The Public Administration Sector is pleased to present the second edition of the Public Administration Sector Plan Newsletter. It will highlight completed, ongoing, and planned activities under the Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018. The PASP aims to achieve a professional and competent public administration providing quality service delivery to its clients, the people of Samoa. It seeks to strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the public administration in its operations.

The Unit is always delighted to discuss and advise on issues relating to the quality of service delivery, human resource management, planning and development. Get in touch to learn more! If you have suggestions on how we can improve the next edition, connect with us!

We look forward to your positive contributions towards the development of our Sector for the remaining half of the year.

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The Government of Samoa hosted the 4th Commonwealth Pacific Forum for Central Agencies from 12 – 14 May 2015. The meeting, held at Orator Hotel, was organized by the Samoa Central Agencies Committee in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, and was attended by more than 10 international delegates, as well as representatives from the Samoan Government. The Forum provided a platform for discussion of public administration issues and enabled Central Agencies from across the Commonwealth Pacific to work collaboratively in addressing the individual and collective challenges facing its members.

For Samoa, central agencies refer to the Public Service Commission, the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Ministry of Finance; although the actual composition varies across the Commonwealth. The central agencies are expected to achieve and strengthen whole of government coordination, maintain a clear focus on the government’s aspirations and demonstrate strong leadership across the public sector.

The key areas of focus were on policy development, management, partnerships to address existing challenges and gaps in the policy process, and aligning the forward Plan with the Plan for Pacific Regionalism. The Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Lutesoliai Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi, delivered the keynote address. The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of central agencies leading by example in terms of policy development, coordination, implementation and monitoring. He emphasized the need for central agencies to collaborate and to provide their whole of government policy advice to the Government of the day, informing their decisions across all sectors of their respective economies.

Lead papers were presented by distinguished speakers from across the Commonwealth Pacific countries, which included Mr. Joji Kotobalavu, former Secretary to Cabinet, Government of Fiji; Professor Graham Hassall, Victoria University of Wellington; Professor Lau Dr Asofou So’o, National University of Samoa; Ms Hinauri Petana, former CEO and Finance Secretary, Government of Samoa; and Faamausili Dr Matagialofi Lua’iuhi, former Secretary of the Public Service Commission, Samoa.

Some of the challenges identified during the meeting included the need to enhance communication between the central agencies, the need to strengthen consultation and engagement processes, as well as the need for rigorous capacity building programs on policy development processes and complying with cabinet procedures.

Delegates reaffirmed their commitment at the end of the Conference to addressing the identified hurdles to strengthen public policy in the Commonwealth.

**Government commences with Phase 2 of Public Service Functional Review**

In the first edition of the PASP newsletter, it was highlighted that the Government had commenced with Phase 1 of the Functional analysis and review (FA) of organizational
structures for the Samoa Public Service. The first stage, which focused on the identification, grouping and aligning of functions, is now complete. The Public Service Commission, in collaboration with all Government Agencies, has commenced with Phase 2, which will confirm and finalize all functions within Ministries/offices and Sectors.

The FA team carried out extensive consultations with external stakeholders (Non-Government Organizations) and Government agencies. Some of the NGOs included Samoa Victim Support Group, SASNOC, Faataua le Ola, Women in Business Development Inc., SUNGO, Samoa Civil Society Support Programme, METI, SENESE and Nuanua ole Alofa. The opportunity was given to these organizations to provide feedback on the performance of core functions pertaining to all Government agencies. They were asked to highlight key aspects relating to the roles and core business of Government, confirm whether the scope was appropriate, and identify functional issues that could lead to a reallocation of functions from one agency to a more appropriate body.

The consultations identified a range of issues including existing duplication and overlaps of functions, Ministries performing non-core functions and neglecting core functions, as well as the absence of a clear mechanism to coordinate and channel funds to assist NGOs with their activities.

Twenty Government agencies were consulted through a 2 day workshop held at Hotel Elisa in May. The representatives were presented with the current state of the public service, the challenges identified through the consultations and desk review, and were asked to identify collaborative measures to improve Government service delivery. The discussions highlighted some of the key issues including the need to outsource some of the services to the private sector and community, the need for Government to strengthen its focus on its policy development role, and the need to strengthen collaboration with NGOs.

The Commission together with the central agencies made note that Ministries, HRM Divisions in particular, should closely monitor proposals submitted to the PSC for approval and establishment of new structures, in consideration of the current functional review and analysis. It was highlighted that Ministries should take measures to prioritize urgent positions, withholding other requests until Phase 3 of the review is complete.

It is expected that the next stages will determine the horizontal scope of Government, the appropriate operating environment, the most appropriate organizational form, and allocation of functions within sectors and organizations.

**PSC hosts CEO Forum for public sector leaders**

The first CEO Forum for FY 2014-2015 was convened on 21 May 2015 at Hotel Elisa. CEO Forums provide an opportunity to gather insight
from Public Sector Chief Executives and leaders on a scope of issues within their respective sectors. Representatives present accounted for 13 Ministries, 14 Corporations and 7 development partners. The presenters included the former Chief Executive of the Public Service Commission, Fuimapoao Leuluaialii Naea Beth Onesemo-Tuilaepa and Assistant Chief Executive Masoe Henry Tamasese. The three key areas covered included the Samoa Public Service Executive Strategy 2015-2019, the Samoa Public Service Functional Analysis, and the National Human Resource Development Plan.

The Executive Strategy 2015-2019, as presented by Masoe Henry aims to provide direction for the professional development of current and future public service leaders, as well as promote and maintain continuous learning and improvement of culture in the public service. It also seeks to build a strong foundation for localization of key public service learning and development.

The Samoa Public Service Functional Analysis (FA), as highlighted in the previous edition, aims to review and define appropriate roles and scope of government at Whole of Government level. Fuimapoao during her presentation on the FA noted that the Government anticipates the initiative will lead to improved allocation of functions across the public service, and improved structures for individual agencies. The FA would also seek to develop exit strategies for functions that agencies no longer need to perform.

Fuimapoao also presented on the National Human Resource Development Plan, which aims to provide a holistic overview of current development needs of the national workforce, and to develop a strategic direction for the enhancement of the national workforce to be in line with Governments development objectives as stipulated in the SDS. The Plan is expected to go hand in hand with the National Employment Policy developed by the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour.

Participants expressed their appreciation to the Commission for the initiatives and reaffirmed their commitment to finding ways to support the whole of government approach to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service. All CEOs were asked to identify and discuss challenges clogging progress within Government, and were later invited to network and form partnerships at the end of the Forum.

5 Year roadmap for PSC launched

The Public Service Commission celebrated the official launch of its Corporate Plan 2015-2019 on 24 April 2015, at the SCOPA House, Vaivase. The launch was attended by the Minister and Associate Minister for the Public Service Commission, along with the Chairman of the Commission, Commissioners, and PSC staff.

The Hon. Lautafi Selafi Purcell delivered the keynote address. The Minister acknowledged PSC for putting together the Corporate Plan 2015-2019, highlighting that the Plan was a roadmap for the Office to achieve its long term vision. The Plan, he said, shows that the PSC values the importance of raising the efficiency
of the public service, and improving skills and capacity of public servants. The Minister spoke about various initiatives in the pipeline including the establishment of the Ministry for Public Enterprises, highlighting that the launch of the Corporate Plan all link to the strengthening of transparency and accountability in the Public Service.

The Corporate Plan was developed through an internal consultative process, over a series of focus group sessions, starting with a review of the previous Corporate Plan 2011-2014. The activity provided a platform for the PSC staff to carry out a SWOT Analysis for the Office, informing the development of the new Corporate Plan.

The new roadmap is closely linked with the Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018 (PASP), adopting the 3 overarching goals under the PASP, which looks at improving 3 key areas in the service; public service delivery, people capabilities, and public sector integrity and culture. The vision highlighted in the Corporate Plan is for the PSC to lead a Public Sector that delivers good services to the people of Samoa.

The Corporate Plan will be rolled out over a 5 year period, and progress will be measured against 5 indicators aligned with the 3 goals.

MESC-PSC carries out extensive consultations on revised framework for teachers

The Ministry of Education Sports and Culture together with the Public Service Commission are conducting a series of consultations around Upolu and Savaii to raise awareness on the new salary and career progression framework. The team has planned to consult over 1000 teachers to explain the contractual arrangements relating to Principals, Vice Principals and other positions of responsibility for secondary and primary schools.

Several concerns were raised by Principals and Vice Principals in relation to the transition as most did not have a good knowledge of the new framework and how it might work. Government representatives helped address most concerns based on prevailing policies and legislation, while other matters are currently being considered and reviewed by PSC.

Offers of contractual employment were disseminated to existing Principals and Vice Principals below the retirement age, while those already of retirement age were advised to serve out the remainder of the current school year. Principals and Vice Principals were also advised that performance appraisals will be conducted twice during the contract term, and any salary increase would be based on the results of the review.

MESC and PSC continue to work in partnership to support the transition phase of contracting school principals and vice principals, noting that they are all on the new salary framework now, as approved by Cabinet.
New legal division in PSC brings value added to the Public Administration Sector

The Public Service Commission welcomes the addition of a Legal Division to its structure this quarter, addressing a gap that existed within the Commission for some time, particularly in relation to legal matters. This new addition is also welcomed by the Sector.

The Legal & Investigation Services Team (LI) is staffed by two (2) legal personnel, namely the ACEO and the Legal Officer. The ACEO holds a Master of Laws (LL.M) in International Maritime Law and a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) from the University of the South Pacific. The Legal Officer is a law graduate from the University of Waikato in New Zealand.

The LI Team is mainly concerned with the provision of accurate and reliable legal advice to the Chairman of the Commission, the Public Service, as well as Cabinet. In addition, the team is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing the Public Service Act 2004, particularly legislative changes to reflect the recent policy decisions on working conditions and entitlements.

They are also responsible for conducting Commission-approved investigations, and provide expert advice on contractual employment when required. The team is currently assisting the Senior Executives Services and Human Resource Management Divisions of the PSC with the roll-out of the new salary and career progression framework for teachers, particularly in relation to the contractual employment of School Principals and Vice Principals.

The LI is also the depository for all legal instruments the Commission is a party to.

The head for the LI Division is Ms. Anastacia Amoa-Stowers, assisted by the Legal Officer, Mr. Steve Chan Chui.

Information centre within PSC Office aims to facilitate access to information for public

As part of its awareness goal the Commission has included next to its new Reception area a bigger and private space now dubbed as the information centre.

The initiative is part of Government efforts highlighted under the Public Administration Sector Plan to improve mechanisms for the public to access information related to the business of government. The centre is a stepping stone towards addressing the longstanding issue of limited public awareness on government functions and responsibilities.

The Information Centre is open and available for the public to find information about services of various Ministries, legislations, regulations, and other relevant information. It is also an open space for job-seekers to actively search for vacancies and other relative information.
On 24 April 2015, the Public Service Commission bid farewell to one of its Champions, former Chief Executive Fuimapao Leulua’ialii Naea Beth Onesemo-Tuilaepa, after 11 years of serving Government through the PSC.

Naea was instrumental in the development of the current Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018. She served as the last Chief Executive for the Office and Secretary for the Commission, before taking up the Chief Executive post with the Ministry of Women Community and Social Development.

The Minister for the Public Service Commission, Hon. Lautafi Selafi Purcell, acknowledged Naea’s significant contribution to the development of the commission’s work during his speech at the farewell, which coincided with the launch of the PSC Corporate Plan 2015-2019.

The Minister highlighted some of the milestones achieved during Naea’s time as Chief Executive, which included the development of the National Human Resource Development Plan, the development of a Performance Appraisal Systems for CEOs and Contract Employees, work on the Whole of Government Functional Analysis, and the development of the new salary and career progression framework for teachers, among others.

In brief, the position of Secretary no longer exists and has been devolved as per Cabinet FK (15)16.

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What have we been up to? Sector Interactions with Development Partners to harness assistance for the 29 Sector Activities in PASP!

- PASCU Team:
  - Met with the Australian DFAT 4 May 2015
  - Presented at the Donor Roundtable 12 May 2015
  - Met with the New Zealand Aid Programme 22 May 2015

- We’ve made it our mission to secure feasible forms of partnerships to move forward with implementation – WATCH THIS SPACE!
Have you noticed? Facelift for PSC Office!

- The Public Service Commission recently completed a facelift for its reception area along with some other changes aiming at building its image, providing space to accommodate the growing number of its staff and to further enhance its services to the public.

- Changes made include:
  - Shifting the PSC Reception area to the front room previously used for interview and training, whilst the interview room has been relocated to the far end inside the office;
  - the name for the office has been enlarged for instant view making it easier for those visiting or looking for the office to see;
  - the Information Centre has also shifted next to the reception area but more private;
  - Waiting area out in the foyer utilizing the available space for visitors to wait while being served.

Planning a Holiday? Diarize these dates!

- 10 Aug: Father’s Day Holiday
- 25 Sept: Public Service Day [Tentative]
- 12 Oct: White Sunday Holiday
- 25 Dec: Christmas Day

Did you know?

- The Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018 (PASP) was launched in February 2014. It is administered and serviced by the Public Administration Sector Coordination Unit (PASCU) housed under the Public Service Commission.
- The Public Administration Sector Steering Committee (PASSC) exercises an oversight role with regards to the implementation and monitoring of the PASP activities.
- The PASSC is chaired by the PSC and comprises of representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Women Community and Social Development, the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organizations, and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.
- The Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Ministry of Women Community and Social Development, together with the PSC, are the key implementing partners for the PASP.
- The PASCU comprises of the Sector Coordinator, Makerita Tiotio, and two Principal Officers.
- The PASP has three strategic goals and 10 core strategies to achieve its vision of a professional and competent Public Administration that provides quality and coordinated service delivery to the people of Samoa in a cost effective, efficient and transparent manner.

Get in touch & find out how you can help strengthen the way we serve you!

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