiles;
- (c) analyses; and
- (d) disseminates,

accurate, relevant, timely and high quality official statistics and related information on social, demographic, economic and financial activities to serve the needs of public and private users.

Functions of Bureau

15. The functions of the Bureau include—

- (a) to provide statistical services for Government, public and private users;
- (b) to collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and publish official statistics and related information;
- (c) to ensure coordination in the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of official statistics and related information obtained by a public sector agency or public officer, including records of that office with particular regard to avoid duplication of collection and ensuring compatibility and integration;
- (d) to formulate and ensure compliance with standards for statistical purposes by any public sector agency;
- (e) to provide advice and assistance to public sector agencies in relation to statistics;

- (f) to provide liaison between Fiji and other countries and international organisations in relation to statistical matters;
- (g) to perform timely quality assurance on information and data collection techniques and the analytical procedures in use; and
- (h) to enhance digital data storage, improve and secure backup and recovery plans for the protection of digital data.

Statistical register

16.—(1) The Bureau may establish and maintain a statistical register to be used exclusively for statistical purposes.

(2) In this section, “statistical register” refers to lists of statistical units for businesses, households or dwellings, for various related statistics and their characteristics, including identifiers that are necessary for statistical production.

Division 2—Government Statistician

Appointment of Government Statistician

17.—(1) The Minister must appoint a Government Statistician to be responsible for the executive management of the Bureau.

(2) The Government Statistician must possess substantial qualifications and experience in statistics, economics or any related discipline.

Functions of Government Statistician

18.—(1) The functions of the Government Statistician include—

- (a) to collect data in connection with, or incidental to, all matters prescribed in Schedule 1;
- (b) to compile, analyse, and publish statistical information;
- (c) to create, coordinate and monitor a National Statistical System and the outcome of statistical activities of all producers of statistics including public sector agencies, to—
 - (i) ensure that approved statistical standards and procedures are applied;
 - (ii) ensure that standard concepts, definitions and classifications are used to enhance harmonisation and comparability of statistics; and
 - (iii) minimise unnecessary overlapping and duplication in the collection and publication of statistical information;
- (d) to collaborate with departments of the Government in the collection, compilation, analysis and publication of statistical records of administration;
- (e) generally, to organise a coordinated scheme of social and economic statistics relating to Fiji in accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- (f) to conduct voluntary pilot surveys to test questionnaires and statistical procedures;

- (g) to ensure the independence, accuracy, relevance, integrity, timeliness and professional standard of statistical information produced by the Bureau;
- (h) to ensure the security and confidentiality of information collected under this Act;
- (i) to determine and exercise final responsibility for the discontinuance of a statistical collection of the Bureau;
- (j) to determine the pricing policy of statistical products and services supplied by the Bureau;
- (k) to convene meetings for the users to review user needs for such statistics;
- (l) to be the focal point of contact with international agencies on the entire National Statistical System;
- (m) to publish a code of practice for official statistics with the advice of the Council which must be based on the values of the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics; and
- (n) to assess and determine whether a code of practice for official statistics has been complied with in relation to the collection of official statistics.

(2) It is the duty of the Government Statistician to make such arrangements and to do all things necessary for the performance of his or her duties under this Act.

Independence of Government Statistician

19. The Government Statistician has the sole responsibility for deciding—

- (a) the procedures and methods employed in the provision of any statistics produced or to be produced; and
- (b) the extent, form, and timing of publication of those statistics.

Division 3—Appointment of employees

Appointment of employees

20. The Permanent Secretary, on the recommendation of the Government Statistician may appoint employees, including any temporary or casual employee, as he or she considers necessary for the purposes of this Act.

Appointment of authorised officer

21.—(1) The Government Statistician may appoint any person or category of persons within the Bureau to be an authorised officer for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Any power conferred by this Act on an authorised officer may be exercised by the Government Statistician.

PART 4—OFFICIAL STATISTICS

*Division 1—Production, compilation and tabulation of official statistics**Matters on which official statistics may be produced*

22. The Government Statistician may produce official statistics on any matter relating to Fiji, including, without limitation, its economic, social, cultural, and environmental situation.

Compilation and tabulation of statistics

23. The Government Statistician must cause the statistics collected under this Act to be compiled, tabulated and analysed and, subject to this Act, may cause these statistics or abstracts to be published, with or without observations, in the manner as the Government Statistician may determine.

*Division 2—Other producers**Other producers of statistics*

24.—(1) Other producers of statistics which are professionally independent entities within their respective organisations with exclusive or primary activities related to the development, production and dissemination of statistics cannot be assigned responsibilities that are in contradiction with the provisions and principles of official statistics.

(2) Other producers of statistics may be responsible for the development, production and dissemination of statistics, as assigned in the annual statistical programme.

(3) The functions of other producers of statistics must be carried out in accordance with this Act and standards issued by the Government Statistician.

Partnership in data collections

25.—(1) A public sector agency intending to undertake data collection must submit a proposal for review to the Government Statistician to ensure that the data collection design complies with good practice of statistical surveys and standards.

(2) The Government Statistician, after consultation with a representative of the public sector agency concerned, may recommend that an agreement be made between the Bureau and the public sector agency to jointly utilise resources to collect and share information between the agreeing parties.

(3) The respondent must be informed by notice in writing that the information is being collected jointly by the Bureau with or on behalf of a public sector agency, and the notice must state the purpose for which the information will be stored.

(4) An agreement must be of no effect in relation to any respondent who gives written notice to the Government Statistician that he or she objects to the sharing of information by the parties to the joint collection.

(5) Any employee of a public sector agency must, if engaged in the joint data collection or the processing of data collected, take an oath of secrecy as required under section 44.

(6) An oath of secrecy is required under subsection (5) regardless of whether the employee has taken an oath of secrecy under any other written law.

Data integration and harmonisation across private and public sector agencies

26.—(1) Private and public sector agencies must work collaboratively with the Government Statistician on the details of compilation and standardisation for statistical reporting to improve data sharing and harmonisation.

(2) The Government Statistician, after discussion with a representative of the public sector agency or any other agency concerned, may in any specific or general case, waive, in whole or in part, the duty under subsection (1) for that department or agency.

(3) In the case of a disagreement between the parties in any discussion under subsection (2), the Minister must decide on the matter.

*Division 3—Quality assurance**Quality commitment*

27.—(1) The Bureau must be committed to continually assessing and improving the quality of official statistics in terms of relevance, accuracy, reliability, timeliness, transparency, clarity, coherence and comparability.

(2) To guarantee quality, the Bureau must develop, produce and disseminate official statistics on the basis of common standards and harmonised methods on the scope, concepts, definitions, units and classifications of official statistics, in compliance with this Act and internationally agreed statistical standards and recommendations.

(3) To improve the quality of official statistics, the Bureau is entitled to edit and validate data, combine data from different sources, carry out record linking and matching of individual data exclusively for statistical purposes and use statistical estimation techniques to fill gaps.

(4) The Bureau must document sources and methods used in the production process, as well as the resulting data sets, in a standardised way.

(5) Users must be kept informed about the sources and methods of statistical production and quality of statistical outputs through metadata.

Quality assessment

28.—(1) Users must be regularly consulted regarding the quality of official statistics.

(2) The Bureau must seek feedback from respondents to improve the quality of data.

(3) The Bureau may collaborate with the scientific community to assess and improve statistical methodology and encourage analytical work using official statistics.

(4) Assessments of the institutional environment, processes and outputs of the National Statistical System may be carried out by internal and external experts.

Participation in international cooperation

29.—(1) The Bureau, and other producers of statistics in their respective areas of competence, must actively work to implement international statistical standards and recommendations.

(2) The Bureau is the focal point for all technical cooperation activities in official statistics, as well as for all assessments initiated by international organisations that concern official statistics irrespective of the statistical domain and producer.

Division 4—Release of official statistics

Statistical release

30.—(1) Official statistics must be disseminated in a timely and punctual manner in compliance with this Act, particularly in respect of protecting statistical confidentiality and ensuring equal and simultaneous access as required under the principle of impartiality.

(2) The Bureau must establish and make public an advance release calendar that indicates the planned dates and times for the release of official statistics.

(3) Any expected divergence from the advance release calendar must be communicated to the public before the planned release date and a new date for the release must be set within a reasonable time and made public.

(4) Releases of official statistics must be accompanied by metadata and explanatory comments, and access must be granted to all users free of charge on online platforms.

(5) The Bureau may regulate and set the price of printed publications and other material.

(6) Official statistics must be clearly distinguished from any other statistics when released.

(7) Errors discovered in released official statistics must be corrected, and the corrections must be released and communicated to users at the earliest possible time.

(8) Users are entitled to use official statistics and the related metadata in their own products with indication of the data source.

Dissemination policy

31.—(1) The Bureau must establish—

(a) a coordinated dissemination policy with transparent procedures to be applied across the National Statistical System; and

(b) a common terminology for the dissemination of all official statistics.

(2) Preliminary release of statistics that will be subject to later revision must be clearly labelled as provisional.

(3) Major revisions due to changes in methods must be publicly notified in advance.

Restriction on publication

32.—(1) Except for the purposes of a prosecution under this Act—

(a) no individual return, or part thereof, made for the purpose of this Act;

(b) no answer given to any question put for the purposes of this Act; and

(c) no report, abstract or other document, containing particulars comprised in any such return or answer so arranged as to enable identification of such particulars with any person, undertaking or business,

must be published, admitted in evidence, or shown to any person not employed in the execution of a duty under this Act unless there is prior written consent of the person who makes a return or gives an answer, or, from the owner in the case of an undertaking or business.

(2) Nothing in this section must prevent or restrict the publication of any such report, abstract or other document, without such consent where the particulars in such report, abstract or other document, enable identification merely by reason of the fact that business within its particular sphere of activities, so, however that in no case must such particulars enable identification of the costs of production, the capital employed or profits arising in any such undertaking or business.

Division 5—Statistical programmes

Programming of national statistical activities

33.—(1) Statistical programmes, including a multi-year statistical programme and an annual statistical programme must be established as key instruments for effective strategic and operational management and coordination of activities in the National Statistical System.

(2) The Bureau has the responsibility of preparing the statistical programmes, in close consultation with users, respondents and administrative data providers.

(3) Other producers of statistics may be involved in the process and provide the Bureau with the necessary input.

(4) The Government Statistician must decide on the inclusion of producers, their deliveries and related activities in the draft statistical programmes based on a transparent, documented process using the following criteria—

- (a) the producer demonstrates its capability and willingness to comply with the provisions of this Act and the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics; and
- (b) the deliveries and activities must not duplicate those conducted by other producers nor result in an excessive burden on respondents.

(5) The Bureau, in close coordination with other producers of statistics, has the responsibility of reporting on the implementation of the statistical programmes including, if applicable, measures for improvement.

(6) The reports must be submitted for opinion to the Council.

(7) The implementation reports and the opinion of the Council must be made public.

Multi-year statistical programme

34.—(1) A multi-year statistical programme must be established for the National Statistical System to define the strategic development of official statistics of Fiji, aiming at satisfying existing and emerging user needs.

(2) The multi-year statistical programme must provide a vision and priorities for the development of the National Statistical System for 5 years and establish the required deliveries and development actions, weighing them against the necessary resources.

Annual statistical programme

35.—(1) An annual statistical programme of the National Statistical System must be established each year as an operational translation of the multi-year statistical programme to update the list of producers of data and to provide for—

- (a) all official statistics to be released;
- (b) all statistical surveys to be carried out by the producers of statistics;
- (c) all transmissions of administrative data or data from other existing sources to the Bureau;
- (d) main development activities of official statistics; and
- (e) statistical registers to be maintained and developed.

(2) The annual programme must include—

- (a) the type and frequency of all official statistics to be released as well as, for each, the producer, the relation to international requirements and linkages with strategic activities of the multi-year statistical programme;
- (b) all surveys to be carried out by producers of data and, for each survey, the methods of data collection, an estimate of the response burden, such as the approximate number and type of respondents, whether the survey will be conducted on a voluntary or compulsory basis and the statistics or statistical registers to which the survey provides input;
- (c) a list of all administrative data sets or any other datasets that are transmitted to producers of statistics, and for each dataset, the name of the dataset, the provider, the receiving producer of statistics, the statistics or statistical registers to which the transmission provides input, the frequency of data transfer and the types of statistical units, which can be replaced by a reference to a memorandum of understanding or any other agreement governing the transmission of data that contains the necessary information and is publicly available;
- (d) information on the main annual development activities and their link to international requirements and the multi-year statistical programme;
- (e) planned internal or external assessments of the functioning of all or parts of the National Statistical System; and
- (f) a list of all existing and planned statistical registers.

Adoption of statistical programmes

36.—(1) The Bureau must submit the multi-year and the annual statistical programmes to the Council for opinion.

(2) The Council must provide its opinion to the Minister on the adoption of the multi-year and annual statistical programmes no later than 3 months before the start of the reference period of the multi-year programme.

(3) When approving the multi-year statistical programmes, the Minister must not interfere with issues covered by professional independence, or with statistical activities of statutory bodies.

(4) The Bureau must be granted adequate resources necessary for the implementation of the statistical multi-year programmes.

Division 6—Confidentiality

Security of confidential information

37.—(1) Information provided to the Government Statistician under this Act must only be used for statistical purposes.

(2) No person other than an authorised officer who has taken the oath of secrecy under section 44 may be permitted to see any individual schedule or any answer to any question put under this Act except for the purposes of a prosecution or a proposed prosecution under this Act.

(3) No information contained in any individual schedule and no answer to any question put for the purposes of this Act must, except for the purposes of a prosecution or a proposed prosecution under this Act, be separately published or disclosed to any undertaking or to any person not being an employee of the department who has taken the oath of secrecy under section 44.

(4) All statistical information published by the Government Statistician must be arranged in a manner that prevents any particulars published from being identifiable by any person and any incorporated entity relating to any particular person or undertaking, unless—

- (a) that person or the owner of that undertaking has consented to the publication in that manner, or has already permitted the publication in that manner; or
- (b) the publication in that manner could not reasonably have been foreseen by the Government Statistician or any employee of the Bureau.

(5) At the most disaggregated level, individual data must not be used for any investigation, surveillance, legal proceedings, administrative decision-making or other similar handling of matters concerning a natural or legal person by any authorities of international organisations.

Disclosure of data and information collected jointly

38. Notwithstanding section 37, particulars of any data and information collected jointly with a public sector agency, pursuant to an agreement under section 25, and data and information collected under any written law other than this Act and processed by the department may be disclosed to that public sector agency, and a completed or partly completed schedule obtained or an answer to any question put in the course of a joint collection, may be disclosed to any employee of that public sector agency who has made a statutory declaration similar to the oath of secrecy under section 44.

Disclosure of individual schedules or microdata for bona fide research or statistical purposes

39.—(1) Notwithstanding section 37, the Government Statistician may disclose individual schedules or microdata to any person if—

- (a) the information contained in the schedules is to be used by that person solely for bona fide research or statistical purposes in relation to a matter of public interest;
- (b) the microdata will not be provided to other persons or organisation;
- (c) the Government Statistician is satisfied that the person has the necessary research experience, knowledge, and skills to access and use the information contained in the schedules; and
- (d) the disclosure is not prohibited by subsection (2).

(2) An individual schedule or microdata must not be disclosed under this section unless—

- (a) the name, address and contacts of the person or undertaking by whom or by which the schedule was supplied are deleted;
- (b) every person involved in the research or statistical project has made a statutory declaration of secrecy declaring that the schedule or any data and information contained in it will be used only for the purposes of that research or statistical project;
- (c) individual data must not be used for any investigation, surveillance, legal proceedings, administrative decision making or other similar handling of matters concerning a natural or legal person by any authorities of international organisations; and
- (d) the Government Statistician is satisfied that the security of the schedule and any information contained in it will not be compromised.

(3) A hard copy and electronic copy of the published results of any such research or statistical project must be sent to the Bureau for reference and future survey improvement.

(4) The Government Statistician must receive the final research report to review and give final clearance.

PART 5—GENERAL POWERS

Power to obtain particulars

40.—(1) Where any data and information are being collected in accordance with this Act, an authorised officer may require any person from whom particulars may lawfully be required under this Act to supply him or her with such particulars as may be prescribed or which the Government Statistician may consider necessary or desirable in relation to the collection of such data and information.

(2) A person must, to the best of his or her knowledge, complete such forms, make such returns, answer such questions and give all such information and estimates, in the manner and within such reasonable time, as may be required by the authorised officer.

(3) An authorised officer may require any person to supply him or her with particulars either by interviewing such person personally or by leaving at the last known address, or posting to the last known address, of such person a notice requiring a form to be completed and returned in the manner and within the time specified in the notice.

(4) An authorised officer may require any person to supply him or her with particulars and providing their response by sending it by electronic mail, and must include a general statement of the purpose for which the information, estimate, return or particulars is required.

(5) Where any particulars are, by any document purporting to be issued by an authorised officer, required to be supplied by any person, it must be presumed until the contrary is proven—

- (a) that the particulars may lawfully be required from that person in accordance with this Act; and
- (b) that the document has been issued by an authorised officer.

Power to access public and other records

41. For the purpose of obtaining data and information for statistical purposes, the Government Statistician may in writing direct any public sector agency to furnish or to supply to him or her any Government records or documents or from any records or documents belonging to any local authority or to any person, information sought in respect of the matter in relation to which the collection of statistics has been approved, or directed, or information which would aid in the completion or correction of such statistics, any person who has the custody of any such record must grant access to the Government Statistician or an authorised officer for the obtaining of such information.

Power to enter premises

42. An authorised officer may, at all reasonable times and upon production of his or her authorisation and identification as issued by the Bureau, for any purpose connected with the collection of data, enter and collect any information from any premises where persons are employed except a dwelling house, and may make such enquiries as may be reasonably necessary for the performance of his or her duties.

PART 6—OFFENCES

Offences

43.—(1) A person employed in the execution of any duty under this Act, who—

- (a) by virtue of such employment comes into possession of any information which might exert an influence on or affect the market value of any share, interest, product or article, and before such information is made public, directly or indirectly uses such information for personal gain;

(b) without lawful authority publishes or communicates to any person otherwise than in the ordinary course of such employment any information acquired by him or her in the course of his or her employment; and

(c) knowingly compiles for issue any false statistics or information,

commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years, or both.

(2) A person, being in possession of any information which to his or her knowledge has been disclosed in contravention of this Act, who publishes or distributes such information to any person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years, or both.

(3) A person who—

(a) hinders or obstructs the Government Statistician or an authorised officer in the execution of any powers under this Act;

(b) refuses or neglects—

(i) to complete and provide the particulars required in any return, form or other document, lawfully left with or sent to him or her; or

(ii) to answer any questions or enquiries lawfully asked to him or her, under this Act;

(c) knowingly makes in any return, form or other document, completed or provided under this Act, or in any answer to any question or enquiry asked to him or her under this Act, any statement which is untrue in any material particular;

(d) without lawful authority, destroys, defaces, or mutilates any return, form or other document containing particulars collected under this Act; or

(e) refuses without reasonable cause to grant access to records and documents in accordance with the provisions of section 41,

commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000, and in case of a corporate body, to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years, or both.

PART 7—MISCELLANEOUS

Oath of secrecy

44. A person employed in the execution of any duty under this Act must, before assuming his or her duties, make and subscribe before a magistrate an oath in the form prescribed in Schedule 2, or where the person is abroad in such form and manner as the Government Statistician may approve.

Act to prevail

45. This Act has effect notwithstanding any provision of any other written law, and accordingly, to the extent that there is any inconsistency between this Act and any other written law, this Act prevails.

Regulations

46.—(1) The Minister may make regulations to prescribe matters that are required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed or are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act and generally for achieving the purposes of this Act.

(2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), regulations made pursuant to this section may include all or any of the following—

- (a) prescribing the particulars to be furnished in relation to any matter in respect of which statistics may be collected;
- (b) prescribing fees to be paid to the Bureau for the furnishing of official statistics; and
- (c) any special information or report supplied or special investigation carried out by him or her.

Power to amend Schedule 1

47. The Minister may amend Schedule 1 by notice in the Gazette.

Repeal

48. The Statistics Act 1961 is repealed.

Transitional

49. A person who, immediately prior to the commencement of this Act, is an officer or employee of the Bureau continues in employment on the terms on which he or she was appointed as an officer or employee of the Bureau.

Consequential amendment

50. All State documents of any nature whatsoever and all written laws are amended by deleting “Statistics Act 1961” wherever it appears and substituting “Statistics Act 2026”, unless the context otherwise requires.

SCHEDULE 1
(Section 18(1)(a))

PRESCRIBED MATTERS

1. Population, vital occurrences and morbidity
2. Other demographic and social matters, including welfare and social protection
3. Immigration and emigration
4. Buildings, dwellings, and housing conditions
5. Health, quality of life, and nutrition
6. Environment and climate change
7. Internal and external trade, visible and invisible, and financial transactions with other countries
8. Primary and secondary production
9. Agriculture, including dairying, horticulture, pastoral and allied industries
10. Forestry and fishing
11. Factories, mines and productive industries generally
12. Labour, employment and unemployment, conditions of work and hours of work
13. Salaries, wages bonuses, fees, allowances and any other payments and honoraria for services rendered
14. Income, earnings, profits and interest, expenditure and taxation
15. Social, educational, labour and industrial matters, including associations of employers, employees and other persons generally
16. Household including family characteristics, conditions and activities
17. Micro, small and medium industries, informal activities
18. Assets including savings, liabilities and wealth of persons and undertakings, price of real and personal property
19. Industrial disturbances and disputes
20. Banking and finance generally
21. Commercial and professional undertakings
22. Distributive trades
23. Transport and communication in all forms by land, water or air

24. Wholesale and retail prices of commodities at any or all transaction level, rents and cost of living
25. Injuries, accidents and compensation
26. Stocks of manufactured and unmanufactured goods
27. Sweepstakes, lotteries, charitable and other public collections of money
28. Land tenure, the occupation and use and condition of land and the produce
29. Local government
30. Fire, marine, life, accident insurance
31. Transfers of land, mortgages or privileges on land, leases of land
32. Information required for the computation of the national income of Fiji
33. Travel, internal and overseas
34. Tourism
35. Economic, financial, production, manufacturing, consumption, sales, investment, stocks and other matters relating to undertakings including ministries and Government departments, local authorities and other statutory bodies

SCHEDULE 2
(Section 44)

OATH OF SECRECY

I,, being appointed do hereby swear/solemnly affirm/declare that I will maintain during or after my association with Fiji Bureau of Statistics the confidentiality of any matter relating to the Statistics Act 2026 and any regulations made under that Act, which comes to my knowledge and will not, on any account and, at any time, disclose directly or indirectly to any person, any matter or information relating to the affairs of Fiji Bureau of Statistics, otherwise than for the purposes of the performance of my functions or the exercise of my powers under the Statistics Act 2026 and any regulations made under that Act.

Sworn/ solemnly affirmed/ declared by the abovenamed at:

.....

This day of20.....

Before me:

Magistrate

May 2026

STATISTICS BILL 2026

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Bill and is intended only to indicate its general effect)

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Statistics Act 1961 (**‘Act’**) served as Fiji’s foundational legislation for the production of official statistics. However, the landscape of official statistics has evolved significantly over the decades, rendering the Act outdated and inadequate to meet contemporary statistical requirements and international standards.
- 1.2 The Fiji Bureau of Statistics (**‘Bureau’**) has continued to operate under the Act and the Census Act 1964, despite increasing national demands for high quality, timely, and independent statistical information. The Act lacks provisions for compelling other Government departments to share administrative records.
- 1.3 In recognition of the need for legislative reform, the Cabinet of Fiji approved a review of the Act in May 2023.
- 1.4 As a result of the Cabinet approved review, the Statistics Bill 2026 (**‘Bill’**) aligns with existing policies, practices and legislation with international standards and best practices thereby modernising the institutional, governance and operational capabilities of the Bureau. It also reflects the whole of Government approach to data sharing, reducing survey fatigue and saving resources.

2.0 CLAUSES

- 2.1 Clause 1 of the Bill provides for short title and commencement. If passed by Parliament, the new legislation will come into force on a date or dates appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.
- 2.2 Clause 2 of the Bill provides for the interpretation section, which defines key terms used throughout the Bill.
- 2.3 Clause 3 of the Bill provides for the purpose of the Bill, which is to provide a legal framework for the collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination of statistical information.

- 2.4 Clause 4 of the Bill provides for the objectives of the Bill.
- 2.5 Clause 5 of the Bill establishes the Statistical Advisory Council (**‘Council’**).
- 2.6 Clause 6 of the Bill provides for the membership of the Council.
- 2.7 Clause 7 of the Bill provides for the term of office of a member of the Council.
- 2.8 Clause 8 of the Bill provides for vacancy in the membership of the Council.
- 2.9 Clause 9 of the Bill outlines the functions of the Council.
- 2.10 Clause 10 of the Bill outlines the powers of the Council.
- 2.11 Clause 11 of the Bill provides for how meetings of the Council are held.
- 2.12 Clause 12 of the Bill provides for the process of submission of an annual report of the Council.
- 2.13 Clause 13 of the Bill provides for protection from liability for Council members subject to their duty to act in good faith and with reasonable care.
- 2.14 Clauses 14 and 15 of the Bill outline the role of the Fiji Bureau of Statistics and its functions.
- 2.15 Clause 16 of the Bill provides for the statistical register which is held and maintained by the Bureau.
- 2.16 Clauses 17 to 19 of the Bill provides for the appointment, functions and independence of the Government Statistician.
- 2.17 Clause 20 of the Bill provides for the appointment of employees of the Bureau.
- 2.18 Clause 21 of the Bill provides for the appointment of authorised officers from within the Bureau.
- 2.19 Clause 22 of the Bill provides for the matters on which official statistics may be produced.
- 2.20 Clause 23 of the Bill provides for the compilation and tabulation of statistics.
- 2.21 Clauses 24 and 25 of the Bill provides for other producers of statistics and the partnership in data collections between the Bureau and other producers.
- 2.22 Clause 26 of the Bill provides for data integration and harmonisation across private and public sector agencies.
- 2.23 Clauses 27 and 28 of the Bill provides for quality commitment and quality assessment that must be adhered to when collecting data and producing official statistics.

- 2.24 Clause 29 of the Bill provides for participation in international cooperation.
- 2.25 Clauses 30 to 32 of the Bill outline how statistics are released, the policy which the Bureau must adhere to in relation to dissemination of official statistics and the restrictions that apply to publication.
- 2.26 Clauses 33 to 36 of the Bill provides for programmes for national statistical activities, such as the multi-year statistical programme and the annual statistical programme, and for the adoption of the programmes.
- 2.27 Clauses 37 to 39 of the Bill provide for the security of confidential information, how information collected jointly should be disclosed and the disclosure of data for research or statistical purposes.
- 2.28 Clause 40 of the Bill provides for the power to obtain particulars.
- 2.29 Clause 41 of the Bill provides for the power of the Bureau to access public and other records.
- 2.30 Clause 42 of the bill provides for the power for the Bureau to enter premises.
- 2.31 Clause 43 of the Bill provides for offences.
- 2.32 Clause 44 of the Bill provides for the oath of secrecy.
- 2.33 Clause 45 of the Bill provides that the Act must prevail.
- 2.34 Clause 46 of the Bill provides for the Minister's power to make regulations to give effect to the provisions of the Bill.
- 2.35 Clause 47 of the Bill provides for the power of the Minister to amend Schedule 1 by order published in the Gazette.
- 2.36 Clause 48 provides for the repeal of the Act.
- 2.37 Clause 49 provides the transitional provision.
- 2.38 Clause 50 provides for consequential amendments.

3.0 MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 The new legislation comes under the responsibility of the Minister responsible for statistics.

S. D. TURAGA
Acting Attorney-General