

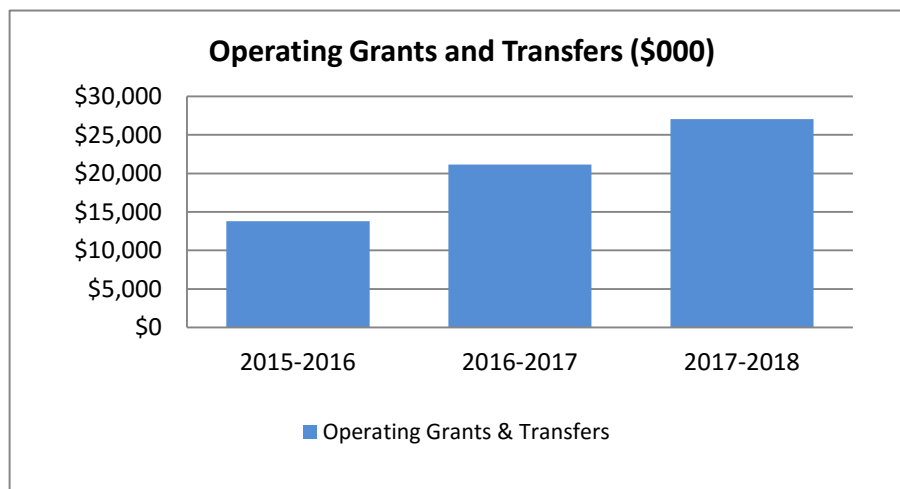


## The Fijian Government Independent Commissions 2017-2018 Budget Highlights

Fiji's independent commissions serve the Fijian people in specialised areas where objective, technical judgment is essential. They apply the law independently and are valuable tools for transparent and accountable governance. They uphold the constitutional rights of individuals and communities, keeping the institutions and people who serve them accountable.

The independent commissions are the: Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission, Accountability and Transparency Commission, Constitutional Offices Commission, Public Service Commission [PSC], Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption [FICAC] and Legal Aid Commission.

The budget of Independent Commissions in 2017-2018 comprises **\$27.0 million** in operating grants. The increase of **\$5.9 million** in 2017-2018 is attributed to increments for salaries and wages, other operational expenses and inclusion of operating grants for the Constitutional Offices Commission and the Fiji Accident Compensation Commission.



### Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission

The Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission has independent authority under the Constitution to promote the protection and observance of, and respect for, human rights in all

spheres of life and to take steps to secure appropriate redress for any human rights violations. This includes initiating investigations and court proceedings and monitoring compliance by the State with human rights treaties and conventions.

The budget of the commission in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$2.4 million.

The increase of \$0.86 million in 2017-2018 is attributed to salary increments for existing staff, recruitment of a new legal officer and additional funding for IT equipment and travel and communications.

### **Accountability and Transparency Commission**

The Accountability and Transparency Commission is established as an independent commission under the Constitution to carry out roles and responsibilities assigned to it under any laws enacted by Parliament.

The budget of the commission in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$0.5 million.

### **Constitutional Offices Commission**

The Constitutional Offices Commission is an independent commission responsible for providing advice to the President for the appointment of constitutional offices including the chairperson and members of most independent commissions and offices as well as the Commissioner of Police, Commissioner of Corrections and the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces.

The budget of the commission in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$50,000.

### **Public Service Commission [PSC]**

PSC is responsible for setting consistent service standards across the Fijian civil service by enforcing guidelines and administering the Procedural Review Process and Performance Assessment Framework of Permanent Secretaries.

The budget of PSC in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$6.3 million. The increase of \$750,000 in 2017-2018 is attributed to an increase to fund performance bonuses for permanent secretaries and establish two new permanent secretary positions in the Ministry of Fisheries and the new Ministry of Waterways.

## **Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption [FICAC]**

FICAC is Fiji's independent anti-corruption agency responsible for investigating and prosecuting alleged corruption and bribery offences. FICAC is also responsible for examining the practices and procedures of any public bodies in order to eliminate corrupt practices, assist any persons, on request, on the ways in which corrupt practices may be eliminated and carry out public awareness to educate communities about the dangers of corruption.

The budget of FICAC in 2017-2018 is maintained at 2016-2017 levels comprising an operating grant of \$8.5 million.

## **Fiji Accident Compensation Commission**

The new Fiji Accident Compensation Commission will be established as an independent commission to administer a no-fault compensation scheme for all motor vehicle accidents. The scheme will provide victims of motor vehicle accidents with the option of either receiving compensation or pursuing their claims through legal proceedings. This no-fault scheme will replace the current third party insurance scheme.

The budget to set up the commission in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$1.0 million.

## **Legal Aid Commission**

Every person arrested or detained in Fiji has the right under the Constitution to communicate with a legal practitioner. The Legal Aid Commission is established and empowered under the Constitution with the independent authority to provide free legal services to Fijians that cannot afford them.

The budget of the commission in 2017-2018 comprises an operating grant of \$8.4 million. The increase of \$3.4 million in 2017-2018 is attributed to increased efforts to expand the reach of quality legal services for the Fijian people through:

- \$1.25 million is allocated to fund 32 new positions in the organisational structure of the commission.
- \$150,000 is allocated to purchase office and IT equipment to improve the quality of services at all 21 legal aid offices.

- \$680,000 is allocated to fund the opening of five new offices in Kadavu, Rotuma, Vunidawa, Keiyasi and Seaqaqa. Since 2012, the Commission has significantly improved access to legal services for Fijians that cannot afford them by opening 16 new offices in Nausori, Nasinu, Suva, Navua, Sigatoka, Nadi, Lautoka, Ba, Tavua, Rakiraki, Korovou, Labasa, Savusavu, Taveuni, Levuka and Nabouwalu.
- \$251,180 is allocated to fund 12 new staff to operate the five new offices.