



Christmas message from the CEO

AS we approach the festive season, it is timely for us all at FRA to reflect on where we were 12 months ago and how far we have travelled, and it's not just about what has been achieved out on the road, which would be stunning even if it was delivered by a fully functioning entity that had been in place for two or three years.

The fact that it has been

delivered at the same time that our organisation has had to grow, from around four people on the 4th of January this year to around 20, is a reflection of the calibre of the people making up the FRA team.

We've had MWH in support, but they too have had to establish themselves at the same time as delivering tenders, delivering designs and conducting supervisions.

And then there are the contractors who all started on the 1st of January, yet they hit the ground running, and by and large, they have delivered what they said they would deliver.

It really has been an extraordinary effort by all concerned.

I say "timely to reflect" because we've all been going at 100 miles an hour and most of us haven't had the luxury of celebrating the successes. Now



FRA CEO Mr Neil Cook.

is the time for us all have a break, recharge, and be ready for 2014.

Budget increases support FRA programmes



Thurston Road was included in the Suva CBD Rehabilitation programme. A new Irish crossing to Namosi Village was constructed after the old crossing was destroyed by Cyclone Evan.



IN announcing the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) budget allocation for 2014, the Honourable Prime Minister Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama said, "We cannot effectively reach our potential – in business, in education, in health, in government, or in any sector – without making a constant investment in our infrastructure."

With an increase from \$420 million in 2013 to \$454.7 million, the budget for next year enables FRA to continue, without interruption, the programme to rebuild a road

network that is world-class, and deliver on Government's commitment to all Fijians.

"FRA takes very seriously the responsibility we have to deliver on Government's vision for Fiji, as it relates to the roading network and all it contributes to communities and the economy," said FRA CEO, Mr Neil Cook.

As part of the infrastructure upgrade, FRA has set aside \$74 million to maintain existing assets, thus averting their long or short-term deterioration. Some examples of the wide range of Maintenance activities

are pothole repairs, reinstating road markings, spot metalling and grading unsealed roads, and replacing bulbs in street lights.

When the cost of maintaining an asset becomes uneconomic, then it is replaced with one similar, such as occurs when a sealed road is rebuilt, or a bridge is replaced. FRA has set aside \$145 million for Renewal activities in 2014.

For several years approximately \$10 million has been spent in immediate response to cyclones and extreme weather events, and on the restoration of damaged

infrastructure. As having appropriate funds in the event of an emergency would obviate the need to reassess programme commitments, \$23.6 million has been set aside for flood damage and emergency response.

FRA has allocated \$212 million for Capital Development projects in 2014. These are projects where an asset is created that did not previously exist, or an existing asset is upgraded to provide a level of service in excess of current delivery. "With continued commitment from Government, we will deliver Fiji a world standard road network that is a world leader in integrated and co-ordinated management of infrastructure," said Mr Cook.

HAVE YOUR SAY
24 HOURS
679 310 0114
SHORTCODE
5720
f FIJI ROADS
AUTHORITY

Industry advised of standards

AT the Fiji Roads Authority Industry Forum held in Suva, early December, contractors and suppliers to Fiji's roading industry have been advised of the Capital and Maintenance programmes planned for early 2014, and what this would mean in terms of project contract tenders and the supply of suitable materials.

It is expected that the quality of materials used in the 2014

maintenance and capital works projects will be of a standard commensurate with creating a world-class infrastructure.

FRA Chairman, Mr Pio Tikoduadua said that in order for the nation to obtain value for money from this Government's "significant investment" in the roading sector, "we need to ensure that high quality is maintained for FRA operations and for the sustainable future."



FRA Chairman Mr Pio Tikoduadua, addressing the Industry Forum.

Solutions outlined at Transport Forum

AT the 12th National Transport Consultative Forum, the Honourable Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Mr Jone Usamate, called for changes to improve transport network systems that are crucial to trade.

At the two-day forum, with the theme 'Pathways to Sustainable Land and Maritime Transport', Mr Usamate said that there is a need to recognise the problems, that "must be converted into opportunities that we as a nation can address and turn into assets."

During the Forum, Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) CEO, Mr Neil Cook, outlined investigations the Authority is making in finding solutions to road network challenges that impact trade: solutions that could help facilitate better productivity and cost effectiveness for those involved in the import/export sector.

The budget allocation for 2014 will see work begin on some of these solutions next year.

Team building workshop



(From left) Mr Ian Hunter, Capital Works Manager; FRA CEO, Mr Neil Cook; Ms Kavita Verma, Corporate Services Manager; Ms Christine Serreyn, Strategy, Planning and Performance Manager; Mr Dale Nicholls, Maintenance Works Manager, and (inset), Mr Sunil Kumar, Chief Financial Officer.

FRA has confirmed the appointment of all members of the Senior Management team, all of whom recently participated in a High Performance Leadership Workshop.

"The workshop, which was conducted by Management Consultant Joe Foster, gave us the opportunity to understand how the strengths and weaknesses of our different

types of personality can be best utilised to build a high performance management team," said Ms Kavita Verma, Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) Corporate Services Manager.

Training for safety

FIJI Roads Authority (FRA) is committed to best practice in safety for its staff, all contractors and utilities organisations and their employees, and of course, for the benefit of the public.

Here (below) Mr Eddie Mee, National Trainer, of Fulton Hogan (NZ) demonstrates good traffic control practices to roading industry stakeholders and utilities employees at an FRA-organised seminar, held at VT Solutions.



Harris Road reconstruction

NOT only is Harris Road undergoing a complete reconstruction, but re-configuration of the road layout and traffic flows form part of the work to upgrade one of the busiest roads in Suva.

These layout changes are designed to make easier entry and exit to and from the Port, and for more efficient and effective bus use.

"Although it is a complex project, with underground services and new kerbs to be dealt with, some of the most modern technology that is available anywhere in the world is being used on the reconstruction, namely the foamed bitumen



Harris Road is undergoing a transformation.

modification process (FBM)," said Mr Dale Nicholls, FRA Maintenance Works Manager.

For example, this method was used on Nadi Backroad, reconstructing six kilometres of road in 25 days; six kilometres

that some years ago took 18 months to construct.

"While the significant scope of the changes being carried out in Harris Road has meant that the project has taken some time to complete, the use of the FBM process, which has generally been undertaken during the night, has meant that the pavement work has progressed much faster than

more traditional methods," said Mr Nicholls.

Despite this, there will still be unavoidable delays, some disruption and inconvenience. The public is reminded to allow for this when travelling into the city.

Capital works gears up for 2015

WHILE the many people in Fiji are looking forward to holidays and celebrating the rapidly approaching festive season, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) Capital Works Department is gearing up, not only in preparation for 2014, but also with a view to plan for 2015.

Capital works is anything that creates a new asset, or renews an existing asset back to its original state, thus providing it with another equivalent life-span, and includes bridge renewals, jetty renewals and



Mr Ian Hunter, FRA Capital Works Manager.

major new seal extensions.

Mr Ian Hunter, FRA Capital Works Manager, whose main responsibility is the delivery of the programme, said that it is

necessary to advise Government “very quickly” about the plans for the first half of 2014.

He explained that “from the gleam in the eye,” or from having the idea to getting a contract started can take 12 months, and involves finding the quickest, most satisfactory way to tender a project, with investigations, a design tendering period and approvals needed.

“FRA is in its first year, and there was quite remarkable progress for 2013 with several

large projects already under way. We have been busy getting as much done as possible, so there hasn’t been the length of planning time available for 2014. Once the new year gets started we can begin planning for 2015 in the first quarter of next year,” said Mr Hunter.

“There are discussions about the design progress, design options, procurement options, how to staff a project, all of which takes time. So we need to start early on planning 2015.”

Rights and duties reviewed at workshop



Study and group discussion formed an integral part of the workshop.

AS the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is a public office as defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji, it is necessary for all staff to be aware that as well as having rights that are protected by law, as public officers, they are subject to very strict guidelines with regard to their responsibilities and any actions that could result in prosecution.

All FRA management and staff spent a “very intense two days” studying the Constitution with particular emphasis on how it applies to them as public officers, at the Corporate Governance Workshop.

“At FRA, there is zero tolerance of corrupt practices,” said FRA Communication Officer, Ms Onarina Umu, following the

workshop.

“The roading industry is recognised world-wide as being potentially high-risk for corrupt practices. This is a new Authority, specifically established to create a corruption-free work environment,” she said.

During the workshop, attention was also paid to finding the balance between protecting the public’s right to access to amenities, while at the same time, protecting the Authority as it deals with the backlog of roads that was created by others’ neglect.

Ms Umu said that there is a need for further discussion of the issues raised at the workshop, and to include constitutional rights and responsibilities in the FRA staff induction process.

HR policies explained

MAKING sure that everyone is aware of the policies and procedures that affect them, whether they are working in the FRA laboratory in Samabula, in Nabouwalu or at Buca Bay in the North, has been the concern of Fiji Roads Authority’s (FRA) Corporate Services Manager, Ms Kavita Verma, who has induction training for staff based on Viti Levu, and another for Vanua Levu-based workers.

“All staff need to know what FRA expects of them in terms of the Code of Conduct. They



Ms Kavita Verma, FRA Corporate Services Manager, (5th from left) believes distance is no object in keeping staff informed.

also need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, and what procedures to follow if, for example, they have a grievance to be addressed,” said Ms Verma. “Distance is not a reason for staff to be uninformed.”

Communication a priority



FRA Land Liaison Officer, Mr Jese Morgan Veibuli.

KEEPING people informed of what is planned, and what the time-line will be, is all part of a day’s work for FRA Land Liaison Officer, Mr Jese Morgan Veibuli, who visited Natewa in Vanua Levu as part of the Alleviation of Poverty Programme. “I really felt for some of the people at Natewa whose villages

do not have road access yet. We are looking at cutting new roads in the future, but we are also working to upgrade existing rural roads to an acceptable standard,” said Mr Veibuli.

“Sometimes it is just a matter of asking people to be patient and explaining that there is a huge volume of work to be done.”

Mr Veibuli travels extensively throughout Fiji to inform people, especially in rural areas, and recently met with the Macuata and Cakaudrove Provincial Councils to gather information, listen to concerns, and outline FRA’s plans.

Dredging solution for Rotuma

TO ensure the people of Rotuma continue to receive shipping services at the Port of Oinafa, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is prioritising a dredging programme to remove accumulated sand from around the jetty.

“The Authority was aware that the jetty in Rotuma was not working as it should, and it is a priority that people and their goods have access to shipping services,” said Ms Christine Serreyn, FRA’s Strat-

egy, Planning and Performance Manager.

Ms Serreyn, who recently accompanied an engineering specialist in maritime infrastructure to Rotuma in order to assess the situation, said that physical assessment of the jetty and underwater photography revealed that the sand accumulation is the primary issue to be addressed.

“We went to the jetty three times a day, and in different weather conditions, to analyse



An aerial view of Oinafa Wharf, Rotuma. Sand build up in the bay can be detected.

the impact of the tides and waves. This confirmed that the problem is recurrent sand buildup that makes it impossible for vessels to dock,” said

Ms Serreyn. “The solution is to instigate a dredging programme to remove built up sand.” The programme is scheduled to be delivered in 2014.”

Recognise the sign



This means slow down to protect the new seal and to avoid damage to your vehicle.

Safety Note:

- Stay safe and help our workers to be safe.
- Be aware, road reconstruction uses huge machines and dangerously hot bitumen.
- Respect the signage.
- Follow the traffic management controllers’ directions.
- Pedestrians, walk where directed.
- Motorists, reduce your speed, drive where directed.

Commonly asked questions

Why have you fixed only a certain portion of road?

In order to manage the huge task in front of us we have had to prioritise where renewal work will occur. This is as a result of having to acknowledge that both financial and physical resource constraints mean it will be three to five years before we are on top of all of the issues. Our priority areas must start with key bus routes that service schools and carry people and produce into towns or markets. Commercial areas with a high amount of heavy vehicle use are next in priority, as these contribute

to the general economy of Fiji. By necessity, all other roads and streets fall into a lower priority grouping.

Sometimes this means that carry out repairs to the worst section of a road only to maintain it in some sort of serviceable condition. We may be able to programme a reseal over the entire section of some of these roads later, and that will be enough to save them. If the road is too bad then we will need to come back in a year or so to carry out a full renewal. In the meantime we would continue to undertake essential repairs only.

Multi-purpose island visit

THE recent week-long visit to Rotuma by FRA’s Strategy, Planning and Performance Manager Ms Christine Serreyn served more than one purpose,

While gathering information on the state of the island’s jetty, she also had the opportunity to explain to the Rotuma Council what FRA is, how the Authority operates, and its plans for the future.

“Equally important, it gave me the opportunity to listen to the Council’s plans and aspirations for the future,” said Ms Serreyn. “And because we were there for a week, we were able to communicate with people in informal settings which made interesting and useful feedback possible.”

Communication with the Council members will continue long-distance, so they are kept informed of FRA outcomes

from the visit.

Ms Serreyn was also able to GPS Rotuma’s roads, water provisions and generators, “as accurate data is a necessity to enable plans for the future,” and assess the equipment needs of the six-man FRA maintenance team that is providing services on behalf the Ministry of Provincial Development for FRA.

“FRA is committed to give people the right tools to do a good job in a safe way. There is a need for additional equipment and spare parts, and to ensure that everyone is issued with personal protective gear such as safety glasses and safety harnesses. It is also necessary to provide the Supervisor and Foreman on Rotuma with mobile phones and computers for better communication on the island as well as with the mainland.”

Definitions

New Capital: Expenditure to create new assets, or to increase the capacity of existing assets beyond the service potential of the original design. E.g. Building a new bridge.

Renewal Capital: The replacement or rehabilitation of an asset. E.g. Replacing an

existing bridge.

Capital Works: Includes both Renewal Capital Works and New Capital Works.

Sealing chips: Mineral aggregate (sharp stones) used with bitumen in the chip sealing process.

Metal/gravel: Irregularly shaped stones from a quarry or river bed. Mixed with a varying amount of sand, silt, and clay, which can act as a binder, to form a gravel or metal road.