

**SD**  
**TONGA**



**STATISTICS DEPARTMENT**

# **CORPORATE PLAN**



**February 2004**

## **FOREWORD**

This corporate plan provides goals, objectives, and output to be produced by the Statistics Department (SD) in the next three years i.e. 2004-05 to 2006-07. The SD will endeavour to fulfill its vision of developing an integrated and comprehensive statistical information system to facilitate informed policy and decision-making, discussions, and encourage education and learning.

The SD in its mission will seek to be the leading statistical agency in the smaller Pacific Island nations, which strive to produce statistics on time for better decision-making and discussions within government and the public. Government requires statistics for project planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation. Statistics are required for assessing the performance of the objectives and goals of Strategic Development Plan 7. Statistics helps people make informed decisions.

It is important for policy and decision making that the statistical information system provides statistics that are accurate, relevant, timely, and independent from political or other influences. The new millennium has created increased demands for social and economic statistics not just from Government but also from regional and international organizations, especially the United Nations. Statistics will show whether Tonga has achieved the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) adopted by the United Nations and agreed to by Tonga and other countries. Tonga has agreed to adopt the International Monetary Fund General Data Dissemination System (GDDS), as a useful planning tool, and framework for dissemination of statistics and metadata. The increased demands for statistics has strained meager resources to its limits given the insufficient staff capabilities in the SD. Staffing assistance will be sought from New Zealand, Australia and the UK to alleviate the staffing position.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, the SD has undertaken large statistical data collection surveys and censuses, which has produced a wealth of information and statistics to meet user demands. These include a Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2000-01, an Agriculture Census 2001, and Labour Force Survey 2003. The SD published a website in November 2003 which was a great leap forward into Internet dissemination and archiving of statistical information. The website was designed with assistance from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and funded by the UK DFID. The connection to cyber space however poses problems of data security, which requires additional resources to alleviate. The Plan period includes the decennial Population Census scheduled for November 2006, and annual Employment Surveys to begin in 2004-2005.

---

S. T.T. 'Utoikamanu  
Minister of Finance

## **INTRODUCTION**

This strategic plan identifies relevant issues to the SD today and sets the direction the organisation should take in the coming three years. The attainment of the plan goals and objectives lies in the strength of the SD staff members and their concerted effort in producing statistics that are relevant to our valued customers, full utilization of modern technology available to the SD, and the support of regional and international statistical organisations. The statistical output of the SD is essential for measuring the performance of SDP 7 objectives as well as future National Strategic Plans.

The plan recognizes the need for more coordination of statistical activities within government to avoid duplication of effort, maximize use of resources and ensure compliance with accepted standards and procedures for statistical data collection.

The implementation of the Plan objectives and goals are constrained by insufficient staff with relevant academic qualifications and experience to guide and implement various activities. This has posed restrictions on the quantity and quality of outputs produced. The SD finds it difficult to cope with the high turnover of staff, and it is getting more and more difficult to replace staff that have left the Department on retirement, transfer to other government departments or to the private sector. Staff training is crucial to curb these constraints; both long-term academic studies and short term specialized training is required. The assistance of regional and international organizations like the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, the IMF Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre, the United Nations, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand and others have helped alleviate the gaps in statistical capabilities in the SD. During the Plan period, the SD will continue to seek technical assistance from statistical agencies overseas to fill the gaps in human resources while long-term training opportunities are sought for staff.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
Introduction	ii
Table of Contents	iii
<b>1. The SD Purpose</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. The situation now</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Statistics mandate	2
2.2 Role of the SD	2
2.3 Statistical services	2
2.4 Financial matters	3
2.5 Resources	3
<b>3. The Future</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Vision	4
3.2 Mission	4
3.3 Goals	4
3.4 Values	4
3.41 Our people	4
3.42 What the SD will do for its staff	5
3.43 What the SD expects of its staff	5
<b>4. Reaching the Future</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 The output objectives	6
4.2 The key result areas	6
4.21 <i>An expanded and improved statistical service</i>	6
4.22 <i>A statistical service that is timely, relevant and respected for quality and standards</i>	6
4.23 <i>An organisation that encourages excellence in what it does and its staff</i>	7
4.24 <i>Maintains statistical contribution to international and regional statistical activities that would foster Tonga's development</i>	7
4.25 <i>Providing a statistical advisory service that is sound and accessible</i>	7

## *The SD Purpose*

To provide a statistical service that would facilitate informed decision-making and discussions within government, and support learning for the people of Tonga.

## **2 THE SITUATION NOW**

### **2.1 Statistics mandate**

The Statistics Act No.31 of 1978 gives the Statistics Department the authority as the central government agency to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics pertaining to the people and their institutions. The same Act requires the treatment of all personal information as confidential, and allows access to all kinds of information required for statistical purposes.

### **2.2 Role of the SD**

The Statistics Department currently fulfills the following statistical roles to government and the public:

- i. Collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of statistics and related information.
- ii. Co-ordination of statistical operations of other government departments in order to avoid duplication of efforts, maintain compatibility and maximise statistical efforts.
- iii. Providing statistical advise and assistance.

### **2.3 Statistical services**

2.31 The prime service that the SD provides to Government and the public is producing up-to-date statistics relating to the status of the economy and the socio-demographic status of the people and their institutions. These services include:

- i. Regular production of Economic Statistics like Gross Domestic Product, Balance of Payments, Consumer Price Index and Merchandise Trade;
- ii. Regular production of Population profiles, structure, size and distribution of population, migration profiles and vital statistics of births, deaths and marriages;
- iii. Conducting household surveys or censuses relating to population, agriculture, household income and expenditure, and labour force. These surveys and censuses provide a wealth of statistical information like household population, agricultural activities of households, household composition, household income and expenditure, labour force participation rates of household members, unemployment rates and detailed information on those who are employed. Regular establishment surveys are also conducted on manufacturing establishments, and big businesses for GDP estimation and Balance of Payments compilation.

The administrative records of various institutions within government and sometimes outside government form the basis for most statistical compilations.

2.32 Another important service provided by the SD is co-ordination of statistical activities within government. This occurs mainly when large-scale household surveys are conducted by another government department like Agriculture or Health, or smaller scale surveys conducted by Ministry of Finance or Central Planning department. Co-ordination of statistical

activities within government will encourage data sharing within government, avoid duplication of data collection efforts, and ensure maximum benefits are derived from government resources.

- 2.33 Statistical advice and assistance was extended by the SD to government departments requesting such services. Most statistical advice has been in relation to conducting statistical surveys, including planning and training of field enumerators, how to supervise fieldwork operations, data processing and final stages of report preparation. This service was often limited to advisory only, when the SD was short of staff to undertake such assistance.

## **2.4 *Financial Matters***

- 2.41 The Department collected total revenue of \$7,335 in Financial Year 2000/01 from the sales of statistical periodicals and reports. The annual budget estimates financed the department's annual expenditure through the Programme Budget Estimate, with the highest allocation ever of \$633,800.
- 2.42 For the first time during financial year 2003/04, the Department operated as a separate program in Budget Estimates 2003/04 independent of the Ministry of Finance.
- 2.43 The Ministry of Finance Sun-system accounting package is the latest development towards improving the record, speed and management of disbursement of government funds. The Ministry of Finance installed a leased line in the SD which had Internet access as well as access to the Sun-system for processing of purchase orders, and access to Micropay before the end of 2004.

## **2.5 *Resources***

- 2.51 The quality and quantity of statistics and services provided by the SD is dictated by the caliber of its human resources. High staff turnover continues to be a major concern especially the difficulty of retaining qualified and skilled Statisticians. It is increasingly more difficult to recruit staff to fill posts vacated by those who leave the SD. The current organizational structure cannot fully meet the SD objectives hence the need to restructure the organisation. A new structure will boost morale and retain qualified staff since a more promising career path is created, enhance the output of much needed economic and social statistics, and improve people management skills of all senior staff.

- 2.52 Training of various skills at the professional level are required to be conducted regularly in order to meet changing SD demands. Specialized areas for regular training include data analyses, data processing, report writing, use of specialized statistical packages, and leadership and management.
- 2.53 The accessibility of staff to computers ratio of 1:1.2 is expected to be reduced to 1:1 in the Plan period. This will improve quality of statistical output.
- 2.54 The SD providers of statistics will continue to have the organisation's trust and appreciation of their contribution to statistical production, which will continue into the future.

### **3. THE FUTURE**

#### **3.1 Vision**

*“To develop an integrated and comprehensive statistical information system to facilitate better decision-making and discussions and to encourage education and learning for the people”*

#### **3.2 Mission**

To be the leading statistical agency in the smaller Pacific island nations, that strive to produce statistics on time for informed decision-making and discussions within government and the public.

#### **3.3 Goals**

To provide Government and the public with relevant, timely and quality statistics that is:

- i Informative and independent of government and outside influences but true and based on objective measures;
- ii Effective for policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and presentation;
- iii Sufficient to encourage informed decision making.

#### **3.4 Values**

##### **3.41 Our People**

All staff members of the SD value customer satisfaction with intentions of providing a fair and honest statistical service that is highly respected.

The organisation's charter mirrors to Government and the public the staff intentions:

***We will endeavour to provide our Customers with:***

- Quick Service;
- Where focus will be client oriented; and
- That is free from bias and status quo considerations

***We will treat our Customers with:***

- Politeness, caution and due respect;
- Treat every statistical requirement in a professional manner with effective promptness
- Improved products and service depending on customer needs.

***We invite our Customers to:***

- Question us and provide propositions for better service delivery.

#### ***3.42 What the SD will do for its staff***

- Provide staff with fairness and respect and make available to staff a safe and healthy working environment
- Form a consultative dialogue environment that encourages consultations with staff on matters that affect them, and provide justification for various decisions
- Encourage a working culture that would build excellence into performance, work recognition and reward.
- Provide appropriate training needs for staff development and job advancement
- Continue to assess the structure of the Department and levels of work performance to meet the expanded and improved service delivery.

#### ***3.43 What the SD expects of its staff***

- Know the Departments purpose, values and goals and work together towards their fulfillment
- Strengthen and foster good working relationships between providers and the SD and between users of statistics and the SD
- Strict adherence to regulations and rules that govern employment in government as in the ESTACODE and revised from time to time by the Public Service Commission
- Continuous assessment of work processes by discussing pertinent issues for improved performance
- Provide timely, honest and constructive feedback
- Treat customers and colleagues with fairness and respect
- Uphold the Department's values and acts as true ambassadors of the SD.

## **4. REACHING THE FUTURE**

### **4.1 The output objectives:**

The outputs that the Statistics Department endeavours to produce include the following objectives:

- i facilitate Government and private sector planning, policy and decision-making by providing timely statistical information and analyses, and encouraging informed decisions by the public;*
- ii meet the information needs of local, regional and international organizations and promote efficient production and dissemination of information;*
- iii coordinate all statistical services within government to avoid duplication of effort, as well as ensure compliance with accepted concepts and procedures;*
- iv increase and maintain the level of professional staff to meet the statistical needs of Government;*
- v Conduct the decennial Population Census in November 2006 and produce a Census Report with associated statistical and demographic analyses.*

### **4.2 The Key Result areas:**

#### **4.21 An expanded and improved statistical service through**

- Developing and promoting better collection and improving statistical collection from government administrative sources;
- Exploring the possibility of utilising government computerised data collections;
- Regularising some survey collections such as Labour Force and Household Income and Expenditure and new surveys required by the minister;
- Increased utilization of the Internet to disseminate statistical information via the SD website;
- Timely provision of statistical information according to pre-set timetable.

#### **4.22 A statistical service that is timely, relevant and respected for quality and standards.**

Structuring of work programmes to cater for SD present needs including timely review to address continuing and emerging issues by:

- Having build-in clear work objectives and standards for measurement of performance which include quality and timeliness;
- Enhancing data consistency and reliability across the SD;

- Exploring opportunities to strengthen transparency in statistical procedures and methodologies, and publishing metadata on the SD website.

Establish and maintain a strong user-producer relationship via:

- Regular discussions of SD work programmes, output and constraints in the
  - Statistics Advisory Council meetings
  - Macro-economic review committee
  - Millennium Development Goals Taskforce
  - General Data Dissemination System
  - Steering Committees of Health Sector Project, Customs Modernisation Project, Tax Reform Project, Fuel Concession Committee
  - Other groups

***4.23 An organisation that encourages excellence in its staff by:***

- Developing a performance management scheme that would encourage and reward work achievements and innovation;
- Maintaining skilled and highly motivated staff members for the SD current and future developments;
- Providing good and fair working environment to all staff members;
- Facilitating staff access to appropriate training and staff development programmes;
- Improving the way the SD access, secure, communicate, and share knowledge and skills;
- Sharing with other NSOs in the region the recognition and utilization of staff skills development;
- Utilising recommendations from Users for improvement in SD service development;
- Utilisation of various staffing assistance schemes to alleviate gaps in skilled manpower.

***4.24 Maintaining statistical contribution to international and regional statistical activities that would foster Tonga's development.***

- Enlarging our statistical services by expanding our on-line services;
- Timely responding to international and regional requests for statistical information;
- Securing technical assistance from international and regional organizations that would enhance production of economic and social statistics.

***4.25 Providing a statistical advisory service that is sound and accessible***

- Increase the number of professional staff in the SD so that statistical advice may be provided to other Government departments without jeopardizing the Department's output.