



The Fijian Government

Ministry of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations

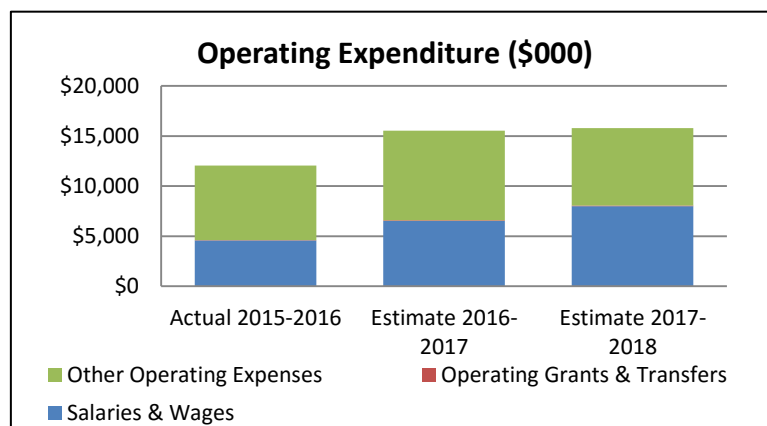
2017-2018 Budget Highlights

The Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations is responsible for upholding the constitutional right of every Fijian to economic participation, a just minimum wage and fair employment practices, which include humane treatment and proper working conditions.

The Ministry promotes and advances the rights of workers and employers, and administers and enforces the Employment Relations Promulgation 2007, Health and Safety at Work Act 1997, National Employment Centre Decree 2009 and the Workers Compensation Act (Cap. 94).

Over the past eight years, the Ministry has implemented labour reforms that have improved labour relations between workers, employers and Government, and boosted overall productivity. The Ministry will work towards the completion of the reform programme to build on the success of the reforms already undertaken.

The total budget for the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations in 2017-2018 is **\$16.5 million**, comprising **\$15.8 million** for operating expenditure and VAT of **\$0.7 million**.



The variations in allocation for the Ministry's 2017-2018 Budget are mainly attributed to:

- an increase due to adjustments to salaries and wages to account for pay rises, regularisation of project positions into line positions and the creation of new positions; and

- a decrease in the Workmen's Compensation allocation due to the reduction in the number of pending claims by government employees.

Ongoing Initiatives

- Promoting the rights of all workers in Fiji to prevent inhumane treatment and uphold safe working conditions through:
 - Labour Services: an additional 17 positions have been created for labour services to assist the Ministry in enforcing the National Minimum Wage, including the ten sector based minimum wage rates (\$3.4 million).
 - Occupational Health and Safety Unit: funds the operations of the Unit and covers the creation of 10 new positions to assist in the enforcement of diving regulations (\$5.5 million).
 - Workmen's Compensation Programme: ensures that compensation is paid out to workers employed by Government who have suffered temporary or permanent job related injuries (\$2.0 million).
- Providing employment opportunities for the Fijian people to acquire relevant skills and improve their standard of living through:
 - Apprenticeships: funds the four-year apprenticeships to provide apprentices with technical skills to help further their careers (\$400,000).
 - Foreign Employment Service Unit: promotes foreign employment opportunities through the seasonal work programme and other direct employment opportunities. The seasonal work programme provides Fijians in rural and maritime communities with the opportunity to work abroad to earn cash and develop valuable skills they can use upon their return to Fiji. In the past financial year, 431 Fijians were deployed overseas for foreign employment opportunities (\$869,639).
 - Fiji Volunteer Service Scheme: a regional volunteer scheme that sends retired teachers to neighbouring island states that request assistance. More than 150 volunteers will be engaged through this scheme for up to 2 years (\$1.2 million).

- Promoting good-faith employment relations, health and safety, productivity and social justice in the workplace through:
 - Mediation Services: services under the Employment Relation Promulgation that support timely and effective resolution of workplace disputes between employers and employees (\$1.1 million).