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LOA MO SOSEL JASTIS TOKTOK

The newsletter from the Justice and Community Services Sector



Brought to you by:

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SERVICES

JASTIS, SEFTI, DIGNITI, RISPEKT MO GUD FASIN BLONG EVRIWAN

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The purpose of this Newsletter is to share information, news and data among our Sector. You can keep up with more news at the Ministry of Justice & Community Services (MJCS) website and other Sector agencies websites.

SECTOR UPDATES

Staff Biography



Katrina Mackenzie – Adviser to the Office of the Public Prosecutor

Katrina joined the *Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti* program as Adviser to the Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) in May this year and works with Prosecutors to build their capacity to effectively, independently and fairly prosecute matters in Vanuatu.

In consultation with the Public Prosecutor, she is working on a range of capacity building projects related to advocacy, witness support and policy. Currently, her work has a particular focus on building legal and advocacy skills to assist vulnerable witnesses (particularly women, children and the disabled) to give their best evidence in court. She has been excited to see prosecutors successfully apply these skills in court which not only allow a witness to give their best evidence but reduces stress and improves the level of trust in the criminal court process. In the future, Katrina is hoping to assist the OPP to develop cross sector support for this group.

Katrina has an Honours degree in law at the Australian National University, after graduating she worked as a Child Protection lawyer and in 2006 she started work as a Prosecutor at the ACT DPP in Canberra. In addition to prosecuting in many criminal trials and appeals she held a number of management roles at the ACT DPP including Senior Prosecutor of the Family Violence, Sexual Offence and Appeals Units, she also spent some time as counsel assisting the Coroner.

Katrina enjoys working with the committed and talented prosecutors of the OPP and looks forward to continue her work with them.

Ms. Emma Scadeng, SRBLS Systems officer
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Ms. Emma Scadeng, SRBJS systems officer

It has been a big month for systems and technology within the Justice sector - not because of the systems themselves, although they contribute to good operations, and are used by many, many people.

But - because - the justice sector now has a full time Systems Officer, Emma Scadeng, who has joined the *Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti* program (Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program) through to the end of 2020.



Many of you will know Emma from her OGCI days - and her roles within Help Desk, trouble-shooter, network administrator - the list goes on. Emma has undertaken all roles with a professionalism and responsiveness that made her so appreciated by people across the sector.

Now, working closely with the Case Management Adviser (Tony Lansdell), Emma and Tony will run a joint work-plan assisting the agencies within the justice sector, not just on systems (e.g. Police Information Management System (PIMS) and Case Management Systems (CMS)) but on things like networks, video conferencing, and importantly, undertaking a detailed audit over the coming months about the PCs and printers/scanners used currently.

While people will still contact OGCI Help Desk for day to day 'PC problems', Emma (and Tony) will work closely with senior officers in each agency to ensure the respective agency is making full use of the technologies available to us.

With Emma's solid technical under-pinning of skills, and Tony's systems skills, this is a great combination of skills and experience (and age!) - and the coming months - and years - will see a tremendous increase/improvement in the technology across the sector.

Gender equality in Corrections

The Dipatmen Blong Koreksional Sevis (DBKS) is pleased to report that Maina Anson is the first female officer to be permanently appointed as a Principal Correctional Officer (PCO).

Maina will transfer to Santo to take up the position of PCO at Luganville Correctional Centre. The role of the PCO is to undertake day-to-day management of Correctional Centre operations, reporting to the Manager. She has recently been awarded with a Baton of Honour for her well-displayed performance during a three months training in the Solomon Islands. According to the Director of Correctional Services Johnny Marango, the award is the highest award and is granted to a single student from each course who displays a high level of competence, professionalism and academic performance through their training and who is able to demonstrate a strong leadership, integrity and strength of character.

'Although almost all offenders in our Correctional Centres are male, and many of them are sex offenders, we need to overcome the idea that only male officers can work with them' explains DBKS Director, Johnny Marango. 'In the past, many of our female officers have been assigned to work with female offenders only or to undertake administration duties. Thus, in line with best practice overseas, I am pleased to see our female officers now beginning to work in male Correctional Centres, and in Maina's case, to actually manage Centre operations.'

'I am happy and I feel proud and confident that I can do the job' says Maina. 'I work in a male-dominated area and it has challenges, but female officers can do the job. After attending a conference in the Solomon's in 2013, I saw what other women had achieved and came back with the determination to break down the barriers facing female officers. My message to other female officers in DBKS and in the justice sector is that you can do it. Aim high and you can achieve it'.



Maina is from Paama and has two children. She began her career in Corrections in 2007 as a contractor. We wish Maina the best of luck with her new position.

Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) training workshop in DBKS



The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) successfully facilitated a workshop on Corruption for probation officers from the Correctional Services Department in Vila. The workshop was spearheaded by Mr John Hyde, a former Member of Parliament for Australia and the advocacy & Anti-Corruption Consultant based in Thailand, and his counterpart, the current Member of Parliament for Western Australia Right Honorable Margaret Mary Quirk.

The Director Mr Johnny Marango stressed that the workshop is the first of its kind ever for Vanuatu, based on a request in 2016 by the Probation Manager Mr Daniel Tavoa to Ms Contanze Von Sohnen the UNODC Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Officer in Vienna, Austria. The request was because there were no Corruption & Bribery rehabilitation programs in the Correctional Centres in Vanuatu or for offenders on probation, and it will be useful to use for future offenders with similar criminal background on corruption and bribery issues, and not only former members of parliament.

The Corruption workshop led to the creation of a Corruption Rehabilitation program that will be used in the Correctional Centres as well as in the probation services. The workshop covered types of corruption like: bribery, money-laundering, obstruction of justice, kickback, nepotism, patronage, insider training, influence, speed money, embezzlement, illicit enrichment, clientelism/cronyism and abuse of public property. This program is used to help former members of parliament as well in the Correctional Centres and those on parole facilitated by probation officers.

First ever Vanuatu Criminal Law Conference held last week

On the 26th and 27th of October all lawyers from the Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP), the Public Solicitor's Office (PSO) and the Vanuatu Womens Centre (VWC) attended a two day Vanuatu Criminal Law Conference in Port Vila. In this, the first year of the Conference, workshops and presentations were aimed at further educating lawyers about dealing with vulnerable victims and young offenders in the criminal justice system. The Conference was hosted by the Public Solicitor and Public Prosecutor and funded and supported by the Australian Aid program's Strem Rod Blong Jastis Mo Sefti Program. The conference was opened by the Australian High Commission Chargé d'Affaires Susan Ryle.

The first session was a panel discussion on dealing with violence within the family in the criminal justice system. This panel included information on the 'cycle of violence', police responses to it and mechanisms to break that cycle. The following day included a presentation by Justice Paul Geoghegan on dealing with young offenders, and a fascinating presentation by Margaret Jones, the Deputy DPP of the Australian Capital Territory on what the latest research shows about how victims of sexual assault actually react, compared to how people expect them to react. There was general agreement that this presentation explained many common reactions that lawyers were seeing in victims. For example, research was presented that showed that in most cases children do not report sexual assaults and most people will freeze not fight when assaulted. There were also guest presentations made by representatives of the Vanuatu Police Force and Vanuatu Women's Centre. Other topics covered included criminal appeals and crime scene investigations.



One of the participating lawyers noted the success of the event:

"The topics focused on areas of our daily responsibilities, including domestic violence, victims and juveniles. Some of the myths of how victims are expected to behave were discussed. Both prosecution and defence have a responsibility to ensure that justice is done."

At the end of the conference the group had the honour of being presented with certificates by Chief Justice Vincent Lunabek and Strem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti Program Co-ordinator Viran Molisa Trief. It is hoped the conference will become an annual legal education event.



Thank you for reading the October edition of Loa mo SoseL Jastis Toktok.

If you have any feedback for the newsletter please send to mjcs@vanuatu.gov.vu. If you have any information to share for next month's newsletter please also email us.

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