

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Promoting Integrity



Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region (APOR) Conference Members, Melbourne, Australia.

Remarks of the Ombudsman

Malo e lelei and a prosperous new year to you all from the Office of the Ombudsman, Tonga.

The December quarter, hosted APOR October, November and UNCAC and COSP10 in December.

In particular noting, the importance of our commitment to improving public administration and ensuring fairness.

Thank you all for promoting, and being the face of, integrity.

Mrs. 'Alisi Numia Taumoepeau, KC
Ombudsman.

Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region (APOR)

The Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region (APOR) conference was held on 31 October 2023 in Melbourne, Australia. The Tonga Ombudsman and A/CEO attended. The conference was hosted by Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass and themed "Through The Ombudsman looking Glass: Now And Into The Future".

APOR Members reflected on and reaffirmed:

- The importance of independent and autonomous Ombudsman institutions to improving public administration and ensuring fairness.
- The role of the Ombudsman in the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

Ombudsman throughout the region acknowledge the importance of their role in empowering those aggrieved by the actions of government agencies and supporting their human rights.

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UN Human Rights Treaty Body Follow-up Review Outreach

Pilot

The United Nations Human Rights Treaty Body Follow-Up Review Pilot in the Pacific Region was held in Nadi, Fiji on the 28th - 30th November, 2023.

Mr. Roman Vaihu, Director of Investigations and A/CEO of the Ombudsman Office attended.

UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) Atlanta Conference



The United States hosted the 10th Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption in Atlanta, Georgia from December 11—15, 2023.

The Tonga delegation consisted of the Minister of Justice, Chairman, Parliament Anti-Corruption Committee, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the Ombudsman, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Attorney General as focal point.

The conference convened the states parties to the UNCAC and civil society stakeholders to advance anti-corruption obligations and policy priorities. It is the preeminent global forum focused on implementation of the anti-corruption commitments.

“Outreach strengthens the principles of good governance. Through outreach programmes, people understand that the Ombudsman Office is not political but doing their job as prescribed by law.” (Former Ombudsman ‘Aisea Taumoepeau)

Public Holidays of the Quarter

November 4 - Tonga National Day / Constitution

December 4 - Anniversary of the Coronation of King Tupou I

December 25 - Christmas Day

Ombudsman Monthly Themes

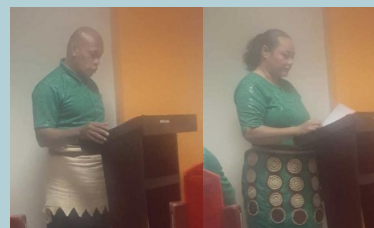
October - Independence

November - Constitution

December - Good Governance

Monthly Devotions included:

October Devotion



Tevita Kafoa (top left) and Me Saafi Via (top right) leading the October Monthly Devotion.

The October monthly devotion of the Office of the Ombudsman for 2023 was lead by staff members Me Saafi Via (Computer Operator) and Tevita Kafoa (VIP Driver). Their text was based on Galatians 6:9 “*Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*”

December devotion

L-R, front row: Mr. Sateki 'Ahio (D/CEO), Ombudsman, Mrs. 'Alisi Taumoepeau, KC., and Rev. Dr. Mele'ana Puloka, together with staff.



The last monthly devotion of the Office of the Ombudsman for 2023 was led by Rev. Dr. Mele'ana Puloka on the theme of "Trust in God," held on Friday, 1st December.

Rev. Dr. Puloka was the first Tongan Principal of Queen Salote College, was one of the first women-ordained ministers of the Free Wesleyan Church (FWC), former President of the FWC Education, Director of Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) and Director of Evangelism.

She shared her experience of trusting God for guidance. Her text was from Proverbs 3:5 & 6 *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."* She encouraged staff that no matter how difficult the situation may be, being totally dependent and trusting God for guidance brings success. @OMBTonga.

Training

i. Good Governance (NZ Short Term Scholarship)

Mr. Mosese Uili (Senior Investigation Officer), sponsored by the New Zealand Government, attended a 2-week training scholarship course on Good Governance organised and facilitated by the University of Auckland and the Public Policy Institute.

This training explored the definition and characteristics of good governance and ways to fight bureaucratic corruption.

ii. Leadership

Investigation Officer – Mr. Siosaia Tu'i'onetoa participated in Leadership Training at Puataukanave

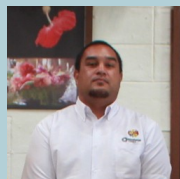
Hotel, Vava'u.

The Modules were,

- Adaptive Leadership;
- Formal and informal authority; and
- Knowing yourself.

Staff of the Month

During the quarter, four (4) of the staff members were acknowledged for their dedication and commitment to their respective work and upholding the values of Integrity.



October – Mr. Fotu'aika 'Ataveifoa, (VIP Driver) was awarded Staff of the Month for October, 2023.



November – Mrs. Konikotia Taunaholo, (Accountant Officer) was awarded Staff of the Month for November, 2023.



December – Mrs. Sisilia Tokai, (PA and Senior Assistant Secretary) was awarded Staff of the Month for December, 2023.

Staff of the Year



The Ombudsman Management Committee acknowledges a staff member annually for their all-year-round dedication and commitment to the Office of the Ombudsman.

Mrs. Sisilia Tokai (above) was awarded this certificate and congratulated for her outstanding work ethic.

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