



Office of the Ombudsman of Solomon Islands

CORPORATE PLAN

2018 – 2022



Source: OOSI Media, 6 June 2014, OOSI mark its 33rd Anniversary Day in Gizo, capital of Western Province, Solomon Islands.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APOA	Asia Pacific Ombudsman Alliance
CMS	Case Management System
CP	Corporate Plan
FOI	Freedom of Information
HRMs	Human Resource Managers
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration & Management
IOI	International Ombudsmen Institute
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KRA	Key Result Areas
LCC	Leadership Code Commission
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MP	Member of Parliament
MPS	Ministry of Public Service
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
OFPs	Ombudsman Focal Points
OPMC	Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet
OOSI	Office of the Ombudsman of Solomon Islands
PIN	Pacific Integrity Network
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSs	Permanent Secretaries
SIDCCG	Democratic Coalition for Change Government
SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
STC	Secretary to Cabinet
TOR	Terms of Reference
USs	Under Secretaries

OMBUDSMAN'S FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I present the Office of the Ombudsman Solomon Islands (OOSI) Corporate Plan 2018 – 2022. This plan will set the strategic directions for OOSI for the next five years and will also guide the implementation of our key activities.

Our Five Key Result Areas of: Service Excellence, Improving Public Administration, Our Office Management, Our Community Relations and Profile & Our Staff outline the ways we will achieve our vision to “promote fair, transparent and accountable public administration that benefits the people of the Solomon Islands.”

The plan was developed collaboratively with my staff to ensure that they are all aware of our vision and actively contribute towards achieving this.



The SIDCCG Government like its predecessors, continues to recognise the importance of strengthening its public institutions and to improve governance across the public sector. Against this backdrop, the OOSI Corporate Plan 2018 – 22 is aligned to higher level Solomon Island Government plans and policies. In particular, the Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition for Change Government (SIDCCG) policy on Fundamental Reform Program, which stipulates:

(a) Oversee efficient and effective conduct of oversight institutions to eradicate corruption, at all levels, in the country.

It is a key output in meeting the Government Policy Goal and the identified key strategies, that once implemented, will work to further improve government accountability and public confidence in public institutions across Solomon Islands.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fred', located below the main body of text.

Fred Leve Fakarii

Ombudsman of Solomon Islands

The OOSI Corporate Plan 2018-2022 is aligned to higher Solomon Islands Government plans and policies that promote good governance and good public administration in government ministries and bodies.

PURPOSE

The Office of the Ombudsman of Solomon Islands (OOSI) is established through Chapter IX (ss 96-99) of the Constitution of the Solomon Islands 1978. It is further empowered under the *Ombudsman Act 2017*.

The OOSI investigates the actions or conduct of public officials, government contractors, assists in the improvement of administrative practices and procedures, and fosters fair and reasonable decision-making.

The OOSI does this by investigating and reporting on complaints about the actions of Government officials and bodies, or by investigating and reporting on administrative action upon invitation from an individual citizen, a Minister or MP or on an 'own motion' basis.

The OOSI is one of three constitutionally established offices supporting the Solomon Islands system of accountability. Its operations directly impact upon, and are affected by, other stakeholders in the system. The OOSI seeks to improve public administration in the Solomon Islands so that it is fair and accountable and serves the people of the Solomon Islands by investigating and reviewing public administration, recommending changes and remedial action and reporting these matters to Parliament.

VISION – WHERE WE WANT TO BE

Our vision describes what we want to do as an organisation during the course of this Corporate Planning cycle:

Our vision is to promote fair, transparent and accountable public administration that benefits all people of the Solomon Islands.

OUR MISSION – WHAT WE MUST ACHIEVE

Our Mission articulates what we must do to achieve our Vision. It reflects what we do, who we serve and what promise we are making.

Our Mission is to protect the interests of the Solomon Island community to:

- ***Assist people to resolve complaints about government bodies***
- ***Independently investigate and report on the actions and practices of government bodies***
- ***Foster accountable, lawful, transparent and responsive administration.***

OUR VALUES – WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

We adhere to a set of values that underpin the way we do our work and the way we interact with each other and with our stakeholders. These are:

Independence - The OOSI will, consistent with its constitutional and statutory roles, act independently of the government in discharging its functions

Accountability - The OOSI values accountability in government, and therefore, will perform its duties in a timely, responsive and responsible manner, and measuring and reporting on our work

Impartiality & Fairness - The OOSI will at all times act fairly and in a manner that maintains the impartiality and objectivity of the Ombudsman.

Integrity - The OOSI will at all times act honestly in accordance with our powers, with the highest standard of professional working ethics.

Transparency - The OOSI will keep people informed about their rights and any decisions affecting them, and in an appropriate manner.

Accessibility - The OOSI is aware that it exists to serve all the people of the Solomon Islands and will endeavour to ensure it is readily accessible to all.

Respectfulness & Ethical Behaviour - We recognize that respect and ethical behaviour must underpin all our work and relationships. The OOSI will treat everyone with courtesy, dignity and respect.

Responsiveness & Timeliness - The OOSI will provide prompt customer service and will facilitate speedy resolutions as defined by our Service Principles.

Teamwork - The OOSI values the diversity of experience and talent of people who have a unity of purpose and a shared commitment to making the OOSI a success.

OVERARCHING OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

We have identified that that a primary focus of our operations will be to educate SIG bodies on the potential cost savings to our country that can be realised through a reduction in the number of complaints our Office receives. It is estimated that by dealing with a complaint directly, rather than having the complaint received by our Office, a saving of over \$100,000 can be made by the SIG. For this reason, our education campaign will focus on communicating how SIG bodies can improve the way they provide services and also how they can handle complaints from the public themselves as they arise.

In order to provide this education to SIG bodies, the Office requires an increased number of human resources. Additionally, adequate resources will be required so that training relating to leading practice in public administration can be provided to our staff members. This will enable them to become adequately equipped to understand and provide education to SIG bodies, whilst demonstrating these values and new skills in their own work.

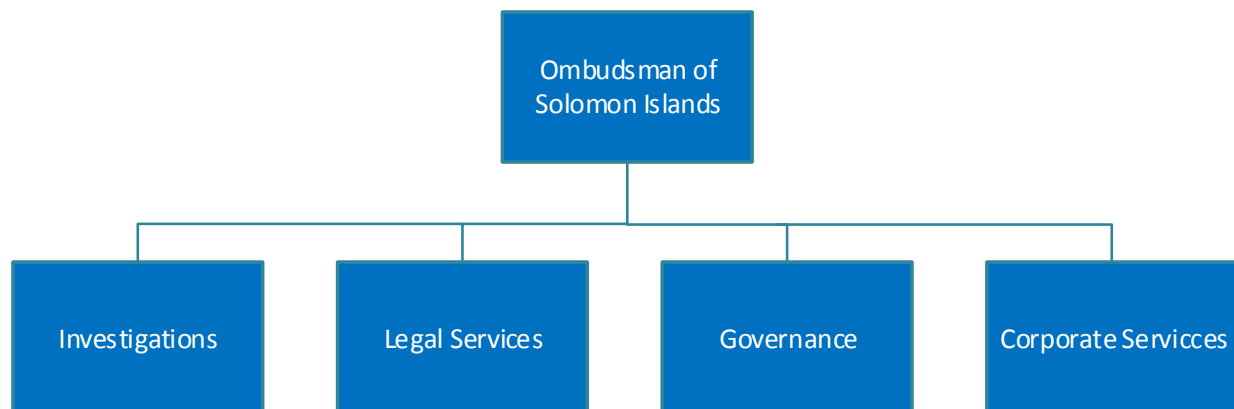
As our talent base grows, we have ambitions to expand our presence in provincial areas. This will increase the accessibility of the Office and contribute towards our vision that all people of the Solomon Islands have access to our services.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Office proposes to start increase it's staffing by 2018. This will include a total of seventeen new officers recruited in the coming years. This will result in a total of 44 staff members throughout the Office. This increase is necessary under the new *Ombudsman Act 2017*, where additional responsibilities are now vested upon the OOSI. Additionally, commencing in 2018, the priorities are to strengthen the Investigation, Legal Services, Governance and Corporate Services Units. Prior to that, an urgent priority is to improve office space for the additional staff increase.

The organisational structure can be illustrated as follows:



ENVIRONMENT

The Office operates within a dynamic political and social environment involving continuous internal and external change. Internally, new functions require the Office to develop resources to achieve our high standards of work and stakeholder engagement. Externally, the breadth of our work, encompassing all government bodies including those dealing with provincial locations, dictates that factors outside of our control will always be changing. Concurrently, the Office must remain a stable influencer as an integrity body in order to effectively carry out our purpose.

In order to effectively undertake our role, it is essential the Office maintains a high level of awareness of its operating environment. The following is a description of environmental factors categorised as being within or outside of the Office's control. In addition to these factors, risks that may impact the Office's performance against KPIs are provided in the performance section of this Corporate Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS WITHIN OUR CONTROL

Human resources – training

The Office has identified that we play a pivotal role in training staff so they have the skills to administer effectively as public servants. Our focus on staff training demonstrates our active work in this area.

Stakeholder engagement

The Office has good working relationships with both government and non-government organisations throughout Solomon Islands. It is our responsibility to focus on these relationships and continuously work to maintain them and keep them positive and current.

Our external stakeholders include our complainants, the general public, the public sector, non-government organisations and civil society, the Parliament, Solomon Islands Government (SIG) including the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, other Ministers and Ministries, Provincial governments, State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), other accountability institutions – Office of the Auditor General, the Leadership Code Commission, churches, courts, police, media, business and other donors, schools and other education institutions and private sector suppliers.

Community trust

The Office considers earning the trust of the community to be an integral element of our work. We identify that community trust is a vital aspect of our role as an influencer in both social and political spectrums.

Strategic Planning

By carrying out regular strategic planning, the Office seeks to ensure that staff are always aware of the high level goals the Office is working to achieve.

Culture

The Office takes an active role in managing internal culture so it reflects the principles that we strive to encourage throughout government bodies in Solomon Islands. This includes a strong culture of attendance in the workplace.

Membership in relevant associations

The Office is an active member in several associations to maintain networks and ensure that our practices reflect leading practice in the industry. Associations include the Pacific Integrity Network (PIN), the Asia Pacific Ombudsman Alliance (APOA), and the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS OUTSIDE OF OUR CONTROL

Funding

The Office's funding is provided by outside sources including the government and donors. The Office must budget in accordance with the funding it receives.

Human resources

There is a shortage of skilled staff available in Solomon Islands for the Office to recruit during its expansion. In order to operate within this environment, the Office has training programs in place to enable the upskilling of newly recruited and current staff.

Accessibility

An inherent factor of operating in Solomon Islands that must be taken into account is the geographic dispersion of the population and transport and communications infrastructure. This can limit the accessibility of the Office to a large proportion of staff. This has driven a primary goal of the Office – to expand our presence amongst the community by establishing an office in each of the provinces in Solomon Islands.

Powers held by the Office

The powers held by the Office to carry out its operational activities are granted by the government through legislation and the Constitutional Framework. The Office is unable to directly control the powers granted to it.

Access to Legal materials

The Office relies on legal materials provided by external bodies in order to effectively carry out some activities.

Media landscape

An audience that can be reached through media channels is concentrated primarily into radio and newspaper audiences. This dictates the channels available to the Office when communicating to and educating the public on issues regarding the Office.

Political interference

Due to the nature of the work carried out by the Office, there is always potential for political interference to impact on the work we do.

Access to training

In achieving the Office's objective of providing excellent training opportunities for staff, access to training programs is a factor that we must consider. Due to several reasons including resourcing and availability of certain training programs in Solomon Islands, we can sometimes be limited as to what training we can provide staff.

Support from other accountability organisations

Through collaboration with other accountability organisations, the Office is able to more effectively fulfil our role. The support provided from these organisations is often outside of our control.

National General Election 2019

The election to be held in early 2019 may result in a change of government. This can have an impact on several factors that impact how the Office operates.

Information Security

The data recorded and maintained by the Office is integral to our work. It is a key risk for us that this data could be compromised at any time for a variety of reasons.

Natural disasters

Natural disasters can have a severe impact on our work. The dispersed nature of our population across multiple islands exacerbates this problem.

PERFORMANCE

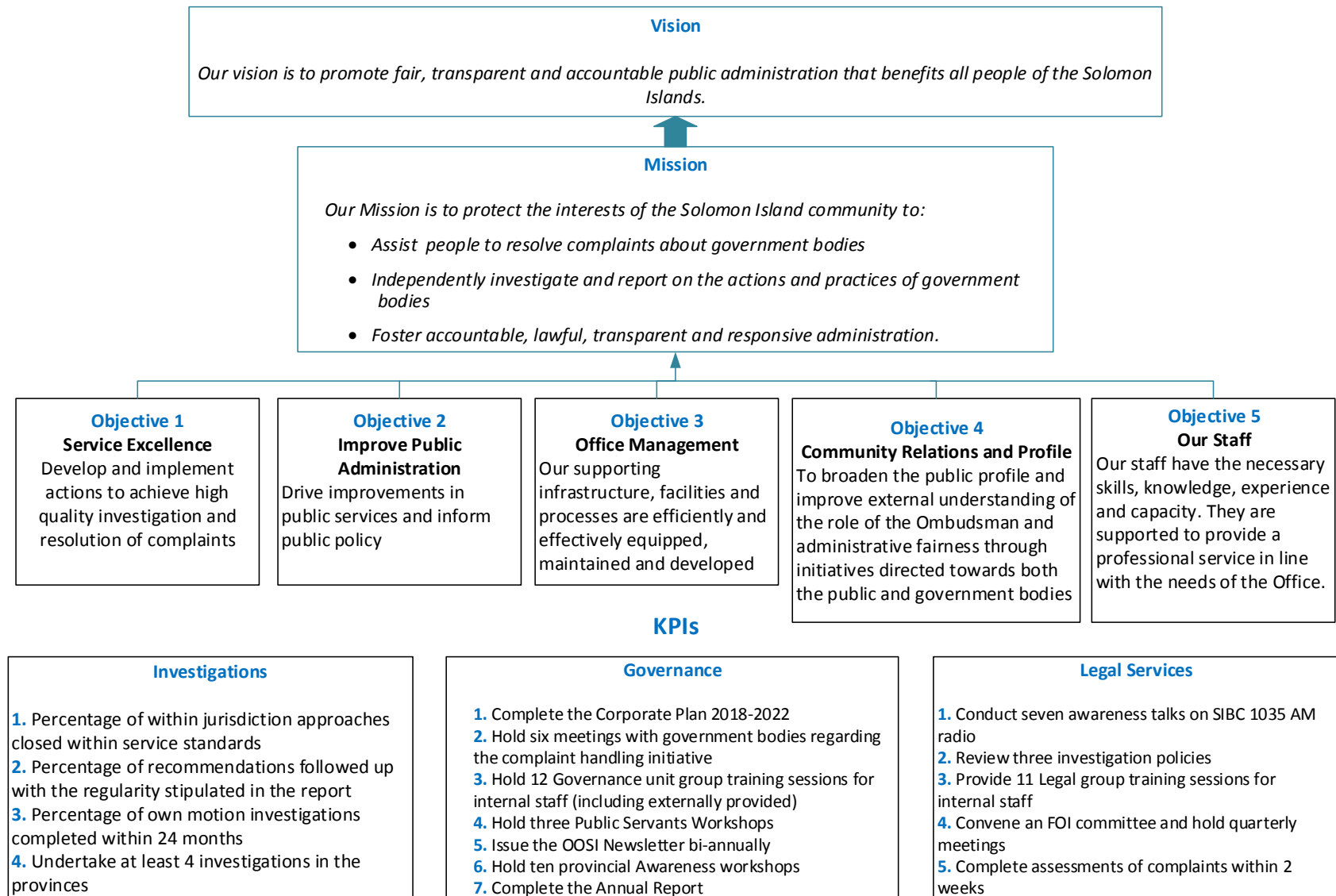
OBJECTIVES AND KPIS

The Office's performance against our vision can be measured qualitatively and is open to subjective judgement.

In order to guide efforts towards achieving our Vision, the Office has a Mission and five objectives, with measurable KPIS for monitoring the Office's performance and progress throughout the year.

Each Division has identified actions and intended results which enable monitoring of progress toward objectives and KPIS through regular reporting. The connectivity between our Vision, Mission, Objectives and KPIS are illustrated as follows:

OOSI PLANNING FRAMEWORK



INVESTIGATION UNIT

MISSION STATEMENT

To independently investigate and resolve complaints within the Office's jurisdiction in a timely manner and report on the actions of government bodies.

KPI's

KPIs	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. Percentage of within jurisdiction approaches closed within service standards	70%	70%	70%	70%
2. Percentage of recommendations followed up with the regularity stipulated in the report	90%	90%	90%	90%
3. Percentage of own motion investigations completed within 24 months	80%	85%	90%	90%
4. Undertake at least 4 investigations in the provinces	100%	100%	100%	100%

RISKS

The following risks may impact our efforts towards achieving our KPIs:

	Risks	Cause	Level	Mitigating actions
1	External stakeholders do not fulfil their obligations	Government bodies do not respond to requests for information	High	Maintain contact with bodies and advise their requirements clearly
		Changing managers and staff in government bodies		Maintain regular communications with agency contacts
		Government bodies do not keep / do not provide proper records		Maintain contact with bodies and advise their requirements clearly

2	Service standards are not met	Complainants cause delays	Medium	
3	Lack of resources – financial and personnel	Slow processing of funding to facilitate and attend programs	High	Conduct on-going meetings with MPS & MOF to secure additional resources
4	Retention of staff / conditions of service	Lack of funding	High	Need to urgently improve the office conditions to match workforce requirements.
		Difficult complainant conduct		OOSI staff training – dealing with unreasonable complainant conduct
5	Procrastination, sickness & family problems	NA	Low	Provide on-going monitoring & support to staff and address priorities first.
6	Limited office space	Lack of funding	High	Need to urgently improve the office accommodation to cater for additional workforce.
7	Poor weather conditions	NA	Medium	Allow flexibility on programs & ensure on-going consultation prior to facilitation of provincial programs

ACTIVITIES AND INTENDED RESULTS:

- Build stronger relationship with SIG ministries and other government bodies
- Consultation with responsible bodies and agencies to comply with OOSI investigation report recommendations
- Conduct a total of Four (4) own motions and systemic investigations
- Continue consultation with MPS, line ministries and bodies on the development of complaint handling system for the public service
- Develop a proposed inclusive complaint handling system for the public service
- Conduct regular visits to prisons and hospitals (Psychiatric) to assess the level and conditions of treatment given to inmates and mentally ill persons
- Produce reports with recommendations for improvement and issue to relevant authorities to consider
- Establish and attend training opportunities, conferences and workshops that are linked to individual performance and skill needs of the OOSI
- Recruit, develop and maintain professional and productive staff
- Examine complaints and/or legal questions and then advise on what appropriate action the Office should take regarding such matters
- CMS management

- Write to complainants to advise status of their complaints
- Conduct research into potential topics for own motion investigations

GOVERNANCE UNIT

MISSION STATEMENT

To enable the Office to carry out its role and functions effectively and efficiently when dealing with government bodies, communities and citizens.

To promote accountable and transparent administration within public service bodies.

KPIs

KPIs	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. Complete the Corporate Plan 2018-2022	100%	100%	100%	100%
2. Hold six meetings with government bodies regarding the complaint handling initiative	90%	90%	90%	90%
3. Hold 12 Governance unit group training sessions for internal staff (including externally provided)	90%	90%	90%	90%
4. Hold three Public Servants Workshops	65%	65%	65%	65%
5. Issue the OOSI Newsletter bi-annually	100%	100%	100%	100%
6. Hold ten provincial Awareness workshops	90%	90%	90%	90%
7. Complete the Annual Report	100%	100%	100%	100%

RISKS

The following risks may impact our efforts towards achieving our KPIs:

	Risks	Cause	Level	Mitigating actions
1	External stakeholders do not fulfil their obligations	Slow processing of funding to facilitate and attend programs	High	Regular communication with external stakeholders
		Low participation in meetings & workshops		Garner support from PSC and STC to summon all public officials to attend OOSI meetings & workshops.
		Lack of leadership support		Conduct different meetings for PSC, PSs, USs & HRMs to garner support
2	Lack of resources – financial and	Slow processing of funding to facilitate	High	Conduct on-going meetings with MPS &

	personnel	and attend programs		MOF to secure additional resources
3	Limited office space	Lack of funding	High	Need to urgently improve the office accommodation to cater for additional workforce.
4	Poor weather conditions	NA	Medium	Allow flexibility on programs & ensure on-going consultation prior to facilitation of provincial programs
5	Procrastination, sickness & family problems	NA	Low	Provide on-going monitoring & support to staff and address priorities first.

ACTIVITIES AND INTENDED RESULTS

- Development of publicity and awareness materials
- Organizing and conducting of workshops, awareness programs and public talks
- Review organizational structure and bidding for new positions
- Consultation and recruitment of additional staff and re-engineering of complaint handling processes
- Conduct relevant training for staff
- Build stronger relationship with SIG ministries and other government bodies
- Consultation with responsible bodies and agencies to comply with OOSI investigation report recommendations
- Develop monitoring and performance framework for Corporate Plan that includes development of key indicators for reporting
- Develop an internal reporting template for unit heads to use when submitting reports
- Ensure Annual Report to Parliament is delivered by due date
- Continue consultation with MPS, line ministries and other government bodies on the development of complaint handling system for the public service
- Develop a proposed inclusive complaint handling system for the public service
- Assist OOSI to create own website to facilitate the policy
- Coordinate with other divisional heads to ensure the annual report is produced
- Work with divisional heads to produce annual work plan cost
- Consult and establish an effective relationship with mainstream media agencies
- Reassess the OOSI complaint aerogram initiative for improvement or discontinuity. Review MOU with Postmaster annually.
- Consult and establish effective relationship with umbrella NGO bodies like SIDT, and main NGO groups
- Develop and publish OOSI bi-annual newsletter and circulate to SIG ministries, bodies and public
- Conduct awareness talks, workshops and presentations on the role and functions of the Ombudsman to IPAM participants, ministries staff, government bodies, schools, communities and public

- Establish and attend training opportunities, conferences and workshops that are linked to individual performance and skill needs of the OOSI
- Recruit, develop and maintain professional and productive staff
- Explore opportunities of training with other local or regional institutions
- Explore opportunities for attachments with other institutions and established organizations, e.g. Commonwealth Ombudsman Office, Other regional Ombudsman Offices
- Prepare and present radio awareness talks on the new Ombudsman Act 2017
- Identify and advise on areas warranting own motion investigations
- CMS management
- Conduct research into potential topics for own motion investigations

LEGAL SERVICES UNIT

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide effective and timely legal services relevant to the functions of the Office.

KPIs

KPIs	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. Conduct seven awareness talks on SIBC 1035 AM radio	100%	-	-	-
2. Review three investigation policies	100%	100%	100%	100%
3. Provide 11 Legal group training sessions for internal staff	90%	90%	90%	90%
4. Convene an FOI committee and hold quarterly meetings	-	100%	100%	100%
5. Complete assessments of complaints within 2 weeks	80%	85%	90%	90%

RISKS

The following risks may impact our efforts towards achieving our KPIs:

	Risks	Cause	Level	Mitigating actions
1	External stakeholders do not fulfil their obligations	Complainant does not provide information in a timely manner	Medium	Maintain contact with complainants and advise their requirements clearly
2	Lack of resources – financial and personnel	Slow processing of funding to facilitate and attend programs	High	Conduct on-going meetings with MPS & MOF to secure additional resources
3	Retention of staff / conditions of service	Lack of funding	High	Need to urgently improve the office conditions to match workforce requirements.
4	Procrastination, sickness & family problems	NA	Low	Provide on-going monitoring & support to staff and address priorities first.

ACTIVITIES AND INTENDED RESULTS

- Development of OOSI internal policies and procedures and liaise with minister for gazetting of commencement date
- Conduct relevant training for staff
- Develop ToR for Ombudsman Focal Points (OFPs)
- Establish freedom of information committee to discuss pre-policy activities
- Conduct consultation FOI workshops with stakeholders
- Conduct training for freedom of information officers
- Finalise freedom of information policy paper for cabinet approval
- Consultation with stakeholders relating to FOI
- Prepare drafting instructions and send to legal drafts person
- Finalise FOI bill and related documents and submit to cabinet for approval
- Conduct FOI related awareness programs to ministries, government bodies and the public
- Develop guidelines for Registry procedures
- Conduct training on the public financial management Act 2013
- Conduct awareness talks, workshops and presentations on the role and functions of the Ombudsman to IPAM participants, ministries staffs, bodies, schools, communities and public
- Examine complaints and/or legal questions and then advise on what appropriate action the Office should take regarding such matters
- Provide quality assurance with respect to the legal aspects of investigation reports and annual or special reports
- Prepare and present radio awareness talks on the new Ombudsman Act 2017
- Identify and advise on areas warranting own motion investigations
- Conduct research into potential topics for own motion investigations

CAPABILITY

Enabling services are provided to our operational units primarily by our Corporate Services Unit. The following information describes matters that are managed by the unit:

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Office currently comprises 25 staff members and has three vacancies for various roles. With plans for expansion, an additional seven vacancies are expected to arise within the next 12 months. This expansion will increase the need for training to be provided to staff to ensure that the high standards of work upheld by the Office are maintained.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Office will operate within a budget of \$3.5 million during 2018. It has been estimated that a budget of at least \$5 million will be required in order to facilitate the Office's plans for expansion including on boarding and training of new staff. This expansion will include the addition of an accounts division within the Corporate Services Unit and a Compliance team within the Governance Unit.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Under current arrangements, IT support for the Office is housed within the Information Communication Technology Support Unit within the Ministry of Finance. It is expected that IT support will not be provided by in-house staff for the foreseeable future.

CORPORATE SERVICE UNIT ACTIVITIES

The following activities are carried out by the Corporate Services Unit as it enables the operations of the Office:

- Seeking cabinet approval on separation of budget head from OPMC
- Review organizational structure and bidding for new positions
- Consultation and recruitment of additional staff and re-engineering of complaint handling processes
- Improvement of current office capacity to accommodate new staff
- Consult with responsible minister and Parliament with a view to establishing the most effective method of introducing OOSI reports
- Build stronger relationship with SIG ministries and other government bodies
- Continue consultation with MPS, line ministries and government bodies on the development of complaint handling system for the public service
- Develop a proposed inclusive complaint handling system for the public service
- Assist OOSI to create own website to facilitate the policy
- Finalise freedom of information policy paper for cabinet approval
- Develop guidelines for Registry procedures
- Maintain a clear OOSI Policy of acceptable attendance through consultation with staff
- Work with divisional heads to produce an annual work plan costing
- Work with divisional heads to produce a procurement plan
- Produce new budget bids
- Request virements of required funds when necessary
- Deliver all procurement services to all divisions of the organization
- Ensure all outstanding standing and special imprest are retired

- Ensure all outstanding bills are settled
- Consult with sponsors and relevant authorities to develop and erect OOSI advertising billboards in main provincial centers
- Annually Review and modify as required Job Descriptions to ensure staff have a clear understanding of their work requirements
- Monitor the implementation of MPS Performance Management System that identifies individual work performance for increment rewards
- Monitor staff attendance and punctuality, and consider enforcing the necessary actions for improvement
- Establish and attend training opportunities, conferences and workshops that are linked to individual performance and skill needs of the OOSI
- Prepare a Workforce Development Plan to identify needs of office particularly in relation to succession
- Recruit, develop and maintain professional and productive staff
- Explore opportunities for attachments with other institutions and established organizations, e.g. Commonwealth Ombudsman Office, Other regional Ombudsman Offices
- Explore other funding agencies who might be interested to assist the office of the ombudsman in its staff development program