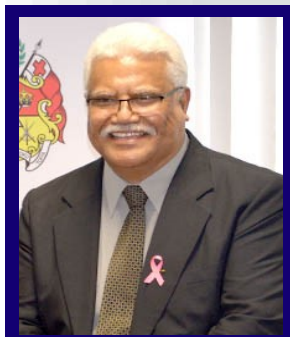


**Ombudsman
Quarterly Newsletter**



Happy New Year to you all! This Newsletter covers the period of October – November 2018 and as usual this Quarter was filled with a lot of activities. Outreach programs to the Youth was a main feature of our work especially to High Schools, Youth exhibition and Youth Parliament. The Office recognizes the importance of reaching out to Youths of Tonga, as they are the future administrators, decision makers and office holders in both Government and Public Enterprises. Sharing the principles of good governance and teaching good administrative practices to Youths portrayed through skits and pictures generated a lot of queries and laughter from them. The outreach programs we carry out is to clearly demonstrate to both people in Government and its agencies and to the public at large how we can help to make Government decisions, processes and service delivery lawful, fair, reasonable and timely! Hope you enjoy the last newsletter for the last Quarter of 2018.



(PC: www.parliament.gov.to)

As part of an ongoing drive to foster closer cooperation and to receive words of professional advice and encouragement, all staff was privileged to receive the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Lord Fakafanua, as the Guest Speaker. The Lord Speaker spoke of his appreciation of various key developments being achieved and made by the OMB Office. They included an amendment to the Constitution of Tonga to enhance the position

of the Ombudsman to a constitutional status. The Speaker also spoke about his recent educational achievement from India, in response to a question by a staff member. The Ombudsman, CEO and staff highly appreciated the insights shared by Speaker on his professional experience and educational endeavors especially when he has been the youngest Speaker ever to be appointed at age 27.

Outreach Programs (OPs)

The OMB Office had, for the first time, ventured off-shore in its Outreach Programs (OPs) from 1-6th December. The aim is to ensure Tongans living in New Zealand get first-hand information about the services of the OMB Office seeing some of them have lands and properties or foot bills for families and relatives in the Kingdom. Some of the members of the NZ SDA Church Tongan parish, the FWC of Tonga of *Tuinga Papai* and the COT-Selusalema received the OPs led by the Ombudsman and included the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Principal Investigation Officer (PIO) and the Communications and Media Officer (CMO). A live talk-back program was also held over the “*Le’o ‘o e ‘Otufelenite*” program on 531 PI Radio of the Pacific Media Network, hosted by Mr. John Pulu and Mr. Tevita Maka. Another radio program was recorded and aired over the “*Vai ko Soatani*” program on Planet 104.6 FM hosted by Rev’d. Tapavalu Palau. An interview of the Ombudsman in Auckland was conducted by Mr. ‘Ulu’alo Po’uhila of the NZ-based *Kakalu ‘o Tonga* Newspaper. The OMB Office is appreciative of all the assistance towards these outreach and public awareness programs in the South Auckland area.

Number of OPs - During the quarter, a total of 53 Outreach Programs (OPs) including additional publicity drives in various genres were carried out, as the following:

No.	Program Genres	No. of times
1	OPs to schools on Tongatapu and Vava'u	11
2	OPs to Communities (10 constituencies of Tongatapu, Outer Islands of Vava'u and Tongans in NZ)	20
3	Clinics (at public places on Tongatapu and Vava'u)	9
4	Radio Talk-back programs (over A3Z and 87.5FM in Tonga and NZ)	4
5	Exhibitions (at the Youth Exhibition during the royal visit of the Duke & Duchess of Sussex, Law Week 2018 and the Youth Parliament 2018)	3
	Sub-total	47
	Additional Publicity	
6	<i>Newspaper articles (published monthly on Tala-ki)</i>	3
7	<i>News coverage (local media)</i>	3
	TOTAL	53

Photos from OPs at Tongatapu Constituencies – All of the 10 constituencies of Tongatapu were covered in the OMB OPs during October to early November. The concerns raised by those who attended vary in each constituency. For example, people living in villages of Tongatapu 8 especially near Tapuhia dumping site were concerned over possible leakage of poisonous chemicals and waste to their water system and also the environment, thus affecting them in the near future.

Meanwhile, the major concern voiced at Tongatapu 10 was the prolonged delay or the total absence of assistance from the government following TC Gita during February.



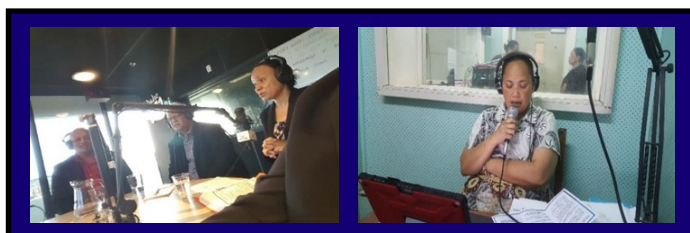
Photos from OPs at the outer islands of Vava'u – Despite the adverse weather during late October in Vava'u, OPs were held at the islands of Olo'ua, Ofu and 'Otea. The islanders of Kapa, Falevai and Taunga received the OP at a meeting held at the Governor's Office, Neiafu. Bad weather had prevented the OP team from reaching Hunga, Ovaka and Lape islands.



Photos from OPs to Schools – The OMB Office understands the importance for the youth of Tonga to know and practice the principles of Good Governance (GG) early in life. It was a rewarding experience when the CEO, Director of Investigation (DI) and PIO together with the skit team visited and met students in various government and church schools on Tongatapu and Vava'u. Despite the interest and eagerness of students to answer the quiz and watch the GG skits, it was realized that it would be ideal to incorporate the key elements of GG in school syllabi. It would enable students to formally study about these elements including Independence, Rule of Law, Accountability, Transparency, Effective and Efficiency and Integrity.



Photos during Radio Talkback/Felafoaki Programs over Radio Tonga (AM) and 87.5FM – The Felafoaki programs aimed at reaching every person up to the far northern islands of the two Niuaus and across the Tonga Group. It is a two-way Q&A session over the air where people can call and ask questions to be answered by the host – either the CEO, DI or the PIO. The public are also educated and informed when listening to information and answers to questions made by the host.



Photos during Clinics on Tongatapu and Vava'u –

It is a weekly obligation of the OMB Office to give out its educational brochures to the public at a designated public area. Shown here are various Clinics carried out at the NZ Immigration Office, Downtown Neiafu, schools and businesses.



Outreach Programs in Auckland, New Zealand 1st to 6th December-

The works of the OMB Office should benefit every Tongan in the Kingdom and abroad. This was the aim of reaching out to Tongans living in South Auckland when the Ombudsman, CEO and PIO led a series of OPs for the congregation of the SDA Tongan parish, FWC Tuinga Papai parish, the COT Selusalema parish as well as through Le'oto e 'Otufelenite over Radio 531pi, Vai ko Soatani over Planet 104.6FM and a news interview by the NZ-based Kakalu 'o Tonga newspaper.



Exhibitions & Events Fri 26th October –

The OMB Office had the honour to present to the Duke and Duchess of Sussex some of its OP promotional give-aways – an OMB bag and flash-pen each. When visited the OMB display during the Youth Exhibition in honour of the royal visitors in October, the Duke and Duchess were explained how the OMB OPs reach out and educate youth and students about Good Governance. It was also an honour for HRH Princess Latufiuepeka Tuku'alo to view the OMB OP products. An OMB flash-pen was also presented to her HRH.



Tonga Youth Parliament Friday 9th Nov 2018 – The members of the Tonga Youth Parliament 2018 received the outreach and awareness program and products of the OMB Office, led by the Director of Investigation, Mrs. Lepaola Vaea. The luncheon presentation received a host of questions from the young members about the works and services of the OMB Office particularly about Good Governance and Anti-corruption.



Tonga Law Week 2018 – It was a joy to receive the interest and focus of young minds as dozens of primary school pupils visited the display of the OMB Office at the 2018 Law Week. Some of them heard for the first time about the core services and functions of the OMB Office as well as the importance of the key elements of Good Governance – Independence, Rule of Law, Accountability, Transparency, Efficiency and Effectiveness and Integrity.



Observance of the World Anti-corruption Day, 9th December, 2019 – The Ombudsman, CEO and staff observed the Day together with the congregation of the FWC Fasimoeafi 'a Tungi, on the exact day of this world wide commemoration. The United Nations' theme was – *United Against Corruption To Promote Peace and Development*. The Preacher was, Rev'd. Viliami Finau of the Auckland-Manukau Methodist Tonga Parish. Rev. Finau stressed the rationale of establishing the works of the Office of the Ombudsman *“as a source of blessings for Tonga ... there's an opportunity for people and their families who are being affected due to unruly decisions of government ministries and public enterprises ... there is an office, being led by Mr. Taumoepeau, where people can complain to whenever they feel victimized ... the functions of the Office of the Ombudsman are like the answer to our prayers when we ask God for forgiveness and in intervening during times of difficulty ... we can do that to the Ombudsman and his staff.”* In observing the Day, the Ombudsman, Mr. 'Aisea Taumoepeau, SC, said that *“the Office of the Ombudsman recognizes that the occurrence of corruption will prevail in an administrative environment where opportunities exist for waste, abuse and maladministration, therefore the most effective way to prevent this is to promote an ethical environment in which internal control mechanisms should be implemented. The Office of the Ombudsman through its outreach program promoting good governance principles therefore assists in preventing corruption by advocating to public officers that they should understand the responsibilities of their positions and familiarize themselves with their laws and policies and adhering to them,”* according to the Ombudsman of Tonga.



Other Activities

1. Breast Cancer Awareness Month



2. New Red Uniform in support of MMT



3. National Tsunami Drill



By the way ... did you know that staff of the OMB Office can act? Yes, that's right ... we can act and dramatize a scenario relating to our work ... all for a worthy cause ... to portray the essence of Ombudsman works and services as well as about Good Governance ... and now ... ACTION ...



Christmas Raid - And, to appreciate another year of cooperation, the OMB Office conducted another Christmas Raid to some of the government ministries and public enterprises ... a joyful moment of sharing and caring, as the spirit of Christmas dictates

Resignations and Retirement

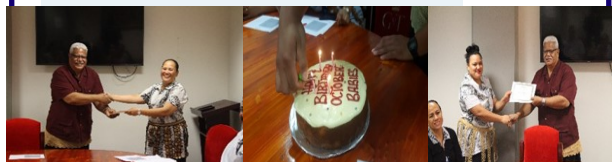
The OMB Office bid farewell to two (2) staff members and wished them well and success in their future endeavours. Their departure was fully acknowledged and appreciated during the OMB Christmas Party in December, held at Ancient Tonga. They were the:

1. Investigation Officer, Mrs. 'Elisiva Lui – whose resignation became effective on 16th November, 2018, to take up a promotional transfer to the Attorney General Office. Mrs. Lui completed 2 years and 4 months since joining the OMB Office on 28th October, 2016. She formerly served as a Policy Officer at the Legal and Policy Division of MEIDEC.
2. Caretaker, Mrs. Takina Pupu Baker – who retired after almost 17 years of committed service since February 2002, when the Office was then known as the Commission for Public Relations.

Internal Administrative Matters - During the quarter, the Corporate Services Department, in collaboration with the staff, was also instrumental in the following tasks:

- Amendments to the OMB Staff Policy Manual
- Compiling PMS Full Year 2017/18 Results
- Draft Corporate Plan 2019/20
- Christmas Party
- Christmas Raid

Staff Achievements and Milestones – As a tradition, the Staff of the Month and also the Biggest Loser (in weight, of course!) for each month receives a Certificate of Achievement as well as a monetary prize ... while those whose birthdays fall during the quarter are acknowledged with a cake ... and to be shared by everyone when the candles have been blown off



Vacancies - The OMB Office has been publicly advertising vacancies for the positions of Director of Investigation, Senior Investigation Officer and Investigation Officer. The vacancies and respective JDs can be viewed and downloaded from our website on www.ombudsman.to and also from our Facebook page – Office of the Ombudsman. You can also call for further information on 26980 or 26982.

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