

COOK ISLANDS HERALD

7 January 2015 \$2 (incl VAT)

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Hyperbole Rasmussen's media stunts tiresome and fast emptying the Demo goodwill account

He had the chance to measure up against the Prime Minister Henry Puna in a campaign television debate but the former leader of the Opposition Wilkie Rasmussen got a dose of chicken liver and invented every possible excuse to bypass that opportunity. Any criticism within the Democratic Party that their Leader was giving up the chance to hammer nails into the Cook Islands Party coffin was robustly defended by vice president Tupou Faireka who insisted the decision to field another candidate in the live debate telecast had to be decided by the collective members of the Party.

That nonsensical diversion meant nothing further was done; the Demos weren't convinced Rasmussen could deliver a knockout punch but they were desperate to shelve an alternative that could go toe to toe with Puna and at the same time expose the incompetence's of Rasmussen's leadership.

The relaxed Puna eventually delivered the blow that knocked Rasmussen right out of the political ring into the arms of his corner man Aitutaki's Teina Bishop who now is super glued to Penryhn's unwanted used by date politician.

The One Cook Island Movement leader Bishop is Rasmussen's ticket to being a Clayton's Member of Parliament, the unelected seventh minister of Cabinet.

Now more aligned to the OCI than his own Party, Rasmussen seems to have indulged in so much self preserving enrichment he is on a self prescribed public relations effort to keep his name

in the fore front of political news. Obviously egged on by fellow job seekers Faireka, Eddie Drollet, Shaun Willis and Paul Allsworth, Rasmussen is trying to make a splash but he can't part the Red Sea.

The more he tries to bait Puna by one sided media sledging through a supportive CI News who readily give him premium front page headlines the more Rasmussen exposes his lack of political acumen and his serious deficiency of strategic comprehension. His public ranting that Puna should resign before he is thrown out of Government manifests Rasmussen harbours personal fantasies he should keep locked away in his own brain.

Puna's silence is evident he is never likely to dignify Rasmussen's political sledging. Puna isn't going to resign and give up the reins of power to two political misfits when Bishop has the corruption millstone hanging around his neck and a likely arrest with charges and Rasmussen having diminishing credibility within the Democratic Party and virtually none in Rarotonga. Rasmussen in 2014 was a five time loser that places the country at high risk if he manages to wriggle his way back into the tax payer's trough.

When in Government Rasmussen contributed more damage like the Toa gate fiasco than any memorable benefit for the Cook Islands and virtually nothing for his Penryhn constituency. Rasmussen is a political reject that is driven by deep political impulses of self interest that blind him to the unwanted messages from



Wilkie Rasmussen

within the Democratic Party. He can refute that statement of fact by immediately calling a Conference to test his Leadership. None of his four loyal followers plus Bishop wants a bar of a Party Conference because all of them will be unelected. Rasmussen has lost the plot with the wider members; his personal contour of expectations is a contradiction of the Democratic Party's geography of the heart. No one was impressed with Rasmussen for storming out of a recent pre Christmas Caucus coalition meeting attended by OCI representatives when he was disagreed with and he failed to get his way. The over bearing Rasmussen is engraving his name deep into his critics' notebooks and his behaviour invites political injury, out of politeness and tolerant restraint those within the Demo Party are biding their time come Conference.

There are loaded guns in the Demo team that are never going to stay silent, then Rasmussen, Faireka and company will be rudely awakened and ceremoniously dislodged from their positions they think they own simply because they are the only ones on the Bishop/Rasmussen page of self.

No one needs to be reminded that when a shaky panicking Puna pulled the plug last April the CIP goodwill account was empty and the Demo one was over flowing with credits but by July 9 2014 the Demos were in deficit and the CIP had balanced their books.

The dumbness of Drollet and Rasmussen must take the credit and responsibility for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory and tender their resignations effective immediately. A new team must step up and save the Demos from being further savaged by its most dangerous enemy – itself. - George Pitt

Sea Bed Mineral plans suffer setback due to ongoing legal battles over elections

By Charles Pitt

2014/2015 was to be the year when the Office of the Sea Bed Minerals Authority was to commence the tender of exploration blocks thereby heralding in a new revenue stream for the country.

Under the Authority's Business Plan for 2014/2015, the office was to seek additional funding to increase its technical capacity and expertise. Additional staff were to be sought, increasing the number of staff from four to eight. New staff to be sought were; Technical Director (Marine Geology and Biology), GIS Technical Officer, Licensing and Compliance Officer, Admin Junior.

However, due to the ongoing legal wrangling over the outcome of the general election which took place on 9 July, and with an Appeal Court ordered by-election in February, there is just four months left until the end of the 2014/2015 financial year. In that four months there is a possibility more petitions could be filed. Just who will control the country's purse strings depends upon the outcome of the February by-election.

With no Budget likely until a new government is formed,

the Authority's Business Plan forecasts for the 2014/2015 year in regard to the tender process have suffered a severe setback and will probably have to be written off.

This delay means much needed new revenue from the issuing of exploration licenses is on hold and this will be troubling for a government at a time when fiscal deficits are forecast for the next few years.

When contacted by the Herald on Tuesday, Sea Bed Minerals Commissioner Paul Lynch declined to comment on the implications of the delay caused by the current political situation.

Extract from Business Plan page 25

"The Cook Islands has a window of opportunity for its SBM industry as interest in this area is at a high – however, the longer the Cook Islands takes to enter the market – the slimmer our chances become for attracting the best investors if they are already engaged elsewhere. The Authority is acutely aware of the need to develop the SBM industry in order to be able to issue licenses. However, it has been significantly delayed from doing

so due to lack of resources, both in personnel and funding.

Currently, the work that is required before the Authority can issue exploration licenses include:

1. Review and finalise regulatory framework
2. Preparing for international Tender process
3. Environmental management

The first two fall under the Authority's mandate, which is what was applied for through CITAF.

Goals:

Legislative review:

Streamlining of the Policy, Act and Regulations for effective and efficient running of the SBM sector

The Authority is able to effectively and efficiently administer the SBM regulatory

regime

Up-skilling and capacity development of staff, in particular on legal aspects of SBM regulatory regime, and in general on the overall visions and policies of the SBM sector moving forward.

Tender process:

Set up process for future issuance of Exploration and Exploitation Licenses

Up-skilling and capacity development of staff, in particular on licensing, technical, negotiation aspects of SBM sector, and in general on the overall visions and policies of the SBM sector moving forward.

The Authority is able to effectively and efficiently administer the SBM regime through the expertise gained in issuing of Licenses. "

PM has priority for political stability

The Prime Minister says his first priority is to provide a secure and stable government. That is in the best interests of the country, he says.

"The Cook Islands Party must explore the political opportunities available to it, and as Leader, I am obligated to look at those options."

"There's no need for the Demos to get into a huff over it. You don't see the CIP getting into a hissy fit because the political parties are talking to each other."

The PM says that both the OCI and Democratic Party have been trying to poach individual CIP members for many weeks.

Everyone will recall for example, how the OCI tried to carve off the signatures of support from four CIP MPs. However, the team remained solid and supported Puna as Prime Minister with a vote of confidence in Parliament.

The PM acknowledged that emotions are bound to run high as crucial events got nearer. But he said the CIP was showing true character by exercising patience and upholding its integrity.

- PM Media Release



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Cyclone Safety Tips



It has been mostly only rain and wet weather so far these holidays with thankfully little sign of any cyclone activity.

But stay vigilant. Remember that weather forecasters have predicted a higher than average chance of 8 to 12 cyclones in the south east Pacific this season.

And, February and March have been active months for cyclones in our past.

If a cyclone approaches make sure you and your family have the following items on hand:

- Torches and candles to see at night.
- Battery operated radio to hear the latest news.
- Food that you can store without refrigeration.

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Chinese contractors at logger heads with Neves

Finance Secretary Richard Neves may have few fans but he's stacking up some brownie points among those in the know for the stance he's been taking with the China Civil Engineering and Construction Corporation (CCECC). When it comes to a major development Neves is a round peg in a square hole but what he lacks in the complex mechanism of construction he is making up for it in the equally complex component of the financial constraints and accountability. Neves is an economist overseeing a major development.

For the uninitiated Neves is demanding accurate financial accountability from the vague noncompliant CCECC. The \$24.3 million loan from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) is sovereign funding that is channelled through and receipted by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) then paid on receipt of statements from CCECC.

From February 2014 till September 2014 CCECC were unable to convince Neves to make any payments. Neves was unable to convince CCECC to provide a detailed statement of their accounts rather than a one lump payment demand. While neither party could convince the other, no payments to the growing irritation of CCECC were made by Neves.

Knowing the Chinese contractors were intending to make a \$6.5 million gift of heavy machinery to the Cook Islands, the CIP Government were being politely pressured by CCECC to deal with the



Richard Neves giving the Chinese the run around?

What bothers the Chinese contractors is Neves is demanding a bill of quantities be provided, that is an itemised breakdown of the lump sum. CCECC is adamant Neves is overstepping his authority as the signed contract is a Lump Sum Contract not a measured contract..

obstinate Neves. Full credit to Neves he had grown a beard as well as some balls and was beginning to earn some respect among some of the two faced politicians and inner CIP circle for his Alamo resistance.

The face saving exchanges by the government who were passively looking into the concerns raised by CCECC meant it was business as usual for the bullet proof

Neves who held his ground. CCECC went as far to suggest they were being harassed and victimised by Neves. Such was their annoyance CCECC management's retaliating defiance and down tools threat had to be doused by the PRC Embassy powers to be in Wellington. CCECC is a PRC State Owned Enterprise and were told to settle down and at all costs avoid a diplomatic incident and co operate as the

Te Mato Vai was the PRC first tripartite project and under international observation.

Everything CCECC seems to do is shrouded in secrecy where passing the buck in the face of questions is normal practise. What bothers the Chinese contractors is Neves is demanding a bill of quantities be provided, that is an itemised breakdown of the lump sum. CCECC is adamant Neves is overstepping his authority as the signed contract is a Lump Sum Contract not a measured contract. A bill of quantities for the work carried out is not the format of the contract claim CCECC.

If Neves wants the details and breakdowns of the lump sum then he needs to pursue the legal process of obtaining a variation order to change the contract format. A good place to do that is the BTIB who have the power to vary the terms and conditions of CCECC's Foreign Enterprise Registration.

MFEM Information released to the media indicates sovereign funds were received and finally a payment was made to CCECC. Who compromised and what was compromised is as the Chinese insist strictly confidential, for now.

In the public interest of anti corruption Neves must not give CCECC any special dispensations to be exempt from transparent accountability. The public have a right to know how their loan is being spent. Anyone who can clarify this ongoing saga can be assured of confidentiality from this publication. - George Pitt

Does this ring a bell?

Reprinted is a Letter to the Editor of the Samoa Observer

State of our economy

Tuesday, 25 November 2014
00:00

Dear Editor,
I just wanted to raise a few points about the current state of the economy.

Almost everyone (small businesses) I know of here hasn't had any work now for a month.

Even some people whom I know have been here since the Jurassic period have left! While I am by no means racist (lived and worked all over the world), why are we giving jobs to Chinese companies who use Chinese labour?

I have some \$35,000 worth of quotations out to Customers. These Customers consider the prices to be OK but as they contracted to the S.I.D.S fiasco, they can't come up with the requisite deposit due to the fact that they haven't been paid for the services provided to S.I.D.S.

I mentioned this to a Supervisor

some weeks ago at the I.R.D and her response was, "no one has been paid"!

A few questions thus arise:

1. How are Chinese Companies getting work here and being allowed to use Chinese labour?

2. How is a Chinese labourer more qualified than a Samoan labourer to dig a hole or carry materials from point A to point B?

3. As such, how are work permits being issued to allow visas to be issued?

4. Do the Chinese Companies pay VAGST? If so, is it recoverable when they finish the Project?

5. Do the Chinese labourers pay into the ACC?

6. Do the Chinese Labourers and Companies pay into the SNPF?

7. For points "5 & 6" above, if the answer is in the negative, what is happening to the financial base of the above organisations?

8. Is anybody aware of the quality

of the work done by the Chinese Companies?

If any clarification is required, just visit the Fugalei market and check out the rust coming through already. Is it poor galvanising? Is it poor paint? Is it poor steel? Check out the quality of the doors at the TATTE and Court buildings. The wood may be OK but the handles are falling off! There are cracks everywhere. Check out the tiles at the rear of the TATTE building, the majority are stained due to water penetration.

Also check out the progress of work being done by the Chinese for private companies? Progress is slow and the quality is questionable.

If the government doesn't start recovery procedures for the economy "last week", then there will be an economic catastrophe here and REAL hardship!

With only 25,000 here paying tax and minimal Company tax

revenue, how will the P.M. justify his statement that the country can pay back the "soft" loans when there is no tax revenue?

There will be no revenue from Customs either as imports will slow right down due to lack of economic activity.

A chat to the Banks will scare the hell out of you. They are forecasting a four-year recession with the economy just entering it now. There will be a one-year entry period, a two-year full stop, and another year to climb out of the recession.

On another matter, with decreased government revenue, how is E.P.C going to pay for its fuel imports which probably run at around 2.5M/month? Power blackouts will follow!

Now, remember what happened in Nuku'alofa a few years ago!

Batten down the hatches!
Charles Mansfield, Samoa

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*Merry Christmas
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HO-HO-HO-JANUARY-AND



Our Frontpage model



Our frontpage model is Hayley-Rose McNabb. She is the older sister of last week's front-page twin models and is here on holiday with her family. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

Letter to the Editor

Demos fly undone: lack of credibility exposed

Dear Editor
The unzipped lips of the Democratic Party Leader have exposed the Opposition to major questions over the credibility of the so-called 'coalition government in-waiting'.

Wilkie Rasmussen's seemingly uncontrolled rants to try and derail the sitting Cook Islands Party government are going nowhere except to reveal just how desperately the 'coalition in-waiting' is clinging to wishful thinking.

In a pitiful saga that can only be likened to the tale of the 'Emperor's New Clothes', the Demo Leadership is completely unaware that the buttons on the fly of the party are also undone and exposing the true colours of disorganisation. The credibility of the Demos has become the casualty of the political ignorance of its leader, and widespread misinformation among party supporters is the symptom of a leadership off the rails. The question is: does Rasmussen even see it?

The 'Rasmussen Rants' – as they should be labelled – have called for the Prime Minister's resignation, the Queen's Representative to intervene, and for the 'coalition majority' to assume power.

Unfortunately, despite many years in politics and terms in Parliament, Rasmussen has conveniently overlooked the small matter of the Cook Islands Constitution. The Constitution is the one over-riding, overarching, formal framework of our entire governance. Maybe the public should be reminding the Demos of this overlooked fact since we will soon be celebrating 50 years of its existence.

The Constitution is now providing the Prime Minister and the CIP government all the security they need. The time has not yet been reached where the rules are in breach or been put

in any jeopardy. Puna has been confirmed by Parliament already. The CIP are sitting on 11 – still ahead of the Demos. Only the Prime Minister can advise the QR to summon Parliament. And the QR does not have convincing grounds to sack a government because of the huge uncertainty that still lingers.

The first several weeks of 2015 will yield a clearer picture but for Rasmussen, Norman George, and Teina Bishop himself, patience does not seem to be part of their thinking. Instead, ignorance about the Constitution and its provisions are holding sway over experienced politicians.

Rasmussen – and Bishop – for that matter, might like to recall the events of 2009. Five years ago just before Christmas, the ruling Demo government was reduced to 5 representatives. Shortly into the New Year of 2010, that number was increased by one to lift the administration to 6 MPs. Rasmussen was part of the 'Gang of 6' and firmly supporting the Prime Minister of the day with the authority of the Cook Islands Constitution. At no time, was this minority ever in danger of being tossed out because of the ultimate rule of this important document.

Rasmussen is now ignoring his own past for the sake of trying to line up a comfortable future outside of Parliament. It's an 'open secret' that the multi-failed Penrhyn candidate is angling for the Seventh Seat in Cabinet. However, the Bishop-Rasmussen Siamese act is not getting any stage bookings. It's become a fizzled-out show of irrational smears and sideswipes at Prime Minister Puna.

This is the time that Bishop and Rasmussen should button-up and zip-up. Demonstrate some political knowledge and credibility for a change, and work on getting a successful outcome in the corruption investigation and the Vaipae by-election.

- Zipper Up



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\$1.80
Each

Bishop and Rasmussen tag team no match for ring master Puna

A soft dictatorship exposes a softer democracy

Many would argue that our leaders are not at fault, however many more would disagree.

In 2009 through to 2010 Prime Minister Jim Marurai held onto the powers of office for much longer than many anticipated.

With only enough MPs to form cabinet he held onto the reins of office for over 12 months. First it was five MPs then it became six MPs in Cabinet and Government. Even a petition signed by 19 MPs from both political parties was insufficient to remove him.

The 19 MP signatures out of a total of 24 made not a 'single iota' of difference to having PM Jim Marurai removed. The exiting PM, Jim Marurai did so on his own terms in 2010 and on to the scene the new PM Henry Puna arrived.

Admittedly, many would class PM Puna as behaving badly, the reluctance to address the Grey Power taxation issue, the continuous international travel and the growing cost of government, increased cost of living and increased taxes seemed to dog him. Despite all these and many questions about his leadership he has maintained his position as PM and even the rumours about internal fighting of the Cook Islands Party over some of his decisions he seems to have managed to withstand them.

PM Puna will remain as PM for as long as a conference of the CIP on the leadership does not replace him and that Parliament is not called or Parliament dissolved. That being so, he could quite conceivably remain

as Prime Minister for quite some time yet. Because right now only the PM can convene Parliament.

So what rule changes have changed from the time Marurai was PM to now that Puna is PM? Nothing has changed.

Any PM that behaves badly can quite easily avoid any tests to their leadership from within their own party or from within Parliament for as long as they have the budget to continue. This means until the next budget allocation, probably around June 2015 and even then they are able to continue for at least another three months past this date. We sometimes hear the saying that 24 hours in politics is a long time and what was agreed upon in the morning will be a broken deal by the afternoon, now over a 12 month period before Parliament is next called anything can happen, numbers change, people change.

If something does happen it can mostly be a controlled situation by the Prime Minister.

Is the Prime Minister at fault? Partly. Any delays to democracy are really no real fault of whoever is Prime Minister. The real fault is the law; a suspicious person would blame the people who prepared the law that gives PM Puna or any other future PM too much power.

But ultimately the law has caused both Marurai and Puna to rule the roost for as long as they have and PM Puna will milk the situation for all he can, and the reason is simple, because he can, who says he can? The law says so, that's the simple truth.

Like his predecessor Marurai,

Puna has turned the Cook Islands Constitution into a weapon of offence.

Henry Puna is astute enough to simply play politics according to the rules of engagement; there is no room for inventions of democratic morality in our Constitution as according to the gibberish nonsense Bishop and Rasmussen keep verbally regurgitating. It's now clear who the organ grinder is and who are the monkeys with Bishop hypnotically dangling the carrot before Rasmussen and his dwindling band of loyal job hungry donkeys.

The Prime Minister has more power and authority than the vast majority have realised including long serving politicians who have become deluded by their own greedy thirst for power. Puna is robustly testing the pliability of the rules and to the surprise of many they fall in his favour by a wide margin.

There is no panic in the Cook Islands Party camp; initial concerns have subsided by the comical antics of the Bishop and Rasmussen Dumb and Dumber tag team who have now shifted their focus to the February 17 2015 by election in Vaipae/Tautu.

The outcomes of Mitiaro and Vaipae/Tautu whatever way the coconuts fall can be totally ignored and Puna can continue to be the PM till September 2015 when he can pursue one of several favourable options.

Replacing PM Puna without any law changes that reduce the PM's power will only ensure that the next PM could easily continue

down the same path. Take Wilkie Rasmussen who has already shown a defiant reluctance to call a conference to test his leadership, any self deserving leader would be screaming to ensure transparency and contestability. Despite his Party's Constitution making conferences mandatory, one has not been called for three years. Would and could Rasmussen do the same if he was to become PM? You be the judge.

The difference though is that the Demo Constitution is conveniently over looked despite its requirements, whereas the Cook Islands Constitution the most supreme law in the country actually gives the power to the Prime Minister to do most things that preserve his leadership, essentially turning what is a supposedly a democratic country into a softer version of a dictatorship.

You can't blame the person, that's the law. In business if you keep having to replace people then sometimes it's not the people that is the problem, it could be the system that needs changing. One thing is for certain, the entire system that relates to governance in the Cook Islands is old, worn-out and in need of reform.

PM Henry Puna knows this, most parliamentarians know this and given half a chance to repair it, all MPs should fix it.

Who knows one day if we don't repair it we may get ourselves a real tyrant and it won't be a case of a soft dictatorship it will be a full blown out of control autocracy. - George Pitt

Economy slowing, expenditure expected to exceed revenue

Growth slowing down, less tourists coming, tax revenue declining, deficits forecast

By Charles Pitt

Government's latest financial report changes the position of the wickets once again. Not good if you are a fast bowler but under arm bowlers have a good chance at taking a wicket or preventing runs.

As required by law, government issued its half yearly economic and fiscal update on 31 December 2014 and the news is not good. MFEM has been warning government for the last few years that if no new revenue streams are established, then operating expenditure will outstrip revenue. That point is now upon us.

It's certainly not good news to usher in the new year. Operating budget deficits forecast several years ago are here. Tax revenue is estimated to be lower than expected. Original estimates in many sectors have had to be revised downward partly due to international events and also a slowing down of the Australian and NZ economies which has impacted on tourism estimates and may impact on the special subsidy arrangement with Air NZ.

While it is not all grim news, MFEM advises caution and care in the year ahead as regards government expenditure and new policy initiatives.

The purpose of the Fiscal Update is to revise the fiscal forecasts underpinning the 2014/15 Budget published in October 2014. In updating the fiscal forecasts the following factors have been considered:

- year to date assessment of revenues and expenditure patterns against original Budget estimates 2014/15; and
- updated economic forecasts which have impact on forecasted government revenues.

Since the 2014/15 Budget total:

- operating revenue has reduced by \$0.510 million and
- operating expenditure remains the same as originally budgeted.

Extracts from the Report

Section 2.1.1 "Updated economic forecasts which have a direct impact on forecasted government revenues"

Due to the lower than expected tax collections since the formation of the 2014/15 Budget estimates and declines in key tourist markets, tax revenue has been revised down in 2014/15 and all future years.

Nominal economic growth (which is what tax income is derived from) is estimated to be as follows:

- 2.0 per cent decline in 2013/14 (previously 2.6 per cent growth) due new data being available which showed large decreases in financial services and construction;
- 4.8 per cent growth in 2014/15 (previously 4.5 per cent) due to the large increase in public capital projects; and
- 1.3 per cent growth in 2015/16 (previously 1.1 per cent) due to a large reduction in the aid expenditure profile.

Section 2.1.2 Year to Date Assessment of revenues and expenditure patterns

Since the 2014/15 Budget published in October, economic conditions and the availability of new data have resulted in the revenue projections being shifted downwards. The net operating surplus for 2014/15 was originally estimated to be \$0.009 million. After reviewing two months of actual receipts, tax revenue has been revised downwards by \$1.0 million for the 2014/15 Budget year. Reductions in revenue result in a net operating deficit of \$0.501 million for 2014/15, \$0.316 million deficit in 2015/16, \$3.3 million deficit in 2016/17 and \$0.602 million deficit in 2017/18.

In addition other revenue has been adjusted to take into account banking arrangements on behalf of the Financial Supervisory Commission to receive deposits which are bona vacantia assets vested with the Registrar. They become vested with the Registrar when a company has been struck off our registry whilst still holding assets. These deposits can face legal ownership claims for a period of six years. After the six year period no claim can be entertained and the money passes to the Crown. It is anticipated that the Crown

will receive approximately \$0.500 million for 2014/15.

These revisions suggest that the 2015/16 Budget will be carried out under tight fiscal conditions with limited fiscal space for new initiatives. Therefore, Crown expenditures will be monitored closely, and Government will need to consider cost saving policies if new initiatives are to be considered.

Section 2.1.3 Tax Revenue to GDP

This ratio sets the revenue boundary and ensures government limits the diversion of resources away from the private sector. The benchmark government agrees to work within is maintaining collections to within 25 per cent of GDP. The expected performance against this benchmark is illustrated in Chart 2.1.

(Comment: The chart shows that Government tax revenue will exceed this benchmark of 25% of GDP but the report fails to comment how government intends to comply. Indicators for 2014/2015 show the tax revenue is estimated at 26.9% and over 27% in out years).

Other extracts of interest

At the time of the 2014/15 Budget published in October 2014, GFS Operating revenues in 2014/15 were estimated to total \$186.9 million, of which \$108.6 million was expected to be collected in taxes over the financial year.

Since the 2014/15 Budget, movements in taxation revenues have resulted in a downward revision of operating revenues by \$0.501 million to \$186.4 million, due to parameter changes.

Total tax receipts for 2014/15 are expected to be \$1.0 million lower than forecast at the time of the 2014/15 Budget due to downward revisions in income, company and import taxes. Most of the revision in income taxes comes from the writing-off of non-performing assets in the local banking sector, which have negatively affected profitability in the short term. Import duties continue to perform poorly, although data on the reasons

behind this are not yet available. It is assumed that the stockpiling of tobacco is still affecting import duty numbers.

The underlying operating balance was initially estimated at \$0.009 million at the time of the Budget, after the revision of estimates this has arrived to a budget deficit of \$0.501 million for 2014/15.

It should be noted that the 2014/15 net underlying operating balance is still in deficit and Government will need to implement policy measures to improve cost recovery for service rendered by line ministries whilst also taking into account saving measures to improve efficiencies in Government.

Comments

It is interesting that the report mentions fuel prices and refers to a time when the reduction in world prices should flow through to local suppliers. In NZ the price of fuel at the pumps has already come down by around 50%. How long will local customers have to wait? Government should be asking the two suppliers this question.

As mentioned above, government's rate of taxation exceeds (by 2%) the benchmark against GDP of 25% but there is no explanation why this is so and what government intends to do to reduce the current level of tax. Government has already reported that tax is down on estimates but the GDP measure would indicate the estimates were probably too high. No comment is offered on whether the benchmark will be complied with once the full effect of the tax review takes effect. Is this a case of wait and see?

Why do we persist with "income tax" when our working population is so small and shrinking? Government should work towards abolishing this tax and looking to compensate somewhere else. Some countries (also some Australian States?) have introduced a "bed tax" on accommodators of around 5% and it is understood NZ is looking at this type of tax.

Environment Internship Scheme, SPC-EU Deep Sea Minerals Project

Minerals, and the metals they contain, are an essential component of the modern high-tech world. Global stocks of raw mineral resources continue to dwindle in absolute terms, leading to increased pressures to access previously unattainable mineral deposits - including those lying at the bottom of the oceans.

The SPC-EU DSM Project (www.sopac.org/dsm) aims at providing technical assistance to the 15 Pacific-ACP States, with a focus on supporting them to develop and implement comprehensive policy and legislative frameworks as a means to ensure that deep sea mining is a viable economic option they could efficiently utilize to meet development goals as well as strengthen national independence and autonomy. To this end, it is of critical importance to ensure that the environmental and

social risk associated with deep sea activities are not only properly identified and assessed but also, managed in a sustainable manner.

Countries participating in the Project are: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. There are numerous other interested partners to the Project, from international organizations, academia, private sector, and civil society.

The Project has four Key Result Areas:

- (1) Development of a Regional Legislative and Regulatory Framework for offshore minerals exploration and mining;
- (2) Formulation of national policy, legislation and regulations;
- (3) Building national capacities; and
- (4) Effective management

and monitoring of offshore exploration and mining operations.

As part of its capacity-building objective, and following the success of the Legal Internship Scheme, the Project is now initiating an Environmental Internship Scheme.

The aim of this scheme is to build a sustainable source of in-country environmental expertise, as the interns are encouraged to return their country to work with national authorities involved in deep sea minerals activities.

As a result, this scheme,

which will provide a 2 month internship position with the Project in the SPC regional office in Suva, is open to individuals who have graduated in the fields of environment, marine studies or other applicable disciplines. Priority will be given to applicants from the participating countries who are under a bond that requires them to work for their government after completing their studies.

Environment Interns will be working closely with the Project's Environment Advisor, Ms Alison Swaddling, in delivering the key result areas identified above.

November 2014 tourism figures compared to same month in 2013

Key facts
In November 2014 compared with November 2013, visitor arrivals (9,417) down by 9.0 per cent. The biggest changes were in arrivals from:

- Europe (up 202)
- Asia (down 41)
- Australia (down 446)
- Canada (up 55)
- USA (up 10)
- Other countries (down 50)
- New Zealand (down 2178)
- French Polynesia (up 23)

Overseas trips by Cook Islands residents (922) were mainly to visit families and friends.

Total arrivals 10,466.

Visitors 9,417

Cook Islands residents arriving 1,049

Compared to October the Visitor numbers down by 2,425

This reflects the usual trend at Christmas time when visitor numbers drop while the number of Cook islanders arriving, increases.

Syndromic Surveillance Report

Reports on illnesses up to end of November 2014 (after 49 weeks of the year). These figures are from the ESR Unit of Community Health Services at Public Health, Tupapa.

	2014 (end of Nov)	2013
Acute fever and rash	72	1
Flu like illness	43	116
Diarhoea	143	299
Prolonged fever	12	2
Dengue like illness	930	15
Ciguatera (fish poisoning)	7	24

New Hope Church

Parekura Conference Centre

Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you

Sunday at 10.30am

EAT LESS

MOVE MORE

HEART FOUNDATION

The comedy of errors

By Norman George

The July 9, general election delivered to this country game changes, new concepts and some very worrying trends. The revival in our electoral system of corruption is like a new virus, immune to all available means to stop it. The most corrupt candidates beat the system. We have now people in our Parliament who are, barely able to read and write who are our new M.P.s. It would seem that you can buy your way into the House of Parliament with zero ability and talent. As the Beatle song says money can't buy me love, but can buy me "votes."

We can thank the CIPs for that. They are the ones who revived corruption in elections and day to day governance. Just look back at what has happened in the past 4 years. Corruption in the fishing industry and Te Mato Vai project. The CIPs sewed the viral seeds of the new corruption, cultivated it, nurtured it, propagated it and now it is blooming. Some achievement after 50 years.

Many of our people are troubled with our Court system. The procedures of the Electoral Courts need desperate review. The old fashioned style that you can only file an appeal based on case stated is very restrictive and difficult for the petitioner's petitions. Petition cases can only be appealed on questions of law. Politics is all about factual arguments. Some decisions based on the wrong interpretation of facts by the Judge hearing the case, cannot be appealed against, because it is a procedural or factual argument and not a question of law.

Add to that the gate keeper who is the trial Judge who heard the petition, decides the case stated, therefore holds the key to what can be appealed or not is considered unjust. You only hear people talk about political reforms. How about urgent judicial reforms?

I have watched instances in the recent past of gut wrenching decisions. There were more praise and sympathy for the hardworking trial petition Judges than the financially strapped

petitioners who had been cheated at the elections. The Court costs imposed are out of league with our cost of living.

We need to reform the means of appointing our Judges. We need to step outside of the brotherhood old boy network system and expand selection to Judges from Australia, Canada, South Africa and maybe Samoa.

I make these comments as a private citizen, concerned about the present and future of my country. I hope I will not be forced to sell out and leave my beloved country, if my ability to practice my profession to make a living, is affected by these comments.

Now back to the position on the ground. Prime Minister Henry Puna while putting up a brave face, is a troubled man. His recent Christmas message is comical and pathetic. There is no concern for the state of the nation, just concern for dear Enery's status and future.

The issue is not about confidence in you Enery it is about your majority, which has now disappeared. The CIP government cannot produce a quorum of 12 in Parliament today. A gentleman politician will normally step down and give the chance to the Opposition. That cannot be expected even after 50 years, will it take 150 years perhaps? Henry do the right thing old chap! I say parachute down to earth now!

The position on the ground can be described from a circus to a farce to a comedy of errors. "All is not well in the state of Denmark," (Hamlet)

Opportunities are coming and going moments of sheer resolute outcomes are allowed to slip away. Decisions that should be made are not being made. Actions that should be taken are not acted upon. Procastination, delays, indecisions will eventually turn to mush. The pressures of indecision have the potential to create a split in both parties.

Focus on what has been happening. The numbers as they stand gives the Demo/One C.I. 12 seats, CIP 11. The Demo/One C.I. caucus elected Teina Bishop to be the Prime Minister



Norman George

but he takes no action to force Henry Puna out by taking his 12 caucus M.P.s to the Q.R. to demand the post of P.M. or call the Parliament in 7 days.

His inaction could be fatal, he will miss the boat. Word is that Mr. Bishop will wait for the Tautu /Vaipae, by-election, result on 17 February. Who is advising Teina? My comments are my own as a political commentator and should not be treated in any way associated with my political party, the Democratic Party.

There is reliable speculation that Teina Bishop could be facing criminal charges very soon. If that happens before February 17, his hopes of being appointed M.P. will be blown to smithereens. Under article 14 (7) (b) of the Constitution, the Q.R. will find his legal grounds to refuse Teina's appointment as P.M.

I would expect the Demo caucus to refuse to endorse Teina after such an event but keep him in caucus... A word of caution, Teina will remain an M.P. until the Court decides the outcome of any likely charges. Teina is absolutely presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Who could take over as the likely P.M. in the coalition? My bet is on Tangata Vavia, the M.P. for Mitiaro. As a former Detective Inspector, he has the calmness, intelligence, smartness and experience to

handle the job. He is not mistake prone and neither is he likely to make hasty decisions.

My second bet is on James Beer. New perhaps, a bit of a lone ranger or rough diamond? Diamonds once polished will outshine the stars.

Other possible scenarios? A couple of wannabe Demo caucus M.P.s running across to accept Ministerial posts in the CIP Cabinet? This will be a mistake. It will reduce the shelf life of the M.P.s

Can the reverse happen, like 3 CIP M.P.s joining the Coalition? The M.P.s of Penrhyn, Mauke and Amuri Ureia are all former Demos. Don't write this possibility off.

What is the final solution to this political free fall? A new general election old boy! The Q.R. could simply say there is stagnation, the numbers stay at CIP 11, Demos (after Tautu / Vaipae) 11, One Cook Islands 2.

This poses the threat of instability uncertainty and bad governance for the nation. Dissolution for a March general election is the only solution. Bite the bullet and let's get on with it. P.S. Q.R. Don't forget to appoint a neutral caretaker Cabinet, 3 from either side. The last CIP caretaker Cabinet became a corrupt advantage taker. Adios!

A Happy and successful new political year in 2015 to all..... Norm.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

In the last paragraph of my Cook Islands News letter of 13 October 2014 on the parliamentary shambles I presaged that I was working on a piece that questioned whether we may have been too hasty back in 1963 in choosing self-government. Here is that piece.

I am wondering whether it is time to rethink self-government especially now the 50th anniversary is looming and some politicians will see this as an opportunity to tell us how it has been such a tremendous success and by association a favourable reflection upon them.

But has it:

-when more Cook Islanders than ever before have chosen to emigrate rather than now live here

-when we have had 16 years since the Commission on Political Reform to reform the political landscape but have kept promising to address this vital issue but have steadfastly neglected to do so

-when the needs of the country have taken second place to endless travelling, self-enrichment, self-indulgence and the private interest of a privileged few who consider the public revenues their personal bank account

-when the Cook Islands is bogged down by political malcontents, naked ambition, minorities, inequalities, horse-trading, backroom deals, unnecessary political appointments and self-serving interests which pervert the delivery of stable government and a reflection of the popular vote

-when a culture of corruption is perceived to be the acceptable standard and any attempt to investigate and expose it thwarted by denial and frustrated by vested interests

-when the sanctity and integrity of the rule of law is threatened by a scarcity of defenders

-when Members of Parliament are denied opportunities to fulfil their representative role by the manipulation and abuse of parliamentary procedure so Government's management of the affairs of the country can escape scrutiny

-when our propensity to be forever seeking the handout rather than address our capacity to take care of ourselves creates an obsession with foreign aid which has become an industry in itself and promotes an abdication of responsibility and innovative thinking of how we might care for ourselves and avoid the appellation of international bludger

-when our boastful claims of being leaders in the region is an exercise in self-deception and is a misrepresentation to the people of the real position as our population and land area is miniscule compared with others like Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea and consequently we should be doing much better than we are

-when our per capita GDP further inflates with each year's net negative migration and is a cause for serious alarm rather than foolish bragging

-when it is pointless having an economic development plan but no labour policy to address the shortage of workers

-when the appointment of people to positions they are inadequately qualified to fill continues with disastrous results and the wasteful and excessive expenditure on salaries and perks is an unacceptable burden on the taxpayers

-when Government uses the power of its office to retaliate and attempt to silence its critics by adopting policies calculated to undermine their businesses all in the spurious name of consumer interests and the global model meanwhile failing to heed cries for the enactment of Commerce legislation that vested interests have been able to delay for 13 years thus allowing predatory pricing practices and other restrictive non-competitive trade activities to thrive

-when the lower income worker constantly struggles with rising prices yet government resists a return to price control on basic lines misguidedly believing that the free market system would provide those controls

-when Government relentlessly pursues taxes, back taxes and penalties with a determination that takes no regard of the wider implications

-when fewer people contribute letters to the newspaper fearful of recrimination and those that do increasingly see it as an unsafe

environment and seek protection in anonymity

-when successive governments have failed miserably to address depopulation

-when so many Cook Islanders now residing overseas tie up land which then lies idle and unavailable for agricultural use and no attempt made to find a formula which brings that land back into production by resident family members or interested farmers

-when in the 1950s, the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s we had the resources of economic self sustainability because we had the land and we had the people and while the land remains it remains under-utilised because we no longer have the people.

-when if we are unable to exploit the potential of the land because of political and official short-sightedness then our last hope is in and under the sea but what are the chances there when we cannot even effectively and transparently manage our fish resource.

-when the abundance we are constantly reminded exists on the seafloor is an opportunity whose time will come but the waste of public funds that we see now with the more modest sums at our disposal is seen as just a practice run for when those riches materialise and the real fear whether we could trust our leaders in the management of them.

-when we have fallen behind our regional neighbours in exploiting the seabed minerals because of suspicious manoeuvring, indecision and general dithering

Parliament, and the people, on Friday 31 October 2014, heard for the first time the suggestion that perhaps Cook Islanders did have reason to question its leaders' devotion to the self-government concept.

A radio interview where Murienua MP, James Beer in reviewing 50 years of self-government flagged areas where self-government had failed to deliver was the catalyst for a blistering attack from Minister of Finance, Mark Brown who, along with Minister Nandi Glassie pointedly demanded whether Mr Beer was promoting a return to the colonial days and a NZ administration. Mr Beer countered that that was not his intention at all but was advancing the proposition that as successive governments had failed the people those people should be given the opportunity to express, in a referendum, whether in fact they wished to continue with the experiment which was resulting in the demise of primary industry and the flight of its people in alarming numbers.

Minister Glassie referred to the UN policy on non-self-governing territories and attempted to explain the four options that were presented to the Cook Islands in 1962. He got three right but the fourth which was central to the issue at hand he did not. The three he stated correctly were: complete independence, a pacific federation and self-government. The fourth he described as being a colony of NZ or some other country which was quite wrong and he either did not know that or, if he did, was deliberately misconstruing it so as to cast it in the worst possible light as he considered it was this option that Mr Beer was referring to.

Now for some history. The United Nations Committee on Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, also later known as the Committee of 24 or the Special Committee on Decolonisation, was established in 1961 in pursuance of a Declaration in 1960 by the United Nations that Member States take immediate steps to transfer power to those non-self-governing territories. NZ was a Member State and the Cook Islands was a non-self-governing territory.

In 1961, Frank Corner became New Zealand's Ambassador to the United Nations, where he chaired the Trusteeship Council for two years, and served on the United Nations Security Council. Corner was the leading proponent of decolonisation of Pacific territories under New Zealand control and provided the leading intellectual arguments in favour of decolonisation of Tokelau, the Cook Islands, Niue, and Western Samoa. (Wikipedia)

I believe it neither unkind nor untrue to state that NZ in the very earliest stages of the Committee decolonising activities was eager to demonstrate its cooperation and willingness to comply with the applicable resolutions and in doing so engender a positive reaction amongst its fellow Members and an enhancing of its international profile.

Continued next page

The thrust of Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 was however complete independence which was not thought applicable to the circumstances of the Cook Islands considering the stage of development it had then reached.

Clearly the United Nation also recognised its blanket demand for independence was not universally relevant and by a further resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960 qualified in 12 guiding Principles how colonial governments should interpret Resolution 1514 (XV). Numbers VI to IX are quoted here:

Principle VI

A Non-Self-Governing Territory can be said to have reached a full measure of self-government by:

- (a) Emergence as a sovereign independent State;*
- (b) Free association with an independent State; or*
- (c) Integration with an independent State.*

Principle VII

(a) Free association should be the result of a free and voluntary choice by the peoples of the territory concerned expressed through informed and democratic processes. It should be one which respects the individuality and the cultural characteristics of the territory and its peoples, and retains for the peoples of the territory which is associated with an independent State the freedom to modify the status of that territory through the expression of their will by democratic means and through constitutional processes.

(b) The associated territory should have the right to determine its internal constitution without outside interference, in accordance with due constitutional processes and the freely expressed wishes of the people. This does not preclude consultations as appropriate or necessary under the terms of the free association agreed upon.

Principle VIII

Integration with an independent State should be on the basis of complete equality between the peoples of the erstwhile Non-Self-Governing Territory and those of the independent country with which it is integrated. The peoples of both territories should have equal status and rights of citizenship and equal guarantees of fundamental rights and freedoms without any distinction or discrimination; both should have equal rights and opportunities for representation and effective participation at all levels in the executive, legislative and judicial organs of government.

Principle IX

Integration should have come about in the following circumstances:

(a) The integrating territory should have attained an advanced stage of self-government with free political institutions, so that its peoples would have the capacity to make a responsible choice through informed and democratic processes;

(b) The integration should be the result of the freely expressed wishes of the territory's peoples acting with full knowledge of the change in their status, their wishes having been expressed through informed and democratic processes, impartially conducted and based on universal adult suffrage. The United Nations could, when it deems it necessary, supervise these processes.

So it can be seen that while the 'self-government' Minister Glassie was referring to embraced free association with an independent state (in this case NZ) it could also include integration with an independent state and the way NZ presented the options to us was to add the fourth of integration as a clearly identified other option.

David Stone in an article in the Journal of the Polynesian Society wrote- *The alternatives given in Principle VII are precisely those which were offered the Cook Islands Legislative Assembly, with the addition of Pacific federation. 55 While it is admitted that the New Zealand Government preferred free association (i.e., internal self-government while retaining links with New Zealand), it would, under the set of Principles according to which it was acting, have had to have accepted integration or independence, if such a choice had been made. As it turned out, it seems to me that New Zealand suggested internal self-government because it was believed that this was the status most appropriate - 370 to the political, social and economic development of the Cook Islands, and the one closest to the aspirations of their people. 56*

And that is what the NZ Government through its Minister of Island

Territories and its local Resident Commissioner did. It quickly recognised that Cook Islanders would not seek to go in

the same direction as the newly independent Western Samoa but that integration with NZ where so many of its people already lived did remain a possibility. But it was never fully examined in fact Leon Gotz, the Minister dealt with it but briefly, and negatively, in his address to the Legislative Assembly on 11 July 1962 in which he said-

A few weeks ago the NZ Cabinet discussed what steps ought to be taken in the next few years and my principal purpose in attending this session of the Assembly is to let you know the views of my Government. We feel that our aim should be to establish full internal self-government in the Cook Islands as soon as this is reasonably possible.

Having stated the direction NZ wished the Cook Islands to take he, then, paradoxically, acknowledged that NZ wanted to do the right thing and to cooperate with the United Nations in seeing that the Cook Islands people are governed in accordance with their own freely expressed wishes.

Of the four options there were really only two which had appeal. Independence pretty much ruled itself out with the loss of NZ citizenship if nothing else and the complexities of a Pacific Federation could not even begin to be articulated. On the question of integration with NZ the Minister, consistent with the already announced position of his Government, tended to pour cold water upon the notion and no doubt was echoing a submission he taken to his Cabinet just a month earlier in which he referred to the disastrous social effects on the Islanders. He referred to the Cook Islands receiving the same treatment as say the Province of Taranaki; that NZ laws would apply - some that would be liked but also a number that would not be liked. Instead of a Legislative Assembly the Cook Islands would have representation in the NZ Parliament but because of its small population would probably need to share that and its voice would be less than currently enjoyed in its own Legislature.

Without any opportunity being given to more fully examine these competing options and consult with the people, the Assembly, two days later on the 13 July 1962 passed the following motion which had been drafted by the Administration:

That this Assembly-

(1) Records its appreciation of the Minister's speech and of the New Zealand Government's proposal as outlined by him for the future political development of the Cook Islands

(2) Declares that full independence as recently granted to Western Samoa is not the goal of the Cook Islands

(3) Requests that the New Zealand Government proceeds with its plan for giving the Cook Islands the fullest possible internal self government while at the same time preserving for the Cook Islands people their present status as New Zealand citizens

(4) Reaffirms its loyalty to the Crown and its faith in New Zealand's willingness to continue giving aid and assistance to the Cook Islands without thought of any gain other than the friendship and goodwill of the people.

On the strength of that resolution Constitutional advisers sat with the Assembly for a week in August 1963 to discuss in detail the constitutional framework which would eventually be incorporated into the Cook Islands Constitution Bill. There was no looking back and although

there was inchoate movement to get more discussion and understanding of the integration option it never really got any traction (nor support from the administration) and although some candidates stood on an integration platform at the ensuing general elections they were roundly beaten by the glamour, organisational skills, drive and dynamics of the Albert Henry CIP political machine which it would be fair to say handsomely won the election (14 seats to 8) not so much as a statement and endorsement of the future political status of the Cook Islands but more as a result of a coalescing of support behind the novel phenomenon of a charismatic and flamboyant leader. It was more a combination of an exciting new leader promising a new direction under a new polity and a rejection of the old establishment.

Does integration remain an option?-It would appear from
Continued next page

the foregoing that integration was not necessarily excluded from consideration at a later time. Reference to Principle IX above that(a) The integrating territory should have attained an advanced stage of self-government with free political institutions, so that its peoples would have the capacity to make a responsible choice through informed and democratic processes; presupposes that the Cook Islands could, after gaining experience with internal self government, opt for integration. Logically that would for all practical purposes imply NZ but integration with some other state would not necessarily be ruled out of consideration although the New Zealand citizenship factor would be a huge influence. But would NZ accept integration at such a late stage? David Stone took the view (vide:ante) that had the Cook Islands chosen integration in 1962 NZ would have been obliged to have acceded to that wish and accommodated it. It is a moot point now 50 years later on whether after satisfying the precondition of having attained an advanced stage of self-government the same obligation exists especially when NZ in 1962 was so clearly against it and carefully steered the Cook Islands in another direction.

The irony of course is that since 1962 when the Cook Islands resident population was around 19000 it is now estimated to be in the region of 12-13000. With net migration being negative in recent years, and extrapolated out, integration is occurring by default. In twenty years at the same rate the total resident population, unless depopulation is reversed, is expected to reach critical levels with all manner of social and economic consequences. As most of those migrants are now in New Zealand anyway, and more joining them every year, one wonders whether New Zealand would still be reluctant to consider integration especially when it is internal self-government, and not integration, which is bringing about the disastrous social effects that the Minister warned his Cabinet about in 1962!

A parallel case to this scenario occurred in Newfoundland where after 75 years of self-government a constitutional referendum in 1949 chose integration with Canada due to its economic collapse in 1933 during the Great Depression. David Stone wrote in 1965:*This underlines the fallacy of applying to the Cook Islands the argument that Commonwealth experience shows the unlikelihood of a change of status from internal self-government to anything other than independence. Exceptional as Newfoundland's example may be, it is precisely in the circumstances that led that country to turn to Canada (acute economic difficulties) and also the procedure it adopted to do so (a constitutional referendum) that the Cook Islands could consider it necessary or desirable to turn to New Zealand in the future should the recent experiment in self-government fail.*

And that is how New Zealand regarded self-government. It was an experiment-

"The experiment upon which both our countries have embarked - the concept of self government and free association - depends to a large degree, however, not only on the financial measures taken by both our governments for the future economic well-being, but also on the maintenance of trust and confidence between us as fellow New Zealanders." (Message from Minister of Island Territories JR Hanan read to the Legislative Assembly in 1966).

In this same context we should be reminded of the Exchange of letters between the NZ Government's Prime Minister, Norman Kirk and the CIs Government Premier, Albert Henry in 1973 wherein was identified that the unusual gesture of extending NZ citizenship to people beyond the reach of its own laws creates an expectation that the Cook Islands will uphold in their laws and policies, a standard of values generally acceptable to New Zealanders. If readers will go back to examine my when questions it would appear that we are not upholding our end of the bargain.

The Cook Islands Constitution has provision in Article 41(2) for a change in status by constitutional referendum. Section 2 of the Cook Islands Constitution Act 1964 provides that-

The Cook Islands shall be self-governing. This cannot be changed except by following the procedure contained in Article 41 (2) {2/3rds support in Parliament, 90 days wait, poll of electors and 2/3rds support in that poll}.

Should we be looking at this?-The Cook Islands has in the view of this writer reached a crucial crossroads in its political evolution. There is an innate desire in all people to want to manage their own

affairs but of the estimated global population of Cook Islanders of somewhere between 80-100,000 all but 12-13000 have abandoned their homeland and chosen to live elsewhere. Successive Cook Islands Governments were slow to recognise that we were facing a population loss problem and then impotent in how to address it. Substantial investment in outer islands harbours, airports and renewable energy while admirable in principle has probably come too late to arrest the depopulation of those islands and foster the economic opportunity presented by this investment. Meanwhile loans associated with these developments need to be repaid and if economic revival in those islands fails the burden will be fall upon remaining taxpayers.

As the population diminishes so the cost of government per capita increases. More and more of our resources are disappearing into non-productive avenues. Millions of dollars are wasted in providing public and crown servants with vehicles, with associated running costs and maintenance, predominately chosen to suit their private lifestyle rather than job related. In years past official vehicle requirements were managed by a transport pool. Financial management which in years past was centralised in the Treasury has been replicated by as many times as there are Ministries all unnecessary and all operating independently and beyond the immediate purview and control of a central agency which is just a further invitation for profligacy and waste demanding more effective oversight by those Government agencies charged with protecting the taxpayers money.

A sobering fact is that if the economy in future years is still expected to operate at something like existing levels, but given the continuing attrition in the resident population, Cook Islanders will

become strangers in their own land as increasing numbers of imported workers arrive to fill the vacuum created by fleeing Cook Islanders.

Is self-government worth saving? Are people satisfied with our present system of government? Are we performing well within it? The howls of protest and derision that followed James Beer's posing of similar questions predictably came from that quarter which enjoys or aspires to recapture the good life of being in government. Is self-government delivering what the people expect from it or has it betrayed them? Why else are they complaining and leaving in droves? Is self-government actually serving the people or does the defense of it narrow down to those selfish few who benefit mostly from it. And is this why we only get lip service when the subject of political reform comes up - because political reform has the serious potential to disturb the cushy life of a tiny but influential minority?

Last chance. If we are going to give self-government one last chance to demonstrate that it can deliver the expectations of those that embarked us on this path 50 years ago now is that time.

There is no clear winner yet emerging from the general election of five months ago. It could go either way or it could end up as it did once before in 1983 and require a return to the polls.

So while there is no clear winner and therefore no compelling personal agenda would this not be, as James Beer suggested in a letter a week ago, the perfect opportunity for all three parties to commit to political reform and by that I mean serious political reform. Not just the tampering with a seat here and a seat there but a revival of the 1998 Political Review Commission of Iaveta Short, Ron Crocombe and John Herrmann. I believe so and, as the final electoral landscape could be revealed in a matter of days and would have the capacity to dilute any cooperation and enthusiasm, that decision, that commitment, should be taken now before the final position is known. In the event of a hung Parliament, and that prior commitment, a government of national unity could be agreed and proceed along the lines James Beer has proposed with clear terms of reference and a tight timetable. Political reform could then be legislated and the country could return to the polls under the new arrangements. It will not be easy and it will not be without some losses and some pain but unless we are prepared to do it the Cook Islands has not got a great deal to look forward to if it retains the present system the way it is currently structured.

If we do not seize this opportunity then, in my view, we are destined to continue our downward spiral and we would likely be better off commencing negotiations right now with New Zealand on the terms of integration

John M Scott.

Welcome to the New Year!

By Norma Ngatamariki

Holler, everybody! With the festive season just gone past, everyone has hopefully recovered from all of the pesky hangovers (from the endless drinking) and bloated tummies (after feasting on all that glorious food). I hope everybody enjoyed their Christmas and New Years with their families and friends. We are only in the second week of 2015 and already people are hyped up over what will be going down this year. We've got the school festival coming up as well as the Cook Islands 50th anniversary of independence, where the school holiday will be prolonged to three weeks for the celebrations. Woop woop! (Sadly, I'll be in New Zealand during this time)

For my family, Christmas was far from a relaxed affair. I actually managed to keep my promise of baking pavlovas and chocolate

cakes. I think all that baking has put me off making baked desserts for a while. Thinking of the patience required, the frustration when something doesn't turn out right and the clean up afterwards (shudder). However, I really enjoyed myself and was happy with the end result (four snowy-white, cloud-like pavlovas and two delicious chocolate cakes. Yum) After the bake off, Mum and I were off to The Islander for a lunch buffet. Even if the weather was a bit bleh, it wasn't enough to kill my appetite. I was salivating by the time I arrived. For \$45 per head, we were not disappointed. The food was to die for and the service was friendly. I ate to my heart's content and was able to finish two helpings. I would most definitely visit that place again, no question.

I had five days to recover from my binge eating episode

at The Islander until New Years. I thought of all the resolutions that I had made in 2014 and began ticking off the ones that I had accomplished (quite a few, I'm pleased to say). The ones I hadn't would have to be shifted to 2015. I had made plans with some friends to head out on New Year's Eve. I could already tell that it was gonna be an awesome night. We had decided on being at Sails in Muri, to say farewell to 2014 and to welcome 2015 with a brilliant display of fireworks. Flashes of green, blue, red and gold lit up the sky as the clock struck midnight. Fireworks on the beach: a perfect combination.

People in town partied the night away with everything going at full throttle. The nightclubs were going hardcore and random people were screaming out "Happy New Year!" to anyone and everyone. I loved feeling



the happy vibe that everybody was letting off. My friends and I were having the time of our lives, while Mum and Dad were celebrating the New Year quietly back home. I have a lot of hopes for this year and I can't wait to see what 2015 has in store for me.

TENDER



ARE TAPAEANGA PROJECT – WESTERN BASIN AVATIU HARBOUR, RAROTONGA.

The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation and the Cook Islands Ports Authority advises that tenders are now invited from suitably qualified tenderers for the following contract work on the Are Tapaeanga Project – Western Basin, Avatiu Harbour, Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

Turnkey Contract No. C01/2014 – the supply, installation of materials and equipment for the construction of a new building Are Tapaeanga Project – Western Basin, Avatiu Harbour, Rarotonga, Cook Islands

The contract requires the contractor to provide insurances at specified levels. Suitably qualified and experienced tenderers should apply to Cook Islands Tourism Corporation for tender documents, including a brief statement of their experience and qualifications.

All tenders are to be delivered to Cook Islands Tourism addressed to: Mrs Noeline Mateariki, Destination Development Coordinator, Destination Development Division. During the tender period all enquiries regarding the tender document should also be addressed to the said person above on email noeline.mateariki@cookislands.gov.ck or telephone 29 435.

Tenders close at 4pm on the 16th January 2015. (Cook Islands Time).

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**SAVAGE FAMILY MEETING, SATURDAY 10TH
JANUARY 8AM AT NEW RAROMART STORE WITH
DON CARLAW TO EXTEND LEASE AND ALSO
9.30AM AT GENERAL TRANSPORT FOR SAME.**

Past Tattslotto Results

Oz Lotto Tue 30/Dec/14, Draw 1089

Winning Numbers 35 41 7 43 26 4 19
Supplementaries 31 23

Powerball Thu 25/Dec/14, Draw 971

Winning Numbers 32 19 13 38 16 31
Powerball 5

Tattslotto Sat 27/Dec/14, Draw 3489

Winning Numbers 16 43 33 39 20 7
Supplementaries 41 3

Crafts attract much interest

On the 30th of December 2014 at the Punanga Nui market, crafts carved by prisoners under the tutelage of master carver Mike Tavioni, went on public exhibition and sale. The works were of a commendable standard and on show were a wooden table with local designs, kumete bowls with designs, pates, spears and carved panels. Most of the pieces sold and aroused much public interest. - *By Poko Utia*



Rutaki School celebrates 50 years

On the 30th of December 2014 Rutaki School celebrated its 50th anniversary and the event attracted many ex students some of whom back from overseas for this special event. There were performances by young groups. An excited crowd screamed and yelled and the smaller children couldn't help but dance even if it wasn't their turn. Although events ran behind schedule everyone didn't seem to mind. - By Poko Utia



Moetaua Tutere reunion

On Tuesday at the St Joseph School, the Moetaua Tutere family held their reunion. Each family introduced themselves and their families then told the kopu what line they come from. There were many surprised faces when those present found out who was related to whom.. - *By Poko Utia*



Love – the greatest gift

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

This Article of Encouragement I will focus on the events surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ. It is important for us to do this because it's becoming very difficult these days to identify Christ with a lot of things happening around us at this time of the year.

We need to stop and think of the worldly trends imposed upon us, and look directly to God and say to Him – 'help us Lord to rediscover a perspective of Christmas that glorifies and honours Jesus!' Christmas is to celebrate the joy of receiving Jesus Christ the Saviour as a 'free gift' from God. It is the time to acknowledge God's great love towards us. Yet I see three distinct trends that are nothing more than diversions or distractions from a sincere celebration.

The question I kept asking myself is "Where is the joy of the world?" For many people Christmas becomes a time of doing things in excess – we spend more money than we have, people eat, eat, eat, and drink, drink, drink, and this leads to increase in road accidents, partying, and so on. Shops stay open for long hours to draw people into spending.

The first trend is that Christmas has become more of a Holiday instead of a Holy Day.

The second trend is that we have Commercialized and not Christianized Christmas. Now-a-days Christmas is a business with Santa Claus as the main person. People are about making money rather than focusing on the significance of Christmas. Christmas is not

about material things, but about a person called Jesus Christ.

The third trend is that we have placed more upon Getting rather than Giving. We tend to speak about what we got for Christmas rather than what we gave. Christmas is to be a time of giving. For God so loved you and I that He gave Jesus.

What really happened at Christmas was this. Love came and knocked at the door of the world's heart. God's love for the world was so strong that it conceived itself by a miracle, from our perspective, in the womb of a virgin. The evidence of that spiritual act was the eventual birth of Jesus – Emmanuel – God with us.

When we read in the Bible of the build up to the birth of Jesus and the events that followed, we discover that people reacted three different ways.

Firstly, there were those who totally ignored it. When love came knocking on their door, the door of their hearts, it was turned away in ignorance. The pre-occupation of the people with what the world had organized for them distracted their attention from earth's greatest historical event. Revelation 3v.20 reads "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him, and he with Me." Many ignored that knocking. Friend, do not get carried away by the external trends and events of Christmas, that we ignore God's great manifestation of love toward us.

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi



Secondly, there were those who were so concerned of God's love to the world. When Herod the King heard of this great occasion – a Messiah was to be born – he did everything within his power to stop this from happening. After it happened he tried to cut off God's love towards people by seeking to physically kill baby Jesus. God's love is to be received and enjoyed, yet there are many who are concerned about this love. For some reason their hearts are so hardened that they are so negative towards love. Despite all the hurts and disappointments we have had during the year, let us open up our hearts to God and receive His love towards us and we will find that the love will heal those hurts and

disappointments, and instead of being a hostile person at Christmas, you are a happy person.

Thirdly, there were those who searched God's love. When love comes knocking at your door, don't ignore it or have concern for it, but search it.

Christmas is about searching for the love of God. Friends, we can't ignore God's love, or show concern for it, but rather we ought to search for it. Let us set our minds, our hearts and spirit on searching for the greatest gift of love the world has ever received – Jesus Christ. Let us not be distracted from that.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you – God bless, te Atua te aroa.

New Year, new beginning

By Teherenui Koteka


It's that time of the year where we get to say goodbye to 2014 and hello to a fresh new year. At this time of the year, I and no doubt a lot of you, tend to hear the flutter of new year's resolutions. All over Facebook I see people spreading the word of their various goals for 2015. I see people's usual targets such as "I'm going to lose weight" or "I'm going to aim to do better at school" and I see the more exotic goals such as "I'm going to save enough money to travel to Europe this year". The catch phrase 'new year, new me' is one often heard throughout the holiday period and into the start of the New Year. By today, January 7th many people have set goals to battle out the journey of 2015 hoping to emerge in 2016 a new and better person.


I think the 'New Year' is the perfect time to set objectives for the on-coming year. To me the New Year is a magical time where any goal seems possible and the next 365 days will test how much you really want to achieve the goals you have set. Although I, and no doubt many of you out there still have New Years resolutions from 2012 that have not yet been achieved, the New Year marks a new beginning and the chance to reach those goals that just seem inaccessible. The New Year for me means that you symbolically get a new beginning. With this new beginning comes new chances, room for improvement, and the


casting away of mistakes made in the previous year. The idea of new possibilities and opportunities also accompanies a New Year. The New Year means new things to look forward to and new adventures to partake on. For many of my friends 2015 means embarking on their journey into adulthood as their initiation into university draws closer.


A New Year always brings hope and a little dread. We hope for a prosperous year ahead, and hold a little dread at the thought of not knowing what the year will bring. January 1st marks the beginning of a voyage throughout a brand new, fresh year. Although we do not know what the next 365 days will bring we have to just hope for the best and battle out what ever challenges come along the way. New Years is a time to reflect upon the previous year and look towards the up-coming year. All I can really hope for this year is a safe but challenging year that helps me emerge in 2016 a better, stronger and wiser person than I was in 2014. My New Years resolution this year is "umeia te marokura" meaning aim for the highest. Although this has been my New Years resolution for the past four years I'm not convinced that I have truly done my best to achieve it. Maybe 2015 will be my year. I go into 2015 with a New Years resolution in my back pocket and the will power to stick it out. I hope many of you do the same. Either way here's hoping that we all have a fantastic prosperous year. Happy New Year!


Chooks extra


Spotted in Captain's Log, SS Daily, Christmas Eve, the new rates for fuel approved by the one person Price Tribunal. How is it chooks that with the world prices for fuel coming down, one supplier has dropped his rates across the board while the other, has increased his rates significantly? How does the one person Price Tribunal justify such a situation? Only in the Cook Islands do such oddities exist! 


2015 was proclaimed as the year government would start earning much needed new revenue for its grandiosely touted Sovereign Fund, from the issuing of licenses for exploration of our sea bed by foreign companies. However, this is contingent upon firstly getting a budget to employ the necessary extra staff and to train them up. No idea where the money is coming from just yet. Our taxes or our donor buddies? With parliament still up in the air and no budget likely any time soon, the sea bed mineral dreams will stay just that-dreams! 


The longer we dither in getting our sea bed licensing system airborne, thanks to all the political wrangling, the worse it will be for us as other nations, like India, plough ahead with greater speed and urgency. All our efforts to date are likely to go down the proverbial gurgler as we get overtaken and drop from a leading position to last! Whether we like it or not, we are in a race and if we drop the baton, we can forget all about winning any medals! 


Bathers at Muri were somewhat stunned chooks to see a noisy jetski zooming about the lagoon at high speed. Is such a thing allowed? What of the bathers? Who polices this activity? The Harbour Master? The Traditional Chiefs? What are the speed limits? 

Posh hotel out west opens its doors to locals at an affordable price but the way some were paddling their kayaks gave others cause for concern thereby raising queries about breathalyzer tests for erratic paddlers! 

If the numbers of budget tourists keep rising and no new accommodations are built, will we see the first camping grounds set up? These were all the rage in Kiwiland some years ago. All we need now is "tent town" with an ablutions block, a PA system and an early morning, "Hi Dee Hi campers!" 

With deficits expected over the next few years, MFEM has ordered a new set of cheque books from the bank for issuing as payment to private sector contractors. The new cheques are made of a rubbery material, not for long life or durability but for their "bouncing" capability. The higher the bounce, the less likelihood of payment! 

Athletic types stand a better chance of employment when the new government takes office chooks. When the new Minister says, "Jump," those who can jump higher than ordered, will get to keep their jobs! With the abolition of office vehicles, those who can run fast, also have a better chance of retaining their jobs! 

Here's a tip chooks. Watch for a major development at Avatiu wharf. The whisper is those who operate the dry dock for ships in Tahiti are looking to re-locate and Avatiu harbour apparently fits the bill! With a long list of vessels seeking dry docking for maintenance work on their hulls, business at the harbour is looking up! 

Halleluiah chooks! A new use has been found for the humble tobacco plant! It appears the leaf has bio-fuel properties and in South Africa, massive plantations are planned to grow tobacco not for puffing on but for powering vehicles and other means of transport.

Rassie is so in love with his Bishop he's even overlooking his recently past muck ups. After the October visit to the QR debacle Rassie made every effort to dodge the Demo firing squad's bullets by telling the meeting of the central committee Bishop had stuffed up not him. The audience clearly heard Rassie distance himself from the failed attempt to become government after assuring everyone it was in the bag. He even went as far to say the Bishop was nuts and what do you expect it was a full moon. So what can we expect Rassie to report to the central committee when the current attempt to become government predictably fails after all the hype of big changes and jobs for the boys turns to poke?



Rassie's waffle about the spirit of co operation between himself Smilie Heta and the Bishop during their Vaipae/ Tautu trip in Aitutaki was another of his misleading persuaders. Demo Opposition Leader Heta made the trip to protect the interests of the Democratic Party and prevent a sell out by Rassie to the One Cook Island Movement. Just goes to show Bishop isn't quite the power broker he makes himself out to be. Kete is one leopard who isn't going to change his spots even after an offering of financial inducements.



Word around the coop is a locally taxpayer sponsored businessman has acquired a suitable property to start a brewery. Let's hope they have a competition for a name and a logo. The big question being asked is where did the proprietor get the loot from? The simple answer is its no one's business. It isn't a crime to be smart. At the end

of the day it's good ideas not hard work that attracts investors. And what a great beach front site to have a bar and restaurant.



Talk about the lonely hearts club, it's Christmas Eve and instead of being at home with their wives two political roosters were out dinning together. Try as they might no one else wanted to join them.



Whisper reaching Big Red on Coconut Wireless chooks is that our pals from the East working on Te Mato Vai are getting the princely sum of NZ\$40 a month. That's probably a good living wage for a gentleman from the Orient but would not go far over here. Also we do not know what portion is paid to worker's families back home.



Is the broken down shell of a hotel in Vaimaanga coming back to "Papa?" That's the word among the swaying palms chooks. Even the ghosts of ages past predicted it.



On the eve of Christmas Eve, the well known crim, "Sticky Fingers" broke in and made off with a quantity of Christmas

Hampers! Will Sticky Fingers be feeding the poor ala Robin Hood?



Whisper is chooks, Tricky Dickie, pareu shirt and all, wants to stay put. Put down some roots so to speak. His employer, Le Commissar Publique, is now under pressure it seems from the higher ups, the Lordly High Mandarins to re-issue his license to rob for another 365 sleeps! Not satisfied at having bashed and robbed the elderly's nest eggs and the children's coin boxes through cruel taxes, the Lordly High Mandarins seem quite happy to let Dickie loose to wreak havoc among the lowly in the Markets and the destitute roaming the streets with plastic buckets.



Breaking news on CNN-Coconut Network News chooks is that the Big Moaner may not stand for the Utu in the Vaipae by-election. Word is he is fearful the High Court finding may have put some of his band of followers off! Hence the sensation below his legs of cooling feet!



Spot the results of the Demo raffle in Captain's Log, SS Daily, Christmas Eve? Notice all those unsold tickets that were drawn? If

none of these tickets were paid for, why were they in the draw? Surely to qualify for the draw, the ticket must be paid for? So why weren't these unsold tickets excluded from the draw so those who bought tickets, could have a good chance of winning a prize? As it is, the Demos sure saved themselves a small fortune by including the unsold tickets in the draw. They did not have to pay out prizes in many instances! Why aren't the Police investigating? Demo Way!



Trust government to come up with a novel way to boost economic development chooks and raise GDP! Open up the Market rent free to entrepreneurial high school kids so they can sell quantities of unspecified goods for pocket money! Brilliant idea! That's innovation for you! Talk about thinking out of the box! But with all the potential pocket money to be collected, will it arouse the beady eyes of Fagan Haigh, the Sherriff of Rottingham?

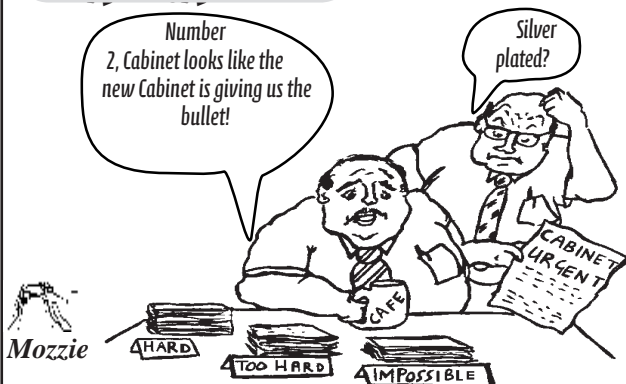


Big Red has been rubbing his large crystal balls furiously and disturbing visions have appeared out of the mists. Signs are a few nervous pen pushers in the employ of the Lordly High Mandarins in the "Halls of the Treasury" might take heed and firmly fix their rear to their seats with Super Glue as one day soon, unsettling winds will blow through the hallowed passages unseating the unprepared!



The daily dribble is a glutton for punishment, the last time they bit the hand of one of their biggest customers they paid for it in the pocket. This time other sympathetic customers are going to join forces and protest in the same way.

FAT CATS



COCONUT ROUNDTABLE



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OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

VACANCY: PROGRAMME OFFICER – THE SRIC-CC PROGRAMME

Applications for the position of Programme Officer are invited from qualified, experienced and motivated individuals.

The successful applicant will be responsible for assisting in the management and coordination of the Programme; Strengthening the Resilience of Our Islands and Our Communities to Climate Change (SRIC-CC).

The objective of the SRIC-CC programme is to strengthen the ability of Pa Enua communities, and the public service, to make informed decisions and manage anticipated climate change driven pressures (including extreme events) in a pro-active, integrated and strategic manner.

The successful applicant must have a passion for learning, be innovative and have recently worked on community based projects in the Pa Enua or Rarotonga. They must also have excellent communications and interpersonal skills. Proficiency in Cook Islands Maori is an advantage.

To receive a copy of the Terms of Reference for this position please contact Mrs Tina Samson-Hoff at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) between 8am-4pm (Mon-Fri) on phone 25494 or 29300, or email tina.samson@cookislands.gov.ck;

Applicants should submit the following to Mrs Samson-Hoff at the OPM or by email to the address above (hard or electronic copies are acceptable);

1. A full curriculum vitae (CV);
2. A covering letter outlining your interest for this position; and
3. At least two letters of reference that support your application

Applications close on Monday 19th January 2015 at 3.00pm.

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NOMINATION FORM

The 2015 Development Awards - Honouring 50 Years of Development in the Cook Islands



- Closing date for nominations is **Friday 23rd January 2015**.
- There is no limit to the number of nominations made by individuals.
- Winners will be chosen by a judging panel representing business, civil society, youth, traditional leaders and others.
- Winners will be recognised at the 2015 Development Partner's Meeting Awards Dinner on Tuesday 10th February.

Jaewynn McKay, the Awards Coordinator, is happy to answer any questions you may have.
Contact Jaewynn by email: development@cookislands.gov.ck or by phone: +682 55 486

BACKGROUND

The 2015 Development Awards will recognise the country's best development achievements over the last fifty years. These 7 awards will honour organisations, individuals and the public and private sector for their efforts in creating positive change in the Cook Islands.

CATEGORIES

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Best Development 1965 – 1974 | • Best Development 1995 – 2004 | Special Awards |
| • Best Development 1975 – 1984 | • Best Development 2005 – 2014 | • People's Choice |
| • Best Development 1985 – 1994 | | • Supreme Development 1965 – 2014 |

CRITERIA

Recipients of the 2015 Development Awards will have demonstrated to our experienced panel of judges that they or their project were at the forefront of the country's development.

These awards will recognise the most successful and innovative, people, projects, programmes and partnerships; entries will need to demonstrate how they have improved the physical or environmental quality of an island or islands within the Cook Islands or the economic or social well-being of a community within the Cook Islands.

Other criteria that might be incorporated include:

- The contribution and benefit to society and impact on community or nation by the individual/group/event or project being nominated.
- Their personal interest and involvement in the wider community.
- Details of any challenges faced and how they were overcome.
- The length of time living in the Cook Islands.
- Outline contribution to the Cook Islands development.
- Outline degree of difficulty in achievement.
- The involvement in establishing and/or setting the direction of a group, organisation or cause in which they have been involved.
- Value of contribution to the Cook Islands.

TIMELINE

- Call for nominations opens Monday 15th December 2014.
- Nominations close Friday 23rd January 2015.
- Judging panel convenes Monday 26th January to consider nominations and to short list up to three nominations per category.
- The People's Choice Award will be voted on by the public from the short list published on Monday 2nd February.
- The Supreme Award will be chosen from the category winners.
- Announcement of Awardees at the Development Awards Dinner Tuesday 10th February.

NOMINATION

Nominee name/project/programme: _____

Contact name (if different from above): _____

Contact email: _____ Phone: _____

Category, tick one:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Best Development 1965 - 1974 | <input type="checkbox"/> Best Development 1995 – 2004 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Best Development 1975 – 1984 | <input type="checkbox"/> Best Development 2005 – 2014 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Best Development 1985 – 1994 | |

Supporting information

Please tell us the reasons why you believe your nomination should receive a Development Award (in about 250 - 1000 words). You can provide additional material in support if you wish. You can use this section to list the achievements. Please feel free to add additional pages or attach a separate document to this nomination form.

NOMINATOR GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

I agree to the Development Coordination Division (MFEM) recording the personal contact details provided in this nomination, retaining and using these details and disclosing them to the judging panel for the purposes of selecting recipients for the Development Awards 2015.

I understand that my nominee's name and brief details about this nomination may be released to the media or appear in publicity material.

Your name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

SUBMIT NOMINATION

- email to development@cookislands.gov.ck
- Post to Development Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, PO Box 120, Rarotonga
- Deliver by hand to the Development Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management