



Pacific Governance and Anti-Corruption Program Newsletter

"Shoulder to shoulder"

*Supporting and strengthening Ombudsman and Allied Institutions to
combat corruption in the Pacific*

First edition, 21 June 2017

Welcome to the inaugural Pacific Governance and Anti-Corruption Program (PGAC) newsletter. The PGAC Program partners Ombudsman, Audit and Leadership Code Commission organisations in seven Pacific countries. This includes Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu, and Tonga. The program is supported by the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, and funded by the Australian Government Partnerships for Development Program.

Pacific Leaders Integrity Meeting

A Pacific Leaders Integrity Meeting was held in Canberra, Australia on 4 April 2017. Attendees included leaders from Ombudsman, Audit Offices and Leadership Code Commissions from the seven PGAC partner countries.

The group discussed strategy and priorities for the program, as well as opportunities to work together, flexible funding initiatives and training opportunities. Updates were provided from each of the jurisdictions.



International Integrity Leaders

International Integrity Leaders Forum

An International Integrity Leaders Forum was held in Canberra, Australia on 6-7 April 2017. Leaders from the seven PGAC nations were in attendance, along with leaders from the Ombudsman Republik of Indonesia.

The Forum was facilitated by former Deputy Secretary of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection and provided leaders with an opportunity to discuss issues of leadership and organisational management.

Conflict of Interest Training



Training participants

Conflict of interest management training took place in Nadi, Fiji on 1-3 May 2017. 23 participants took part in the training from across the seven PGAC nations.

The training was conducted by Mr Robert Buchanan, a public sector lawyer from Wellington, New Zealand, with experience working in the New Zealand Ombudsman and Audit Offices.

Participants tackled theory, practical scenarios and management tools relating to conflicts of interest within a Pacific context.

A highlight of the training was a question and answer session on understanding the 'hard cases' and dealing with reputational risks. A panel of three leaders were selected from within the group to represent the Ombudsman's offices (Mr Darval Simon from Vanuatu), Leadership Code Commission (Mr Solomon Kalu from the Solomon Islands) and Audit Offices (Mrs Sophia Pretrick from the Pohnpei State Office) jurisdictions.

Wontok and Conflict of Interest

What can you do when you have to investigate someone who is also part of your wantok? Does that create a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest can arise when our personal and private interests intersect, or conflict, with our public duties, the interest of our employer or the entity we serve, or our responsibilities to other people.

A real or perceived conflict of interest may occur if an officer is undertaking an investigation into, or on behalf of, a person who is part of their wantok.

As it is not always practicable to exclude yourself from involvement in the investigation, the answer lies in disclosure. Let someone else consider whether the situation causes a problem with the conduct of your work and whether or not you should excuse yourself from the investigation.

Project Funding Applications

Applications are now open for project funding under the PGAC program. The purpose of the project funding is to address partner-identified needs, deliver sustainable improvements and support the cooperative efforts of Ombudsman, Auditor-General's and Leadership Code bodies addressing maladministration and corruption.

A reminder that applications for the PGAC Flexible Funding Pool close Friday 23 June 2017. Please provide applications to international@ombudsman.gov.au by this date.

Contact us: international@ombudsman.gov.au

RECENT APPOINTMENTS Commonwealth Ombudsman



Mr Michael Manthorpe PSM was appointed on 8 May 2017 as Commonwealth Ombudsman for a five year term.

Mr Manthorpe brings with him a wealth of experience from his many years in senior leadership roles across the Australian Public Service, including in the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Solomon Islands Ombudsman



Photo: Solomon Islands PM's Press Secretariat

Frederick Leve Fakarii was appointed for a five-year term as Ombudsman of the Solomon Islands.

Mr Fakari was sworn in on 11 May 2017.

Mr Fakarii is a long serving and experienced public servant, formerly the acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Mr Fakarii replaces Mr Joe Poraiwai who held the position for two terms.