



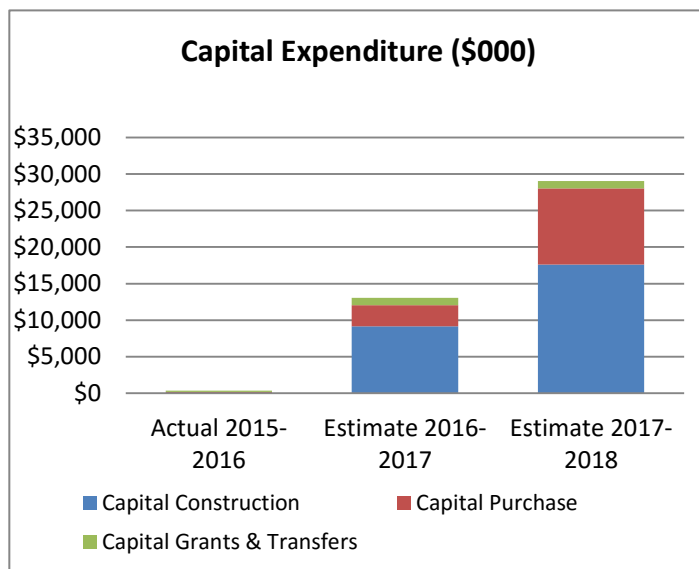
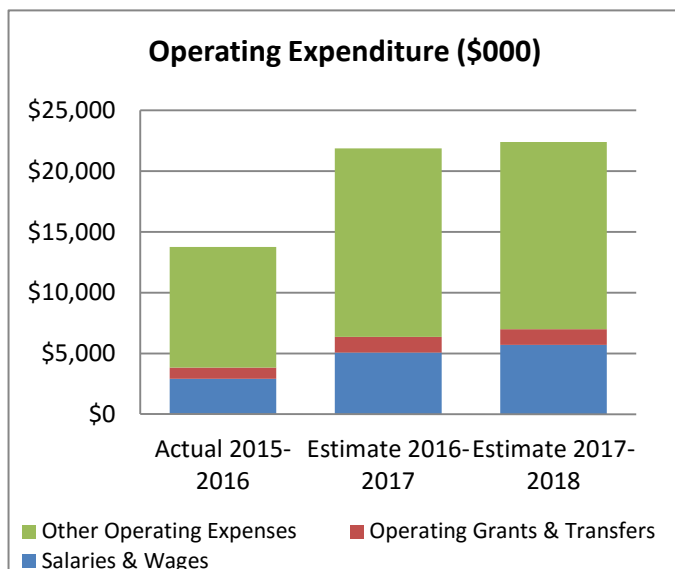
The Fijian Government Ministry of Communications 2017-2018 Budget Highlights

The Ministry of Communications is responsible for keeping the Fijian people connected to each other and to the outside world by providing efficient, competitive, cost-effective and accessible telecommunication and postal services. The Ministry also manages all ICT systems in the Fijian Government.

The Ministry engages with the Fijian public in radio, print and online media to keep the Fijian people updated on Government's plans and policies and to quickly alert the public to important information.

The Ministry comprises the Department of Information, Department of Communications and the Information Technology and Computing Services (ITC).

The total budget for the Ministry of Communications in 2017-2018 is **\$55.4 million**, comprising **\$22.4 million** for operating expenditure, **\$29.0 million** for capital expenditure and VAT of **\$3.9 million**.



The increase of **\$17.9 million** in 2017-2018 is mainly attributed to:

- an increase due to adjustments in salaries and wages associated with the civil service reform;
- an increase to purchase goods and services that improve service delivery;
- an increase in special expenditures to host Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union meetings; and
- an increase in capital expenditure for the Vanua Levu Cable Connection and the Digital Television Rollout.

New Initiatives

- \$300,000 allocated for Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union meetings from early February 2018.
- \$8.0 million is allocated for the Digital Television Rollout to enable access to free to air television for the first time to places like Bua, the interior of Ra and maritime islands including parts of Lau, Yasawas and Rotuma.

Ongoing Initiatives

- Raising public awareness on the services, assistance and other opportunities that are available to the Fijian people through:
 - Film and Video Materials: produces news summaries for release to promote broader coverage of Government activities, including the range of services and assistance that are available to Fijians, and promotes greater accessibility to national and international events (\$350,000).
- Continuing the liberalisation of the telecommunications market to improve access to affordable and reliable mobile services through:
 - Cable Connection to Vanua Levu (World Bank): funds the construction of the Suva-Savusavu cable connection via the new Samoa-Fiji cable to increase broadband capacity and internet connectivity in Vanua Levu. The project is expected to be completed in March 2018 (\$17.5 million).

- Implementation Analogue to Digital Roadmap: supports the transition from analogue to digital throughout Fiji by subsidising the purchase of set top boxes for low-income households (\$2.0 million).
- Operational Grant to Telecommunications Authority of Fiji: ensures proper monitoring and regulatory compliance in the ICT sector (\$948,908).
- Upgrading Government ICT infrastructure to gradually improve and expand e-government services to dramatically improve the access and availability of services to the Fijian people through:
 - National Switch and Fiji Pay Account: funds the launch and implementation of the National Switch and Fiji Pay Account following the successful enactment of the Fiji Interchange Network in February 2017. Banks and financial institution will be required to connect to the network, giving consumers access to superior online financial services and lower transaction costs (\$1.0 million).
 - Government Fibre Optic Network Project: makes critical upgrades to the Govnet network to provide a more stable online environment (\$500,000).
 - Digitisation of BDM, Companies and Titles Office: digitises public records programmes. There are currently three ongoing digitisation projects in the Companies, Titles and BDM offices (\$1.0 million).
 - Voice-Over Internet Protocol [VOIP]: funds exploratory work for the provision of an internet-based communication system and central and secure communication and data exchange system that provides superior service and is more cost effective than telephone systems (\$461,272).
 - Primary Data Centre Certification: funds quality assurance efforts to bring ITC practices in Fiji in line with the highest international standards (\$250,000).
 - Storage System Capacity: ensures that the Primary Data Centre has adequate storage capacity to meet present and future requirements (\$250,000).