

Welcome to the Chamber's Newsletter!

MARCH - APRIL 2019



Funding agreement sealed

SICCI acknowledges the Australian Government for their continuous support towards the private sector in the country. Board Chairman, Jay Bartlett made the acknowledgement after signing a SICCI grant funding agreement with the Australian Government through the Australian High Commission office on Thursday 11th April in Honiara. (MORE INSIDE)



Directorship
Programme
receives
support



Domestic,
sexual
violence and
business



42nd AGM,
members cast
votes to elect
new board



FEATURE:
Relishing
a rare
opportunity



Welcome

This is the official Newsletter of the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI), published and distributed to members and stakeholders after every two months.

It contains updates on all Chamber activities, news, members' feature, interviews, upcoming events and department updates from the Secretariat.

This publication is produced by the SICCI Media & Communications Department.

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SICCI's grant agreement with Australia



SICCI Chair, Jay Bartlett (third from left), Vice Chair, David Rupokets (second from right), CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata (far left) members of the SICCI Board and representatives from the Australian High Commission to Solomon Islands.

Thursday 11 April, Honiara – Solomon Island Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) acknowledges the Australian Government for their continuous support towards the private sector in the country.

SICCI Board Chairman, Jay Bartlett made the acknowledgement after signing a SICCI grant funding agreement with the Australian Government through the Australian High Commission office in Honiara.

The new SICCI grant funding worth SBD5million translates to three years worth of SICCI activities and support for core costs including some staff key positions to progress its private sector advocacy agenda.

“On behalf of the SICCI Board and our members I would like to thank the Australian Government, not only for your continuous support towards the Chamber but also your valuable support to other partners and organizations that promote growth in Solomon Islands’ economy and facilitate an enabling environment for investment,” Mr Bartlett said.

“The SICCI Board acknowledges the Australian Government’s preparedness to work with us to build our representative role for private sector. With previous funding signed in 2016, the Chamber convened events and meetings that

provided networking and learning opportunities for members, and at the same time gave us opportunities to canvass members’ views to develop collective private sector positions.”

With the first Australian Government grant SICCI developed higher quality policy dialogue with the Solomon Islands Government on the state of the economy and domestic business environment. SICCI worked hard in broadening its membership to capture the range of industries as well as small to medium sized businesses. The tranches were utilized for core funding towards strengthening the secretariat and for activities related to the Chamber’s advocacy agenda.

New SICCI Board member Ricky Fuoo testifies to the growth in SICCI brand and influence.

“The growth of SICCI membership to 250 member entities including over 30 province-based businesses resulted in both the increase in SICCI influence and convening power, as well as allowing a fuller national picture on issues businesses are facing.

“This growth aligns with my vision of seeing the Chamber become a true representative organisation for national development which was my platform at the March AGM which saw my election

into the SICCI Board. I am excited to be able to contribute to this important mission as part of the 2019-2020 Board,” Mr Fuoo said.

SICCI Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Atenasi Ata noted SICCI projects of gender equality and of development of entrepreneurship that were also implemented in the timeframe of the Australian Government grant agreement.

“It makes sense that building young people as entrepreneurs and improving women’s experiences in the private sector were two parallel SICCI efforts as the longer-term cumulative impact on social and economic outcomes leads to a higher chance of realising our goal of a vibrant private sector that delivers jobs and economic growth in the country.”

Ms Ata said that this new funding will be used along with raised membership subscriptions and sponsorship packages to implement priorities identified in the new SICCI Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

“SICCI priorities in the new strategic plan were largely informed by the Private Sector Scan (2017) which collated business concerns,” she said.

“For the next five years, SICCI will continue

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its efforts to remove barriers to growth and improve the business environment. And at the same time, we will deliver events that facilitate cross-learning, conduct trainings that build and improve the capacity of businesses to achieve their full potential.

"The new SICCI strategic plan, therefore, takes a long-term view of business-enabling concerns.

"Also, SICCI has come a long way in building itself as an organisation. There will be continued improvements to financial and human resource



SICCI Chairman, Jay Bartlett and Andrew Schloeffel from the Australian High Commission in Honiara, signing the SICCI grant agreement.

management of the Secretariat, as well as the attraction and retention of high-calibre individuals to deliver on the SICCI mandate," he said.

SICCI Chair Mr Bartlett maintained that SICCI will carry out its policy engagement efforts consistently.

SICCI calls for good governance in mining sector

Friday 8 March, Honiara – SICCI believes that principles of good governance need to be adequately applied in the country's mining sector with mechanisms that are sufficiently established.

The Chamber made this stand following the oil spill disaster in Rennell Island in February caused by the grounded MV Solomon Trader.

The ship was there to load bauxite.

"Government must ensure accountability and good governance practices are observed in the extractive industries especially Mining," SICCI Board Chairman Jay Bartlett said.

"With good governance mining, forestry and fisheries will benefit all Solomon Islanders through tax revenue, through infrastructure development, through employment and through benefits to resource owners.

"These industries must bring a better standard of living for our people and not simply extract our resources with little return," he added.

Meanwhile, SICCI CEO, Ms Ata said Solomon Islands as a country should seriously implement its national mining policy to provide an overarching guide for mineral development.

Ms Ata said the formal mining policy should provide a framework that points the mining industry in the direction the country chooses to proceed.

"Genuine mining companies and foreign



"These industries must bring a better standard of living for our people and not simply extract our resources with little return."

investors can seek such guidance so that they can know clearly the boundaries encompassing the sector and can demonstrate that they adhere to official policy," she said.

She said while mining offers opportunities for economic development, without adequate management, it also poses direct threats to livelihoods, culture, social well-being and our environment.

SICCI understands that the Solomon Islands Government launched its National Minerals Policy in 2017 that ensures resource owners have more say in development of their mineral resources.

Ms Ata said provincial governments should also have more of a role to play under the National Minerals Policy 2017-2021.

She said it is encouraging to note that the policy offers resource owners a direct voice in the industry, whereas previously they could only participate through signing of surface access agreements. SICCI, Mr Bartlett added: "All investors need to be considerate about how they conduct business in our country that is still aspiring to develop. There is an unwritten social licence to respect our democracy, our laws, our people and most importantly our land."

Report on Employer Capacity Strengthening & Project Consultation Workshop Trip



BY JOE SIKA MANUOPANGAI
General Manager
Tongs Corporation

I was invited by SICCI to attend an ILO workshop at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi Fiji from 24th to 26th of April, 2019.

On the 23rd, the Solomon Islands delegation met with the ILO ACT/EMP Employer specialist and ILO Legal advisor. We discussed issues that are of immediate concern to Employers in the Solomon Islands. I raised the Minimum wage and the need to review our labor and industrial laws. During the discussion I invited the ILO reps to visit and meet stakeholders in the country so they can formulate projects to assist us.

Workshop was conducted by ILO ACT/EMP together with ILO Suva office.

Attended by employer reps from Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, PIPSO.

The workshop was on Employer's Capacity Strengthening & Project Consultation. Project; Increased capacities of employers and workers organisations to participate effectively in the development of social and labor policy; aims to support employer and worker organisations participate/ contribute to national SDG processes. Project will be implemented in Vanuatu, Kiribati, Fiji, and Samoa and shared (??) to other Pacific Islands countries.

The project four focus areas;

- Build capacities for bi-partite and tripartite dialogue
- Enhance information/knowledge bases and platforms
- Facilitate MSMEs (particularly Young Entrepreneur) prepare for and respond to climate change
- Share information across the Pacific region

The project writes up is completed. Written in New York, full of legal jargons, a bit hard to understand

(requested to put in layman English). Workshop was to improve on the methodology of the project, identify project activities that are relevant to our region, prioritize according to importance and urgency to ensure effective implementation. Basically to develop a clear road map aligned to the project objectives. The output of the workshop will be featured in the project activities which will be distributed later to member countries.

The workshop also discussed some of the challenges faced by businesses in the region. Discussion focused on Insurance so can have a document submitted to the upcoming FEMM meeting for ministers to deliberate on. Some of the

issues highlighted were High cost of insurance, Limited coverage, Lack of micro insurance, Lack of awareness on insurance coverage, Lack of climate insurance, and Lack of conflict insurance.

I was also invited to take part in a plenary session about 'Strategies for building stronger employer

representation' which I discussed SICCI Strategic Plan 2019 2023 KRA of Advocacy, Membership Services, Organisational Strength.

Recommendation

The project activities focus a lot on bi-partite and tri-partite dialogue. There is a need to identify 'fit and

proper' stakeholders, employers and workers organisations that will take part in the dialogue. This project potentially will provide a platform where employers and workers organizations may find common ground for meaningful dialogue which is a rarity. We are currently struggling with the tri-partite dialogue on minimum wage where theres lack of commitment. Our labor and industrial related laws are outdated. This project road map when completed would provide an educated approach for its effective review and reform. Would have been a good project for the Solomon Islands.

JOIN US:

Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry, SICCI, is the national body representing private sector in the country.



TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP:

Member

- 1-9 employees \$550
- 10-19 employees \$1,600
- 20- 49 employees \$3,300
- 50-100 employees \$9,000
- 100+ employees \$12,000

Umbrella \$12,000

Affiliate \$4,000

Honorary

WIN FOR TOURISM



SICCI welcomes the commencement of international flights to Munda airport.

Thursday 28 March, Honiara – The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) has described the opening of the country second international airport in Munda as victory for tourism in Western Province and the country as a whole.

SICCI commends all partners in this activity, both Government and private particularly, Solomon Airlines under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Brett Gebers in driving certification of Munda airport for the landing of jet operations. From this outcome, commercial flights will commence this weekend.

The airport was certified following a successful Proving Flight on Saturday 23rd March 2019 to Munda airport.

SICCI Board Member and Operator of Dive Munda, Belinda Botha says this will have a positive impact on the local tourism sector.

“We were all thrilled to see the A320 land on the 23rd of March during the proving flight, it was like a dream come true for us here in Munda.

“The entire community, everybody, they were out watching, waiting and celebrating. We were all very emotional to finally witness this historic event take place. What a victory for tourism, the Western Province and the Solomon Islands in general,” Ms Botha.

“Thank you so much for all the hard work, dedication, determination and commitment by many stakeholders, but most importantly a big thank you to Solomon Airlines and the New Zealand Government.

She said the hope now is that with commercial flights to Munda up and running, visitor arrivals into Munda and Western province will soar.

“I have already seen a positive impact on booking inquiries and interest in our destination after the social media campaign announcing the direct flights went viral. We are working hard to market and promote the attractions of the province” she added.

SICCI Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Atenasi Ata congratulated all for the hardwork in realising this goal of the second international terminal particularly the New Zealand Government, in working with the Solomon Islands Government.

The Chamber sees this development as an important realisation of one of its advocacy goals of developing new sectors such as tourism in the country.

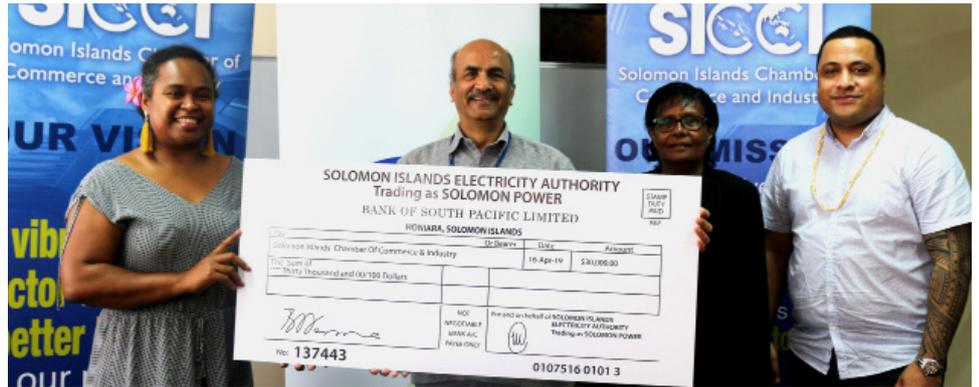
“Direct flights to Munda will enhance our tourism product offering; more visitors help us create awareness and be the voice for sustainable and responsible travel. These are exciting times indeed for the country.”

Directorship Programme receives support

Tuesday 23 April, Honiara - The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) acknowledges Solomon Power, Solomon Islands Ports Authority (SIPA) and Solomon Islands Tobacco Company (SITCO) for their commitment to supporting improved corporate governance in companies and organizations in Solomon Islands.

As part of this commitment, the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) has both committed SBD\$30,000 and SITCO \$60,000 towards the third Directorship Programme SICCI hosted in partnership with the Institute of Directors, New Zealand. For 2019, the Programme will run from 14-17 May 2019.

Working with its stakeholders and interest groups on addressing challenges to economic growth, SICCI continues



SICCI CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata receiving the \$30,000 cheque on behalf of the Chamber from Solomon Power representatives led by CEO Mr Pradip Verma.

to offer this programme, due to the wide implications in terms of improved corporate oversight of the country's State-Owned Enterprises, as well as the large, multinational companies through to small-sized businesses.

The programme offers a comprehensive introduction to international best practice in corporate governance, strategy, finance, risk and assessing performance.



*Not a member?
Want to join?
It just got easier.*

Sign up online by visiting our newly re-launched website on www.solomonchamber.com.sb

New looks, better feel ...awesome features!

Check our news updates, newsletter subscription, about us info, members portal, downloads section, and search for tenders function!



Visit our office located at the Hyndai Mall, First Floor, Suit 223 to collect an application form.

For Membership enquiries contact Naomi Mara on phone 39542 or email services@solomonchamber.com.sb

RELISHING A RARE OPPORTUNITY



Charlie Sango from Bethlehem in Central Kwara'ae, Malaita Province had the opportunity to showcase his products at the Path to Market trade-show in New Zealand and explore new markets overseas.

Local basket maker eyes overseas market

One of the key objectives of the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) is to build and improve the capacity and ability of local businesses to achieve their full potential in business, and therefore in contributing to growing the economy.

To achieve this, the Chamber works with Government partners, interest groups and organizations both national and regionally to work through challenges local businesses face.

One such partnership SICCI has utilized is with the Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) New Zealand.

Over the past three (3) years SICCI has been facilitating the participation

of locally owned businesses in the PTI New Zealand annual 'Path to Market' programme which is a multi-stage activity also known as the Pacific Path to Market business capability building programme.

One part of the activity, is where New Zealand businesses are brought into direct contact with Pacific businesses and their products, giving the former an opportunity to meet the people behind these businesses, and the latter a taste of the New Zealand market and to personally explore and potentially establish deals.

This year five local Solomon Islands businesses travelled to New Zealand from 6-10 April.

One of them was Charlie Sango from

Bethlehem village in Central Kwara'ae, Malaita Province.

For Mr Sango, this was a rare opportunity he says would not have been possible if he hadn't decided to fill in the membership form and become a SICCI member last year, 2018.

In New Zealand, Mr Sango showcased a range of traditional handmade cane baskets, locally known as loyacane woven handicrafts.

"For small businesses like mine opportunities such as this are very rare, even more because when we are based in the rural areas," he said.

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“That is why I really appreciate the Chamber of Commerce, and for me, their Export Industry Development Department who helped me, enabling me to show case my products overseas,” a satisfied Mr Sango, said upon his return from New Zealand on Thursday (11 April 2019).

Basket weaving has been a family business started by his father, and Mr Sango has been involved in what he does for 21 years now.

Most of that time, the products were sold at the community level, which Mr Sango says was just enough to meet the needs of his family and other commitments.

About five years ago he decided to commercial the idea into a business, and started selling the baskets in Auki, occasionally travelling to the capital Honiara to sell his products.

Today, Mr Sango is the proud owner of RLO Bethlehem Handy Craft, a financial member of the Chamber of Commerce.

“It’s a family business that initially started with my nuclear family,” he reiterated.

The impact from his small business has reached outside of his immediate family however, with other villages who have begun basket-making apart from his own community.

“It has a bigger impact on our livelihood. It helps us in terms of paying school fees and building good houses for our families,” he said.

Mr Sango learnt about the work the Chamber of Commerce does in representing small businesses during his visit to a SICCI stall set up during the Police Open Day in Rove, West Honiara in September 2018.

Mr Sango was at the Police Open Day to sell his baskets to members of the public attending the event where he found himself talking to SICCI’s Export Industry Development Officer (EIDO), John Paul Alasia and Media and Communications Officer, Philip Lilomo who had explained the work of

“I really appreciate the Chamber of Commerce, and for me, their Export Industry Development Department who helped me, enabling me to show case my products overseas.”

the Chamber, and some of the goals in supporting business it was established to deliver.

He also heard about the practical benefits of becoming a member of the Chamber.

A week later, Mr Sango showed up at the SICCI office the Hyundai Mall in central Honiara to complete formalities and become a member.

He was invited as a member of the Chamber, to attend the PTI NZ Path to Market workshop which was run on 18 October last year in Honiara.

The one-day workshop was part of the PTI New Zealand multi-stage programme, aimed at selecting local businesses to participate in a subsequent trade mission to New Zealand.

Although Mr Sango is not currently exporting internationally, he says recent sales in Honiara were about 100-150 baskets.

He went to New Zealand therefore, with the hope to find markets for his products there.

And participating in the Path to Market programme from the 5th-10th April in New Zealand has given Mr Sango the opportunity to explore this market for his products.

China’s biggest online market, Alibaba.com who had sent representatives to the Path to Market, met with Mr Sango, and they expressed keen interest in Mr Sango’s homemade loyacane baskets.

“That was the whole aim of going to New Zealand for this programme and I’m really encouraged by the fact

overseas buyers are showing interest in my work.

“I will also follow up on this online marketing offer because what I want in the near future is to start sending my products overseas,” Mr Sango said.

SICCI’s EIDO Officer, John Paul Alasia, led the Solomon Islands delegation to New Zealand.

He also commended the five local businesses who showcased their products at the Path to the Pacific Trade Show at The Cloud, the Auckland-based venue.

“This was a great opportunity for our local businesses to test market their products and learn from their experience in New Zealand.

“The capacity-building opportunities such as learning how to better market products through developing values-based pitches, this helped the businesses identify for themselves how to make their products even more attractive.

“Being able to directly interact with the public and potential buyers at the Path to Pacific Trade Show was another positive feature of the programme,” Mr Alasia said.

PTI NZ has had more than 300 companies in the region go through the Path to Market programme over the past 4 years.

The 7-stage programme starts with an in-country workshop. Potential exporters are identified and invited to attend the Auckland part of the programme that includes a showcase event. This year, that showcase event was the Path to the Pacific Trade Show at The Cloud on April 6.

SICCI's 42nd AGM, elects new Board

Thursday 21 March, Honiara – The Solomon Islands Chamber Commerce and Industry (SICCI) now has a new Board that will lead its mandate for the next twelve (12) months.

The new Board for 2019-2020 was elected during the 42nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of SICCI on Wednesday 20th March 2019 at the Heritage Park Hotel in Honiara.

The new Board is led by Jay Bartlett, Director of Hatanga Limited who returned unopposed marking his fourth consecutive term as the SICCI Board Chair.

David Rupokets, Managing Director of Capitol Construction Pty Limited also returned unopposed as the Board Vice Chairman.

The other six SICCI Board Members are:

- Ms Uta Temahua (Head of Human Resources & Support Services, Solomon Telekom Limited)
- Ms Hilda Lamani (Manager, Star Supplies Company)
- Ricky Fuoo (General Manager, Tropical Glass Aluminium (TGA))
- Ms Belinda Botha (Owner and Operator of Dive Munda)
- Craig Gibsone (General Manager Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Limited)
- Sir Bruce Saunders (Managing Director, AJ & G Blum Limited)

Under the new SICCI constitution eight members are elected for the Board every year during the AGM, and another two are co-opted – meaning two more



Members of the newly elected SICCI Board. Front row (right to left) Vice Chairman, David Rupokets, Chairman, Jay Bartlett, SICCI CEO, Atenasi Ata, Belinda Botha. Standing: Uta Temahua (left) and Hilda Lamani. Missing in the photo are Sir Bruce Saunders, Graig Gibsone and Ricky Fuoo.



SICCI Vice Chairman, David Rupokets delivering his remarks during the AGM.

members will join upon being appointed by this new elected Board.

The SICCI Board of directors is made up of eight (8) members.

Chairman, Mr Bartlett in his remarks highlighted the work, progress and challenges faced by the Chamber over

the past 12 months.

CEO, Ms Ata delivered a presentation on the 2019 Business Plan for the Chamber.

The Chamber's 2018 Financial Statement was presented to members by outgoing Board Treasurer, Joseph Huta.



Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MFoT), McKinnie Dentana giving an economic and financial update to SICCI members during the AGM.



David Patternot, Human Resource Manager, GPPOL, joins other SICCI members in casting their vote during the AGM.

Domestic and Sexual Violence to People and Business

Honiara, March 26, 2019 -A new study shows employees in Solomon Islands lose more than two working weeks a year due to domestic and sexual violence, with one in three employees experiencing violence in the past 12 months.

The study, of more than 1,200 employees working for companies in Solomon Islands, was undertaken by IFC, the International Finance Corporation, with the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry, SICCI. It's part of their joint work on the Waka Mere Commitment to Action, under which 15 companies in Solomon Islands, have committed to promoting gender equality in the workplace.

Surveying employees at nine businesses in the country, the study shows almost half the employees surveyed had experienced some form of domestic and sexual violence in their lifetime, with a quarter saying violence occurred at least once a month.

The study shows that stress and physical effects of domestic and sexual violence follows people to work. More than 80 percent of people who'd experienced violence reported at least one negative impact on their work, most often making it difficult to get to work, stay at work or impacting how they felt at work. These impacts included feeling anxious,



Some of the professional women who attended the launch of the report.

depressed or ashamed at work, and feeling unsafe.

The study shows that although men and women are both affected, more women experience violence and report slightly more effects. Overall, 49 percent of women and 38 percent of men reported they had experienced violence in their lifetime. The study also shows responding to the effects of violence also takes up staff time, with an average of five and a half days a year spent discussing the issue, helping someone access services or addressing the

impact of absenteeism, lateness or low productivity.

Waka Mere companies include: Bank South Pacific, Bulk Shop, GPPOL, Hatanga Construction Ltd., Heritage Park, National Fisheries Development, Pan Oceanic Bank, Solomon Airlines, Solomon Brewery, Solomon Islands National Provident Fund, Solomon Islands Port Authority, Solomon Islands Tobacco Company Ltd, Solomon Islands Water Authority, Solomon Power, and SolTuna.

We bid farewell to Mr Persson

Wednesday 27 March, Honiara – SICCI bids farewell to one of its senior staff, Charles Persson, who has been with the Chamber for the past three years.

Since May 2016 Mr Persson worked with SICCI as a Business Analyst working closely with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Board on strategy and planning.

The SICCI Board approved extending Mr Persson's role with the Chamber and he continued to support the team and advise the CEO since 2017 until his departure this week.

"Over the last three years the Chamber has been reshaped. The SICCI brand has value. The SICCI brand has visibility. The SICCI brand is associated with advocacy,



Charles Persson leaves the Chamber after serving for three years.

membership services, youth programs, and respect for women.

"And I am proud to have been part of that, and in particular to be there in support of the past CEO Dennis Meone, the new CEO Atenasi Ata, the Board and

the team," Mr Persson said before leaving for Sydney on Tuesday earlier this week.

"I have enjoyed immense collegiality not only with the Board and the SICCI team but also with our members and the greater community," he said.

EIDO DESK



John Paul Alasia
EIDO Officer

Five local SMEs attended the annual Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) NZ Trade Mission

“A positive learning experience that we must continue to support.”

Greetings from the EIDO desk!!

Solomon Islands recently participate in the annual Pacific Trade Invest (PTI) New Zealand Trade Mission on the 5th-9th April 2019. Solomon Islands delegation to this event was led by Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry through its Export Industry Development Office (EIDO) Mr. John Paul. Alasia and was accompanied by five (5) SME's.

The objective of the trade mission is to for small local businesses in the area of agribusiness, handicrafts, jewelry, clothing and food from the Pacific to test market their product in a New Zealand market.

New Zealand provide and set a standard market place that small businesses from the Pacific including Solomon Islands could learn from.

Product presentation and representation is still an issue for us Solomon Islands. Good quality labelling, branding and telling your story behind your product is still an issue we must continue to support and help our local products on.

Solomon Islands businesses attending the trade mission are as follows, Solkava Ltd, Chottus Guadalcanal Products, Nautilus Gilts & books, Gemstone Jewelry from Technical Institute of Malaita and Cane Basket Makers from Central Malaita.

SICCI call for more collaboration and engagement from the Government, private sector and development partners to support small local businesses to improve their products and find markets.

On behalf of the small businesses, SICCI would like to thank PHAMA Plus Program funded by Australia & New Zealand and the Ministry of Commerce Solomon Islands for the support. The



Local businesses with SICCI's EIDO Officer, John Paul Alasia (right) before their departure to New Zealand.



Nautilus Gilts & books.

group really appreciate and look forward working together with you in the future to support our local businesses grow. This is an annual event and we want to inform everyone especially those in the agribusiness, handicrafts, jewelry



Chottus Guadalcanal Products.

clothing and food to stay tune for the SICCI-PTI NZ in Country Capability Workshop later this year. Attending this annual in Country Capability workshop will give you a chance to attend the annual PTI Trade Mission.

SICCI commends RSIPF's response to Honiara disturbance

Sunday 28 April, Honiara – The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) commends the professionalism and capability shown by officers of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and the Correctional Services in dealing with the violent unrest experienced in Honiara City following the Prime Minister's election on Wednesday 24th April, 2019.

SICCI, on behalf of its members and the business community, thank the hard work of the RSIPF officers who risked their own safety to maintain law and order in the capital.

SICCI particularly commended the RSIPF's Police Response Team (PRT) who were able to contain the situation on Wednesday avoiding further looting and damages to businesses and properties.

"From our observations, we are impressed by the conduct of RSIPF and we call on our members and the general public to show support to the force on the streets and their executive in dealing with the situation," SICCI Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Atenasi Ata, said.

"The Police work as seen these past days was one of utmost professionalism and endurance," she added.

Ms Ata welcomes the assurance by the Police Commissioner that normalcy is back and pleas to individuals wishing to continue with more violence to think twice for the sake of peace in our capital and continuous growth of our country.

"Events like Wednesday's opportunistic violence can have significant negative impacts on business activities as we have witnessed, so as a Chamber, we strongly condemn the disturbances that has occurred.

"The resulting damages can set businesses back in having to rebuild and restock. The costs in non-operating days also impact on the everyday Solomon Islander. In most cases the customer at the end of the chain will meet these costs," Ms Ata said.

SICCI also calls on Solomon Islanders to accept the outcome of the Prime Minister's election and allow issues that came up to be dealt with accordingly through the right processes.

"At the end of the day there is a process for electing a country's political leaders. So, we are all encouraged as individuals to engage in those channels.

"It must also be kept in mind that laws and policies that impact on things like jobs for young people pushed out of the education system are captured in platforms of the Government of the day," SICCI CEO, Ms Ata, said.

Therefore, the Chamber remains a ready and willing partner to develop the strategies concerning industry-growth and job creation.

"By doing this we can address the observation that the majority of the crowd causing the unrest were young unemployed men and boys," Ms Ata said.



SICCI commends the RSIPF's Police Response Team (PRT).

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 14-17

SICCI Directorship Programme

Host: SICCI

Venue : Heritage Park Hotel,

May 20-24

SICCI-Gizo Roundtable

Host: SICCI

Venue: Gizo

May 29

Career's Market

Host: Woodford School, SISBEC,
SICCI

Venue: Woodford School

*For events enquiries contact our
Membership & Services Officer,
Naomi Mara on phone 39542/39543 or
email*

services@solomonchamber.com.sb

WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF

The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) Secretariat welcomed a new member to the team in April. Meet **NELSON KERE**, our new **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**.

Here Mr Kere speaks to this edition of the SICCI Newsletter about the motivation behind taking up this role, his professional experience and his objectives with SICCI.

What was the motivation behind taking up the role of Executive Officer for the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry?

I am motivated by what SICCI does towards the development of our country because I firmly believe that a highly productive private sector plays a pivotal role in this development.

Briefly tell us about your previous roles and work experience?

I am a trained lawyer by profession. My past work include – anti corruption with the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre of Transparency Solomon Islands, law reform and legal policy development with the Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission, and development cooperation with Australian High Commission aid program specifically the Governance Program as a program manager.

I am passionate about Sustainable Development and Good Governance.

What are your main aim or objectives if you like, of achieving during your time with SICCI?

- Use my knowledge and skills to contribute toward the SICCI team achieving its objectives and outcomes in an efficient and effective manner.
- Contribute towards the strategic direction of SICCI through reporting on performance indicators post implementation.
- Build relations and bridges towards a vibrant private



SICCI Executive Officer, Nelson Kere.

sector and the development of Solomon Islands.

- Enhance my performance capacity and capability with the responsibility I have as the Executive Officer of SICCI.

Finally, what are your views of the work SICCI is doing in representing the private sector?

- It is an important role in developing a vibrant business sector.
- It creates an avenue for the private sector to contribute more towards national development, in addition to

economic activity.

- It allows for there to be constructive dialogue, between the Government and the private sector, that is delivered in a coherent and cohesive manner.
- A well-coordinated private sector can be instrumental in influencing the appropriate National governance mechanisms to be put in place, positive policy directions – and perhaps holding the state to account for commitments it make – which is fundamental for economic activity and growth in a stable, open, fair and transparent environment.

Contact Nelson on:



executive@solomonchamber.com.sb



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KNOW YOUR BOARD

SICCI Board Members for 2019/2020



CHAIR

Jay Bartlett
Director
Hatanga Ltd



VICE CHAIR

David Rupokets
Managing Director
Capitol Construction



Belinda Botha
Owner Operator
Dive Munda



Sir Bruce Saunders
Managing Director
AG & J Blums



Craig Gibsone
General Manager
GPPOL



Hilda Lamani
Manager
Star Supplies Company



Ricky Fu'o
General Manager
Tropical Glass Aluminium (TGA)



Uta Temahua
Head of Human Resources
Solomon Telekom

MEET THE SICCI TEAM



Atenasi Ata

Chief Executive Officer

Atenasi is an emerging women leader who wants to see people in the Solomon Islands informed, engaged and invested in the future of the nation's development with dignity and a high quality of life. She started with SICCI as the CEO in September 2018. She sees the private sector and SICCI as having a significant role to play in enabling change that directly impacts people's lives. Atenasi holds a Masters in Law and Development from Melbourne Law School in Australia. Before she joined SICCI, Atenasi worked at the National Parliament, the Australian Government's bilateral aid program and UN Women.



Nelson Kere

Executive Officer

Nelson Kere is responsible for maintaining strong network for the Chamber. He ensures SICCI engages with the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and its partners, in an approach promoting partnerships on core issues for the private sector.

Nelson joined SICCI in April 2019.

He is a trained lawyer by profession. Nelson has previous work experiences with Transparency Solomon Islands (TSI), Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission and with the Australian High Commission's Governance Program as a program manager.



John Kanai Ta'amora

Advocacy Officer

John Kanai is responsible for the Chamber's Advocacy Plan 2015-2019. Part of this role is to do researches that will help assist members of SICCI and the Solomon Islands Government in making better policies that are mutually benefiting. John Kanai was recruited in April 2017.

He recently completed his Master of Arts thesis in International Affairs in February 2017 on Solomon Islands Foreign Policy and the Impact of RAMSI and has a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Economics and Politics at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji.



John Paul Alasia

Export Industry Development Officer

John Paul oversees the Chamber's agribusiness activities and the export industry and works closely with Rural Development Program (RDP). His role involves engaging with the five industry working groups Cocoa, Coconut, Horticulture, Sawn Timber and Seafood.

John joined SICCI in May 2017. He previously worked as a Livestock Field Officer at the Taiwan Technical Mission Farm at King George VI in East Honiara in 2016. He graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Agriculture Applied Science at the University of South Pacific, Samoa in 2014.



Shaun Konaga

Administrative Manager & Assistant Finance Officer

Shaun manages the SICCI Office administration through reception, office and printing supplies, events management as well as assisting financial duties on salaries and finance records.

Before she came to SICCI she was an assistant administration officer with the events company Mac Group and made her potential known during Mac Group's preparation of the SICCI Business Excellence Awards in 2015.



Naomi Mara

Membership Officer

Naomi looks after the SICCI Membership database and takes lead in organising SICCI events such as the popular Business After 5. She joined SICCI in November 2017.

Naomi previously worked with the Youth@Work program following her completion of studies in early 2017. She has a degree in Social Science obtained at the James Cook University in Townsville, Australia.



Philip Lilomo

Media & Communications Officer

Philip drives the SICCI Communications Strategy. He maintains the Chamber's branding, design and graphic visibility, website administration, social media management and deals with the mainstream media contents. Philip also manages the flow of information in the SICCI network.

He previously worked in the mainstream media for nine years for Solomon Star, Sunday Isles and Island Sun Newspapers since 2008 as a news reporter, photographer and became sub-editor before he joined the Chamber in June 2018.



John Wopereis

Coordinator, Young Entrepreneurs Council Solomon Islands (YECSI)

John is responsible for launching and building the Young Entrepreneurs Council (YEC) program. This is a new partnership program between the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) and the Solomon Islands Government. He was recruited for the position in May 2018.

John previously worked with Skye Eye for two years in a management role. He graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand.



Ruth Maetala

Coordinator, IFC-SICCI Gender Program

Ruth will support delivery of the Pacific Investing in Women program, working closely with the IFC Gender Team in Sydney and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce (SICCI).

Prior to joining the SICCI-IFC gender project in October 2016, Ruth worked with the Solomon Islands Government as Director of Research and Policy Unit of the Ministry of Women, Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Agreement (SINPA) as the coordinator and undertook tasks such as providing advice to member NGOs, Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (facilitate annual reflection workshops) and reporting to DFAT.