



**Press Release
4 September 2019**

Office of the Auditor-General, Solomon Islands: In an innovative peer-to-peer arrangement to support the growth of the Solomon Islands Supreme Audit Institution (SAI), Auditor General Peter Lokay, together with Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI) and the New Zealand and Australian Governments have worked closely together to coordinate a one year secondment for direct support in the Office.

PASAI advertised an Expression of Interest in December 2018 and received an overwhelming response. An assessment of all applications were made and finally Rachel McKechnie - an Associate Director, Specialist Audit and Assurance Services from SAI New Zealand - was selected.

After nearly a year of behind-the-scenes organisation and comprehensive recruitment activities, Rachel started her secondment at the Office of the Auditor-General in the Solomon Islands (SI-OAG) on 2 September 2019. She will be working with the team as the Deputy Auditor-General (DAG) for the coming year to provide assistance to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of the Office.

During the course of the year she will work alongside the Office's Audit Managers to mentor and coach them so that one of them will take over the DAG position. Other responsibilities will include developing an effective quality control system for the Solomon Islands OAG and liaising with other strategic partners as they collectively seek to embed strengthening audit practices.

Auditor-General Mr Peter Lokay, who has needed to fill this vacant role since 2016, created this approach and coordinated with PASAI with a vision to help build the capacity of his office to deliver his mandate. New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT) is funding Rachel's deployment while DFAT Australia supports other logistical arrangements.

Says Peter Lokay, *'We are privileged and thrilled to have Rachel working with us in such a practical guidance role for the next year. I know she will provide much-needed emphasis on quality audits while helping us build capacity for the future. We trust that Rachel will enjoy her time with us as much as we appreciate having her here.'*

For the two development partners, MFAT and DFAT, and PASAI and SAI New Zealand, it is a novel arrangement that has taken considerable time and collaboration to organise. New Zealand High Commissioner Don Higgins noted, *"The Office of the Auditor-General plays a vital role in providing independent assurance to Parliament and to the people of Solomon Islands that public sector agencies have used public funds for the purposes for which they have been appropriated and in accordance with legislations, financial management rules and regulations. We are delighted to provide this secondment to assist the Auditor-General to carry out these functions."*

PASAI's Chief Executive, Tiofilusi Tiueti, agrees. *'We are very pleased with the outcome of this important peer support process. As with our very successful twinning and FASTS programmes, this*

enables a developing SAI to learn directly from a developed SAI and someone who is highly qualified for this role in all senses. We hope that in future we may be able to extend similar peer-to-peer cooperation and arrangements to other SAIs to provide the right support, at the right time, in the right way.'

The Auditor-General acknowledges all partners in making this arrangement possible which will greatly move the office forward with its mandated programs.

For more information please contact PASAI Communications Advisor on jill.marshall@pasai.org

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