



STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Review Report on the 2023-2024 Department of Information and National Archives Annual Report



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI
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CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Standing Committee on Social Affairs report on *the Review of the 2023 - 2024 Department of Information and National Archives Annual Report*.

As part of the scrutiny process, the committee received written responses from the Department of Information and National Archives. The process has proven to be an effective means of gauging its progress and maintaining a high level of scrutiny of the agency under review.

In Financial year 2023 – 2024, the Department of Information and Archives continued to position itself as the central agency for disseminating Government information, programmes and development initiatives. In strengthening this role, the Department implemented new methods of information dissemination while reinforcing existing traditional platforms.

Some of the key highlights of Department of Information for the review period were as follows:

- Event Coverage – a total of 1,003 events were covered including the production of social media briefs, web uploads, photography, radio programmes in both iTaukei and Hindi print publications.
- National Women’s Expo, Exploring Outsourcing in Fiji Launch and Disaster Awareness week.
- Launch of the Fiji Sovereign Blue Bond, Girit Day, Ratu Sukuna Day and Fiji Ports \$15.6 million dividend announcement.
- Covered the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) revitalization, Installation of Turaga Vunivalu of Bau and Head of Kubuna confederacy.
- Election in Parliament of Turaga Tui Cakau, Hon. Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu as Speaker of the Parliament.
- Coverage of New Zealand Prime Minister’s visit to Fiji.
- Full coverage of the Cybersecurity Symposium, Indian Council for Cultural Relations Day and Fiji Day.
- Coverage of opening of the new Ba Court Complex, World Forest Day and National Coconut Day event.

The Committee also noted some of the challenges faced by the National Archives of Fiji during the consultation with the Officials.

- The Department of Information and National Archives does not have regular source of revenue as they are service providers to the people of Fiji.
- The delay in upgrading in IT Server at National Archives further delays the digitalization of records.
- The Department is not adequately funded.

To conclude, I sincerely thank the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Information and National Archives and their officials for their services and contributions to this review process.

I am thankful to the Hon. Members, Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure, Hon. Alipate Tuicolo, Hon. Viam Pillay, Hon. Alikia Bia, Hon. Parveen Bala and Hon. Ketan Lal for their invaluable contribution and support.

I would like to thank the secretariat for their dedication in compiling this report.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I commend this report to Parliament.



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Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu
Chairperson

ACRONYMS

FBC	Fiji Broadcasting Corporation
FTU	Film and Television Unit
GCC	Great Council of Chiefs
MLO	Media Liaison Officer
MM	Media Monitor
NAF	National Archives of Fiji
PRA	Public Records Act
SO	Standing Order
WPHC	Westen Pacific High Commission

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs (**‘Committee’**) is established under Section 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and Standing Order 109. The Committee’s mandate and functions are provided under SO 109 (2) and 110 (1) (a)-(d) & (f).

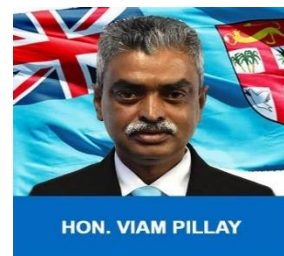
The Members of Committee are:



Chairperson



Deputy Chairperson



Member



Member



Member



Member

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2023 - 2024 Department of Information and National Archives Annual Report was tabled in Parliament on 13th March 2026 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs pursuant to Standing Order 109(2)(b).

Standing Order 109(2)(b) empowers the Standing Committee on Social Affairs to examine matters related to health, education, social services, labour, aviation, culture and media.

1.1 Committee Procedures

Deliberations on the 2023 – 2024 Department of Information and National Archives commenced in May 2026. The Committee reviewed the report, prepared questions and sought clarifications on key issues of interest from Department of Information and National Archives.

The Committee held Public Submission with the Executives of Department of Information and National Archives on 7th May 2026.

Upon receipt of all pertinent information addressing the Committee's queries, the report was finalised and subsequently endorsed on 16th September 2026.

Responses from Department of Information and National Archives can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

2.0 Background of Department of Information and National Archives

2.1 Department of Information

The Department of Information evolved from the Public Relations Office of the Colonial Government and successive governments after independence in 1970 have either kept it as Department headed by the Director of Information under the Office of the Prime Minister and have recently been upgraded to a full government ministry with a dedicated minister and permanent secretary.

The Ministry comprises the Department of Information and the National Archives.

While the Department of Information is the Government's primary information agency, the National Archives of Fiji is the official custodian of government documents and recordkeeping under the Public Records Act (Cap. 108) and Libraries (Deposit of Books) Act (Cap. 109).

National Archives of Fiji

The National Archives of Fiji was established in 1954 as a branch of the former Colonial Secretary's Office under the name Central Archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC). It was a joint depository for the records of the Colonial Government of Fiji and of the WPHC. The Central Archives gained departmental status in 1966. When Fiji gained independence in 1970, all the records of the WPHC and those of its territorial governments were transferred to a new Archives Department and the Central Archives was renamed the National Archives of Fiji.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

The Committee conducted its review of the 2023 - 2024 Department of Information and National Archives Annual Report and identified the following key findings:

- 3.1** The Committee noted that the Department of Information and National Archives lacks adequate funding.
- 3.2** The Committee noted the delay in upgrading their IT Server at National Archives which further delays the digitization of records.
- 3.3** The Committee noted the high turnover of Media Monitoring Officers in the Department of Information.
- 3.4** The Committee noted the urgent need to recruit more human resource personnels to conduct data entry at National Archives of Fiji.
- 3.5** The Committee noted the challenges faced by the Film and TV Unit in procuring media equipment's to assist in providing coverage for all national events.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends the following

- 4.1** The Ministry of Information and National Archives must be allocated with required funding to address their ongoing operational challenges.
- 4.2** The upgrading of the IT Server must be prioritized to develop a database.
- 4.3** The Ministry of Information must review the working conditions of Media Monitoring Officers.
- 4.4** The appointment of Media Liaison Officers for all Government Ministries should be centralized.
- 4.5** The Ministry of Information and National Archives recruitment process must be prioritized.
- 4.6** The procurement process must be reviewed to ensure timely purchase and delivery of the required media equipment.

5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND GENDER ANALYSIS

(Provided by the Department of Information and National Archives)

5.1 The Department of Information and the National Archives pursue the Sustainable Development Goals through the work they are mandated under law to perform. Both departments directly work towards SDGs 3, 4, 5, 8, 11 and 16, and through their mandated work, support and amplify SDGs 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17.

- **SDG 1: No Poverty - End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere.**

The Department of Information promotes this goal by documenting government initiatives and success stories on poverty eradication.

- **SDG 2: Zero Hunger - End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.**

We promote this by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 3: Good Health & Well-Being - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.**

In addition to documenting government initiatives and success stories, we as a Ministry are active supporters of the whole of Government's Wellness programme that includes releasing officers for Wellness Wednesday activities.

- **SDG 4: Quality Education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

Internal and external training programmes are on-going for both departments, and these trainings are inclusive, of very high quality and promote lifelong learnings and skills for men and women.

The National Archives of Fiji engages in outreach initiatives every financial year where records, photographs and historical film footage are taken to remote communities. This effort provides access to educational resources that would otherwise remain unavailable, thereby enhancing education and safeguarding knowledge.

- **SDG 5: Gender Equality - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**

This SDG is pursued at two levels; first within the Ministry itself where gender equality is a key goal in our recruitment policy and second in highlighting government's initiatives and programmes on gender equality.

- **SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 7: Affordable & Clean Energy - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth - Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.**

We pursue this internally in the Ministry by promoting full, productive and decent employment, as well as by documenting government initiatives and programmes on decent work and economic growth.

- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities - Reduce inequality within and among countries.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**

The Department of Information promotes this by documenting government initiatives and success stories, while the National Archives operates a special unit known as the Preservation Unit which is dedicated to the repair, restoration and conservation of Fiji's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

This work is vital for sustainable development and the preservation of national identity. It is the only unit of its kind in the South Pacific where it continues to identify and preserve significant records and provides advice to other government agencies and individuals on the best way to preserve their records.

- **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 13: Climate Action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 14: Life Below Water - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 15: Life on Land - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.**

The Department of Information promotes this SDG by documenting government initiatives and success stories, the National Archives promotes accountability by acquiring and safeguarding public records which facilitated informed decision making and enhances governance efficiency.

The NAF is committed to providing evidenced based information to the public, combating misinformation and fostering national unity.

- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

5.2 Gender Equality

Table below provides staff allocation based on Gender.

a) Department of Information

Year	Male	Female	Total
2023	24	16	40
2024	29	15	44
2025	28	20	48

b) National Archives of Fiji

Year	Male	Female	Total
2023	7	9	16
2024	8	13	21
2025	9	13	22

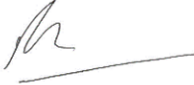
Department of Information and National Archives continues to promote gender equality, with increasing female participation in technical, operational and leadership roles.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Committee concludes that the Government must prioritise the adequate funding of the Ministry of Information and National Archives. This is to ensure efficient and effective service delivery in connecting government with the public and protecting the nations historical memory.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:

Committee Member	E-Signature
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu Chairperson	
Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure Deputy Chairperson	
Hon. Alipate Tuicolo Member	
Hon. Viam Pillay Member	
Hon. Parveen Bala Member	
Hon Aliko Bia Member	
Date: 16 th September, 2026	

ANNEXURE

Published evidence

Written evidence, transcripts, and supporting documents can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

[VERBATIM REPORT]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON **SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

SUBMITTEE : **Department of Information and
National Archives**

VENUE : **Big Committee Room, Suva**

DATE : **Thursday, 7th May, 2026**

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM (EAST/WEST WING), PARLIAMENT PRECINCTS, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS ON THURSDAY 7TH MAY, 2026 AT 9.00 A.M.

Interviewee/Submittee : Department of Information and National Archives

In Attendance:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Ms. Eseta Nadakuitavuki | - | Permanent Secretary |
| 2. Mr. Samisoni Pareti | — | Director of Information |
| 3. Mr. Timoci Baleinaivalu | — | Governor Achieves |
| 4. Ms. Krishma | — | Finance Officer |
-

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable members, members of the public, secretariat, dear viewers, ladies and gentlemen, a very good morning to you all. It is a pleasure to welcome everyone who is here in this room this morning, especially the viewers who are watching this public hearing session.

At the outset, for information purposes, 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 the media, and it is also being aired via the Walesi platform and streamed live on the Parliament website and social media platforms.

For any sensitive information concerning the matter before us this morning that cannot be disclosed in public, this can be provided to the Committee either in private or in writing. However, please be advised that Standing Order 111, in the following circumstances, permits non-disclosure of information, and these are:

1. National security matters;
2. Personnel or human resources matters; and
3. Committee deliberations and development of the Committee's recommendations and report as we move along.

This is a parliamentary meeting, and all information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act 1965. Moving forward, 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 use of mobile phones, and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode while the meeting is in progress. I also wish to remind honourable Members and our guests that all questions asked are to be addressed through the Chairperson. I would now like the Members of the Committee to introduce themselves.

(Introduction of the honourable Members of the Committee)

Today, the Committee will be hearing submissions from the Ministry of Information in relation to the Department of Information and National Archives Annual Reports for the years 2023 and 2024.

Before us, we have representatives from the Ministry, and I would like to thank them for availing themselves to appear before this hearing.

Due to time constraints, you may give a brief response, and Members will intervene with supplementary questions during your presentation. I now invite officials from the Ministry to introduce themselves and then begin the presentation. Thank you, and you may start now.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Committee Members.

(Introduction of officers from Department of Information and National Archives)

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the opportunity to present to the Standing Committee. We submitted our response to your letter, Chair, last Friday, and I have been liaising with Rishi as the Secretariat. Based on the questions asked, we will go straight into the discussion, if you will allow me.

Financial Performance

Question 1. What were the key revenue streams for the Department of Informational and National Archives during the period under review, and how did they evolve over the years?

On financial performance, I will not read out the questions, as I understand the Committee has already reviewed the response. However, I would like to draw your attention to the financial performance, specifically the key revenue streams for the Department of Information and National Archives. The Department of Information is not an income-generating or revenue-collecting unit. The National Archives, however, does collect revenue through the records we maintain at a minimal rate. I can say that it is also at market rate. For example, for photocopying pages, we charge 30 cents per page for members of the public.

If members of the public wish to scan any particular record, we charge 90 cents per page. For the certification of documents, we charge \$1.85. In addition to what we have provided, Mr. Chairman, in the 2022–2023 financial year we collected approximately \$4,500 in total revenue through the National Archives. In 2023–2024, we collected \$6,259. In 2024–2025, we collected \$2,671. For the current financial year, we have collected \$6,603 so far. That is basically the income stream generated through the National Archives. We are also exploring options to review these fees. The last review was conducted in 2005, and the current fees being charged to the public were approved by Cabinet at that time. Another submission was made in 2010 through management before it could reach Cabinet, but management did not approve any fee increase. As a result, we are still using the 2005 fee structure. Moving forward, we have decided to review the fee structure, possibly before the end of the calendar year.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, why do you want to raise the fees and charges?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Mr. Chairman, through you, the reason we are proposing to review and increase the fees and charges is that the current rates were last set as far back as 2005. We wish to review them in line with prevailing market rates. For example, for a birth certificate, if I am correct, we currently charge 30 cents, whereas the Registrar charges \$3, which is significantly higher. We are therefore considering a review to align the fees with market rates.

HON. P.K. BALA.- I have always thought of the National Archives as a service provider, but I understand that there may be different views.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Mr. Chairman, through you, Madam, in Question 1, you also mentioned the issue of stock related to the production and sale of DVDs of archive films and videos. Can you further elaborate on this and explain why this was put to a stop?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- That was put to a stop because of our server. We were not able to upgrade the server; hence, we were not able to duplicate or make copies of the discs. That is still not functional at the moment, and we are working on getting a new one. I can say at this point in time that we have the green light to purchase that. We are working with the Solicitor-General in terms of our agreement with the vendor, as I speak, in the hope that we will be able to get the new server before the end of this financial year, which will enable us to resume this work.

HON. V. PILLAY.- That will generate some income?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Yes, definitely.

Question 2. Can you provide insights into the major expenditures and how they contributed to operational efficiency?

You wanted us to highlight the major expenditures:

- The \$1.5 million covers all the staff members for both departments – Department of Information and the National Archives, and for FNPF overtime, and everything that is associated with the staff pay.
- The \$215,000 was spent on equipment. Under the Department of Information, we have units. One of the units is News, and the other unit is Film and Television, which does all the live streaming for the honourable Prime Minister and His Excellency the President. Therefore, we need to have up-to-date equipment. Hence, the reason we spent \$215,000 on what has been listed there.
- For travel coverage, which is basically for His Excellency the President and the honourable Prime Minister during official visits abroad. Our team travels with them. Those are the only two events that we live-stream. If they go abroad, our team goes with them. That takes care of overseas travel assignments, from airfare to accommodation and associated per diem.
- For public relations, the \$149,000 that was allocated was for the speechwriter, if I am correct, and I stand to be corrected by the Director of Information, and for the research work specifically for Ocean of Peace that was done by our unit.

As you can see, the others are on the *Fiji Focus*, which is the Government newspaper that we publish on a monthly basis and in vernacular languages — *Noda Viti* and *Fiji Darpan*.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Madam Permanent Secretary, was this public relations service internal or external?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- That was external. For photo and video editing software, we have to subscribe to ensure that we obtain the appropriate software for photo and video editing. The second-last item is coverage of local events, for which we spent \$110,000. The final item is expenses related to the National Archives for the maintenance of records.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- I would like to get back to the insight into your major expenditure. This is for the National Archives. What are the plans ahead, because currently, we see there is only one item noted for the period that was reported? Are there any other major expenditures which you are planning, because that will be inbuilt in your budget as we move along? What are your focus points?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- We are transiting from a department to a full-fledged Ministry. The Department of Information used to be under the Prime Minister's Office, and National Archives was, I believe, under the Ministry of Education and, at one point in time, under the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs. It is now under our Ministry. The plan to go back, we have really not done much capital works for that department.

However, we are planning to look at it, and that is inbuilt in the budget for the next financial year for capital works. The building that has been sitting there, not used, no one is there, the one before the National Archives.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- That is your own building?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUA.- Yes, the National Archives. So we are looking at doing some capital work, and we have already met with the Public Works Department (PWD). They have provided us with a scope of work, and the plan is to build a few stories there to accommodate the staff. We want to have an exhibition area and also facilities for the preservation of our national records.

Policy and Regulatory Changes

Question 3. What were some of the major changes in policy that were implemented during the review period and how did they impact on the service delivery?

Going on to Question number three, the major changes in policy. Just because we were transitioning to a full-fledged Ministry, there were really no major policy changes made in the year under review, which is 2023 to 2024. However, we are looking at developing our policies now, since we have the Ministry and also other related Acts or legislation that mandate us as a Ministry. However, for that period, there were no major policy changes.

Infrastructure Development

Question 4. What is the update on the review of Information Act 2018, Public Records Act (Cap 108) and Libraries (Deposit of Books) Act?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Committee members. If you will allow me, I will go straight to Question number four, which is the update on the review of the Information Act. In addition to what we have supplied, we have received an email from the Director of the Fiji Law Reform Commission, and they have confirmed that the Information Act 2018 is now before the relevant Standing Committee. If I am correct, it has gone through the first reading in Parliament, and it is now with the relevant Standing Committee on Law, Justice, and Human Rights. The other Act was enacted in 2011, if I am correct. That is what we have set out there, and that is the Public Records Act, which mandates the National Archives in the work that they do.

Question 5. What were the key infrastructure projects / capital works undertaken in 2023-2024?

If you will allow me, Mr. Chairman, I will move on to Question number five, the key infrastructure projects. There were really no capital works undertaken in the year under review, 2023 to 2024. The major project included was the upgrading of the server, which I alluded to earlier. We have received the green light from the Steering Committee, and the current agreement is with the Solicitor-General. It will then go to the Ministry of Finance. We had a budget allocated, but because of the time it has taken, when we went back to the vendor, there was a 10 per cent increase from the initial quote. However, the good thing is it is still within the budget that we allocated.

HON. A. BIA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, Madam Permanent Secretary, just to the Government Archivist, I saw number four. In question number four, it states the establishment of a National Archives of Fiji Advisory Council. The Cabinet paper is in process, but what difference would it make in regard to the operations of the National Archives of Fiji?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUA.- I will allow the Government archivist to respond to that, please.

MR. T. BAINIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, I believe the objective of setting up this Advisory Council is to advise the Minister, through the Permanent Secretary, on any projects that the

Department would like to proceed with. The Advisory Council is intended to provide appropriate advice. Once a submission is proposed by the Department, they will conduct their analysis before advising the Minister on the project that needs to be taken forward.

For your information also, in the Public Records Act, there is a provision for the Department to provide advice to the Minister on certain records that can be classified as open when they are transferred to the Archives. This Advisory Council would therefore look into those submissions before providing further advice to the Minister that certain records can be made open to the public. In the current environment we are in, they will be providing that sort of advice to the Minister before the Minister provides the final instruction. That is the provision in the Act.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, supplementary question. Since this Department has gone under a few Ministries, maybe that is one of the reasons, but which potential stakeholders will form part of this Council?

MR. T. BALEINAIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, the current status of the National Archives requires a variety of knowledge and skills from different areas to provide appropriate guidance. Under the NDP, the National Archives is to modernise its services. We are therefore looking at the total digitisation of all records in the Archives so that they can be accessed online. This would require advice from IT professionals who can provide the appropriate guidance on the infrastructure that needs to be in place. We are also looking at legal and educational expertise. These are the professional areas that will need to be included in the Advisory Council.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Mr. Chairman, for the formation of this Advisory Council, you would also need a budgetary allocation. What is the amount you are looking at for the formation of this Council?

MR. T. BALEINAIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, I think what we have included in the submission includes sitting allowances and other allowances to enable the Committee to perform the duties of the Advisory Council. So there would be sitting allowances and probably travel allowances if members are based outside Suva, from the meeting locations. We are looking at around \$2,000 to \$5,000. Usually, the sitting allowance provided by Finance is around \$200 per sitting.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- If I may just add on, this is similar to how other Advisory Councils are set up, for example, the National Council for Older Persons and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. It is a very similar setup. We are proposing a \$200 sitting allowance per member, and we have included that in our financial budget for the next financial year.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much, Madam Permanent Secretary. Going back to Question No. 5 with regards to infrastructure projects and capital works undertaken during this review period, when you talk about the National Archives, I am concerned about the delay in the work of the ICT Steering Committee. Does it really affect your operations in order to get this mechanism done?

For us, based on this report, we have already identified our key findings. We have gone through the report, and from those key findings, when we table it to Parliament, it will form part of our recommendations. So, feel free to raise this with us, or if need be, go back and obtain the proper information through our Secretariat so that we can progress this through Parliament. Hopefully, you understand what I am saying. It is either way—if you have the correct information, you can forward it to us, or if you need to go back and liaise with the Secretariat, the door is open.

For us, before we finalise this report and table it to Parliament, this is one of the avenues that the Committee, after deliberation and debate, is working on. We are only given 60 days for the Ministry to implement these recommendations. I was reflecting on the delays caused by the work of the ICT Steering Committee.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Thank you for asking the question. I would like to say here that the process we currently go through is very cumbersome, and we would like to streamline it.

For your information, Chair and Committee Members, if we had not received approval to proceed with the purchase of our IT server upgrade this year, it would have been the third year that this budget has been delayed because of the ICT Steering Committee. We would appreciate your assistance, and I am sure it is not only our Ministry facing this challenge. Other ministries are also experiencing this blockage. Because of the delays, when we returned to the vendor, there was a 10 per cent increase. This delay has lasted for three years. We were concerned that if we did not use the allocated funds this financial year, we would have had to request a budget adjustment, as the matter was beyond our control. The proposal has been with the Steering Committee. Since January, we have been meeting with ICT and the relevant authorities to push this through. We would like to request that the process be reviewed to remove these stumbling blocks. It is cumbersome and causes unnecessary delays.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, a supplementary question. What amount has been allocated for this?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- We allocated approximately \$260,000 Sir. Yes, it is within that range.

Question 6. How did the Department ensure sustainability in its infrastructure / development plans?

If I may, I will move on to Question number six. As mentioned, the server upgrade will ensure the sustainability of infrastructure for the National Archives. In terms of buildings, there has been no renovation, but we are including this in the next financial year to begin scoping, demolition, and planning to revive the NFA buildings that have been idle for the last few years.

Question 7. Were there any delays or budget overruns on major projects and what measures were taken to mitigate them?

If there are no questions, allow me to proceed to Question number seven. Regarding delays and budget overruns, this has already been addressed. Continuing delays in the capital project for the server resulted in redeployment of funds by the Ministry of Finance. Fortunately, we were able to proceed this financial year, and we are pushing to complete it before the end of the financial year.

Question 8. During the period 2023-2024, 2481 Media Monitoring reports were produced. What were some of the challenges faced by the department in obtaining such reports?

If there are no further questions, allow me to move to Question number eight on media monitoring reports. In 2023–2024, we faced challenges with print media monitoring. At that time, *Fiji Sun* and *The Fiji Times* were not online, so the team had to read physical newspapers and type out the reports. After 2024, both print media outlets went online, which made monitoring easier. We also faced challenges with staffing. The Ministry lost some dedicated media monitoring officers, as they took on roles in other Ministries, joined mainstream media, or moved into the private sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Madam Permanent Secretary, when you mention skilled staff being taken by other Departments, what avenues are available to retain them and train new staff? I believe your Ministry plays a critical role, and there should be benchmarks on market rates to assist with retention. This is not a question, but rather a suggestion to guide future planning. We cannot stop people from moving from one Department to another. The only solution is to plan ahead with a succession plan.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- I will respond to that. We have re-looked at their job descriptions, especially from the entry level, such as Media Assistance. We had done that since I came into the role and had sent it through to the Ministry of Civil Service for those positions to be adjusted. If I may, unfortunately, they came back to say that they are correctly compensated. So that is the challenge. I have asked the team not to be disheartened by what we have received. We will re-look at the job descriptions and resubmit for those positions to be adjusted. Hopefully, it will increase, and we can retain staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- On that note, Madam Permanent Secretary, you will be acting as a training ground for others to gain the necessary experience to run the operations.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Yes. We will take note of that.

Question 9. Were there any training provided for Media Liaison Officers across government ministries and departments?

Yes. In collaboration with the United Kingdom Government Communication Service International (GCSI), we have conducted training on countering misinformation and disinformation. They will be returning in June to conduct a deep dive on the recently launched SAUTU Framework on countering disinformation and misinformation. I would also like to highlight that this is the first year the Government has hosted a Government Communications Conference for all media liaison officers in the various Ministries in March, and we are working on some outcomes to be tabled in Cabinet. There are a few things we are looking at in that space.

In addition to the UK GCSI, we also had support from the Australian Government through the Australian Associated Press (AAP). As I speak, they are in the country and will be conducting a fact-checking workshop with all media liaison officers later today at FLIPS. These are the trainings we are providing for our team and we are also reviving the media liaison officers' forum. When I joined the Ministry, I had already convened a meeting with them. I would also like to ask other Ministries—some Ministries do not even have media liaison officers. I have been liaising with my colleagues at peer level to encourage them to include this in their budget to appoint a media liaison officer for their Ministry and work with our Ministry. That is the training we currently have. We continue to look out for opportunities for training, and we do send our staff to ensure they are equipped, especially in AI and social media platforms.

Question 10. Provide update on the Archives educational program.

The National Archives actively promotes the visibility of the work that it does. Even when I joined the Ministry, I had a meeting with the team and encouraged them to create awareness of their existence. I believe that the National Archives hold important information and the history of what we are today. We need to spend more time on this. I am working closely with the Government Archivist and the team to create greater awareness of who they are, why we exist, and to showcase the records that we have. That is what we are providing for them in terms of education programmes. We do support stakeholders when they invite us to be part of their programmes; we do attend and create awareness. The recent one was the TISI Sangam. The team went to the Western Division to create awareness.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, I can see all those entities and the celebrations. What about Girmit Day this year? I believe there will be no national celebrations, so will it be organised through the National Archives or the Fiji Museum?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- I will ask the Government Archivist to respond to that please.

MR. T. BALENAIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, this year it will be organised by Multi-Ethnic Affairs. They have proposed a virtual programme, but the launch will be held at the Fiji Museum, where the National Archives and other Departments will be exhibiting and providing archival services during the launch. However, we will be supporting Multi-Ethnic Affairs through the development of the virtual programme that they are staging.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUA.- Thank you, and if you drop us an email and we respond, you will see our email signature where we have already highlighted the Girmitiya Day, so that is already included in our email.

Question 11. When will National Archives of Fiji complete its digitisation of all its records?

Mr. Chairman, through you, the National Archives on digitisation. As you can see, we have started the digitisation process of more than 60,000 immigration passes, which is now completed. This year, however, we still have a large volume of records that we need to digitise, and we have highlighted this in our response. If there are any other supplementary questions, we would be happy to take them.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Mr. Chairman, through you, Madam, you have mentioned here that it will take about 10 years to complete unless you get support from Government and donor agencies. What level of support do you require to complete this process?

MR. T. BAINIVALU.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you. To respond to that, I will take you back to one of the projects that we did in 2003 through the support of the Japanese Government, where they came and attempted to develop a database. That did not eventuate following what happened over the years. For the project to proceed, I think we will need more support in human resources, because data entry is the main work that needs to be undertaken, as well as the establishment of the actual database. Currently, there is no database. However, there was a database that was developed together with the server that is currently inaccessible. Once that server is upgraded and restored, it could form the basis for other records to be digitised and stored in that database on the server.

For your information, the current records of the Colonial Service Office are about 324,144 files. This is an estimated number of pages, which is around 3 million pages. Digitising and scanning would take approximately 10 years with the current staffing levels. However, if we structure it as a dedicated project, it would reduce the timeframe to around five years to complete the entire project.

HON. A. BIA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, has a budget proposal been prepared in regard to the work that is needed?

MR. T. BAINIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, currently we are still working on the infrastructure first. At the same time, we are starting to digitise certain series of records that can be digitised at the moment. We have not yet undertaken an evaluation of all records. The list of series provided here is not exhaustive of the records held. We have around six kilometres of records, and these are the ones already at the Archives. There are also a number of records still held within other Government agencies that need to be transferred. However, the focus is on the infrastructure first before we can progress a full project on the digitisation of all records.

HON. V. PILLAY.- That means you are not submitting any budget proposal in relation to what you have just said, that you will require human resources to complete all this. I mean, in the coming budgetary allocations, you have not submitted this. This is very important, what you have shown to us, and you should be adequately resourced. The required funding and human resources should be provided

to the National Archives of Fiji (NAF) so that you are able to complete this. You need to request for the budgetary allocation also.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Yes, if I may, we have identified newly created positions, and we have submitted them to the Ministry of Civil Service for the Job Evaluation Leadership Team (JELT). However, we are holding that as we have been advised of the suspension of JELT. We have identified newly created positions to strengthen our human resources. That is one part of it, and the other is the server upgrade.

HON. A. BIA.- Mr. Chairman, through what the Honourable Pillay has stated and the Government Archivist and Madam Permanent Secretary, I believe this should be one of our major key findings and major key recommendations to assist the National Archives as well as the Ministry. We are creating awareness first within Government that this is coming, so that they are ready in terms of funding and allocating resources when needed.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- We are now noting that with Secretariat.

Question 12. Were there any specialised training to empower the staff at the National Archives?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, we will move on to Question number 12, which is on specialised training to empower the staff at the National Archives. As stated in the response, specialised training is not readily available here in Fiji, but most of our officers acquire the skills upon joining the Department. Whenever there is an opportunity to send them abroad, we do so. There is also some assistance from our development partners. For example, KOICA provided short training on digitisation, and they took the team to South Korea for a fortnight of training. We agree that additional capacity building is needed, and we are looking out for any short courses or online training that the team can undertake to upskill. That is in terms of training.

SDG's

Question 13. How well has the Department of Information and National Archives achieved its Sustainable Development Goals?

Moving on to Question number 13, in terms of the Department of Information and Sustainable Development Goals, there is no specific goal on access to information, so it is cross-cutting. Information can cover all areas, and we have mentioned in our response that it can be used as a tool to disseminate the SDG goals to the community and vice versa. So that is where we stand.

HON. V. PILLAY.- It is appearing in your report, the information you have provided on the SDGs?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- We have been involved through the Ministry of Strategic Planning on the upcoming Voluntary National Review. We have been consulted, and we have provided our feedback. I have also received correspondence indicating that we are responding to be part of the working group. Under the Voluntary National Review that is due next year, there are three technical working groups. However, when I reviewed it, the Ministry of Information is not included. Because we are transitioning from a Department to a full-fledged Ministry, our role, and my role, is to demonstrate to other Ministries that we are now a full-fledged Ministry. We can be used as a vehicle for information to members of the public and vice versa. We are liaising with them, Sir. I hope I have answered your question.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Yes. What I am trying to say is that these are two very important components, gender equality and SDGs, as far as scrutiny is concerned. We recently had a meeting with the IPU. So

the suggestion is that if the information you are providing, when we write to you to give written information on SDGs, it should also appear in the annual report you prepare in the future.

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- Point taken Sir.

Question 14. Gender equality

For Question number 14, if we can move on to the question on gender equality, there you can see the composition of gender for both Departments. I can say that we are under-resourced, and we are working on creating new positions to ensure that we have the right number. We will continue to work on that. Just to let you know, there have been 16 resignations over the last three years from the Ministry. We are working on recruiting and filling those vacant positions.

Performance

Question 15. Please highlight the Department of Information and National Archives 5-year Strategic Plans.

If there are no questions about that, we move to Question number 15. To highlight the Department of Information and National Archives in relation to the strategic plan, I mentioned that we cannot comment on the strategic plan for the reporting year, because at that time both Departments were under the Office of the Prime Minister. However, I have included the response based on the current strategic plan, aligning our priority areas with the National Development Plan.

Question 16. Please provide the brief administrative history of the Department of Information and National Archives of Fiji.

Moving on to the last question, which is a brief overview of who we are. As you know, the Ministry became a Ministry in August 2025, and we are still transitioning. With the Permanent Secretary joining in January, we are working together to identify gaps in policies and address them. We are already liaising with development partners to assist us in reviewing our strategic plan. We currently have a strategic plan covering 2025 to 2029, prepared last year, but we are also considering engaging an expert to review and further align it with the National Development Plan, extending it to 2030. Thank you. We stand ready if there are any supplementary questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much, Madam Permanent Secretary and the team. I believe we have exhausted our supplementary questions during the question period. Honourable Members, please feel free.

HON. A. TUICOLO.- Through you, Mr. Chairman, we note that one of the challenges faced by the Department of Information is the preservation of national records. How has the Ministry improved the preservation of physical documents from deterioration?

MS. E. NADAKUITAVUKI.- I will ask the Government Archivist to please respond.

MR. T. BAINIVALU.- Mr. Chairman, through you, regarding physical deterioration, the National Archives is a member of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives. This organisation provides advice and support to Pacific member countries on issues related to record preservation. A few years ago, we were fortunate to have a consultant provide training on preserving certain records at the National Archives. From that one-week workshop, we developed a disaster plan guideline, which is currently in place to assist the conservation team and the entire National Archives in preserving records. At the same time, we have identified a priority list of records requiring immediate

attention. The conservation unit within the National Archives focuses on this priority list. I hope I have answered that.

HON. A. TUICOLO.- Mr. Chairman, one last question. With the National Archives primarily located in Suva, what assistance do you provide to residents in the Northern and Western Divisions who wish to access records from the Archives?

MR. S. PARETI.- We also provide online services through email. If they are in the other divisions, they can email us, and we will advise them on the process that will be undertaken for those records to be sent to them. There is another team that does digitisation, and these records are then emailed to them. Those are the processes through which we are able to provide these services to people in the divisions.

HON. A. BIA.- To the Director of Information, this is in regard to the coverage of national events. When we talk about media equipment in terms of video cameras, cables, and equipment used for coverage for national television, do you see a challenge in terms of procurement to improve the facilitation of this coverage? Do you see this as a challenge, or do you see the capacity to undertake coverage? Will you continue within the Film and Television Unit, or will you still pursue partnerships with mainstream media in terms of coverage? As a Committee, one of the recommendations we can make is to empower your Film and Television Unit in terms of the procurement of such media equipment to assist them, because their work, I believe, is very important. Whatever they capture in terms of national events they cover is a treasure for the country moving forward and for future generations of Fiji to watch in later years to come.

MR. S. PARETI.- Thank you very much, Honourable Bia, for the question. With the permission of the Madam Permanent Secretary, yes, you have touched on a very critical point in the work of our Film and Television Unit in terms of capacity and equipment. I think the recent national programme on the State funeral of the late former President, Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, exposed what we need to do at the Ministry of Information. Our Film and Television Unit led the coverage of that live streaming in collaboration with the FBC. Alone, we cannot do it because of the scale of the work. For five days, we had to go on air on television, covering the procession from the hospital to State House and then on to Bau for the burial.

We certainly need to procure more equipment, particularly the latest technology in terms of camera work. As I speak, we have already gone through the procurement and tender process for the upgrade of our equipment. It is about \$121,000 worth of equipment. We have identified a vendor and are working with them in terms of procurement and subsequent use by our Film and Television Unit. Of course, a component of that, once we have the equipment, is training. We do have very experienced camera officers in the Ministry, which we are thankful for. The other challenge that the Madam Permanent Secretary and the Corporate Unit are trying to assist us with is to ensure that we do not lose these very experienced people once all this expensive equipment comes on board to support our work.

HON. P.K. BALA.- You have just spoken about the experienced photographers and all the equipment that you have. It is unfortunate there is a viral video in respect of the late former President's funeral, showing the coffin being carried, and your photographer was basically focusing on the potholes. I mean, it is a national event, and that is already documented. So when you have trainings for your photographers, when they video, if they cannot do all those things. It is viral, and I hope you have seen it. Please.

MR. S. PARETI.- Mr. Chairman, through you, we have not seen it, so if we could have a copy of that footage, certainly that is something we will address.

HON. P.K. BALA.- Mr. Chairman, through you, this is the last one. The Ministry for Information, is it only for Government, or can it also be for the Opposition in covering events?

MR. S. PARETI.- For the Ministry of Information, we, as our Annual Report also states, it is coverage of Government events and activities.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Members, do you have any other supplementary questions before we wrap up today? Just back to the Director, on Honourable Bia's question, you already mentioned that you have work in that area and need to get the mechanism in place. Do you have the budget for that?

MR. S. PARETI.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have been allocated the budgets to upgrade our film and TV unit equipment.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Any other last questions, Honourable Tuicolo? It appears that you are all good. Thank you very much, Honourable Members, and thank you very much to the Ministry of Information, especially Madam Permanent Secretary, her team, and the National Archives. Thank you very much for your time. At this juncture, I sincerely thank you all for availing yourselves for this public hearing session. We thank you for your time and hope that you will avail yourselves for any further queries that the Committee may have on today's submission.

On that note, I believe from the Committee's point of view, we have gained a holistic understanding of what the report is about. However, for reasons of time, we always ask questions based on the current situation. You may come across some variations in terms of the reporting period. It is about two years back, but most of the questions we have asked relate to the current situation we are facing. We hope we have made that demarcation clear. What we are trying to say is that we are seeking to improve the system in place within the Ministry. On that note, I declare this meeting closed.

Committee meeting adjourned at 10.28 am.

Department of Information and National Archives – 2023-2024 Annual Report

Standing Committee on Social Affairs

Question to Department of Information and National Archives Annual Report for the year 2023-2024.

Financial Performance

1. What were the key revenue streams for the Department of Informational and National Archives during the period under review, and how did they evolve over the years?

Only the National Archives of Fiji offers a revenue stream in the form of printing, scanning or photocopying services for users of its Sir Alport Barker Library. The inoperability of the National Archive server in 2017 put a stop to the production and sale of DVD of archival films and videos.

Service fees for the printing, scanning or photocopying at the Archives have remained unchanged for 10 years.

2. Can you provide insights into the major expenditures and how they contributed to operational efficiency?

Department of Information:

- Established & Unestablished staff cost - \$1,512,459. This equates to 52% of the total expenditures for Salaries, Wages, Overtime, associated FNPF and other applicable allowances.
- Purchase of work tools & equipment for News and Audio-Visual officers - \$215,676. These included Camera (still), Video/TV Camera, MacBook computers, digital recorders, 10TB Hard drives, podcast kit, batteries.
- Travel for coverage of HE President & Hon. PM official visits abroad - \$185,879.
- Public Relations services for the Office of the Prime Minister - \$149,088
- Publishing of Government newspapers (Fiji Focus, Noda Viti, Fiji Darpan), National event messages, advertisements & radio programmes - \$132,060
- Photo and video editing software subscription - \$121,704
- Coverage of local events and tours - \$ 110,409

National Archives of Fiji:

- Expenses related to preservation and maintenance of records - \$121,878

Policy and Regulatory Changes

3. What were some of the major changes in policy that were implemented during the review period and how did they impact on the service delivery?

Department of Information:

- There were no major policy changes in the year under review. The Department has been handling the public relations and social media work in-house after the outsourcing of these services were terminated in early 2023.
- The impact of this decision was felt during the year under review, exposing the urgent need to conduct in-house training in the areas of Public Relations and Social Media Content Generation and Management to upskills and capacity build our officers.

National Archives of Fiji

There was no major policy change in the year under review.

Infrastructure Development

4. What is the update on the review of Information Act 2018, Public Records Act (Cap 108) and Libraries (Deposit of Books) Act?

National Archives of Fiji

The most recent review of the Public Records Act (Cap 108) and the Libraries Deposit of Books Act was in 2011, which saw the inclusion of the provision for the establishment of the National Archives of Fiji's Advisory Council. NAF is actively working towards forming this Council with a Cabinet Paper currently in its reviewing process. A primary responsibility of the Advisory Council will be supporting the Minister and NAF in legislative updates and policy development efforts.

- The Information Act 2018 has been undergoing review with the Fiji Law Reform Commission, and we have written seeking an update. We will provide an update as soon as we receive a response.

5. What were the key infrastructure projects / capital works undertaken in 2023-2024?

National Archives of Fiji

Funds were allocated for the upgrading of the server at the National Archives. However, this work did not commence due to delays in the work of the ITC Steering Committee.

6. How did the Department ensure sustainability in its infrastructure / development plans?

National Archives of Fiji

The server upgrade will ensure the sustainability of infrastructure in NAF. In terms of the NAF Buildings, there has been no renovation or any structural inspection conducted in the last two decades. In this regard, written submissions have been made to the Public Works Department.

7. Were there any delays or budget overruns on major projects and what measures were taken to mitigate them?

National Archives of Fiji

Continuing delays in the capital project of the server upgrade resulted in the redeployment of funds by the Ministry of Finance.

8. During the period 2023-2024, 2481 Media Monitoring reports were produced. What were some of the challenges faced by the department in obtaining such reports?

Challenges included the need to manually type and insert online editions into the report. Hard copies of newspapers are also used when internet connectivity is slow or when e-copies are delayed. Additionally, hard copies are referenced

for verification purposes when required.

During the reporting period, the Ministry lost its dedicated media monitoring officer for she resigned to take on a more senior role at another ministry.

9. Were there any training provided for Media Liaison Officers across government ministries and departments?

Yes, in collaboration with the UK Gov GCS, training was done on Countering Misinformation & Disinformation (RESIST framework), organizing effective messaging campaigns (OASIS template), coordinating public information and messaging (GRID) and Social Media Content Generation/Management in the months of June/July 2023.

Training was supported by the revival of the Media Liaison Officers Forum in March 2024, which met monthly.

10. Provide update on the Archives educational program.

The NAF actively promotes the visibility of the National Archives and its connection to the people of Fiji through a comprehensive educational programme. This initiative enables the public to understand the NAF's role, witness firsthand the efforts involved in preserving significant records, and gain insights into Fiji's history through the records created over time. These records serve as living testimonies to the growth and development of the Fiji Government. Annually, the NAF engages in various exhibitions, outreach activities and organised tours for schools, excursion groups and government officials participating in records management training.

During outreach programmes, key records related to Fiji's government evolution – such as the Deed of Cession, Independence Order, Indian Indentured Labour records, Land Sales records and old photographs are showcased.

The tours provided participants with an understanding of the preservation processes and administrative history of Fiji. Participants are given informational brochures about significant records housed at the Archives, along with tokens such as bags and key tags.

Furthermore, the NAF organises important exhibitions throughout the year, including at the Fiji Day celebrations, Girmitt Day, Ratu Sukuna Day, International Archives Day, 160th Anniversary of the Melanesian community, Fiji Methodist church 60th Independence Anniversary and Suva's Hibiscus Festival. The NAF

has also been invited to showcase Archival materials at the Fiji Day celebrations in Christchurch, New Zealand and shares exhibition materials with the Fijian Diaspora community in Melbourne, Australia.

11. When will National Archives of Fiji complete its digitization of all its records?

The National Archives of Fiji begun digitization of the more than 60,000 immigration passes of Indian Indentured laborers in 2024. This project was completed last year and now we will work on the digitization of the Colonial Secretary Office's Minute Papers from 1875 – 1930. The series consists of 324,440 files which contain more than 3,244,400 pages.

So, there is a large quantity of records that needed to be scanned and with the current workload, it will take about ten years to complete unless the NAF seeks alternative methods and support from the Government and donor agencies to complete the whole digitization of the Archives.

Currently records that are preserved at the National Archives are records created from 1835 until to date. These are important records of the nation that are urgently required to be digitized to allow for easy access in the future as well as to preserve original records. The six kilometers of archival records are kept within three different repositories.

The NAF has developed a list of vital records that requires urgent attention. The vital records list includes:

1. Colonial Secretary's Office Records
 - a. CSOMP
 - b. Indexes Inwards/Outwards/Subjects/Nominal
2. Secretariat files (F Series)
3. Dispatches to and from Secretary of State
 - a. Outwards and Inwards letters
 - b. telegrams
4. Native Affairs file (SNA)
 - c. Indexes
 - d. Correspondences
5. Provincial Council Meetings and Great Council of Chiefs minutes and resolutions
6. N Series
 - e. Vosabalavu
 - f. Phillips
7. Land Claims Commission
 - g. LCCR

- h. Crown Grant
- 8. Cakobau Government
- 9. HBM Consul
- 10. Methodist Missionary Society of Australasia (MMSA)
- 11. Criminal Jurisdiction records (Judicial)
- 12. CSO Miscellaneous papers
- 13. Rotuma District Office Records
 - i. Rotuma Land Cases
- 14. Hold – Over minute papers
- 15. Indian Indentured Laborer records.

12. Were there any specialized training to empower the staffs at National Archives?

Specialised trainings for Archivists are not available locally. Most of our officers acquire skills through on-the-job learning upon joining the department. However, training in special fields can be pursued if sponsored international training is made available.

During the year of review, the only such opportunity was short training on Digitization of Records which was sponsored by KOICA. This was held in South Korea for a fortnight and two of our officers participated. Additionally, capacity building within the NAF is an ongoing process through weekly awareness sessions held every Wednesday morning. These sessions cover various processes within the Archives and include provisions from relevant legislation such as the Public Records Act, Libraries Deposit of Books Act and Records Management policy.

SDG's

13. How well has the Department of Information and National Archives achieved its Sustainable Development Goals? (Please specify each goal).

The two departments of the Ministry of Information and the National Archives of Fiji pursue the Sustainable Development Goals through the work they are mandated under law to perform.

Both departments directly work towards SDGs 3, 4, 5, 8, 11 and 16, and through their mandated work, support and amplify SDGs 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17.

- **SDG 1: No Poverty - End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere.**

The Department of Information promotes this goal by documenting government initiatives and success stories on poverty eradication.

- **SDG 2: Zero Hunger - End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.**

We promote this by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 3: Good Health & Well-Being - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.**

In addition to documenting government initiatives and success stories, we as a Ministry are active supporters of the whole of Government's Wellness programme that includes releasing officers for Wellness Wednesday activities.

- **SDG 4: Quality Education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

Internal and external training programmes are on-going for both departments, and these trainings are inclusive, of very high quality and promote lifelong learnings and skills for men and women.

The National Archives of Fiji engages in outreach initiatives every financial year where records, photographs and historical film footage are taken to remote communities. This effort provides access to educational resources that would otherwise remain unavailable, thereby enhancing education and safeguarding knowledge.

- **SDG 5: Gender Equality - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**

This SDG is pursued at two levels; first within the Ministry itself where gender equality is a key goal in our recruitment policy, and second in highlighting government's initiatives and programmes on gender equality.

- **SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 7: Affordable & Clean Energy - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.**

We pursue this internally in the Ministry by promoting full, productive and decent employment, as well as by documenting government initiatives and programmes on decent work and economic growth.

- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities - Reduce inequality within and among countries.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**

The Department of Information promotes this by documenting government initiatives and success stories, while the National Archives operates a special unit known as the Preservation Unit which is dedicated to the repair, restoration and conservation of Fiji's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This work is vital for sustainable development and the preservation of national identity. It is the only unit of its kind in the South Pacific where it continues to identify and preserve significant records and provides advice to other government agencies and individuals on the best way to preserve their records.

- **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 13: Climate Action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 14: Life Below Water - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 15: Life on Land - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

- **SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.**

The Department of Information promotes this SDG by documenting government initiatives and success stories, the National Archives promotes accountability by acquiring and safeguarding public records which facilitated informed decision making and enhances governance efficiency.

The NAF is committed to providing evidenced based information to the public, combating misinformation and fostering national unity.

- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.**

This is promoted by documenting government initiatives and success stories.

14.0 Gender equality

Please provide the number of staff as per the table below for:

a) Department of Information

Year	Male	Female	Total
2023	24	16	40
2024	29	15	44
2025	28	20	48

National Archives of Fiji

Year	Male	Female	Total
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2023	7	9	16
2024	8	13	21
2025	9	13	22

Performance

15. Please highlight the Department of Information and National Archives 5-year Strategic Plans.

We cannot comment on the strategic plan for the reporting year 2023 – 2024 as the department of Information and National Archives were under the Office of the Prime Minister.

The response is based on the Ministry's Strategic Plan for 2025 – 2029 on priority areas adopted from the NDP:

- Support leadership and nation building
- Promoting access to development and services
- Improve responses to diverse information needs
- Strengthen partnership and stakeholder relationships
- Encourage information accessibility through ICT development
- Improve preservation and availability of records
- Adherence to standards, ethics and principles of accountability
- Policy and programme development management
- Knowledge based society and social cohesion

16. Please provide the brief administrative history of the Department of Information and National Archives of Fiji.

Department of Information

The Ministry of Information comprises the Department of Information and the National Archives of Fiji.

While the Department of Information is the Government's primary information agency, the National Archives of Fiji's is the official custodian of government documents and recordkeeping under the Public Records Act (Cap. 108) and Libraries (Deposit of Books) Act (Cap. 109).

The Department of Information evolved from the Public Relations Office of the Colonial Government, and successive governments after independence in 1970 have either kept it as Department headed by the Director of Information under the Office of the Prime Minister or upgraded it to a full government ministry with a dedicated minister and permanent secretary for Information.

National Archives of Fiji

The National Archives of Fiji was established in 1954 as a branch of the former Colonial Secretary's Office under the name Central Archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission. It was a joint depository for the records of the Colonial Government of Fiji and of the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC). The Central Archives gained departmental status in 1966. When Fiji gained independence in 1970, all the records of the WPHC and those of its territorial governments were transferred to a new Archives Department, and the Central Archives was renamed the National Archives of Fiji.

The End