



[Isaiah 9:6](#)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.



The Chairman and Members of the Public Administration Sector Steering Committee acknowledges the support, commitment and perseverance of all its stakeholders throughout this unprecedented and challenging year and we look forward to continuing working together with you all in 2021. May the holiday spirit be with you and yours during this Christmas and throughout the New Year.





A word from the Sector Coordination Division

We are pleased to present the 24th edition of the Public Administration Sector Quarterly Newsletter.

2020 has been a year that has essentially challenged traditional and conventional certainties about what we think and believe is safe in all areas of our lives. Despite all the uncertainties, we are proud of all that we have accomplished as a Sector over the past 12 months. This year has shown that, by working together, we can overcome any obstacle in our way.

As usual, this Edition will highlight some of the work we did together as a Sector over the past 3 months.

If you have suggestions on how we can improve the next edition, connect with us!

From the Team here at the Public Administration Sector Coordination Division, we wish all our Sector agencies, partners in the private sector and civil society, and all our other stakeholders - a very healthy and happy festive season and an even better 2021!

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Self-Assessment Integrity (SAINT) Workshop Conducted for the Public Service Commission Office

A self-assessment workshop using the IntoSAINT approach was conducted for the Public Service Commission Office by qualified moderators from the Samoa Audit Office on the 19th – 22nd October, 2020.

According to the SAO moderators, the initiative originated from the Netherlands by the Court of Audit and later adopted by the INTOSAI to support the integrity, accountability and transparency for Supreme Audit Institutions. The methodology allows organizations to self-assess and diagnose its resilience to risks posed by integrity-related factors and areas. The tool, which draws on the knowledge and opinions of selected participants, has been recognized by the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) and the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI) as part of assessing the maturity of the integrity management systems within Government agencies when carrying out their core functions.

This workshop was in line with the Public Administration Sector Plan's objective of strengthening transparency and accountability in the public sector.

The moderators explained the operationalization of the tool and its components before the actual assessment was carried out. At the end of workshop and assessment, a report underlying any integrity breaches along with recommendations for improvement was submitted to the management of the PSC for the improvement of its integrity management systems.

The SAO is anticipating to conduct more of these SAINT assessment workshops across the public sector take advantage and to maximise the benefits of this tool.

Awareness Presentation for the Public Administration Sector Plan Conducted (PASP) at the Human Resources Coordination Forum.

The new Public Administration Sector Plan (PASP) was presented at the Human Resource Coordinators (HRC) Forum that was held on the 23rd October, 2020 as part of its communication and awareness campaign for key stakeholders in the public sector.

The Assistant Chief Executive Officer for the Public Administration Sector Coordination Division – Ms. Osana Liki-Ward presented on the phased approach the Sector adopted to develop the new Sector Plan. She provided the context around the importance of the Public Administration Sector Plan, noting that the first one was developed in 2007/2008, the second in 2013/2014, and now with the new one developed with the assistance of the Samoa Governance Support Programme.

In her presentation, she also highlighted the PASP's three main End of Sector Plan Outcomes (ESPO) which in a nutshell aims at achieving the Plan's Long-Term Outcome of – *"A trusted, citizen-focused, public administration"*.

Ms. Ward also encouraged all stakeholders to take ownership of the new PASP noting the importance of their roles and responsibilities in the public service. As quoted *"as a reminder to us all present here today, the PASP belongs to all public servants in the public sector, and not just the PSC. We are all public administrators and we have a role in implementing and supporting the PASP at all levels."*

A copy of the current PASP can be downloaded at the following link – https://www.psc.gov.ws/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PASP2020-2025_Final.pdf and should you have any further queries in relation to the activities highlighted in the plan, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the team at the following email address – paspp@psc.gov.ws

New Zealand Public Service Commission (NZPSC) shares best practices with the PSC Senior Executive Services Team

The Office of the Public Service Commission in conjunction with the New Zealand Public Service Commission began a series of webinars in November with the aim of virtually sharing Pacific expertise, experience as well as best practices designed to strengthen relationships and build capacity across the region in the public service.

The Office of the PSC through its Senior Executive Services was part of the webinar series facilitated by the New Zealand Public Service Commission. This collaboration supports the Public Administration Sector Plan's Objective 3.1: Results oriented, performance driven human resource management frameworks; Activity 10 – Strengthen tools and resources to employ the right people with the right skills and Activity 11 – Strengthen Performance Management.

Some of the topics discussed during the webinar included:

- Annual Cycle for Chief Executive (CE) Performance expectations
- Setting performance expectations
- Engagement with Chief Executive's during the performance year
- End of year review process
- Performance assessment vs Development assessment.
- Linking Chief Executive Performance assessment & organizational assessment
- Reappointment & Remuneration

It was noted from the webinars that there are similarities with the New Zealand's Public Service Commission process on Performance Management with Samoa's PSC approach on managing performance for Senior Executives. These include

the principles of employment that underpin performance planning, performance review and executive development frameworks. The differences are in the level of authority as the PSC NZ follows the Commissioner approach, whereby employment of CE and their portfolios are managed by the Commissioner while PSC manages the process with decisions sits with the Cabinet.

Some of the key takeaways from the session were that the appointment and performance of New Zealand Chief Executives lies with the Commissioner. In contrast, Samoa PSC implements and administers the recruitment and selection process with appointments finalized/reviewed by Cabinet while performance lies solely to the Commission. In terms of the Contract period, New Zealand CEs is 5 years while Samoa is 3 years.

Going forward, the Senior Executive Services division is currently reviewing the Performance Management Guideline and have also shared this with the New Zealand PSC. A follow up workshop took place on the 19th November 2020 to discuss the information shared in detail. It is the Senior Executive Services Team's hope that the NZ PSC would be able to provide an independent and critical input into this work to ensure it meets all the planned outcomes, for the benefit of all senior executives.

Samoa PSC shares human resource expertise at the regional level

A *Talanoa* webinar on Merit Based Recruitment and Appointments was organized and facilitated by the NZ PSC Fale in November 2020. Human Resource advisors from Samoa and Fiji were invited to present and share their experiences with the rest of the Commissions across the Pacific. Mr. Jason Hisatake, Assistant Chief Executive Officer for the Senior Executive Services, Samoa Public Service Commission, and Ms. Salilo Margraff, Assistant Chief Executive of Human Resource Management, were Samoa's lead presenters. Ms Susan Kiran, Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service of Fiji and Secretary to Cabinet, shared Fiji's experience.

Samoa's presentation focussed on the Merit Factors under Section 36 of the Public Service Act 2004 which are:

- 1) Skills and Abilities
- 2) Qualifications
- 3) Experience and Past Work Performance and
- 4) Personal Attributes.

Samoa shared its experience in implementing its Merit Policy 2017 and the challenges. The webinar also provided a platform for participants to engage and share their views on the interpretation and application of merit across the public sector in the Pacific region, the articulation of the merit factors into position competencies and job descriptions, scoring and assessment tools and the level of subjectivity when assessing merits. Fiji was also able to share their Recruitment and Open Merit systems, which mirrors Samoa systems.

Overall, the varying systems on recruitment is to ensure that recruitment is based on Merit with greater focus efficiency and transparency in recruitment and selection processes. It was encouraging to learn from the discussions that Merit-Based Recruitment is considered by the participants as best practice for recruiting the right people, at the right time, to do the right job.

Three Major Surveys Conducted by the Samoa Bureau of Statistics for Samoa

The Samoa Bureau of Statistics in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, and the UNDP Samoa conducted an integrated data collection task for the following major surveys which commenced on the 24th August and was completed on the 31st October, 2020.

1. The Population and Housing Census (PHC) household listing and mapping update in preparation for the PHC in November 2021

and preparation of the National Identification project.

2. Distribution of the Government Stimulus Package of ST50.00 per person.
3. The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of the COVID 19 Survey.

The commencement of the above survey started on the 24th August, 2020 and was completed on the 31st October, 2020.

For the Population and Housing Census activity, this is the usual practice implemented by the Bureau, one year before any Population and Housing Census in order to get the total number of people and household in the country to make preparations before the actual census enumeration.



The PHC is conducted every five years and the latest PHC was in 2016. The information from this activity will also assist with the National Identification project.



As the PHC is mandated to enumerate all persons in the country, the Committee for the Government Stimulus Package

requested to integrate its activity with the PHC fieldwork. The members of the Government Stimulus Package included the Ministry of Finance,

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Office of the Electoral Commission, Ministry of Women Community and Social Development, Ministry of Police and Prison, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the Office of the Attorney General.

Another important activity which was also integrated to the PHC was the collection of information from the public on the impacts of the COVID 19 via the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Survey in collaboration with UNDP Samoa.

Around 300 workers were hired to help with the implementation of this integrated project.

The vehicles were kindly provided by the Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Samoa, Samoa International Finance Authority, Development Bank of Samoa, Samoa Tourism Authority, Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labor, Ministry of Justice, Courts and Administration, while other Government Ministries contributed via the provision of cashiers to assist with the financial distributions.



The Bureau also organized three fixed sites namely the EFKS Youth Hall Mulinuu, the TATTE Convention Centre Sogi in Upolu Island and the Apita o Pisaga Hall in Savaii every Saturdays during the data collection period for the referrals of individual members of households who were not present at their households during the initial visit. The purpose was to ensure that all household information was collected and finalized and also to disseminate the

\$50 tala per person for all households as part of the Stimulus assistance provided by the Government.

The scope of the fieldwork covered two months and one week (Aug 24th-October 31st, 2020). The status quo of the activity is that the Bureau is still working on data cleaning, editing, analysis and other processes from all the three activities before the final result is released by January 2021.

Second Round of the “Hire Me Training” Conducted for Diplomas and Certificate Holders

Due to the high demand of the “Hire Me Training”, the Office of the Public Service Commission through the Human Resource Development Division conducted a second round for this training at the Samoa Shipping Services (SSS) Conference room from the 19th – 21st October 2020.

Ten (10) University graduates with Diplomas and Certificates in different fields were invited to participate in this training, which is practically designed to support their efforts in securing employment.



The 3-day training focused on:

- A general understanding of the Public Service and its functions;
- Employment processes and procedures in the Public Service;

- Locating jobs and requesting for application packages;
- Filling in application forms and answering selection criteria;
- Compiling a submission including an informative curriculum vitae or resume, and an accompanying cover letter;
- Successfully preparing for an interview.

These university graduates' students' reflected on how important this training was for them at this time of looking for employment. The practical one-on-one sessions focused on very useful as application forms, resumes and curriculum vitae, cover letters and mock interviews. Participants acknowledged with appreciation the opportunity for such capacity building, and all look forward to being hired and employed soon.

In closing, the trainers thanked participants for taking the time to attend this important training and encouraged them to have the confidence to apply and seek assistance from them again when needed. The training was delivered by certified trainers – Ms. Lenara Tuipoloa Utuva and Ms. Angela Phineas of the Public Service Commission Office.

PSC updates Workforce COVID19 Planning Guidelines for all Government agencies

The PSC has revised and updated the Government of the Samoa COVID19 Workforce Planning Guidelines. The document was developed back in March 2020 when the SOE Orders came into force. They are expected to provide support to all government agencies to ensure business continuity **before, during and after the pandemic**. They are meant to support key primary healthcare and pandemic management information highlighted in the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) National Preparedness and Response Plan, issued by the Ministry of Health, as well as the decisions of Cabinet and the Disaster Advisory CommitteeThe

revisions take into account the new levels of alert as defined by NEOC and the Disaster Advisory Committee. The revised levels are summarized below, but a copy of the full document can be found on the PSC website, or can be requested from the Sector Coordination Division:

<p>Level 1 – Effective Immediately</p> <p>Workplaces remain open</p> <p>KEY MESSAGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Come to work - Maintain physical/social distancing - Practice proper hygiene etiquette - Be vigilant at all times - Be prepared for the unexpected
<p>Level 2 – Effective in the event there is a <u>suspected case in the community, and 7-9 confirmed cases in managed isolation.</u> (Relies on PSC advice and confirmation based on the advice of Cabinet)</p> <p>Workplaces remain open</p> <p>KEY MESSAGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Come to work, except employees classified as High Risk - Maintain physical/social distancing - Practice proper hygiene etiquette - Be vigilant at all times - Be prepared for the unexpected - Activate Business Continuity Plans and remote work arrangements (i.e., roster)
<p>Level 3 – Effective in the event there are more than 10 cases in managed isolation and/or <u>confirmed community transmission</u> (Relies on PSC advice and confirmation based on the advice of Cabinet)</p> <p>Complete Shutdown for non-essential work</p> <p>Key Message:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work from home (except for essential workers)



**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND OUR BEST WISHES FOR A
PROSPEROUS AND LESS CHALLENGING 2021!!**

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