

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

### Remarks of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The first quarter of FY 2020/2021 has flown by quickly launching us into the final months of the 2020 calendar year. The highlights of cases for the September Quarter show 32 cases closed and a total of 26 new cases.

Outreach was adjusted to comply with emergency pandemic restrictions. Television, radio and internet continued as the main medium of outreach during the reporting period and the state of emergency. ***“Resilience through Good Governance”*** continues to inspire the work of advocacy and investigation of good governance issues. Stay safe and God bless.



Above – Lord Fakavanua (front row, 4<sup>th</sup> from left) and the VIP guests at the TATALA CMS launch.

### Highlights of the Quarter

#### Lord Speaker officially launches the “Tatala” CMS

***(Nuku’alofa, Friday, 31/07/20)*** - The Office of the Ombudsman has celebrated a historical milestone during the quarter with the launch of a new digital Case Management System (CMS). The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Lord Fakafanua, officiated at the launching ceremony and named the CMS as the ***“Tatala.”***

The Lord Speaker said that the name ***“Tatala”*** or ***“to peel”*** as in the work of the CMS, is like an onion where ***“we peel the layers to get to the core of the issue or to reveal the truth.”*** He labelled the system as a ***“vital mechanism in order to support the office’s primary mandate of promoting good governance in Tonga’s public sector.”***

Lord Fakafanua stressed the importance of being resilient during the threats of COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in a crisis never seen before. And at the same time, ***“it calls for resilience and provides opportunities for innovation and the use of digital and telecommunication technology to ensure that we continue to deliver services.”*** Lord Fakafanua was also pleased at the launch of the ***“Tatala”*** which is ***“an ideal, timely and significant milestone.”*** He then commended the Ombudsman, Mr. Aisea Taumoepeau, SC, and the local IT firm, NiuIT, for the concerted effort that resulted in a centralized data management system.

***“It would optimize resources and lead to more efficient resolution of cases through effective collaboration.***

***“The Ombudsman is charged with responding to, and properly investigating citizens’ complaints. Public trust is crucial, so conducting thorough, consistent and timely investigations is extremely important. I am confident that this new CMS will help manage team work flow, avoid unnecessary delays and ensures that cases maintain their momentum,”*** Lord Fakafanua said.

In welcoming the guests, the Ombudsman said that the CMS project was initiated three years earlier while the Attorney General, Mrs. Linda Folaumoetu’i, was the CEO of the office. He also thanked NiuIT for cooperating with his office over the years and despite the challenges, they were able to be resilient and have now achieved this milestone. [\*\(Continue on page 2\)\*](#)



Above - Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Lord Fakafanua launching the ***“TATALA”*** CMS at the Fa’onelua Convention Center. Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2020.

The theme of the Office of the Ombudsman for the FY 2020/21 is -

***“Resilience through Good Governance.”***

*(From page 1)*

The Ombudsman also acknowledged with gratitude the presence of the guest of honor, the Lord Speaker, as well as the President of the Free Constitutional Church of Tonga, Rev. Kinitori Mafi, the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Stephen Caldwell, the Attorney General, Mrs. Folaumoetu'i, Solicitor General, Mr. Sione Sisifā, and the invited guests. The musical group of Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) provided the cultural entertainment.

According to Mr. Kaua Matoto of the 14 year-old NiuIT Technical Group, they started developing the CMS for the Office of the Ombudsman in July of 2019. NiuIT specializes in technical supplies, consultancy and technical services on networking, security and system development.



*Above – Members of the NiuIT consultancy group that designed and developed the TATALA CMS. L-R, Mr. Paula Latu, Assistant System Developer, Mr. Taniela Koloamatangi, Project Leader and Mr. Kaua Matoto (far right). Also shown (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) is Mr. Savelio Mataele, Program Manager of Department of Music of Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI).*

## OMB Office Retreat for new FY 2020/21

The official retreat for the new FY 2020/21 was held following the launch of the new Tatala Case Management System. Lord Fakafanua encouraged the office to use the retreat as a platform to familiarize with the new CMS and to explore vital features of the software, master its functionality and how it can benefit and support the work flow of the office.

“Retreats are intricate platforms for active participation and robust discussion. I am optimistic it would empower and encourage the dedicated and committed staff of the OMB Office to work vigorously under the very capable leadership of the Madam CEO in striving for “resilience through good governance.”

“I urge you all to continue to uphold strategies to promote a process of decision making that is accountable, transparent, just, responsive and participatory.

“The Ombudsman is a key institution for safeguarding and upholding the rule of law. The Legislative Assembly continues to support the work of the OMB Office. Together we work towards promoting good governance and the rule of law so that we could build a more progressive Tonga and guarantee higher quality of life for all,” according to Lord Fakafanua.

The office retreat heard presentations from the Ministries of Finance and National Planning as well as members of the management of the Office of the Ombudsman.



## His Majesty appoints CEO as King's Counsel



The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Office of the Ombudsman, Mrs. 'Alisi Taumoepeau (pictured at right) has been appointed a King's Council (KC). His Majesty, King Tupou VI, officially made the appointment in August after being pleased with the advice of the Judicial Committee, the Lord Chief Justice and the Privy Council.

The appointment of Mrs. 'Alisi Taumoepeau, KC, is another milestone to the Office of the Ombudsman, having been the first woman Solicitor General and Attorney General of Tonga; first woman Cabinet Minister and Minister of Justice, and Acting Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Mrs. Taumoepeau has about four decades of service in the legal profession in Tonga. She holds a Bachelor of Law and a Master of Law (LLM) with Honors from Wellington's Victoria University, and a Barrister and Solicitor of New Zealand.

Mrs. Taumoepeau was appointed together with Law Practitioner, Mrs. Petunia Tupou. Congratulations to these two great women of Tonga's Legal Fraternity.



*(Above) — Mrs. Taumoepeau and Mrs. Tupou, at the investiture ceremony as King's Councils, at the Court of Appeal, Nuku'alofa.*

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## Ombudsman emphasizes Good Leadership

The Ombudsman, Mr. 'Aisea Taumoepeau, SC, was one of two keynote speakers at the Official Retreat of the Ministry of Revenue & Customs, held at the Fe'aomoengalu Hall.

The Hon. Minister, Mr. Tevita Lavemaau, attended the retreat. The other guest speaker was the Head of the Psychiatry Division of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Mapaha'ano Puloka.



The Ombudsman emphasized the importance of good leadership as someone who empowers the employees to help build and advance the organization. He said that a good leader also inspires the employees and the people, shares a common vision and leads the changes in the organization.

"A good leader is a person who influences a group of people towards the achievement of a goal," according to the Ombudsman. He also said that looking forward, it is everyone's determination and commitment to reach a common goal and pathway that produce good results. That is a good leader. A good leader knows the way and shows the way."

The CEO of the Office of the Ombudsman, Mrs. 'Alisi Taumoepeau, KC, also led a brief outreach program to employees of the ministry, assisted by the Communications & Media Officer, Nanise Fifita.

### Monthly Themes for the Quarter

**July—Clarity of Purpose**—to inform and educate the public of work processes, strategies and outcomes

**August—Effective & Efficiency**—to promote and maintain quality service delivery

**September—Good Governance**—to ensure administrative decisions and services of government ministries, agencies and public enterprises are made in accordance with the relevant legislations and policies.

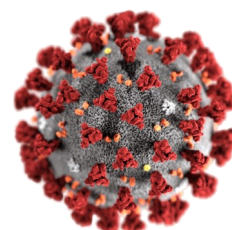
## WHO UPDATE ON COVID-19

Globally, as of 11 November 2020, there have been **51,251,715 confirmed cases** of COVID-19, including **1,270,930 deaths**, reported to WHO.

### Situation by WHO Region

Americas	22,006,044 confirmed
Europe	13,890,009 confirmed
South-East Asia	9,797,966 confirmed
Eastern Mediterranean	3,403,839 confirmed
Africa	1,374,303 confirmed
Western Pacific	778,813 confirmed

Source: World Health Organization  
Data may be incomplete for the current day or week.



*In order to avoid COVID-19, everyone should:*

*Wash your hands often  
Avoid close contact  
Cover your mouth and nose with a mask  
when around others  
Cover coughs and sneezes  
Clean and disinfect  
Monitor Your Health Daily*



## Communications & Media Division (CMD)

**Outreach Programs (OPs)** - The September Quarter was a period of exhausting contacts and reaching out to the public through the use of both traditional and the new media. Face-to-face outreach programs (OPs) were suspended until the last two (2) weeks of the quarter due to the threats of COVID-19 and the imposition of the “new normal.” These affected the implementation of the outreach programs of the Office of the Ombudsman.

The division conducted the OPs via radio, Television and mostly on its official social media page on Facebook and the website.

Thirty-seven (37) postings were made on the official Facebook page during the quarter which were directly linked to the official website ([www.ombudsman.to](http://www.ombudsman.to)).

The declaration of the state of emergency included a national curfew enforced throughout the quarter. Other restrictions included the 1.5-meter social distancing. The Office of the Ombudsman has been very supportive of these decisions by the government and health authorities.

As the theme for this FY 2020/21 of “**Resilience through Good Governance,**” the Office must endeavor to rise above these challenges.

*Below: The CEO, Mrs. ‘Alisi Taumoepeau, KC, leading the Outreach Program for students of “Kolo Tapu” class, Sia’atoutai Theological College.*



*Below: The District & Town Officers of Kolofo’ou and Kolomotu’a Districts received the outreach program of the office.*



**Website & Facebook Visits – July – September Quarter** – The table below shows the number of ‘Likes’ and ‘Followers’ on Facebook page as well as the number of visits to our Website during the quarter.

### Facebook Likes & Followers and Website Visits

Number of Visits	Facebook		Website visits
July	Likes	27	916
	Followers	30	
August	Likes	21	1,186
	Followers	22	
September	Likes	5	1,075
	Followers	6	
TOTAL		111	3,177

**Office Activities—STAFF OF THE MONTH** - Congratulations to the following staff who have performed outstandingly in their respective tasks and responsibilities during the quarter:

**June**—Mrs. Sisilia Tokai, Senior Assistant Secretary (*Awarded during the Retreat in late July*)

**July** – Miss Jane Lavemai, Contract Assistant Accountant

**August** – Mr. Sione Hamani Topui, Senior Investigator

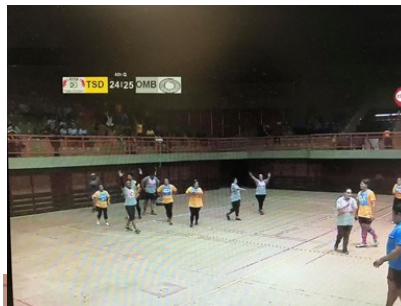
**September** - Mrs. Konikotia Taunaholo, Accounting Officer



## SECOND GOLD FOR THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Ombudsman has won another Gold, this time in the Corporate Netball Tournament 2020 against the Statistics Department Team, 25-24. The combined OMB/RFB team featured Soane Hehea, Litia Tonga and Roman Vaihū (pictured at left below). The OMB/RFB collective team effort aced the Tier 2 of the Tonga Netball Association tournament. This has been the second gold for the office with the first in hockey last year. Thousands of people watched the final at the 'Atele Indoor Stadium and via live internet streaming by TV Tonga. The office specially recognized Soane as the top-player of the team during the retreat (pictured at far right with the Ombudsman).

Congratulations to all team members of both offices.



## HEALTH QUEST

(Right) Mrs. Mo'onia Taufa, Computer Operator Gr. 1, won first prize for being the “Biggest Loser” in weight, for July, 2020.



(Right) The combined OMB & RFB sports team members in action at Teufaiva Park

