

## WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2012

The Speaker, Sir Allan Kemakeza took the chair at 09.40am.

Prayers.

### ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and External Trades; Education and Human Resources; Finance and Treasury; Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification; Commerce, Industry and Employment; Environment, Conservation and Meteorology and Disaster management; Fisheries and Marine Resources; Agriculture & Livestock Development; Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and members for West New Georgia/Vona Vona; Rennell/Bellona; Temotu Pele; Maringe/Kokota; South Guadalcanal; Kia/HogranoHavulei; North New Georgia; North Guadalcanal; West Are Are; South New Georgia/Rendova and Tetepare; Fataleka; West Honiara; Malaita Outer Islands.

### **BILLS**

#### Bills - Committee of Supply

The 2012 Appropriation Bill 2012

**Mr Speaker:** Honourable members, the House will now resolve into the Committee of Supply to continue with the consideration of the 2012 Appropriation Bill 2012.

#### Committee of Supply

**Mr Chairman:** Honourable members before we proceed with the Committee of Supply, I would like to remind you that today is the third day of the four days allotted for the Committee of Supply according to standing order 61(3). Please try to avoid making general comments when

asking questions and when answering questions please refrain from debating the items. This will enable us to go through the heads more quickly. We will continue on page 6 of the Bill, Head 283 – Ministry of Police, National Security and Correctional Services.

Head 283: Ministry of Police, National Security & Correctional Services - \$177,256,380

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 1012 - Special Duty Allowance has a new allocation under headquarters and admin. Can the Minister inform Parliament who are these people who are going to take this special duty allowance?

**Hon Clay Soaloi:** This special duty allowance under headquarters is for cleaners of the Kalala House.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Can the Minister further clarify these cleaners of the Kalala House? What then is the overtime there for and what is the special duty allowance. What is the difference between those two, what grade, and what nature of duty warrants this special duty allowance to be paid?

**Hon Clay Soaloi:** Overtime is for government officers of the ministry and special duty allowance is for the cleaners. In previous budgets we called them the non establish.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Mr Chairman, I am a little bit concerned when you cautioned us not to raise general questions because during question time earlier on, you stated that this is the time for us to ask questions that might be of a general policy nature. And so I hope you will understand it and I am sure you are very understanding to allow us to make general comments as we go along on the heads that are yet to be discussed.

**Mr Chairman:** Can you sit down Leader so that I explain what I meant? Making a statement as if you are reading a statement is what I discourage so that we can proceed quickly. You can now continue.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Thank you for that clarification. My question is on other allowances, accounting code 1014. We have special duty allowance and overtime, what is the nature of this other allowances?

**Hon. Clay Forau:** Sometimes my officers accompany us to the provinces. A good example would be when we went to open police houses and we send officers to go ahead to prepare

those houses for opening. It is also mainly for officers that went to visit the provinces, and not only provinces but other sites in Honiara as well. .

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2011 - electricity and gas. This allocation to the Ministry seems to be very low compared to other ministries. Why is that the case?

**Hon. Clay Forau:** The bill for the Kalala House is shared with the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs so that explains why it is a bit low.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2091 - overseas travel (MPs). How many trips will this budget cater for and how many overseas trips is the Minister intending to take this year?

**Hon. Clay Forau:** This year, I plan to visit our neighbours in the MSG. There is a meeting in Singapore I am planning to take, and these are Interpol related matters. Otherwise I have a lot of things to do at home.

**Mr. Matthew Wale:** Page 264 – the police capability plan. Can the Minister outline the major components of this plan?

**Hon. Clay Forau:** The police capability plan, as you would know well during your time, Mr Chairman, that when RAMSI came in, the budget of the Ministry of Police demands a lot of money but there is no money there at that time and so the instruction given by your government at that time, Mr Chairman, is for the police to come up with a police capability plan where an allocation of \$15million was made for that item.

I think you would remember correctly that \$3million was for the establishment of the Lofung and the other \$12million was reserved for the Police Capability Plan. That is the basic background to this Police Capability Plan. There was also directive from the government then for the Police to come up with a new structure and that structure was finalized towards the end of last year.

Anyway, the allocation in the budget to this Police Capability Plan is to cater for things like vehicles, OBM and canoes, radio equipments for the Police and also accommodation for officers that we would like to move them to temporary accommodation while awaiting the construction of police housing.

The name itself speaks for itself and it is to improve the capability of police. Looking at it, it can even be called a contingency fund for the police to cater for its special operations when the need arises. That is what the PCP is all about.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** One of the issues in Police is when you ring for assistance you are told there is no vehicle or the vehicle is available but no fuel or in the rural areas the outboard motor breaks down or there is no petrol and so forth. In terms of police capability, the mobility of police is always the very important part of it. I would like to know from the Minister how many vehicles, OBM and canoes will be purchased this financial year and how would those be distributed throughout our stations.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** What the MP is raising is very true. The capability of police is very much suppressed by the lack of logistics and so towards the end of last year we purchased eight vehicles, four OBMs and canoes. This year we are planning to purchase more vehicles. What I would like to announce this morning is that we are very fortunate with this new initiative, the PPF announced that this week it will deliver 25 vehicles to the Ministry of Police and so we should be thankful to our PPF friends for this generous assistance at this time.

I cannot refute that concern; it is true that sometimes when people ring there are no vehicles available basically because there are no vehicles. I think from now on with these vehicles coming, you can be assured there are vehicles and if this excuse still continues when vehicles are now available then measures are already put in place that officers should be disciplined for failing to be at their work place.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I am happy to hear that the PPF will be giving some vehicles to the Ministry of Police. Are these new vehicles or vehicles already used by the PPF themselves?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** No, these are not old vehicles but new vehicles that cost around \$7million. These are new vehicles. The instructions that I gave when I came to the ministry is that all police vehicles must be G-plated and must all be labelled. Those 17 vehicles are going to be for general duties and specialized divisions within the Ministry of Police but the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force should have vehicles, one of which is the Sexual Assault Unit which does not have a vehicle for a long time. This morning it was reported in the Solomon Star newspaper that according to the Chief Justice report at the opening of the 2012 legal year, sexual offences are very high. We are doing all we can do to address the needs of the Police Force.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I want the Minister to confirm how many vehicles will be given to the Tetere Police station.

**Hon Clay Forau:** We will start off by giving one vehicle each, and so Tetere is going to have. It will depend very much on how the vehicles are going to be distributed. Now that RAMSI is going to give 25, we will make sure that police stations we see have high needs will be given additional vehicles so that they are able to patrol, especially wide areas like Tetere where there is GPPOL and the Gold Ridge companies.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Mr Minister, you talked about vehicles, but I did not hear you talk about outboard motors. What about Gizo, are you going to buy some outboard motors and canoe for the commanding officer there? I am asking because people use their own transport to lodge complaints at the Gizo Police because Gizo Police does not have any transport. What is your plan for Gizo?

**Hon Clay Forau:** Yes, we are also buying OBMs and canoes. We have awarded a contract to one boat manufacturer. If you go past the Oceanic Marine at Ranadi you would see boats with police signs on them sitting there. But we will prioritize areas like the Western Province, Choiseul; areas where the Police are really in need of canoes to carry out their duties. Honiara's priority maybe vehicles, but for provinces we will give priority to provinces that need police boats.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I still want to ask a question on Police capability, especially in response to call outs on accidents. As the member for Aoke/Langalanga has stated, there is very slow response from the Police if you dial 999 because of the lack of transport for Police to attend quickly. With these new vehicles coming in, how is the Police planning to make sure that when people call 999 during accidents of motor vehicles, how could the Police plan to respond quickly? Are they going to rely on vehicles that are on the road already or are they going to dedicate a particular vehicle to respond quickly to emergency calls like accidents?

I am saying this because on Saturday last week, there was a very bad accident at Burns Creek and it took the Police an hour to attend to that very bad road accident on Saturday morning. I want the Minister to inform the committee what his plans are for these new vehicles coming in will enhance the capability of police to quickly respond when people call 999.

**Hon Clay Soaloi:** The plan now is that when we have enough vehicles, we would want to have vehicles in front of stations so that if calls come through on 999 and the unit tries to contact any vehicles but there is no quick response, a vehicle will be sent from the station. That is the plan now.

I think another problem in regards to this as well is the lack of communication equipments, so we are ordering radios so that all officers on the streets and in vehicles are connected to the communication centre.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I would like the Minister to inform the House whether the Police is collecting response time data when an incident happens and is reported and how long it takes for the Police to actually arrive on the scene and attend to it; whether that kind of information is collected so that there is some accountability that they are looking to improve it.

The other aspect is their fuelling policy. How do they keep their vehicles fuelled at all times so that when the public rings they do not say there is no petrol in the vehicles?

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The Minister has not yet answered the member for Aoke/Langalanga's question.

**Mr Chairman:** I thought it is a comment. Is it a comment Aoke/Langalanga because the same question that you asked earlier on is repeated again the second time? I can hear that the same point was twisted around this time.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** No, no, no I asked for a specific answer because he did not give a specific answer and that is why I asked.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** It is true that it is the same question being twisted around. Yes, we do have data. Most developments in the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force now are based on data that we have available. The improvements we are trying to do in as far as communication is concerned are basically based on the data. Data is available within the Police. I witnessed this myself when I visited that unit several times already. The Prime Minister himself also visited that place where all the data is available in that room.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 3700 on page 266, that amount was taken up as income on page 265. It appears as a lump sum there as donor funded expense. May be the Minister can brief Parliament whether the Ministry has any implementation plan worked out for that particular allocation?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** That amount is the accountable cash grant that comes through the RAMSI Law and Justice Program, which we have used to build 16 Correctional Services houses; eight in Lata and another eight would be in Auki.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 265 - staff welfare, accounting code 2116. I want the Minister to explain the purpose of this allocation.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** This staff welfare is used when a staff member passes away and is used to assist in the buying of coffins or transporting the body back home. It is to assist officers in funeral expenses.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 266, sub-item 6222, how often does that board meet and whether there are any outstanding cases for that board to deal with this year? If the Minister can outline that to us.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** Under current regulation this board has to meet at least four times a year. But as I have mentioned earlier in my budget speech, we are reviewing that regulation to improve it because we want it to meet only when the need arises because it is not a full time job, it only should meet when the need arises. Current regulations require that it meets four times a year, and we are reviewing that.

On outstanding cases, there are some inmates who have made submissions, and therefore consultations between the committee and the Chief Justice who would be standing on behalf of the judges who sentenced the inmates is yet to happen. Once that is done I should be in a position to make the decision whether to release or turn down recommendations from the parole board.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 268, accounting code 283-0479-3233, purchase of outboard motors. I am impressed honourable Minister and I appreciate your answer that you are going to purchase some outboard motors for provincial police. But when I sighted zero provision for that item I am a bit unhappy. Can you explain why this item is zero?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** I would like to refer the member back to the explanation I made under the PCP where outboard motors and vehicles will be catered for under the allocation to the Police Capability Plan.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I am still on page 266. In terms of uniforms, how many sets of uniforms are normally issued to correction officers in a year showing a substantial increase, and perhaps a backlog to try and catch up on it or whether there are more on the establishment, as there is a sizable increase. Can the Minister inform the committee of this increase?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** In terms of correction officers, each officer has three pairs of uniforms.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on page 266 on the regional police chiefs' conference. Is this allocation of \$445,000 for us to host the conference or for the Minister to attend this conference elsewhere in the region?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** This is not only for the Minister but for the delegation that will be attending this conference. It will not be here but we will attend this conference this year.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** With regards to prisoners uniforms, the inmates, how many uniforms are issued I suppose depending on the length of the sentence, what is the standard policy on prisoners' uniforms?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** Inmates coming in are issued with two pairs of uniform, of which one is for them to wear when working outside and the other one is for them to wear inside the vicinity.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** On page 266 we have prison industry, prison welfare and gratuity and prison program. I want to ask the Minister to explain the difference between those three items.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** Prison industry refers to activities that inmates are involved in like carpentry which is more industrious activities like woodwork, screen printing, furniture making and many other activities that prisoners are doing inside our correctional centres. The others refer to other social activities that prisoners are engaged and involved in that helps to rehabilitate prisoners so that when they go out they become useful members of the community.

This prison industry, we believe will help inmates when they go out to make their living after being rehabilitated and should be able to once again become useful members of the community.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On page 266, accounting code 3030 – rations. I assume this is for prisoners rations. I just want to ask the Minister how many prisoners are there in the prison at the moment.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** I cannot give you the actual figure at the moment because as I am speaking I do not know how many have already left. Others might have left yesterday that I do not know, but the accurate information can be given to the Member later. We can only know the exact number if we check today.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** The question on the prison industry, I understand prisoners are making furniture as the Minister has just explained with other products. When prisoners produce those things and sell them, I understand that the proceeds go towards their ration. Are they making good revenue or income from this or not because it does not seem to be recorded even under income? Is it just recorded internally?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** You will not be able to see it as income in here because it goes back to those activities to pay for some more equipment to help in that industry.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 268, sub item 6015 - National Intelligence unit has an allocation of \$40,000. We used to have a branch called the special branch and I assume that is the work this particular unit is doing. Can the Minister brief Parliament how many people are in that unit, what kind of training do they have and how are they spread throughout the country?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** The National Intelligence Unit which has an allocation here refers to duties that plain clothes police officers are doing when going out to the public collecting intelligence. They go out to listen to stories being told on the streets and the markets. That is what is being referred to here, and in doing that, if officers are sent to the provinces they will need accommodation, airfares and other expenses. When we hear information flying out as rumours, these officers are sent over as community members to collect intelligence information from those places. This is what is referred to as the National Intelligence Unit and this allocation is for that purpose.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I would have thought that this is a very, very important unit for national security purposes. I do not know how the Police is organized now in terms of these people. But as you know, Mr Chairman, maybe during your time we used to have a special unit called the Special Branch and their work is exactly what the Minister is saying. Is the Minister saying now that we have abolished that unit – the Special Branch Unit and we only use the general police officers to do the work of collecting intelligence report? I want the Minister to explain it to us because my view is that if we put low priority on this unit then we are underestimating our own national security. How many officers are in this Unit?

**Hon. Clay Soalaoi:** This unit is very important as the Member has alluded to, as it is the core of intelligence in the Police Force. The officers that are doing this work are not those general duty officers in sky blue uniforms. There are 29 officers currently working in that unit, and a good number of them are usually sent out and the core of the unit stays back and assesses the information collected to assist us get right information from rumours coming in we can accurately reach conclusions on information that we have, especially in dealing with the security of the country. This unit is a very special and important unit within the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.

**Mr. Milner Tozaka:** Page 269, accounting code- 283-0479-6034- community policing/touring allowances. I thank the Minister for increasing allocation to this subhead.

My question to you is that we in North Vella have three area constables, and we have gone ahead to implement community policing and that are doing a very good work. Are you going to meet remuneration and operational support for area constables under this allocation?

**Hon. Clay Soalaoi:** If you see an increase in this allocation, it simply shows the importance we are giving on community policing. This year there will be a lot of community policing programs. The Police are planning to visit schools to carry out awareness talks in schools. This increase in allocation is basically to strengthen the police and community partnership so people should feel very much part of the work the Police are doing once they go down to them. Whilst that is happening it would also be seen as police presence in our communities.

As the Police are doing community policing programs, it allows the community to be able to feel the presence of police officers in the communities. This is kind of killing two birds with one stone.

**Mr. Matthew Wale:** Page 267. The police station I know we have been talking about for a long time to be located at King George VI or the Burns Creek area, I can see the vote for upkeep and repair of police stations has gone down by half a million dollars. The police station over there, I heard that the land being repossessed or resumed for public purpose has been allocated to another business. What is the story about that particular police station?

**Hon. Clay Soalaoi:** That police station is going to be built this year. If you look at the Development Budget, this police post is inside. We are building that police post this year.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Just a follow up on that. In light of the fact that the site has been allocated, where does the Minister think they are going to build that police post? Are they going to go back and resume it for the second time or will it be on the same site or a new site?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** As far as we are aware, it will be still the same site. The Ministry of Lands and the Ministry of Police are working closely on this issue. The Ministry of Police has now declared its interest to develop that site and so the responsible ministry will be doing its part to make sure that land is ready for the Ministry of Police to build the police post. But in case things are not done quickly because we want this to happen this year, we might want to identify another location on the same vicinity.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I would like the Minister to explain to the House a new activity here on page 269, item code 6050 – exercises. Can the Minister explain what that is?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** Maybe next time we will look for a better word for this. Our plan now is for the police to have its own gym and equipments for them to exercise and keep fit, and that is what this provision is for. The allocation may look inadequate but this is what this exercise stands for. It is referring to equipments and equipments for police officers to keep fit.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** The forensic services expenses gets a fairly low sort of allocation in 2010, 2011 and again this year 2012. Forensic, obviously, is an important aspect in modern day police force in investigations. Perhaps if the Minister can outline to us the sort of forensic services that are available and can be done here and what is not available. I am assuming there is no DNA testing on murder cases, for example, but just for the Minister to make some clarifications on this.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** The fact that the allocation there is a bit low is because when our friends the (PPF) are here with us here, we have some of the equipments they are giving to us, and so basically what this allocation is for is to continue purchase other things such as films for screens for finger printing, ink, brushes, magnifying glasses and so forth. But the other specialised equipments that we could have used some big amount of money to buy have been given to us by our friends, the PPF and so we are thankful to them for that.

That does not mean we do not recognize its importance, but we think we have enough equipments at this time. What we have should be enough for this year otherwise we believe we are able to take care of any needs this division might need, and next year we should increase this allocation.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Item 3012 - riot equipment and the allocation there seems to be low as well. Is that the same case to the riot equipment of what is the situation here and that is why the allocation is low?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** That is partly true. We have riot equipments at the moment. The other thing you would notice is that the Police have started an officers safety training at this time. We will be bringing these equipments according to the number of officers trained to handle the equipments. We can allocate for them after our officers are properly trained to use the equipments. Up to now as I have said earlier on, our riot equipments are provided for by the PPF. But we are going to purchase our own equipments when RAMSI draws down in that area and we are able to handle our own equipments.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Item 3104 – office rent, there is an amount of \$1.1million on page 268. Which private premises is the Police renting and for how much per month?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** The Police has an unit called the Police Prosecution and Professional Standards housed at the Anthony Saru Building, and that is what that rental is for. Other details regarding the cost of rental per month, I will provide that to the member after the meeting.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Just a comment in relation to item 6034 on page 269. I also join the MP for North Vella La Vella to thank the Minister for increase on this head of community policing.

I just want to encourage the Minister and his officials in regards to substations in the provinces if community policing can be arranged with communities so that the Police presence is within villages maybe on a quarterly basis or something like that. So that even if this head is further increased, it is better because our rural people need the present of the Police for brief consultation and so forth.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I want to ask in terms of professional standards. I note there is an allocation there for internal investigations. I assume that has something to do with professional standards as we are aware there have been serious allegations made against certain key senior officers within the Force, which is a bit demoralizing. On the one hand it is easy to make allegations that are unsubstantiated and on the other, of course, some of those allegations are serious undermining the credibility of the Force.

I think this unit is very important. If the Minister can clarify to the Committee the protocols used by the professional standards unit to investigate highly publicised allegations made by subordinate officers that have just finished.

**Hon Clay Soaloi:** In terms of professional standards, usually when an officer is implicated, internal investigations will be carried out. If an officer is based in the province, officers will also be sent to the province to investigate cases reported to headquarters. This can only be done by the professional standards and officers above the ranks of those who are reported. Lower rank officers cannot discipline an officer that is above their rank. That is what is happening there.

On cases where senior officers are implicated, what should happen is that a tribunal would be set up to look at disciplining such officers and when it comes to the last officer at the top, it is up to the boss on-top of the hill to deal with. That is the way discipline is done within the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. But there is a lot of emphasis in improving that process at this time, not because of allegations that have been coming up, but it has been the plan of the Ministry to ensure the professionalism of the Force is maintained and officers are well disciplined. A lot of work is currently being done in that area. I think when the right time comes officers that we are aware of will be dealt with accordingly. It is only a matter of time when these measures should happen to officers concerned.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On the issue of community policing, I wonder if the Minister could briefly inform us on what communities could do if they are interested in community policing. Very briefly if the Minister can inform this Committee on what communities could do to request this?

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** One particular program the police is doing now is the engagement of community officers. But for communities to speed up the awareness program of police in their communities, we encourage communities to organise and request police to come down to your communities and carry out the community policing partnership programs.

Some activities like have already happened where we are now working with the youths in Honiara on the same program. If individual communities would organise themselves and request the police that would be an added advantage for the police as it will make the work of the police much easier.

We would like to identify which places to go to first, but if there are any requests coming in from communities, then we might just go to those communities first. I would encourage communities to organise and let the police know because the police would very like to go out to every community as much as possible so that partnership between the community and police is strengthened as we are in the stage where we would like to build the confidence of our people in our Police Force.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Just a follow up to my prior question, specifically in regards to serious allegations raised against senior members of the Police Force. If the Minister can update us on what steps have been taken specifically with regards to allegations submitted by subordinate officers.

**Hon Clay Soalaoi:** Referring to the issue submitted by subordinate officers, we fully understand the disappointment and dissatisfaction expressed by subordinate officers have expressed, and as I have said it would only be a matter of time before appropriate actions are taken against officers concerned.

If you look at those implicated in the report, there is no one else above them, so the starting point for me as the Minister of Police would be to start when we have a new commissioner when I should be able to direct him to do the right thing.

**Mr Chairman:** I want to remind members that we are discussing the estimates and not any other questions apart from that. I just want to remind members to be mindful of that. We are discussing the estimates here.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** If I can also remind us that the removal and discipline of members of the Police Force is subject to section 121 of the constitution. Members ought to be reminded that anything against any police officer has to be channelled through the appropriate channel.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Point of order. Coming back to your comment and the ruling you made, Mr Chairman, I just want to say on behalf of us on this side of the House that it is very important

for us to ask questions of general nature so that we can understand the policy rationale behind all these estimates; as to why these estimates and how they arrived at in the context of government policy. Therefore, questions that maybe are of a general nature, but the reason why we are asking them is to get the policy rationale behind the allocations.

**Mr Chairman:** Yes, but we must not go too far. We are outside of the estimates. We seem to be making inquiries or questioning an investigation on matters which are under investigations. That is not the way to question. We are discussing the estimates. I understand and I do allow questions around some policies issues.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Point of order. Since your comment comes immediately after my questions, I presume that the assumption is that my questions are have gone out of the estimates. But all these questions have to do with how the machinery of government is working. If steps are not taken, then we may question why no provision has been done. It is the other side of looking at the estimates, the omissions, we would have no way of telling what have been omitted if we do not know what have been done or not done on specific issues that have been raised. And so I think it is valid.

I think the rule of thumb is common sense, we just go along with common sense; we are not trying to be difficult on this side, we are only trying to solicit more rather than less information. But your ruling is straight, which is commonsense in between, but I am just clarifying my position on this.

**Mr Chairman:** Thank you MP for Aoke/ Langalanga. My ruling stands.

*Head 283 agreed to.*

Head 284: Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening - \$78,357,008

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Statutory salaries on page 272, accounting code 284-0003-1000. Minister, please can you explain what statutory salaries is as it appears in 2011, revised \$15, and budget 2012 is nil.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The statutory salaries have been transferred to accounting code 0003-1030.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** You have 25 budgeted posts which includes provincial speakers, provincial clerks and some works officer. For the Minister to explain whether there have any discussions with the Ministry of Finance, and why did we not budget for these?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The salaries of clerks and speakers will come under the huge amount under accounting code 1030 -members salaries. They will come under the huge amount there of \$10million.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** If they are unfunded how come they find their way into the budget. It cannot be, it cannot be in the \$10million the Minister has stated. If it is unfunded in the establishment and manpower register, then it cannot be in the budget. How are you going to pay the provincial speakers, provincial clerks and works officers? There are 25 of them that are unfunded in this year's budget; it cannot be true. There must be an explanation for it.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** That is very true because this issue just came in towards the end process of the budget. We therefore are going to fit it in there first, and as we move on we will create a head for it. In the meantime that is where they are going to be paid. That is what we agreed on. They will be initially met under members' salaries.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** For the Minister to confirm whether they are going to be paid in super scale 1 and the speakers and clerks at level 13. Is that so?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Yes, that is the level they are going to be paid.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Still on 1030. Following the question of the Leader of the Opposition, if those posts are not budgeted for, and now you are saying they will be accommodated there, initially what is that budget for. Which ones have you displaced from the original budget that makes you to push those who are not budgeted for inside?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Previously, the salaries of clerks and speakers are paid for by provincial assemblies, but now they will be taken care of by the Ministry, the Ministry is going to meet their salaries under its budget. And that is why in fitting them into the Ministry's budget, they are going to be placed under provincial members' salaries.

**Mr Alfred Ghiro:** I think I can offer some assistance to the Minister of Provincial Government by explaining this. It is true that unfunded posts in ministries are not budgeted for, but the case of provincial speakers and clerks were already approved last year and so are included in the budget. It could be a few things we did not get through the Orion and that is why they appeared as unfunded.

But we are going to clean this up to make sure it is right. As you know we are just moving into a new system that would not be perfect in the beginning but maybe next year it would be closer to perfect.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I thank the Minister for explaining that issue. Page 273-6069 – bye elections and elections. How many provinces are going to the polls this year?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** There is only one bye election for a ward in Choiseul province this year.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 273, accounting code 4127. I want to know how much does each provincial member gets for its ward allowances.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Now it is \$50,000.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Just a general question on how we are treating the fixed term service grants for the provinces. The idea is when it is paid to the provinces, how often is it paid, and is it the provinces that would then put in their allocations according to their budgets in terms of roads, health, education and other services that provinces are providing?

**Hon. Walter Folotalu:** Current arrangement is every month that grants are paid. But the Ministry is intending to make it quarterly so that provinces can do proper planning for what they are going to use the moneys for. Their expenditures, plans and things like that are being done by provinces themselves and not the provincial ministry. And as I have said they are paid once every month.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** I find this kind of way not effective in terms of running provincial services, especially in Guadalcanal Province because you hardly see what the province is doing in terms of constructing roads or even the schools, not at all. I think they are giving everything as members allowance or something like that, but to run services, I have not actually seen what they are doing in terms of roads, bridges, schools and even clinics. I think the Ministry needs to look into this carefully.

In the past, we specifically told them the amount for education grants, health grants and so forth. But now it is no longer the case because of how we treat it in the budget and how we pay them. I want to ask the Minister whether he has any thinking on this to make it a bit more effective for our people.

**Hon. Walter Folotalu:** Thank you for raising that point. I will take note of that concern, because I am just hearing it now that Guadalcanal province has not been properly using those grants. That is what you are assuming.

Education grants are never devolved. Apart from those funds, there are other funds like the PGSP fund that can be also used for schools and things like that. That is what we must look at. But as you are saying, Leader of Opposition that those grants do not reach their destination and that is something the Ministry will look into.

**Mr. John Maneniaru:** Still on the same item, the fixed services grant. Looking at the provinces in the budget, some of them have reduced, their amounts are going down and some have increased. I thought that every allocation should increase every year. In terms of the question by the Leader of Opposition, provinces really need to show effectiveness on how they are serving communities in their provinces. I was thinking that it will increase but some provinces have been reduced and some have increased. What is the rationale behind that?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** It very much depends on the formula, the ratio of 80: 20 is 80 percent of the population, and so if a province has a much smaller population the amount it will get will be smaller. The 20 percent is the baseline so when a province has a smaller population it will expect a smaller amount. It is a general amnesty or something across the board for everyone. The formula is 80:20.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 283, the civil service salaries component of the provincial governance division, where has it gone to?

They have a budget to work but there is no one there. If there is anyone there, there are no salaries for them here. That is the assumption here.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Sorry, they have been moved to page 272 under headquarters and admin, where there is a very huge increase of \$473,000 there.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Still under provincial governance on training - general, I wonder if this training includes what they have done for us by training us in the beginning, but this is for provincial assembly members. If the Minister can clarify this.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** This is training for staffs of the ministry.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2071 – tours and travel, with the understanding that this division will be moving around our provinces but it is only given \$671 for tours. Last year they have used \$54,000 so why did you remove \$53,000 when clearly they will be doing tours?

Last year there was a budget of more than \$54,000 for tours and travel for the provincial governance division, now it has gone down to \$671. Why is it like that when we know this group will be touring our provinces?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** I stand up because I was once a Minister for Provincial Government and so I understand this head. I think it has been moved to headquarters. You can see there under subhead 2071 - tours and travel; it will be covered under that.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 282 on fixed service grants. In the Minister's previous statement, we clapped for two particular provinces that are doing well in their spending. This fixed services grant, according to his explanation it will be paid directly to provincial accounts and provinces themselves decide on how they allocate that in their budget. Can the Minister explain how he is going to monitor the performance of provinces in terms of their budgets?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The ministry usually holds quarterly meetings with the provinces.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The two provinces you mentioned that have not properly managed their money last year, are you going to withhold the PGSP grant from them but you are still going to give them the fixed services grant even though they are suspended or whatever term you used. Is it only the PGSP that you are withholding from them but the fixed services grant are still given to Rennell Bellona and Malaita Province? So you are still giving them the grants but suspend their PGSP grants until they make good their accounts?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The Leader of Opposition is right. Yes, I will still give them their fixed term services grant but are disadvantaged from receiving the other grants.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Just a follow up question on the question by the Leader of Opposition. I thank the Minister for his answer.

The effect of this is what I am looking at now that the provinces will suffer the consequence of the leaders. Is there a better way that those who committed these crimes are the ones to suffer personally or be disciplined rather than disciplining the province, its people because that money belongs to the people?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** It is true that it is a sad state of affairs, but that is the agreement the government of Solomon Islands signed with our donor partners. It is a mutual arrangement, an agreement that they have to adhere to.

*Head 284 agreed to.*

Head 285: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey -\$17,889,699

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2091 - radio communications. There seems to be quite a large allocation for radio communications there. Is the Ministry of Lands still using the two-way radio? I would have hoped that now we have mobile phones, this will no longer be there. I would like to ask the Minister in which places are we still using this over, over radios in?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This allocation is for the Ministry's weekly awareness talks at the SIBC.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** There is a million dollars provision for motor vehicles. Perhaps the Minister could inform the committee how many vehicles is the ministry going to purchase, what types of vehicles and which aspect of work in the ministry will be allocated with vehicles?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** We have not had any vehicle since last year. Our vehicles were only provided for by AUSAID and so we intended to buy three land cruisers for the Ministry and that is why we provided for it in our recurrent budget this year for \$1million.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 286 on upkeep and repair of official building – provincial has zero allocation. Can the Minister explain to us how he is going to repair buildings in the provinces for instance like in Gizo?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This year it has been moved to housing.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 287 - office security is more than doubled. We are aware, of course, that some consultants have been quite aggressive at the Lands Office, so there is the need for it but more than doubled is what concerns and if the Minister could explain what arrangements have been taken, whether it is outsourced and therefore the increase.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This figure is for the whole year.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 287, I just came in and so I am not sure if this question has been already asked, but sub-item 4005. Is the Ministry sending people to train, and how many of them?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** There are five of them undergoing training at the USP.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I think the Minister's response to the question by the honourable member for Aoke/Langalanga does not satisfy me. Last year, for the whole year was \$93,000. Now if this is for the whole of this year, then it should be \$93,000 as well, but you have gone up by \$123,000 for office security to reach the total of \$216,000. Why has it gone up to \$216,000 as compared to \$93,000 last year which is for the whole year? That is my question.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** Last year that was for only six months, but this year it will be for the whole year.

**Mr Mathew Wale:** Just a final question on page 287 on the pre-service training. Is that a scheme that pre-service students can apply each year and are qualified for this assistance? As this is not in-service do you pick from schools yourself or do they apply to you?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This is not for students but it is for the staffs of our ministry.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** If that is so, then probably the narration there is incorrect. If those people who get this training are staffs of the ministry then it should be in-service. It is pre-service there and that is why we asked that question.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** I think that is an error, it is supposed to be in-service.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On page 288 under income, why are we no longer earning any income on estate, license fees, valuation fees, premium on estates, land rents and so forth? Has this been moved somewhere, the income that is normally shown here under the lands administration and management unit?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** That item has been moved to a different division.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I thank the Minister for that response. But if so, which division and what page under the ministry?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** You will see it under lands and administration operation group on page 293.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** I tried to locate any provision for outstanding rentals in the Ministry. I understand there is a huge amount of money still outstanding to be collected, and it is in millions. I believe there should be provision if repayments are coming in. But here I cannot see in anticipation of the arrears to be collected under income. If the Minister cares to explain why.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** The figures you can see there are moneys the ministry has collected but not the arrears.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** So what you are saying is that you are not expecting to collect any repayments this year?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Just to clarify to the Leader of Independent that land registration includes what we will collect this year, it should be in that amount.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 292 – land reform unit, a quick policy thing. First, the total allocation of \$209,498 for land reform is inadequate for what the government is announcing it will do to land reform.

The other thing is what the Prime Minister has been saying that after dismantling of the Bureau in the Prime Minister's office, they will move them to the various reforms in relevant ministries, but it seems not to be reflected here on any moves by the Prime Minister's office to come to this land reform unit on posts like the director of land reform and those people who are dealing with land reform. When are we going to make those shifts?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Just to clarify that policy matter. The ministries that will work together are the Ministry of Lands, the Ministry of Rural Development and the Prime Minister's Office.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Still on land rents, and the DPM's answer is not very clear. Perhaps what would clarify it is if the Minister of Lands, not the DPM to inform the House of what arrears have been invoiced already because each annual current, the one current for 2012 should be reflected in land rents and they should have already issued invoices or statements to those who are still to pay their rents, and many of us in here too that are still to pay for our outstanding land rents. Perhaps if the Minister gives that figure we would see the adequacy of the provision here for income.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This record is only for this year, and finance has the records of previous years.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 293-6089 - land acquisition for a sum more than \$3.5million this year. Which lands are we going to acquire this year, I assume for the government?

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This allocation is for lands requested by the government.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I think the gist of my question is which land. Can you inform the committee the names or areas the government intends to acquire?

**Hon. Joseph Onika:** It will depend on ministries that apply to us. But so far no one has applied.

**Mr. Manasseh Sogavare:** Still on the same item. Is this going to be also available to constituencies' developments? We take it that constituencies are extensions of the Ministry of Rural Development so if we identify lands to be acquired for the purpose of development and the centres that we are coming up with, will this fund be available to assist us if we ask you to assist us? And if so, how can we go about this?

**Hon. Manasseh Maelanga:** An example for a land to be acquired is the Doma land. The policy of the Government on growth centres is what we are working on at the moment because some of the lands are customary lands that need to be acquired and we would certainly need money to do that. I think that is what that allocation is for.

**Mr. Manasseh Sogavare:** Thank you for that assurance. So how are we going to go about it? In the case of our constituency, we already have two that is ready to be acquired. So how are we going to go about securing this assistance?

**Hon. Joseph Onika:** To answer that question, if it is a government program, there is no problem with that. You can just make your submission.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** It is definitely the government's program, the extensions of the Ministry of Rural Development and the growth centres that you wanted. Thank you very much, we will make the submission.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Tribal land recording was only allocated \$2,000. I do not know which tribes they are going to record with this \$2,000. For the Minister to explain this because it would seem nothing is going to happen. I think it would be for air-conditions or something like that in the office.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This code comes under the development budget.

**Mr. Matthew Wale:** In terms of incomes on valuations, as we are all aware, when you acquire a piece of land and you go to a government valuer to value it, the valuation is very low. For the

same piece of land, not even bulldozed or cleaned, but you get the title and sell it outside on your own and you get a valuer, and it can even be the same person in the government valuation office goes and values it privately and that land suddenly goes beyond one hundred thousand dollars.

Mr Chairman, in case I am in breach of your ruling, but it is a question surrounding the adequacy of income figures on premiums, valuation fees, and things like that. And so the potential in loss in government revenue comes from the fact of under valuation of properties that premiums and land rents are based on.

This matter has been raised a number of times in the past but no steps have been taken to remedy it. I wonder what steps are being taken now to remedy this situation.

**Hon Joseph Onika:** This year we are going to review the charges and after this budget we will come up with new figures.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a question on land centres in the regions. Now that we only have two; the northern region land centre and the western region land centre. What is the plan of the government in having land centres in every province? Land issue will become very prominent as we go on in development and the direction the government is moving into; the idea of having land centres in every province. What is the thinking of the government on this?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Before the concentration of lands, this is basically for land acquisition. Now we have another component to it, which is how do we get customary land to be also included.

One thing we will continue to face is the shortage of manpower to do this, and at the same time to get the kind of information we wanted from people in doing a proper work in regards to land registration throughout the country. For the time being, even information we received from these two offices is still very much underutilized, so to speak, maybe because of the awareness that goes with it.

You would recall that some years back we tried beeping it up with some kind of capacity there with the help of some donors, of course, but then as we go along we slow down work at that time and just recently they have come back, like the office in Gizo, for instance, in the western region, instead of being used by the whole of the western region, it is only used by the Western Provincial Government, which is a real setback to what was the original objective and intention of regionalizing it for purposes of increasing land registration that people can use for development and so forth.

These are some of the continuous discussions we will be having right now. Of course, if we have to offer it to all the provinces, we would also have to look at human resources and manpower so that we can do an effective work on registration.

I want to give an example. There are some land acquisitions we are trying to do at this time that has been going for 25 years and which is still to be completed. Ziata, for instance, is now also now almost 20 years and we still cannot make a lease for it as yet and many others. In Malaita, for instance, we have been doing it but we still have not been able to complete it.

We therefore have to ask the question whether that is the right route we are going to take or are we going to continue to spend money trying to acquire lands, and never ending. What is the problem that is causing us not being able to reach a conclusion, finality to some of these acquisition proceedings that we been having. Ziata is a classic example. Up until today an acquisition officer that was appointed died, and a new acquisition officer that was appointed also died. They appointed another one but he refused to take up the post because two have already died and so he does not want to join the list of those who died. These are some of the problems.

We therefore have to rethink whether it is land acquisition that we wanted to do or are there better formulas to us to make land available.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am a bit confused about the regions. Who are the western region and who are the northern region? Then where are we from the central or east or what? Just for the Minister to explain where do the western and the northern regions cover and then we can continue to discuss.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** This is something both the Member for East Choiseul and myself should know very well with because it was during our time in 2006/2007 that created that division. Western would include Choiseul and the Western provinces. Those of us in central would come under Honiara. There is an office here covered under the land administration group in Honiara. Those in Guadalcanal, Central and the others will come to Honiara. The northern part covers the eastern part. I think that was the initial division made to it, but do not be worried too much about it because it is still underutilized.

If you see the amount there as very low, we need to rethink how we are going to use these regions and these offices because at the moment they are being underutilized because of those reasons.

Do we go down the route of acquisition and then end up with the never ending acquisition proceedings that we have? Acquisitions done in the past are quite effective. Gold Ridge, for instance, took almost 30 years before it was finally acquired. Ziata is still ongoing on. Auluta and those on Malaita are still going on and Tina is still going on. These are some of the things we have to rethink around.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I think the Prime Minister has raised a very fundamental question on the way we should direct land reform in this country. I think the original intention of coming up with those various regions and the fundamental question to resolve is the issue of titles to land and not acquisition of land. That is why I said that maybe if the government should bring a white paper on the direction we are going on land reform, maybe we can discuss and redirect this whole thing. The whole intention is to address titles to land, not acquisition to land.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** I think that is a very important point made by the member for East Choiseul. It is a clear distinction between what would be the concentration of activities we should be working on. Obviously, under the current Lands and Titles Act, there is need for acquisition to reach the title. We cannot jump automatically to the title, but we have to follow the proceedings. We now know that those proceedings have never produced an efficient process to reach a conclusion of finding the title or determining the finality of the title as to who it should be vested on.

But it is an issue we have to find now that the acquisition proceedings under the Lands and Titles Act are proven to be inefficient, costly, never ending, never provides a fair process for the determination of the finality as to who should the title be vested on. I think we have to rethink the titling whether we require it in that way or like as we have already talked about in here, it is not a new thing, then just recognise the customary land titles. We will work on it.

But it does not come with the issue of dispute even if we recognise it. So dispute resolution panels and arbitrations have to be made so that we find a god finality to this whole thing.

*Head 285 agreed to.*

Head 286: Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination - \$6, 461,498.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Just for clarification. The other charges are not present, have they been taken up somewhere else?

**Hon Snyder Rini:** Other charges come under page 304. That is where the other charges of the Ministry is on.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Obviously, the capacity of this particular ministry is an ongoing issue in terms of attracting the right kind of trained, talented people and retaining them. Perhaps if the Minister could inform the committee whether it is necessary to do things other than perhaps a supplementation or something like that for us to attract and retain people or is it continuing to be a problem or has it been resolved? Perhaps that is a more appropriate question.

**Hon Snyder Rini:** We have now created a new division to sort out that problem, and that is the monitoring and evaluation unit.

**Hon Manasseh Sogavare:** The last sub-item 4116 on project monitoring and evaluation. Considering what would be an increasing activity on the number of projects that are going to be funded this year, the development budget itself is \$867million. In terms of project monitoring and evaluation, the allocation there is \$17,000. Can the Minister confirm if that is adequate to carry out the activities as prescribed there?

**Hon Snyder Rini:** Most of the funds will be met under the development budget under support to NDS.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I am trying to locate any provision for provincial visits and the activities going on now with the National Development Strategy culminating in the National Development Plan, whether that is covered in the development budget. Can the Minister point out if it is in the recurrent estimates?

**Hon Snyder Rini:** Yes, it is in the development budget under the NDS.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** For the Minister to confirm to the House whether this medium term development strategy document has been completed or compiled, and if so whether it will be brought to Parliament or not?

**Hon Snyder Rini:** That document has been completed and launched in November last year, and very soon will be brought to Parliament after printing is done. It is still in the printing stage. When printing is complete it will be brought to Parliament.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I have a copy of the NDS with me already nicely printed in a glossy cover. Are you saying Mr Minister that you will be printing more copies or are you going to make some changes or what are you saying here because when you launched it those of us who were there got a copy each? Do you meant to print more copies or are you making some changes to the cover?

**Hon Snyder Rini:** The first printing made is basically for members of Parliament but because of its requirement by other organisations and other stakeholders we have to print some more.

*Head 286 agreed to.*

Head 287: Ministry of Culture and Tourism - \$81,768,043

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 310, sub-item 2011 electricity and gas does not look like its ongoing but new allocations are there. Can the Minister explain to us under National Archives - \$238,441, a new allocation this year?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** That amount is for water and it is to meet the water requirement at the Archives.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** That is clear, and so in previous years under which item was this utility normally paid?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** In previous years it comes under office expenses.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 308 under headquarters, the allocation to telephone really went up. Perhaps if the Minister can explain why his ministry is expecting a much higher cost on telephones.

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** First of all, it increases because of the Pacific Arts Festival and also the increase in cost of telephones and faxes, and that is why that increase comes about, and it is managed by the Ministry of Finance.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** So are you going to issue just for the festival itself additional telephones, if that is the case then to whom during the period duration of the festival?

Because the Minister said that part of the increase was due to the Arts Festival, so the assumption is that maybe they are going to hand out additional phones for the duration of the two or three weeks of the festival. I therefore ask if this is the case, are they going to issue additional phones, and if so to whom are the phones going to be issued? Will they be issued to those who organize and manage the festival or some of the delegations or who?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** This is not really for mobiles or phones because that will come under its own budget. This is for the number of phones and faxes that will be hired this year.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 308, accounting code 2091 on overseas travel. Last year the Minister's travel costs over \$500,000 and then this year it decreases to only \$14,000. Is the Minister not travelling anywhere this year and therefore this reduction of more than \$498,000?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** This is a one off budget of \$475,000 in 2011 for the ministerial delegation that went to Vanuatu, comprising the Minister of Aviation and the provincial delegations of Temotu and Western Provinces.

On the other part of the question on whether the Minister will travel overseas this year, what I can say is that the Minister will go overseas but through other ways.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Office security on page 308 has increased, and I understand the ministry is renting a new office building and it is pretty secured. I just want the Minister to explain why the increase in security. This one compared to a much bigger compound like the Ministry of Lands, this one seems to be very significant than the other buildings, even Finance and PMO security. Is this contracted out, outsourced to some private security firms because it seems a little excessive?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** This increase is the new rate in the agreement.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I would have thought that because of the upcoming Festival of Pacific Arts, the entertainment allowance of the Minister for Culture and Tourism should be much higher than what it is now. I note here the allocation of only \$23,000. With this event coming up, where will the Minister get money to entertain the visitors or the people that are going to come for the festival?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** You can see \$23,000 there but if look at FOPA head on the other pages, there is a huge allocation there to entertain people coming from overseas.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Just to follow up on my previous question in regards to office security; a general comment for all of government. What is obvious is that each ministry is handling its own contract for its security situation and so the rates may not be standard right across the various ministries. This is just a point for the Ministry of Finance to take note of. May be it needs to be centrally coordinated so that standard rates is agreed by the Government for all the ministries. Just a comment to highlight because it seems to keep recurring.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** The approach is that normally ministries get quotes from at least three security firms and the one that is seen as reasonable in terms of value and work experience would normally be picked. But if you look at the case of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, its premises are spread all over the place. The National Arts Gallery, Museum, Archives and so forth and if you look at their votes, they do not have a budget for security, and so this allocation is what they use to work on.

The process involved here is to get three quotes, properly assessed and then the contract is offered to the one chosen.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Just a question on the establishment of the National Archives. I noted that the position of the curator for Guadalcanal is vacant. What time are you going to fill up this position? The post is on page 114. of the establishment and manpower register.

**Hon Manetoali:** The position will be filled as soon as the budget is passed.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 4094 on page 314 on eco tourism development grants is substantially reduced by \$101,628 at the time when we should be promoting eco tourism and tourism in general, why the reduction? Is it because of the lack of interest by people to go into ecotourism?

**Hon Samuel Manetoali:** That figure is reduced. I do not want it to reduce because I bid for a much higher number amount but this is all I have been given. At least an amount is there. It is purposely for project assessment in a situation where anyone applies for projects, tourism officers have to carry out assessment purposely to meet their expenses when they go to do assessments.

*Head 287 agreed to.*

**Mr Chairman:** Committee proceedings are now interrupted and Parliament will now resume.

*Parliament resumed*

*Sitting suspended at 12.17pm for lunch break*

*Parliament resumed at 1.47pm*

*Committee of Supply resumed*

Head 288: Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration - \$35, 410,312

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2013 page 322 on telephones and faxes. I think there is a reduction on the Ministry's allocation on electricity and gas including water - another big reduction. I want the Minister to explain the reductions that appear on the allocation both for water, electricity, telephone and faxes.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** These allocations are especially for Honiara and provincial offices, but the reduction is mainly our attempt to cut cost on these utilities and that is why you see reductions there.

**Mr. John Maneniaru:** Accounting code 2003 on upkeep and repair of official buildings (province). How many provinces still have commerce buildings and how many houses are in the provinces?

**Hon. Manasseh Maelanga:** This is for repairs of provincial offices in Buala, Auki and Temotu.

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** Still on page 322 accounting code 2091 on overseas travel for the Minister has increased by more than \$130,000. How many trips and where are the destinations the Minister envisages for 2012?

**Hon. Manasseh Maelanga:** The Minister will have a few overseas trips this year to attend conferences.

**Mr. Milner Tozaka:** Page 324, 6150 - annual national trade fair and 0181-6152 provincial trade fairs. Can the Minister explain when are we going to have these fairs - the national one and what is this allocation to provincial one? Did it not come from the same allocation, the national one? You might explain the difference between those two allocations.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The annual national trade fair is to do with national trade events we usually have in the country. We did not have this last year and that is why the Ministry will be putting on this national trade fair this year, and that is its allocation.

On provincial trade fairs, this is usually held during second appointed days of provinces, and during that time the Ministry of Commerce would go down to advertise what the Ministry is doing during those appointed days.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** I have two questions to ask on pages 322 and 323 as they are very similar.

Page 322, item 2092 - overseas travel public servants has a big reduction there of more than \$347,000 and the last item code 4030 on page 323 on conference, seminar and workshops also has a big reduction of \$1.3million. The Ministry usually involves in a lot of promotions, especially investment and frequently travels overseas. It is good that it is reduced, however, would it not affect the ministry's programs. What is happening here which causes this big reduction? As well as conference, it would seem to be only one conference there. Otherwise

other conferences of importance to the ministry's activities are not budgeted for here. If the Minister can explain this.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** That is the appropriate amount on overseas travel for public servants in the 2012 estimates. The one on conferences, seminars and workshops, we think that amount is adequate for the ministry to host small seminars and workshop within the country.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Page 324 on trade facilitation, item code 4095 has an increase there and this is for internal trade. If the Minister cares to explain what commodities are being facilitated for under this internal trade facilitation?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** That item is to facilitate trade networking, for example, between the ministry and non-government organisations, private sector, especially for workshops and seminars.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 326 with regards to income, accounting code 0026 - registration fees on foreign enterprises. I want to ask the supervising minister for commerce and the Deputy Prime Minister to confirm to us if the registration fees for the foreign enterprises vary according to the kind of enterprises or the size of the enterprise or is it the same across the board on any foreign enterprise regardless of size or the nature of the enterprise? And if it is the same, how much do we charge for one particular foreign enterprise?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** All registration fees for foreign enterprises are the same.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Sub-item 6021 on foreign investment promotion. There is a big reduction there. I understand foreign investment promotion is one of the key functions of the ministry under the investment division. The reduction there means less promotion of our foreign investment opportunities this year or what is causing this reduction when this is an important function in this ministry and division.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** That allocation is purposely for promotion of investment activities like advertising of foreign investments, especially to provinces and the region. That provision is for that purpose.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 328 under business and cooperatives, accounting code 2018 on publicity and promotions, there is a big reduction to publicity and promotion for business and cooperatives. I wonder whether the supervising minister would care to explain why we reduce allocations to this very important activity of publicity and promotion.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** There is reduction on publicity and promotion but the ministry sees that as in line with its programs for this year in terms of promotion of small and medium enterprises in conducting workshops. You might remember that last year there were workshops held in our constituencies, and that is the purpose of that allocation.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on page 328, following the answer from the supervising minister and Deputy Prime Minister, accounting code 2081 on travel and monitoring has also undergone a big reduction of more than \$98,000. If our officers are going to go out to do publicity and promotions, why is this particular item reduced?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** There is reduction on the item but it will be supported under headquarters.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Still on page 328 on cooperation reform administration. Last year more than \$7,000 is there but it has a big increase this year of more than \$90,000. What is the nature of this activity on cooperation reform and administration? What is this allocation for?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This subhead has a significant increase and this is to overhaul and reformation of cooperatives in the country.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Just a follow up question to the question by the Leader of Opposition on his cooperation reform administration. Cooperatives have been going down in recent years and this is very encouraging, so can the supervising Minister explain which provinces are targeted here? Or are there some cooperatives that still survive?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This new activity under business and cooperatives is now being looked into by the ministry this year and they will start off with whatever provinces they wanted to start off with.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** It is good to see on page 329 the income that the Immigration Division within the Ministry is collecting for the government. I just want to ask a question on the appeal fees. This is an appeal on what? What is the standard charge to anyone who wants to make an appeal?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This is an appeal fees on permits and things like that.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 329 –code 2198 on repatriation, what does this cost mean? If we repatriate somebody, are we also paying for that or what is this for?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** At the moment we are doing the repatriation where we have to meet meals and airfares. When the bill comes in we would want to change that so that whoever brings a person in will have to meet his repatriation.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I just noted a big reduction on page 330 on purchase of passports. If you could allow me, Mr chairman, to just query why this big reduction on the purchase of passports of more than \$400,000, the last item there under Immigration on page 330. Why is this reduced when we know that we will need a lot of new passports for people that will be going to work in the mobility scheme just when we join the Australian Labour Mobility Scheme? Why is it like that?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The Ministry has just purchased new passports last year and so the ministry has enough for this year and also passports are now valid for 10 years. There are enough passports the Ministry has just purchased last year.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 331, and just to draw the attention of the Deputy Prime Minister that the Deputy Commissioner of Labour's post is vacant. When do you think that post will be filled?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The Ministry is still looking at getting someone to fill that post.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** I was waiting for the chance to ask a question on page 332 and this is regards to SICHE student training. How can students apply for this training under the Ministry? Subhead 4009 - training SICHE fees and 4010 and 4011 also relates to the same matter.

When the Ministry pays the fees of students at SICHE, how can students be sponsored by the ministry? Do they apply or are they picked by the ministry?

**Hon Maelanga:** I think students have to apply to the Ministry.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Like my colleague, the Leader of Independent, I still want to ask a question on page 332. Accounting code 4010, I think is linked with 4011 on training/students expenses and then training/students allowances. I understand that this is for students who probably have undergone second or third year training and are to go on attachment with companies.

Last year I noticed that some of the students have not actually done their practicals and they indicated that they should be doing that this year, for instance, mechanics that should do attachment at Gold Ridge or GPPOL and such. I just want to ask the supervising Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister whether this allocation is adequate to meet the attachments of students who should be doing it last year and as well as those who are due for their attachment this year?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** As I stated earlier on to the question raised by the Leader of Independent Group, students have to apply to the ministry to the division responsible and this is for students like the apprentices. They can apply to the ministry to continue further in their studies. I think that is what this subhead is for.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 334, accounting code 3134 on provincial accommodation for technical assistants has zero allocation there. I just want to ask the supervising Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, is the Ministry not undertaking this exercise this year?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This activity is no longer under the industrial development department and that is why it is nil.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** The same kind of question. It is clear that the Ministry has outboard motors there, but there is no budget for the cost of fuel this year. Can the Minister explain that?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** That will be taken care of under headquarters.

**Hon John Maneniaru:** Page 334, subhead 4013 - website expenses has a big reduction there. Would it be much cheaper to run the website this year or are there major adjustments and changes taking place on this activity?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This head is for the operations of the IDT website the ministry is working on.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am looking at the establishment on price control and consumer affairs division and the important post for the inspector price control is vacant. When will the ministry fill up this important position? There is only one inspector for price control, but this is the group that should have 10 people working there. But why is it only one? We need to have more inspectors on price control to go to the shops to look at the prices charged by our retailers because there are very big disparities in prices. I would like to ask the supervising minister and

the Deputy Prime Minister when will the ministry fill up this very important position and why do we just have one of these people rather than more, maybe 10 of them.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The Ministry will find someone for that position after this budget is passed.

**Mr. Manasseh Sogavare:** The last item 4093 on assistance to consumer groups. The nature of that assistance and why there is a big reduction there for the Minister to brief Parliament about.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Yes, that assistance to consumers groups is mainly to assist groups. The ministry provides for that to cater for educational programs and workshops for groups on business. That is what that item is mainly for. It is for awareness and educational programs. If any group would want to know more about this, they can go to the ministry and the ministry will let them know of the process to get funds from the ministry.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Therefore, the reduction means the ministry will no longer assist the consumer groups at the level they have been assisted in 2011? What is really happening here?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This provision is basically to provide awareness to groups that go to them to conduct workshops, especially in providing advice and so forth. If people want to do business then that is catered for here.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** The final statement of the Deputy Prime Minister catches my interest. He said that this allocation "caters for them", caters for them where, is what I want to know.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** I think the MP has just come in and therefore is not aware of where I said they can get funds from small business enterprises. This is for groups that go to the ministry for advice.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Under registrar of companies, where has that division relocated to as there are no salaries there? In the establishment, it looks like there is only one post there. If the supervising minister can explain where this division has moved to?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This year additional posts have been created. What you said as all zero there, every one of them has been moved to headquarters.

*Head 288 agreed to.*

Head 289: Ministry of Communications and Aviation - \$24,076,055

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just to clear establishment questions. The ministry has some vacancies like coordinator of AVSEC, coordinator air traffic management, manager corporate service, quality assurance manager and air site manager. However, all those posts are not budgeted for. How important are these posts in the work of the ministry and what arrangements are being made with the appropriate authorities to get these people onboard.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** I am the supervising minister for civil aviation. After the budget they are going to recruit people for those posts and some of them have been dealt with last year.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a follow up question. The problem is that they are unbudgeted for. They are listed at the end of the establishment of the ministry as unbudgeted for posts. The question is, how important are these posts in the work of the ministry? .

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Yes, the ministry has already approved these posts and will talk with the Ministry of Public Service about it.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I think we have come across this situation in ministries we have gone through already where there are unbudgeted for posts under the ministries. The Ministry of Public Service may allay our concerns on this area if he can inform the committee that there is unallocated fund for recruitment within his ministry that once ministries apply, the funds are released for recruitment in ministries that have requirements for recruitment but are not budgeted for. Probably the Minister for Public Service can help us on this.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** All unfunded posts are not budgeted for in this budget but they are in the establishment. But as we go along this year and there is money, we can recruit against those unfunded posts in the establishment. Those that are budgeted for have vacancies and approved new recruitments for this year. That is what stands as unfunded in the establishment.

The Minister is right in saying that after the budget we will do recruit provided that there are funds before we can recruit either through the supplementary budget or other means.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Just a follow up question on public service. Those posts, does it not mean the Orion system picked them up in that the body is there but is not unfunded. Bodies are in Civil Aviation and they are paid, however, Orion just found out that these people are not funded, there is no money, is this true?

**Mr Alfred Ghiro:** It is not like that. Those are submissions for recruitment but the ministry only has a total of \$20million for new recruits. Unfortunately, requests for recruitment exceeded funds available if they are taken onboard hence are listed as unfunded so that when funds become available along the year, recruitment can take place. It does not mean these are ghost people who have just been picked up. No, they are new submissions to the ministry.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I want to know about water under headquarters on page 340. In 2010 it is minus \$600,000 and then in 2011 the budget was \$351,000, it was revised to just under \$20,000 and this year it went up to \$379,000. I want to know from the minister the rationale for this up and down of figures? Is this water prepared for fire trucks or are they taking water from there or is water for all the installation up there?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The area in Henderson airport we have our own water system which provides water for the whole area.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I am so happy to hear they have their own water. So what is this money for, for planning, or SIWA?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** We think to have a better generator more effective, sufficient and powerful to produce better water system.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On page 340 on accounting code 2070 there's a big reduction there with regards to staff travel and transport. Last year they spent \$284,000 this year it is being reduced by more than \$240,000 to only reach \$42,000. There does that mean the purpose of travel which you spend money for last year will not happen again this year. That is why the reduction or what is happening here. Thank you.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Some of our staff travels and some other related expenses will be met by CASI because CASI will look after itself and some will be looked after by Civil Aviation so that's why the reduction is there. Thank you.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub item 3010 – motor vehicles – how many vehicles the ministry will purchase for headquarters and admin and how many do we currently have?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** At this time the ministry is just hiring the vehicles so now the ministry is intending to purchase two buses, one and half tone truck and one twin cabin hilux that is what the Civil Aviation is seriously planning to purchase this year.

**Mr Varian Lonamei:** On upkeep and repair of official buildings there is a big reduction for this year's allocation, has those buildings being taken over CASI or is JICA going to repair the whole official building or why is the allocation very low.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Yes, because JICA is injecting about \$3million so that's why the figure is reduced.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 341 on accounting code 4001 on training general – a very small amount of \$1,000 for this allocation what is mainly purchase with this allocation

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** On this training, some of the ministry's training is taken care of by IPAM, Public Service and some of the trainings were organized by other international organizations. That is why the amount is reduced.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 342 on radio license fees, you are not collecting any revenue on it. But if you turn on the radio, the two-way radio (over, over) simultaneously, you would hear everyone talking together. What is the problem with this?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** The Ministry is only collecting TV fees at the moment and the others are collected by the Telecommunications Commission of Solomon Islands. The Ministry only collects TV fees.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 342 on spectrum management services. I want the Minister to clarify to us, the other charges of that particular unit. Where are those taken up? We have people working there but they do not have money to work with.

Just for the Minister to clarify the other charges of this particular unit, where are they taken up?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** At the moment, the Ministry is no longer responsible for the spectrum unit. All these are taken care by headquarters, all the activities that should come under there now comes under headquarters.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a follow-up question. We still have bodies there in that particular unit. Since you will no longer be utilising them, what is the current function of the group?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Spectrum will come under communication policing, so that is what the ministry will establish.

**Mr Varian Lonamei:** How many communication people will be paid by the salaries there?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** There will be two officers; director of communication policy and deputy director on policy.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** In the Communication policy unit, all three posts are vacant; Director, Deputy Director, and Technical Officer. So what is this, are we going to fill up the posts after the passage of this budget or what is the story?

In the establishment Sir, all the posts of the communication policy unit - they all do not have any people against it, they are vacant.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** these posts have been advertised last year and they recommend that they will be re-advertised again after the budget, but so far that is the only two, director of communication will be level 12/13 and deputy director will be level 10/11.

2.52

**Mr. Varian Lonamei:** On airspace fees for civil aviation fund now it is zero. Are we not going to receive any more special fund or what? I just want minister acting to clarify this.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** CASI is responsible now to administer this fund according to this new amendment in the Act. It is CASI that is responsible.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** So the airspace fees that Maringe/Kokota has just asked, is it a different thing from the one on page 345, accounting code 7500 - civil aviation fund and then in bracket statutory expenditure. Is it a different thing from what the Minister has mentioned that CASI has already taken over? Or is it just this one but with a different name, because it is also \$8million.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** That is the expected revenue but CASI has taken over.

**Mr. Manasseh Sogavare:** The accounting treatment on this amount. It appears as expenditure under civil aviation division. We take it that it is the same thing. Can the Minister confirm this? We do not take it up as income, in fact on the income column there it is basically zero, and then we take it as expenditure.

I am saying this because to be consistent with way some of the contributions by aid donors we take it up as income first and then we reflect it as expenditure. If that thinking is correct then we actually underestimate our revenue by a million dollars. Can the Minister explain the accounting treatment on this?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** yes. I think the minister of finance should be in a better position to explain this. Then again with CASI, another thing too is that they have not yet set up their financial set ups and accounting system., So as we are in this transition period of shifting these funds, I think the right person who should give a better answer is the minister of finance.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Previously CASI does not exist. The money directly records this receipt to the Ministry of Civil aviation. CASI is the statutory authority and therefore following actually what the act states is that the money is statutory expenditure and therefore has to be budgeted out of the consolidated fund and so it becomes expenditure out of the consolidated fund.

But obviously the money comes through the ministry of finance through the consolidated funds from the cash based fees and therefore it emerges as expenditure in here. Because it is statutory expenditure, that is what the act of parliament stipulated; that it must go out to the civil aviation authority. So that is exactly the treatment in here.

**Mr Varian Lonamei:** I want a clarification here. Our income on airspace CASI has already received it therefore it is indicated nil in our income? But the expenditure in there we have another \$8million, so that \$8million will be used by the ministry and not CASI? I would need an explanation on that.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** The airspace belongs to the Solomon Islands Government and therefore it also goes into the consolidated fund. CASI is responsible for this expenditure and that is why it is a statutory expenditure to be paid to CASI.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Pages 345, sub-head 2071 Tours and travel; it Is a new item budgeted for \$208,000, if the minister can explain what are the activities here since it is a new item.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Previously staff travel and travel under sub-head 2070 and 2071 are amalgamated and comes under that basket, now they have separated it, and therefore 2071 tours and travel is created as a new head for tours to provinces and overseas. That is the purpose for the new head.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Still on the same page sub-head 2159 maintenance of provincial airfields. I understand that there is a problem in there which also relates to the closure of some of the airfields temporarily or for over some years now; it relates to the contracting which goes to these people. At this time the ministry has a new method in dealing with this issue. Now in

respect of the problems, they are created when they are allocated those contracts to the contractors.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Actually most of the closures of airports or aerodromes are caused by land dispute. I have a list here of airfields that are closed, which are not operational. Another concern as well is some of these aerodromes are closed because the Solomon Airlines sees that it is not commercial, that they divert their flights from these airfields and thus are no longer used. That is what I can say on this.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on page 344 and I would like to ask a question on accounting code 2001 - upkeep and repair of official buildings. The question I have is, which building is this allocation for? Is it the terminal or what building in the Civil Aviation division is this for?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Yes it is for the terminal buildings. There were two terminals there, one is for domestic and international and the terminals in the provinces. Chairman, the staff houses around the airport as well.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 245, accounting code 2159 on maintenance of provincial airfields, a very big allocation of \$2million is there. Which provincial airfield are we going to maintain and repair this year?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** I think it good for me to mention from my list here; Guadalcanal Province – Marau is operational; AvuAvu - closed; Babanakira - closed; Gwaunaru – closed; Parasi – operational; Ontong Java – operational but not schedule; Afutara – operational; Atoifi – operational; Kwailabesi – closed; Tingoa Rennell – operational; Anua – Bellona – operational; Munda – operational; Gizo – operational; Seghe, Balalae, Mono – operational; Barakoma – closed; and some private aerodromes here; Geva – operational; Batuna – operational; Kukundu – operational; Ringi Cove – operational for charters only. Viru closed; Isabel Province, Fera – operational; private airport in Suavanao – operational; Jajao – operational for charter only; Choiseul Province; Choiseul bay –operational private airports; Kangau – operational; Tangibangara – closed; Central Province, Yandina – closed for some time, Makira Ulawa Province, Kira Kira, Ngora Ngora – operational, Santa Ana operational; Arona – operational, Santa Cruz – operational. These are the provincial airports to be maintained.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I did not ask the supervising minister to say which one is operational and which one is closed. I am asking how many airfields will be maintained this year. Anyway, thank you for that information supervising minister.

We have another allocation just below that accounting code 2161, maintenance of airfields for another \$1million. Which airfields is that allocation for?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** If you follow the list, Henderson airport is not mentioned inside. This is for Henderson airport and the other one is for the provinces.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** You must therefore change the wording there to maintenance of Henderson airport because that is confusing as it stands. The other thing I want to ask about is accounting code 6133 - minor works installation. What is this minor works?

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** This is for some installation at the airport which is not functioning well. It is work in the terminal -some toilets that are not working properly. So this is what this caters for.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I came in late because I just came back from the airport. Now they charge you \$10.00 they did not give a receipt but they only give a sticker. So I am not sure whether this goes under CASI or come under the ministry. The chairman of CASI said that CASI itself did not approve the gate fees. So if it is under CASI then obviously then there are some questions there. For parking it make sense but to drop and pick up, is it charged the same flat rate of \$10.00- the legality of it.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** That question is asked by many people, some even called me and make many comments on the paper. I have already mentioned that it is already gazetted in 2009 under the Civil Aviation Act.

I also want to say even if we go to the market through gate, you also pay \$6.00. So we also want to collect money too, revenue for the government. We already legalize and \$10.00 for taxis and buses and if they are companies they pay \$250.00 a year for each vehicle that enters there.

I also go around to the some airports around the world, I usually work at civil aviation in the past and used to tour Europe and Asia, many airports charged fees like that so why not Solomon Islands, why not Henderson airport? Those things are very expensive, nothing is free and nothing is cheap in the world these days. If we want to collect revenue what is \$10.00, just pay it.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** It is for collecting fees as mentioned said it is right it has legal basis. How do we account for it? Second half of the question from Auki Langalanga.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** Those moneys are deposited into the consolidated fund. It does not go to CASI.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I would like to thank the Minister for his good answers but maybe you should think about those people who do the dropping off and picking up because I went to Europe after you been to Europe but only people who go and park their vehicles pay the fee, but people who just go and drop off and pick up, they just drive past. Anyway, it is alright. But where in those income accounts where this gate fee that were collected will be injected to. Especially because they were not issuing receipts, so we don't know how they will they account for it. As to how many vehicles going in there and how many money you will reconcile at the end of the day and the things like that. So where in this budget or you did not put it inside the budget yet because it' has just started. Thank you.

**Hon Walter Folotalu:** They just introduce these three weeks ago or something like that. And under this Civil Aviation Act the Minister have to make rules and regulations and so forth. So please give us time, so that we will study it because they just introduce this. so there is no proper handling of those things, and maybe they were not given proper receipt yet. That doesn't mean it's not legalize, it's legalized. But we will make it proper, we will make it neat and correct and put it right back.

*Head 289 agreed to.*

Head 290: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources - \$12,150,681

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 2011 - electricity and gas. There is concern about this big reduction on that particular item. Does that not mean we are consuming less electricity at headquarters and admin?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** On Electricity and Gas my ministry have four buildings we paid for the bills and so on but this figure is reduced because we look at the actuals of 2011. Thank you.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I know the figure that is reflected in 2011 is revised is that actual or is it still the estimate because if it is based on actuals then it should really be sitting down at \$1million.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** That building uses cash power so the bill is slightly higher.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Accounting code 2091 – overseas travel for the Minister. There is a big reduction in overseas travel for the Minister of Fisheries, but I know he does attend a lot of overseas trips, so this is sufficient for just one trip.

Why is it reduced when I know the Minister will be making more than one trip? If we rely on, like what the Prime Minister has which is \$1million in his vote, this is not sufficient because if every minister exhausted their votes and request funding from the Prime Minister's vote when he himself will be travelling, why is this very big reduction of \$148,000?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** I think it is reduced this year because of reduction in trips. But if the need arises the Prime Minister's Office will be responsible.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 351 on fish and miscellaneous sales. Is the Ministry selling fish, and where do we get the fish that we are selling?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** The ministry does not sell fish, but these are fines the ministry collects.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Those transhipments levies; how are they levied, a flat rate per perseiner and then those mother boats, can the minister explain it a bit more so that we can understand how the amount is based.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** All the vessels that do the tan-shipment pay transhipment bay to the government.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** These technical meetings and negotiations overseas, I can see some funding there for the Minister to travel. I understand that the negotiations are coming up with the US for us to have bilateral negotiations with them on fisheries. Does the government have a position already on what we are going to put forward to US when we negotiate with them?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Yes, recently last month my officers attended a meeting on USA trade in Fiji and a position paper is currently prepared to be endorsed by cabinet.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 343 on library and statistical survey where it is nil, whether these are provided elsewhere. I supposed the reason behind my concern and I am sure it is covered elsewhere but for the minister to point out, is obviously the ministry is watching stock levels and trying to get better understanding of fish stocks in our seas. And you would expect that there will be some allocation for ministry to be able to do that work and then store it and make it available for research and policy making and so forth. So if the minister explain why library and statistical survey is nil or is it taken up elsewhere?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** The library is catered for by the New Zealand government so we put zero in this budget. On statistical survey, the ministry does not have any plans for it this year but survey done by the insurance task force only on data analysis basis.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On page 354, materials and equipments-accounting code 3220 on page 354. I would like, under aquaculture, aquaculture Mr Chairman. This allocation, is it the one for making fishpond for those of us interested in breeding Tilapia or eel fish or something like that or what is this allocation for?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** The code 3220, this is mainly for materials and equipments for office. This provision is for the purchase of computer, computer accessories, toners, printers, scanners and like that. So it is not what the leader of opposition talked about.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just for the interests of parliament, the minister can brief us on what is the level of interest has this unit generated to our people in the uptake of aqua culture as a result of this unit.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** I think these materials are projects like clams, pearls, seaweeds and prawns.

**Mr Milner Tovosia:** Page 255 under fishery centres, sub-item 29002782003 on upkeep and repair of buildings. What is the ministry's policy regarding those centres? A lot of them including the one at Gizo are not functioning. I also noticed in the established register here that some of the principle or head of these centres or the fishery divisions in the provinces, most of them are vacant. Therefore, what is the policy if the minister can elaborate or encourage us whether you will restart those fishery centres?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Fishery centres he referred to are under review at present, and a new program will be implemented for 2012, but I think the New Zealand government too had supported this program.

**Mr Milner Tovosia:** I do not really get your final lines, can you repeat your last line a bit louder, I am getting deaf I guess.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** I have stated something like this in my answer: those fishery centres are currently under review. Some of those centres have ceased to exist, therefore the ministry is finding ways to operate them in a way so that we can use it. And new programs will be for

2012, actually will make programs for 2012 . I think the last bit that I have said was the New Zealand government has supported this program as well.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I did not quite hear the answer to East Choiseul's question. Can he repeat his answer to the question from the member for East Choiseul?

**Mr Chairman:** The question about aqua-culture

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** I guess we have already ventured into other question therefore I have forgotten what his question was; so can he repeat his question so that I can answer in the way the Leader for Opposition would have wanted it.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** The question is for the interest of parliament, the minister to brief us on the work of the aqua-culture unit and the question I asked was the level of interest that it had created with our people and what was that level of interest that this unit creates with our people to take up aqua-culture?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Like I have alluded to earlier, are you referring to 3220, are you referring to that code- is that your question?

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** No, I take it that this aquaculture unit is established to encourage our people to enter into aquaculture activities. The question is since the existence of this unit, how much interest that have been able to be generated amongst our people to take up aquaculture.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Sorry for that. I think rural farmers are very much interested in aquaculture. I think it is a worthwhile If you go to other provinces they have grown a lot of this aquaculture. Aquaculture unit did a research and conducts all aquaculture work interest. It is very high in rural farmers, so the ministry is working on that currently.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on page 354, this aquaculture, aqua is a word meaning a different thing. The way I heard the minister answer today, confuses me because he seem to be talking about inshore fisheries. This aquaculture, I think minister needs to tell us first what is aquaculture then we will know what we are talking about here and the level of interest that this particular division in fisheries begins to taken up in the minds of our people. But before we move on chairman but thank you very much.

**Hon Gordon Lilo:** This is not a fisheries class. I think we all must understand the level of our understanding in here. Aquaculture is a basically a field of interest which people have to do

potential for development to the things that are happening in the marine seas. Like potentials that the Ministry of Fisheries that I am sure that the leader of opposition when he was the Prime Minister would be very much well verse to the priorities that the ministry of fisheries have been dealing with in the past.

One very particular one that has high potential to us or high prospect is clamshell farming, which we use to have down at Aruligo and is destroyed. Seaweed farming that we know some parts of the country has a good potential for us to farm sea weed. Our area in the Vona Vona area in the Western Province they have been doing it very well until tsunami comes and destroy all our seaweed farms. Pearl farming, we have been doing it.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** In Nusatupe in Gizo, it has shown some very good commercial prospect. In fact in 2000 Mr Chairman when you were the Prime Minister we had a very good report from – that time it was still run by ICLAM and later on ICLAM has become world fish in which some very good expedition and marketing of pearl from Nusatupe. It earn a good earning from that project and part of the surplus that came out from that also goes to buy some very specialized medical equipment for Gizo hospital.

So these are some area of high potential areas for aquaculture investment that the country can look into. Obviously right now we have just started off with possible investment in beech demur hatchery as well which is now in progress. The very popular beech de mur and unfortunately no ask question on this.

But it is one way for us to address the current ban we have with the beech demur.- you two should ask questions on the bechedemer. Instead we talk about this ban on the sea maybe there is a potential we do bechedemer hatchery somewhere that people can actually do farming of it so that we avoid the banning we talked about, eventually we ended up cause a lot of problem in our communities who ever relied on marine products for their income. That is the kind of concentration.

Recently, somehow some think they can do some little bit of farming milkfish, there has been some writing about this milkfish recently and let us hear the expertise on these. Do not drive them, our group in bureau are going on ahead, not even fisheries expert too found those milkfish. They are experts in different things and so we stop them.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I want the minister to inform the committee how many fisheries centers throughout the country are actually functional or are still operating and how many are not?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Thirteen are still operating and fourteen are not.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** page 357 – the allocation for touring there is no amount for it. Code 3226-touring equipment is records zero. Can you explain that?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** The major equipments were purchased in 2011 so there is no need to purchase any equipment this year.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Observer program extension in official fisheries management. How many observers do we have at this time and how many more that is represented by the increase of the expansion of the program. Thank you.

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** Currently, the ministry recruited seventy five. But this year we are trying to increase it to one hundred observers.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Because this is a very important unit that deals with the marketing of our marine resources. Just a specific question I understand a local businessman is going ahead in setting up export facilities and that I mentioned specifically is the Didao operations. What level of assistances the government gives to that particular private businessman in setting up that facility. I consider that is a very important facility connecting local fishermen in our provinces. if the government look seriously in exporting our fish overseas.

I would like to ask that very specific question to the government of what level of assistance we are giving to that particular operation. I think it's very, very important set up that is fit in very well with the program of the government right now.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** I am sure that the Minister might be finding a little bit difficult for him to connect that one. Because it was an initiative that was conducted by the Bureau I think previously. It's a very good concept unfortunately I think the link to the Ministry of Fisheries is somehow missed out. But it does have or has some elements of the kind of activity that the Ministry has been doing in the past, and that is getting the equipments and tools that our local fishermen normally used to enhance their fishing operations beyond subsistence into a potential that they can actually do actual marketing and earning income creating living for the people and so forth.

I think initially what was going to happen was with then providing cheaper equipments on for instances OBM, fishing gears and tools that they can issue out to communities that have been able to meet certain criteria for them to cooperate and then do a more and advance fishing operation to some kind of a cooperative effort. So far with the report that we receive they have already mapped out who would be the beneficiaries, I am not too sure whether the materials have arrived. Because unfortunately when the things happen towards the end of last year—I am not too sure whether the materials have arrived and that they have started to link up to the fishing groups that have been identified as a group that will engage in this activity.

I think one thing good about it is that if they can be able to have this group well organised and then form themselves into an entity that will be able to carry out these fishing as part of their living as commercial operation, I think we need to encourage them and we are quite flexible in the way that we will be able to accommodate them to the main activities of the ministry and I am sure that the minister will be very much willing to work with that group to be able to link out to the wider community to be able to get this kind of an organization more productive for the country.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** on page 360, accounting code 2125 – fish collection vehicles. Today the minister said that they do not sell fish, but I understand under marketing business what sort of fish will those vehicles be collecting?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** I want to state here that that heading is a bit misleading; I think those vehicles are for collecting eskies from the main wharf. It should be under franchise shipping, not like this which seems to indicate the ministry selling fish.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** This unit still has outboard motors there, because the provision for maintenance of outboard motors is zero?

**Hon Bradley Tovosia:** This responsibility has now shifted to provincial fisheries so they will look after that.

*Head 290 agreed to.*

Head 291: Ministry of Public Service - \$27,041,154

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Rental fees on income on page 365. There was original budget last year was \$1.9million, revised is nil then on estimates for this year is \$1.2million. Can the Minister explain the story on this?

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** I think last year we realised a little bit of income comes from the subsidies of public officers. That is why we have revenues for this year.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 2112, how many officers will receive the long service benefit?

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** For 2012 the number of qualified public officers is seventy-nine but there are outstanding twenty-seven officers from 2011.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just for the Minister to brief the parliament on the formula to be used. I guess there is a formula to use to determine how much qualifies public servant receives.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** This entitlement comes under chapter F of the General orders. The initial intention is to assist officers retiring from the public service settle in their villages while they wait for the withdrawal of their NPF, because it will take quite a long time. The previous formula, is \$5000 plus ten pay period but unfortunately that formula was reviewed last year and the formula now is \$1,000 plus twenty-six pay periods. That is the formula we use for people who meet the criteria under this benefit. Thank you.

**Hon Milner Tozaka:** I would like to ask a question to the minister on vacant post. The total vacant posts out of 4634 positions, 1005 positions are vacant in the ministries, 117 posts are without budget provisions. Can the Minister inform the committee what is the problem at the moment for filling up these positions.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** Out of the total of 1105 vacancies, 300 were approved for new recruitment this year, 117 posts are unbudgeted for, and the difference is from the posts that had been vacant for quite a while now. Either they have advertised it but were not occupied or the ministries have not advertised that is the problem. But the power to recruit is already vested on ministries. If a post is vacant they advertise the post, form interview panels, interview the candidates, select the candidate and then send the nominee to the Public Service Commission for appointment.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I am asking about the local supplementation, it has reduced. Whether a particular contractor has come to a conclusion or whether this is something else but a little more explanation on this from the minister.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** I would like to know which Accounting code he is asking his question on.

**Mr Chairman:** Can you quote it for him Aoke –Langalanga?

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 365, and the second last line 2112 Local supplementation.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** This provision is made available to pay for the salary allowances for two person; a technical advisor for the Aviation and a national authorising officer in the ministry of planning.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Those ministerial committees; item 2322 on page 366, there is an allocation of \$66,000. But what are those ministerial committees?

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** The ministry tender board is one of them; the disciplinary committee and an executive management committee; those were the ministerial committee within the Ministry.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 366, the last item; sub-item 6004 Public service Review; may be the minister can brief us on the objectives and purpose of that and how it is different from the Public Service reform.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** This Public Service review is part of the NCRA policy to strengthen governance institutions, improve the overall performance of the Public service through the reviewing of the system within the Public service that is the purpose for that review.

That review program is to improve public service in incremental improvement is not a system that we will jump the changes at once. And a lot has been done, one is for the first time we come up with a code of conduct for public officers which we use as a basis to discipline officers. We also review the recruitment process, last time we have 21 stages to recruit officers. Now we have 16 stages which is a bit short. So these are some of the basic information about the public service review program.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 366 accounting code 2910065000 general orders provision. Minister I am happy that you still continue to review the general orders a good have come out from that one, when do you think it will be completed.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** The last time the general orders were reviewed was in 1985. It was done by somebody but he did not complete the task. Then the initial work on the GO started in 2009, unfortunately the person that was contracted to do that does not really push the work as expected and so in 2010 he was removed. Now the Ministry engages a local, a very experienced public officer to do that, and we are satisfied with his work and with the support from the GO committee with members from the Prime Minister's office and Finance. We have achieved a lot of things, the review will take into account in simplifying the language into current usage. They will simplify the various process describe under the GO. Gender balance is used, structure plus presentation under right leveling of allowances for the public officers.

Only few things are still outstanding chapter 8 – P were already done. Only smaller chapters we will be work on this year and should be completed. So the committee for this one is already submitted to senior citizens and educated Solomon Islanders to look at. We anticipate that this review to the GO will be completed in June 2012, thank you.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** With the public service review on page 366. I know Chairman that this code of conduct we have completed in 2009 and we have started to implement it. I want to ask the minister with the public officers adhering to the code of conduct and the way which the ministry looks at the implementation of this particular document.

Did public officers comply with this or what has been the – or did the ministry make any evaluation on how the public officers adhere to this professional code of conduct that we started in 2009.

**Mr Alfred Ghiro:** IPAM continues to disseminate information to public officers about the code of conduct but the outcome of this new code of conduct is really good. We already used this conduct to discipline officers in 2011. Seventeen determinate, twenty have first and final warning, seven public officers were charged, six of the cases were referred to the courts or the police to look at, and eight are still suspended. That is the effect of that and the Ministry realizes that officers start to comply very much on that new code of conduct.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Can the minister brief the committee on those disciplinary issues that he mentioned,- the nature of those discipline issues whether it is lateness, stealing money from the Government, guilty of sexual harassment. What is the nature of those offense that you discipline our officers for.

**Mr Alfred Ghiro:** The activities involved are absent from duties, consuming of liquor in the office, convicted of traffic accidents, and some misuse of money. I don't want to add anything more to that. But they have abuse government money.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on 368 on training general, and there is a big allocation there that is more than \$1.9million.

The question I have and I take it that this is the allocation that IPAM is going to use to train all our public officers at the various levels. My question is how will IPAM decides on the intakes of the courses that is conducted for public officers. Does it get recommendation from ministries going to the public service before going to IPAM or do the officers apply direct to IPAM and then it conducted the courses?

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** With regards to training in IPAM, recommendation has to come from Human Resources Managers of the various ministries. When they send those then training is arranged. That is how officers current intake is done to do the training. Thank you.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 370 the public service reform unit. There's a need for the Minister to brief parliament of some main activities that this unit will be doing this year in terms of Public Service Reform.

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** This Public Service Reform Unit looked after mainly performances of government staff of the government machinery. This year the most target of the Ministry is to improve the performance management of the public officers serving Honiara and throughout the Provinces. We are also looking at connecting the performance management unit of Public Service to go down to the provinces, it's still under research and maybe sometimes 2013 we will be trying this out. Mainly this deals with the performance management of the public officers.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a follow-up question, whether right sizing is also an issue that the Ministry of Public Service is looking at?

**Hon Alfred Ghiro:** Thank you the approach the ministry is taking now Chairman is we will be going into focusing on performance management. If they are short of staffs or they don't have the capacity before we go into that direction maybe later. Thank you.

*Head 291 agreed to.*

Head 292: Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs - \$25,140,951

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Pages 375 and 376, on 376 sub item 3700 – donor funded expense taken up as Revenue on page 375. May be the minister can brief the committee about the implementation plan on that support.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** This fund provided by AusAID through RAMSI law and justice program to meet the cost of serving justice sector assets throughout the country and also to enable the ministry of justice and legal affairs and the national judiciary a ...asset and infrastructure plans and maintenance policies. The funds are provided through two accountable cash grants: one is for the server of Justice Sector assets and to meet additional costs of some maintenance work, and the other is to meet the cost of employing four local principle magistrates. Two have taken up post around mid 2011. The other two will still be recruited.

**Mr Chairman:** The net total is \$380million.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** There is a substantial reduction in the public solicitor's tours and travels. Obviously we want to see more public solicitor's services around the country. If the minister can explain how this is being catered for.

**Hon Commis Mewa:** Is that a general question.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Code 377 for the public solicitor code 2071 – tours and travels. I note that there is a substantial reduction that is why I ask because we want these people to go around the country to provide services accessible to everyone, but I am a bit concerned about the money for travelling which is reduced, but in case you have other places you can access funds from. For you to explain it.

**Hon Commis Mewa:** My ministry based this reduction on the actuals of last year.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 377, sub-item 2024, a point that leader of opposition continued to ask throughout the constitutional post holders. On entertainment on the public solicitor, I take it that it's a constitutional post holder. It has only \$480. It used to have \$18,000.00 allocation for entertainment. Has there any change in policy not to allow public solicitors to entertain anyone?

**Hon Commis Mewa:** yes. Just like the previous answer I gave. Most of the figures of the ministry are based on the actuals. We actually experienced last year. So I do not like to do guess work. Actually I really based it on last year. This is based on last year's actuals as well.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** The answer from the Minister is the same for the two questions from this side. If the answer is correct, I mean it is not correct but if it is correct we will see that 2010 actuals is \$298,000.00 and then budget for last is 178 revised. So it is probably roughly almost the actual is \$260,000.00. So then estimates this year is 193. So I am not sure which actual the ministry is based on but the answer is not correct. Just for him to correct it. Thank you.

**Hon Commis Mewa:** Can you be more specific on the head you want me to comment on?

**Mr Matthew Wale:** It almost looks like all the heads are the same. But the head I was asking, tours and travel of public solicitors and I think it is also the same with the question that East Choiseul raised. So I therefore suspected that it will be similar, because if we look at the difference column. It shows a substantial reduction to almost all of these relative to the amounts that have in the revised column for last year which we assume are the actuals for last year.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** In fact this is one of the things that we have been going through during the budget preparation. You will find that there is always flexibility for you to; for recourse to other subheads. Say for instance, office expenses you know, you can always take money from there and do entertainment. Also the donor funded expenses-, it is an accountable cash grant. There is flexibility for all other officers including public service officers can use it. They can do travel and transport as well. So the budget in itself with the baseline resources, you will find there is a lot of flexibility for you to move resources around but within the limit that is approved by parliament.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On Page 379 account code 2050 on fuel: It is a new allocation for this year, under the Attorney General's office. I would like to know where does the office of the Attorney General receives money to pay for fuel in the previous years, that's why it appeared only in this years' budget.

Sorry, my sincere apologies, I was looking at the one above; I guess you know my eye sights are getting poorer, so it's actually publicity and promotions that I have mistaken it for. However further question to the minister is what kinds of publicity and promotions are we going to do under this allocation.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** I am not really sure whether it appeared in previous years, but this year this publicity and promotion is basically a publication to publicize the work and services provided by the Attorney General's chamber.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** The very last item on Page 379 sub-item 6001 legislation review; which legislation is the Attorney general's office going to review this year?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** I guess this chamber should have been aware of one or two things that I have mentioned during the questioning time, that there are bills which the ministry will bring to parliament sometimes this year; probably towards the end of this year or next year. And these bills needs reviewing, and these allocation are purposely for that. For example the land disputes panel bill and some others. But I guess that is the main one which we are intending to spend that allocation on.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just for the minister to clarify, I thought the attorney general' chamber is actually the central focus of all the bills to come through for either reviewing or review the tasks of the legal adviser based in those Ministry maybe when they submit a draft of the laws; they come through the Attorney General's Chambers and maybe a legal draftsman who is within the Attorney General' chamber does the review. So well, almost every law that eventually reached parliament is actually reviewed by the Attorney General. Therefore the

allocations for \$60,000, what specific legal tasks will the chamber actually do to the legislation the minister was saying?

**Hon Gordon Lilo:** I think we do have the law reform commission which is working every time to keep reviewing relevant laws and application to our laws and submit recommendations for necessary reforms but at the same time chambers has the responsibility to continue to provide advice to Ministries that had laws- acts of parliament that under the purview of the Ministries to continue to put them on check to the way they do the implementations of the legislations.

Where implementations are not done properly, that will involve review to it, review just in the operational. but not the substance of the law. And this is what the office of the Attorney general would normally do to guide the ministries so that when applications are made or enforcements are made, we do it effectively and with minimum resources instead of us applying high cost resources on us to enforce the laws.

So that is the continuous work that the chambers do provide to the ministries. And I think over the years because of the limited resources that they had, this work has not been fully enforced by the chambers but now that with additional recruitments that have been made. And I am sure that you will find it to the recruitments that have currently been made and some more recruitment to be made by the chambers. They will now continue to improve the work that they will do in advising the ministries to the applications of the laws.

**Mr Chairman:** Honourable Members, it is now 4.30 pm and proceedings of the committee of supply are now interrupted and Parliament will resume.

*Parliament resumed*

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** I want us to have more time to complete the consideration of the 2012 estimates, so I ask that you consent to us moving the relevant Standing Orders or suspension of the relevant Standing Orders to allow us to continue.

**Mr Speaker:** Leave is granted to Prime Minister.

**Hon Gordon Lilo:** In that case I move that standing order 10 be suspended in accordance with Standing Order 81 to permit the continuation of the business of the house until adjourn by the speaker under Standing Order 10(5).

*Committee of supply resumed*

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Point of order, I know we want to continue to finish but I want to raise the question of quorum before we continue with the committee of supply.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Point of Order, yes decision has already been taken.

**Mr Chairman:** Decision has been taken and this is in progress. We will continue with head 292.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** First of all I take it that you made your ruling for us to continue.

**Mr Chairman:** Yes.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Thank you and I am still on page 379 – code 4121 - subventions and grants under the Attorney General's office. What bodies do we give subventions to?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Those grant the ministry spent for annual grant of the financial intelligence unit in CBSI.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Local supplementation is for how many officers or which officers in the AG Chambers?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** The head is to meet supplementary cost of the Legal Draftsman.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Printing after the Solomon Printers wind down. The printing of legal notices, gazette and bill is done where and met from which budget line or it is met from here?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** This allocation is actually what the budget show is for printing. Since the Solomon Printers is not working now most of the printing we do it in the office. But this allocation is meant for those expenses in printing.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** For the time being printing is still done at Solomon Printers. A legal component there still exist, eventually it will totally be liquidated. But for the time being we still keeping it, knowing very well the constitutional requirement for government printing.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** In light of the explanation ny the honourable Prime Minister because we hope that printers will fully liquidated soon yeah this year sometimes and if it's like what arrangements now taking into consideration the legal requirement for government printer yeah will be put in place to serve that obviously a lot of confidential government its legal material

will be going through the government printer. Looking at the allocations here, I am a bit worried where are we going to meet that from.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Yes we have fully conscious of the constitutional requirement for government printing. I can assure the house that you know we will not in a way compromise confidentiality, and the issues of standards of government printing because gazetting is an important legal requirement for public awareness and also enforcement. In any instrument of the government that are duly sign under our statutes.

So Mr Chairman, I mean the model now of out sourcing the task of the government is a model that you know that we have to see, but at the same time we have to require them that whatever that belongs to the government must be well protected, so that we do not allow that standard being unnecessarily being compromised or ridicule at times where issues of confidentiality has to be made and then we compromise ourselves. And we say that in relation to like for instance printing of the examination papers, what else more. thing like that in the past we have been having a lot of difficulty in ensuring confidentiality at the time when matters like this has to be made.

But the Ministry of Education obviously has a Curriculum office which has top secret and absolutely confidential things. But the other matters of government we are conscious that we cannot compromise now and that standards has to be met. .

**Hon Derek Sikua:** First of all, I would like to make a comment of what the Prime Minister have said. I think already, the standards and the quality of printing is already compromised, I am sorry to mention this especially if you look at the Bills and even if you look at this Appropriation Bill. it is really no way near standard now, of what we get use of in the past. So please Prime Minister take everything seriously and make sure that we are take back the standard and the quality, especially when printing of our bills. The best example is the printing of this 2012 appropriation bill 2012.

I am still on page 380 on appeals and legal fees. I am just thinking about the numerous legal fees the government is going to pay when people take the government to court and government has to pay court penalties, is it this head that that is normally paid out from or somewhere else?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** That subhead could be quite small but that is the ministry's allocation to cater for appeals and other legal fees on behalf of the government.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** In addition to what the Minister said, which is a very excellent clarification, as we know the government does also make appeals too, and when the office of the Attorney General makes an appeal or application on behalf of the government you do pay

fees and government is not exempted and this is where the government picks the money and pays the applications to lodge the applications to the court.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Page 382, accounting code 4030 – conferences, seminars and workshops. In the last two previous years there is no budget and this year \$200,000 is budgeted for. If the minister can explain how many conferences or seminars or workshops do they plan for this year, because this is a new budget estimate.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** It is true as the member for West Are Are has stated, this is a new provision and this allocation is made this year to cater for this conference that I mentioned the other day in my speech, that the ministry will host the Pacific Prosecutors Association conference on July this year. That is why this new bid was submitted and accepted by the Minister of Finance.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Court witness on page 282. I seem to remember there was also an allocation for court witness under Police when we covered that head. At what point does the police court witness stop and DDPPs court witness take over. Can the minister clarify this?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** This allocation is meant to meet cost of prosecution witnesses for this year 2012.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** The clarification I seek is that it is the same thing that the allocation is done under two ministries. It almost sounds the same because I mean we presume that police witnesses are prosecution witnesses. Further clarification please. Thank you.

**Hon Clay Soaloi:** This allocation under the Ministry of Police is for us to go and take them from where they live, especially to get them from provinces if it is referred to come to Honiara that is where the police comes in so that one is to meet the expenses.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** For the Minister to confirm whether we will recruit the chairman of the law reform commission and whether provision for his salary is provided for in the budget under the law reform section.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes, at this point in time since the post is vacant, we no longer provide any allocation or budget allocation for that post. However, if we are happy to recruit anyone this year, the ministry of justice and legal affairs headquarter civil servant salary will take care of that.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I want to go back to page 185 on National HIV division. Is that what you mean?

**Mr Chairman:** No.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Okay.

**Mr Chairman:** Page 386 is the conclusion of this head.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 385, last line at the bottom, 6001-legislation review under the registrar General's office \$1million. Which legislation review is to take place there in light of legislation review that happen continually in the reform commission but also as the minister has just said, on Attorney generals chamber? Which legislations are involved in this particular review? Thank you.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** The legislative review here, we see it is a new funding and that is to review laws on trademarks, patents, copyright and other intellectual property in Solomon islands which is set up in this country and to set up new registry of intellectual property and capacity and as well as to build office of the registrar general.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 385, accounting code 0010 registrar of companies and business is paid under your ministry in this allocation, is that right?

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Yes, this register of companies and business, does it come under your ministry and paid under this allocation, is that right?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Just a follow up question, so therefore the registering of Commerce and Industry is misplaced in there. It was not supposed to be there then. The registry of Commerce and industry employment there is a register of company in there as well; what is the meant by this?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Actually the registration is but the building is situated within the ministry of commerce.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Thank you Deputy Prime minister for your answer; in the establishment registry of companies and businesses appears in the ministry of Justice and Legal affairs. So

does that mean that you are responsible for paying for this post and not the Ministry of Commerce then?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a follow up to the question by the member for Aoke/Langalanga on the legislative review and the number of acts and laws the Minister had listed. Are these existing laws or are they new laws that we will come up with? He listed intellectual property right law, trademark, patent law and copyright laws.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** I think I use the word 'review'. I guess the word 'review' meant a review of existing legislation and so forth.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** We have the Attorney General in here; currently we do have intellectual property right laws?

**Attorney General:** Currently, we have the copyright and patent law but not the intellectual property right laws.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am confused a bit with the Minister's answer. The Registrar General's office we are talking about here used to be under the Ministry of Lands and Housing and now it is moved to the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs.

The registrar of companies which the Member for North Vella is asking for is a different thing altogether - that belongs to the Ministry of Commerce, under the companies act; there are two different things altogether. The Minister, instead of you saying yes, you should say no so that I am not confused.

**Mr Chairman:** Minister of Justice, do you have something to say or do you still stand by your decision?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The Registrar of companies is under the Ministry of Commerce and the Registrar General is under the Ministry of Justice.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** So what the Attorney General is saying is we still do not have an intellectual property right law, so can the Minister assure this House that this law will come to Parliament this year.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes, I believe my ministry officials are working very hard on this copyright law, and it will be brought to Parliament towards the end of this year.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** We already have a copyright law, we already have the patent law and the trademark law, but the Attorney General is saying to us that we do not have the Intellectual property right law. We talked about this law for quite some time now. Several governments have talked about it and it is good that the Ministry engages somebody to look at bringing this law to Parliament.

Just for the Minister to assure this House that you will definitely work on that law and bring it to Parliament this year.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** I want to thank the Member for East Choiseul for his comment concerning this one. Since this is very important for this country, especially the intellectual property law, I am not going to promise but we will try to our best to make sure we bring this into Parliament towards the end of this year.

*Head 292 agreed to.*

Head 293: Ministry of Home Affairs – \$37,052,408

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 390, sub item 36771; the minister to brief what the fund was used for last year, and the plan for this year for this National Unity day.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The National Unity day is an event the Ministry is currently working on. It is a new thing where the Ministry is looking at bringing everybody around the country to come together on a certain day. That is the Ministry's idea, since we know the Ministry is also looking after the welfare of the people of the country, That is one of the ideas the Ministry is taking forward to bring people together, to try to put that day as a National day that people could come together to unite.

It is something like the Arts Festival, that is the kind of event the ministry wants to host so that all our groups from all provinces come together to take part in activities like people showing their cultures and so forth. That is the idea about National unity day the ministry thinks of organizing.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** The idea is very good. In fact we begin allocating money for it since 2010. I cannot remember but do we have that celebration last year when \$100,000 was allocated for, and again we are asking for another \$124,000 this year?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** I think the Ministry aims to do this event this year and make it happen.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The item just above that is promotion of National Unity. Could the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs explain to house what activities does the ministry have in mind to enhance the promotion of national identity?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** The promotion of national identity; this is a program which the Ministry takes; we are also looking at hosting this program this year to promote national identity. If you go to other countries you will see their National dress, but we do not have a national dress so that is what this program is purposely for, we will organize a national costume competition and then people will show their dress code and we will have a panel which will select which one is the national dress for our country which will show the national identity of the people of Solomon Islands.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I would like to thank the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs for this idea. I got a lot of ideas of our national dress, so I hope to take part in this competition.

The question by the Member of East Choiseul and the way the Deputy Prime Minister explained seems to me this allocation is quite small. If we bring our people from the provinces; transport, accommodation, meals and so forth, in coming together for whatever activity we do for that national unity day, I think that allocation will not be sufficient, and I hope the Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister can be supportive with more funds so that we bring this idea into reality this year. That is just a comment

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** On page 392, sub item 414 – Assistance to local churches; just for the Minister to outline his implementation plan on how we will utilize this fund.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Assistance to local churches as we all know this year's budget has increased. We know that church assistance is \$100,000, but this year church assistance has increased to \$200,000 that is why we see \$10million in the budget allocation. Actually this allocation will go direct to the constituencies. This \$10million will go directly to the constituencies and will be administered by Constituency Development Officers.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** On page 395 the sub-item 4001 – Road maintenance grants to Honiara City Council (HCC). Looking at the state of the roads that come directly under the authority or the responsibility of HCC, I do not know whether that amount - \$300,000 will be sufficient for

the amount of work HCC will do to the roads; Road maintenance grants to Honiara City Council.

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Concerning the road maintenance grants under the Honiara City Council, usually grants are paid to HCC on a quarterly basis; these grants are paid in lump sum and Honiara City Council will be addressing how it can fix the roads with the funds that The ministry give them. I think with the help of the Ministry of infrastructure it will go in line with those from HCC's road maintenance Program.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** My concern specifically is on the level of assistance we give this year for the road maintenance and if you look at the state of the road in Honiara that come directly under the supervision and authority of HCC, that amount would be insufficient. If we need to do further work how can we help HCC on this?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** All the roads in Honiara will be taken care under MID and this fund is just to cater for the Honiara City Council just to polish up few small areas they need to fix under Honiara City. But the MID is looking after all feeder roads and all the roads in Honiara City.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 394, subvention and grants, accounting code 4121. What kind of sporting bodies are we giving subventions to under this allocation?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Subventions and grants are paid to the Solomon Islands National Sports Council. The grant purposely goes to that body for the operation of the National Sports Council and also to meet their salaries.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I come down to the next one on sports development, item 4138 on page 394. If the Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister can inform the Committee on activities that are involved in the kind of sports development we will be doing under this allocation?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** This provision is used for—as we know we are trying to build the National sports stadium—for the ground work. But since there are a few delays, we are still trying to work on it, just a matter of negotiation with people who living in Burns creek. Actually, if this turns out well this year, very soon work should commence. The allocation is for the ground clearance, land boundary and demarcation of that area.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Page 394 - primary schools sports grant and secondary school sports grants - subhead 4118 and 4136. I see that there is no assistances in the current budget.

The ministry has placed this assistance somewhere else under the other heads or not at all, because if that is so—that is where we should start preparing our athletes in the schools and I think these schools really need the support so that we can bring up our athletes and they can prepare for compensation locally, and also in the region.

So is the assistance somewhere else in the budget or not at all?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** These two grants fall into with the lump sum that we have allocated for the Provincial Sports grant.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** So our schools in terms of their sports plan; can they apply under that code 4117 –provincial sport grants; if the minister can confirm it?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Yes.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 6074 on constituency boundaries committee expenses. Given what the Prime Minister has mentioned earlier in terms of the recommendations by the new Federal Constitution, we are working on where they want to reduce the number of seats in the Federal Parliament.

Can the Minister brief the Committee what really is the intention? Are we still going to continue pursue the idea of increasing the number of seats in Parliament? I say this in relation to the information given to us by the Prime Minister.

It seems that if we think of increasing the number of seats, the recommendation by—if we say that that comes from the people, the people want the reduction of seats. So, we need to reconcile it somehow.

I think the direction that the Prime Minister said that we need to make some decisions now on the issue of the Federal Constitution—what really does the government have in mind so that we do not clash with any decision to increase the number of seats in Parliament?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Yes, this is exactly why I was saying that there is need for us to bring the work of the Constitutional Reform Unit to come to some conclusion this year.

I have made it very, very clear to the team or the unit that this will be the last consultation they will have to do to bring another draft, or any specific issues out of the drafting they have done so far on this provincial consultation, because the two final stages that have to be made have been made towards the end of last year - the Eminent Person's Advisory Council have already met and have agreed to a set of issues that has to be reflected in the other draft. That fifth draft has now come on, so we have to bring them. We cannot continue on till next year to cause further confusion, because by next year or even during the course of this year there will be questions about the Constituency Boundaries Commission. Once the Electoral Reform work goes on, surely there will be an interest that will be generated out of the people about the

question of whether or not we are going to do the review of the boundaries of our constituencies, which as you know, we vote it out last year. If the demand arises then things like this will arise.

I think the best thing that we have to do is to reconcile some of these expectations that will arise this year, and the only way that we can do it is basically to put to the fore the whole issue of this Federal Constitution so that we know exactly, what is the kind of thinking behind it, and how we will move forward in reaching some kind of a decision where we are going to stand so that we do not create confusion to our people.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am looking at the income on page 396, Election fees – 0043 it is zero there, but on item 6069, there is allocation of more than \$1.2million for Election and by-election expenses, so there is likely to be some fees paid for the elections. Why do we not reflect the election fees in the income which appear zero?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** I think the increase to by-election and elections, as we know there will be two constituencies that will be having their by elections so that is the allocation for that. We might expect two by-elections this year.

With that too, we still do not know how many people will be contesting, that is why we do not have it in there for the election fees.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 396, 6072 – Births, deaths, marriage expenses. The allocation has gone down. Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain, there are some functions of this particular allocation which remains with the Ministry of Health especially with births and deaths. But very important is your division; so can you explain how you go about it with your division?

**Hon Manasseh Maelanga:** Actually that very small amount there, mainly the expenses is for certificates where we spend for printings and others things, especially for death and marriage certificates.

*Head 293 agreed to.*

**Mr Chairman:** Honourable members we will take a break, the proceeding of the committee of supply is now interrupted and Parliament will resume.

*Sitting suspended for 30 minutes*

*Sitting resumed at 6.11pm*

**Mr Speaker:** We will again resolve into the Committee of Supply to continue with the consideration of the 2012 Appropriation Bill 2012.

*Committee of Supply resumed.*

Head 294: Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace - \$9,712,343

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Point of Order. I feel obliged to raise the question of quorum under Standing Order 12(2). We are talking about a very important Bill here, which is the 2012 Appropriation Bill 2012, and I feel we cannot lawfully transact this Bill without a quorum. I would like to raise this question of quorum and wait for your decision, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Chairman:** Thank you honourable member. I think the House has the quorum now, in my view. But we will wait for 15 minutes.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** The fact that the Leader of Opposition raised it is a very valid point. I have been advised that that is the case. But I think I need to raise here as well that this side of the House has shown great responsibility by forming the quorum. At times, people on the opposite side of the bench are playing around too much by coming in and going out. I have considered the point of order raised by the Leader of Opposition.

*Quorum gained*

*The Committee of Supply resumed*

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 400; second last item 2196 – Reconciliation program. Just for the Minister to brief Parliament on its work program on that particular allocation for this year.

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** We still have programs that we will still carryout this year which is between SIG and Guadalcanal Provincial Government with the second phase and the Malaita Provincial Government and the Guadalcanal Provincial Government. These are the two big programs we will still hold this year.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Yes, I really thank the Minister for his response to the question raised by the member for East Choiseul. I looked at the development budget as well as the recurrent on this particular head in question. Are these two the same thing or they are different things? This is for the Minister to clarify.

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** These two are quite different, they are not the same. They cater for different activities.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Most reconciliation programs in Guadalcanal Province in the last couple of years took place mainly in South Guadalcanal. I would like to ask the Minister whether there are provisions specifically for reconciliation programs at various levels for North East Guadalcanal and Central Guadalcanal, especially those of us on this side of the island to the eastern side of Guadalcanal. Does this cater for reconciliation programs beginning from North Guadalcanal, Central, North East, East Central, up to East Guadalcanal and maybe even West Guadalcanal and North West Guadalcanal? If so, is this enough for about six or even seven constituencies?

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** We have funding available in our development budget for reconciliations programs, but it will depend mainly under the Guadalcanal desk who is going to deal with them before coming to the Ministry.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** This question is in relation to the last sub-item 6169 - TRC running costs. We were informed by the Minister when he answered certain questions in the current meeting that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report is about to be submitted. My question is to ask the Minister to brief the Committee as to how it will progress the TRC report after its submission to the Prime Minister?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** I guess it was only yesterday that I have decided to extend the TRC work period for another two weeks to coincide with the period for the dissolution of the Commission. That is purposely to allow them to finalize that report. I think in view of the various views that had been offered in public, there is a need for us to—again similar to the CRU, we have to draw them to some conclusion now, and that is the intention. Once that is done then cabinet will have to have a look at it and obviously it has to be laid before Parliament, so that we can have another chance to be able to discuss the issues that would come out from the recommendations of the Commission. That will pave the way for us to take further actions as to what we are going to do.

On a related matter, I think you will note also that there are some very encouraging development that has been going on as well, which is well supported too by the community. In a way we need to harness the efforts of the work to drive us to some form of reconciliation, and I am referring to the particular activity that is being carried out now in the prison which is called the “Sycamore Tree program” which is a very practical one.

It is practical in the sense that it is targeted at getting the people to express themselves and express their feeling in the most open and calm way to find the way for this whole healing

process to take place. I think the Sycamore Tree is a very good program that has paved the way for people to better understand each other and for you to really generate the feeling of healing to come from the people.

There are a lot of views that have been expressed about what has come out from the TRC, but I think the most notable activity that comes out from is the exhumation program Which lead to the recent funeral service that we share with those that have been affected and the victims that have been affected as a result of some of the brutalities that has happen during the ethnic tension.

All that is good but I think we need to really pick up some peripheral programs to make the whole process of healing more effective. That is the line of thinking that we are having right now and I am sure that once the report is made available to cabinet, a more open discussion will have to be made and then obviously here on the floor of parliament, so that we can find a way forward, what next from this TRC.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I want to ask the minister regarding the reconciliation programs. What needs to be done by the community to start of their interest to reconcile in terms of approaching the Ministry? Or will the Ministry itself identify these programs or you will rely on the communities and people to come forward before you work on these programs? Or do you already have programs identified?

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** In terms of the programs we had guidelines where we will talk with the communities, and they will look at the guidelines then we can negotiate with them to do the reconciliations.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Going back to page 402, sub item 1012, 1013, and 1014, can the Minister can explain to us what necessitates the new allocations to the three subheads: Overtime, special duty allowance and other allowances, what are they for?

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** If you look at the allocation for last year it was not there, this year you will see what you are asking about appearing. The amount which appears there is the 8 percent increase which finance is doing.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** It is not really clear Minister. You have new allocation on special duty allowance. For what grade and nature of duty are you giving this allowance to, including overtime and other allowances?

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** This caters for the TRC for the duration of the three months they will write the report; this dissolution period.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on these reconciliation programs on page 400. Do these reconciliation programs include counseling, especially trauma counseling and maybe compensation as well, or is it just a normal reconciliation where people shake hands exchange food with each other? Or in that case if it does involve trauma counseling, who is carrying out that role?

**Hon Hypolite Taremae:** That is included in the program, where the Ministry is going to look after trauma counseling, mediation and these workshops.

*Head 294 agreed to.*

Head 295: Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification - \$16,290,920

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** This is just a general question regarding establishment. The Ministry will engage a number of electrician trainees, where will they go after these trainings? The Ministry has a number of electrician trainees in the establishment, are they part of the work Ministry's work program or are they trained and you will be putting them somewhere?

**Hon Moses Garu:** The Ministry has an application to make sure that we have certified labour force in electricity, and I think one of the goals of the ministry is to try and have the resources that will help the industry in terms of human resources and also in the needs of the local demands of our country. I think it is important that we have skilled and trained electricians and this are work force that we will be using them locally and the same time these are people that we can sell too.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Actually you were engaging them in renewable energy section, so what the Minister is saying is for the Ministry to train them and then they will go somewhere else. Is that the case or are they part of this renewable energy program of the ministry?

**Hon Moses Garu:** I think looking at the Ministry's programs and developments, not only in the Ministry itself but looking at upcoming developments like the Tina Hydro power station and also other mini-hydros around the provinces the ministry is planning to establish, I think the need to have properly trained personnel within the ministry is very important. When these developments actually come up; you talk about SIEA, you talk about SIWA, you talk about Tina hydro, and you talk about our other rural electrification needs, renewable energy developments that are coming up. I think we need more than what is in our establishment.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I would like to ask questions on pages 408 and 409. I want to know what activities are being done to update the geological maps in the country and whether there is a systematic approach that tries to cover most - if not all of the country.

**Hon Moses Garu:** That need was highlighted and it is a very important need in the ministry. And we have been negotiating and talking with some of our donor partners to assist in this regard. We have sought and we have some assistance from the World Bank towards our institutions through the ministry. They will be giving us two consultants this year. The first thing that has to be done is to actually do an assessment of the need and also the appropriate technology that we need them to help us out with.

I think the message is very strong that the Ministry improves that service for our stakeholders but I think until the Ministry have secured the resources, and in terms of funds through this review, that will remain an important need in the Ministry.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** The geology division Mr Minister does not have any staff there. There is only one, the director for geology. So you have a little bit of a problem there, and I think this is a bit chronic. What is the Ministry doing to attract people to take up those posts?

**Hon Moses Garu:** Sorry my hearing ability is not that good so my apologies, but I may not get your question right.

Yes, one of the problems we have in the Ministry is trade engineers and we have shortage of manpower not only in geology but also in other divisions in the Ministry and we plan to recruit this year, in fact we have a total vacancy of around 22, I think. We plan to recruit nine officers this year and two of which will be within the senior cadre of that division. Of course, we think that we are solving the problem. I only hope that public service can give us more but we certainly will be doing recruitment in the geology and the petroleum division this year.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** A general question but it relates to the question by Member for North Vella. Regarding our trained manpower, especially the geologist, it seems that the number is reducing regardless of its demands in the mining industry at this time. And I understand Gold ridge is even recruiting from our national secondary schools as well and so recruitment may end up with inexperienced graduates only. And that trend if they go up there they can be attracted because there are better conditions and salaries up there. What is your comment on this likely problem the country is yet to face?

**Hon Moses Garu:** That has been the real challenge for the ministry, in fact nationally we have not had adequate trained personal in the Mines and Mineral sector, and so we will continue to

experience draining out of our resources to the mining prospecting companies locally. So that is a challenge with us.

We will have to have a plan to train more and that would have to come in a joint consultation with the ministry of Education so that we should have a quota in the scholarships annually to train people in this sector.

I think you all can say that the future of our country will swing along this line in this sector, and it is good that we invest in human resources not only through the highly qualified geologists and so forth, but also in semi skilled jobs such as drivers and so forth.

We have to have a comprehensive policy on this, and I think we are working on that and Soon a paper will brought to cabinet to have some kind of endorsement for a joint cooperation with some of our human resources development agencies in Australia which have a very strong mining sector; to have some of our people training outside - drivers and whatever, to experience outside work attachment, such that upon their return they should be able to be absorbed in the industries in our mining sector.

If you were to look at Gold Ridge at the moment, locals make only around 30 percent, and 70 percent were just drivers and people who worked in the mine site, but we do not have people with specialized skills; that is why often times we question why we do not employ our local people—even securities, We cannot employ locals because we have not been trained to that level that is required by these big companies.

So yes, I can only sympathize, but this is a challenge that will remain with us for some time, but we are making ways by which we in the medium/long term we should achieve our demands in terms of human resources in this sector.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** Page 408 - I want to ask a question on the income-mine and tenement fees. Currently I understand we had 147 tenement areas, knotless 89 tenement areas, Blue water 18, 8 on Guadalcanal, Pacific Popari in new Georgia 9, 3 Sumitomo in Choiseul, and Isabel 8 tenement areas; Bauxite 3 on Guadalcanal itself.

The thinking on this mines and mineral, probably it is an income or revenue capture thing is what I want to ask on; the act of 2008 makes sure the people that apply for prospecting licenses and mining lease - the permits should done properly. Is there a standard formula to calculate these fees? I am worried about the figures here; like in 2010 the income here is \$1.2million, it is now reduced to half a million and again now it is half a million. But is there a standard formula to calculate the fees to determine how much income we are receiving under this act and the schedules which attach to the act?

**Hon Moses Garu:** Yes, I think the projection for this year on mining tenement has slightly increased. That only reflects the level of interest to do prospecting on new sites that has been allocated and so forth.

Yes, with the formula as to how they come to charge the tenements, I can provide that later if it is possible.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** I beg your indulgence to come back to page 408. I have a very important question I want to ask on page 408.

**Mr Chairman:** Go ahead, sorry you came in late but go ahead.

**Mr. Douglas Ete:** Subhead 6063 - laboratory running cost. I am a bit concerned about the current laboratory up at the Ministry of Mines, and I just want to comment I think we must relook—it is an industry that we have just opened-our mining sector in this country. We have specialized people already in the laboratories those with Masters Qualifications, but the laboratory there is a bit run-down. I see a figure of \$21,795 which looks small to me. I want the Minister to review and relook at it, otherwise we will get our tests overseas. We can do it there at our laboratory, because previously in 1980 we do it in Honiara. This is just a comment.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Page 410 code 0065 - income, petroleum storage fees - income at the top. My question is, is this for storage only in Honiara or also other parts in the country?

**Hon Moses Garu:** Yes, in terms of the storage for petrol, we take it as only for Honiara. But I stand to be corrected.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** The petroleum on page 414. Is there no civil servants there – just the board? Just for a bit of clarification.

**Hon Moses Garu:** I think for salaries maybe that is absorbed in the administration headquarters. But I think that provision there will be—for the first time we will try to build the capacity of this division to administer the petroleum act which for sometimes has remained like that, nothing was done. Also for this year this division will do recruitment and we will try to set up the advisory board to do advisory work for the Minister, to move some tasks which we are mandated to do under the act. This one reflects the Ministry's aggressiveness to look into the petroleum sector this year.

This provision will also provide to further identify the potentials that we have in our country, both inshore and offshore.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** In the establishment there is a director for petroleum and exploration, and only the Director is in place, the other positions are vacant. Where exactly we are going to get the money to pay the salary of this director, Regarding the Petroleum and exploration division?

**Hon Moses Garu:** As I alluded to earlier, we are planning to do a full recruitment in that division. For the first time as I have said, that we like to fully create this Petroleum office as a full division. So as I said, we have a total vacancy of 22 posts which is under our establishment, of which we plan to recruit nine for this year, and if we need additional then we have to negotiate with the Public Service again and the Ministry of Finance.

*Head 295 agreed to.*

Head 296 – National Judicial - \$16,164,806

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Upkeep and repair of official buildings – which buildings are concerned here, I note that quite a bit of work that has been done under the justice sector program on the buildings of the Judiciary throughout the country. I mean it's good to see a good amount there but which buildings are planned to be done this year.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Upkeep and repair of official building to cater for backlog of repairs and maintenance and preventive maintenance to various infrastructures belonging to the National Judiciary throughout Solomon Islands, and new funding that we will see there is \$600.

*(interjections)*

**Mr Chairman:** Minister, can you talk to the microphone?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes, this allocation is to cater for backlog of repairs and maintenance of preventative maintenance to various infrastructures that are owned by the national judiciary throughout Solomon Islands. We can see there, a new additional funding of \$600,000.00 for the work.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Item 2017 - printing. Can the Minister brief The Committee whether that is adequate for printing purposes of the national judiciary?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** This question I think relates to my question today where I will say here that the baseline there is to cater for printing cost where the national judiciary will require.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** My question is whether this \$541,000.00 is really adequate for your purposes.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Yes, I think this amount is adequate.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Office rent on top - 0418. Which building have you been renting in the past, and if the Minister can confirm that, do you not rent that office anymore?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** We no longer rent any office because we have now moved into our own office.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Page 419 – income: the court fees. There is some concern, anecdotal of course but for court fees, the latest recent increase last year starts to become marginal a bit - it starts to push access to the courts a little outside of our ordinary people, like fees starts to increase.

So my question is how regularly are the fees reviewed, and in such review what—I do not know—steps or safeguards are taken to ensure that court fees are not seen as revenue raising and to cover admin cost and running costs and the rest of it, as important as those objects are, but that the much more important objective of having justice accessible to ordinary people can dictate the way that fees are levied? If the Minister could care to clarify.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** I would apologize to my colleague, the member for Aoke/Langalanga. Sorry, I cannot tell how often they review the court fees, but if it has not been done in the past it is a good suggestion, and my Ministry will be embarking on that as soon as possible.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Looking at the establishment, we have six judges currently including the Chief Justice. I am not really sure which of them are civil judges and which of them are criminal judges. But I would like to ask the Minister if he were to ensure our High Court functions, with a load that would be lighter for our judges, how many judges should we have at the High Court and how many of them should be criminal judges to judge criminal cases and how many of them should be judging civil cases - the actual number the high court would really need instead of just six. I know the current loads for our judges are quite heavy which resulted in the backlog of our cases with the high court.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** That is technical question. Yes, just like any other ministries we will ensure there is no manpower shortage. Therefore, in the national judiciary we also encountered the shortage of judges. We recruited another one to be high court judge just last year and obviously I cannot give you at this point in time exactly how many judges we need in this

country to carry out our laws. But I will provide that information later on by placing it in your pigeonhole, my good Leader of Opposition.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The Minister does not need to place that information in my pigeonhole because I know the actual number of judges that we need to ensure the flow of work. I urge the Minister to work hard in recruiting another two so that we have eight judges.

The idea here is we should have four criminal judges and four civil judges; seven would be okay so that we can have three to deal with civil cases and four to deal with criminal cases.

I would like to ask the Minister to recruit another judge this year especially in terms of the criminal case. There is no need for you to give me that information in my pigeon hole, it is alright!

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Still on the same page on High Court judges. Which provisions will be used to pay their salaries?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** Their salaries are catered for under statutory salaries.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Can the Minister inform us where are those statutory salaries outlined?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** The salaries of judges are statutory. Section 107 of the Constitution says that it must be charged automatically to the consolidated fund, and therefore we cannot see it here because Parliament does not vote for it.

I think one thing we have to understand is the separation of the powers; the judiciary, the legislature and the executive. Sooner or later we have to give more autonomy to the judiciary so that it has its own budget and that budget must be charged automatically to the consolidated fund so that the problems as the Leader of Opposition said where availability of funds is always the constraint that holds the judiciary back to really equip the bench to the adequate level required of it to discharge its responsibilities. That must be given to them.

The same too is for the legislature. In some jurisdictions the legislature enjoys autonomy where it votes its own budget which automatically is charged to the consolidated fund or whatever label given to those jurisdictions. But in this particular case the common fund of the government is the consolidated fund.

You would recall that in 2007 we established a separate head for the judiciary, and that is the Head 296, which its origin was in 2007 where we have given some autonomy to the judiciary so that it is separate from the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. Sooner or later we have to give them some kind of constitutional status where sourcing of resources are charged to the consolidated fund so that they run their work more independently.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** We thank you for that explanation. In that case, I think this budget needs a lot of tidying up because in some places the statutory salaries are still reflected, the statutory posts or constitutional post holders. All those are still reflected like the governor general's salary, the public solicitor's salary. Maybe at future presentation of this budget, you need to really tidy it up so that statutory obligations are not reflected in the budget.

The question arises is whether NPF contributions are also statutory costs, whether there is need to reflect them or they are part of salaries. May be there is a need in future to tidy it up so that the budget can become smaller like this because a lot of things are taken out.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** That is a very valid point. If you look at page 10 of the brick, you will find separation of statutory, in some cases, I do not think it is completely all of that, but you will find the difference between what is in the brick total and the statutory expenditures that have been taken away. But the budget process is a continuous cleaning up process and so we are going to do that as we go along.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I want to ask about the security of judges. I can see the security of the office here, but those human beings also need security during official hours and after hours. Whether there is provision of such a service and if so where is it funded from? But if there is no such service whether the ministry is thinking strongly about providing security for judges?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** That is a well noted point that we will take note of. Obviously, increasingly our judges are now under threat and we must live up to the reality that they are also human beings and so we need to move along that direction. I think it is a point well noted.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Just to correct the security issue of judges; they already have securities. If you look at the establishment, all the judges have security officers already.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Page 422 - accounting code 2169 – local courts and other charges. I note a reduction of more than \$200,000 while the budget is \$160million. I believe there are a lot of outstanding cases for the local courts. In Malaita, I know some have dated back to the year 2000 and they cannot move until now.

Also, the concern here is when we talk about development in the rural areas, most of the cases there in the local courts and even in the customary land appeal court is only to do with land dispute. I want to ask the hard working minister – is the money to support those work, especially in the provinces somewhere or is this intentionally held up like this?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** It is true as the Member has stated that there is a decrease on the baseline. The amount in this year's budget is determined very much by the actuals of 2010.

We note the decrease there is \$160,000, and some of the funds the Member for West Are Are wants to know are already transferred to the districts to deal with court cases and so it will appear in each district because it was transferred.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** If we are going to deal with the magistrates in the provinces, I noticed a lot of vacancies and this is also causing problems like what the MP for West Are Are has pointed out in the local courts, it causes problem in the backlog of cases that are still pending hearing.

My question to the minister is, the system at the moment is we recruit and we advertise and then appoint people. But I think the problem there is that you do not have the people to apply for the posts. Is there any other way we can address this problem? Are there any other things that you in the ministry talks about, in which we can be able to fill up those posts for the magistrates?

**Hon Commins Mewa:** It is true that we notice that there are vacancies there in the establishment, especially throughout our districts in this country. Unfortunately Mr Chairman, our qualified lawyers who should take up some of these posts in our various provinces have become private practitioners, which is why we are short of manpower for addressing such problem.

One thing the Ministry has talked about is “rewarding”. So that is what we will try to made a bid for it in our next budget; we will try to increase their salaries so that we attract them back to come back in the government system.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** I heard the Minister is basing his estimates for this year on 2010 actuals; my fear is if the services are just the same. What I am looking at now it is just the similar line of services – otherwise the similar line of services is provided again in this year, because some areas cannot serve and the excuse here is there is no money. Like for us in Malaita, I understand service is within Auki region only, it cannot go further to cater for the Southern region. And in some cases which I am aware of from the Southern region cases are still pending since 2001 to 2004. So that is why I raise this, because if there is no money here - how will the budget be catered for? We need a change in the service so that it can move further down in the rural areas. It is not good that the service will be within town areas only. If the Minister can give us some hope that those services will reach areas it had not reached because of the budget.

**Hon Commins Mewa:** In fact what is reflected here in the budget is enough to cater for this year. But I am aware of the honourable members concern. I believe what he is trying to express here is that probably money was allocated but people did not actually go out and do the job. I think that was what happened in year 2010 and even last year. I think it is something my Ministry will look at, that if there is money allocated—where it is always the excuse of some

people who did not do their work and say there is no money. I will make sure this year and onward that money is fully utilized.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The issue with our magistrate courts not having lawyers to serve in it I think it will continue for a long time to come. I know that we have been training lawyers for a long time, and I think in any given year, there are ten new ones that are trained, for a long time now and the Minister of education might want to confirm this. So much so that even at the law school of USP in Vanuatu I think we, may Fiji is the largest number and we are second largest. People come out and then go on to private practice.

My question to the government is, for professions like lawyers and doctors where it is very expensive to train them, any thoughts to bond our lawyers and doctors, especially for the amount of time they spent in training to serve the government. I think in that way we can turn the tide of people going out of government service. Is there any view from the government towards that end for bonding?

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** I think it is good for all of us to start to realize the actual cost and the risk that involved as we move higher in providing tertiary training for our people. In fact the risk is much higher for us to lose them—if the conditions in the country are not that conducive, we will lose them. It is good that we start to realize that this sort of thing will continue to happen. I think the good thing is that you know if we start to develop, for instance upgrade our tertiary institution, SICHE into a university So that we can start to build up this knowledge bank in the country by having SICHE to be our own National University. It is the way to encourage people to see that our education is not as low as what people might think, but that it will create a more inclusive environment for people to have interest in our country even our own people too.

But of course, the cost of us educating our own people is one that, if we continue to weigh it with people who go before, it is not only that we lose them but it is also that whether or not we have given ourselves the right priority for the people to be trained. Most of the time the people that we train may be only be in a general field but we forget about those in the specialized areas or professional areas. So much so that because of that negligence, we now start to realize that we need to rethink it. But I think it is a well noted point, we will take note of that and find a way out on how we can address it.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** The Attorney General is here, so maybe he can comment on this propositions made by the leader of opposition. This idea of bonding we have talked about that before, and the advice from the legal chambers raised a constitutional issue on it. Maybe the Attorney General can comment on that.

**Attorney General:** There are some possible constitutional ramifications if we are to bond a person, probably, against his will to be employed with a particular employer that he does not want to work with. The policy reasons behind that are fine, if we were to retain as much as possible all our graduates, but then there are issues like I said, whether we can hold someone to work for the government and if that particular person does not decide to work with the government, it would probably be a disguised form of having someone to work under conditions which that the person does not really want to work in.

Those are the considerations probably why previous governments have not actually gone into that particular proposal the honourable member has enquired about.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** My suggestion is, remove the Magistrates from the civil service salary of the Public services and include them as the judges, create a new scheme of service for them. This is because these poor things really handle a great load of task, so we must pay them well. If we pay them well, they would not consider leaving the job, they will remain. Because we do not give them a good salary they will feel reluctant to judge criminal cases and take the risk, but the salary is not that good.

We are all humans, so Minister when you have given it some consideration, I think that will be one thing that will make it work. This is just a comment.

*Head 296 agreed to.*

Head 297: Ministry of Women Youth, Children and Family Affairs - \$12, 661 390

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just an establishment question, there are two posts, principal accountant level 9, senior administration officer level 8. The two posts which you need are unfounded. Does the Ministry needs the two posts this year?

**Hon Peter Tom:** The two posts are proposals for this budget. Once we pass it then we will take it in.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Actually we do not have funds for it, it is unbudgeted for. Do you really need these two posts?

**Hon Peter Tom:** Yes, for sure the ministry needs the two posts.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I want to thank the Minister for continuing this assistance to CYP; this is on page 432 – item 2168. I want the minister to inform the house on what specific assistance this \$1million goes towards for the commonwealth youth program?

**Hon Peter Tom:** This \$1million assistance comes from SIG, especially for maintenance.

**Mr. Milner Tozaka:** Page 434, Item 4125 – Women’s Development Assistant grant.

Sir along the Mendana Avenue in front the Museum, you can see our good women, who do some knitting and weaving, they display their baskets there. What is the plan of the Ministry, in your opinion, for us to build a house for them somewhere in town so that they can have a proper shelter for our women because they have done a good job in trying to get some revenue?

**Hon Peter Tom:** The Ministry is working on the National Center for women.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Just a follow up on the Minister’s answer. Where will you build that national center?

**Hon Peter Tom:** Yes, that National Center will be built in Honiara.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Do we find land for that now in Honiara?

**Hon Peter Tom:** Yes, this land is offered by the Honiara City Council?

**Mr John Maneniaru:** On page 434, 4126 support to rural women entrepreneurship; how will those women in the village access this fund, can the minister explain?

**Hon Peter Tom:** This is to fund the small income generating projects.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** So are women groups to apply or the ministry selects which group to help?

**Hon Peter Tom:** Yes, they will apply and the ministry will also conduct training for them.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** Accounting Code 6709 - women special day event; this one is quite interesting to me there is a budget for it. Is this special day event only for Honiara women or can we bring women from the constituency as well, because women in rural areas would also want to participate? So can you guide us minister?

**Hon Peter Tom:** The Ministry will also support women in the provinces to celebrate on that event.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Just a comment on this 4126 – support on women entrepreneurship. If you look at it \$300,000 is not enough to go around everywhere. I think the most appropriate

way and since the government is taking the route to deliver these kinds of services through the constituencies set up, I think that is how we should go. If we want help our women at the village level; and if you serious about then we must be serious to think about another allocation in the constituency to train women.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I am still on the same item, - support to rural women entrepreneurship. I fully support what the MP for East Choiseul had said, and I am just trying to make a rough calculations. The allocation is really in adequate, it will not cater for that and I urge the government to put more on this one and put it through our constituencies, but for the time being I would like the Minister to give information in our pigeon holes as to who have received projects under this allocation so far. This is so that we can look at it just for our information.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Thank you for those very encouraging comments made by both the Member for East Choiseul and the Leader of the Opposition.

I think the direction has been set now where I am sure that the House and public will note the direction this government is taking is to go along the line of constituencies. You would find that in the development budget. This is just the beginning. If we can work out some good understanding about past programs that have been offered through, like what has been stated here in line items here, for instance support to rural women entrepreneurship, women's development assistance grants—I mean these can be amalgamated because they may be about the same thing, developing the entrepreneurship skills of our women and other areas of development that women can be best tasked to do and not us men.

There are examples of successes where women run developments succeed. If you read about the group in Bangladesh, the Grameen Bank that is predominantly for the women alone. So the access of capital is for the women to source the funds in this one. So I encourage the three MPs who were whispering there that they must read the report of the Grameen bank because you know these are some very good model on how the capital enterprises where women is doing best and very successfully than male. That will be the direction, but the beginning is in the development budget.

I encourage all of us to come tomorrow so that we share ideas when the Minister will be presenting the development budget tomorrow.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Sub-item 6411 – Childs Rights Bill. Can the Minister brief the Committee on the progress and where are we in preparing this bill to be sent to Parliament.

**Hon Peter Tom:** I just want to assure this Committee that my Ministry is working on it now.

**Mr John Maneniaru:** On the bottom of page 436, subhead 66415 – children’s forum and peace ambassadors. A good budget there, if the Minister can brief the Committee on what this program will be like?

**Hon Peter Tom:** With this program the Ministry will work with other groups that look after children. They will try to bring the children together and make some educational program for the children.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** The CRC sensitization and lobbying process suddenly got a big allocation for it for this year. I know we have already been working on the convention on the rights of the child for some time now, but this sudden hike in the allocation for this year, what does it mean? I would like the Minister to brief the Committee on what we will use this money of more than \$400,000 for this year?

**Hon Peter Tom:** This allocation is to set up children’s offices in the provinces and also to set provincial advisory committees.

*Head 297 agreed to.*

Head 298: Ministry of Rural Development & Indigenous Affairs - \$13,097,829million

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** I think I will repeat what I said during the debate in the second reading and I think this is what the Prime Minister has also emphasized, and this is the importance of getting the constituency establishment properly organized so that we can manage the increasing funds that you will insert into those constituencies.

The vacancies that are not yet funded; un-funded posted, what is the program or the ministry’s plan in here? And how will the Ministry justify it to the government in order for the government to give funds to it to recruit the additional posts that we do not have any budget for? It is very important that we should have those posts.

**Hon Alex Lionel:** As you can see in the Ministry of Rural Development, there are around 30 unfunded vacancies which are for project officers. But we will try our best as to how we would be able to source funds to fill these posts.

I would like to say that according to this Appropriation act, whatever excesses available within this Appropriation act, we will make use of that this year so that at least we will fund these vacancies.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** So 32 is un-funded, or maybe 30; the Minister is right because the other two are principal accountant and Deputy Director, so that is 30. However 20 are already in the approved establishment. So for the 20 who will be receiving theirs first. I can see that some are already listed under certain constituencies already, but there are these that you have placed under Honiara in your establishment already; so who will take these. My concern is otherwise North East Guadalcanal will be left last.

**Hon Alex Lionel:** Yes 20 of those project officers are already being approved and are waiting to be advertised, and six of them are already filled. They already have people in mind for those positions. The other 14 whichever constituencies who wish to have one as soon as possible you have to send in your application to the Ministry of Rural Development and we can consider it.

*Head 298 agreed to.*

Head 299: Ministry of Environment Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology - \$20,465,422

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 447 – 3001, who in the admin and headquarter is to have uniforms?

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** For this one, we want to put uniform on our team to raise the image because environment will pick up its image not only inside the country but also outside. We want to make us special so that it encourages them because five divisions in the ministry take big responsibilities so that it makes up a bit more special. This is the reason for these uniforms here and I want to thank the member for east Choiseul for the question.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 446, 1012 – Special duty allowances; this is a new allocation, what nature of work or administrator warrants the special duty allowance.

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** I would like to thank the member for north Vella for his question. This special duties allowance is to cater for both establish and non-establish personal inside the Ministry, and it takes the place of overtime especially in Meteorology and Climate change divisions, that is what this provides for.

**Mr Manasseh Sogavare:** Page 446 sub - item 2011. The provisions for electricity and gas at the headquarters are zero. Is that the case, is the ministry not going to pay gas and electricity?

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** I want to thank the member for east Choiseul for such an insightful question. This is because it will be co-funded by donors it will save us some of our money. So it

is co-funded by donors and we want to encourage renewable energy instead of fossil fuel. That is why we put it like that so that donors see that we are committed to what we talk about when we talk about renewable energy or tentative energy instead of depending on fossil fuels.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** Just a follow up question to the Minister's answer on donor funding. I just want to ask the Minister about the outcome of the Denmark summit regarding climate change in the area of food security, agriculture and land use? Our government applied for a funding of US\$5million. What is its outcome to fund this year's budget?

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** This shows the complexities of issues we do, it is under the project that we share with the Ministry of Agriculture regarding food security. So it is a huge package that we begin to work on but funding is secured. So I want to thank the Member for East Honiara for his question. It is in process, it is a core administration between the Ministry of Agriculture and my Ministry, in terms of the project we have.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** I just wanted to follow up; we submitted a proposal to the World Bank for US\$6.8million for the funding for least developed countries for this 2012 budget. What is the outcome?

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** The project is on process, we will finalize our talks with the World Bank next week.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I just want to ask a question on adaptation. I see that a little funding is there for vulnerability and adaptation assessment. I do not check in the development but whether there is any fund in there for actual adaptation?

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** We put in \$2million in terms of SIG's commitment in the development, and then the funding from SICAP, given by EEU gave which is \$2.8m EURO and \$12million will come after this budget that is why we are waiting for the conclusion of the budget.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I Just want to flag it with the Minister for him to be ready for the development estimates, for him to clarify - out of this total funding of \$2million in SIG and \$2.8million in EURO because not all of it will go to adaptation to reallocation, So that he will tell us how many of that will go to community for actual adaption rather than studies and others which is also necessary, but the actual adaption. I just flag it so that when it come to that he can outline it and the process for it.

**Hon John Moffat Fugui:** I will be more than ready to answer that because we are committed to make sure that every single cent of this \$2million goes for that issue and not for studies or research. That is why we would like to be committed in terms of what we do.

When I look at what is in this budget, it is smaller than what our needs are. I remember, if you can recall Mr Chairman, I know you have got a very retentive memory that in West Are Are itself they have what the member for West Are Are called 'Samaritan villages'. Our problems are more than the funding we have. So I am committed to stand by my words when we come to our development budget.

*Head 299 agreed to.*

**Mr Chairman:** Honourable members, having completed all the heads in the recurrent expenditure of the schedule, it is proposed that the total recurrent expenditure of \$1,716,228,687 billion stands part of the schedule.

*The Recurrent Expenditure of \$1,716,228,687 agreed to.*

### **Budget Support Expenditure**

*Head 372: Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development - \$115million*

**Mr Matthew Wale:** My comment may be out of order, but I am really tired, do you consider that we should—because tomorrow is another is another day, we should finish it tomorrow but anyway—

**Mr Chairman:** The chair ruled that we continue on to finish.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** My question is on page 84. This National school infrastructure is \$12million. Can the Minister clarify whether national school means for everyone to have equal access or for national secondary schools or what does it mean?

**Hon Dick Ha'amori:** This is to assist schools on infrastructure. It is not divided whether it is secondary or primary.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** An issue - and this budget has gone to some lengths to remedy this situation is the equitable fair access to these resources, right across all constituencies because we have schools in every constituencies. And so when funds are available sometimes it is on a first come first serve basis, or on selected schools because we cannot fund all the school. But if this

money was shared equally for all constituencies just like tourism, agriculture, it may go a much longer way towards meeting the infrastructure needs fairly right across the country. But it is only a suggestion and I know the government is well in the way of doing that with other allocations, but may be something for the Minister to think about.

*Head 372 agreed to.*

Head 376 Ministry of Health and Medical Services - \$148,250,000

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Those tertiary scholarships are not funded in this one; are they covered elsewhere; can the Minister clarify?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Yes, these are the ones we funded for 2011 are only for special trainings which only take two weeks for the professions – the actual training is under 276.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** I want to ask about this AusAID swap funding. There are a number of bilateral and multilateral partners who have signed this swap arrangement. AusAID is in here, but where are the other funders like the Japanese government and the others; this is under HSSP?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** They are under the development budgets and some are captured in the non-appropriate funds.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** We have a 180 – upkeep and repair of official buildings is \$10million. Perhaps the Minister can clarify which buildings are these allocations for?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** This is for the whole Ministry of Health.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Does it also include the new clinics and so forth, or just repair on the existing clinics and installations?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** The clinics are catered for under the development budget.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Item 3269, page 188 - consultation fees local; about \$17million under the national medical stores division. If the Minister can inform the committee of this big amount of money.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** We engage one consultant which works with the medical store.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** Is the Minister saying that we will be paying this one consultant \$17million.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** This is an expatriate whom we engage locally to do this work, plus other local consultants which we will also engage.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I think the Minister must come out clear on this. I just find it very hard to believe that we are going to pay one expatriate plus some local consultants to be paid this amount for the year. It is very expensive advisers, what rate is the Ministry paying these people to cost \$17million.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** The amount of money is not just for the consultant, it will also go towards others who are also assisting.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** Probably this is not a question. I was just thinking that probably the short term doctor - low come, which they bring into this country. Last time they are paid under the budget support, some are paid under local supplementation under ministry of public service. This could probably go towards that. Is it right or not that is all I want to know?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Yes, that is correct.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** I think for the benefit of the House as well as in view of this very large amount that is allocated for this particular item. I want to request the minister to provide details for this particular accounting code so that we can examine it for details and put it in our pigeon holes to satisfy our thoughts that this money is well spent, and for our purposes with regards to national medical stores.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Yes I will do that.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** For that medical stores total of \$28million; the \$17million is more than half of this which goes for consultant. It seems a little unreasonable so I suppose the obvious question is what are they consulting on that it would require so much money?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** The national medical store has been a big challenge for the Ministry of Health over the years and in order for us to put things in order we need somebody to help us out so that we actually put a system that can help us improve the supplies and medicine in this country.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** 189: Just a comment - I want to encourage the Minister to use \$5.5million to pay equipments starting from this month. Because it procurement is very long, so that at the end of the year we have equipment in our hospital.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** I take note.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** On page 189, the item on patience travel. Is this for patience to come to National Referral Hospital or is this what we use for Honiara to Sydney for treatment?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** On 276 we have \$2.4million for patient referral and this \$600,000 is to support; and it use for both.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** On 195 the environment health - \$24million on materials and equipment. What materials and equipment is this?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** This is for water supply materials for provinces and our projects throughout the country.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I suppose government is already making some head way on this, but a fair and equitable distribution of these things so that it does not go on first come first serve basis or who you know. All of us need water supply in our villages. So this falls under the same approach the government has already taken in which each constituency gets a little allocation for water supply or this different, it is an additional one that will still be managed by the Rural Water Supply in the Environment Division?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** These are national projects funded for all the provinces.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** I would like push this point home a bit more, for equitable distribution of it, because this is the way we have been operating until now; credit to this government that you have started to divert some money for water supply, 3 or 350 for each constituency. This is correct but this should not remain as it is, it should also get to each of the constituencies.

I think if the Minister can make a commitment in that direction and then see how pragmatically it will work that will be fair to everyone because if not it will be quite hard to have an equitable access.

For me, my projects are sitting down at the Rural Water Supply until now; for how many years now, and I am sure I am not the only one. The approach taken for equitable access is a good one and it would be good for the ministry to make a commitment to the direction the government already took but it is also good for this program to perhaps follow suit.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** I would like to thank the member for Aoke/Langalanga. I think you have come up with a very valid point. I think the way the government is going now I think, they

have started in some Ministries have already started and I think what you actually mentioned is very important for the Ministry to take note of.

**Mr Milner Tozaka:** Page 201, 376-084-4191 on Helena Goldie, there is nil provision. Can the Minister explain that? I noticed the others have provisions but Goldie has nothing. May be he has a good reason for it. Can you explain?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** I would like to thank the member for North Vella for the question. This one is funded under SIG grant on 276.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Item 4139 on page 199. I would like to ask about Malu'u Nurse Aide training school for which \$200,000.00 is allocated there which is good. Are there plans by the Ministry to upgrade this school so that it also has the status such as Atoifi and the Helena Goldie for nursing as well?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Yes, this school is currently under review. It normally runs nurse aide training programs. It is currently under review. But we are not actually looking at upgrading it to another school of nursing.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** Again with regards to Malu'u hospital and since it is on Malaita province, an issue that came out of the hospital board raised recently was with regards to the house of a senior nursing officer where the commissioner of lands allocated to a private individual without any consultation with the board; whether steps are being taken by the Ministry perhaps to liaise with the Ministry of Lands to resume the title to the land, because it is an important public utility for the hospital and the need is great for this officer to live in it. They just completed renovations and then it was sold for an amount that is much less than the cost for its repair. It sounds like it was not a very clean arrangement. If the Minister can either comment or take note and follow up with the Ministry of Lands to sort this out.

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** I take note and will follow up on this.

**Hon Derek Sikua:** This is just a comment. Following the request by the member for Aoke/Langalanga for water supply for constituencies under this head, in my view, it would be quite hard because if AusAID hears the name constituency it will not happen. So let us not raise our hopes too high Mr Minister because it looks like it will be hard for funding under this head to come to constituencies because AusAID is there.

But I would like to ask a question on 204 in relation to Guadalcanal Province. Are you going to treat these service grants as the service grants for health that goes directly to the

province or how does it happen? Can we apply for our area health centre, our clinics in the constituency for this grant or will it be given directly to the Province?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Service grants go directly to provincial health authorities.

**Mr Matthew Wale:** With regards to physiotherapy, whether the Minister can clarify if there are physio establishments also in provincial hospitals and whether they are resourced or at least at par with those at the National Referral Hospital or is the Referral Hospital the only physio set up for the whole country?

**Hon Charles Sigoto:** Yes, there are physio divisions in the provinces; we have what is called the CBR – Community Based Rehabilitation people working in the provinces.

*Head 376 agreed to.*

*Total Budget Support Estimates of \$263,250,000 agreed to.*

**Mr Chairman:** Honourable members, we have covered enough in this sitting. The proceeding of this committee is now interrupted and will resume at the appropriate time on the next sitting day.

**Hon Gordon Darcy Lilo:** Under Standing Order 35(4), I move that the proceedings of the committee of supply on the 2012 Appropriation Bill 2012, be now adjourned to the next sitting day.

*Proceedings of the Committee of Supply adjourned to the next sitting day*

*Parliament resumed.*

**Mr Speaker:** Honourable Members in accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, in accordance with Standing Order 10(5) Parliament is now adjourned until 9.30 am Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2012.

*The House adjourned at 8.56pm*