



SICCI  
THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
IN FIJI



# 2019

# BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Partnerships for a shared Future

Saturday 9th November  
Coral Sea Resort

Welcome to the Chamber's  
Newsletter!

JULY - AUGUST 2019



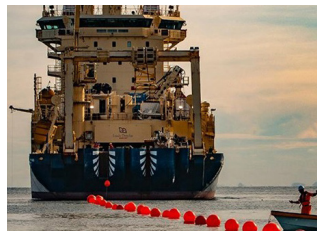
## 'Convene the Road Transport Board'

SICCI has called on the Ministry of Infrastructure & Development (MID) to convene the Road Transport Board (RTB). SICCI firmly believes that the Road Transport Board (RTB) will ensure that traffic rules are enforced. More on pages 4 & 5.

Private Sector  
encouraged  
to implement  
CSR



SICCI  
welcomes  
undersea sea  
cable



'Waka Mere'  
offers driver  
training for  
women



2019 SICCI  
training  
workshop for  
SMEs





# 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](http://www.solomonchamber.com.sb)

## FOLLOW US ON:



## 2019 Business Awards

2019 Business  
Excellence  
Awards promises  
to be the best yet,  
set for Nov 9

p4



## Tripartite Forum

Ensuring  
a smooth  
transition to an  
environmentally  
sustainable  
world of work

p9

## Advocacy Round-table

As part of its  
Advocacy efforts  
hosted round-  
table meetings on  
Infrastructure, Land  
& Agriculture

p12



## 'Home Blo lumi'

YECSI's Home Blo  
lumi Program strives  
to build a culture of  
entrepreneurship within  
our youth

p14

# The Business Excellence Awards is back for 2019 and promises to be the best yet

- *Two new award categories added to 2019 BEA*



Winner of the Prime Minister's Business Excellence Award, Kokonut Pacific Solomon Islands (KKPSI) at the 2017 BEA. Pictured here, KPSI Managing Director, Bob Pollard (centre) and one of his employees, Douglas Doli and Member of Parliament for West Are'are, Hon John Maneniaru.

Thursday 29 August, Honiara - Solomon Islands leading business event, the Business Excellence Awards returns for the 6th time and will take place on Saturday 9th November at the Coral Sea Resort and Casino from 6:00pm.

The Business Excellence Awards (BEA) was initiated by SICCI with the support of the Solomon Islands Government in 2013 and has since been the premier event for Solomon Islands' business community attracting increased submissions over the years.

The BEA offers the chance to reinforce credibility, pursue new ventures, build profiles and unparalleled networking opportunities. Overall it is an occasion for celebrating success, sharing stories and inspiring others. The 2019 BEA promises to be the best yet.

Looking again to increase entrant numbers and to reach the wider business community, SICCI has decided to revamp the award categories by adding two new categories for the 2019 BEA.

The two new awards categories are 'YECSI Entrepreneur of the year' and 'Business Contribution to Sustainable Development

and Community'.

This year eleven (11) businesses and/or individuals will again be honoured at the award ceremony in the following categories: Entrepreneur of the Year, Large Business of the Year, Medium Business of the Year, Small Business of the Year, New Business of the Year, Business Contribution to the Community Award, Innovation & Technology Award, Special Awards, Agribusiness of the Year, Tourism Business of the Year and the Prime Minister's Business Excellence Award.

The awards ceremony gives the perfect platform for business owners to take a fresh look at their operation and have it assessed by experts. A new panel of independent experts will again be selected to judge the awards.

SICCI is pleased to once again be partnering with the Solomon Islands Government to host this event.

The 2019 BEA will have the theme 'Partnerships for a shared future'.

Chair to SICCI Board, Mr Jeremy Bartlett explains the theme:

"Now more than ever, the country needs

all the decision-makers from private sector, from Government and its partners working together to realise stronger economic growth. The Solomon Islands has a rapidly growing population that will demand more resourcing of services; thus, any investment today should be for sustained growth.

"National projects coming online in infrastructure, telecommunications, electricity they are catalysts for sure, however, it's the enabling framework that makes or break the development that our country needs. In that quandary we can see that partnership and collaboration between private sector and Government has to be fostered towards one common purpose. The theme therefore, reflects that sense of cross-roads that we are at now, in that the opportunities are there, we need to get on with the hard work to realise this future prosperous Solomon Islands."

The 2019 Business Excellence Awards will seek out the big names in the Solomon Islands commercial industry, looking for businesses whose creativity, innovation,

**continue next page**



from previous page

capability and strong leadership have helped them achieve success.

In addition to an engaging award ceremony, you can once again expect an evening with inspiring keynote speeches and exciting performances from our local talent.

Nominations are now open and SICCI is calling on all businesses to enter relevant categories and you will be able to compete for up to two awards.

The Prime Minister's Business Excellence Award will be the only category your business cannot enter, being a judges' only decision.

If you have never taken the opportunity to enter your business in this prestigious awards event previously, this is your chance to be recognised on a national scale.

To nominate your business or another outstanding business you know of please contact the SICCI office on 39542 and speak with Naomi Mara or email [services@solomonchamber.com.sb](mailto:services@solomonchamber.com.sb)



Applications can also be downloaded from our website [www.solomonchamber.com.sb](http://www.solomonchamber.com.sb)

Nominations close Friday 18th October 2019.

Tickets to the Business Excellence Awards are on sale now in the following categories: For SICCI members, rates are \$500 per person for small-sized businesses; \$600 per person for medium-sized businesses, and Corporates tickets are available at \$1300 per person. We now have tables of 12 and tables of 10

available for Corporates. Tables of 12 will be available for BEA sponsors. For non-members the tickets are \$750 per person. All tickets can be purchased through the SICCI office by calling 39542.

This will be a sell-out event so get in early!

To become a sponsor of the 2019 Business Excellence Awards please contact Melanie Champion at [melanie@macgrouplimited.com.au](mailto:melanie@macgrouplimited.com.au)

## SICCI calls on MID to convene Road Transport Board

Wednesday 24 July, Honiara - SICCI has called on Government through the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development (MID) to convene the Road Transport Board (RTB).

The RTB has not been activated since its establishment in 2009.

SICCI firmly believes that its convening will ensure that traffic rules are enforced.

SICCI Board Member and Honiara businessman, Sir Bruce Saunders says until the RTB is formed and operating, the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) has no power in imposing penalties when taking control of the traffic management in the City.

One practical way this can be done would be in imposing penalties in managing traffic in Honiara City.

The RTB was set up by the 2009 Traffic Amendment Act. This Act placed responsibility for the licensing and regulation of road transport, and the enforcement of traffic regulations with the



RTB.

The Board itself will consist of a mix of Government representatives, RSIPF and key stakeholders including the Permanent Secretary of MID as the

**SICCI Board Member and Honiara businessman, Sir Bruce Saunders highlighting the need for MID to activate the Road Transport Board (RTB) during a stakeholders forum on infrastructure priorities for private sector hosted by SICCI in Honiara in August. Sir Bruce believes that unless the RTB is formed and operating, Police has no power in imposing penalties when taking control of the traffic management in the City.**

Chairperson, Clerk of the Honiara City Council (HCC), the Commissioner of Police (or the Commissioner's nominee),

continue next page





Traffic congestion in Honiara.

from previous page

the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Provincial Government (or the PS's nominee), the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce (or the PS's nominee), the Chief Mechanical Engineer of MID, a representative of the Chamber of Commerce (SICCI) and a representative each from taxi and bus operators.

SICCI CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata says the RTB will ensure functions and powers under the Traffic Act 2009 are well coordinated, administered and enforced.

"The RTB will allow for proper administration and better enforcement of our traffic laws, which could then include on-the-spot fines, appointment of enforcement officers and undertaking of prosecutions in the Magistrates' Courts by officers of the Board for minor offences," the SICCI CEO said.

According to the Act, the functions of the RTB are (a) to formulate, implement, monitor and review policies in relation to road transport, in conjunction with the functions of the Ministry to formulate nation transport policy; (b) to coordinate the implementation, administration and enforcement of this Act; (c) to prepare and submit quarterly reports to the Minister on the implementation, administration and enforcement of this Act; (d) to submit to the Minister any information in relation to this Act, if so required by the Minister; and (e) other functions given to it under this Act or any other written law.

The objective of the Act can be achieved by the activation of the RTB.

The RTB is responsible for carrying out the functions and powers under the Act for the registration and licensing of motor vehicles and licensing of drivers, including

*“Convening the Road Transport Board will be a significant step towards driving improvements to traffic congestion in Honiara which will impact productivity for private sector.”*

formulation of road transport policies for consideration by Government.

It also has the power to institute and conduct prosecutions for offences under this Act, its regulations or Highway Code, subject to any written directions by the Director of Public Prosecutions, and to exercise any other powers conferred on it under this Act or any other written law.

Therefore, SICCI appeals to the Permanent Secretary of MID and Chairman of the RTB to call for the first properly-constituted meeting of the Board.

Under a MoU SICCI and the RSIPF signed in 2018, an Executive Working Group was established and one of the issues discussed was the traffic congestion usually experienced at the Fishing village market.

SICCI representatives on this issue - Sir Bruce Saunders and Mr Toata Molea - are actively involved in a Traffic Working Committee comprising of RSIPF and SICCI representatives formed to find solutions to the issue.

They both agree that it is common knowledge that adhoc parking at the Fishing village market is the cause of the congestion.

"But without the RTB, Police does not have the authority to give infringement notices and enforce them. Only the RTB can have this power as stipulated in the Traffic

(Amendment) Act," says Sir Bruce.

SICCI Advocacy Officer, John Kanai Ta'amora said better improved flowing of traffic supports daily business activity and indicates a fast-growing economy.

Mr Ta'amora cautioned that the combination of continued economic growth and an increasing population means that congestion in Honiara is only going to get worse if not managed properly and in a well-coordinated manner.

"I believe that convening the Road Transport Board (RTB) will be a significant step towards driving improvements to traffic congestion in Honiara which will not only impact productivity for private sector but will also ensure that public servants get to work on time which in turn will positively improve the performance of our public service and our students will be able to arrive in schools on time," Mr Ta'amora further added.

Key research that supports this call by SICCI was one done by the Economics Association of Solomon Islands (EASI) in 2017.

The research found that the cost of the amount of time spent sitting in traffic due to congestion instead of working productively in the office is SBD3.7 million each year.



## JOIN US:

Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industry, SICCI, is the national body representing private sector in the country.



## 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**

# SICCI welcomes commencement of undersea cable



The cable ship, Ile De Brehat off the SMI seafront in July earlier this year commences laying of the cable from Honiara to Sydney, Australia.

Tuesday 16 July, Honiara – SICCI welcomes the much-awaited laying of the fibre optic cable between Honiara and Sydney, Australia as part of the Coral Sea Cable System which commenced in Honiara over the weekend.

SICCI, as the peak body representing private sector in the Solomon Islands, eagerly looks forward to the completion of this national project and the positive impacts it will have on private sector and community.

Chair of SICCI, Mr Jeremy Bartlett reiterated that the Coral Sea Cable System project has a huge potential to drive economic development for the Solomon Islands.

“Faster, affordable and reliable internet services in the Solomon Islands among others is a pre-condition to creating an enabling environment for business and investment and will have a positive cross cutting flow on effect.

“Among many benefits, the cable will boost the country’s internet speed connection, and for the average Solomon Islander, it should translate to cheaper communication rates. We are excited with its potential to enable innovations in systems and processes both for Government as well as for businesses. It could result in better and more efficient ways of doing business and most importantly, help bridge the gap between private sector

and public sector,” Mr Bartlett said.

The SICCI Chair acknowledges the Government for placing this project as a national development priority as part of its commitment to deliver tremendous social and economic benefits to the Solomon Islands people through the availability of fast reliable and cost-effective telecommunications services.

Mr Bartlett also thanked chiefs and tribal representatives in Guadalcanal Province for partnering with Government and calls for their continuous support which will enable all Solomon Islanders to benefit from this is national project.

The Coral Sea Cable System is a 4,700km long fibre optic submarine cable system linking Sydney, Australia, to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and Honiara, Solomon Islands. The project also includes a 730km submarine cable system connecting Honiara to Auki (Malaita Island), Noro (New Georgia Island) and Taro Island.

Australia will provide the majority funding for this cable, with PNG and Solomon Islands Governments jointly contributing up to one third of project costs.

The Coral Sea Cable System and the Solomon Islands Domestic Network are on track to be ready for service by December 2019.



# Waka Mere trains women to drive

Thursday 4 July, Honiara – 12 women including employees from two State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) who are participating in the Waka Mere Commitment to Action initiative have successfully completed an intensive six-week driver training and are now certified drivers.

This driver training course for women is part of Component three of Waka Mere, which focuses on increasing opportunities for women in non-traditional jobs.

IFC/SICCI Gender Coordinator, Ms Ruth Maetala congratulated the successful participants of the driving course and highlighted that training women to drive increases productivity and gives women independence.

On behalf of IFC and SICCI, Ms Maetala



**SICCI CEO  
Atenasi Ata**  
awards one of  
the participants  
her certificate  
for successfully  
completing the  
driver training.

acknowledged Solomon Water and Solomon Power for their support to empowering women in the workplaces of the private sector.

A brief ceremony was hosted on Wednesday 3rd June where SICCI CEO, Ms Atenasi Ata handed out certificates to the women for successfully completing the driver training.



*Not a member?  
Want to join?  
It just got easier.*

**Sign up online by visiting our newly re-launched website on  
[www.solomonchamber.com.sb](http://www.solomonchamber.com.sb)**

New looks, better feel ...awesome features!

Check our news updates, newsletter subscription, about us info, members portal, downloads section, and search for tenders function!



Visit our office located at the Hyndai Mall,  
First Floor, Suit 223 to collect an  
application form.

For Membership enquiries contact  
Naomi Mara on phone 39542 or email  
[services@solomonchamber.com.sb](mailto:services@solomonchamber.com.sb)





The two-day training event hosted by SICCI was planned to help these businesses in practical and growth-oriented ways.

## SICCI hosts training workshop for SMEs

Wednesday 28 August, Honiara – The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) hosted its annual Small Medium Enterprise (SME) training workshop from 26-27 August 2019 for small businesses in and around Honiara. The two-day training event was planned to help these businesses in practical and growth-oriented ways. The seventeen (17) participants benefited from sessions like 'Hiring that first worker'; 'Developing a business web presence'; 'Cyber security for businesses' and 'Accessing SME-specific Finance'.

The training workshop was supported by Solomon Telekom Ltd and Solomon Post.

Small businesses are the backbone of the Solomon Islands economy as they provide services and goods or products all over the country and provide much needed employment.

These businesses make up close to 70% of SICCI's membership.

SICCI's Membership and Services Officer, Ms Naomi Mara says efforts to build required infrastructure, ensuring good governance and providing social welfare for our citizens should be accompanied by strengthening of SMEs.

"SMEs can contribute significantly to



Workshop participants during a group work session at the two-day training workshop for SMEs.

our country's overall development. An efficient private sector can contribute, both directly and indirectly, to addressing high rate of unemployment, generating tax revenue, increasing wealth, and overall, contributing to a stronger nation.

"As such, advocating for an enabling environment where more SMEs are set-up, and helping existing SMEs by building their capacity through trainings like this, is vital to economic development in the country," Ms Mara, who organized the training workshop, said.

"Participants' early feedback have been overwhelmingly positive. They appreciated having access to the different specialists in HR, IT, company

law, and especially from the Central Bank in the one training event.

"Lessons from this approach in delivering short sessions on each topic, will inform what the Chamber develops for its training calendar next year, 2020," Ms Mara added.

SICCI acknowledges the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI), Central Bank of Solomon Islands, Pasifiki HR, Positive Development, Law Corporation, Credit Corporation Solomon Islands and Breadfruit Consulting for being generous partners for the 2019 SME training workshop.

Sponsors to the 2019 SME Training were Solomon Post and Solomon Telekom.



## UNDP encourages private sector, businesses to implement CSR



UNDP Partnership and Entrepreneurship Specialist, Mr Hunjai Lee.

Monday 22 July, Honiara – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Solomon Islands is encouraging private companies in Solomon Islands to publish sustainability reports and are urging entrepreneurs to implement Corporate Social Responsibility activities relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This was reiterated during a Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) Business After Five (BA5) information sharing event on Friday 28th June 2019 attended by businesses and companies who are members of the Chamber.

UNDP Partnership and Entrepreneurship Specialist, Mr Hunjai Lee made an informative presentation on how sustainability reporting can promote private sector to adopt business practices that move communities toward inclusive sustainable development.

He highlighted that this kind of responsible engagement between the private sector and communities is also accordance with the country National Development Strategy (NDS).

Mr Lee said UNDP is currently working with private companies in the Solomon Islands to implement CSR activities.

One of them is SICCI member, Kokonut Pacific Solomon Islands (KPSI) who have their unique way of producing coconut oil, which is called Direct Micro Expelling (DME).



Solomon Islands' delegation at the Pacific Tripartite high-level forum.

## SICCI attends Pacific tripartite forum in PNG

Monday 29 July, Honiara – SICCI was part of a Solomon Islands delegation that attended the Pacific tripartite high-level forum on climate change and decent work last week from 24-26 July in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

SICCI was represented by Board Member and Manager of local company Star Supplies, Ms Hilda Lamani at the forum.

Ms Lamani said the forum, co-organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the PNG Ministry of Labour discussed climate action and the future of work in the Pacific, and how to ensure a smooth transition to an environmentally sustainable world of work.

Thirteen (13) labour ministers from ILO member states of the Pacific, including representatives of employers and workers, regional development partners and friends converged in Port Moresby over the three days to deliberate on

these major issues of concern in the Pacific.

The Solomon Islands delegation at the forum included the Minister of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI), Honorable Clezy Rore and his Permanent Secretary Mr Riley Mesepitu (representing Government), National Secretary to the Solomon Islands Council of Trade Union, Mr Tony Kagovai (representing workers) and the Chamber of Commerce (SICCI) representing employers.

Ms Lamani said each party were separated into three different meetings to raise Solomon Islands' concerns, challenges and issues based on the following themes:

- Future of Work for Climate Resilience
- Labour Mobility in Pacific Island Countries
- Opportunities and challenges of digitalization for decent work.

## Strata Titles on the agenda at SICCI roundtable

Monday 5 August, Honiara – Strata Titles was among topics discussed at a stakeholder's roundtable exploring options on land reform for the private sector hosted by SICCI on Wednesday 31st July 2019.

It is the first substantive effort by SICCI to pose private sector views on land reforms in the country.

Commissioner of Lands at the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, Mr Allan McNeil made a presentation about the Strata Title legislation, its application process as well as taking questions from SICCI members and private sector representatives who gathered for the forum.



Commissioner of Lands, Mr Allan McNeil.

Mr McNeil confirmed that the Strata Titles Act and Regulations has commenced on 1 July 2019 and anyone can now apply for a strata subdivision.



# Discussion on agriculture, land priorities with members

Monday 5 August, Honiara - SICCI in July this hosted stakeholders' roundtables on private sector priorities for agriculture and land reform.

The agriculture roundtable was held on Thursday 25th July 2019 attended by SICCI members in the agriculture sector and a land roundtable on Wednesday 31st July 2019.

This is part of SICCI's advocacy efforts to address the key impediments to economic growth maintaining that in order for businesses to grow, it is imperative that there is an enabling business environment that supports economic growth, encourage business growth and the creation of jobs for Solomon Islanders.

"The main aim behind hosting these roundtable forums is for SICCI members to identify areas of partnership with the Solomon Islands Government through its relevant ministries and for our members to bring up issues, challenges and recommendations to inform government policy efforts," SICCI Executive Officer, Mr Nelson Kere, said.

In the agriculture sector, SICCI members highlighted that Government must allocate necessary resources towards services that will allow for the sector to grow.

There is also a need to provide appropriate support for small holders who face a range of challenges regarding access to information, meeting market demands.

SICCI members also highlighted that there can be improved coordination between Government, development partners and private sector in the agriculture space.

During the land reform roundtable held on Wednesday 31 July 2019, Commissioner of Lands, Mr Allan McNeil made a presentation on the Strata Titles Act while National Recorder from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, Ms Mary Tegavota presented on Customary Land Registration.

Mr Kere said land tenure system in Solomon Islands is a major factor in development

SICCI believes that achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth hinges on ongoing policy dialogue between the government and the private sector.



**Jack Chottu, Owner of Chottu's Coconut Oil Products based in west Guadalcanal expressing a point during the agriculture roundtable SICCI hosted for its members on Thursday 25th July.**

## Forum on infrastructure priorities



**Private Sector and Government representatives at the infrastructure forum hosted by SICCI.**

Thursday 18 July, Honiara – SICCI on Wednesday 17 July 2019 hosted a stakeholders' forum on the topic 'Infrastructure Priorities for Private Sector' attended by private sector representatives.

They were briefed by Solomon Islands Government officials and officers of the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands.

SICCI Advocacy Officer, Mr John Ta'amora said the main objectives of hosting this forum was to inform the private sector on Government's current economic infrastructure development activities and for Government to receive feedback on what the private sector think should be development priorities that will contribute to economic growth.

"This forum enabled the Government and private sector to have starting point to identify areas for Public Private Partnership in developing economic infrastructure and transparent policy framework," he said.

There were two main presentations during the forum after which private sector representatives were given time to ask questions, make comments and give recommendations.

Roy Mae, Under Secretary of the Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination (MNPDC) presented on the Solomon Islands National Infrastructure Investment Plan (SINIIP) highlighting the status of economic infrastructure projects in the country and other major infrastructure projects that are in the pipeline beyond the year.

Andrew Schoeffel, Economic Councillor at the Australian High Commission in Honiara, provided an overview of Australia's current and planned infrastructure work in the Solomon Islands, including updates on the development of the Solomon Islands Infrastructure Program (SIIP) and the recently-announced Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific.

# Call for review of Tarriff & Utility costs amidst increase of minimum wage

Wednesday 28 August, Honiara – The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI), as the peak body representing private sector in the country, is calling for a reduction of tariff and utility costs following the one hundred percent increase of the country's legal minimum wage.

This includes a review to reduce electricity tariffs, port tariffs and in Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

SICCI believes that this will help support businesses with meeting the new increased costs and help foster confidence which is vital for continued investment and expansion plans.

"While Coral Sea Cable and Tina River Hydro projects are ongoing, we need to see some reductions in the interim until these two projects come online for the full cost saving benefits," a SICCI statement said.

With the increase in the legal minimum wage, SICCI reiterated that increasing PAYE thresholds will also ensure that a broader spectrum of the workers can take home more pay.

"Increasing the minimum wage impacts positively only on minimum wage earners'

"PAYE needs to be reviewed and the thresholds need to be increased so that employees can earn a decent living," SICCI Chair, Mr Jay Bartlett, said. SICCI is also calling on the Government to stagger the implementation of the new minimum wage over a number of years, rather than a 100% increase to companies at immediate effect.

This is to give companies time to deal with a 100% increase in wages of employers on minimum wage and adjust operational budgets.

"Without a staggered approach, businesses are more likely to pass on the increased costs to their customers or more drastically, lay off staff or go through natural attrition where

*“Without a staggered approach, businesses are more likely to pass on the increased costs to their customers or more drastically, lay off staff or go through natural attrition where workers scheduled for exit are not replaced. Companies could also cut back on extra staff benefits that may affect welfare of all its employees, not just the workers on minimum wage.*

- SICCI CEO, Atenasi Ata

workers scheduled for exit are not replaced. Companies could also cut back on extra staff benefits that may affect welfare of all its employees, not just the workers on minimum wage," SICCI Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ms Atenasi Ata, said.

"This increase affects too student apprentices who are attached to companies as part of their certificate courses. This group could be the first ones to be highlighted for budget implication, which leads to a bigger issue of quality attachment experiences which only big companies can provide. This affects our youth who want to enter the workforce valued as skilled workers."

Ms Ata notes in addition that SMEs account for 70% of SICCI's membership and should also warrant special thought.

"SMEs are important as they provide services and goods that reaches throughout the country and in some cases provide employment that spans the informal sector. SMEs are also those who provide first time work experience for young people during school holidays," said CEO Ata.

"Now they are faced with critical

decisions. A higher minimum wage rate will mean an increase in the cost of their services. This can drive customers away. We heard from security service providers who asked that the increase should be in the range of \$5.00 to \$6.50 per hour. Now they may seriously consider downsizing or shutting down if they are not able to break-even.

"One thing that is missing from the discussions too is how the year has been for businesses with the NGE and the Voter Registration prior to that with high worker mobility experienced. Straight after that Honiara businesses went through a week during the election of the PM where they were either in shut-down mode or operated on skeletal staffing. It has been a tough time for businesses," she said.

Following the announcement, on 12th August, a SICCI delegation presented a case for a staggered approach to help soften the impact on companies.

This was approved in-principle by the Minister for Commerce, stating that it would be a case-by-case approach and requiring provision of financial records of the company concerned.



# 'Home Blo lumi' seeks to pave pathway to entrepreneurship



YECSI Coordinator, John Wopereis with students from Betikama Adventist College following a information session on the 'Home Blo lumi' program at the College.

Tuesday 13 August, Honiara – The Young Entrepreneurs Council of Solomon Islands (YECSI) is committed in its efforts to encourage entrepreneurship amongst young people in the country, pushing the need to create more opportunities for Solomon Islands' growing youth population - currently sitting at 70% of the total population.

YECSI in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Education in August launched the 'Home Blo lumi' program with the belief that Solomon Islands' economic prosperity lies with our youth population.

Home Blo lumi strives to build a culture of entrepreneurship within our youth and to change the mentality from being job seekers to job creators.

Home Blo lumi is a pre-accelerator program designed to help young people be innovative, creative and pave their pathway towards entrepreneurship.

YECSI Coordinator, Mr John Wopereis says creating a conducive entrepreneurship environment for young people to enter into business and have a high chance of success is vital to the long-term economic growth of the nation, working with students is part of achieving this vision.

"Building a culture of entrepreneurship amongst the nation's youth is vital in changing the mindset from being job seekers to job creators," he said.

Addressing youth unemployment is a priority for the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and innovative entrepreneurship programs like Home Blo lumi can offer a significant step forward in finding a solution.

According to YECSI's Membership and Communications Officer, Ms Irish Melaume, there are only fifty (50) spaces available and to be selected, interested participants were required to enter a business challenge and win a place on Home Blo lumi.

The Home Blo lumi Program is purposely for aspiring entrepreneurs ranging from ages 16-24 and is open to students currently enrolled in forms 5, 6, and 7 and those that have left school in the last years.

The Home Blo lumi Program itself will be held September 30th – October 4th in the term 3 school holidays.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**October 18**

Business After Five (BA5)

Host: Solomon Post

Venue : Heritage Park Hotel,

**October 24**

Business After Five (BA5)

Host: Solbrew

Venue: Heritage Park Hotel

**November 9**

Business Excellence Awards

Host: SICCI

Venue: Coral Sea Resort

*For events enquiries contact our Membership & Services Officer, Naomi Mara on phone 39542/39543 or email [services@solomonchamber.com.sb](mailto:services@solomonchamber.com.sb)*



## MEMBERSHIP & SERVICES DESK



**Naomi Mara**  
Membership & Services Officer

Greetings from the Membership Desk!

This is a brief update on membership events and membership numbers to date.

### Trainings:

Five capacity building trainings for members were planned this year. This includes 4 provincial trainings and 1 Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Workshop in Honiara.

A total of 48 participants attended the provincial trainings conducted in Gizo, Auki, Kirakira and Munda. Of the total participants, 70% are women who are both business owners and employees.

The topic was on Bookkeeping and Basic Accounting – a practical subject that was highly requested from previous provincial trainings.

Participants in Munda also had the opportunity to be informed about the SME Credit Guarantee Scheme from Credit Corporation (SI) limited, one of the financial providers of this scheme.

Feedback from the trainings showed that participants found the training useful as it is directly applicable to their work.

We thank SISBEC who is our partner in delivering these provincial trainings and also members who helped spread word about the trainings to their contacts in the provinces. We also thank those who have partnered with us in providing training venues and accommodation.

The annual SME Workshop in Honiara was hosted 26-27 August 2019. This year's SME Workshop is different from last year's in that we partnered with members who specialise in certain fields to deliver the eight (8) sessions.

We acknowledge our program partners CBSI, Ministry of Commerce, Industries,



Participants at the final provincial business training for 2019 in Munda, Western Province.

Labour and Immigration, Pasifiki HR, Breadfruit Consulting, Positive Development, and Law Corporation for delivering the sessions. We also acknowledge our supporters; Solomon Telekom and Solomon Post.

### Networking Events:

Apart from trainings, we also hosted several networking events in July and August.

The National Hosting Authority officially launched the 2023 Pacific Games on 4 July 2019 at the Heritage Park Hotel. Members turn up in numbers to attend this important event that will provide opportunities for businesses.

Woodford International School hosted a BA5 at the Heritage Park Hotel on Friday 26 July 2019. The Head of School presented on school offers that are available to the business community and how they can also assist the school.

On Friday 9 August 2019, the Solomon Islands Tobacco Company (SITCO) hosted a BA5 where they introduced the new interns in their internship program. SITCO also launched the internship program at a BA5 in 2018.

The latest BA5 was hosted by the Institute of Solomon Islands Accountants (ISIA) and Solomon Airlines on 30 August 2019 at the Aero Club at Henderson. ISIA launched their new website while the Solomon Airlines CEO spoke on the

current issues/challenges for the airline.

This is an example of how members could collaborate to co-host a BA5 event.

### Membership:

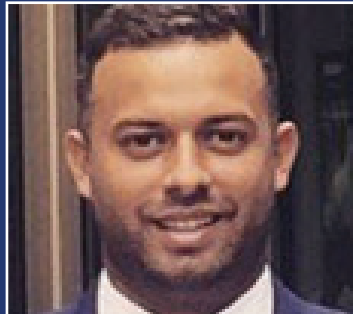
Below is the list of new members who have recently joined. Our current membership is 216 members.

- LSI Enterprise
- Solomon Islands Professional Driver Training Services
- Raj Group Limited
- Auki Gateway Lodge
- Save the Children
- Taraniasi Gas Reseller
- San Cristobal Rural Development Enterprise (SCRDE)
- Emaloisio Family Cocoa Project
- Uma Tailor
- JC Professional Ltd
- M Prakash Limited
- Kin Enterprises Ltd
- Hipala Café
- Zalekoro Ltd
- Superfly Limited
- Office Choice Ltd
- Cathliro Commodities Development
- Your Electrical Supplies



# KNOW YOUR BOARD

## SICCI Board Members for 2019/2020



CHAIR

**Jay Bartlett**  
*Director*  
Hatanga Ltd



VICE CHAIR

**David Rupokets**  
*Managing Director*  
Capitol Construction



**Belinda Botha**  
*Owner Operator*  
Dive Munda



**Sir Bruce Saunders**  
*Managing Director*  
AG & J Blums



**Craig Gibsone**  
*General Manager*  
GPPOL



**Hilda Lamani**  
*Manager*  
Star Supplies Company



**Ricky Fuo'o**  
*General Manager*  
Tropical Glass Aluminium (TGA)



**Uta Temahua**  
*Head of Human Resources*  
Solomon Telekom



**Sohaib Mahmood**  
*Country Head*  
ANZ Solomon Islands



**Frank Wickham**  
*General Manager*  
NFD

# MEET THE SICCI TEAM



**Atenasi Ata**  
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)



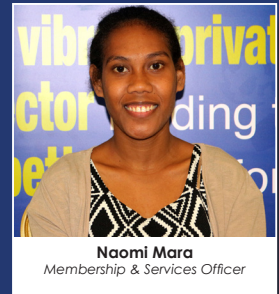
**Nelson Kere**  
Executive Officer



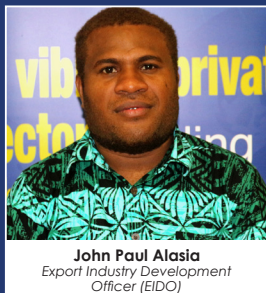
**Shaun Konaga**  
Administrative Manager & Assistant  
Finance Officer



**John Ta'amora**  
Advocacy Officer



**Naomi Mara**  
Membership & Services Officer



**John Paul Alasia**  
Export Industry Development  
Officer (EIDO)



**Ruth Maetala**  
IFC/SICCI Gender Coordinator



**Philip Lilomo**  
Media & Communications Officer

# YECSI TEAM



**John Wopereis**  
YECISI Coordinator



**Chantelle Lincoln**  
Organisational Development  
Adviser



**Irish Melaume**  
Membership & Communications  
Officer





# CASHPOWER MOBILE TOP-UP AVAILABLE 24/7

1. Open an account with **BSP Bank**
2. Sign up for **Mobile Banking Services**
3. Then Top up any where, anytime **24/7**
4. Dial **\*277#**
5. Enter Mobile **Pin Number**
6. Reply with '**3**' for **Top Up Services**
7. Reply with '**2**' for **SIEA**
8. Enter **Cash Power Meter Number**
9. Enter the amount
10. Reply with '**1**' to **confirm**

**Anyone with BSP mobile services can top up cash power for as many meters (family and friends) as funds allow; no matter where you are or what you are doing!**

**1.** For POB existing customers – you can top up on your Cash power by transferring your money from your POB account to your e-purse account, or deposit money into your e-purse account at any POB agent.

**2.** For non-POB customers – you can top up on your Cashpower by creating an e-purse account and depositing money into your e-purse account at any of the following POB agents in Honiara only:

**S.A Bottle Shop - Point Cruz;  
E2N Shop Town ground plaza;  
POB - Hyundai mall branch**

## **How to Topup your Cashpower using POB purse**

- 1. Dial \*191#**
- 2. Select language**
- 3. Select #5. Utility payment**
- 4. Enter merchant code : 2**  
*(This is the merchant code for Solomon Power)*
- 5. Confirm: 90**
- 6. Enter amount (Minimum \$50)**
- 7. Enter meter Number**
- 8. Confirm: 90**
- 9. Receive SMS with Cash power token number**
- 10. Enter the token number into the meter**

