

Ministry of Public Service

Newsletter

Volume 1: Issue 1

2022: January – April

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Ministry of Public Service Launches Annual Work Plan 2022



(L-R) Ministry of Public Service Human Resource Manager Luke Cheka, Permanent Secretary of Public Service (middle), and Minister Hon. Makario Tagini Launching the Annual Work Plan 2022.

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The Ministry of Public Service has launched its Annual Work Plan 2022. The Annual Work Plan is one of the Ministry's key documents that outlines all the activities that will be implemented by the Ministry in 2022.

It also shows how the Ministry will implement the activities, when they will be implemented, the budget, and expected results.

During the launching ceremony held at the IPAM Conference Room, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service, Nego Sisiolo reiterated that the Plan is very important to the ministry as the ministry's finances will only be spent on its activities in the Annual Work Plan. You can have access to the Annual Work Plan at the Ministry of Public Service Office.

Work on new Public Service Bill progressing well

By Isabella Kaoa-

The Ministry of Public Service (MPS) proposed to table the much-awaited Public Service Bill 2020 in Parliament by July this year. The Bill has now reached its final stage of legal drafting and is with the Attorney General's Office.

The new Public Service Bill will replace the current Public Service Act (Cap. 92), it is one of the key priorities for the Ministry of Public Service (MPS) under the DCGA policy redirection.

The Public Service Bill will be presented to Cabinet before the end of May 2022 for endorsement. It will be forwarded to the Bills and Legislation Committee for deliberations before enactment by Parliament in the July sitting.

The MPS management with the support of the Minister for the Ministry of Public Service has prioritized the Bill to be presented to Parliament. The aim is to introduce the Bill to Cabinet and Parliament in Mid –2022, with the new legislative framework likely to commence in the latter half of this year, 2022.

The proposed Bill and subsidiary legislation including the new set of regulations, orders, and guidance will support improved governance in the Solomon Islands Public Service, which is a key development priority under the SIG National Development Strategy 2016 – 2035.

The subsidiary legislation that is currently in review to be compatible with the Public Service Bill is the Public Service Commission Regulation, Public Service Orders formally known as the General Orders, and their Guidance.

Public Servants Received Long Dedicated Service Benefits

By Baddeley Nimepo-

Most retired eligible public servants who have completed their service to the Government in 2021 have received their Long-Dedicated Service Benefits.

This is a benefit in a form of financial package that is given to permanent officers who served the

Solomon Islands Government for a period of a minimum of 15 years' time period.

With a total of 307 applicants for LDSB, 96.4% (296 retirees) were paid. A total payment for LDSB in 2021 was \$21,123, 796.08m.

The Government's ability to settle LDSB claims is enhanced through a cost-sharing arrangement with ministries. So, with this \$21.1m LDSB committed in 2021, 51.1% (\$10,919, 829) of the funding comes from the MPS budget and the remaining 48.9% (\$10,203,967.08) comes from respective line ministries whose officers retired from service.

The other 3.6% (14 retirees) applicants for LDSB were either deferred or rejected.

MPS commences Graduate Trainee Program

By Andrew Noli Junior-

The Ministry of Public Service, Graduate Trainee program has commenced in October 2021. 10 Graduates are recruited for the program.

It is a program that seeks to train and accommodate tertiary graduate students into the workforce of the Ministry of Public Service. Graduate Trainees will have the chance to be trained mentored, experienced, and work in various divisions within the Ministry of Public Service. Most of the students are students who have just completed their studies in various educational institutions in the country and abroad. They are eager to learn and be part of the workforce of the government.

Since, assuming the positions, they have been trained on the systems and processes of the Ministry of Public Service and Government. Currently, they have been rotated to other divisions within the Ministry. The shifting was for graduates to be knowledgeable and understand each division's roles and functions. Also, for them to be involved in inclusive government policies and understand the know-how to serve in the workforce of the Ministry.

The Corporate Service Division is responsible for managing the human resource development of the graduates



(L-R) Graduate Trainee's Rhona Qaqa and Johan Houhiapa in their workstations

Public Service Housing Assistance Policy before Cabinet

By Ian Rakafia-

The new approach to managing Public Servants Housing Public Service Housing Assistance (PSHA) is now ready to be presented to Cabinet. There are many queries raised regarding the past Public Service Rental Scheme (PSRS) and it is anticipated to end in June and the subsequent commencement of the implementation of the PSHA Policy.

In a Circular Memorandum No. 12/2021 dated 20 December, Public Servants were informed of the continuation of PSRS till June and the PSHA policy implementation commencing on 1st July 2022. Since this was a matter involving Cabinet's decision, only Cabinet can determine whether to cease the PSRS and commence with PSHA or undertake other options.

During the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Hearings on the 2022 Budget, the PAC raised concerns about the effects of the new government housing rental policy on public servants. The PAC recommends the Ministry of Public Service undertake an assessment to understand the effects of government housing rental policy on Public Servants and the Housing Market. The assessment is conducted by the Ministry of Public Service.

With the PAC recommendations, the Cabinet holds the final decision on whether to commence with PSHA in July or extend the PSRS further to a later date. Once a Cabinet decision is reached on this matter, all public officers will be duly informed.

31 Cases of Misconduct Reported in 2021

By Baddeley Nimepo-

A total of 31 Cases of Misconduct in office by Public Servants is reported in 2021. Discipline management is delegated responsibility with the Ministry of Public Service. The body primarily vested with powers to exercise disciplinary control for Public officers is the relevant Service Commission.

For the period 2020/2021 a total of 31 cases of alleged misconduct were reported to MPS and were administered by the MPS Professional Standard team. Of these 77% (24) of cases reported were completed, and the remaining 23% (7 cases) are still in progress.

Freeze on Non-essential jobs to continue into 2022

By Baddeley Nimepo-

There will be continuous freezing and control of recruitment in the non-essential service roles. This is one of the key policies of DCGA implemented through MPS and is done to ensure finances are managed and directed to priority workforce areas.

Whilst that is enforced, the MPS stepped-up Establishment support to key social sector bodies – the MHMS and MPNSCS by allocating 56% (439 posts) of the total 778 budgeted vacant positions.

This should enable these Ministries to surge needed human capacity so that they are well-positioned to look after the security and health of our people.

The remaining 44% (339 posts) of budgeted vacant positions are shared among other ministries.

Early Retirement Policy Program for Public Servants

By Baddeley Nimepo-

MPS is working on finalizing the Early Retirement Policy. It is one of the DCGA Redirection Policies aimed at giving its workforce a chance to retire early and partake in private beneficial ventures.

Ministry has set-out administrative mechanisms to implement this policy in 2022. In managing its

workforce and in line with the estimated early retirement budget, the MPS plans to carry out

retirement exercises for approximately 50 officers between the age of 50 and 54 years old.

Once approved, early retired officers shall be remunerated with what we called ERESA – Early Retirement Economic Stimulus Assistance + usual retirement benefits such as LDSB as they gracefully leave the service.

It is expected that the assistance will support them to participate in economic activities.

Public Service Retirement Planning (PSRP) Training Review

By Solomon Manea-

On the 28th of March, 2022, the PSRP review team met to review the pilot training/workshop. The team consist of Leadership Management Development Unit (IPAM) and Separation Unit officers Workforce Management Division (WFM).

This training/workshop is aimed at preparing public officers for the life outside of the public service and encouraging public officers to be engaged in economic activities that can contribute to the local economy. This is in line with the DCGA "Early Retirement Policy".



(L- R) Mark Koethivoo and Martha Talika of WFM division and Steven Amasia of IPAM Division reviewing the PSRP pilot training workshop document in a review meeting on the 28th of March, 2022, in IPAM VC room.

Prevalence of Sexual Harassment Study underway

By Simon Dolaiano-

MPS under its Public Service Transformation Strategy Thrust 6: Sensitising Gender in Governance key strategies is currently, conducting a study on Sexual Harassment in the Public Service. The Ministry of Public Service has engaged the services

of a consultancy team to conduct a Prevalence study on Sexual Harassment in the Public Service.

The work on the Prevalence Study on Sexual Harassment in the Public Service is progressing well. Although, the COVID-19 community transmission and lockdown had affected the timeframe of the study. The collection of data has been successfully completed. The Data collection includes conducting a survey across the public service including teachers and interviews.

The consultancy team is now working on the second stage of the study. That is analysing the raw data collected. When the initial analysis is done. The consultants will provide their preliminary findings to the ministry.

MPS recognizes Corporate staffs for service during Covid-19 outbreak.

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The Ministry of Public Service has recognized Three of its Corporate staff. This is for their work during the Covid 19 breakout in Honiara and around the country. They are Luke Cheka, Gareth Sammy and Joseph Kakaro. Luke Cheka is the Ministry of Public Service Human Resource Manager. Gareth Sammy is the Ministries Desktop Officer and Joseph Kakaro works as Senior Accountant.

Those three staff played a crucial role in ensuring the ministries' administrative and operational tasks are maintained during the Lockdown. While all staff remained in their homes due to the lockdown and curfew, the three staff a up and running to ensure key office operational matters such as Salaries, Office Bills, MPS Payments, and functions are processed and up to date. This is during the riskiest part of the covid outbreak. During that period, it is not safe to commute, especially with the disease widespread in Honiara. The Permanent Secretary thank the officers for being responsive and displaying patriotism when the Ministry needs them most.

They received their awards during MPS Quarter 1 Reflections, Recognition and Launching of the 2022 Annual Work Plan Program held at IPAM Conference Room.



Mr. Joseph Kakaro, Senior Accountant, Ministry of Public Service (3rd from left), receiving Award Certificate from Minister of Public Service, Hon. Makario Tagini.

MPS Standby Generator and Air-Condition maintained

By Andrew Noli Junior-

The Corporate Service Division has recently sorted out the Ministry of Public Service Standby Generator. The Generator has not been working for the last six (6) months and it causes a lot of inconvenience to the ministry operation. Furthermore, Honiara has experienced power cuts that affect the ministry's daily operations. The failure of the generator to operate after power cuts was due to its batteries being removed the late last year 2021. The Ministry through the Corporate Service has sorted out two new batteries and is currently conveniently operational without disrupting MPS operations.

The Ministry's Office air conditioning system is also restored to full operation after malfunctioning for nearly 2 years. This has affected the work environment of the Ministry which is sometimes not conducive due to the heat of the sun. However, this has already been resolved. The MPS Corporate Service Division successfully produced a service agreement with an Air Condition Supplier for Service Maintenance over three (3) months to service the MPS Air condition. The Service Agreement is signed between Vanua Holdings Limited.

In the agreement, it is expected that they will be servicing the Air Condition System within the next four quarters of 2022. Vanua Holdings Limited started servicing the MPS Air Condition in the first quarter of 2022 (Jan-March 2022).

IPAM held Zoom Online Trainings

By Solomon Manea-

The Institute of Public Administration and Management has suspended all its training in Quarter 1, 2022 due to the community transmission. This will be reviewed based on the situation. If the situation improves training will continue again in Quarter 2.

In spite of this, three zoom online meeting training were conducted. These series of training were demanded in SIG to build the capacity of Executive Personal Secretaries and Administration Officers to arrange virtual meetings for senior management. Virtual meetings are now used to ensure connectivity in SIG. Three more zoom online training is scheduled for this year.

OPMC is also engaged in the zoom online meeting sessions to make awareness of the SIG virtual policy.

This review identified areas that would improve the training/workshop, making it a relevant and suitable training for public officers.

The reviewed training/workshop is scheduled for 30th – 31st August, 2022.



Mr. Bata'anisia, OPMC (3rd from right), Hemaima Moveni, IPAM ICT trainer (5th from right) with Ministry of Health Officials in IPAM ICT lab.

MPS total budget for 2022 Approved

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The Ministry of Public Service will have 29M to resource its activities for this year 2022. Approved by parliament, the budget is set to be rolled to resource many of the policy reformation programs of the Solomon Islands Government for its public service workforce.

The Ministry's Recurrent Budget with 26M has the bigger share of the budget as it covers all administrative and operational costs as well which include salaries.

The development Budget has 2M of the share and it will be used to further key DCGA Policy reform programs for the Public Service such as the Early Retirement Program.

"NO Jab, No Job" Policy enforced

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The "No Jab, No Job" Policy of the Government is now enforced and some Public Servants will be affected. With the Government's mandatory policy on Covid19 Vaccinations for public servants, employees are contractually obligated to ensure they are vaccinated. This policy is aimed to keep the Public Service Workforce safe from the deadly Covid-19 Disease.

However, as of 31st January 2022, the Ministry identified over 200 officers who choose not to be vaccinated. Through its verification process, the Ministry verified almost 100 officers and thus ceased their salaries.

The Ministry now proceeds on undertaking due disciplinary process ensuring that justice is accorded to those concerned before the matter is concluded.

20 Public Servants awarded SIG Scholarship in 2021

By Baddeley Nimepo-

With a total of 50 applicants submitted for long-term in-service study, 40% (20 officers) were awarded SIG scholarships.

These officers on supernumerary positions and are on paid 50% salary for the duration of their study leave. The 50% salary for officers on supernumerary positions is a newly adopted policy and is now part of the Public Service terms and conditions of service.

Public Service Annual Leave days reduced

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The Public Service Leave Conditions have been reviewed and the number of Leave Days reduced. A

review of the conditions has been conducted in 2021 by the MPS. One of the key findings after the review is the past 42 Days' time frame is very long. A paper on the recommendations from the review for improving the conditions was presented to the cabinet which is approved and endorsed.

With the new Leave Conditions, officers L7 and above will have their 42 Days reduced to 28 days. Officers L3-6 will be reduced from 36 to 21 days and staff L1-2 reduced from 24 to 18 days.

Work on MPS Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework nears completion

By Baddeley Nimepo-

The Ministry of Public Service is expected to have a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MPS MELF) in place by end of this year 2022. It is a result and evidence-based framework that is developed to assist the ministry in monitoring and evaluating the its work.

The Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Unit of the Ministry conducted a study on Organisational M&E Systems in the Solomon Islands in 2020 and it is the findings of the study that has been used to design the MEL Framework.

Currently, the MEL Unit of the Ministry is working on compiling the MEL Framework. It is expected to be presented to relevant stakeholders in the next months to get their inputs before it is finalized.

The MPS MELF works together with the Public Service Transformation Strategy (PSTS) and currently, that document is under review for redesigning. It is expected that MPS MELF and Redesigned PSTS are to be launched together at the end of 2022.

There Ministry has been doing Monitoring and Evaluation but on ad-hoc bases. There have been limited plan to put in place to do Monitoring and Evaluation in the Ministry. However, with the completion of this Framework, M&E functions in the Ministry are expected to be strengthened and improved.

Ministry of Public Service

Background Information

MISSION - To enhance a competent, inclusive and sustainable public service focused upon strong ethical leadership

MPS operates under the Public Service Act 1988, its basic functions and responsibilities are to:

- (a) Determine, review and administer the terms and conditions of service for public servants;
- (b) Promote and administer in-service capability development for public servants;
- (c) Determine, review, amalgamate or abolish organisational structures in the public service;
- (d) Administer and control the establishment workforce budget in the public service;
- (e) Performing secretariat roles to the Public Service Commission, Judicial and Legal Service Commission and the Police and Correctional Service Commissions, and
- (f) Performing disciplinary and control functions delegated by the Public Service Commission

Implementing Divisions of the Ministry of Public Service:

- (a) Public Service Commission
- (b) Governance and Performance Management
- (c) Workforce Management
- (d) Corporate
- (e) Institute of Public Administration and Management



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