

# APPENDICES

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# Verbatim Report

# **[VERBATIM REPORT]**

## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS & DEFENCE**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **2022-2023 Annual Report**

**INSTITUTION:** Fiji National Sports Commission (FNSC)  
**VENUE:** Big Committee Room (East Wing)  
**DATE:** Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

**VERBATIM REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM (EAST WING), PARLIAMENT PRECINCTS, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, ON WEDNESDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2025, AT 9.02 A.M.**

**Submittee: Fiji National Sports Commission**

**In Attendance:**

1. Mr. Peter Mazey - Executive Chairman
2. Mr. Shalendra Ram - Manager Finance
3. Mr. Joji Liga - Manager Sports Development
4. Ms. Moira Rodan - Research and Development

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DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, members of the public, the Secretariat, viewers, ladies and gentlemen; a very good morning to you all. It is a pleasure to welcome everyone, especially to the viewers who might be watching this proceeding.

At the outset, for information purposes, pursuant to Standing Order 111(2) of Parliament, all Committee meetings are to be opened to the public. Therefore, this meeting is open to the public and the media who may be coming in and out. However, for any sensitive information concerning the submission that cannot be disclosed in public, this can be provided to the Committee either in private or in writing. But do note that this will only be allowed in a few specific circumstances which include:

- (1) National Security matters;
- (2) Third party confidential information;
- (3) Personnel or human resources matters; and
- (4) Committee deliberation and development of Committee's recommendation and report.

I just wish to remind honourable Members and our invited submittee that all comments and questions are to be asked and addressed through the Chairperson. And for those viewers who are watching this live on *Facebook*, if you have any questions that you would like to ask the submittee, that can be asked via comments, and only relevant questions will be considered by the Committee.

Please, note, if there is any question from Members of the Committee, they may interject, or we will wait until the end of your submission to ask any question. This is a parliamentary meeting, and all the information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act and the Standing Orders of Parliament. Please, bear in mind that we do not condone slander and/or liable of any sort, and information brought before this Committee should be based on facts.

In terms of the protocol of this Committee meeting, please, be advised that movement within the meeting room will be restricted. Please, do minimise the usage of mobile phones and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode, if you can.

(Introduction of Committee Members, Secretariat and Hansard)

Today, the Committee will be having an oral submission from the Fiji National Sports Commission in relation to its 2022-2023 Annual Report. I now take this time to invite our guests to introduce themselves before you proceed with your submission.

(Introduction of Officials from Fiji National Sports Commission)

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much, Mr. Mazey. I understand you have a submission to make so after that, we will ask some questions.

MR. P. MAZEY.- Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Chairperson. It is actually quite normal for us to be presenting our 2022-2023 accounts because this is 10 years of the Commission, so we are very proud to be able to do that.

In those 10 years, we have had 10 years of unqualified accounts, so we are very happy with that. This would be our first submission to the Standing Committee that we did not receive a large number of questions, and we are actually very happy about that because our report reflects every time we get questions from a Standing Committee or from Parliament, we then take that on board and include it within the next reports. So, it has worked for us, and we think it has here.

In our submission, we are addressing, in summary to you, just the areas that we have put a lot of effort into and that is, principally, grassroots development. As you will see from this report, we are only giving you what happened in the past financial year, but we are very pleased to be able to say that our reports on sports development have been substantial, and in 10 years we have been to 674 villages on Sports Development Community Programmes and 158 *Tikina*.

On the Train the Trainer Programme which is very much one of our main programmes, as you have seen, this is where we train people within the communities to be leaders, administrators, coaches, technical officials, and we spend at least a week in the community on all our programmes. On that programme alone, we have seen 12,500 participants and have been to 533 villages.

On top of that, we very much present our Educate the Educator Programme because one of the big gaps in Fiji's education system is Physical Education (PE) Teachers. It is estimated that we may probably need about 600 of them. So, we try and fill that gap, through the Commission, by running the Educate the Educator Programmes where we teach teachers to be coaches in the number of different sports, so that is a very good programme.

On all our programmes, wherever we go into the community, be it rural or urban, we very much involve the whole community. So, the Commission is not there to look after people in the youth category from 18 years to 35 years, we are there to look after people from birth to death, and that is very much on our Wellness Programmes. We educate villages and communities on how to do day-to-day wellness and physical education to keep them fit and healthy. We have our children and community sports programmes which is very much going to primary schools and bringing our younger kids, giving them an interest in other sports, apart from rugby. That is the sort of work that we have been doing and that is reflected in our Annual Report.

We are also very much involved, and through our funding programme, supporting all our national sports organisations. As such, you will see through the report all the funding that was given by Government relating to either our national teams or to our development of national sports, and to supporting them financially.

We do not just pick one sport to support, and every year, we ask every national sporting organisation to submit their requests for funding from Government. So, right at the moment, every national sports organisation is preparing their request for the next fiscal year, from June to August. We have to have them in our office by 31st January, and then we start going through to see what fits in with the various categories and what funding we are going to request from the honourable Minister for Finance. So, you will see within our report is the funding that was done in the past year.

One thing that you will note on our accounts is that every dollar we get from Government, we spend. We would like to ask for more, but we are lucky that this past fiscal year which we are in now, we had received substantial increases in our budget, so we are very thankful to the Government of the day - the Coalition Government, for giving us that extra support.

Part of our programmes that we are very proud of is the work that we do for people with disabilities and special needs. Those are our inclusive programmes, and we have worked through all our inclusive schools throughout the country, I think we have 26 at the moment that we are working with. We fund and support our disability sportspeople, we support the Paralympic movement, and I think we now have eight national sporting organisations that are now running programmes for people with disabilities.

We have been very much involved with the UN and with Australian funding partners in receiving grants and we apply for grants from other agencies, and that is one area that we do get assistance from. As such now, we have trained special trainers to ascertain that people with special needs can now be part of the Olympic Paralympic movement. But that has to be done so we have trained psychologists from USP to now do that assessment to see where they are, so we are working inclusively.

All our programmes are very much geared up to be gender balanced. It is an issue that we have, especially in the rural communities, in getting more and more young women involved in sports. It is an area that is a challenge, even within our Indo-Fijian communities that after university, most of the women are not given the opportunity to play sports and we are trying to get through that and have assisted in setting up Indo-Fijian sports organisations which was badly needed.

We have worked a lot with the Ministry of Finance on all the SDGs and we report on that monthly to our Board. It is not included in the annual report this year, but we are very much aware of SDG 3 especially, which is on the good health and wellbeing of all our citizens. That very much has been part of our Act, has been how we can assist the wellbeing of the health of the nation.

We have partnerships and agreements with the Ministry of Health, and we sit on the Wellness Committees in trying to spread the word and get across that physical activity at all ages which is good in combating our NCDs and various other problems we have medically.

A big push in the communities is our community sports associations. We found there was a big gap, so wherever we have gone now, when we do programmes, we will be in one village but with about 18 from the *tikina* or around that, that joined in, and we then encourage them to form a community sports association. Again, it is not just for rugby, it is also for other sports. That has worked very successfully, and we have been running a lot of that.

In each district, we then have centralised our community games and we had, I think, 30,000 to 40,000 youth at the recent games we had in Suva, which covered our Central/Urban and Central/Rural areas - Naitasiri, Tailevu, Namosi, all these areas around the Central. We will have them in the North, and next month we will be holding one in Rotuma.

I think that is all reflected within our report. The report principally has statistics for the past year, but I also have a separate report which we have on the achievements over the past 10 years, and I am certainly willing to leave this for the Secretariat. That has everything in it.

In summary, Madam Deputy Chairperson, that is our presentation today and we are here to answer any requests and all of them are addressed in the issues we had. Yes, we do have challenges,

of course, and we can answer them if you wish to ask questions on that.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much, Mr. Mazey. We really appreciate your very frank presentation. I will open the floor now to the honourable Members for any questions.

I think I might start with the Chairman's report on page 5 of your Annual Report, where you did mention challenges. We just wanted to know what exactly were your challenges, and may be, your wish list, besides more money from the Ministry of Finance?

MR. P. MAZEY.- Yes, there are. The major challenge, of course, is funding, as we have requested and as you can see. For all our development programmes, we only receive about \$200,000 a year, so we are running all those programmes on that.

What we do in those programmes is that we involve our national sports organisations. So, part of the Government funding that we distribute is a development officer funding where we pay the salaries of development officers in each sport, whichever sport wants it, and I think we are paying around 24 different sports at the moment. We take those people on our programmes, so it is not just the sports development officers within the Commission, but it is also the sports development officers and training officers from various sporting organisations.

We would like to be able to, again, it comes to funding, but when we go into communities, we pay the community for accommodation, meals and anyone we take on our programmes. We pay for villagers to come into the central area where we need quite substantial more funding in those areas. My apologies, in speaking on the funding side of it, because five years ago, we could give the village \$20 per head per day. If there are hundred applicants, we pay for each one for food. We all know that that is not good enough now and it is not enough money, so in those areas, we need to do it.

The other challenge is the expectation of the country in our national sports. We would like, as the main funding arm for Government to national sports organisations, to be able to give every dollar they require, but it is an impossibility. While you see what allocations we made in this report for all our national sports organisations, the request was over \$50 million from the sporting bodies, so it is an impossibility.

The other challenges coming up are new challenges that we are facing. When children from here go and play rugby, they just put on headphones and everything. It has been recognised worldwide now that that is going to be a big issue in the future, so we are going to find that more and more of our children will stop doing physical activity, and we are seeing it now where they are using their phones for everything.

The other challenge with the youth is, we have a moving youth population, hugely moving from rural to urban. So, we will go and set up an association in a community, *tikina*, or on the islands. The next time, we go back to the rural Suva. So, we are finding a lot of island and rural communities setting up sports associations in the Suva or Nadi area, and we are trying to work with them and involve them in our urban programmes. Hence, we have set up a new division two years ago, being the Central/Urban Division, instead of just being Central Division. So, we have a Central/Rural and Central/Urban for that and the moving population is affecting sports.

The other one is sports is moving professionally, and the more and more of that happens, the more and more we lose our own athletes very quickly. It is not just rugby; we have professional



people overseas. We have young ladies just accepted for professional soccer in New Zealand, Vanuatu and PNG, so that is also one of the challenges.

The other challenge that is coming up just now is really trying to understand what Government wants in sports. What it wants to get out of sports because the Commission, as you have seen 10 years ago, actually came out of a very wide-ranging consultations run by the previous Rabuka Government in 1995, whereby all the sporting bodies and communities asked for the setting up of the Sports Commission. That took until 2013 to be done, but it did come out of the current Government, and we are quite proud to still be associated with that. But now, we find that there might be a change in looking at going backwards again, and we would like to really understand what the reason behind that. So, that is a challenge, and we are meeting our honourable Minister tomorrow or a day, on these issues.

The next biggest challenge is the challenge of the country against drugs. Thank you, honourable Members and Madam Deputy Chairperson, for passing our Drug Free Sports Act. That has now saved Fiji on the global stage, and I was happy to be involved in a lot of work done on that through the Standing Committees and submissions. But we are having a major issue with our youth, and we are addressing that at every level and being involved wherever we can. Hence, our MOUs with our community police and all the work that we do with them.

I think those are all our challenges, Madam Deputy Chairperson.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much, Mr. Mazey. I think we might go back and forth as well because we would like to hear from the other members of your Executive Team but right now, I will open the floor for questions.

HON. I. TUIWAILEVU.- Through you, Madam Deputy Chairperson, a question to the CEO; is there any plan to establish sports facilities in rural areas to prevent people from coming to the urban areas?

MR. P. MAZEY.- Currently, I think the Government allocates \$300,000 a year for the establishment of rural sporting facilities. It is nowhere near enough. There have been many plans and going right back into early 2000, where there were promises for major sports facilities in Naitasiri, Kadavu, Koro, and various other islands. During that time, we were promised that funding was available through Chinese grants but not one of those has got off the ground and I think this is the problem.

The sports facilities actually come directly under the Ministry. In 2016, the Commission did a survey of all the sports grounds that Fiji had established that Government had funded throughout the country, in villages and rural areas. Regrettably, the results were not very good at how many were still operating. A large number of them were now, sort of, being overgrown or in cultivation.

The promise now on sports facilities and I have been working with my equivalent partners in New Zealand, which is Sports New Zealand, they have identified on the sports ground problems in rural areas too. Again, it comes down to Government policy. However, we could establish a main ground that would cover a large number of sports, plus a hard court, that would allow for netball, basketball, volleyball, et cetera, and then build changing rooms and changing room showers, toilets and everything. One thing that came out of that discussion was that those changing rooms and facilities can have a dual purpose, especially in times of disasters. They can become centres and be purpose built. However, we are looking at round about half a million dollars, I mean, per stadium.

The Commission did get involved in trying to establish a hardcourt facilities and sports facilities at Suvavou to cover for the Lami area and we had arranged for Tui Suva to donate the land which was foreshore land. At that time, (it was the previous Government I am talking about here) there was what was called a minority sports fund, and it was held by the Office of the Prime Minister. We knew that this fund had a million odd dollars in it, but we could not get access to it to complete that. However, that facility could have been built for \$230,000, we tendered it out and got all the money in. A huge challenge being faced, not just by us, but by the Ministry also, is that the rising cost of building a new facility is very high.

The other one on acilities was getting communities, *tikina* and *mataqali* to give approval and they needed 60 percent to use the land. We had plans, we were working on the Naitasiri facility which was to be a ground, I think, at Vunidawa, and that was to be a stadium with everything.

It was all done, China came over, ready to start building but as soon as the engineers saw the ground that had been allocated which was a valley, they said, "We cannot do it." And when they tried to get other land, it was not made available so that programme is still on the backburner and that is now 10 years down the track. Those are the challenges we are facing.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, through you, can you, please, elaborate on the medical screening and clearance mechanisms that allows a boxer to step into the ring?

MR. P. MAZEY.- If you are talking about national boxing, there is a difference between professional and amateur boxing, very much so. Amateur Boxing is a national sports organisation that is part of our group of sports bodies and, yes, we do fund them.

Professional boxing where the incident we are referring to occurred, is under the Boxing Commission which totally has nothing to do with Sports Commission. We do not fund them or have anything to do with it. The Board is appointed directly by the Minister.

I am afraid I cannot answer your question, but we can certainly get an answer for you on the amateur side, from the Amateur Boxing, and submit it to you.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, on that note, you said that the passing of the Anti-Doping Bill 2024 has saved Fiji on a global stage.

MR. P. MAZEY.- Yes.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- But what are the drug testing mechanisms for all participants in sports in place now in terms of how effective it is being implemented - the implementation, the control, the monitoring, just so that the players out there who are listening would also be aware of what the process is like?

MR. P. MAZEY.- At every international event held in Fiji, drug testing is conducted and has been done through many years as is required to host international events. Luckily, we have not come across major issues. In drug testing, only in Fiji Football have we had people being called up for testing and that has happened not just in Fiji but when they were in overseas. Principally, marijuana which is not a heavy duty fine, but it stops them from competing through some time.

Each drug test costs about US\$400 to US\$500, so we have to do several tests under the laws of international sports. Those tests have to be done either in Melbourne, Guam or Hawaii and there have to be special transportation and everything, so they are very expensive.

In the past, that funding came through the Oceania Drug Testing regime and anti-doping organisations. However, one of the disadvantages of winning medals at the Olympics meant that Fiji moved up into a Category 2 nation which meant that it had to fund and establish its own drug-free sports operation.

Hence the Act was very important because if we were on a timeline, if that had not been passed when Government passed it, we would no longer be competing in international events, and that was a written threat from WADA which is the World Anti-Doping Organization.

FASANOC being the major organisation for sports and represent our Olympic representatives, they have a Medical Commission, they also have a Drug Free Sports Commission. So, we are just waiting for the Minister to announce who is going to be on the Board of the new Drug Free Sports. Once that is done, funding has already been established and made available by Government for the full setting up of that. Currently, that funding is held within the Sports Commission, ready to be transferred.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, when I look at the FRU Management Board, is it inclusive of any youth rugby players?

MR. P. MAZEY.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, youth in Fiji is anyone under 35 years old and the answer to that is, yes, very much so.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- How many?

MR. P. MAZEY.- On the Management Board?

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Yes.

MR. P. MAZEY.- I apologise, not on the Management Board but within Management, there is.

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Not on the Board?

MR. P. MAZEY.- No, there is not a position on the FRU Management Board for a youth representative. There is for players' representative and for women's representative on the Board, two members of the Board have to be woman. Once the players' association is formed, they are able to have a representative on the Board. That has not been formed yet by any of the players.

HON. P.K. RAVUNAWA.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, you mentioned about the lack of PE teachers and you need about 600 of them. My question is; do you have any plans on how to recruit these qualified teachers? And if you have a plan, what was the progress with the education institution or the accredited trainer's institution that would support in getting these PE teachers? My third question which is linked that is, we have Milo Kaji, then we have Deans, but in between to become a national rep, there seems to be very little visibility in your programme along those lines.

MR. J. LIGA.- Thank you for the question. With the teachers, the problem with PE teachers in schools is we do not have qualified teachers to teach PE. All our primary school teachers are general teachers, they teach all subjects, but there is no specialisation in PE. That is why we have identified that as a big gap. If you look at other countries, PE is one of the priority programmes in schools whereas in Fiji it is not. That is why we are finding that as a gap.

We have specialist teachers in secondary schools, we used to run training for them at Nasinu Teachers College, but no more, and we used to call them PEMAC teachers. So, while our priority in sports development lies with developing sports or physical activities in schools, we can only go as far as assisting them to become accredited coaches and officials in the different sports.

However, to become specialised teachers, I think that is the call of the Ministry of Education. But under our mandate to develop sports in schools, that is as far as we can go to help schools, help and train our teachers to become good coaches so that the students in schools can have a range of sports to participate in nationally, in national schools' competition, like the Coca Cola Games, the Deans Competition, et cetera.

MR. P. MAZEY.- I would just like to add, Madam Deputy Chairperson, that at the Education Summit last year, I submitted that we have a desperate need for our teachers colleges to start training PE teachers urgently. The bigger need was to go back, and I would encourage Parliament to look at this, to have a sports period every week. So, to go back to where we will close at 2 o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon in my day and then spend the whole afternoon in sports and physical activity, that, I think, is good for the health of the nation.

We have heard from teachers who have been working with us where they have offered extra sports programmes, not just rugby but other sports and our associations, we have managed to get the youth back into schools because they find that if they can play sports, they will need to go back to school. So, yes, it is a huge challenge for us all.

HON. P.K. RAVUNAWA.- Just a follow-up question, would you have a strategic plan along that line to lobby with Government because it is a crucial mandate for our young people? How can we get them to be engaged with this?

We, in Fiji, naturally produce a lot of great sportsmanship in the nation and also in the world arena, so I would request the Commission to seriously lobby with Government in getting something concrete for the young people of this country.

MR. P. MAZEY.- Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Chairperson. Yes, I agree, and that is why we attended and spoke at the Education Summit. I am afraid we did not get much hearing, but we constantly met with the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education does have sports officers. The Sports Officer at the Ministry of Education was also looking after, in the past, rugby league, athletics, the Deans Competition, as well as the Kaji and Milo.

Yes, we have to do it through everyone in this room and through Parliament, but it is something that has been recognised worldwide. Now that we are facing this AI problem of youth just using their computers or using their phones to play sports, it is a big change and globally, it is being recognised. There are now world games just on that for our youth, but it does not make a youth healthy.

I think that is something that needs to come out from the direction and policies of Parliament and Government. We will certainly back it and be part of pushing it, anyway. I have children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and every one of them spends their time on their phone now. It is very hard to get them to go outside. That is our biggest challenge, if we want to have a sporting nation.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- I think my next question would be to Mr. Ram. Mr. Mazey was talking about how the National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) needed to send you their wish list for finances for the next fiscal year. When they send in that, is there a condition that their accounts are audited?

MR. S. RAM.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, yes, the NSOs' accounts need to be audited, if their income is more than \$100,000. If it is not, then a qualified accountant can verify their accounts and do their accounts.

MR. P. MAZEY.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, I would just like to add that we are very much involved in organisations such as Trim And Fitness International Sport for all Association (TAFISA), which I know no one had mentioned and knows what is this. It is the international sports organisation for sports for all. We are working with them at the moment on obtaining more funding for the training of women and children, and I noticed gender was part of this. Late last year, our own Development Officers were trained internationally on special coaching programmes. Might I ask Moira to talk briefly on that because it also affects your query on gender development.

MS. M. RODAN.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, TAFISA had organised, through Nike, a sponsorship for women and young girls for the protection, safety, coaching and safeguarding of girls, and creating pathways for that. So, we took on the project in July last year. Two of our Sports Development Staff were part of that, and they trained close to 2,000 women, and this was a broad spectrum of women and where they came from.

They also were able to share the difficulties and the safeguarding issues that they have when playing sports. So, this started from pre-teen, teen, right up to adulthood. This is something that we are wanting to work and continue with the Ministry of Women, where they are also having reporting mechanisms on abuse for women and young girls, where they are having health issues, and trying to come into where it is a male dominated sport so that even male recognise this for them.

We have just finished, a final report was sent to us earlier this week, where they worked with and became friends with all other Sporting Development Officers globally, particularly in the Caribbean areas and Africa. So, that was that programme, and we hope to continue it this year. We are just waiting on the funding agreement proposal and if it is coming through.

MR. P. MAZEY.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, one of the other areas and more touching on this, that we are hoping Parliament and whole of Government will be looking more at is safeguarding in sports. As I have said, we are very much involved, that the issues as you have heard that have gone on in sports between coaches and young female and things in various sports has been detected and is happening here and we do have cases that involve the courts as we speak. This has not been addressed for some years and it needs to be done quite urgently.

I think the issue on the Boxing Commission was brought up, we also had some young rugby players who died during training last year and the Commission was involved in all the investigations on what went on. Those, because it involves families in that, it is very personal, then we do not involve the public in those, unless there is going to be a court case or something, then it is out.

We are very worried about that, and the international sporting bodies are also very much concerned and is looking at changing rules of sports to adapt to ensure that this sort of things do not happen. But to think it is not happening here, it is, regrettably. I would encourage that when that comes to Parliament that we get support on that as possible. Thank you.

MR. S. RAM.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, if you look at our financial statements, we are up-to-date with our audited reports. Our 2022-2023 Annual Report is in front of us, our audit for 2023-2024 concluded last year, so we are working on our Annual Report.

We are using International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and in the last 10 years, there were very few years where we have received management letters. Most probably in the last eight years, we have not received any management letter. We are looking at the accountability and transparency of the public funds we are using, we make sure that all our acquittals are up-to-date and presented when the audit starts on a yearly basis.

We are thinking of maintaining that standard throughout, and we thank the Government for the funding we receive. Thank you.

HON. I. TUIWAILEVU.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, CEO, in terms of recruiting international accredited coaches, what is the process when bringing these coaches to have them train our Fiji team? Are there any certain requirements needed for recruitment? What are the challenges encountered, if any?

MR. P. MAZEY.- A good question, Sir. Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Chairperson. The International Coaching Grant was set up some years ago. Actually, it was just before we went to the Rio Olympics and that was why we achieved gold. It is a funding programme that is most probably had the best benefits we have got of any of that funding.

Every national sport has the opportunity to apply for international coaches and actually, internationally qualified coaches. So, it can be Fijians who are internationally qualified and that has happened recently when I appointed Oscar to be the Sevens Coach.

The roles for the international coach, the position has to be advertised globally and that person then has to go through full interview stages. They have to produce media reports, media advertisements and it is all done by the national sports that wishes to coach.

The Sports Commission really only gets involved when they are asking for the funding, and at that time we ensure that they have:

- (1) advertise the position;
- (2) we got to the international body to ascertain their qualifications and that they have coached internationally; and
- (3) they had to pass the rules of immigration.

So, we have had some coaches, you may have recalled last year, I had a few problems with Immigration approving one of the international coaches and right, at the moment, another one is going through the same process. So, we follow the rules. We do not start paying an international coach until such time as they had passed the rules of Fiji, especially on work permits. They must get a work permit, and they have to reside in Fiji.

A few years ago, we had problems with paying \$400,000 a year to a coach who was not residing in Fiji, and we did not see him very much. So, the Commission and Government did get involved and that stopped their contract. So, we are monitoring it very carefully and encouraging, part of the contract that is signed between the Commission and the National Sports Organisation state that the international coach appointed must have a local understudy, and not just one, must have, at

least, one. They must be involved in development in that sport and assist, and they must reside in Fiji so they can be part of that community. Those rules are very strictly in place and complied with.

Everyone refers to our coaches for the rugby which used to happen quite a few but we also have an international coach from Argentina that coaches yachting, and we managed to qualify for the Olympics. So, Sophia Morgan and the young boy, Vili, from Savusavu both went to the Olympics in Paris.

We have had coaches in surfing, cricket, table tennis, weightlifting and netball. I think those are the main ones we have had. In soccer, of course, we had two to three coaches who were all paid by the Commission. It is round about \$2 million a year allocated for international coaches. I hope that answers your question, Sir.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members, do you have any other questions for the submittee?

HON. R.R. SHARMA.- Madam Deputy Chairperson, I know that today, Fijians have been playing all around the world on highly paid contracts. Does this Commission have any training programmes for rugby players, especially the younger ones, in terms of building capacity towards financial literacy, management and leadership skills, apart from the rugby skills that they have? As they grow and as they play within the region or internationally, they are able to sustain and manage with everything that they are getting and receiving. So, any sort of that for our youth?

MR. P. MAZEY.- Not done by the Commission, but it is done by the Fiji Rugby in this case, or the Drua through their youth programmes, they also do a lot of training in financial literacy, in particular.

A number of our international players overseas, on very high salaries, are actually doing university degrees. That is encouraged through the International World Rugby in the case, but World Football do it also through FIFA.

It is an area we call 'life after sport' and we would like to see it being put in place. With the youth, it is not being done because most of our youth are coming through our school programmes, through the Deans, et cetera, and we expect that to be done in schools.

All our national teams, especially in rugby, we have bankers and financial advisors who come in and speak to all the teams. The Sevens boys all go through it. It was interesting that when we started paying the Fiji Sevens Team boys last year in salaries instead of them just getting an allowance to play, because they are all on contracts - nice contracts between \$30,000 and \$80,000 per player, the first question they ask is, "I don't want to pay FNPF, what is that?" Someone else said, "why am I am paying this tax? Our education system should have already told them about that. So, we had to go through and call people in to teach them and tell them what was this all about and the benefits of being part of FNPF and benefits of paying tax. You know, that is why you get medical treatment, why you go to school. But it showed us that there is a big gap in our education system again because all of that should be part of that, I think.

MADAM CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you very much, Mr. Mazey. I believe there are no more questions from the honourable Members. So, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you very much for your time.

Thank you for making this a very interesting morning for the Committee as well and thank you for your time. I hope that if we have any further questions, we can just send you a letter and that you will come back to us.

On that note, I declare this meeting closed.

The Committee adjourned at 9.55 a.m.



# Written Responses



Your Reg: PARL 6/15  
13 January 2025

Honourable Minister Viliame Naupoto  
The Chairman  
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence  
PO Box 2352, Government Buildings  
Parliament Complex  
Constitution Avenue  
Suva

Dear Sir,

Re: **Response to Request for submission to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence – Fiji National Sports Commission August 2022- July 2023**

The Fiji National Sports Commission is in receipt of standing committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence Reg: PARL/6/15 email received 06 January 2025

- a) Attached please find written summary on the general overview of the trends, achievements and relevance to SDG goals, challengers and future outlook for the organisation as requested.
- b) We will be in attendance for committee meeting on Wednesday 15th January from 9am at the parliament Big Committee Room 2. Members in attendance will include Peter Mazey, CEO, Shalendra Ram, Finance Manager, Joji Liga, Sports Development Manager and Moira Rodan, Research & Development Manager

Thank you and we look forward to the attendance on Wednesday.

Yours Sincerely

**Peter Mazey**  
**Chief Executive Officer.**

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*"To enrich the lives & health of all Fijians through physical activity & sports at all levels"*

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[/fjinationalsportscollection](https://www.facebook.com/fjinationalsportscollection)



[@FNSC\\_](https://twitter.com/FNSC_)

## **Submission to Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.**

### **Fiji National Sports Commission – Annual Report August 2022 – July 2023**

**Summary on the general overview, trends analysis on achievements, staff gender segregation (statistics on women in leadership), relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals, and challenges if any and the future outlook for the organization.**

The Fiji National Sports Commission (FNSC) is dedicated to promoting and developing sports across Fiji, focusing on enhancing and supporting athletes, and increasing participation at all levels. The Commission collaborates with various stakeholders, including government bodies, national sports organizations, and communities, to facilitate the growth of sports at all levels in Fiji.

In the last 10 years, the FNSC has made significant strides in several areas:

1. **Grassroots Development:** Initiatives to promote sports among all ages and youth have led to increased participation rates in schools and communities. The set up of Community Sports Associations has seen a growth in Rural and Urban Development.
2. **Support Programs:** The Commission has provided for training for sports administrators, technical officials, and coaches, thus enabling them to be competent and begin their journey for becoming effective at national and international levels.
3. **Inclusive Programs:** Providing support to our NSO's in including people with disabilities and special needs in sporting activities. This has enabled a number of elite athletes to be identified and to be selected and compete on the global stage with medal success.
4. **Organizing Events:** Hosting the community sports association games to elevate participation in communities. Providing financial support for the National Sports organisations to Host international events.

**Staff Gender Segregation:** FNSC is committed to gender equality and inclusivity within its workforce. Current statistics indicate:

1. **Women in Leadership:** Approximately 30% of leadership positions are held by women, demonstrating a growing emphasis on gender representation at the commission and advocating at all NSO's
2. **Overall, Gender Representation:** Women make up around 45% of the total staff, highlighting efforts to promote female participation in various roles within the Commission.

**Relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The FNSC aligns with several SDGs, these are reported and analysed each month as, maintained and provided to FNSC Board. Relevant SDG's:

1. **SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being):** Promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles through sports involvement. This is especially through our Kids in Community Sports and Wellness programs but we ensure all development programs delivered include this goal by encouraging and introducing community physical activities.
2. **SDG 4 (Quality Education):** Supporting education through sports programs such as Train the Trainer, and Educate the Educator to increase Coaches, Sports Administrators and technical officials for NSO Development and scholarships for student-athletes and general athletes as well.

3. **SDG 5 (Gender Equality):** Encouraging more equal participation of women and girls in sports through workshops with NSO's and communities. These workshops included Coaching Girls pathways that Identify Safeguarding pathways on Gender based violence within sports.

**Challenges:**

While the FNCS has achieved many successes, it faces several challenges:

1. **Resource Limitations:** Budget constraints can restrict the expansion of Sports development programs. The current funding for Sports Development and staffing restrictions limits the number of programs we, are able to conduct annually.
2. **Infrastructure Needs:** Many sports facilities require upgrades and maintenance to meet standards for community sports development. These need good toilets and Bathroom and seating facilities for general public to ensure a safe environment for everyone especially our children and girls. There is a growing need for increased funding to provide the specialised sports equipment required to grow our sports in Fiji.
3. **Outreach and Engagement:** Effectively reaching remote areas to promote sports participation remains a significant challenge. Continuous movements into the greater Urban Areas, Transport and boat schedules, Accommodation for Staff and NSO resource personal going into these areas, Road conditions into rural and remote areas are at times not suitable due to weather or very limited in access. Poor water sanitation or proper water supply to rural communities.

**Future Outlook:** The outlook for the FNCS is promising, with plans to enhance the sports landscape in Fiji. Future initiatives will focus on:

1. **Investment in Infrastructure:** Prioritizing the development and upgrading of community sports facilities.
2. **Enhanced Training Programs:** Expanding coaching and athlete development to ensure more accreditations systems to keep competitiveness for the global stage.
3. **Community Engagement:** Increasing FNCS efforts to engage communities and foster a culture of sports participation across all demographics. Encouraging all Community age groups to actively participate in regular Wellness programs to work towards a healthier nation.
4. **Volunteerism:** Expanding and encouraging volunteerism through the sports platform
5. **Good Governance:** Prioritize Good Governance Training for our Sports Volunteer Administrators to better support not just the development of sports but also the talented and elite athletes as identified through the current programs.
6. **Programs for Life After Sports:** We look forward to working with Government to establish a framework and policy on this long outstanding issue.

# Additional Information

RE: REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE - FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION AUGUST 2022-JULY 2023



moira@fjijisports.com.fj

To 'Susana J. Korovou'; 'Elesi Waiwalu'

Cc 'Susana Korovou'; Peter Mazey; Shalendra Ram; Joji Liga

**\*Additional Information One**



Dear Susana,

Please find our Email response to the committee requesting further clarification on whether drug tests for local sports are undertaken locally and what is the process involved (including the cost factor).

**Response from Drug Free Sports to Standing Committee Query.**

Drug Testing is undertaken at all International Events Hosted in Fiji, a number of Fiji National Sports Organisations such as Football and Rugby also undertake Drug Testing at their local tournaments.

We test here i.e. we take blood or urine samples, but we must send the samples to overseas labs mainly Australia for the testing.

Testing is done after a particular event of selected athletes, it can also be done at the residence of the athlete after an international event.

Testing will in the future be conducted by the new Drug Free Sport Organisation as to be set up under the recently passed Drug Free Sport Act but costs will remain the same due to having to go overseas..

Costs are:

Sample Collection Fees

DCO – Base Fee F\$150.00 plus F\$10.00 per sample

Chaperone – Base Fee F\$100.00 plus F\$10.00 per sample

Contingency – Transport & Meals if required

Lock on test kit is 60.00 FJD

Lab Test Analysis is 250.00 AUD per sample (Depends on the type of test required) to 980.00 AUD per sample

**End Response -----**

Thank you

Yours Sincerely

Moira.

---

**From:** Susana J. Korovou <[s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj](mailto:s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 January 2025 6:31 pm

**To:** [moira@fjijisports.com.fj](mailto:moira@fjijisports.com.fj); 'Elesi Waiwalu' <[elesi.waiwalu@legislature.gov.fj](mailto:elesi.waiwalu@legislature.gov.fj)>

**Cc:** 'Susana Korovou' <[susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj](mailto:susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj)>

**Subject:** RE: REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE - FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION AUGUST 2022-JULY 2023

Bula Vinaka Mrs. Rodan,

We thank Mr. Mazey and your team for a very concise and comprehensive submission to the Committee.

In fact, the committee has requested further clarification on whether drug tests for local sports are undertaken locally and what is the process involved (including the cost factor).

We look forward to your response.

Vinaka saka

Susana Korovou

RE: REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE - FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION A



Peter Mazey <peter@fijisports.com.fj>

To 'Elesi Waiwalu'; moira@fijisports.com.fj; s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj  
Cc 'Susana Korovou'; 'Shalendra Ram'; 'Joji Liga'

**\*Additional Information Two**



Active & Non Active Sports Organisations 2025.xlsx  
12 KB

Dear Elesi

The number of Active Sports Organisations we recognise currently is 41 Active plus 2 Currently In-Active. Total 43.

I have attached listing for your information.

Trust this is what you were looking for.

Regards  
Peter

Peter Mazey  
Chief Executive Officer  
Fiji National Sports Commission  
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Fax – (+679) 3300299  
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[www.facebook.com/fijinationalssportscommission](https://www.facebook.com/fijinationalssportscommission)



@FNSC\_



From: Elesi Waiwalu <[elesi.waiwalu@legislature.gov.fj](mailto:elesi.waiwalu@legislature.gov.fj)>

Sent: Tuesday, 25 February 2025 3:23 PM

To: [moira@fijisports.com.fj](mailto:moira@fijisports.com.fj); [s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj](mailto:s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj)

Cc: Susana Korovou <[susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj](mailto:susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj)>; Peter Mazey <[peter@fijisports.com.fj](mailto:peter@fijisports.com.fj)>; Shalendra Ram <[shalen@fijisports.com.fj](mailto:shalen@fijisports.com.fj)>; Joji Liga <[jljiga@fijisports.com.fj](mailto:jljiga@fijisports.com.fj)>

Subject: Re: REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE - FIJI NATIONAL SPORTS COMMISSION AUGUST 2022-JULY 2023

Dear Ms Moira,

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence is in the final stages of finalizing its Review Report on the Fiji National Sports Commission 2022-2023 Annual Report.

In this regard, the Committee requests additional information on the number of local sports associations under the FNSC in Fiji. The Committee would appreciate a number in response to this request.

We look forward to your response.

Vinaka,

**(Attached Listing)**

<b>National Sporting Organisation - INFO UPDATE</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>NSO</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>
1	Archery	Olympic House, SUVA

2	Athletics Fiji	Vodafone Arena
3	Australian Football League Fiji	Olympic House, SUVA
4	Badminton Fiji Assn	Olympic House, SUVA
5	Baseball Softball Assn	Sports House, Selbourne Street
6	Basketball Fiji	Sports House, Selbourne Street
7	Billiard & Snooker	Olympic House, SUVA
8	Bodybuilding Fiji	
9	Bowls Fiji	Olympic House, SUVA
10	Boxing Amateur Fiji	Stanley Brown Gym, Walu Bay
11	Chess Fiji	
12	Cricket Fiji	32 High Street, Toorak
13	Cycling Fiji	Olympic House, SUVA
14	Darts Fiji	PO Bpx 2139 Govt Bldg Suva

15	Deaf Fiji Association	PO Box 15178 Suva
16	FASANOC	Olympic House, SUVA
17	Fiji Football	Taramati Street, Vatuwaqa
18	Gymnastics Federation of Fiji	Pacific Harbour
19	Golf National Fiji	Fiji Olympic House
20	Hockey Federation	Olympic House, SUVA
21	Judo Assn	South Pacific Judo Training Centre, NABUA
22	Karate Fiji	GPO BPX 14114 SUVA
23	Netball Fiji Assn	1st Floor Grantham Plaza, Grantham Road Raiwaqa
24	Outrigger Fiji	Domain Road, SUVA
25	Paralympic Assn	NCDP, Toorak
26	Powerlifting	Olympic House, SUVA
27	Rugby League	57 Richards Road, SUVA
28	Rugby Union	35 Gordon Street, Suva



29	Shooting Assn	Rifle Range, Vatuwaqa
30	Special Olympics	Suva Special School, Namadi Heights
31	Squash Fiji	Olympic House, SUVA
32	Surfing	
33	Swimming	Damodar Acquatic Center , SUVA
34	Table Tennis Assn	Vodafone Arena
35	Taekwondo Fiji Association	PO BOX 1217 SUVA
36	Tennis Assn	Regional Tennis Centre, Nadovu Park
37	Touch Fiji	Olympic House, SUVA
38	Triathlon Fiji	PO BOX 11048, Nadi Airport Fiji
39	Volleyball Fiji Fed	Olympic House, SUVA
40	Weightlifting Fiji	National Fitness Centre, Rabuka Gym
41	Yachting Fiji	National Sailing Centre, Suva Point
	<b>NON-ACTIVE National Sporting Organisation</b>	
1	Handball Fiji	
2	Mountaineering & Climbing	