

**2014**

**National Parliament of Solomon Islands**

**Strategy Annual Report**



**Volume Three**



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## Preface



Dear Sir,

The year 2014 saw the end of the 9th Parliament in September and the ushering in of the 10th Parliament in December. This transition impacted on the programs of Parliament and the implementation of the NPSI Strategy. Furthermore 2014 is the halfway mark of the strategy implementation period and thus the need to look back at what we have achieved so far, the lessons learnt and refocus our attention to achieve the results remaining for the of rest implementation period 2015 to 2016.

We have arrived at the end of the third cycle of implementing the NPSI strategy and as required, in the strategy plan, I delightfully present this report to your office.

There are areas of success during this year and calls for celebration of these achievements and successes. As well there are areas needing improvement that calls for commitment, refocus, strategic problem solving and team work to deliver the expected results. This annual report sums up these successes and point out areas that need improvements.

It is apparent that the implementation of this strategic plan occurs at the departmental level, therefore strategic thinking and leadership at the departmental level

is critical and essential for successful implementation of the plan and delivery of the expected results. I acknowledge the effort all Heads of Department have made in coordinating their team at departmental level. NPO staff have done amazingly well during this reporting period.

Thank you Strategy Support Unit team for coordinating the 2014 Strategy implementation program.

Looking forward to the next strategy cycle.

May God Bless and strengthen NPSI and NPO staff to accomplish the NPSI vision and mission

**Taeasi Sanga**

**Clerk of Parliament**

## Foreword



Thank you Clerk and NPO staff for the consistent effort of keeping the vision in focus and striving to fulfill the mission of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands through the implementation of its Strategic Plan. I pleasantly accept this 2014 Strategy Annual Report Volume 3.

Without the support of our partners, success would have been on the far side. Thus I acknowledge and thank the following organizations for the close cooperation and helping hand rendered to Parliament staff and Members of Parliament in many ways.

- UNDP for the project support in funding a number of activities and trainings in 2014;
- NPSI twin partners —the NSW Parliament and the Bougainville House of Representatives for training of Committee Secretariat. The training builds institutional capacity that would last.
- NZ Parliament for training the Hansard team on effective Hansard work. The training was another institutional capacity building.

More interaction and engagement in the future is the best way forward between NPSI and its partners

The release of this volume 3 has once again proven the continuous commitment and dedication of the Clerk and the team of staff serving at the NPSI. Thank you NPSI team for a job well done. Congratulations!

Having witnessed the commitment of the Clerk and Staff of the National Parliament, am confident that the NPO team will continue to support the Speaker in the next cycle.

**Sir Allan Kemakeza**  
**Speaker of Parliament**

## Executive Summary

As the 9th Parliament wound up in September and the 10th Parliament began after the 19 November General Elections, the effects of transitioning from the 9th to the 10th Parliament commenced since the beginning of the year. In what has been commonly referred to as the “11th hour” the impact of it has been tremendous especially in terms of the implementation of the *National Parliament of Solomon Islands Strategy 2012-2016*.

From January to September there were a total of 48 Parliament sitting days. Committees on the other hand have 56 deliberative meetings and 32 Hearings. This brings the total of Parliament and Committee meetings to 136 over a period of 9 months (January to September). These meetings affect the implementation of the Parliament strategy. When Parliament and Committee Hearings occur, all resources and staff support are needed to ensure a smooth execution of Parliament business. Hence all other activities are often halted to avail resources to Parliament sittings and Committee hearings.

Generally the implementation of the NPSI strategy in 2014 have successes in some areas and challenges that calls for improvement in other areas.

Successes in objective 1 include; about 90% completion of paper work on the autonomy plan, 78% of 2014 vacancies filled, painting of the Parliament building roof, successful restoration of NPSI network data after its breakdown in January, a good number of staff attended trainings related to their work and the successful overhaul of the NPO standby generators.

Areas needing improvement include; the need to complete the spot improvement program for Parliament buildings; need to complete the Committee Office design, Performance Management Processes needs coordinated execution; training policy needs to be put in place, enforcement of the admission rules needs strengthening and the need to keep up to date upload of Hansard transcripts.

Successes in objective 2 include; 3 workshops that educate Civi Society Organizations (CSO) and State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) representatives and government officials about the legislative processes, involvement of CSO's SOE's and government officials in Committee Hearings and the successful amendments of the Standing Orders. These have contributed to improving citizens participation in the legislative process.

Some of the areas needing improvement include; the need to develop and implement a legislative calendar, the need to consistently implement Committee work plans and the need to train MPs on their roles in Committees.

Under objective 3, the following are some of the achievements made in 2014: training of Committee secretariat staff on the inquiry processes and report writing, proper scrutiny of all Bills committed to Parliamentary Committees, successful scrutiny of all Appropriation and Supplementary Appropriation Bills committed to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) scrutiny and review of financial reports of ministries and government agencies and the internal rearrangement of the library which now provide sufficient space for



research and easy access to library digital materials.

Some of the areas that need improvement under Objective 3 are; 7 inactive Parliamentary Committees need to develop and implement work-plans and there is a need to increase dialogue between MPs and stakeholders.

For strategy Objective 4, success have been in the following areas; school visits to Parliament have been on going although Parliament experienced a low turn out in this year, the probable ripple effect of Parliament dissolution in September. The media awareness workshop about the role of Parliament was another successful achievement under this objective.

The development of the Press Gallery office space, YWPG implementation of its activities and the continuous dissemination of information about the Parliament through media and website are achievements under objective 4.

There are areas that need improvement in the implementation of Objective 4 especially in the following areas; need to develop and implement the Speaker's constituency visit program per year, need develop and Implement a work plan on the activities of the MPs' Spouses programme, need to facilitate the Speaker's reflection group and also there is a need to increase and improve links with provincial legislative assemblies. The details of these achievements and areas needing improvement are discussed in this report.

## Acronyms

BLC	Bills and Legislation Committee
DAWPs	Departmental Annual Work Plans
EG	Executive Group
FRC	Foreign Relations Committee
HODs	Heads of Department
MG	Management Group
MOFT	Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MPs	Members of Parliament
MPS	Ministry of Public Service
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPO	National Parliament Office
NPSI	National Parliament of Solomon Islands
OPMC	Office of the Prime Minister's and Cabinet
PMP	Performance Management Process
PS Form 10	Public Service Form 10
PSP	Parliamentary Strengthening Project
SSU	Strategy Support Unit
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
SOE	State Owned Enterprises
AVID	Australian Volunteers for International Development



## Guiding Principles

### Our Vision

The Vision of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands is:

To be a modern Parliament that fulfils its constitutional duties and effectively serves the people of Solomon Islands

### Our Mission

The Mission Statement of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands for the period 2012-2016 is:

As the democratically elected national legislature of Solomon Islands, our mission is to ensure that Parliament exercises its legislative, oversight, representation and outreach duties effectively and that Parliament remains the main forum for national political debate.

### Our Core Values

Whilst moving towards achieving the Vision and Mission of the legislature, the Parliament as a whole, both the elected Members and the National Parliament Office staff, must be guided by the Core Values of the Parliament.

As a democratically elected Parliament, we recognize that we are here to serve the people and we must hold and follow the highest ethics and values in order to serve the people of Solomon Islands.



## **The Parliament's Strategic Objectives for the period 2012-2016**

1. To develop the general capacity of the Parliament and to enhance the institutional capacity of the National Parliament staff to serve Parliament
2. To improve the legislative process in Parliament to ensure enhanced scrutiny and quality of legislation
3. To improve the capacity of Parliament to provide effective oversight
4. To develop the education and outreach work of Parliament and the representative role of MPs

## Strategic Objective 1:

**To develop the general capacity of the Parliament and to enhance the institutional capacity of the National Parliament staff to serve Parliament**

### 1.1 PARLIAMENTARY AUTONOMY

#### **A. Autonomy**

Work on the autonomy project is progressing well and on schedule. The following activities have been accomplished since November 2013 to September 2014:

1. A Baseline study about Parliamentary autonomy was conducted in late 2013 and a report was produced on based on the study findings.
2. A comparative desk research on the UK House of Commons, NSW state Parliament and NZ Parliament was conducted and a report produced on the findings. The Autonomy working team agreed on developing a model that combines some features of NZ Parliament, NSW Parliament but taking into consideration the NPSI context.
3. Autonomy Options Paper was developed based on the comparative research findings mentioned in 2 above. This resulted in the development of the autonomy road map which specifies the remaining priority autonomy activities for 2014 and 2015 .
4. Dialogue with government on progress of autonomy began as of June 2014 with a letter from the Speaker to the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OPMC) stating Parliament's desire and plan to be autonomous in terms of managing finances allocated

to the NPSI and recruitment of personnel to work in Parliament. There were no formal responses from the OPMC at the time of writing of this report.

5. Drafting of legislations is the final step in the plan but this awaits OPMC's response to the Speaker's memo (mentioned in 4 above).

#### **Finance and Budget**

##### **Presentation to Management Group**

The Finance and Accounts team and the Parliament Departments Heads, continue to do presentations to the Management Group (MG), updating the Speaker, Clerk and staff about Parliament budget. The Financial Controller also presents financial reports to the Executive Group (EG) during Executive Group meetings.

There was a significant drop in the Management Group and Executive Group meetings this year with only 3 MG and 3 EG meetings held. The reduction in meetings was partly caused by much focus and attention drawn to attendance to Parliament and Committee Hearings, an effort to complete Parliament business before the dissolution of the House in September.

##### **2015 NPO budget bid**

The NPO Finance and Accounts department prepared and submitted the 2015 budget bid to the Ministry of Finance. The submission was made on time inline with the Ministry of Finance August deadline.

### 1.2—1.3. Strengthen Corporate Services and Human Resources

A new addition to the NPO organizational structure effected in 2014 was the establishment of the Parliamentary Research Unit under the Library department. The Research Officer is responsible for conducting research into Bills and issues of interest to the Parliamentary Committees. This has been a function commonly performed by the Committee Secretariat and with the establishment of the research unit, the research team will assist the Committee Secretariat on research work.

The UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project funded employment of the first Research Officer who worked under the supervision of Ms Jayne McPherson an Australian Volunteer for International Development (AVID) temporarily engaged (April-September) by Parliament to establish the research unit.

#### Strategy Reviews

Preparation of Departmental Annual Work Plans (DAWPs) for 2014 took place since October 2013 at the release of the 2014 Corporate Work Plan. However a few departments were not able to put together their 2014 DAWPs by the time of the first Strategy Review in February.

During the first review only nine departments were able to present their DAWPs and plans for the year. In the second review, seven departments presented their DAWP's and present report of their progress.

The final review occurred in October and all departments presented their DAWPs before the Strategy Support Unit team. The following table shows the Strategy Review Program and the level of participation.

Strategy interview dates and departments involved

Strategy Interview	Dates	Departments Participated
1	27-28 Feb	9 Departments
2	6-7 Jun	7 Departments
3	25-26 Sep	12 Departments

The above table shows a decreased involvement of departments in the strategy review cycle especially at the beginning and middle of the year.

There is a need for more engagement of all departments in the strategy cycle with all staff in the departments involving in the process rather than having the HOD and assistant only attending Strategy reviews. This was raised during the Strategy Workshop held on 22 October.

There is also a need to strengthen the accountability mechanism putting HODs to account and report DAWP progress to the SSU on a quarterly basis. One of the tools used to account for the reporting of events in quarters is the situational reports (SitReps) produced by the United Nations Development Program Parliamentary Strengthening Project Manager. This could also be integrated with the strategy DAWP reporting to increase the frequency of reporting of activities done, goals achieved and improve accountability.

### *NPO Staffing, Recruitment & Selection*

At the beginning of the year there were a total of 14 vacancies advertised

1. Three new and eleven existing positions advertised and filled in this reporting period

2. Two staff on two years study leave as of June 2014.
3. The following table shows trainings attended by some Parliament staff in 2014

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TRAININGS ATTENDED</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
Lloyd Bera	Proc & Corporate Management	ICPS
Ian Rakafia	Proc. & Corporate Management HR Management	ICPS Public Service & DWU
Marson Lilozeza	Environment and Parliament	
Wilson Orisi	NZ Parliamentary Studies	NZ Parliament
Whitmon Tabiru	NZ Parliamentary Studies	NZ Parliament
Jean Resana	Parl. Practices and Procedures PAC workshop	UK Parliament UK Parliament
Clara Pita	Leadership and Management	IPAM
Joy Rikimae	Leadership and Management Parliamentary Media Training	IPAM Fiji
Philemon Loe	Parliamentary Media training	Fiji
Marisa Pepa	Leadership and Management	IPAM
Marlon Keni	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Frederick Iro	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Arol Kimi	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Esther Turaluvu	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Ignatius Talifilu	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Rexford Kouto	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Liam Sau	Hansard	NZ Parliament Hansard staff
Marson Lilozeza	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Jefferson Hallu	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Wilson Orisi	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Wilson Ani	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Jasmine Waleafea	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Vanessa Rhodie	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Salome Pilumate	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement
Chris Paul	Committee inquiry planning	Parliament Twinning arrangement

4. Staff Development Plan developed and yet to be approved and submitted to the Ministry of Public Service.
5. Performance Management Process is on going. The Performance Recognition Committee (PRC) met in August and deliberate on Committee Secretariat and Human Resource officers performance. These were the only departments that were able to complete and submit their PSForm 10 to the PRC by September

### **1.4 Parliament Infrastructure and Security.**

Three key infrastructure priority projects for 2014 are:

#### **1. Standby Generator Overhaul**

The Parliament Standby Generator was overhauled and maintained starting in June and completed in July. The Paul Tovua Complex (PTC) standby generator house was also extended to provide enough space to accommodate the gen-set.

#### **2. Parliament and the Paul Tovua Complex spot improvement**

The Parliament building rooftop was coated with crack-proofing paint eliminat-



The newly painted Parliament house roof top. The special paint eliminate cracks in the rooftop preventing rain sipping through cracks in the roof.

ing cracks found in the roof. The next phase of the work is to paint the four corners of the Parliament building and the PTC as well to prevent water leaking through into offices in these buildings. The Central Tender Board (CTB) did not approve the NPO proposal for spot improvement, hence the NPO management is re-negotiating with the CTB to approve the project at the writing of this report.

### **3. Committee Office building design**

This project has been stalled and the responsible officers need to follow up, select the successful design bidder, purchase the design and bid for budget to begin the construction of the Committees Office.

### **Security**

Security Officers have been trained on the Parliamentary Admissions Rules, through workshops conducted by the Sergeant At Arms in February. The training enables Officers to understand their duties of Security officers in securing the Parliament properties and perimeter in accordance with the Admission Rules. Other developments in security include:

- Recruitment of a new Security Supervisor to an upgraded post L5/6.
- Upgrade of Officers in Charge (OIC) positions from non established to established positions graded 4/5
- Increase in the number of security officers from 16 to 20, bringing total number of persons per shift to 5 including the OIC. This increase provide adequate security staffing to man the whole perimeter and the Paul Tovua Complex.

### 1.5 Creating an e-Parliament

Through the Australian volunteer program, Parliament engaged the services of ICT specialist Noven Purnell-Webb. The volunteer assisted the ICT team with training on computer network maintenance, Backup and Disaster recovery and intranet planning and development. The ICT team also conducted a server health check to determine the current conditions of the server. This check is an important activity in maintaining the servers and network.

#### ICT developments:

- Two NPO ICT staff attended ICT trainings provided by Solomon Islands Government Information Communication Technology.(SIG ICT)
- The development of the NPO ICT Backup and Disaster recovery plan is a noteworthy achievement.
- NPO has agreed in principle to join the SIG ICT network. This decision has an impact on the future management of the NPO network.
- Intranet plan established and is currently in the development stage.
- Electronic Pay-slip Distribution software developed by ICT and currently used by NPO to send pay-slips to staff.
- Assessment of servers and network completed and recommendations made for replacement of current servers. This will depend on availability of finance.
- NPO switched Internet Service Provider (ISP) from Telekom to Satsol.
- Paper work on re-commissioning of the Chamber audio and tv system started in July. The work is slowly

progressing with a need to assess the existing tv system and improve the quality of televising Parliament sittings

One of the priority activities set for 2014 is the training of the newly elected MPs on the use of computers. NPO ICT team are preparing to assist the new MPs with ICT trainings. There is a need to firstly identify MPs baseline on computer usage and tailor a training program that meet the needs of the members.

### 1.6 Instituting a Parliamentary calendar.

Work on the Parliamentary calendar began in August with the UNDP PSP support in engaging a local consultant to work with Parliament and government and develop a Parliamentary calendar.

### 1.7 Effective Reporting of Parliamentary Proceedings.

Hansard staff attended training on effective hansarding conducted by New Zealand Hansard staff John Greenless and Lawrence Patchett. The training is an important one that focused on effective reporting of Parliamentary proceedings, the relationship of Hansard with the Procedures Office, Committee Secretariat, members of Parliament and other stakeholders. The training was held in the PTC from 22-25 September



### **1.8 Developing the capacity and professional skills of MPs**

The following MPs attended professional trainings and seminars

- Hon Andrew Manepora'a

4th Westminster Workshop: Public Accounts & Departmental Houses of Parliament Committees - Financial Scrutiny of Public Expenditure 23 - 26 June 2014

63 rd Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures 16 - 20 June 2014

- Hon Peter Shanel Agovaka

20th International AIDS conference, Melbourne Australia

Due to constituency commitments, a few MPs withdrew from attending workshops and conferences conducted by overseas organisations and Parliaments. The 9th Parliament also ended in September and the need for training of MPs on their work becomes unnecessary because they already possess experiences and knowledge about their roles through out the four year term of the 9th Parliament.

There is however a need for training of the members of the 10th Parliament. At the writing of this report, the general elections was scheduled to 19 November and the first meeting of the 10 th Parliament is anticipated to be held in early December. An induction and training program for the MPs of the 10th Parliament will be carried out during that time.

### **1.9 Developing and Sustaining International links**

The Foreign Relations Committee is yet to report to the House on its findings on advantages and disadvantages of joining the IPU. This report is anticipated to be tabled in the 10th Parliament.

### **1.10 Code of Ethical Conduct**

A code of conduct for MPs was developed in 2008. It is yet to be approved by the House for enforcement.

### **1.11 Developing new Standing Orders**

Prior to the dissolution of the House in September, Parliament passed significant amendments

to the Standing Orders. Instead of developing a new Standing Orders the NPO management in consultation with the Parliamentary House Committee has decided to amend the existing Standing Orders progressively. The passing of the first 12 amendments in August is a significant step in this process.

### **1.12 Mainstreaming gender**

The Parliamentary Civic Education Unit together with the Young Women Parliamentary Group have closely worked with Parliament Members and staff in advocating activities that promote gender mainstreaming.

One of the successful program under this objective is the Women mock Parliamentary debate that took place in the Parliament Chamber from 10-13 February. The program was purposely designed to train and support women aspiring to run in the 2014 National General Elections.

Through the debate women receive practical training and tools that help them develop and implement their electoral campaigns and have a better understanding of Parliamentary processes. Details are discussed in

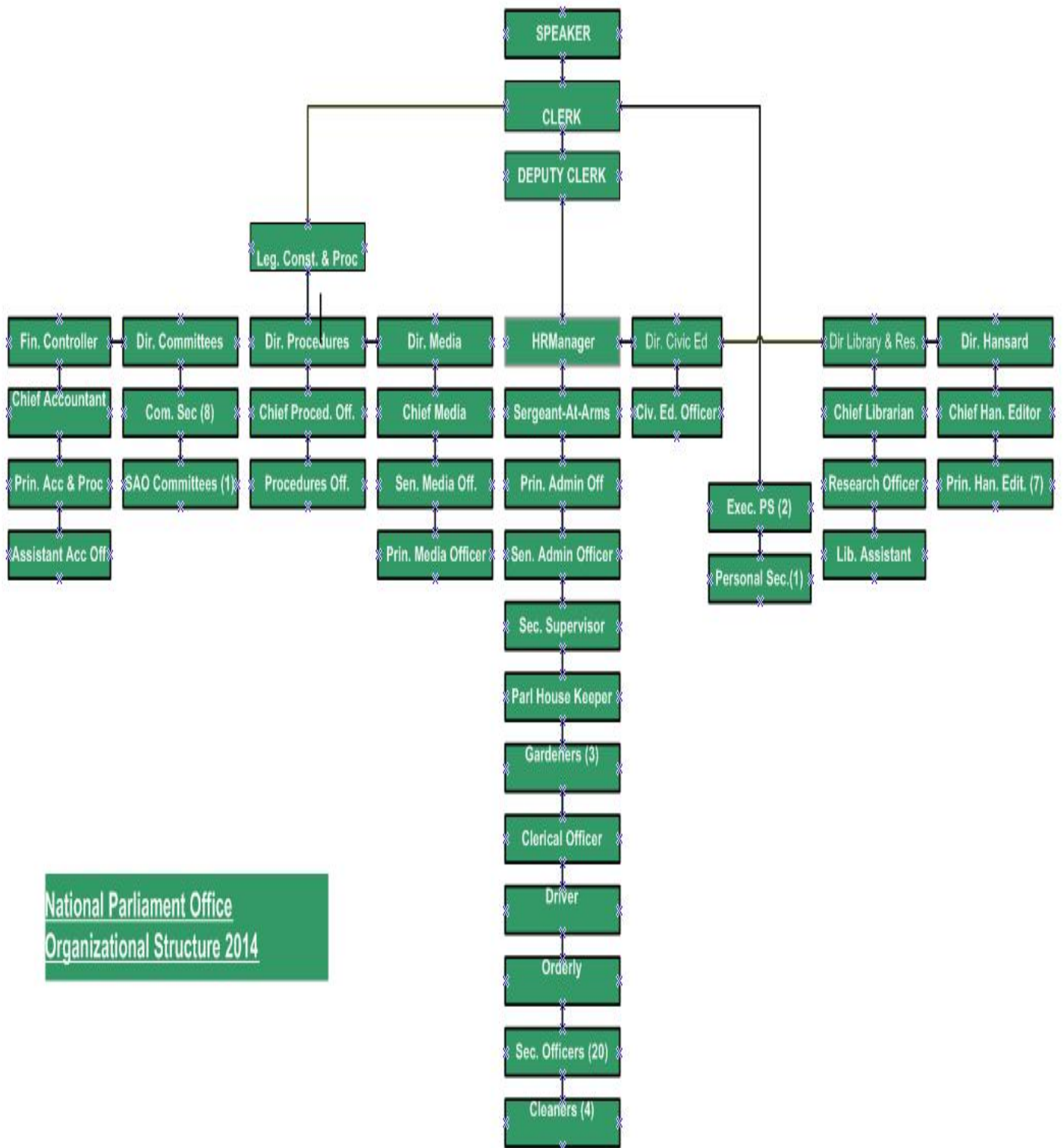


Group discussion preparing the participants for the mock debate.



Participants in the chamber gearing up for the mock debate

Strategic



## **Strategic Objective 2**

### **To improve the legislative process in Parliament to ensure enhanced scrutiny and quality of legislation**

This chapter reports about the NPSI strategic activities that help to enhance and improve the Parliament legislative process.

#### **2.1 TIMETABLE FOR THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

##### **A. Review Legislative process**

With UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project support, Parliament engaged a local consult from Law Corp firm to progress this activity. The Terms of Reference for the assignment include:

1. Conduct a review and produce a report on the legislative process,
2. Develop an options paper on how Parliament can work with Government to develop a legislative timetable
3. Conduct roundtable meetings with the Government to discuss options for Parliamentary calendar.

At the writing of this report, the report on the legislative process has been completed, deliverable 2 and 3 are yet to be completed.

Dialogue between government and Parliament is the final step in the process and is expected to be completed in January 2015 after the establishment of a new government in December 2014.

#### **2.2 PROCEDURES OFFICE**

##### **A. Procedures Office Staffing**

During this reporting period a new position (Chief Parliamentary Procedures Officer) was created in the procedures office bringing the total Procedures Office staff to three.

The Procedures Office also has its own Departmental Annual Work Plan (DAWP) separated from the Committee Secretariat. The separation of DAWPs reduced role confusion and role interdependency between staff of the Committee Secretariat and the Procedures Office.

The Chief Parliamentary Procedures Officer attended training on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures in London in June. The training is part of strengthening the capacity of the Procedures Office team by learning from the UK House of Commons experiences and practices.

##### **Records of ninth Parliament meetings and 2014 sittings**

From 2010 to 2014, the 9th Parliament held 7 meetings in total. In terms of sitting days, there were a total of 48 Parliament sitting days in 2014 alone.

## **2.3 INCREASED AND IMPROVED LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY BY COMMITTEE**

Under this sub objective the two primary focus for this year are:

1. Training for Committee staff and Members on the legislative process and good practice in terms of scrutiny and timeframe.
2. Hiring of experts to assist Bills Committees

### **1. Committee staff and Members training**

Training of both Committee staff and members during this reporting have been relatively low as compared with previous years. The two Committees which receive training invitations overseas are the Environment and Conservation Committee and the Public Accounts Committee. The Secretary to the ECC (Marson Lilopeza) attended the Environment conference in the Philippines on behalf of the ECC and Hon Andrew Manepora'a and Ms Jean Resana attended a workshop on Parliamentary practice and the Public Accounts workshop in London. Mr Wilson Orisi also attended the NZ Parliamentary study in June.

### **Committee workshop**

Through the auspices of the Parliamentary twinning arrangement, NPO hosted a Committee Training workshop facilitated by the NSW Parliament Committee experts. The participants include 4 of the NSW Parliament Committee staff and the twinning coordinator, 4 Bougainville House of Representatives Committee staff and 8 of the NPSI Committee Secretariat team and the Research Officer.

The focus of the workshop is committee inquiry planning, committee logistics support, inquiry and evidence collection, sifting of evidence, templates for effective committee planning and report writing. This workshop build up committee staff capacity which subsequently build up institutional memory. As part of the NPO Committee staff preparation for the 10th Parliament, the workshop build up staff capacity to effectively plan, organize, administer committee activities and draft committee reports.

The NPO is preparing for the induction and training of the new Members of the 10th Parliament. The induction will be held in early December after the November 19 General Elections. Further training is expected in February 2015.

### **2. Hiring of experts to assist Bills Committees**

The Bills and Legislation Committee held 21 deliberative meetings and 13 Public Hearings during this reporting period. This is comparable with 17 deliberative and 18 public hearings held in 2013. The BLC successfully scrutinized all Bills committed to it by the House.



The Bills and Legislation Committee conducting a Public Hearing at the NPO



One of the BLC's function stated in the Standing Orders 71 (c) is to review subsidiary legislations made under Acts of Parliament. It is recommended that the new BLC of the 10th Parliament proactively perform this role to improve and increase legislative scrutiny.

In order to gain a broad knowledge and perspective on policies and proposed laws brought to Parliament, the BLC consulted several experts in various fields, depending on the bill under the BLC's scrutiny. Through out the year, the BLC conducted 13 hearings and 21 deliberative meetings. Experts have been consulted to present their evidences to the BLC during Public hearings.

The BLC has been one of the active Parliamentary Committees that has produced a work plan and follow through its implementation. One of the key challenges that hinder committee activities is the lack of a Parliamentary calendar. With no Parliamentary calendar it is difficult to plan and schedule activities.



Members of the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund (SINPF) Board and its subsidiary companies before the Public Accounts Committee



PS and Officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs appeared before the Public Accounts Committee.



Justice and Legal Affairs PS Freddy Mesa and Legal Advisor Pamela Wilde



Officials from the Ministry of Provincial Government appeared before Public Accounts Committee

## 2.4 CONSULTATION DURING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.

### **A. Develop Guide for BLC on how to involve CSO's in the Legislative Process.**

The Committee Secretariat conducted 3 workshops, engaging representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSO), State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and Government officials. The workshops educate participants about the role of the Parliament, the legislative process and how citizens can contribute to the legisla-



Civil Society Organizations (CSO) representatives participating in a Committee information workshop

tive process through Committee inquiries and written submissions.



Representatives from State Owned Enterprises (SOE) who attended the Committee information workshop educating SOE's on the legislative process and how they can involve in contributing to the law making process.

Many of the CSOs are aware of the need for involvement in the law making process and willingly participated in hearings when requested by Parliamentary Committees.

One such opportunity involving the Civil Society Organization was during the Family Protection Bill inquiry. A number of Civil Society Organizations such as the Christian Care Centre, World Vision SI, Family Support Centre, Oxfam International, Home and Family Impact Solomon Islands, National Council of Women, Public Solicitor's Office, and the Ministry of Health & Medical Services Social Welfare Division were consulted during the Family Protection Bill hearings.



Representatives from Civil Society Organizations participating in a workshop conducted by NPO to educate CSO about the importance getting involved in the Legislative Process.

## **2.6 INCREASE MPs CAPACITY TO ENGAGE IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.**

Four key areas of focus under this objective are:

1. Develop easy to use handbook for MPs on the legislative process
2. Distribute handbook on the legislative process to MPs and key stakeholders
3. Provide training courses for MPs on the legislative process and the new manual
4. Provide training sessions for MPs on amending and initiating legislation

### ***Handbook on the legislative process***

Through the UNDP support a consultant from Law Corp produced and delivered to Parliament a document about the legislative process. The document will be printed into a handbook about the legislative process. Other materials are available in pamphlets, powerpoint presentations and posters which also provide details about the legislative process.

### ***Training Course for MPs***

With the new Parliament (10th) anticipated to be established in December 2014, the NPO staff have prepared the relevant documents and presentations for the MPs induction program in December. Two inductions programs have been planned for the 10th Parliament. The first is to be held in December 2014 and another scheduled for February 2015. The first induction will focus on the Parliament, the Constitution, the Parliamentary Entitlement Regulations and the Standing Orders. The second induction program will look at the specifics of conducting committee inquiries, Parliamentary privileges and immunities and the roles and functions of MPs and Parliament.

It will also look at the budget and the structure of the Appropriation Bills and how the Committee Secretariat and the PAC can draw meaningful information from the budget and appropriation bills.

### ***Other Developments in the Committee Secretariat office***

The following are some of the achievements made in 2014 by Committee Secretariat.

- Completion of a Handbook on Committee Inquiry Processes. The handbook provides useful information about the process of conducting committees inquiries.
- Production of information pamphlets for witnesses. The pamphlets entail the steps of making written and or oral submissions to committees.
- Simplified copy of functions and powers of Committee

### ***Committee staff training.***

The Committee Secretariat plays an important role in supporting committees in their work. Hence training of committee staff is also essential as it contributes to the improvement of the legislative scrutiny process. The Committee Secretariat participated in the twinning Committee Workshop on the effective management of Parliamentary committee inquiries facilitated by the NSW Parliament, Bougainville House of Representatives (BHR) and National Parliament of Solomon Islands.



### **Strategic Objective 3**

#### **To improve the capacity of Parliament to provide effective oversight of the Executive Branch**

This chapter discusses the oversight activities conducted by Parliament in terms of the budget plans of the Government, scrutiny of public expenditure, and overseeing the impact and effectiveness of the implementation of policy and legislation.

#### **3.1 STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENT COMMITTEES**

Three priority areas of focus in this objective are:

- A. Development and implementation of work-plans
- B. Training of Committee staff and MPs
- C. Conduct field visits and public hearings

##### **A. Develop Committee Work Plans**

All Parliamentary Standing Committees have work plans developed in the beginning of each year. However only a few committees were able to follow through and execute their work-plans this year. Lack of quorum in committees has always been an issue causing committees unable to plan and carry out their business. There is also a great need for close collaboration between the chairman of each committee and the committee secretariat, working together and plan committee activities.

Committee chairmanship is an important position in Parliamentary Committees. Chairs are responsible for leading and

directing the Committee Secretaries on the execution of a work-plan.

It is thus recommended that in the 10th Parliament, the Speaker identify and appoint to committee chairmanship positions MPs who have strong commitment and ability to coordinate and actively participate in committee activities; if strong functional committees are desirable.

##### **B. Committee Trainings /Workshops.**

Training of Committees members and secretariat staff is an essential part of strengthening Parliamentary Committees. One of the Committee training conducted to strengthen and support the work of the Public Accounts Committee is a PAC support workshop conducted by the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General's office. The workshop enabled the Committee Secretariat abilities to understand the budgeting process, to read and interpret financial statements and budget documents. More information about this training on page. Other trainings have been discussed in section **2.3 on page 19 and on page 26.**

##### **C. Undertake Field Visits and Public Hearings**

During this reporting period, the two active committees that conducted public hearings were the Public Accounts Committee and the Bills and Legislation Committee. The PAC conducted hearings on the following bills and tabled documents:

- Two supplementary appropriation bills

### Committee Public Hearings and Deliberative meetings from January to September 2014

<u>Committees</u>	<u>Deliberative meetings</u>	<u>Cancelled Deliberative meetings</u>	<u>Public Hearings</u>	<u>Committee Reports Tabled</u>
Bills and Legislations Committee (BLC)	21	0	13	9
Constitutional Review Committee (CRC)	1	0	0	0
Education & Human Resources Training Committee (EHRTC)	2	1	0	1
Environment and Conservation Committee (ECC)	2	0	0	0
Foreign Relations Committee (FRC)	1	0	0	0
Health and Medical Services Committee (HMSC)	0	0	0	0
Parliamentary House Committee (PHC)	11	3	0	0
Police and National Security Committee (PNSC)	3	0	0	0
Public Accounts Committee (PAC)	16	0	19 (1 private)	2
Public Expenditure Committee (PEC)	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>

• Audit Reports, Annual Reports and Financial Statements produced by the Auditor General's Office on expenditure of government ministries.

The BLC conducted hearings on

- Business Names Bill 2014
- Report on the Constitution (Status of Magistrates) (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Report on the Constitutional Offices (Terms and Conditions of Service) (Judicial Reform) (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Family Protection Bill (FPB) 2014
- Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Lands Titles (Amendment) Bill 2014

- Magistrates' Courts (Amendment) Bill 2014 and the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Mines and Minerals (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Political Parties Integrity Bill 2014
- Prime Ministers (Pension and Benefits) Bill 2014
- Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill 2014
- Solomon Islands National University (Amendment) Bill 2014
- The Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill 2014



Members of the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund Board and its subsidiary companies appeared before the Public Accounts Committee



Under Secretary (US) and officials of the Ministry of Police, National Security and Correctional Services giving their statement before PAC



Members of the Bills and Legislation Committee

### 3.2 EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL SCRUTINY

Parliament through its Committees, especially the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Expenditure Committee exercise financial scrutiny of government budget and expenditures. The following scrutiny activities have been implemented during this reporting period by the PAC.



Public Accounts Committee Chairman Hon Douglas Ete speaking to stakeholders about the roles Public Officers and Committees play in scrutiny



The Director of MOFT Budget unit Mr Norman Hiropuhi conducting a presentation for Committee Secretariat and Procedures Office during Public Accounts Committee supporting workshop.

During this reporting period, the Public Accounts Committee held 16 Deliberative meetings and 19 Public Hearings. The hearings include scrutiny of two Supplementary Appropriation Bills and inquiries into Performance Audit Reports produced by the Office of the Auditor General and Financial Audit Reports produced by the various government ministries and agencies.

The ability to effectively perform financial scrutiny depends on the PAC/PEC members and the Secretariat support. Thus training of both Committee members and Secretariat is important. On 12 March 2014, the Office of the Auditor General, the Ministry of Finance Budget unit together with the Committee Secretariat conducted a PAC support workshop. The training involves, understanding the budget process, reading and interpreting budget books and financial statements and understanding the role of the Secretariat in the Public accounts Committee .



The members of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) during the inquiry into the financial audit reports



### **3.3 INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF PARLIAMENT THROUGH IMPROVED LIBRARY AND RESEARCH SERVICES**

One of the important developments achieved in 2014 is the establishment of the Parliamentary Research Unit and the recruitment of the Research Officer who assists the Committee Secretariat with committee research duties. Modern Parliamentary practice is Parliamentary Research Officers conduct research and support MPs, Committees, Procedures and Parliament staff with research findings. With the current manpower, the committee secretariat remain the primary researchers for Committees' work but supported by the research unit team.

The establishment of the research unit strengthens the capacity of Parliament in terms searching for information, modern practices, laws, knowledge, benchmarks and innovative ways of improving systems and processes. The research unit operates under the Library but closely work with Committees.

#### **Library Rearrangement.**

Refurbishment and rearranging of the Library collection began in September. The rearrangement provide enough space for proper library set up.

The rearrangement catered for establishment of research facilities and capacity to accommodate online researching. This provision allows Members of Parliament, researchers and stakeholders to access internet and online library materials and digital material stored in the d-space repository.

#### **Library policies**

Library policies related to the management of the library resources, usage, acquisition of library materials, access and research have all been completed. The policies are now in effect as endorsed by the Library Support Committees on 18 July 2014. The final step is to educate staff, news MPs and library stakeholders to comply with these policies.

### **3.4 Increased Dialogue with stakeholders**

There were no officially recorded dialogues between Members of Parliament and Civil Society Organizations' during this reporting period. However during CSO, SOE and government officials awareness workshops, BLC, PAC Committee Chairs make presentations on the roles of their committees.

### **3.5 Interaction with Independent Oversight Institutions**

Two activities set down for completion in 2013 under this objective are:

1. Undertake an assessment report on the interaction between Parliament and Independent Oversight Institutions
2. Develop an options paper for consideration by the House Committee and Parliament on improved mechanisms for interaction

Both activities were rolled over from 2013 to 2014. However there were no formal arrangements made for close collaboration between Parliament and oversight institutions.

## Strategic Objective 4

### **To develop the education and outreach work of Parliament and the representative role of Members of Parliament**

This chapter reports the outreach work done by NPO in terms of educating citizens about the role and functions of the Parliament, duties of Members of Parliament and the roles citizens can play in the legislative process.

#### 4.1 Increased Outreach and Community Engagement.

The following are the three key activities under this sub-objectives:

- I. Develop and implement an annual programme of outreach activities that focus on all areas of the country
- II. Develop and implement an annual Programme of Speaker Constituency visits
- III. Develop a programme of events for a "Parliament week" and implement

#### **I. Outreach activities**

There has been a significant drop in the outreach programs conducted during this reporting period. One of the causes of

this is Parliament sittings and committee meetings slightly increased during this year. Additionally, the 9th Parliament dissolved in September and there has been an attempt to complete all Parliament programs and business before its dissolution in September. This increase in Parliament and committee activities affect all other NPO programs.

Parliamentary Civic Education Unit conducted the following community outreach programs in June and July.

Constituency Tours and visits to Parliament:

- A. West Honiara constituency tour (30th June).
- B. Central Honiara constituency. NPO set up a stall at the Youth Market program conducted, at the cultural village. NPO staff distribute pamphlets about roles and functions of Parliament, conduct presentations to the public and talk with visitors about the roles of Parliament.(3-5 July 2014).
- C. Public Servants who attended the IPAM Know Your Public Service Course learnt about Parliament and its constitutional functions. A total of 278 public servants attended this training which ended with a tour to Parliament.
- D. Two hundred forty six (246) overseas visitors visited Parliament during this reporting period.



Parliament stall displaying posters and staff distributing pamphlets and conduct presentations during the Youth

## **II. Speaker Constituency visits**

During this reporting period there were no constituency visit programs arranged for the Speaker of Parliament .

## **III. Parliament open week**

Parliament Open Week is an annual program that see Parliament open its doors allowing members of the public to visit the Parliament. The program is usually held between October and November. This year, due to the dissolution of Parliament, there was no Parliament open week program organized by the PCEU.

## **4.2 ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WORK OF PARLIAMENT**

### **A. School Outreach Program**

- A total of 123 students from two schools visited Parliament under the school outreach arrangement.
- One of the achievement made under this school outreach program is the participation of Solomon Islands students in the Melanesian High School Debate in Papua New Guinea from 24 -28 Nov. The PCEU spearheaded the arrangement which enable 4 students representing Solomon Islands High Schools in the debate.



Honiara Integrate Primary School (HIPS) students posing for a photo in the Parliament Chamber.



A HIPS student carrying the Youth Parliament mace



Parliament staff assisting the HIPS students touring around the Parliament building.



### **4.3 ENSURING A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARLIAMENT AND THE MEDIA**

Two priority activities under this objective for completion in this reporting period are:

- I. Training of media staff on the way Parliament operates
- II. Develop public information programmes for the media on the way in which Parliament operate

#### **I. Media Staff training**

Two staff (Joy Rikimae and Philemon Loe) from the Parliamentary Media Unit attended a training on the processes of Parliament and skills of reporting Parliamentary sittings and activities. The training was held in Fiji and attended by Parliamentary Media staff from all over Asia and the Pacific.

The Director Media Joy Rikimae also undertook leadership and Management training course offered through IPAM. The course enhances participants skills in leading and managing resources and organizations.

#### **II. Public information programmes for the media on the way in which Parliament operate**

The Parliamentary Media unit continuously develop and discharge press release through external print media outlets and Parliament website, keeping the public informed of committee activities, bills debated and activities happening in Parliament.

The Parliamentary Media Unit and the ICT Steering Committee and the ICT unit met and discussed the establishment of an interactive social media facebook page for Parliament, to allow public to interact and get informed on the way in which Parliament operates. Development of the facebook page is yet to be approved by the NPO management.

Parliament Blo lumi radio programs are broadcasted on fortnightly basis. The program inform radio listeners on developments and happenings in Parliament.

#### **Press Gallery Development**

The press gallery project is an activity rolled over from 2012. The Press Gallery is an office space in the Parliament building provided for external media involved in reporting Parliament meetings and programs. The Press Gallery provides workstations where media groups can access and use. It allows for closer cooperation, sharing of information and resources between the Parliament media and the external media groups.

#### **Media workshop**

The Parliamentary Media Unit organized a Media Workshop aimed at educating and informing external media about the processes of Parliament, the importance of media in the Parliamentary democratic process and how the media can get much information from Parliamentary question time sessions. The workshop was successfully conducted from 5 -7 November with participants from; Solomon Star, Island Sun, Sunday Isles, Development Services Exchange, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation and others.

#### **4.4 USER FRIENDLY PUBLICATIONS ON PARLIAMENT**

The PCEU since 2012 developed pamphlets about the functions and processes of Parliament, the law making process, Parliamentary Committees and the role each department plays in supporting the work of Parliament.

One of the activities under this objective is to develop a database for distribution of newsletters and pamphlets. Instead of newsletters, Parliament uses radio broadcasting and the website, publishing information about Parliament.

#### **4.5 INVESTIGATE OPTIONS TO INCREASE THE REPRESENTATIVE NATURE OF PARLIAMENT**

##### **A. Young Women Parliamentary Group.**

Since its establishment in 2011, the YWPG has actively involve in implementing its annual work-plans and educate people about social, health and gender issues.

In conjunction with the UNDP PSP, the PCEU and the YWPG spearheaded the Solomon Islands Mock Parliament Debate for Women



Members of the YWPG in a planning workshop on 6 March 2014 setting out the workplan for 2014.



Ms Grace Hilly the 2014 president of the YWPG delivering a speech during the Girls Summit hosted by the British High Commissioner in



Preparing for the Women Parliamentary Mock debate



Members of the YWPG participating in



Women mock Parliament participants rehearsing for the mock debate in the Chamber.

Some of the Young Women Parliamentary Group's achievements in 2014 include:

- Work plan workshop held on the march 6 at the Parliament Conference room
- Ending Violence Against Women: Family Protection Bill passed by Parliament.
- National Referral Hospital Cervical Cancer Campaign: Theme is "Fight Like a Girl" started off with the Girl Summit 2014 on July 22 and a Group Pap Smear Test at Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association on September 16 2014.

#### **B. MPs Spouse Program and Speaker's Reflection Group.**

There were no activities done under this objective in 2014 although it is designed to be an annual program. It is recommended that the MPs spouse program and the Speaker's reflection program be developed and implemented on an annual basis.

#### **4.6 Building Links with Provincial Legislatures**

##### **Provincial Speakers and Clerks Conference**

The Speaker and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Choiseul Province visited Parliament and observed the Parliament Proceedings from 18-22 August. The visitation is part of an arrangement done with the Provincial government for Speakers and Clerks of provincial assemblies to visit and observe proceedings of Parliament and Committees.

There is a need to strengthen the link and improve the cooperation between the National Parliament of Solomon Islands and Provincial Legislative Assemblies in order to improve governance and legislative work at the National and Provincial level.

## Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Mobilization

### Implementation

One of the challenges in the NPSI strategy implementation pointed out in the 2013 annual report is the inability of staff to strike a balance between the daily operational activities (urgent) and the strategic goals (important). In 2014, this remains a challenge the NPO staff need to overcome in order to effectively accomplish tasks and deliver expected results.

In the implementation of the NPSI strategy in 2014, there are successes in a number of areas and failures in many other areas that shows the need to improve the coordination and commitment of the SSU and the NPO team as a whole.

As far as the SSU is concerned, there has been a significant drop in the commitment of staff to implement their strategic activities in 2014. Perhaps this is partly caused by the fact that 2014 is the year in which the 9th Parliament dissolves and there have been tremendous pressure from the government to finish off its businesses and government bills before the dissolution of the House.

Given the fact that Parliament has no sitting calendar, there have been no forward planning or schedules of dates each activity in the DAWPs should be executed. Consequently when Parliament sits, all other activities in the DAWPs are halted as focus narrow down to supporting the Parliament. Thus by the end of the year there are results achieved and there are activities needed to be rolled over to 2015.

### A. Monitoring

From 27-28 February, the first 2014 Strategy review took place. The emphasis then was for the HODs to lead and manage their resources and staff performance at the departmental level. The tool used for measuring performance is the PSForm 10 and this was stressed in the first review for HODs to seriously monitor staff performance.

The second review was held from 10-11 July. Not all departments were able to participate in the review and HODs could not complete the PSForm 10 at that time. The final review was held from 25-26 September and all departments presented their DAWPs.

On 22 October, the NPO held a strategy workshop. During the workshop staff were able to draft their 2015 work-plan and submitted to the SSU.

By the time of the third strategy review it is apparent that HODs are yet to complete their staffs' PSForm10. there is a need to further strengthen the performance management of staff of the National Parliament Office. HODs may need a refresher training on PMP and the ability to manage resources and lead staff in their departments as well as manage their performance.