

## **A PARTNERSHIP FOR FIJI**

### **CREATING A HIGH PERFORMING PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS**

1. As the main stakeholders, the Government, on behalf of the people; the Public Service Commission, as the employer; and the Public Service Unions, as the representatives of workers, jointly undertake to closely co-operate in transforming Fiji's Public Service into –
  - a professional organisation which recognises that its most important assets are the men and women who make up its ranks, and which is committed to developing the ability and talents of its members through continuous learning.
  - A professional organisation that is committed to serving the Government and the country with commitment and competency, with responsibility and accountability, with high priority on performance and achieving results, and with strict adherence to the rule of law and other principles of good governance.
  - A service organisation that is committed to serving the people with diligence, reliability, fairness and honesty, and with respect for the rights, needs and aspirations of the people.
  - A work environment free from discrimination, where there is adequate and equal opportunity for all, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, gender or socio-economic background, and which places a high value on performance, competency and continuous self-development and improvement through life-long education and training.
2. To work together in achieving these objectives, the parties have agreed to consult and to co-operate in the following three broad areas:
  - (1) Resolving all pending industrial relations issues of an immediate nature, i.e.
    - (a) The future of the Performance Based System (PMS);
    - (b) The Arbitration Awards No. s 52-57 of 2005;
    - (c) Unions' Log of Claim for 2003; and
    - (d) Job-Related Allowances.

- (2) A longer term industrial relations framework for 2006 to 2008 covering 2005 to 2007, in the following:
  - (a) Annual COLA Payment;
  - (b) Merit or performance based pay review;
  - (c) Implementation of JEE Report/JER;
  - (d) Flexibility in salary point for scarce skills and for higher or enhanced professional qualifications.
  - (e) increased support for in-service training.
- (3) Long term and continuous co-operation among the three stakeholders in the following specific areas:
  - (a) Improving the standards and quality of services to the people, and restoring public trust and confidence in the Public Service.
  - (b) Eradication of corruption and the promotion of Civil Service values and code of conduct, as set out in the Constitution and the Public Service Act.
  - (c) Agreement on the Job Evaluation Exercise Report/JER and implementation.
  - (d) Review of, and agreement on, a much simpler and more relevant and objective performance based appraisal system to operate alongside the annual COLA review.
  - (e) Agreement to control and stabilize the overall cost of the Public Service, so as to release more resources for improving services to the people and for stimulating increased private sector investment.
  - (f) Develop long term co-operative arrangements in other areas or aspects of the Public Service.
3. As a starting point in this collective partnership to improve the Public Service, the three parties agree that the following principles and guidelines, drawn from the Constitution and the Public Service Act, are to be the basis for policies and standards in the Service.

- A. Employment practices are based on the following:
- (1) appointments and promotions are made on professional merit, after an open, competitive selection process;
  - (2) appointments and promotions are made without patronage, favouratism, or political influence
  - (3) appointments and promotions, and merit progression, are made without discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, gender or socio-economic background.
  - (4) A working environment that is free from discrimination and a Public Service with a staff composition that reflects as closely as possible the ethnic composition of the population, taking account, where appropriate, of occupational preferences.
- B. A reward and remuneration system with the following guiding principles.
- (1) if we are to attract people with talent and commitment to public service, and if we are to root out corruption and dishonesty, we ought to offer salaries and wages that are fair and realistic for the work to be undertaken.
  - (2) Salaries and wages are to reward individual effort and performance, with merit progression to reward outstanding achievements and results.
  - (3) maintenance of the purchasing value of salaries and wages through an annual COLA review, but also taking into account the impact of this on the national economy, and the need to promote and stimulate a competitive environment for more investment in employment creation and in exports.
  - (4) a pro-active in-service training and other human resources development programmes to encourage continuous professional self-development, with recognition for higher relevant qualifications and job related skills and knowledge. In this, men and women equally, and members of all ethnic groups, are to be given adequate and equal opportunities.

- (5) Recognition of outstanding service to the community and to the nation in the annual Civil Service Excellence Award Scheme and in national honours under the Order of Fiji.

C. Responsibility to the Government

- (1) The Public Service is fully accountable within the framework of the Constitution, the Public Service Act, the Public Finance Management Act and other relevant laws, to the Government, the Parliament and the people of the Fiji Islands.
- (2) The Public Service is responsible to the Government in providing frank, honest, comprehensive, accurate and timely advice, and in implementing Government policies and programmes.
- (3) Government's policies and programmes are carried out effectively and efficiently, and with due economy.
- (4) The Public Service is to serve the Government and the people with the highest standards, particularly for integrity and honesty, commitment to the rule of law, and professionalism and accountability.

D. Services to the People

- (1) All Public Officers are to avail themselves to serve the public in the most efficient and helpful manner, and always with respect, courtesy and decorum.
- (2) In all their dealings with the public, all Public Officers are to be open, honest and fair, without regard for a person's ethnicity, cultural or socio-economic background.
- (3) All Public officers are, at all times, under obligation to respect the rights of the people, to be sensitive to their needs and aspirations, and to be considerate and helpful in advising and directing them.
- (4) Public servants are to be ever conscious of the importance of giving citizens the best possible value for money.

E. Code of Conduct

- (1) Public Officers are required to conduct themselves, at all times, in a way that upholds the integrity and good reputation of the Public Service and the Government.
- (2) they must behave honestly and with integrity.
- (3) they must act with care and diligence.
- (4) they must treat everyone with fairness, respect and courtesy, and without coercion or harassment of any kind.
- (5) they are to serve the Government and the people with competency, responsiveness, reliability and sensitivity, and with strict adherence to the rule of law and the requirements of public accountability.
- (6) In carrying out their functions and responsibilities, public officers must always act in a neutral, impartial and professional way.
- (7) Public Officers are not to use their offices, or to exercise their authority for private gain, to allow their integrity to be called into question, or to compromise the fair and honest exercise of their public duties.