

## **Parliament of Tasmania Twinning Report**

### **DELEGATION VISIT TO SAMOA TO CELEBRATE 10 YEAR TWINNING RELATIONSHIP**

A delegation of Members from the Tasmanian Parliament visited Samoa and the Legislative Assembly of Samoa from 29 September to 4 October 2018 to celebrate 10 years of the parliamentary twinning relationship.

The visit had originally been planned during a sitting week with meetings set up with the Prime Minister, Minister and other Members. Due to internal reasons the sitting of Parliament was deferred and the Prime Minister was out of country.

The delegates met with the Speaker, the Hon Leaupepe Taimaiono Toleafoa Faafisi, at the temporary Parliament (Fono) location in Apia and Deputy Speaker the Hon Nafaitoa Tala'imanu Ketu.

The Deputy Speaker hosted a number of social and cultural events for the delegation where Members and staff could interact in a 'relaxed' setting.

The delegation toured then temporary Parliament site and development site of the new Maoto Fono (Parliament House). The new Parliament House was being built with the support of the Australian Government. Its design is based on traditional architecture to reflect the cultural identity of Samoa.

In addition to the hospitality there were a number of other official visits and meetings arranged to explore Samoa its culture, political life and society in more depth. The delegates met and engaged with the following people and organisations.

#### **Australian High Commission**

The High Commissioner Her Excellency Sara Moriaty and her team including representatives of the Navy, AFP, and project managers. The meeting explored a number of social, environmental, economic, foreign policy and trade issues between Australia and Samoa in general and its relationship with Australia.

One of the main focuses of discussion was the importance of the parliamentary twinning arrangements to support Members and institutions. This was contrasted with the actual and perceived rise of Chinese and other foreign influence.

#### **SPB Nafanua**

The High Commission also organised an inspection of the vessel SPB Nafanua. The SPB Nafanua is a Pacific Patrol Boat maritime surveillance in Samoan waters with a view to securing border, reduce drug trafficking and other illegal activity. The vessel operated by the Police of Samoa and was commissioned in conjunction with support from the Australian Defence Force (Navy).

#### **Australian Pacific Technical College**

The delegation visited and inspected the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC). They met with Ms Cheri Robinson Moors as the Country Director for Samoa and Tonga and Mr Andrew Colquhoun, who is the new Vocational Training Manager in Samoa.

APTC has a strong emphasis on strengthening Pacific Technical Vocational Educational Training (TVET) systems by working in 'coalition' with governments (including the Australian Government), TVET providers, private sector, development partners and the community.

The APTC works to facilitate opportunities, enable locally-led and context-appropriate initiatives that bridge skills gaps, and contribute to workforce development within Samoa. It offers courses, in air-conditioning and refrigeration, applied fashion design and technology, carpentry, commercial cookery, education support, fabrication trade, mechanical trades, diesel fitting, hospitality, light vehicle mechanics, plumbing, tourism, wall and floor tiling, and business management.

The APTC's programs, at national and regional levels, assist to meet current and future labour market demands as well as enable Pacific people to access quality training and pathways to meaningful employment.

### **United National Development Program (UNDP)**

The delegation met with the United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Samoa, Ms Simona Marinescu and some of her staff.

Ms. Marinescu briefed the delegation about the UNDP's work with the Government, non-government organisations and people of Samoa in realising its development priorities, including towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the SAMOA Pathway and other key international and regional commitments. Some of the key development programmes the UNDP are involved in are in the areas of democratic governance, Sustainable livelihoods, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy, and gender equality. The work of the UNDP also maintains its commitments in dealing with climate changes, family violence and reducing communicable diseases.

### **The Samoa Observer**

The Delegation met with the Editor of the Samoan Observer and one of the newspaper's journalists. The Samoa Observer is the largest newspaper group in Samoa published in both English and Samoan. The meeting discussed the delegation's visit, the twinning relationship and gender equality - work towards increasing the number of female Members of Parliament in both jurisdictions.

Subsequently, an article was published in the Samoan Observer about the visit to celebrate our 10 year parliamentary twinning relationship. The article also referenced the delegates congratulating the Samoan Parliament for its constitutional reforms to ensure a minimum number of women would be elected to the Parliament. Delegates also emphasised the importance of gender equality in Parliamentary representation generally and noted the 2018 Tasmanian State election results which delivered a majority of female Members in the House of Assembly.

It was also very interesting to hear the perspectives of the media in relation to community engagement by Parliaments in particular in relation to law reform and committee work.

## **UNDP & SAMOAN PARLIAMENT – PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP**

In August 2018 the UNDP in partnership with the Legislative Assembly of Samoa held a workshop for Members of Parliament on the role of committees in a Parliament. At the invitation of the UNDP, the Parliament of Tasmania sent a Member of Parliament who is an experienced Chair to participate in workshops and exchange knowledge.

## **UNDP FUNDED STAFF ATTACHMENTS – LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SAMOA STAFF VISITS TO THE PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**

Over October to November 2018 the Parliament of Tasmania hosted 5 separate visits for a week at a time of (about 20) staff of the Legislative Assembly of Samoa. The attachments concentrated on the following areas -

- research and policy;
- security – sergeant at arms;
- chamber and procedural advice;
- education, media (including social media) and community engagement through publicity and outreach programs;
- human resource management – policies and processes (including recruitment, retention of staff and disciplinary and performance management processes);
- Hansard, parliamentary reporting, printing and publication services; and
- Parliamentary committee work, with a focus on developing terms of reference communication about committee work.

The cost of the visits was funded through the UNDP and were organised as part of the UNDP Strategic Plan which includes (among other matters) a focus on democratic governance. The Deputy Clerks of both houses of the Parliament of Tasmania (Ms Catherine Vickers – Legislative Council and Ms Laura Ross – House of Assembly) set up the programs and events for the visiting staff.

The programs included meeting a variety of public officers and officials (not just officers and staff of the Parliament) to further knowledge such as the Integrity Commissioner, Deputy President of the Tasmanian Industrial Commission, the State Service Management Office, the Registrar of the Supreme Court and Manager of Court Transcription Services.

It was a lot of work for a small Parliament to set up programs and events, but well worth the effort to share knowledge and experience with our twin.

## **INTER- PARLIAMENTARY STUDY PROGRAM FOR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF**

The Deputy Clerk of the House of Assembly Ms Ross attended the Inter-Parliamentary Study Program for parliamentary staff in March 2019 held at the Federal Parliament. During the study program Ms Ross was also able to spend time with Mr Iole Sanerivi,

Principal Translator from the Samoan Legislative Assembly, furthering our twinning relationship.

#### **OPENING OF NEW MAOTO FONO**

The building works were completed in early 2019 and the opening of the new Parliament House building occurred on 13 March 2019. The Parliament of Tasmania and its CPA Branch contributed to a gift of a Huon (native Tasmanian timber) pine clock which was installed in the Chamber.