

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament on **Tuesday 7 March 2023**. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about the Proceedings of Parliament on **Tuesday 7 March 2023**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

DAY 1

9:30am

I. WARRANT OF ELECTION

Pursuant to Section 84 (2)(b) of the Electoral Act 2019, the Hon Speaker announced the warrant of Election signed by the Ao o le Malo to elect the Member of Parliament for Vaimauga 3.

- LAUTIMUIA Uelese Vaai

**Mr Speaker called upon the new elected Member to stand whilst he calls out the Code of Ethics.*

II. Swearing in of new Member of Parliament

The new Member for Vaimauga 3 took his oath of allegiance and was officially sworn in before the Parliament.

III. Other Announcements by Mr. Speaker

Mr Speaker acknowledged the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet, Leader of the Opposition and all Members of Parliament together with members of the public who were present in Chambers. He also addressed his Highness, Le Ao o le Malo and his good lady and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. He extended greetings to our neighbouring brothers, American Samoa, then acknowledged the newly elected Member and his constituency and family seated in the House to witness his swearing in today.

The Speaker also congratulated the newly elected Member of Parliament Lautimuia Uelese Vaai and wished him well in his duties especially in representing the interests of his constituency and serving the Parliament of Samoa. He then extended his well wishes to the Members of Parliament for the work scheduled for today.

IV. Obituary Speech

Mr Speaker announced the passing of a former Member of Parliament, Afioga Tuaepepe Fili who passed away on 17 February 2023. The Member was elected during the X Parliamentary Term (1988-1991) and a representative for the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP). Mr Speaker conveyed condolences on behalf of Parliament to the Members' family and constituency.

**The House observed a minute of silence for the deceased former Member of Parliament.*

V. PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

A total of 9 Annual Reports and 2 Government Responses were presented to Parliament.

VI. Presentation of Parliamentary Committee Reports

A total of 14 Committee Reports were tabled: 7 from the Standing Orders, Electoral, Petitions and Constitutional Offices Committee, 4 from the Social Sector Committee, and 3 from the Economic Sector Committee.

VII. VII. Motions from Chairmen of Parliamentary Committees

- (i) The Chairperson for the **Standing Orders, Electoral, Petitions and Constitutional Offices Committee**, Afioga AUUAPAAU Mulipola Aloitafua Mulipola moved a motion pursuant to Standing Order 166(2), seeking an extension of time to consider 4 reports referred to its Committee, motion seconded and approved.
- (ii) The Chairperson for the **Finance and Expenditure Committee**, Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua moved a motion, pursuant to Standing Order 166(2), to seek the Assembly's approval of an extension of time to consider the 3 Parliamentary Papers referred by the Assembly, and to have these Papers reported back to the Assembly in its May Sitting.

VIII. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

- **Consideration of Parliamentary Committee Reports and Government Responses**

1. **P.P. 2022/2023 No.3, Economic Sector Committee Report on the P.P.2020/2021 No.64, Annual Report of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour for the Financial Year 2019/2020**
- **P.P 2022/2023 No.63, Government Responses on P.P 2022/2023 No.3**

Afioga NIUAVA Eti L Malolo – Chairperson for Economic Sector Committee and Member for Vaisigano 1

The Chairman for the Economic Sector Committee moved a motion for Parliament to approve its Committee report and recommendations; motion seconded and approved.

The Chairperson addressed the House and read out the Committee's report on the Annual Report of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour for the FY 2019/2020. He read out the achievements and challenges encountered by the Ministry in the reporting period and voiced the following recommendations for consideration and necessary action of Government.

Recommendations:

1. The Ministry should conduct awareness programs to educate the business community on the requirements of the new international agreements that Samoa has signed, to ensure that they comply with International regulations as well as to assist in the promotion of locally manufactured products in Samoa and its overseas markets.
2. Promptly notify businesses and retailers of any changes to pricing regulations and compliance. The Ministry should also conduct inspections of all stores in both town and rural areas to ensure that all businesses are following the set prices at all times.
3. Strengthening the current Agreement with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Police and Fire Emergency Services Authority to monitor businesses and shops to comply with the State of Emergency Orders.
4. Review guidelines for RSE's process of applications to ensure the accuracy of information provided in the application. Thus, this scheme is to prioritize our unemployed citizens as well as equal opportunities for all. The Committee raised concerns on some issues such as shortage of public service employees and private sector employees which negatively impact families in terms of abandonment of parents and children.
5. Engage with overseas businesses in partnerships to apply the skills and abilities of locals who have graduated and hold apprenticeships awards in the Ministry's scheme. The Ministry must also find other opportunities under apprenticeship programs aside from those the Ministry already has where our people can be educated and get jobs from. The Committee hopes to ensure the effectiveness of this program, to increase opportunities and vacancies for our local people and for the development of their families.
6. Conduct Training programs for staff based on the needs of the services as well as the changes that have taken place during this period. Consider finding suitable partners in Samoa and abroad who can assist the Ministry in the development and training of its staff.

7. Enforce the status of branding and locally manufactured products to promote Samoa labels such as Ava Samoa and Nonu. The Ministry should also monitor products imported into the country where they proudly represent their manufacturing countries, and it is important to have English translations on these imported products so that consumers know exactly what the product is about.

**Proceedings set aside at 10:18am; and
Resumed at 10:59am**

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker acknowledged the presence of Customs representatives from American Samoa's Customs Department in the House.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

- **Consideration of Parliamentary Committee Reports and Government Responses cont.**

1. P.P. 2022/2023 No.3, Economic Sector Committee Report on the P.P.2020/2021 No.64, Annual Report of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour for the Financial Year 2019/2020

-P.P 2022/2023 No.63, Government Responses on P.P 2022/2023 No.3

Afioga Hon. TOEOLESULUSULU Cedric Salesa Schuster - Acting Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour delivered Government's Responses on recommendations put forth by the Committee as follows:

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES:

Response to Recommendation 1:

MCIL began its awareness campaign under the theme "ONEMCIL" from 2016 to March 2019 as part of its annual communication strategy. The main purpose is to promote MCIL's services and roles as well as to keep the community, business communities and public at large informed of reforms and legislative requirements in order to provide a more enabling environment for business development and employment creation for all. The past awareness programs covered the majority of constituencies/districts in Upolu and Savaii as well as selected secondary schools in both islands. Since the proclamation of the State of Emergency (SOE) for the Measles and the COVID19 in late 2019 and early 2020, MCIL has put on hold its awareness campaign to the communities. However, the television, online meeting applications and social media platforms were widely used by MCIL for its awareness campaign during the SOE restrictions. MCIL will continue its

awareness through public consultations on policy reforms to ensure the business community is well informed of new international agreements Samoa is a party to and their benefits in strengthening business innovation and development.

Response to Recommendation 2:

MCIL as part of its regulating and monitoring role continued to conduct inspections to all stores in both Upolu and Savaii as well as in Manono to enforce compliance with the Price Orders (PCO) issued under the State of Emergency Orders and their obligatory roles. Fluctuation of prices stems the review of the PCO and copies of the updated PCO disseminated to all businesses before the effective date.

Response to Recommendation 3:

Under the State of Emergency Orders, MCIL and other Government ministries and public bodies are empowered to exercise their statutory functions, duties and powers provided under any legislation, or administrative functions for the implementation of the Sector Preparedness and Response Matrix consolidated for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Response to Recommendation 4:

The review of the seasonal work programmes as directed by Cabinet in its FK (22)06 is progressing well and near completion and the outcome of the review will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration. The review of the seasonal work program coincides with the numerous public complaints and private sector criticism of the Schemes. This undertaking reaffirms the need to carry out a full review of the Seasonal work operations addressing long standing issues that have had an adverse effect on national stakeholders, with these effects perceived to have been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Response to Recommendation 5:

For the information of the Committee, the apprentices in the Apprenticeship Training Program are full time, paid, employed, trades people who are already in formal employment practicing their field of trades in both the public and private sectors.

To date, 24 qualified trades people from the Apprenticeship Training Program were recruited under the Pacific Trade Partnership NZ (PTPNZ). The PTPNZ initiative is primarily aimed at recruitment and selection of skilled trade workers from Samoa and Tonga and builds on the success of the Canterbury Rebuild Employment Pilot Project (2015-2016). The PTPNZ provided a valuable opportunity for the Government to work collaboratively with other local industries and agencies to be part of an endeavour that contributed to the socio-economic development of our citizen and families.

Response to Recommendation 6:

MCIL through its partnerships with other Government agencies and training institutions and development partners was fortunate to be provided with opportunities for staff to undertake relevant formal training and capacity building opportunities using online and face to face

platforms. This is in line with MCIL's workforce planning objectives to seek professional development opportunities for all staff, enabling them to continually enhance their skills and knowledge so they can reach their full potential in contributing to the Ministry's mission. Furthermore, specific training opportunities are made available through the Ministry's collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Phama Plus, PACER Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU), and the NZ Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Response to Recommendation 7:

Preparatory work is in progress for the establishment of the National Branding Bureau for Samoa with the assistance from the World Intellectual Property Organization. The purpose of the Bureau is to assist small and medium enterprise in the creation and building of their brands for their goods and services. The Food Act 2015 and all its regulations including the Food Safety and Quality Regulation 2017 are administered by the Ministry of Health. Labelling requirements for any kind of food (imported and locally produced) is clearly spelled out in the Regulation. It is mandated that all food products should be labelled in English language in a manner that is easily visible and likely to be read and understood by the buyers. These matters are referred to the MOH for enforcement based on enquiries received and findings from MCIL's Monitoring and Evaluation Work.

Mr. Speaker then opened the floor for any questions from the House in regards to the Report under consideration in detail and its Government Responses.

i. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo - Member for Anoamaa 2

The Member greeted the House and his constituency listening in, as well as conveyed congratulations and well wishes to the newly appointed Member for Vaimauga 3, then raised the following issues:

Hon LAUOFO commended the Chairperson and Minister for delivering the Committee report with recommendations and relative government responses. The member further acknowledged the Ministry's efforts throughout the reporting FY despite the challenges brought by COVID19. The member specifically commended the Ministry's efforts in pursuing the National Branding of local products produced within the country which are exported to other countries [export market] and asserted that this is an essential move to protect our local produce.

The Member also highlighted the efforts of the export markets, in exporting and marketing our local products such as Ava and nonu overseas. He further noted that these products are also being exported by other countries and are named differently, such as Ava in Samoa is exported and named Kava by other countries, thus the importance of labelling/branding our products for exportation.

Moreover, the member advised the ministry to continue their monitoring duty on goods imported in the country to ensure that they all comply with health and safety agreements/regulations in the country. He moved on to say that we should encourage and enforce a Council of consumers, to monitor product prices, and express opinions on when prices of such products are not valid or legal. He moved to say that it is very important to have this.

He also commended the committee for mentioning the ISO (International Standard Organization) and for encouraging the ministry to strengthen their partnership with the ISO as this will set a standard for our goods and services offered locally and deemed export worthy to overseas markets. Furthermore, Hon LAUOFO commended the committee for mentioning CODEX Committee responsible for enforcing standards of imported and exported food items. For instance, the quality of eggs, where some have not met the standards to be exported to American Samoa.

The Hon Member commended the Ministry on the RSE Scheme as he noted from 2019-2020 about 5,000 citizens have been employed under this scheme. The member advised the Ministry to continue this scheme as it is important for the national development of Samoa from income received through remittances. He added that about 350million is from remittances which is about 15-20% of the country's Gross Domestic Product [GDP].

The Member also acknowledged the Ministry to continue the Apprenticeship program and commended the Council for pushing apprenticeship programs for our people to further the necessary skills and knowledge on vocational courses. Furthermore, the Member touched on work permits and noted from 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 about 500 requests were put in for working permits in the country within each financial year. Majority of these requests were from overseas for retail and domestic care works. The Member also mentioned the 3 countries with the most requests for permits in Samoa with Fiji in number one, followed by China and lastly the Philippines. The member queried the process of permits carried out by the Ministry as most of the work outsourced to foreigners like Fijians, Chinese, Philippines are work which can be done by our own people. In regards to the private sector, as mentioned in their report, there are 18,295 employees in the private sector in the considered FY, the government employees sits at 3,997 employees in the considered FY, this means that the majority of our people are engaging in subsistence farming.

The Member noted the disparity between the pays between men with an average \$3.60 an hour compared to the average \$2.60 per hour for women in the private sector; then queried the guidelines to address the salary disparity between male and female as mentioned in the report.

ii. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuuilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga 1

The Member greeted the Speaker, Hon Prime Minister, Cabinet, and all members of Parliament present in the House; he then acknowledged the presence of the newly elected member for

Vaimauga 3 and expressed his gratitude on behalf of his constituency for considering Parliamentary Committee reports during the sitting today as it is an essential role of Parliament. The Member commended the previous Government for removing the price control Board to allow competitions between businesses. The Member expressed the need to enforce the price control measures. In regards to agreements between the Ministry and other Government Ministries the member noted that MOF should also be in this partnership/agreement between the MCIL, MOH and Police in terms of business license registrations and renewal. The member requested to have all businesses and companies, partnerships, sole traders to register through MCIL given the complexities of issuing business licenses. In reference to business license, he urged to include all business to be registered under MCIL in order to simplify the process of registration. He then suggested that all businesses be registered under MCIL.

The Member touched on Pacer plus, and asserted that this is a good direction in terms of simplifying imported products without any duty, further suggested to reconsider the terms of this agreement given the low number of exports. The Member encouraged the Government to continue with the RSE scheme as it has developed most families especially the low income earners.

In terms of salary rate, the member requested to increase the minimum wage to factor in the rapid increase in cost of living. In terms of issuing Samoan citizenships to foreigners the member questioned the process conducted by the Ministry noting that this is a sensitive issue as these people have immense influence in our country and parliament in the next 10 or so years. Furthermore, this also applies to permits issued by the Ministry to foreigners for babysitting or sewing employment noting that these jobs can be done by our own people however, if they continue to hire foreigners for these tasks then our local people will lose out.

Afioga NIUAVA Eti L Malolo: Vaisigano 1 - Chairman Economic Sector Committee

The Committee Chair commended the Members who raised concerns on the report and perceived most recommendations and concerns put forth by such Members were mostly on the recommendations provided in the Report. He then acknowledged recommendations and requests made by Members of Vaimauga 1 despite majority of matters raised are current and are not included in the report.

Afioga Hon TOEOLESULUSULU Cedric Salesa Schuster - Acting Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Hon Minister commended the members for Anoamaa 2 and Vaimauga 1 for their comments and queries raised regarding their committee reports and government responses. The Minister noted that their comments and queries will be considered by the Committee.

Afioga Toeolesulusulu Cedric Salesa Schuster - Acting Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour moved a motion to approve (seconded by the minister for MCIT)

P.P 2022/2023 No.63, Government Responses on P.P 2022/2023 No.3

ii. P.P. 2022/2023 No. 10, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 109 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.38, Annual Reports of the Ministry of Public Enterprises for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021

2. Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua- Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo

The Chairperson for Finance committee greeted the speaker of the house and also all Members of Parliament present. The Chairperson delivered a synopsis of its report and its recommendations as follows:

Recommendations:

1. The Committee recommends the Ministry of Public Enterprises to review the dividends paid by SOEs based on their capital due to the effect of the Covid19.
2. The Committee recommends the Ministry to reconsider reasons ACC and GCA were reclassified and transferred under Beneficial Body based on their annual revenues especially investments
3. The Committee recommends the Ministry of Public Enterprises to clarify the conflicting use of terms including the appointment of Ministers as shareholders for the Corporation and Board of Directors.
4. The Committee recommends the Ministry to consider the rationale behind increasing the number of staff compare to their outputs and performance to save Governments funds.

Afioga Hon. TOEOLESULUSULU Cedric Salesa Schuster - Acting Minister for Public Enterprises

The Hon TOEOLESULUSULU delivered responses in accordance to recommendations put forth by the Committee as follow:

Response to Recommendation 1:

The effects of Covid 19 on Public trading Bodies (PTB) performance have been well noted and the impact it has on the financial ability of the PTB in payment of dividends has been considered. In the prevailing dividend policy, should the PTB in incurring losses as a result of amongst many factors the Covid 19, the PTB is not entitled to any dividend payment to Government. Should a PTB's earning profit; payments of dividends therefore is based on meeting the solvency

requirements. In effect, PTB only pay dividends if they have the ability to do so, otherwise supporting solvency documentations should be provided to MPE to justify inability to pay.

Based on SOEs audited financial statements since Covid 19 (FY2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021) not all PTBs have been affected by the global impacts of Covid 19. At the end of the FY 2020, nine out of seventeen (9/17) PTB earned profit. Same as in the end of FY 2021 where nine out of fifteen PTBs earned profit after GCA and LTA were reclassified to Beneficial Bodies. PTB that incurred losses are not required to pay any dividend. Additionally, PTB earning profits would need to justify inability of paying dividends where to date, MPE did not receive any such documentations. The Ministry of MPE advises that the policy needs to be reviewed as it has already catered for scenarios where there is poor performance or factors out of PTB control such as Covid 19.

Response to Recommendation 2:

The Government with the technical assistance by the Asian Development Bank carried out a mapping exercise in FY2020 which resulted in the following 7 criteria for classifying Public Bodies. They are as follows:

- i. The entity's primary objective and activity; is it commercial or non-commercial?
- ii. Source of revenue - uses pays, taxation through levies, or direct budget allocation,
- iii. whether the entity has any regulatory, policy making or semi-judicial functions that are core, or cannot to be separated from their core functions
- iv. is the entity incorporated as a company?
- v. Which definition in the Public Bodies Act is the best fit?
- vi. the relationship between payments made to the entity and right to receive financial benefits
- vii. How best to structure and exercise the ownership interest to support the entity's primary objective.

Following examination of the factors above, GCA was reclassified to be a Public Beneficial Body due to the fact that their main mandate is to regulate and monitor gaming and gambling, totalizator activities, lotteries and facilitate responsible gambling which is without a doubt not commercially driven. GCA is not incorporated as a company under the Company's Act 1955. Furthermore, GCA better fits section 14 of the Public Bodies Act 2001 which is the objective of Public Beneficial Bodies. ACC on the other hand was reclassified as a beneficial body from a mutual entity mostly due to Criteria 6 where there is no relationship between payments made to the entity and the right to receive financial benefits. With the 2 mutual Entities SNPF and SLAC, the financial benefits received by contributors and policy holders are determined by your contribution /premiums paid into the business.

Response to Recommendation 3:

Cabinet in March 2022 has endorsed the review of all legislation relating to Public Bodies. This review will clarify the Roles of Shareholding Ministers (including the responsible Minister of the Public Enterprises) and the sector/Line Minister.

The Ministry together with the Ministry of Finance have requested Technical Assistance of the Asian Development Bank to undertake this review in the 1st/2nd quarter of the Financial Year 2022/2023

Response to Recommendation 4:

The Ministry has been reviewing its Organizational Structure on a systematic approach (annual reporting framework) which saw the need for staff to ensure the mandate, objectives and key performance indicators outlined in the Corporate Plan and Annual Budgets are effectively implemented. Since its establishment in 2015, 8 positions have been created through the existing PSC framework. All newly created positions were in the Corporate Services Division as priority in 2015 was recruitment of management and technical positions.

** Mr. Speaker opened the floor to Members for questions and issues on the Recommendations and Responses provided:*

1. Tofa Hon. Laufo Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo: Anoamaa 2

The Hon Member commended the Committee and responsible minister of the Ministry for delivering their committee reports with specific acknowledgement towards revenues earned by the Ministry which recorded an increase from one FY to another [2019-2020 and 2020-2021].

The Member noted 6 public enterprises were mainly affected by Covid-19 in terms of their profit/revenue. However, the Member noted that the Ministry managed to overcome all these challenges encountered due to covid and are starting to regain revenue.

2. Afioga LUPEMATASILA Galumalemana Tologata Tofia Tile: Falelatai ma Samatau

The Member greeted the House, and acknowledged the newly elected member for Vaimauga 3. He then commended the Committee, Minister and Ministry for their efforts on the respective report. The member briefly highlighted the importance of the Ministry's roles and responsibilities given that its establishment by the previous government was to oversee State Corporations/Enterprises so that they continue to benefit the country. However, the member raised concerns regarding the political influence involved in running State Enterprises/Government Corporations as he stated there are still uncertainties in regards to the responsible Minister. The member therefore, advised the collaboration between the Minister, the Ministry of Public Enterprise and leading councils of each government corporation/state enterprise to ensure the achievement of all objectives of MPE and generating benefits for the nation as a whole as well as, ensuring that this will acknowledge the operations of MPE as an independent ministry.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua- Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Aleipata Itupa I Lalo**

The Chairman commended the recommendations and advices made by the fellow Members for the betterment of the works of the Committee.

Tofa Hon OLO Fiti Vaai – Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure

Hon Minister clarified that the reclassification of LTA was done 3 years ago and perceived that it was an arrangement appropriate at the time. In regards to Boards, the Member is correct there are regulations and policies that regulate the Boards however as the Member mentioned 100% of shares is held by the Government thus the Board has no freedom to do whatever they want. The Minister clarified further that the Committee's Council does not override the power of the Government and relevant Government Ministry in terms of running Government Corporations and State Enterprises.

Hon TOELESULUSULU Cedric Salesa Schuster – Acting Minister for Public Enterprises

The Hon. Minister commended the comments and suggestions provided by the members, and noted that there is a consultant at MPE conducting reviews on current guidelines governing Committee Councils for Government Corporations/State Enterprises, related management and minister of each respective ministries to ensure the smooth flow of work and operations of the Ministry.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua- Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Aleipata Itupa I Lalo**

The Chairperson moved a motion for the House to approve P.P. 2022/2023 No. 10, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 109 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.38, Annual Reports of the Ministry of Public Enterprises for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021; Motion seconded and approved.

- **Hon TOELESULUSULU Cedric Salesa Schuster – Acting Minister for Public Enterprises**

The Hon Minister moved a motion for the Assembly to approve its Responses on the Committee's Recommendations; motion seconded and approved.

iii. **P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 106 and P.P. 2021/2022 No.24, Annual Reports of the Central Bank of Samoa for Financial Years 2019/2020 & 2020/2021**

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua- Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo**

The Chairperson moved a motion for the Assembly to approve its Report; motion seconded and approved.

- **Afioga FALEOMAVAEGA Titimaea Tafua- Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo**

The Chairperson for the Finance Committee delivered a synopsis of its findings and considerations on the reports as well as its recommendations noted below:

Recommendation 1:

The Committee recommends the Central Bank to formulate ways to ensure that loans issued to businesses affected by Covid19 are well monitored especially hotels/accommodations and the tourism industry that were mostly impacted by this pandemic.

Recommendation 2:

The Committee recommends the CBS to continue with reinstating staff benefits for staff only with conditions to limit applications, in order to avoid staff turnover as well as implementing appropriate and impartial regulatory services to all Commercial Banks in Samoa.

Recommendation 3:

The Committee recommends for the Parliament to approve CBS's recommendation to roll out a fiscal stimulus package operated from ACC for businesses and individuals who were affected by the pandemic, and to consider appropriate reasons given that when a business is unable to pay its loans it may affect the country's economy.

- **Afioga Hon LEOTA Laki Lamositele - Acting Minister of Finance**
**P.P. 2022/2023 No.61, Government Responses on P.P. 2022/2023 No. 11*

Response to Recommendation 1:

The CBS will ensure to maintain the reporting requirement places on commercial banks since the onset of the Covid19 pandemic, to submit reports on monthly basis (instead of the previous quarterly basis) for the asset quality of business clients, including hotel accommodations and the tourism industry that were impacted by the pandemic. these reports include monitoring of loans that are 'non-performing' (up to 90 days past due, without any repayments of interest or principal) or loans that have started to deteriorate (past 30 days without any repayments of interest or principal).

ii. Ensure monitoring of its Credit Line Facilities (CLFs) is further strengthened in view of the Covid19 pandemic impact on the Samoan economy. The Committee is kindly informed that consistent with the signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Central Bank of Samoa and the borrowing institutions (namely the Development Bank of Samoa and Samoa Housing Corporations) for each of the CBS Credit Line Facilities, reports are required to be submitted to CBS on a regular (monthly and quarterly) basis. These reports provide indications to CBS of the

use and loan status of each CLFs. Further, CBS will continue to engage in discussions with the DBS (as the major recipient of CLF funds) to be updated on developments and latest status of their eligible clients who accessed these CLFs given their service ability as a result of the pandemic.

Response to Recommendation 2:

Recommendation by the Committee is kindly noted.

Response to Recommendation 3:

The Recommendation by the Committee to Parliament to approve the Central Banks recommendation for the roll out of a fiscal stimulus package assistance for Covid-19 affected individuals or businesses to be sources from the ACC in kindly noted.

Hon Mr. Speaker

Mr. Speaker acknowledged the efforts of Committee Chairpersons and Members for delivering their Committee reports noting that this task is important for Parliament as a whole to consider the work of Ministries/Corporations and their contribution to the country as a whole. It is important to ensure the Oversight role of Parliament is executed effectively.

Proceedings adjourned at 12:56pm and will reconvene on Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 9:30am