



December 2013 edition

Four long-term serving officers go through retrenchment



Left: Acting Director Corporate Services Dick Morehari assisting one of the retrenched officers Stephen Yapulabe sign his deed of release while Chief Ombudsman Rigo Lua looks on.

The Ombudsman Commission witnessed the signing of the deed of release for four of its officers who have each served for more than fifteen years in the service of the Commission. It was an important occasion; however, made informally on 24 December 2013.

“I admire officers who have worked long here because over the years you have gained so much experience and I am pleased with the valuable contributions you have made in this Commission”, said Chief Ombudsman Rigo Lua.

While agreeing, Ombudsman Phoebe Sangetari thanked the officers for their service to the Commission and to the people of Papua New Guinea. She reminded the outgoing officers that they were leaving with a lot of information and knowledge about the Commission. “You must remember the Oath of Secrecy you signed and that is; information stays with you until death do you apart”, she said.

The retiring officers thanked the Commission for giving them the opportunity to work in this organisation. They expressed satisfaction during their service in the Commission and said that they will always be proud to be known as former employees of this great institution.

Despite being happy to leave, one of the retiring officers was frustrated over the high tax deduction from her final entitlements. Madeline Dira said the government was unjust to cut almost 50 per cent of the final entitlements as tax. The others shared similar sentiments.

The retrenched officers were Vahoita Raka, Koma Pereilu, Stephen Yapulabe and Madeline Dira. Also present to sign their deed of release were Victor Milli who ceased employment due to non-renewal of contract and Lorraine Manua who resigned.

VISION

Fair, just and effective leadership and good governance in Papua New Guinea.

MISSION

To promote and foster quality leadership and good governance and strengthen respect for Rule of Law in accordance with Section 218 of the Constitution.

The Ombudsman Commission is committed to (6) fundamental values in all dealings with government bodies, the private sector, members of the public and the leaders.

The values uphold are;

- ◇ Impartiality
- ◇ Integrity
- ◇ Independence
- ◇ Accountability
- ◇ Responsiveness
- ◇ Respect

[Ombudsman Commission Strategic Plan 2011– 2015]

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Officers share experience on twinning placement

Following their two-month placement with the Commonwealth Ombudsman in Canberra - Australia, Patrick Niebo – Senior Investigator (Complaints) and Gerega Asisi – T/L Annual Statement Assessment Unit (Leadership) held a debriefing session with interested officers and Members of the Commission. This is a first of its kind since the inception of the Twinning arrangement seven (7) years ago for officers on placement to share their experience with other officers .

In the session Mr Niebo ran officers through his experience of the placement and issues of interest that they saw relevant for implementation to improve the processes in OCPNG.

editorial

December edition of WasDok Newsletter

Hello readers!

We hope you have enjoyed reading every edition of the WasDok newsletter which is an OC monthly publication.

We are seeing another challenging but successful year come to an end and we take this opportunity to thank our internal and external readers for making time available to read the newsletter.

We also extend our thank you to the contributing writers for your contributions towards the publication of the WasDok newsletter and we look forward to more of your inputs in the new year.

Wishing each and everyone a fruitful 2014!



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Their Terms of Reference included investigatory practices; issues of interest; working with other integrity agencies; managing & developing relationship with external stakeholders; access to ombudsman (prison hotline) and ombudsman inspection function (police intrusive power).

One of the issues of interest of the placement is the ramification approach the Commonwealth Ombudsman has in place to look at the consequences, implications or the effects that an administrative procedure has occurred in its totality in an organisation.

Mr Niebo and Mr Asisi were the only placements for 2013 and so far there have been more than ten officers from OCPNG who have taken part in the twinning program.

Pictured here is Mr Niebo sharing his twinning experience with the officers.



Mobile phone lights used in hospital

No generator, no power. Mobile phone lights and torches are used to deliver mothers and attend to emergency cases at the Nissan Island hospital in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Health Extension Officer (HEO), Diane Linken said they use solar power but when it is raining they find other sources of light.

In a recent Public Education Program conducted by New Guinea Islands Regional Office on Nissan Island, the team visited the hospital facility and saw that it is run-down with very limited medical supply. The patients sleep on broken beds without mattresses and use sticks as drip stands. There is also no proper kitchen for the guardians to cook and a big need for improved sanitation and water supply.

According to HEO Linken, the hospital has not received any funding from the District Office even though 40 per cent is allocated to Health under the District Services Improvement Program (DSIP) Fund. She said the hospital gets its funding directly from the National Department of Health under the Direct Health Facility Funding. This is because the hospital under the Health Sector Improvement Program has been identified as one of the pilot projects in Bougainville including seven others.

Apart from the funding issue, the hospital continues to face staffing problems. There are no nursing officers except two



Left: HEO Dianne Linken listens attentively to NGI's Acting Regional Manager Anthony Champanien make a point.

Health Extension Officers and six Community Health Workers (CHWs). The CHWs are attached to other aid-posts on the island and only assist when they are free.

An average of ten patients is attended to in a day apart from those that are already admitted to the ward.

Lack of service delivery affects islanders

Many trained teachers leave the teaching profession for many reasons. One of the obvious reasons is the salary package. They turn to look for better opportunities for the welfare of their families.

Teaching, however, is a vocation. Often they do a lot of sacrifices and go through so much difficulty just to continue the love of their job.

It was sad to hear from the teachers of Uruh Primary School on Pinapel Island of North Bougainville in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville about how they live and what they eat to survive and continue teaching the young children.

One of the teachers, Helen Bengi from West New Britain has taught in this school for seven years. She told us that there is only one trade store on the island and when there is bad weather and or no boats, the store runs out of goods. "We feed on fruits and the villagers also assist us with garden food". Sometimes there is also shortage of garden food because the island is seated on coral. They feed on pekon (mangrove fruits). During OC's

time of visit, we were told that they were facing the hunger period because the mangrove was just bearing fruits.

A local teacher Conleth Daniara said transportation is a very big problem at Pinapel Island. They walk hours to look for dinghies. Often teachers are faced with the hardship of travelling to Buka to access their salaries because boat operators demand for boat fares to be paid in cash before they board. Passenger fare to Buka is K150.00 each way and to hire it would be K2500.00. You also pay freight for your cargo even if it is your household shopping.

Often teachers do not want to go to Uruh Primary School because of the remoteness as well as lack of service delivery. The education level in Pinapel and Nissan Islands is very low. They have a generation now that depends on education to move forward but the current setting of schools is not promising. They need a vocational school to help fund technical jobs.

On the other hand if transport services are improved it may open up more opportunities for them.

OC Fellowship

Ants

One day I stood alongside an anthill and watched all the activity down there. Everyone was moving, running this or that direction. Everyone seemed to know exactly where to go, and it was clear that everyone was busy about something.

Ants are, after all, not the kind of insects we associate with relaxation or taking it easy. Each one had his own job and knew exactly what to do.

I wondered who bossed them. I had heard they have a queen, like the bees.

I noticed that some ants were carrying eggs around, moving them to another place. Some were carrying bits of food much larger than themselves. Some seemed to be soldiers guarding the anthill.

They must have quite a government... I wondered how they communicate and talk.

I wondered how I could find all this out... I came to the conclusion that there was only one way: descend to their level and become an ant.

Message:-
 God wanted to know about earth, so he became man.
 That is the story of Christmas and of the babyhood and boyhood of Jesus...

Frank Mihalic
 DWI Publications and Kristen Pres



In-house training...(Seated 2nd from right) Ombudsman Nero, Mr Molita-Director Complaints Division and Mr Bonny from the Commonwealth Ombudsman flanked by officers from the Complaints Division and Office of Counsel. Also seen in this picture are officers from the Public Service Commission who were part of the training conducted by Mr Bonny.

Acting CEO of CIC referred to PP for misconduct

The Acting Chief Executive Officer of Coffee Industry Corporation Limited has been referred to the Public Prosecutor for alleged misconduct in office on 24 December 2013.

Anton Benjamin was referred on allegations of misconduct when he was the Secretary for Department of Agriculture & Livestock.

Mr Benjamin was investigated for alleged misconduct in office which arose from his failure in upholding his responsibilities in office.

He was issued his right to be heard notice in January 2011 and responded to the allegations in February of the same year.

The Commission deliberated on the matter and is satisfied, for the purposes of Section 29(1) of the Constitution and Section 17(d), 20(4) and 27(1) of the Organic Law on Duties and Responsibilities of Leadership, that there is a prima facie case that the leader has been guilty of misconduct in office.

He was informed of his referral to the Public Prosecutor on 23 December 2013.



END-OF-YEAR GATHERING

Towards the end of every year is normally filled with celebrations of all kinds, be it graduations or Christmas parties. It is also this time of the year when organisations take time out to celebrate their achievements and successes with their staff and families.

With the same trend, the Ombudsman Commission hosted its end of the year function at the Murray Barracks Bowling Club in Port Moresby on 21 December 2013. Officers came with their families and friends for the event.

As seen in these pictures, Chief Ombudsman Lua and Ombudsman Sangetari led a team of officers to play a game of bowling. It is not a game that everyone is familiar with so they had to go through a bit of coaching before playing.



2013 Highlights



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