



# MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

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9 April 2026

The Secretary-General to Parliament  
Parliament of the Republic of Fiji  
Government Buildings  
Suva

Dear Madam,

**RE: SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVIEW REPORT ON  
THE 2018–2023 FIJI RICE PTE LIMITED ANNUAL REPORTS (PP 10 OF 2026)**

Reference is made to the above-mentioned subject.

Pursuant to Standing Order 121(6)(b), I am pleased to provide the substantive response as the Permanent Secretary for Public Enterprises to the recommendations outlined in the above Committee Report tabled in Parliament on 13 March 2026.

**Recommendation 1:**

That expression of interest should be called to identify strategic partners to invest in the company.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

The Ministry of Public Enterprises is currently progressing with agro-based reform papers, with Fiji Rice Limited (FRL) identified as one of the key entities under consideration. These reforms are expected to introduce strategic improvements aimed at enhancing the company's financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and overall governance framework.

Some of the anticipated benefits of the reform include the attraction of private sector investment through strategic partnerships, improved corporate governance and accountability, enhanced operational and cost efficiencies, and reduced reliance on Government grants over time. In addition, the reforms are expected to strengthen market competitiveness, promote innovation, and ensure long-term sustainability of the rice industry while safeguarding farmer interests and national food security. The Ministry will only call the recommended expression of interest once the applicable reform type has been identified for FRL.

Regardless of the delay in the reform, the company remains resilient, as demonstrated through ongoing upgrades and strategic investments to strengthen its operations and better support

farmers. FRL has undertaken key infrastructure developments, including the construction of new office facilities, warehouse improvements, and repairs to silos following damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Yasa. The factory premises are now well maintained, with secure fencing and concrete flooring around the mill to enhance safety, efficiency, and durability.

Further investments have been made in company vehicles, harvesters, and tractors to improve operational efficiency and provide direct mechanization support to farmers. These initiatives support the Government's commitment in strengthening the rice industry, enhancing productivity, and improving farmer livelihoods.

**Recommendation 2:**

That Tables and Journals Unit must strictly ensure adherence to SO 121 (6) (b) which states that : 'the Minister responsible for the relevant government department must table a substantive response to the standing committee's report within 21 days of receiving the report'.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

As per the committee's findings, recommendations for FRL's 2013-2017 review report were not implemented and the company also did not provide a response to these recommendations to the Parliament (Tables and Journals Unit) as required under SO 121 (6) (b).

FRL wished to confirm that the company had provided the response to the Ministry on the recommendations of 2013-2017 review report, which the Ministry subsequently incorporated in the Minister's Parliamentary Response that was debated in the Parliament.

However, for the future, FRL assures that it will strengthen its internal reporting and tracking mechanisms to ensure that all future Parliamentary reporting requirements are fully complied within a timely manner and in accordance with SO 121(6)(b).

**Recommendation: 3:**

That Fiji Rice Pte Ltd should adopt a results-based reporting framework that includes clear, measurable annual performance targets aligned with the National Development Plan. This should include establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as paddy volume targets, farmer participation rates, production efficiency metrics, financial performance goals, and grant-impact measures and reporting progress against these indicators each year. The company should also shift its Annual Reports from activity-based descriptions to impact-focused outcomes, supported by data, trends, and independent verification. Additionally, Fiji Rice should develop a corporate performance monitoring system and require its Board to provide oversight to ensure targets are met and reporting is transparent, enabling the Committee to effectively assess its contribution to national development.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

FRL has in place a comprehensive Strategic Planning Document (2025-2030) that outlines SMART objectives and targets extending through to 2030. The Company operates in alignment with these established objectives and remains focused on ensuring their effective achievement within the specified timelines. Staff recruitment, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and performance appraisals are undertaken in accordance with the Strategic Plan, ensuring that human resource management directly supports the Company's long-term goals and operational priorities.

The Strategic Planning Document covers all key aspects of the Company's operations, including paddy production targets, farmer participation, sales performance, milling efficiencies, and financial management. This integrated framework ensures that business functions are aligned toward improving operational performance and achieving sustainable growth within the rice industry.

FRL will continue to strengthen its annual reporting processes by progressively enhancing the use of data-driven performance indicators, trend analysis, and outcome-based reporting. This will support improved transparency and enable more effective monitoring of the Company's contribution to national development objectives, including rice self-sufficiency.

With respect to the Committee's recommendation on the development of a corporate performance monitoring system and enhanced Board oversight, the Company acknowledges the importance of robust monitoring and governance mechanisms. FRL will continue to review and strengthen its internal performance monitoring and reporting systems, with oversight from the Board, to ensure that targets are effectively tracked, accountability is maintained, and reporting remains transparent and aligned with Government expectations.

Overall, the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan, together with strengthened reporting practices and continued investments in operations and farmer support, positions FRL to progressively improve its performance and contribution to national development goals.

**Recommendation 4:**

That Fiji Rice Pte Ltd and the MoA WSI establish a formal partnership framework including a joint Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU), shared performance targets, coordinated programs, and regular joint planning meetings to ensure better alignment between production efforts and milling operations. This structured collaboration would improve communication, streamline support to farmers, and create a unified approach to growing the rice industry while strengthening Fiji Rice's contribution to national development goals.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

FRL confirms that a formal partnership framework with the Ministry of Agriculture, Waterways and Sugar Industry (MoAWSI) is already established through an existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This agreement provides a structured basis for collaboration on farmer support programs and broader rice industry development initiatives, with all grant-funded programs designed and implemented in close consultation with the Ministry to ensure alignment with national agricultural priorities and farmer needs.

This established framework facilitates continuous coordination between FRL and the Ministry at both operational and governance levels. At the operational level, FRL works closely with Agricultural Officers within each district on planting schedules, harvesting coordination, paddy collection, drainage support, and other key aspects of rice farming. These ongoing engagements support ensures that farmers receive timely technical support, and the operational issues are addressed efficiently at the field level.

At the governance level, the Principal Agriculture Officer for the Northern Division serves as an ex officio Board Member of FRL and participates in Board meetings, enabling regular information sharing and provides an effective platform for jointly addressing issues affecting farmers and the rice industry.

Overall, the existing arrangements between FRL and MoAWSI provide a structured and coordinated approach consistent with the intent of the Committee's recommendation. FRL remains committed to maintaining and further strengthening this partnership to support the continued development of the rice industry.

**Recommendation 5:**

That MoA WSI should set clear, measurable performance targets for extension officers, so their work directly supports higher rice yields and greater adoption of nutritious brown rice. By strengthening accountability and aligning extension activities with national self-sufficiency and health goals, productivity can improve and progress toward reducing NCD risks can be accelerated.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways (MoA WSI) confirms that extension officers are strategically deployed across all divisions of Fiji and operate under clearly defined performance targets and indicators, which are monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure alignment with national agricultural objectives.

These officers play a key role in providing technical support to farmers, promoting best farming practices, and supporting productivity improvements across crops, including rice.

Notwithstanding the above, the MoA WSI will further strengthen its performance framework by reviewing existing targets to ensure they are clear, measurable, and outcome-oriented, with a stronger focus on improving productivity in rice production and promoting the adoption of nutritious brown rice, in line with national self-sufficiency and health objectives.

Further, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will also be enhanced to improve accountability, strengthen performance tracking, and ensure timely corrective action where required.

The Ministry remains committed to continuously improving the effectiveness of extension services to support productivity, food security, and the reduction of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

**Recommendation 6:**

That MoA WSI and Fiji Rice should prioritise urgent repair and upgrading of key rice infrastructure including irrigation, drying facilities and ageing mills to ensure reliable processing capacity and restore farmer confidence. Improving and maintaining these facilities will reduce post-harvest losses, lower production risks, and encourage more farmers to re-enter or expand rice farming.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

The MoA WSI in close collaboration with FRL, confirms that priority is being given to investments in irrigation, drainage, and post-harvest infrastructure to strengthen the rice industry and improve farmer productivity.

Significant work has been undertaken on the rehabilitation and upgrading of irrigation systems, drainage networks, field inlets, and outlet structures in major rice-producing areas to support consistent water supply, reduce waterlogging, and improve land preparation.

In particular, the Nasarawaqa and Korokadi irrigation schemes, which had previously become non-functional due to landslides, structural leakages, and damage at water storage sites, have been successfully repaired and restored to operational condition. This has improved irrigation reliability and supported planting confidence among farmers.

Further, at the farm level, FRL continues to support in-field drainage management, including the cleaning and maintenance of field drains to improve water movement and reduce crop losses caused by excess rainfall. However, at the processing level, FRL has invested in the upgrading of the Dreketi Rice Mill to improve milling efficiency, reduce post-harvest losses, enhance grain quality, and increase throughput capacity.

FRL remains committed to enhancing post-harvest handling, drying, storage, and milling practices to improve recovery rates, maintain grain quality standards, and ensure better returns for farmers.

These efforts reflect the ongoing commitment to strengthening rice infrastructure, improving processing capacity, and supporting farmer productivity.

**Recommendation 7:**

That priority should accord to review and amend legislation relating to iTLTB to ensure that is responsive to the demand of interested tenants and provide better returns to landowners.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

FRL currently operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the iTaukei Land Trust Board (iTLTB) and works closely with the Board to identify suitable landowning units for rice cultivation. This collaboration supports the expansion of land under rice production through the utilisation of underdeveloped or underutilised land, while ensuring that the interests of landowners are appropriately considered.

Through this partnership, FRL facilitates land assessments, provides technical guidance, and supports landowners in preparing land for rice farming. In addition, landowners are assisted to access Government-supported programmes, including planting grants, extension services, and irrigation support, enabling their effective participation in the rice industry.

With respect to the recommendation on the review and amendment of legislation relating to iTLTB, this matter falls outside the direct mandate of FRL. The Ministry of Public Enterprises will formally convey the Committee's recommendation to the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, which is the line Ministry responsible for iTLTB and the relevant legislative framework, for their consideration.

FRL remains committed to continuing its collaboration with iTLTB and landowning units to maximise land utilisation and contribute to national rice self-sufficiency objectives.

**Recommendation 8:**

That Fiji Rice Ltd must increase its marketing budget to improve sales and reduce stockpiling of paddy in silos.

**Response:**

The Committee's recommendation is noted.

FRL confirms that it is actively strengthening its sales and marketing initiatives to increase domestic rice sales and improve market penetration, particularly in the context of strong competition from imported rice, which presents challenges in achieving sales targets and maintaining market share.

To support this, FRL is exploring partnerships with distributors to expand and manage its sales networks. Discussions are currently underway with potential partners to enhance distribution efficiency and ensure wider availability of locally produced rice.

FRL has also been investing in promotional activities and marketing campaigns, including targeted advertising, public awareness initiatives, and engagement with key stakeholders. Particular focus has been placed on Government institutions, academic institutions, schools, and training centres to promote and increase the uptake of locally produced rice.

The Company recognises the importance of sustained marketing efforts and will allocate additional budget and resources to support ongoing promotional campaigns, outreach activities, and to strengthen the overall brand presence of FRL rice in the domestic market.

Overall, these measures are expected to strengthen FRL's market presence, improve sales performance, and reduce the stockpiling of paddy, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of the rice industry.

Should you require any further clarification, please contact Ms. Laisa Bolalevu on 3315577 or email [laisa.bolalevu@mcs.gov.fj](mailto:laisa.bolalevu@mcs.gov.fj).

Yours sincerely.



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**Dr. Vinesh Kumar**  
**Permanent Secretary for Public Enterprises, Multi-Ethnic Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts**