



STRENGTHENING PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

A WORD FROM NATIONAL MANAGER SKILLS & INVESTMENT



Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kam na mauri, Talofa, Gud de tru olgeta, Kia ora tatou.

We hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas and break over the holiday period. It seems like a very long time ago now!

are the busiest time of year during the main harvest particularly for apples, kiwifruit and grapes. By the end of March, there will usually be over 5,000 RSE workers in New Zealand.

Regional labour governance groups across New Zealand are now discussing how this season has gone in terms of crop production and labour supply, and undertaking early consideration of seasonal labour needs for 2014-15. We anticipate that demand for workers from New Zealand, the Pacific and elsewhere will continue to increase in line with industry projections.

As far as our Pacific engagements are concerned some of my team will be travelling to Samoa in April and to the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu in May to discuss and renegotiate a review of the Inter-Agency Understandings (IAU) between the Ministry and these Pacific Island countries. Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Kiribati have all been reviewed. The IAUs are fundamental to our work as it sets out government-to-government agreement which underpin our working together, sharing information and holding each other to account in discussions and negotiations.

In this edition, we highlight the RSE bi-lateral discussions at the Pacific Island Labour Sending Forum in Samoa last October. We have included

a short summary of Papua New Guinea's Inter Agency Understanding signing and domestic awareness programme, including updates on training provided to improve pre-departure orientations and delivery. This edition also features Geoff Lewis, Chairman of New Zealand Asparagus Council and the current chair of the National Labour Governance Group and we present to you the employer's profile of JR's Orchards Limited in Wairarapa as well as other stories of interest.

The next edition of this e-newsletter will be issued in July. This is a great forum for all of us who are interested in the SPP work to share experiences or bring up questions for discussion, and any items of interest.

I am immensely proud of my team and know they will continue to assist you where they can and I look forward to working with you all to progress the RSE: SPP work.

Matt Hoskin
National Manager Skills and Investment



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND



NEWEST MEMBER OF THE RSE FAMILY

Papua New Guinea is the latest country to become part of New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme.

In August 2013, an Inter-Agency Understanding (IAU) was signed at a ceremony in Wellington, New Zealand, between PNG's Minister for Labour and Industrial Relations, Hon Mark Maipakai, and the head of Immigration New Zealand Nigel Bickle.

The IAU is an agreement between the Ministry and PNG in support of New Zealand's RSE policy and set out the arrangements to facilitate access for PNG nationals to work seasonally in the New Zealand horticulture and viticulture industries. The IAU also allows PNG access to SPP funding to provide technical assistance to



INZ DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NIGEL BICKLE AND THE PNG MINISTER OF LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, HONORABLE MARK MAIPAKAI SIGNING THE IAU AT A CEREMONY IN WELLINGTON.

build PNG capacity to support the operation and management of the RSE policy off shore.

Hon Mark Maipakai paid tribute to the Government of New Zealand for accepting PNG workers under the RSE scheme. "I'm grateful to New Zealand for the opportunity afforded to my people and I personally take a special pride in this signing ceremony".

Minister Maipakai also expressed the PNG Government's appreciation to the first PNG guest workers for their dedication, hard work and commitment and for paving the way for the next batches of PNG workers.

The first New Zealand employers that recruited the first PNG workers were also acknowledged.

"I thank Pick Hawke's Bay Inc. and Thornhill Horticulture & Contractors Ltd. for enabling our first pioneer PNG RSE workers into Hawke's Bay for work. This first step has now culminated in the official signing of this agreement", says Hon Maipakai.

PNG's ministerial also provided the opportunity for PNG's ministerial delegation to observe the RSE scheme in action in the Hawkes Bay. PNG's ministerial delegation included senior government officials; Mr Tau Poo, Second Secretary to the PM, Ms Mariam Lovaga, Deputy Secretary Policy, Mr Pius Lahari, Executive Manager, Mr Michael Gene, Consultant as well as the Deputy High Commissioner in New Zealand, Mr Morea Veratau.

About 35 RSE workers from PNG came to New Zealand last season, and this number is expected to grow in the future. Feedback from employers regarding PNG workers is extremely positive and more employers are expected to start recruiting from PNG now that the IAU has been signed.

SOLOMON ISLANDS AGENTS WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

In September 2013, Regional RSE Relationship Manager George Rarere accompanied by Ken Mitchell of Brandheart conducted training workshops for Solomon Islands key RSE stakeholders. The combined workshops were about building the awareness of key stakeholder partners that drive the RSE environment in the Solomon Islands.

The three day workshop covered 'Planning and Customer Relationship Management' and 'RSE Update and Pre Departure workshop roles and responsibilities' and was well attended by RSE Agents, officials from the Solomon Islands government as well as officials from the New Zealand High Commission in Solomon Islands.

The workshop focused on:

- Maintaining a high quality worker selection process ensuring they are good ambassadors for the Solomon Islands whilst working in New Zealand
- Reminding workers to be vigilant in observance of New Zealand law and employers' employment and pastoral care compliances
- Working hard and save their money for remitting home to support Solomon Islands economy
- RSE Agents to be more transparent and fair in their recruitment process
- Recruitment from the rural areas where there was a lack of economic opportunities

The workshop was well received by Agents who have expressed their appreciation verbally, along with written evaluations. They rated the relevance and value of the workshop very highly, and it had immediate practical benefit for them, with the Approval To Recruit (ATR) processing taking place at the same time enabling the

Agents to apply some of workshop contents to the process.

A key outcome of the training was the development of a planned and specific process map for Agents to plan for and execute in processing an ATR. Following this, the training provided the Agents an understanding of how to manage deadlines, projects, tasks and their daily time to ensure they are meeting their ATR Employer commitments.

The participants developed a strong sense of team unity through participating in the workshop as they developed an appreciation that they were all sharing the same issues, barriers and challenges.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S DOMESTIC AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The signing of the Inter-Agency Understanding (IAU) in August 2013 allows PNG to access funding under the Strengthening Partnerships Programme (SPP), to provide technical assistance to build PNG's capacity to support the operation and management of the RSE policy.

In October 2013, the Ministry in partnership with PNG's Department of Labour and Industrial Relations, along with New Zealand employer JR Orchards Limited conducted a Domestic Awareness Programme (DAP) in PNG.

The idea was to disseminate and convey key messages to ensure that PNG have a comprehensive understanding of the RSE policy objectives and outcomes.



HON MINISTER MARK MAIPAKAI ADDRESSING THE COMMUNITY IN KOKOPO

The DAP covered the four corners of PNG to Kokopo (East New Britain), Goroka (Eastern Highlands), Alotau (Milne Bay) and Madang. In total over 1000 people participated in the programme with the largest gathering in Kokopo where over 500 people attended to witness the official launch of the New Zealand's RSE Regional Tour by PNG Minister for Labour and Industrial Relations Hon. Mark Maipakai.

Hon Maipakai opened proceedings by acknowledging the New Zealand Government for signing the IAU with PNG, which marks the beginning of bilateral relationship and

partnership between the two countries. The DAP shows New Zealand's commitment to the relationship. The Minister challenged his people to take full advantage of the opportunity presented by the New Zealand RSE Policy to achieve their socio-economic aspirations.

The PNG community acknowledged the effort made by the PNG government and the NZ delegation in sharing RSE information with them. The community acknowledged that this was the first time anyone has come out with any information regarding the RSE scheme. People are now more aware of the environment their workers face in New Zealand as well as the expectations of employers and officials.

The participants requested that New Zealand should provide more opportunities to PNG nationals to be recruited in the RSE policy. PNG have noticed the significant difference in the economic and social status of those participating in the RSE scheme and those who are not. Some would like these benefits spread evenly among all PNG communities and for New Zealand to support them in their quest for social and economic independence.

The PNG community acknowledged that they have a pivotal role to play in ensuring PNG workers are supported while they are away, encouraging them to work hard, and be on their best behaviour to ensure that PNG are looked at as the preferred destination for recruiting RSE workers by the New Zealand employers.

The community made a commitment to work in collaboration with the PNG's Department of Labour and Industrial Relations in ensuring that the RSE policy is preserved, the workers are supported and encouraged to work hard and be productive, so the opportunities and benefits



ONE OF THREE RSE: SPP WORKSHOPS HELD IN KOKOPO TO ACCOMMODATE OVER FIVE HUNDRED PARTICIPANTS

derived from the programme can spread to the rest of the people of PNG.

The inclusion of the New Zealand employer, JR Orchards Limited demonstrates the combined effort by the public and private sector partnership under the RSE programme. It also shows to the PNG Government that the New Zealand Government has accommodated its responsibility in the IAU agreement of promoting PNG as a viable work force destination to recruit productive and valuable workers.

Operations Director of JR's Orchards Limited, Ms Jamiee Burns was very enthusiastic about the prospect of recruiting more PNG workers. This

regional tour was Jamiee's first ever visit to the Pacific and she was very impressed with the interest of the people she met and places she visited.

Ms Burns highlighted that there were other rewards in working with the New Zealand RSE as Seasonal Workers would receive based on their performance, world recognised certificates in horticulture and other skills training that would benefit them and their communities. Jamiee was very pleased with her tour and was willing to share her experience with other farmers in New Zealand.

One of three RSE: SPP workshops held in Kokopo to accommodate over five hundred participants.

The DAP was well organised and facilitated by PNG's Department of Labour & Industrial Relations and supported by the New Zealand High Commission in PNG.



SPOTLIGHT ON GEOFF LEWIS: TRUSTED PARTNER RELATIONSHIP



The Recognised Seasonal Employer's (RSE) scheme refer to him as the "national chairman", his working partners often address him as Mr Lewis, and his family and friends simply refer to him as Geoff.

Meet Geoff, an asparagus grower from Horowhenua with his wife Liz, 3 adult sons, 2 of whom have joined their family business and one who works for Fonterra.

Geoff has run an export and domestic marketing business for over 30 years, including a dairy farming operation. He is the Chairman of New Zealand Asparagus Council and the current chair of the National Labour Governance Group.

Geoff is one example of a trusted client partnership between Immigration New Zealand's (INZ) RSE scheme and the Horticulture/Viticulture industries.

The trusted client relationship between Geoff's role as a national chair for the Labour Governance Group and the RSE is based on a profound understanding of the RSE agenda; the critical priorities, needs, and goals.

The RSE has a central role to play in achieving INZ's vision of being recognised as a trusted partner, delivering outstanding immigration services and bringing in the best people New Zealand needs to prosper.

Mr Lewis says that the successful development and implementation of the RSE policy does not just happen. It involves a lot of trust and drive from a wide variety of groups to continue to make a valuable contribution.

Close consultation and collaboration with industry representatives and officials from key agencies and the Pacific RSE countries is essential. The horticulture and viticulture industries provide significant job opportunities for New Zealanders, and drive growth for the economic future of New Zealand. The RSE policy has contributed significantly to this.

"When I was appointed as a National Chair for the Labour Governance Group I was originally asked to come into the role as an independent chairperson. I consider the role of this type of chair is to identify themes in a meeting that have potential to achieve successful outcomes for the subjects that are being considered."

As time in the role has progressed for Geoff, he has looked to initiate and drive ideas and innovation, lead through inspiration and continue to strengthen industry relationship with RSE as a key economic player.

"The RSE scheme has certainly help lift economic and growth in our industries. Large numbers of overseas seasonal workers are required each season, particularly in the horticulture and viticulture industry, and this is a step forward to reaching our goal of being a \$10 billion industry by 2020."

Even with unemployment, INZ continue to work with other agencies to facilitate participation in the labour market.

Geoff's views about the RSE policy are that it met the objectives that it was designed to and strengthening business relationships is crucial for this success.

"A huge driver for employers is the human relationship stuff. The scheme, for many employers, has enriched their lives and created a relationship opportunity that they may never

have had without this involvement. They love it and look after it with great care," says Geoff.

When discussing the industry's growth and associated labour needs, Geoff believes that a cap increase is needed.

"For industry it is seen as a constraint. I would like to see innovative New Zealanders engagement as a measurement for the rights to engage with RSE. This would change the emphasis from working within the cap to responding to real needs."

Geoff also says that the increase in regional crop specialisation is evolving where factors such as climate, water, labour supply and distribution are assessed to match crop with most appropriate climate.

When asked about the most important issue the horticulture and viticulture industries are facing at present, Geoff responded that the high New Zealand dollar is a real concern, retaining existing offshore relationships while margins are really tight.

"Perhaps the world has to get used to pay more for food." However, he has confidence that the labour resources will be there.

The horticulture and viticulture industries have changed significantly since the introduction of the RSE scheme.

"We are seeing major rationalisation with all sectors of horticulture and viticulture. There is the evolution of large corporate and family corporate businesses. This has created the opportunity for New Zealanders career paths at many levels within these businesses. Also large scale seasonal employee numbers are needed for these entities. It is these larger scale businesses which drive export growth."

The concept of trusted partnership is a key element of INZ's Vision 2015 and the RSE has been a great example of this by strengthening partnerships with their key stakeholders.

"I am confident in the RSE policy to meet our goals for growth and in meeting the labour shortage challenge faced by our industry from time to time, and we will continue towards building our partnership."

"I continue to look for inspiration from within my community where I see people every day making a difference, no matter how big or small, it is still a difference."

"Our role as an RSE employer is to give RSE workers the economic tools to create opportunities for themselves. We too can then inspire them to be brave and I am confident we are heading in the right direction to having the edge of business growth."

"What is striking about making this all happen is that it is rooted in a culture of collaboration and trusted partnership", says Geoff.



GEOFF, WIFE LIZ AND THE SAMOAN PRIME MINISTER HON. TUILAEPA SAILELE MALIELEGAOI



TONGAN NATIONALS AWARDED NZQA HORTICULTURE CERTIFICATE

The Horticultural Industry Training Organisation (HITO) Foundation Horticulture Ola 'o e Fonua pilot graduation ceremony took place in September 2013 at the Ministry of Education and Training Fokololo-e-Hau, 'Anana campus, and concluded the second phase of the training component of the wider RSE: SPP project.

Twenty-three out of twenty five initial trainees completed the 12 week practical training programme and graduated with an NZQA approved National Certificate Level 1 Horticulture qualification.



GRADUATES RECEIVING THEIR CERTIFICATES AT THE AWARDS CEREMONY

Approximately 250 guests attended the ceremony included the New Zealand and Australian High Commissioners, Ambassadors from Japan and China, Minister for Education and Training, Hon Dr 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki and Minister for Internal Affairs, Hon Lord Vaea.

The New Zealand delegation that attended the graduation ceremony comprised of the Chief Executive Officer of the Primary ITO, Mr Kevin

Bryant, the Director of BEST Pacific Institute of Education, Ms Anita Finnigan and members of the Primary ITO project team.

Speeches focused on the importance of the RSE scheme for Tonga in terms of remittances, and the need for training both for people participating in the RSE scheme and for those wishing to work and train in horticulture in Tonga and New Zealand in terms of the New Zealand horticulture industry sectors and in particular the fruit sector. The Tonga government expressed a commitment to work with the Primary ITO to explore how the training model can be established in a long-term sustainable manner in Tonga.

Graduates who participate in the RSE scheme will have industry relevant horticulture training and employment skills not only for the New Zealand RSE scheme, but also to work in the Tongan horticulture industry or in commercial businesses.

The research component of the project identified the need for practical vocational training in horticulture in Tonga, and supported the ITO training model as an effective structure to upskill people for the New Zealand RSE scheme and for Tonga horticulture businesses and domestic contexts.

The Primary ITO now intends to work with the Tonga and New Zealand Governments to develop a sustainable long term ITO training model in Tonga that dovetails into the New Zealand ITO training and qualification system. This will provide an international training system that will lead to increased skills and food production for both Tonga and New Zealand.



KEVIN BRYANT, CEO PRIMARY HORT-ITO, AND CHRISTINE NEWLAND, PROJECT LEADER



SOME OF THE GRADUATES WITH THEIR FAMILIES AT GRADUATION CEREMONY

SITA JOINS TONGA'S MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS



The RSE: SPP family welcome the appointment of Kalesita Mafi Taumoepeau. Sita took up her new role as Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) - Overseas Employment Division for Tonga's Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in November last year. She will manage Tonga's participation in the seasonal work schemes with Australia and New Zealand.

Sita holds an MBA degree and a Postgraduate Diploma for General Managers from the University of the South Pacific. She joined MIA from the Ministry of Infrastructure where she was Assistant Secretary (Human Resources & Policy Management).

Prior to joining the Ministry of Infrastructure in 2008 she had been the Office Manager at the NZ High Commission in Nuku'alofa from 1999; Executive Secretary to the General Manager of the ANZ Bank (1997-1999); Office Manager at two local law firms (1994 - 1997); Insurance Administrator at MMI Insurance (1989-1994); Insurance Underwriter for NZ Insurance Company Ltd and National Pacific Insurance Ltd (1985-1989).

Chief Executive Officer for Tonga's Internal Affairs Lopeti Senituli, said, "We are very fortunate to have been able to recruit Mrs. Taumoepeau into the Ministry. She brings with her a wealth of experience from working for 23 years in the private sector as well as 5 years in the Ministry of Infrastructure. We hope to increase the number of Tonga workers participating in the two schemes under the guidance of Mrs Taumoepeau."



RSE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH PACIFIC STATES

The 2nd Pacific Island Labour Sending (PAILS) Forum held in Samoa in October 2013, provided the opportunity for the RSE: SPP Team to collectively discuss the challenges and opportunities of the RSE scheme, how to enhance working relationships with Pacific counterparts and key stakeholders of the RSE and Strengthen Pacific Partnerships (SPP) project, and engage with RSE Pacific sending states to discuss, identify, prioritise, negotiate and agree on Pacific states focus areas for the next three years.

Bilateral discussions with Pacific states included Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea set activities under RSE: SPP, which concentrated on the following focused areas:

- Information management – strengthening capacity to collect and store relevant information to meet internal and external reporting needs and to inform future development of its services and functions.
- Processes - strengthening the processes that underpin the operations to inform

and manage expectations of workers and New Zealand employers about the services offered.

- Knowledge - building the capacity and knowledge of Pacific states officials responsible for the delivery of the services.
- Communication - disseminating information to raise awareness of RSE, inform, and manage expectations of key stakeholders.
- Marketing - increasing the exposure of Pacific states as a source of reliable and productive labour to expand employment opportunities available under the RSE policy.

The information and activity priorities from these one-on-one discussions culminated in the development of tailored RSE: SPP 'Action Plans' specific to each Pacific state as identified and mandated by representative officials from each RSE country. The Action Plans are the basis of the Ministry's focus in establishing the systems, processes and technical assistance required to support Pacific States and their operation and management of the RSE policy both offshore and onshore.



THE SAMOAN PRIME MINISTER, HON TUILAEPA SAILELE MALIELEGAOI WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM PACIFIC ISLAND LABOUR SENDING COUNTRIES INCLUDING THE SEVEN RSE SENDING STATES.

LEADERS WORKSHOP IN TONGA

With funding assistance from SPP programme, TongaWorks conducted a series of Leaders Training workshops in Tonga in September and October 2013. TongaWorks recognised the value of providing training for Tonga's group leaders as an integral part of both the RSE and the Seasonal Workers Program (SWP). Over 100 participants including leaders (for RSE & SWP), town officials, community elders, employers and those workers who have been identified as potential leaders participated in the workshop.

The leader's workshop in Tonga is the first phase of the training with the second phase to be implemented in New Zealand that will include a series of workshops organised when the leaders are in New Zealand during the season.



EMPLOYER PROFILE - JR ORCHARD'S LIMITED

JR's Orchards is a family farm of 135 hectares of Pip Orchards with Export Packing and Coolstore facilities in the sunny Wairarapa township of Greytown Wairepa Province. JR's Orchards specialises in the growing of pears and apples for sale to European and Asian Markets.

JR's Orchards is fully MAF Accredited to ensure all their products meets both domestic and international requirements. JR's Orchards guarantees full traceability from the Orchard through to the Market Place.

JR's Orchards has embraced the Deregulation of the NZ Pipfruit Industry and has built up a strong alliance with several overseas markets, thus enhancing the Growers' returns and providing customers with a superior quality product.

Owner and Operational Director Jamiee Burns shares JR's Orchards story;

JR's Orchards Limited Operations Director MS Jamiee Burns being welcomed at Kokopo Airport

1. How long has your company been part of the RSE programme?

JR's has participated in the RSE scheme since 2007 and currently has approved ATR's (Approval To Recruit) for 55 RSE workers from the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

2. What was your motivation behind the decision to be involved?

We saw the RSE program as a great opportunity to employ a good solid reliable workforce that would ensure we could maximise its potential and harvest our crop at its optimum condition.

3. How has your company benefited from the RSE programme?

We believe that one of the main benefits of having the RSE program for our industry, is the ability to have a core group of well-trained, qualified workers which allows us to maintain a high level of daily work output at very key times in our operation. We have also learnt a lot about the both the people and their resident countries so have learnt to appreciate how lucky we are here in New Zealand. This is what has inspired us to undertake fostering some of the workers' requests to participate in night school classes in computers, dress making and cooking.

4. Where do you recruit most of your workers from and why?

Up until 2013 we have always got all our RSE men and ladies from all 10 of the Solomon Island provinces as we have found the people very friendly and loyal workers, who like to return each year. Our company also now sponsors two children's Football teams in Honiara with uniforms and equipment. Some of our RSE workers have young relatives that play for the club so they are immensely proud to go home and watch their games.

5. Who are some of your longest serving workers – how many and when did they start?

We originally started with 10 men from the Solomon's and grew the number to 20 men for the orchard and 8 ladies for the Packhouse. Of the original 10 men we have 5 still returning this year for their seventh season and all 8 ladies for their sixth season.

6. How many workers have you recruited since your first involvement in RSE?

Our number of RSE workers has increased from 10 to 55 over the years as our Orchard business has increased and expanded after we hail netted 70ha of our current 117ha orchard.

7. What do you think of the policy?

We believe the policy has given the Horticultural Industry the ability to substantially grow and re-invest in our businesses with the re-assurance that there will be a good supply of qualified, suitable labour available, when required. Another positive part of the policy is the high level of skills the workers take back to their countries along with the funds to help set up their own business to ensure they are can continue to proposer all year round. We are very excited to have Papua New Guinea officially become part of the RSE program this year and believe that their Government's commitment to their recruitment policy, 3-week pre-departure and re-integration programs will have immense benefits to both the workers and employers of New Zealand.

8. What are some of the success stories from your employees?

Two of our original RSE men Robert and Ben have combined their earnings and have purchased a charter vessel and now offer tourist fishing, diving and sightseeing tours. Margaret has set up her own coco growing and exporting business that employs several of her family all year around. Mercy and her sister have started their very own fish n chip shop, which they have

called "Papawai Fish n Chips" named after the area our orchard is located in. Chris, aged 28 has started his own recording/production company in Honiara and is now making short segments pieces for the local television programs as well as freelance work. He also hires-out his recording studio to up-and-coming young musical artists.

9. Would your company survive without RSE?

We don't believe so, as the amount of qualified, experienced and motivated workers are not available in rural New Zealand at the time we the employer needs them.



SAMOA USES MEDIA TO PROMOTE RSE MESSAGES

The Samoa domestic awareness programme in October last year provided the opportunity to disseminate and convey key messages to Samoan communities, to provide them with a good understanding of the RSE objectives and outcomes under the SPP programme:

The programme consists of both live and recorded interviews on three television stations and five radio programmes.

The intention of the programme is:

- potential workers from Samoa having an excellent understanding of the requirements and expectations of New Zealand employers and government officials;
- enhancing Samoan communities understanding of the selection process and recruitment of RSE workers;
- ensuring that the expectation of Samoan workers and their families matches the reality of the working environment in New Zealand;
- ensuring that Samoan workers have an excellent understanding of New Zealand employment law, remuneration and pay scales, taxes and deductions and other areas that are pertinent to the RSE programme;
- conveying key messages relating to compliance issues including the consequences of absconding, non-return and misbehaving;
- ensuring Samoan communities' realisation of the benefits to RSE workers families, communities and Samoa's economy; and

- understanding the role of families and communities in supporting Samoan workers' during their working time in New Zealand.

At the time of the domestic awareness programme, the Samoan Government had imposed a policy to stand down villages whose workers were found to have misbehaved or had committed crimes during their working time in New Zealand, leading to them being charged by the New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Courts resulting in their removal from New Zealand.

Whilst the policy did not find favour with some stakeholders of the RSE Policy and with some sections of the Samoan community, this was the Samoan Government's effort to curb the level of unacceptable behavior of Samoan workers. Maintaining the Samoan position as one of the preferred destinations for RSE and other labour mobility recruitment is crucial to the ongoing economic benefits and development of families, villages and communities and to the Samoan economy. Imposing the stand down policy was the Samoan Government's way of protecting the integrity of the RSE programme so the benefits derived from the programme could continue to be enjoyed by Samoa.

The domestic awareness programme also provided the opportunity to further explain to the Samoan public the rationale behind the stand down policy.

The domestic awareness programme was led by the Samoa's Ministry of the Prime

Minister and Cabinet (MPMC) who has portfolio responsibilities for the operation and management of the RSE programme in Samoa, supported by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Using Samoan media to disseminate information to Samoan community was identified by MPMC as the most effective way of conveying key messages to the wider Samoan community without raising their expectations.

The television and radio stations acknowledged the effort of the domestic awareness programme and appreciated the opportunity to be involved. This is the first time any information had been officially conveyed via the Samoan media and they requested that the MPMC shared more information on a regular basis, to educate not only the Samoan communities but the media themselves about the RSE scheme.

The team consists of the Samoa's DPMC chief executive Vaosa Epa, principal advisors and a representative from MBIE.

SPP FUNDS LIAISON OFFICERS WORKSHOP

The Liaison Officers Regional Presence Workshop held in Auckland in July 2013 provided an opportunity for discussion and information sharing between Liaison Officers and representatives from each of the RSE sending countries, relating to their experience to date in the RSE policy. The workshop discussion focused on issues experienced by RSE workers and how those issues impact on New Zealand employers, the reputation of Pacific RSE countries, workers and their families.

Workshop participants shared ideas and experiences on solutions for mitigating and minimising some of the concerns identified, as well as ideas on how to improve Pacific states participation in the RSE programme.

The presence of RSE employers, Alistair Jamieson (Mr Apple) and David Easton (Easton Apples) ensured that there was employer's input in the discussions.

The workshop participants all agreed that Pacific states needed to have more presence in the regions particularly during the busy time of the season so that any issues can be addressed in a timely manner. The RSE: SPP Unit through its SPP funding agreed to provide financial support to enable Liaison Officers or country representatives to have regular visits and regional presence in the regions, during the peak time of the season.



PACIFIC LIAISON OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES AT THE LIAISON OFFICERS WORKSHOP IN AUCKLAND



PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING IN DECEMBER 2013

As part of our priority work to improve pre-departure orientation there are a number of initiatives that we have started. First, was the train the trainer workshop held in December 2013 in New Zealand by Brandheart. There were several actions resulting from the training, one of which is a Pre-Departure Training (PDT) Manual which will be developed with a Working Group consisting of the Training attendees. The PDT will be available from a central website location (details to be confirmed) and will include all kinds of information for workers, leaders, employers etc. We hope to have all these tools available before Season 8.

REVISED RSE PAGES ON DOL WEBSITE

To keep track on RSE: SPP movements as they happen, make sure you visit the web page <http://www.dol.govt.nz/initiatives/strategy/rse/strengthening/>

We trust that you will find our latest e-newsletter helpful and welcome any feedback or comments that you may have.

If you have any questions, feedback or suggestions for improving this newsletter or news and events to include in future editions please contact Lafaele Lupo, Relationship Manager on Lafaele.Lupo@mbie.govt.nz or + 64 4 915 4736.

CALENDAR OF RSE: SPP EVENTS

The following table provides a summary of the key events for the RSE: SPP Team for the next three months. Please note that these may change depending on the availability of key contacts both in New Zealand and in Pacific states.

EVENT	LOCATION	DATE
Ministerial Visit – PNG	New Zealand	17 to 21 March 2014
Brandheart Training	Tonga	24 to 28 March 2014
Ministerial Visit – Kiribati	New Zealand	22 March to 3 April 2014
Inter-Agency Understanding Review - Samoa	Samoa	April 2014

