



# Media release

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## PASAI director visits Saipan

**Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:** Guam-based programme director for the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI), Doris Flores Brooks, visited Saipan last week on an advocacy and knowledge-sharing mission.

The primary purpose of Ms Flores Brooks' trip was to explain to the staff at the Office of the Public Auditor for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) how PASAI can help improve its capabilities.

Ms Flores Brooks, who was herself formerly the Public Auditor of Guam, made a presentation to the Temporary Public Auditor, Dora I DeLeon Guerrero, and other audit staff on the independent performance assessment of their office. The office's assessment indicated its performance audit standards, quality management and results stood out as strengths.

However, high staff turnover at the office since the baseline assessment took place made it especially opportune to familiarise staff with the report and discuss how PASAI's programme of work can address the gaps it identified. With a strategic plan now in place, the office is committed to tracking its progress against the report.

Such assessments have been completed for all 20 member offices who are beneficiaries of PASAI's programmes and were done using the internationally recognised Performance Measurement Framework (PMF).

In the CNMI, the Public Auditor's duties include investigating possible cases of fraud, waste and abuse of public funds. As such, Ms Flores Brooks met with the office's investigators as well.

Advocacy is one of PASAI's strategic priorities, so while in Saipan Ms Flores Brooks made courtesy visits to senior government officials to promote the importance of actioning recommendations made by the Office of the Public Auditor and maintaining its overall independence.

Among those she met were Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable David M Apatang; Senate President, Edith DeLeon Guerrero; and newly confirmed Secretary of Finance, Tracy Norita. According to Ms Flores Brooks, the majority of government employees in CNMI are working reduced hours due to an austerity programme recently implemented by the Governor. "I was able to share insights that the Government of Guam went through when it too was faced with dire economic conditions," she said.

PASAI acknowledges the support of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

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