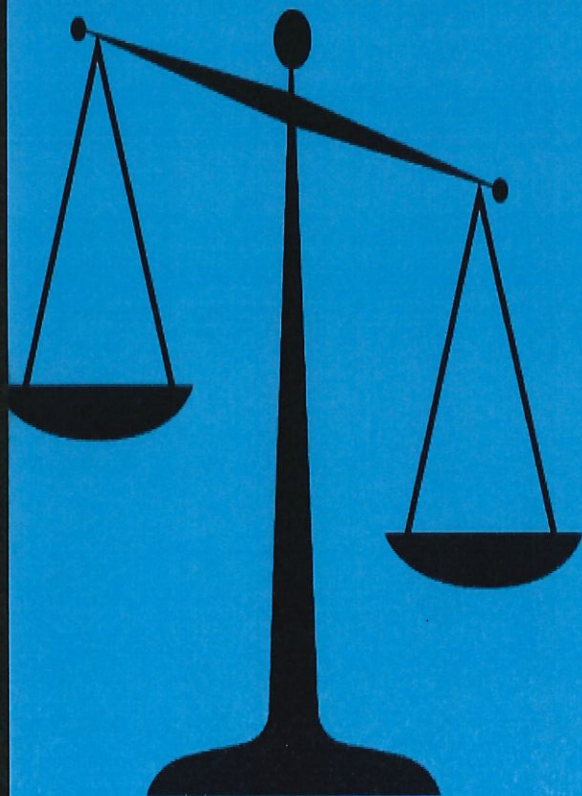


ANNUAL REPORT JANUARY – DECEMBER 2015

Office of the Commissioner for
Public Relations (Ombudsman)



- TO INVESTIGATE, REVIEW AND INSPECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS AND PROVIDE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE IN ORDER TO ENSURE PEOPLE ARE TREATED FAIRLY.

Annual Report – January to December 2015

Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations

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FOREWORD

This report covers the period of January 1st to December 31st 2015.

I am pleased to introduce the Annual Report for the Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations (CPR Office) for 2015.

The Annual Report provides a strategic view of our work throughout the year. It targets the achievement of the Commissioner for Public Relations mission to ensure that the people are served by a fair and efficient public administration. The key goals for this year include raising public awareness about the core functions of this office and the provision of professional service to the public.

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations acknowledges the support from the Government of Tonga to it as an integrity agency. It confirms that the successful implementation of our plan requires the support from all stakeholders within Government and the public.

My priority as Commissioner will always be to provide high quality and accessible complaint handling service to meet the needs of those whose complaints cannot be resolved elsewhere. 2015 has seen our office continuing to work successfully towards those aims, as indicated in this report. In that regard, I am grateful to the CEO, Mrs. Linda Folaumoetu'i, and all the staff for the hard work and unfailing efforts to carry out their duties.



Aisea H. Taumoepeau, SC
Commissioner for Public Relations

1. THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

1.1 Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF)

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations ("CPR Office") is pleased to use the TSDF 2015–2025 as the overall plan to ensure our office is contributing to the priorities and vision set out by the Government of Tonga.

CPR continues to successfully play an effective role in the Government of Tonga's goal to achieve the national impact of Tonga, which states, *"A more progressive Tonga supporting higher quality of life for all"*. Furthermore, the CPR Office aims to contribute to achievement of the national outcome *d. "a more inclusive, sustainable and responsive good governance with law and order"*. The overall TSDF has been a guide for CPR to strategically design its own organizational outcomes and outputs and outline activities that can give a clear direction to implement and subsequently produce the appropriate results.

1.2 Our Purpose

The Commissioner of the CPR Office is an independent officer appointed by Cabinet under the Commissioner for the Public Relations Act, 2001.

The overall purpose of the CPR Office is to investigate, review and inspect the administrative conduct of government ministries and organisations and provide advice and guidance in order to ensure people are treated fairly.

The CPR Office has an aim to assist government ministries and organizations remedy deficiencies and improve service delivery. Traditionally, the main mechanism is by investigating and reviewing government administrative decisions in response to complaints received by the CPR Office from the public. The Commissioner also has the power to look into a matter without having received a complaint, in cases where he considers a particular issue is in the public interest or is systemic. The goal is that these interventions will address the grievances and improve administrative systems and processes overall. We would foresee the result of a cohesive and effective organization. Government can continuously improve accessibility and being more responsive to members of the public. Eventually, government can be seen as a leader in the standards of service to the public.

1.3 Jurisdiction

The CPR office's jurisdiction covers government ministries and the public enterprises and statutory boards ("organisations) . The Commissioner may conduct an enquiry or investigation in response to a complaint or on his own motion.

Further the Commissioner has the power to investigate a matter which has been referred by the Prime Minister to him and the Commissioner consents to, This matter is considered by the Prime Minister should be investigated by the CPR Office. When such a matter is referred to CPR Office, the Commissioner must immediately investigate the matter and report to the Prime Minister.

The CPR Office also has responsibilities in relation to protecting human rights in relation to those held in custody, in particular two classes. The first class refers to those who have been sentenced to be imprisoned, those who have been ordered to be in custody awaiting sentencing or those held in custody for the purposes of completing police investigations. The second class refers to those who have been ordered to be detained at the Psychiatric Ward, at the hospitals. Where any person who is detained wishes to lodge a complaint against the administrative decisions made by the police or health authorities they are permitted to lodge such a complaint with the Commissioner. If the complaints are made in writing, these written complaints cannot be opened by anybody, except the Commissioner for CPR Office.

1.4 Vision and Mission of the CPR Office

Our key aim is to improve the delivery of services by government and its organisations to the public and our corporate goals reflect this objective.

CPR Office Vision

'Fair, accountable and responsive administration in government ministries and organizations in Tonga'

CPR Office Mission

'To provide an impartial and effective complaints resolution service and also work to promote the best practices in public administration, integrity, good governance, transparency and accountability within government ministries and organisations.'

In everything we do, CPR Office gives assurance that we will act fairly, with integrity and impartiality. The CPR Office staff will always treat individuals and government agencies

courteously and with sensitivity. We will also use resources efficiently and effectively to achieve our goals. It is also important to ensure that we are easily accessible to everyone.

1.5 Legislations Governing the CPR Office

Our office was established by an Act of Parliament, the Commissioner for Public Relations Act 2001. The main laws governing the CPR Office are (i) the *Commissioner for Public Relations Act 2001*. Other relevant laws include the *Government Act, Public Service Act 2002 and subsequent amendments to it and its Regulations*.

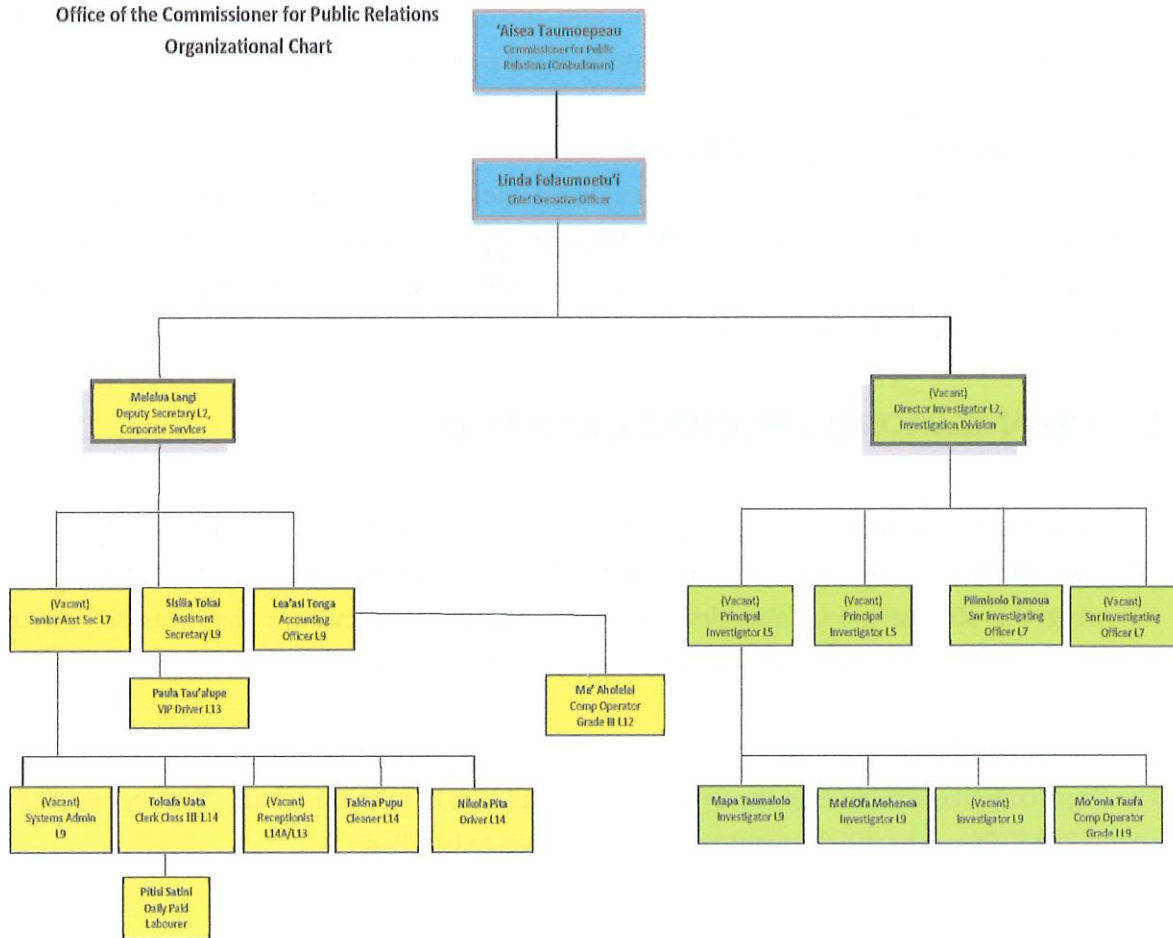
2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND BUDGET

This year was significant in the development of a new organizational structure for the office. The appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer in March was the start of not only renewing the structure, but also developing a positive office culture that was somewhat missing from the office for the past several years due to the absence of strong leadership.

2.1 Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the CPR Office is displayed here in this chart. To note, as of the end of 2015, there are still 8 vacant posts that have yet to be filled.

Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations
Organizational Chart



2.2 Functions per Program and Division

There are two budgetary programs within the CPR Office which are: (i) Leadership and Policy Advice and (ii) Ombudsman. The Leadership & Policy program consists of three divisions: Office of the Commissioner, Office of the CEO and Corporate Services Division. The Ombudsman Program consists of the Case Management & Investigation Division. This section will outline the work each program is responsible to carry out. The following outline gives the specific function of each program:

2.2.1 Program 1: Leadership and Policy Advice – This program is divided up into three sub-programs or divisions. The leadership of the office is the Commissioner who holds the authority to lead and direct all matters of the office. The Commissioner takes on an ‘overall management’ approach and mainly deals with the stakeholders at a higher

level. The Chief Executive Officer also holds a vital leadership role in the office and is more specific in management of the office operations. Policy advice can be given at any level within these three sub-programs. The leadership of the office may advise all staff of specific matters and the Corporate Services Division is also required to be knowledgeable with any policies that are relevant to the CPR Office, which include government policy. The section below will go into specifics on what work has been achieved for each sub-program.

2.2.1a *Sub-program 1.1: Office of the Commissioner*

The Office of the Commissioner (sub-program) includes the Commissioner, his Assistant Secretary & the VIP Driver. The overall supervision of the CPR Office takes place from the Commissioner. All high level consultations and meetings are taken up by the Commissioner and he will direct any other staff member to join, as necessary.

2.2.1b *Sub-program 1.2: Office of the CEO*

The Office of the CEO includes the CEO and her assistant, the Clerk Class III. This sub-program is responsible for the overall management of specific functions, including the operations of the office and delegating work to investigators and staff members. All external communication, via savingram or letter, is directed to the CEO and the CEO will review and delegate to a relevant personnel to ensure workflow is ongoing.

2.2.1c *Sub-program 1.3: Corporate Services Division*

The efficient and effective operation of the office is thoroughly supported by the Corporate Services Division. This division can be further separated into 3 sections: (i) Human Resources Section, (ii) Accounts Section & (iii) Transport Section. This division is headed by the Deputy Secretary (Corporate Services).

These sections are briefly described below.

2.2.1c(i) *Human Resources Section*

The main responsibility of this section is to ensure appropriate and good quality resources are made available to carry out the work that needs to be fulfilled. This includes human resources or staff, equipment, office stationary and office space, appropriate training.

2.2.1c(ii) Accounts Section

This section is staffed by an Accounting Officer and a Computer Operator Grade III staff.

2.2.1c(iii) Transport Section

This section is staffed by one driver. He is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of correspondence to line ministries and other stakeholders. His schedule is strategically planned out to ensure efficiency as his work contributes to the effective operations of the office.

2.2.2 Program 2: Ombudsman – This program has only one sub-program or division. The Case Management & Investigation Division takes on an essential role of the CPR Office. Our office has the responsibility to the public to review and make effective assessments on complaints that are brought to the office. Again, the section below will go into more specifics on the work done by this division.

2.2.2a Sub-program 2.1: Case Management & Investigation Division

This division undertakes the ‘core’ function of the CPR Office. The CEO heads this division as the vacant post of Director Investigator has yet to be recruited. All complaints received by the CPR Office are initially reviewed by the CEO, whom then designates to one of the investigators, dependent on complexity. The investigators have a time frame to follow in their acknowledgement of the complaint, assessment of the complaint and any consultation or hearing process that may be necessary to further make recommendations. The CEO is responsible for reporting the outcomes of assessments to the Commissioner, of which the Commissioner will make his own review of cases and either endorse or request further consultation before recommendations are given to the parties.

2.3 Staff Allocation in relation to budgetary programs

The CPR Office staff is allocated accordingly –:

Staff Post	Staff Member	Division/Sub-Program
Commissioner	Mr. ‘Aisea Taumoepeau	Office of the Commissioner
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Silia Tokai	Office of the Commissioner
VIP Driver	Mr. Paula Tau’alupe	Office of the Commissioner

Chief Executive Officer	Mrs. Linda Folaumoetu'i	Office of the CEO
Clerk Class III	Mrs. Tokafa Fifita	Office of the CEO
Deputy Secretary	Mrs. Melelua Langi	Corporate Services
Accounting Officer	Mr. Lea'asi Tonga	Corporate Services
Computer Operator Grade III	Mrs. Me' 'Aholelei	Corporate Services
Office Cleaner	Mrs. Takina Pupu	Corporate Services
Driver	Mr. Nikola Pita	Corporate Services
Daily Paid Labourer	Ms. Pitisi Satini	Corporate Services
Senior Investigator	Mr. Pilimisolo Tamoua	Case Management & Investigation
Investigator	Mrs. Mele'ofa Mohenoa	Case Management & Investigation
Investigator	Mr. Mapa Taumalolo	Case Management & Investigation
Computer Operator Grade I	Mrs. Mo'onia Taufu	Case Management & Investigation

3. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Following seven months of serving as Acting Commissioner for Public Relations (Ombudsman), in November 2014, Cabinet appointed Mr. 'Aisea Taumoepeau to the position of Commissioner. At the beginning of this reporting period, the office was still being operated by only a staff of six (6), which included two (2) daily-paid staff and they were all under the leadership of the Commissioner.

In March 2015, Mrs. Linda Folaumoetu'i was appointed as CEO of the CPR Office. Months following, from June to August, two (2) Level 9 investigators and an Office Clerk was recruited. A new daily-paid labourer was recruited and the two former daily-paid staff applied to vacant staff posts and were recruited as permanent staff of the CPR Office. The office continued to focus on increasing staff capacity as 3 more staff were recruited to include a Computer Operator, Grade III, a VIP Driver and a Deputy Secretary.

The challenge faced by CPR Office in further recruiting staff in 2015 was that there was no office space available for further staff. There are several job vacancies within the CPR Office that are scheduled to go through the recruitment process in 2015/2016.

Please refer to the CPR Office Organisation Chart in section 2.1.

3.1 Number of Staff Joining and Leaving CPR

This section of the report will go into detail on the staff that have joined the CPR team or exited the office.

3.1.1 New Appointments

Staff capacity increased by 7 staff in 2014 to 15 staff by the end of this year. This included the appointment of the following staff:

Staff Post	Staff Member	Recruitment Date
Chief Executive Officer	Linda Folaumoetu'i	March
Clerk Class I	Tokafa Fifita	June
Daily Paid Labourer	Pitisi Satini	June
Investigator	MeleOfa Mohenoa	August
Investigator	Mapa Taumalolo	August
Computer Operator Grade III	Me 'Aholelei	November
VIP Driver	Paula Tau'alupe	November
Deputy Secretary	Melelua Langi	December



Picture. Staff meet to welcome the newly appointed CEO Mrs. Linda Folaumoetu'i to the Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations

3.1.2 Promotions

Due to the increase in workload there was a need to increase the staff capacity and ongoing assessment of performance. Two vacant junior posts were advertised for recruitment. Following the process of recruitment to fill these two posts, the panel recommended their two successful candidates and they were both existing staff members of the CPR Office. Their appointment became a promotional appointment from their previous post. Mrs. Mo'onia Taufu was promoted from an Office Administrator to a Computer Operator Grade I and Mr. Lea'asi Tonga was promoted from a Computer Assistant to an Accounting Officer. The skills and knowledge of both staff would be better utilized in their new post.

3.1.3 Transfers

The CPR Office received two new staff through transfer from other Ministries. As indicated above Mrs. Me' Aholelei applied to the vacant post of Computer Operator Grade III and was the successful candidate. She transferred from the Ministry of Justice. Mrs. Melelua Langi applied to the Deputy Secretary vacant post and following her successful recruitment process, she transferred from the Prime Minister's Office.

3.1.4 Retirement

After working as an Investigator in this office for about 14 years, Mr. Ma'afu Tonga retired from the public service in 2015.

3.2 Staff Training

With the increase in staff recruitment this year, there is a dire need for training in the areas of investigation work, administrative duties, financial management and a wide range of other aspects that would be beneficial to the office. However there were preliminary workshops held by both the Commissioner and CEO. The Commissioner carried out a half day workshop with the whole CPR staff on the legislative framework which governs CPR work to ensure that they have a better understanding of the CPR laws. The CEO also led 2 training sessions with the investigation team to ensure that the investigation team are aware of investigative processes which are relevant to CPR Office work.

4. COMMISSION'S PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

4.1 Corporate Plan Outcomes and Outputs

The CPR Office was pleased to propose its very first Corporate Plan since its establishment. This 3 year plan is for the 2015/2016 to the 2017/2018 financial year. Outcomes and outputs were set to outline the goals that the CPR Office would like to achieve.

The CPR Office identified the following external outcomes to achieve throughout its Corporate Plan duration.

- Outcome 1: That management behavior towards stakeholders and employees/subordinates improves, consistent with adherence to the rule of law
- Outcome 2: Stakeholders adopt appropriate strategies towards the operation of the CPR Office and the improvement of good governance.

The following external outputs would assist the CPR office in achieving its organizational outcomes.

- Output 1: Ensure complaints by external stakeholders, in particular the Tongan public, and employees/subordinates against public officials are appropriately investigated and resolved.
- Output 2: Engage proactively so that investigations are appropriately carried out into individual public servants and public organisations which have a record of violating the principles of good governance.
- Output 3: Assist senior management to exercise good leadership and influence over the operations of the department and organizations
- Output 4: Enhance engagement opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders

The CPR Office also identified the following internal outcome.

- Outcome 1: Operates efficiently, effectively and affordably based on appropriate balance between available budget and desired outputs

The following internal outputs contributed to the achieving of the internal outcome mentioned above.

- Internal Output 1: Timely and effective internally planning and financial management system

-
- Internal Output 2: Effective placement of appropriate staff, adaptable and capable, within a well-managed organization
 - Internal Output 3: Efficient logistic support services

The outcomes and outputs, as outlined above, became a blueprint for the CPR Office since the beginning of its implementation stage on July 2015. The CPR Office continues to improve its operations and services through setting appropriate goals that are relevant and achievable to the improvement of the office.

4.2 Work Achieved in 2015

The duties undertaken by the CPR Office are very broad and include:

- Resolution, conciliation and investigation of complaints about all Government of Tonga's ministries, , and organizations;
- Providing constructive advice and guidance to ministries and organizations on issues relating to good administration and complaint-handling.
- Assisting and referring people (both via communication on telephone, emails and/or visits) to the office to make enquiries
- Providing training in conducting investigations and complaint management;
- Conducting customer service audit.

Modes of how complaints are made to CPR office

CPR office encourages people to lodge complaints or queries with us. Complaints are conveyed to CPR Office through the telephone, email, letter or in person.

4.2.1 Outreach Programs

Even though the CPR office has been in existence since 2001, it is noted that only in the past year that it has received the recognition and support it needed to be an effective organization in government. Following the appointment of the new CEO in March of 2015, the CPR office made it a priority to focus on awareness and outreach programs to actively engage the public to understand the core function and mandate of the CPR Office. The outreach efforts include radio and television interviews, information meetings at village and town halls and even consultations with government departments and organisations. The CPR Office aims to inform all relevant stakeholders on the vision and mission of the office.

From the period of April to July 2015, there have been at least 2 radio interviews with the Commissioner, CEO and Senior Investigation Officer. Two television spots were also broadcasted which featured the same CPR staff.

From the period between October to December 2015, the CPR Office has conducted several informational meetings to villages and communities and also government ministries and organisations. The following were conducted.

- 10 outreach programs to communities divided into districts. These villages are located on the main island Tongatapu and Vava'u and were conducted in the evening hours to ensure widest dissemination of information to the people. District & town officers are very much involved to assist with the announcement and encourage its village people to attend. Radio announcements have also been used in some cases. Further TV Tonga attended village meetings and recorded snippets of the village discussions which were shown as part of their news items at prime time news hour, at 7pm.
- 10 outreach programs were conducted to various Government ministries and public enterprises. The civil servants welcomed the CPR office as many were not aware of the core functions of the office.

Photos from outreach programs.



Tofoa village outreach



Utulau village outreach



Vaotu'u Village outreach



Picture above. Governor of Vava'u Lord Fulivai, welcoming all the participants to the Vava'u Outreach program















Picutre above. Civil servants and employees of public enterprises of Vava'u attending the outreach programs



4.2.2 Complaints and Investigation Process

What happens to a complaint which is lodged in CPR Office?

The following table outlines the steps that are taken in our investigation process.

CPR Office will send a written acknowledgment letter to the complainant

<u>ASSESSMENT STAGE</u>
Complaint is assessed to ensure it is within jurisdiction

	
If complaint is <i>within jurisdiction</i> , according to the law: 	If complaint is <i>out of jurisdiction</i> , ("OOJ") according to the law: 
The Commissioner of CPR Office will send a letter to the government Ministry or organization, that is being complained about and will inform them of the complaint and request a response 	CPR Office will not investigate further and a letter of advice that the case will be closed, will be sent to the complainant
<u>INVESTIGATION STAGE</u>	
Government Ministry or organization responds back to the CPR Office and will either agree with the issues brought up by the complainant OR will disagree with the issues. 	
If the Government Ministry or organization <i>agrees</i> to the issues: 	If the Government Ministry or organization <i>disagrees</i> to the issues: 
The organization will respond and take action on improving their services	The CPR Office may call a hearing; Witnesses may be called to testify in the hearing
The CPR Office will cease its' investigation and write a letter to the complainant advising the positive response from the organization. 	
<u>The case is closed.</u>	
<u>REPORTING STAGE</u>	
The CPR Office will write up a report on the investigation and make recommendations towards the Ministry or organization being complained about. The organization may agree or disagree with the recommendations 	
If the Ministry or organization <i>agrees</i> to the recommendations: 	If the Ministry or organization <i>disagrees</i> with the recommendations: 

CPR Office will write a response to the complainant with the outcome of the investigation 	The CPR Office will release the report to the Prime Minister and/or the Privy council 
<u>The case is closed</u>	<u>The case is closed</u>

4.2.3 Investigation Statistics

It is important to recognize that as the awareness and outreach programs increased, the workload of the investigation team also increased. This is evidence of the value these outreach programs have on the general public. Reaching out to the people at the grassroots level proved to be an effective way to generate the interest and let people know of the useful avenue and additional options they have in trying to resolve their grievances and to know about CPR Office's role in supporting good governance initiatives.

4.2.4 Advices

After considering a complaint, CPR office may not be able to assist. In these cases, CPR office provides advice and where appropriate refer the complainant to the organization concerned or suggest another avenue. These advices are verbally rendered to people when they make enquiries through the telephone, emails or when they walk into CPR Office.

The following table outlines the number of complaints and the percentage in workload from 2014 to 2015.

Mode of complaint submission	# of complaints in 2015	Percentage (%) difference from 2014
Written	76 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 cases were fully investigated and reports have been referred to ministries or to organisations 12 out of jurisdiction cases, therefore are closed 57 cases closed (45 of the cases were resolved between the 	48 to 76 = 37% increase

	<p>parties and 12 OOJ)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 cases pending – due to delay in response from ministries or organization or there is a consultative process between CPR and the Ministry or organisation in view of resolving the matter informally 	
Telephone	41	No stats from 2014
Walk in visits	76	125 to 76 = 39% decrease

We will look at mechanisms to improve our record keeping, especially to be able to monitor our response time and ensure cases are given an appropriate assessment.

4.2.5 Conferences and Workshops Attended by CPR

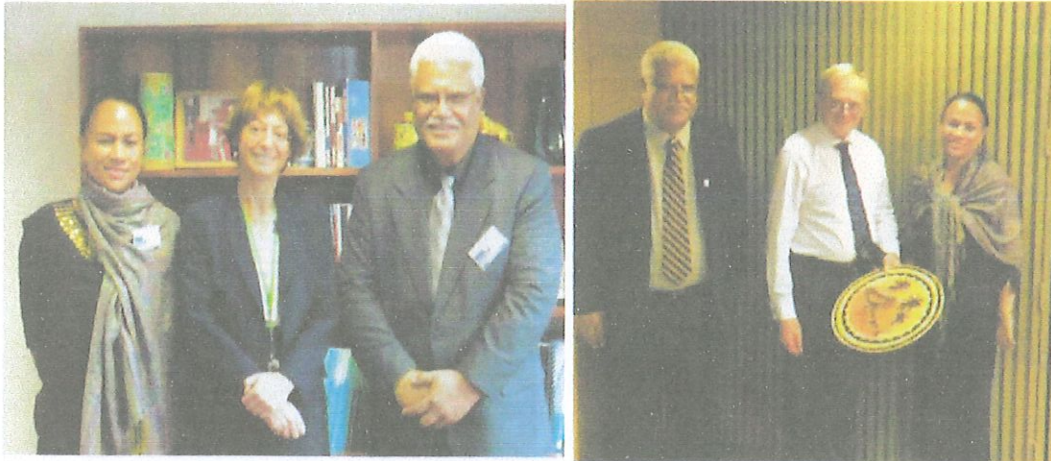
Throughout the year, CPR Office was given the opportunity to attend workshops and meetings that were relevant to the functions of the office. These events were not only limited to local meetings, but also to the outer islands and overseas.

The following table outlines the *overseas* meetings attended by CPR.

Date	Meeting/Workshop	Attended by:
17 – 27 May	Pacific Ombudsman Alliance Board Meeting – Sydney, Canberra & Melbourne Australia	Commissioner and CEO
28 May	Visit to review role & functions of the Ombudsman in Wellington New Zealand	Commissioner and CEO
30 June to 2 July	Anti-corruption program workshop held in Suva, Fiji	CEO and Senior Investigator
17 – 21 August	Global Conference on Anti-Corruption Reform in Small Island States in Mauritius	CEO
17-19 November	Australian Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference in Brisbane Australia	CEO

The conferences and meetings attended above were useful to all attendees to ensure roles and functions were well understood. There were also useful meetings on Anti-

Corruption and even though an Anti-Corruption Commissioner has not been appointed, it was beneficial to the CPR office to attend and learn more about this important topic.



Left photo. CEO Linda Folaumoetu'i, Victorian Ombudsman Ms. Deborah Glass and Commissioner 'Aisea Taumoepeau in Melbourne; Right photo. Commissioner 'Aisea Taumoepeau, Mr Paul Menzies QC and CEO Linda Folaumoetu'i in Sydney Australia.

The following table outlines the *local* meetings attended by CPR.

Date	Meeting/Workshop	Attended by:
12 May	GOPAC/UNDP workshop for Parliamentarians @ Loumaile Lodge	Commissioner and CEO
13 May	UNDP workshop for Civil Society @ Bahai Faith Center	CEO and Senior Investigation Officer
18 May	UNCAC/UN-PRAC awareness workshop for Senior Government Officials on Anti-Corruption @ Fa'one lua	CEO
22 June	Private Sector Workshop @ Davina House	Commissioner and Senior Investigation Officer
23 June	Media Workshop @ Davina House	Commissioner and Senior Investigation Officer
10 August	UNODC & UNDP UNCAC, Awareness training for Media @ Davina House	CEO and Senior Investigation Officer
12 August	International Youth Day @ Digicel Square	CEO
9 December	Anti-Corruption Youth Day –Anti-Corruption	CEO

	Panel	
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The locally held conferences/workshops outlined above were invitations extended to the CPR Office from various organisations like, United Nations Development Program, Media Council, GOPAC , UNCAC/UNPRAC and other Ministries and was a great way to give a brief introduction of what our office actually does.



The Commissioner for Public Relations Mr. Aisea Taumoepeau was invited to make a presentation to the Hon. Prime Minister Samiuela Akilisi Pohiva and Cabinet Ministers at Fa'onelua Convention Centre on January 2015.



Building closer work relations with MDAs, CPR met Commissioner of Prisons Sione Falemanu at the Hu'atolotoli Headquarters

4.3 Financial Performance for 2015

The CPR Office is pleased with the 40 percent (%) increase in budget from FY 2014/15 – T\$853,991 to FY 2015/16 – T\$1,419,900. We recognize this increase as a sign of positive support from government and members of parliament, of which we are grateful. We are happy to work towards the governments' priority to promote good governance and transparency and we strongly believe our office strives to achieve these standards.

The following table lists the financial performance for the 2015 calendar year. *Please note that the funding for the 1st and 2nd quarter is from the FY 2014/2015 budget and the 3rd and 4th quarter is from the FY 2015/2016 budget.*

Financial Year (FY)	Total Original Budget	2015 Quarter	Total Spent
FY 2014/2015	\$853,991	1 st Quarter Jan to March	\$105,968
FY 2014/2015	\$853,991	2 nd Quarter April to June	\$209,828
FY 2015/16	\$1,419,900	3 rd Quarter July to September	\$136,573
FY 2015/16	\$1,419,900	4 th Quarter October to December	\$152,302
TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2015			<u>\$604,671</u>

5. CHALLENGES and WAY FORWARD

5.1 Investigation Challenges

The legislations that govern the Office of the Commissioner for Public Relations clearly outline the appropriate jurisdiction that CPR may act on. There are several matters that have come to our office, whereas, CPR Office has no authority to assist. We are able to direct them to the most appropriate entity to satisfy their needs.

In reviewing the conduct of the general public authorities, public officials and other persons and bodies within jurisdiction, the primary focus of the Commissioner is not to apportion blame. The Commissioner considers that the effectiveness of the Office should be measured by the results that are achieved. In other words, emphasis should be on rectification, not retribution. Given that the Commissioner has no power to enforce compliance with recommendations, it is of vital importance to the effectiveness of the CPR Office that any recommendations made for the purpose of resolving complaints or addressing issues raised in notifications are implemented.

Due to the fact that an Anti-corruption Commissioner has not been appointed, it is challenging for any persons with a corruption complaint to receive any useful advice. However CPR Office refers corrupt natured complaints to the office of the Attorney General's Office or to the Police.

5.2 Human Resources Challenges

The lack of resources of any organization can be the cause of inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Although there have been significant improvements in the CPR Office the past couple of years, there is always room for improvement.

It has been noted earlier in this report that an increase in staff is expected in the next year. With the increase in awareness efforts, it is also foreseen that workload will continue to increase. In order for our office to be efficient and effective, ongoing recruitment is vital. Recruitment is dependent on having office space to work from. This is crucial for the purposes of CPR Office in that a bigger office is needed. The building of staff capacity through relevant trainings would also be beneficial to ensure the right people are placed in the right area to utilize their respective expertise appropriately.

5.3 Systems and Procedures

For the past several years, the CPR Office has been running on outdated systems. There is a need to improve the systems through upgrading to allow an increase in efficiency. This would include engagement of CPR staff with relevant government entities and get the systems' training that is needed. This includes the Sunny system that most government ministries have been connected to and public financial management system training, to include procurement and other finance procedures, would be most useful once an IT staff is recruited. Set procedures are also not in place and in some cases, they exist but not enforced. This includes internal procedures that would assist in the efficient operation of the office as a whole.

5.4 Way Forward and Conclusion

The CPR Office will continue to review its internal processes and procedures and seek out measures that will assist in taking a more proactive approach to achieving its outcomes and outputs set forth in the Corporate Plan. We believe that as we work towards filling the vacant posts in our office, suitable candidates will bring with them their expertise and their background to move the work of CPR Office forward.

We are encouraged by the ongoing support Government has provided in 2015.

The appointment of the Commissioner in 2014 was vital to the development of this office and the Commissioner's desire to continuously improve through its leadership was shown through

his push to appoint a new CEO early in 2015. The new CEO took on several initiatives to not only build the staff capacity within the office but also take measures to reach out to the public to build awareness.

Despite the advice received this year that royal assent was not given to the proposed amendments from 2014 to the Commissioner for Public Relations Act, 2001, the CPR Office continues to work closely with the Ministry of Justice to review the legislations and prepare re-submission of the proposed amendments to the CPR legislation in due course.

We are confident of the effectiveness of our work, and hope that the ministries and organizations complained against, have learnt lessons and have taken crucial steps and extra care not to repeat the same mistake.

Complaint and enquiries are quickly increasing, so has the positive growth in our relationships with Government ministries and organizations.

We aspire to focus our efforts on the vision we have set for CPR Office and to continuously work towards achieving our office mission.

