

Welcome to the Chamber's Newsletter!

MAY - JUNE 2019



'PATHWAY TO FUTURE CAREERS'

Hellen Aumae of Tourism Solomons explaining to students her organization's role in promoting tourism in Solomon Islands during the 2019 Careers Market hosted in May. More photos and article on pages 10 & 11.



PM reaffirms
Govt support
to private
sector



SICCI present
submisson
on minimum
wage



Provincial
business
trainings in
Auki & Gizo



Improving
quality of
local cocoa,
chocolate



Welcome

This is the official Newsletter of the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI), published and distributed to members and stakeholders after every two months.

It contains updates on all Chamber activities, news, members' feature, interviews, upcoming events and department updates from the Secretariat.

This publication is produced by the SICCI Media & Communications Department.

CONTACT US:

Suite 223, Hyundai Mall, Central Honiara
PO Box 650, Honiara,
Solomon Islands
Tel: (677) 39542

www.solomonchamber.com.sb

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Engaging Government

Maintaining
strong
partnership with
Govt is vital for
private sector led
growth

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Good Governance

SICCI's strive for
good governance
continues with
3rd Directorship
Programme

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2019 Careers Market

Inspiring students
and our young
generation to aim
high and to reach
their full potential

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YECSI on the move!

Strengtens team to
help support growth
of its programmes
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entrepreneurs

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SICCI presents submission on Minimum Wage

Wednesday 26 June, Honiara – SICCI on Tuesday 26th June 2019 presented its submission, containing views of its members, to the Labour Advisory Board's (LAB) review into the country's minimum wage.

SICCI's submission, as the peak body representing private sector in the country, focuses on issues specifically relating to the Solomon Islands business community, to provide the LAB with a clear view of how their businesses anticipate impacts of an increased minimum wage.

Two of the country's largest employers in the country, Soltuna Limited and Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Limited (GPPOL), both of whom are active members of the Chamber, also made presentations on the possible impacts of the proposed 100 % increase of minimum wage to the LAB meeting.

The SICCI submission is a compilation of views from businesses after SICCI reached out to its members for their general views, firstly on the minimum wage review and secondly, commenting on the announced increase to \$8 per hour.

Presenting the submission on behalf of members, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Atenasi Ata reiterated SICCI's stand in supporting a review and increase of the minimum wage.

However, she noted that to ease the shock to employers, increases as large as that announced of 100%, is phased in over a period of time.

"The collective view of SICCI member companies is that the review is long overdue, but it is a process that should be conducted regularly so that substantial increases such as 100% increases are not necessary. An incremental approach to raising minimum wages in the country is a good thing – companies can factor in costs and impacts into their annual planning

"The collective view of SICCI member companies is that the review is long overdue, but it is a process that should be conducted regularly so that substantial increases such as 100% increases are not necessary."

-SICCI CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata

process.

"Along with the various considerations that the Board must take into account, we ask that the LAB ensures it gives weight to factors such as, the high mobility of the workforce in contrast to the high numbers of working age-individuals; the high unemployment rate in the country; rising operational costs for small business; and the small base of business investments in the country's economy.

"It is this last point especially that reinforces our call that the increase continues to be tiered according to industries, that is, maintaining the different minimum wages applicable to the agriculture and fishery sectors versus all other sectors. Large and important employers in the country will be severely affected such as Soltuna Company Ltd and GPPOL Company Ltd. These are sectors that bear special thought due to their importance to our economy," SICCI CEO, Ms Ata, said.

According to SICCI's submission to the Board, some employers will not be affected given that they are paying above \$8.00 per hour.

During its consultation with members, the SICCI Secretariat received suggested

timeframes of at least six (6) months to up to three (3) years for any new minimum wage rate to be implemented.

While acknowledging the fact that raising the minimum wage will enable low income earners to cope with the high cost of living in the country, food, electricity, rent, transport and school fees, SICCI CEO, Ms Ata urges that small businesses in the country must also be well consulted on the proposed minimum wage increase.

"Small businesses including those in the provinces, especially retail, security and service businesses might experience hardships with a very substantial jump such as a 100% increase. For bigger companies an increase such as suggested brings into the conversation, re-examining of benefits that workers currently receive like housing, and utilities support," she said.

Finally, the SICCI CEO said: "We urge the LAB to recognise the needs of workers and families of Solomon Islands of course. But also, to remember that it has the responsibility to balance this with the national goal of economic development, high level of productivity and the desirability of attaining and maintain a high level of employment."



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TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP:

Member

- 1-9 employees \$550
- 10-19 employees \$1,600
- 20- 49 employees \$3,300

- 50-100 employees \$9,000
- 100+ employees \$12,000

Umbrella \$12,000

Affiliate \$4,000

Honorary

PM reaffirms support to private sector



Prime Minister Hon Manasseh Sogavare addressing the business community during the 2019 PM's Business Breakfast and his Government's 100 days policy priorities launch in late May.

Friday 31 May, Honiara – Prime Minister Hon Manasseh Sogavare has commended the role SICCI is playing in representing private sector in the country and reaffirmed his Government's support towards private sector led growth.

Hon Sogavare made these remarks on Friday 31st May, 2019 during the Prime Minister's Breakfast, an annual event hosted and organized by SICCI to give the Prime Minister the opportunity to formally engage and address the business community on a range of topics from policy priorities, updates on key infrastructure developments to generic themes.

The Prime Minister commended SICCI for its commitment in continuing discussions with Government through the Advisory Group, which comes under the MoU signed between SICCI and the Government in 2017.

"I believe this is an important platform where the Government and the private sector are able to share views and ideas on the best possibilities to improve the lives



Members of the business community at the 2019 PM's Business Breakfast.

of our people," Hon Sogavare said. "The challenges, hopes and aspirations that the Chamber of Commerce have highlighted are indeed those our people and the country," he added.

The Prime Minister said his DCGA Government will pursue appropriate policy reforms as well as necessary legislative and regulatory reforms to

ensure proper and effective mitigation actions are taken.

Hon Sogavare reiterated that Government appreciates and reaffirms that the private sector has always been and will always continue to be the main driving force for economic growth in the Solomon Islands.

SICCI's engagement with the DCGA Government

Continued partnership with Gov't

Thursday 2 May, Honiara – SICCI maintained that the private sector plays a critical role for economic growth and jobs creations in the country, as such, the Chamber is eager to continue on the strong partnership it has established with the Solomon Islands Government.

SICCI, on behalf of its members, the business community and the Solomon Islands private sector, acknowledges the Democratic Coalition Government for Advancement (DCGA) led by newly elected Prime Minister, Hon Manasseh Sogavare and pledges its support to the new Government.

"The Chamber welcomes Hon. Manasseh Sogavare as our new Prime Minister and congratulates his new cabinet of ministers following their official appointments to the respective portfolios.

"We are confident that the DCGA administration will strive to the best of their ability to enhance the lives of Solomon Islanders, considering all the time, the sum of its efforts across both public and private sector," SICCI Chairman, Jay Bartlett, said.

"We look forward to continuing discussions on policy directions that



SICCI CEO Atenasi Ata with Minister of Forestry Hon Ismael Avui and Minister of Development Planning, Hon Rick Houenipwela.

enable businesses to grow, and we look forward to keeping the Government well informed. Clear direction and appropriate action I believe will reap demographic and economic dividends in the coming years," the SICCI Chair added.

SICCI Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Atenasi

Ata says the Chamber and its team within the Secretariat looks forward to engaging on key impediments to growth, progressing the formalised Public Private Partnership (PPP) through the MOU signed with the Government in 2017.

SICCI's courtesy visit to Prime Minister Sogavare

Thursday 23 May, Honiara – Representing the interest and concerns of the private sector, SICCI on Wednesday 22nd May 2019 paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Honourable Manasseh Sogavare.

This is part of the Chamber's efforts to continue building whole-of-government support for private sector engagement and participation in key economic areas in the development of Solomon Islands.

Members of the SICCI Board were led by Chairman, Jay Bartlett, Vice Chairman, David Rupokets, Board members Craig Gibsone, Hilda Lamani, Ricky Fuo'o and SICCI Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Atenasi Ata.

The courtesy visit was an opportunity for the SICCI Board to personally congratulate the Hon Prime Minister on his successful election, touch base on key private sector issues and assuring the Chamber's



SICCI Board members and SICCI CEO during the courtesy call to the Prime Minister.

willingness to work in partnership with the Government.

Chairman, Jay Bartlett highlighted during the visit three key events in the SICCI 2019 Calendar that would be of sufficient

interest to the Honourable Prime Minister.

The three events include the Prime Minister's Breakfast, the Australia-Solomon Islands Business Forum and the Business Excellence Awards.

Australia—Pacific Islands
Business Council

SICCI
SOLOMON ISLANDS CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



11th Australia Solomon Islands Business Forum

Heritage Park Hotel, Honiara, Solomon Islands | 11 - 12 September 2019

“PARTNERSHIPS FOR SHARED PROSPERITY”

events.apibc.org.au/event/11ASIF

SICCI acknowledges NZ Pacific Mission

Thursday 6 June, Honiara – SICCI acknowledges the recent visit by the high-level New Zealand delegation as part of the 2019 Pacific Mission as an opportunity for the private sector to build partnership and beneficial relationships.

The New Zealand delegation was led by Deputy Prime and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Winston Peters who met with Solomon Islands Prime Minister Hon Manasseh Sogavare strengthening the relationship and friendship between the two countries in a way that will further enhance the mutual benefits to Solomon Islanders and New Zealanders.

Also travelling on the Mission were a broad range of business and Pasifika representatives from New Zealand with

important links into Melanesia.

SICCI, as the peak body representing private sector, presented to the mission a Business Breakfast on Wednesday 5th June 2019, where local businesses and the private sector had the opportunity to engage with their counterparts who were part of the Pacific Mission.

"The success in the Pacific is fundamentally built and underpinned by partnerships and beneficial relationships. In that regard for the Chamber of Commerce to Partner with the Pacific Mission I trust is a wonderful opportunity," SICCI Board Chairman, Mr Jay Bartlett, said.

Mr Bartlett informed the visiting business delegation that SICCI, as a Chamber, represents the voice

of business and plays a key role in harmonizing, advocating and elevating issues of key concern.

"Beyond our mandated role and corporate imperatives, the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce is more than that – we represent an emerging cohort in leadership, thinking and innovation."

"Bridging both the inter-generational leadership intermission and reshaping undervalued cohesion that exists between Government and Business are what we are most focused on, and to see the Pacific mission consist of both Business leaders and High-level Government Officials is extremely encouraging," the SICCI Chair said.



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Visit our office located at the Hyndai Mall,
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application form.

For Membership enquiries contact
Naomi Mara on phone 39542 or email
services@solomonchamber.com.sb

Our strive for excellence in Governance



Participants of SICCI's third Directorship Programme with their certificates.

Tuesday 21 May, Honiara – As an organization that strives to achieve excellence in corporate governance, SICCI has delivered a third Essential to Directorship Programme in Honiara from 14-17 May 2019.

Twenty-six (26) individuals ranging from Board Directors, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), General Managers and Senior Managers from Solomon Water, Solomon Islands National Provident Fund (SINPF), Solomon Telekom Company Limited, Bulk Shop, ANZ Bank, Tongs Corporation, South Pacific Oil (SPO) Limited, Toner Shop Limited, Island Enterprises Limited, Eagon Plantation Limited took part in the training.

This programme offers a comprehensive introduction to boardroom governance.

It exposes participants to international best-practice in developing organisational strategy, oversight of finance, managing risk and assessing performance. It is delivered over four days.

First delivered in-country last year in July, with a second offering in November, participants have come from various industries in the country including construction, tourism, agribusiness, industrial goods, water and power utilities, fisheries and telecommunications.

As one of its long-term goals, SICCI aims to contribute to enhancing executive performance in the country.

The Chamber sees this raising of

corporate governance standards as important not only for SOEs and companies, but also for churches, civil society and government agencies as ultimately it will lead to improved or enhanced performance.

SICCI acknowledges its successful partnership with IODNZ and the strong support from the Australian High Commission, British High Commission, Solomon Power, Solomon Water, Sol-Law Lawyers, Solomon Telekom Company Limited and Heritage Park Hotel towards the Directorship Programme.

This recent group of participants, now represent seventy-six (76) Directors, CEOs and Senior Managers who have been educated in international best practice of corporate governance.

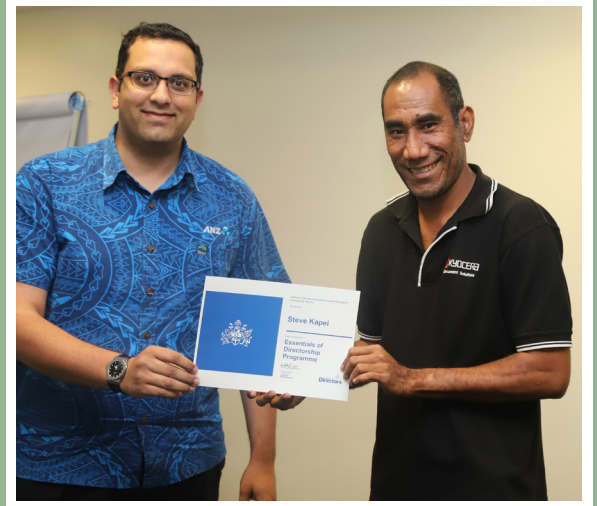
Governance plays a strong role in defining leadership and management practices that achieves long-term success.

-Hilda Lamani,
SICCI Board Member & Manager Star Supplies



“SICCI is proud to be offering this high calibre programme in the Solomon Islands. Not only targeting SOEs and multinational companies, it is an extremely relevant course also for family owned businesses who are thinking of enhancing governance and formalising strategy.”

-Sohaib Mahmood,
SICCI Board Member & Country Head for ANZ



SICCI supports CBSI's emphasis on broad-based economy

Tuesday 21 May, Honiara – SICCI supports the statement made by Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) Governor, Mr Denton Rarawa emphasizing that the country could lay the foundation of a broad-based economy by putting more emphasis on agriculture and tourism.

The Chamber says the statement made by the Governor during the launch of the 2018 CBSI Annual Report on Monday 20th May 2019 must be seriously considered if we are to transform the country's economy in order to sustain the rapidly growing population.

Executive Officer leading the Chamber's advocacy department, Mr. Nelson Kere, says with the reality that forestry will decelerate, taking the initiative to be sustainable will mean that the Government will need to build up its investment in alternative economic drivers.

He also reiterated the Governor's call stating that Solomon Islands needs growth that is inclusive so that those in the rural areas can also benefit from development.

"Tourism offers an important alternative pathway for economic growth. Solomon Islands is considered to have world class tourism potential and with Government support the country could unlock this potential and gradually provide a more sustainable source of growth.

"Agriculture is an inclusive growth area because most people in our rural areas can participate and benefit from it," Mr. Kere said.

CBSI Governor, Mr Rarawa said to



CBSI Governor, Denton Rarawa handover a copy of the CBSI 2018 Annual Report to the new Minister of Finance and Treasury, Hon Harry Kuma.

realistically grow the economy without overheating it, we should be growing at an average of 6% over the medium term.

"To achieve this, we should address structural issues in the economy, and appropriately invest in the growth areas that we can realistically develop and sustain.

"To grow at 6 percent means it will only take us around 12 years to double growth, and that rate is just right to deliver a growth that is inclusive, cross cutting and achievable," he said.

To reach this point, Mr Rarawa said we should lay the foundations of a broad-based economy by putting more emphasis on agriculture and tourism, without disregarding other sectors.

He said to revitalize the agricultural sector, the country should seriously invest in replenishing the stock of our current commodities over the

next three to four years, grow new cash crops and enhance and properly resource the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) and associated agencies to appropriately support farmers, while at the same time, liaising with development partners and programs on the most effective interventions.

With respect to tourism, Mr Rarawa said this is a growth sector with cross cutting positive spill overs and can be a catalyst for infrastructure, employment, education, wholesale and retail, transport and technology development.

"These are just some ways we could shape our economy as we see slowdowns in the forestry industry, and strive to diversify the economy, there are of course other important sectors as well," he said.

According to CBSI, the economic forecast for the next four years is for an average growth of 4.5 percent.

'PATHWAY TO FUTURE CAREERS'

Successful hosting of 2019 Careers Market



Wednesday 29 May, Honiara – As the body representing the private sector, we are focused on supporting businesses to thrive and create jobs, but at the same time we need to inspire our students, our young generation to aim high and to reach their full potential, as they are our future workforce as well as business entrepreneurs.

SICCI CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata, uttered these sentiments at the 2019 Careers Market on Wednesday 29th May 2019 at Woodford International School grounds.

This year's Careers Market was marked with the theme 'Pathway to future

Careers', with the one-day event attracting hundreds of students from schools in and around Honiara.

School students in and around Honiara will have the opportunity to explore future career opportunities including the types of skills and expertise that businesses are looking for.

The Careers Market programme included an exhibition of businesses who are members of the Chamber of Commerce as well as other organisations, Government ministries and presentations made by key speakers and stall displays set up around the field for students,

parents and members of the general public to visit.

There were twenty-five (25) stalls this year.

The students also had the opportunity to listen to inspirational talks from Dr Welshman Gegeu, Dr Derek Mane and Pilot Alex Takola.

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI), Mr Riley Mesepitu was keynote speaker at the 2019 Careers Market.

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Students from participating schools listening to the address by SICCI CEO Atenasi Ata at the 2019 Careers Market.

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"This Careers Market is an avenue where young people get to think about their future and the importance of getting an education so you can either get a job or start your own business.

"I'd like to make mention that young people must develop the idea of starting their own business and not just looking for a job," he said.

Mr Mesepitu assured his ministry's continuous support towards the event going into the future.

Mr Alex Haro, Principal of Woodford International Secondary School, said hosting such an event as Careers Market encourages young people to think about their future and the importance of an education that matches their goal in careers.

"This is also a great opportunity for businesses and organizations to engage with the form 5 - 7 students by not just talking to them about their job, but also reinforcing the importance of staying at school and improving their skills now so that the base is set to achieve whatever path they choose," he said.

The Careers Market was organized through the partnership between Woodford International School, SICCI and SISBEC.

It is the third such event since the inaugural Careers Market in 2017.



Students of Betikama Adventist College with their SICCI pamphlets.



Students learning about the country's international port at the SIPA stall.



Rolland Ko'ufoli of SIBC explaining the role of a broadcaster.



Solomon Airlines' stall was a popular one at the event.



GPPOL's stall at the 2019 Careers Market.



Ministry of Commerce providing information to students.

About the revised Credit Guarantee Scheme

SMEs who are members of SICCI had the opportunity to be informed about the revised SME Credit Guarantee Scheme.

This was during a BA5 Information Session on Friday 3rd April, 2019.

Up to forty-four (44) SMEs had the chance to listen to speakers from Government, from the Central Bank as well as BSP, to understand how the Credit Guarantee Scheme works, significant changes to the scheme, eligibility criteria, processes and current uptake of the scheme.

The SME Credit Guarantee scheme is an initiative created by the Solomon Islands Government (SIG). With oversight by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour & Immigration (MCILI), it is administered by CBSI through a special fund established to support the Scheme.

The scheme is to encourage locally-owned businesses to participate in the economy by providing collateral guarantee. Providing security where the potential credit-applicant comes short, the scheme assists them to access finance from the five (5) participating Finance and Credit providers under the scheme.

SICCI envisaged that the awareness session will generate interests among SMEs to utilize the range of commercial finance options supported by the collateral guarantee made possible under the scheme, to support in growing their businesses.

Presentation were made by the Director, Business and Cooperatives Development within the MCILI, Mr Morris Rapa'ai, CBSI Project Officer: Project Support Unit, Currency and Banking, Ms Rachel Stewart and Bank South Pacific (BSP) SME and Loan Officer, Mr Ernest Tura.

Previously known as the 'Micro Small Medium Enterprises Business Loan Guarantee Scheme', among the significant changes made to the revised Credit Guarantee Scheme is the expansion of guarantee coverage to all types of commercial finance and expansion to include other Finance and Credit Institutions.

The revised scheme also includes now two non-bank financial Institutions. All participating institutions offer a guarantee of 90% for all SME Loans. The scheme will incur for the successful applicant, a fee of 2% of the Guaranteed amount.

It will provide for new finance required for business growth or expansion – not refinancing an existing credit facility. The guarantee can be claimed in the event of borrower's default meaning that no funds are provided directly to the SME.

For commercial finance, the amount can range from \$50,000 - \$1 million. The Maximum Credit Guarantee is \$300,000.

To be eligible, SMEs must be formally registered and locally owned business entity employing 1 – 50 people. The guarantee is up to 90% for all eligible SMEs. It must also demonstrate that it is 80% owned and controlled by indigenous Solomon Islanders.

To initiate the process, the SME can approach the finance provider of their choice for a loan. The lender or financial institution will have its usual credit and repayment requirements that the borrower SME will have to consider in their loan application. If the lender assesses the loan

as eligible, but the SME cannot meet the security requirements, then the lender or financial institution on behalf of the borrower, makes a submission to CBSI for guarantee support.

The role of the scheme is to bridge the gap between what the bank requires as collateral security and the collateral that the borrower can provide.

CBSI will undertake its own assessment of adherence to the eligibility criteria and its due diligence on the involved SME.

When CBSI is vetting the nomination from the lender, the lender or financial institution and the borrower SME may be requested to supply more information.

Once satisfied with the submission, CBSI will approve the nomination and issue a commitment letter and contract signed by both parties before disbursement of funds to the borrower SME.

SICCI attends World Chambers Congress



Thursday 13 June, Honiara – Over 1,000 business and Chamber of Commerce delegates from around the world connected at the Windsor Expo Convention Center in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the 11th World Chambers Congress which concluded on Friday 14 June 2019.

SICCI Board Chairman, Jay Bartlett was among international private sector representatives at the three-day event that brought together chamber leaders, business heads and key government figures.

Organised by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the ICC World Chambers Federation, and Brazilian Confederation of Trade and Business Association, the 11th World Chambers Congress took place from 12-14 June and examined some

of the most pressing issues facing chambers and their respective business communities.

They include global trade reform, digital transformation, climate change and sustainable development, and workforce skills development.

The Congress is hosted for the first time in Brazil under the theme "creating a shared future" and brought together chamber and business leaders from over 80 countries to discuss solutions that enable peace, prosperity and opportunity for all through private enterprise.

Previously held in Sydney in 2017, the Congress provides delegates a unique opportunity to gain insights from business leaders, chamber heads and policymakers from around the world.

SolChoc Festival 2019



John Paul Alasia
Export Industry Development Officer

Greetings members from the EIDO desk! SICCI through the EIDO department is proud to once again work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders in hosting the SolChoc Festival 2019 in June.

The SolChoc Festival 2019 is the fourth of a series of events undertaken since 2016 to promote and boost the cocoa sector, improve the quality of local cocoa and chocolate and to improve access to international markets. In 2016 and 2017, the event was supported by PHAMA, Commodities Export Marketing Agency (CEMA), the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) with RDP, chocolate-producer NGO, ADRA, and the Cocoa Industry Working Group. In 2018 Strongim Bisnis Program and SICCI joined these organizations and continued as members of the organizing committee and make financial and/or in-kind contributions to the costs of the festival.

The overarching message for the SolChoc Festival was to build pride in Solomon



Islands cocoa ('Build Pride in our Products'). The primary objectives of the event were to promote and link Solomon Islands' cocoa to international markets and provide networking opportunities. The event

also promotes learning opportunities, good agricultural practices, value-added processes, and highlight the importance of cocoa quality for local farmers and buyers.



PHOTOS: Local cocoa farmers and international guests at the SolChocFestival also went on an exciting field trip to Blackpost, East Guadalcanal.



Naomi Mara
Membership & Services Officer

Hello from the membership department!

It is already mid-2019 and I hope business has been going well.

Events:

First and foremost, thank you for your continued attendance to all SICCI events this first half of the year. I hope you find these events useful to your business – whether it be expanding your network, gaining useful information or having the opportunity to showcase your products and services. I also hope that other information shared through the SICCI network has been useful to you.

In terms of membership events, we held at least one event per week in the month of May.

On 3 May 2019, the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) together with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour, and Immigration (MCIL) hosted an Information Session on the SME Credit Guarantee Scheme. SME members were informed of the significant changes on the revised scheme, its purpose and the process by which to acquire loan under the scheme.

The third Directorship Program was held on 14-17 May 2019. This means more than seventy people in the Solomons have now successfully undergone this training.

We are determined to continue our outreach to the provinces. This year we partnered with SISBEC to provide Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting training to businesses in the provinces. I accompanied a SISBEC trainer to Gizo on 21-24 May 2019 kicking off the first of the four provincial trainings.

The Careers Market held on 29 May 2019 saw more than twenty business



Business representatives who participated in the Booking and Basic Accounting training in Auki, Malaita Province from 25-28 June 2019.

houses and other institutions gather to provide high school students with information to help them choose their future career paths. The Careers Market is an annual event hosted in partnership with Woodford International School and SISBEC. The organisers wish to acknowledge the sponsors and supporters for this event.

Another major event is the Prime Minister's Breakfast hosted on 31 May 2019 where the Honourable Prime Minister graced the business community with his presence. He also officially launched his government's 100 Days Policy Priorities during this event.

Solomon Power hosted a BA5 under the theme 'Green Energy Initiatives of Solomon Power' on 6 June 2019. Solomon Power informed members of the main challenges they are facing, their current work and projects, and future plans or way forward.

Finally, on membership events, I am writing this update to you from Auki. On Tuesday 25 May 2019, we started the Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting Training for our members and other SME's in Auki.

The last two provincial visits will be to Kirakira on 16-19 July 2019, and Munda/Noro on 30 July to 2 August 2019. If you have branches in these places or have contacts there, do inform them of the training opportunities.

Membership:

Our membership is growing both in Honiara and the provinces. Please join me

in welcoming our new members below.

- Tourism Solomons (Tourism, Travel, and Leisure)
- JF Consulting (Architectural, Engineering & Civil Works)
- Mauritewa (Architectural, Engineering & Civil Works)
- Y-Sato Marine (Wholesaler & Retailer)
- PMK Transport Service (Logistics)
- AP Family Associates (Agribusiness)
- Honiara Digital Printing & Stationary Supplies (Printing & Stationary)
- Panatina Chemist Ltd (Health Services)
- ACC Quantum Energy Solomons (Health Services)
- National Hosting Authority (Local NGO)
- E7 Ventures (Construction and Building Materials)
- Rekona Lodge (Property Development & Real Estate)
- Rekona Flourish Lodge (Property Development & Real Estate)
- Pacific Insurance Brokers (Professional Services)

There are still some outstanding membership renewal subscriptions. If you are having difficulty in paying your renewal subscription, please let me know so we can discuss a payment plan for you.

If you are interested in hosting a BA5 event, kindly get in touch with me on services@solomonchamber.com.sb or phone 39542.

Improving financial record keeping for provincial businesses

"A lot of us small businesses in the provinces do not have access to such trainings and I believe this will go a long way in helping us manage our business effectively."

Lucie Opaka is the owner of E7 Ventures, a small business operating in the Western Provincial capital of Gizo.

Ms Opaka was among other small businesses who participated in a business training focusing on 'Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting' hosted by SICCI in Gizo from 21-24 May 2019.

"This was the first time for me to attend such trainings. The structure in which the training was delivered was good as it was easy for us to understand the content and the trainer was also helpful in answering our questions," Ms Opaka said.

This training is part of SICCI's continuous efforts to build and improve the capacity and ability of businesses to achieve their potential, in this case those in the provinces.

Following the trip to Gizo, SICCI Membership & Services Officer, Ms Naomi Mara travelled to Auki in Malaita Province in late June where 12 business owners and representatives of businesses there underwent a similar training.

"The training is very useful as it is tailored to suit businesses in the provinces," Solomon Alufoo'oa from Legacy Press, said.

Legacy Press is a SICCI member based in Auki and according to Mr Alufoo'oa, they have been using MYOB and this training has helped him understand the basics of accounting and bookkeeping.

Mr Alufoo'oa is now looking forward to train his staff after successfully completing the training.

Owner of DST Travellers Lodge in Auki, Philip Solodia meanwhile thanked SICCI for bringing such important business trainings to the provinces.

He said the training has really helped participants to understand how to manage their businesses better, by keeping accurate and updated business records and improving bookkeeping management.

"Now some of us understand the importance of business management," Mr Solodia said.

SICCI is implementing training for its province-based members, trialling a partnership with Solomon Islands Small Business Enterprise Centre (SISBEC) to deliver this Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting training.

SISBEC Manager, Mr Ben Nginabule said the training outcome is to help business operators to improve their financial record keeping so that they can have reliable financial reports to help them in managing their businesses effectively.

SICCI will be conducting two more provincial visits this year to Kirakira, Makira/Ulawa Province and to Munda and Noro in the Western province in July and early August.



A business owner in Gizo, Western Province during the Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting training hosted by SICCI.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 4

2023 Pacific Games Launch Event

Host: Hosting Authority

Venue : Heritage Park Hotel,

July 12

Business After 5 (SICCI updates)

Host: SICCI

Venue: SINU Local Fusion Cafe

July 26

Business After 5

Host: Woodford School

Venue: Heriage Park Hotel

For events enquiries contact our
Membership & Services Officer,
Naomi Mara on phone 39542/39543 or
email
services@solomonchamber.com.sb

YECSI on the move!



TEAM YECSI...Coordinator, John Wopereis welcoming two new members of the YECSI team, Chantelle Lincoln and Irish Melaume.



John Wopereis
YECSI Coordinator

Over the past few weeks, the Young Entrepreneurs Council Solomon Islands (YECSI) have been busy working on further establishing its team to help support the movement and growth of its programmes for members and aspiring youth.

The arrival of a new organisational development advisor from New Zealand through the support of VSA and the appointment of a new local membership and communications officer means the team are in a great position to ramp up the rest of the year's activities for a true YECSI 'iumi duim' year.

Teachim Me on the search for mentors!

YECSI's mentoring programme Teachim Me is almost at its half way point with its first 9 Honiara based business mentors/mentees.

The idea behind Teachim me is to match a young entrepreneur from the YECSI membership with an experienced business leader from the Private sector to give them the advice, confidence and support needed to run their own business. So far the programme has received great feedback and the team hope to showcase some of the results from these partnerships at an end of year event.

While the Honiara mentoring programme is full steam ahead, YECSI have started its search for business mentors in the western province to help play a part in coaching aspiring entrepreneurs in Munda and Gizo for the implementation of its provincial component of Teachim Me, set to take place in late July.

If you are interested or know of someone

who wants to get involved – please do contact us.

Upcoming Events

11 July - Ignite: Agripreneurs
5:30- 7:30pm

Agriculture is the backbone of the Solomon Islands. Discover the opportunities in this sector and learn about what's in the pipeline to improve the sector for the Agripreneurs of tomorrow.

Speakers include: YECSI agripreneurs, Ministry of Agriculture, PHAMA Plus, Central Bank Solomon Islands

YECSI have received continuous support from the business community and would like to acknowledge the dedication, commitment and support of key partners and supporters.

The work YECSI does would not be possible without the great people / organisations like yourselves.



Chantelle Lincoln
YECSI Organisational
development Adviser
(VSA Volunteer)

Chantelle is from Auckland, New Zealand and is a young, vibrant individual with a real passion to develop not only YECSI as an organization but also make an impact for our members.

Chantelle has a range of experience, her most recent role working at Auckland University of Technology where she worked with business and community partners while also coordinating student support initiatives for Maori and Pasifika students.

She holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Masters degree that focused on Social enterprise. She has a strong interest in education, growing strong communities and supporting young pacific peoples. YECSI are pleased to have Chantelle for the next 12 months.

✉ yec.development@solomonchamber.com.sb



Irish Melaume
YECSI Membership &
Communications Officer

Originally from Temotu and Guadalcanal, Irish was a stand-out applicant in the interview rounds and joins the team to take the lead on YECSI membership and communications.

She is a young, driven woman wanting to help young people realise their potential and achieve their dreams for a better Solomon Islands.

Irish joins YECSI with a wealth of experience having worked at SIWIBA as their administration and communications officer for 2 years and graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of South Pacific -a real asset to the team!

✉ yec.communications@solomonchamber.com.sb

YECSI launches business mentoring programme

Tuesday 7 May, Honiara – YECSI launched its first business mentoring programme on Thursday 2nd May, 2019.

Called 'Teachim Me', the programme offers mentoring opportunities for YECSI members where they can gain the ability to learn and improve their businesses by interacting with experienced mentor.

For this pilot programme, nine young entrepreneurs (mentees) are paired with experienced mentors who are also members of SICCI.

The Teachim Me programme is envisioned to run for a period of 4 months with mentoring sessions occurring on a fortnightly basis at a venue agreed upon by the mentor and mentee.

This is an opportunity for the mentors, comprising of general managers, experienced business owners and a consultant to share their skills, knowledge and experiences with the upcoming entrepreneurs.

YECSI Coordinator, John Wopereis is proud that YECSI has achieved this major



Group session for the nine mentees and mentors participating in YECSI's pilot Mentoring Programme.

milestone in 2019.

"This is Solomon Islands' first mentoring program developed purely for young entrepreneurs.

"Mentoring plays a vital role in achieving our vision of fostering a conducive environment for young entrepreneurs in order to contribute to the socio-economic development of our nation," he said.

Mentoring is been identified as a key ingredient to the success of any

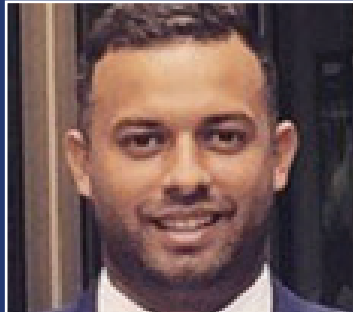
entrepreneur as mentors provide feedback, expertise and most importantly experience which entrepreneurs can learn and grow from.

Having a mentor can make a huge difference in the journey of an entrepreneur, however to date there has been limited mentoring opportunities for young entrepreneurs.

YECSI believes that its 'Teachim Me' programme will bridge that gap.

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MEET THE SICCI TEAM



Atenasi Ata

Chief Executive Officer

Atenasi is an emerging women leader who wants to see people in the Solomon Islands informed, engaged and invested in the future of the nation's development with dignity and a high quality of life. She started with SICCI as the CEO in September 2018. She sees the private sector and SICCI as having a significant role to play in enabling change that directly impacts people's lives. Atenasi holds a Masters in Law and Development from Melbourne Law School in Australia. Before she joined SICCI, Atenasi worked at the National Parliament, the Australian Government's bilateral aid program and UN Women.



Nelson Kere

Executive Officer

Nelson Kere is responsible for maintaining strong network for the Chamber. He ensures SICCI engages with the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and its partners, in an approach promoting partnerships on core issues for the private sector.

Nelson joined SICCI in April 2019.

He is a trained lawyer by profession. Nelson has previous work experiences with Transparency Solomon Islands (TSI), Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission and with the Australian High Commission's Governance Program as a program manager.



John Kanai Ta'amora

Advocacy Officer

John Kanai is responsible for the Chamber's Advocacy Plan 2015-2019. Part of this role is to do researches that will help assist members of SICCI and the Solomon Islands Government in making better policies that are mutually benefiting. John Kanai was recruited in April 2017.

He recently completed his Master of Arts thesis in International Affairs in February 2017 on Solomon Islands Foreign Policy and the Impact of RAMSI and has a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Economics and Politics at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji.



John Paul Alasia

Export Industry Development Officer

John Paul oversees the Chamber's agribusiness activities and the export industry and works closely with Rural Development Program (RDP). His role involves engaging with the five industry working groups Cocoa, Coconut, Horticulture, Sawn Timber and Seafood.

John joined SICCI in May 2017. He previously worked as a Livestock Field Officer at the Taiwan Technical Mission Farm at King George VI in East Honiara in 2016. He graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Agriculture Applied Science at the University of South Pacific, Samoa in 2014.



Shaun Konaga

Administrative Manager & Assistant Finance Officer

Shaun manages the SICCI Office administration through reception, office and printing supplies, events management as well as assisting financial duties on salaries and finance records.

Before she came to SICCI she was an assistant administration officer with the events company Mac Group and made her potential known during Mac Group's preparation of the SICCI Business Excellence Awards in 2015.



Naomi Mara

Membership Officer

Naomi looks after the SICCI Membership database and takes lead in organising SICCI events such as the popular Business After 5. She joined SICCI in November 2017.

Naomi previously worked with the Youth@Work program following her completion of studies in early 2017. She has a degree in Social Science obtained at the James Cook University in Townsville, Australia.



Philip Lilomo

Media & Communications Officer

Philip drives the SICCI Communications Strategy. He maintains the Chamber's branding, design and graphic visibility, website administration, social media management and deals with the mainstream media contents. Philip also manages the flow of information in the SICCI network.

He previously worked in the mainstream media for nine years for Solomon Star, Sunday Isles and Island Sun Newspapers since 2008 as a news reporter, photographer and became sub-editor before he joined the Chamber in June 2018.



John Wopereis

Coordinator, Young Entrepreneurs Council Solomon Islands (YEC SI)

John is responsible for launching and building the Young Entrepreneurs Council (YEC) program. This is a new partnership program between the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) and the Solomon Islands Government. He was recruited for the position in May 2018.

John previously worked with Skye Eye for two years in a management role. He graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand.



Ruth Maetala

Coordinator, IFC-SICCI Gender Program

Ruth will support delivery of the Pacific Investing in Women program, working closely with the IFC Gender Team in Sydney and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce (SICCI).

Prior to joining the SICCI-IFC gender project in October 2016, Ruth worked with the Solomon Islands Government as Director of Research and Policy Unit of the Ministry of Women, Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Agreement (SINPA) as the coordinator and undertook tasks such as providing advice to member NGOs, Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (facilitate annual reflection workshops) and reporting to DFAT.

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