

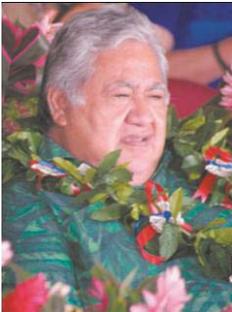


Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Corporate Plan

2012-2017

1. Foreword



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade was officially established on 1 July, 2003 under the Ministerial and Departmental Arrangements Act 2003.

This Corporate Plan sets out the framework for the Ministry's work for the period 2012 – 2017. It explains the scope of the Ministry's objectives and outputs, its operational structure, and the standards of performance required of its staff. The Plan therefore provides a guide to actions the Ministry takes in the management of Samoa's foreign and trade relations and in support of the development and strategic outcomes outlined in the Government's Strategy for the Development of Samoa.

A blue ink signature of Tuilaepa L. Sailele Malielegaoi.

Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi

PRIME MINISTER

and MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

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2. Overview

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is tasked with advising Government on Samoa's foreign and trade relations.

The promotion and enhancement of Samoa's interests internationally is achieved by strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations in key regional and international fora and by reinforcing Samoa's credentials as a trusted, reformed minded democracy that places high value on integrity in its partnerships.

This is an image that has been further enhanced by Government's ability to contribute to the promotion of regional and international security, rules-based trading systems, peace-keeping efforts in the region and beyond, promotion of human rights, emergency/relief operations, as well as being in the forefront in instituting economic and administrative reforms. In addition, Samoa continues to attract positive attention from abroad, including financial and trade support to assist Government's efforts in further developing and strengthening its economy and improving overall the welfare and prosperity of all Samoans.

The outcome of the work of the Ministry, in particular the management, administration and conduct of Samoa's foreign affairs and trade relations with the international community, contributes considerably to the overall effort of Samoa being recognised as a democratic, socially and economically stable country. The Ministry ensures that within the constraints of available resources, it continues to improve and deliver quality advice to Government and represent effectively the interests of Samoa internationally.

In a period of over 20 years, Samoa has opened only two more full diplomatic missions and a consulate in key locations. The perennial paucity of resources and high costs would continue to constrain establishing further new missions in the near future. This will obligate greater efficiency and effectiveness of current staff and

existing diplomatic missions overseas and further encourage the Ministry to look for alternative ways to promote greater awareness and appreciation of Samoa worldwide. However where circumstances require, the Government may consider establishing new overseas missions to meet the strategic needs of Samoa and as more and more Samoan people make their homes in other countries.

Domestically, the Ministry continues to consult closely with government agencies, the private sector, non-government organisations and the public on issues that have a bearing on the mandate of the Ministry and its stated outputs.

Crucial to the operations of the Ministry is the development of its diplomatic career structure. With continuous training and enhancement of its human resources, the Ministry will be able to conduct its mandate and meet its responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

3. Mandate

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade was officially established on 1 July, 2003 under the Ministerial and Departmental Arrangements Act 2003.

The Act incorporates the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Trade Division of the former Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry.

The Ministry is entrusted with the administration and conduct of Samoa's foreign and trade relations with other nations through its headquarters in Apia and its Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates-General abroad. The Ministry is committed to managing Samoa's international relations to promote Samoa's national

interests and achieve benefits for Samoa in relation to the Government's economic, trade and security objectives.

Samoa currently has official diplomatic relations with at least 80 States and is a full member to twenty major international/regional organisations. Samoa is a full contracting Party to many international treaties, ranging from international security and disarmament to human rights, civil aviation, environment and climate change, maritime and fisheries issues, economic/financial cooperation and trade arrangements.

The Ministry records, facilitates and advises on Samoa's accession and ratification of treaties, conventions and agreements. It also carries out depositary functions for various regional and international agreements, as required under international law.

The Ministry administers the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1978, the Maritime Zones Act 1999, the Chemical Weapons Prohibition Act 2011 and the Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act 2012.

4. Vision

For Samoa to be recognised as a regional leader and an active participant in global decision making and to improve trade prospects and opportunities for Samoa.

5. Mission

To initiate and continue to provide high quality and professional policy advice to Government on the management of Samoa's foreign relations and trade opportunities to support socio-economic development and promote Samoa's national interests.

6. Operating Environment

Samoa is a very small Pacific island country and is geographically distant from the main global markets. Samoa has nevertheless taken steps to integrate and to be involved in all meaningful ways with the regional and international communities in full awareness of the positive contributions Samoa can make and the benefits that accrues to Samoa from this engagement. Samoa is a member of the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the World Trade Organization and a signatory to many intergovernmental conventions important to Samoa. Regionally, Samoa is a founding member of the Pacific Islands Forum and a member of all key regional organizations.

Samoa is currently an LDC and is set to graduate from this status at the beginning of 2014. Graduation from LDC status reflects strong Samoa's institutional governance and successful management of its economy. Still, as demonstrated by the 2009 devastating tsunami and the effects of the global financial crisis that continue to reverberate around the world, the risks to Samoa's small open economy would always remain and must be taken into account. Transition policies are necessary to be developed to enable Samoa to adapt to its new operating status of middle income country (MIC) especially in the finance and trade sectors.

In today's interconnected world, major developments beyond the Pacific region impact on Samoa's development aspirations. The past decade has witnessed dramatic changes in our operating environment; notably the impact of globalization; political instability and security concerns in the region and beyond; global financial crises; vulnerability to natural disasters; increased donor coordination and stress on development funds. Information technology has speeded up the flow of information even to remote countries like Samoa, changing the way the economy operates and how people behave. These factors and characteristics therefore determine largely Samoa's options and strategic interaction in the region and in the international arena in the next few years.

The extent of Samoa's engagement abroad in the advancement of its national interests and development opportunities through bilateral and multilateral ties therefore will have to be managed carefully given Samoa's limited resources and its remoteness.

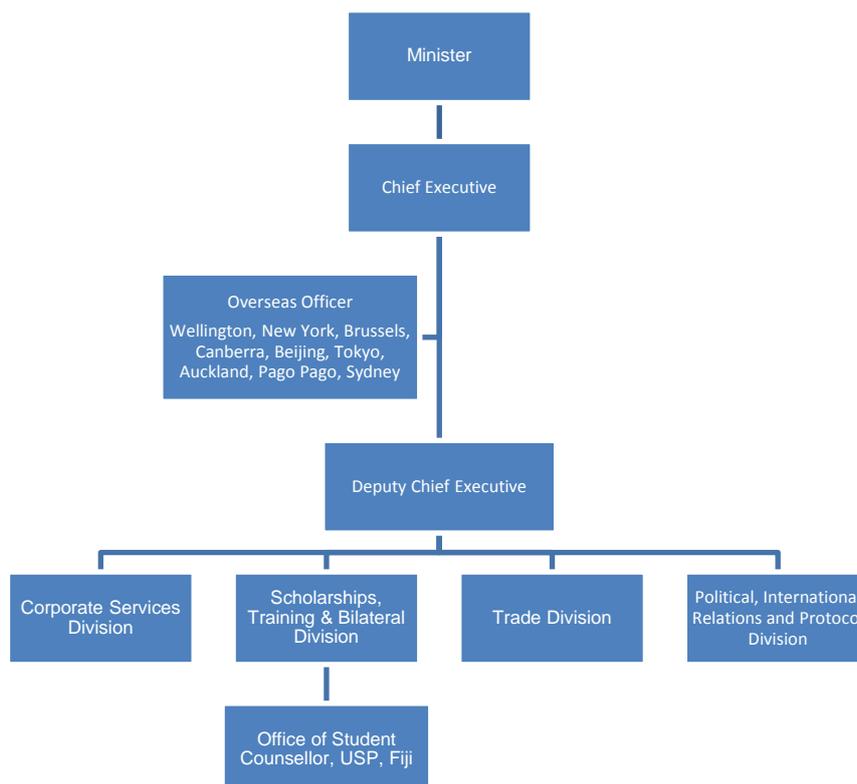
In the domestic environment, globalization and the impact of technology has had a significant influence on the level of awareness of global and regional issues amongst local and non-governmental organisations. Also, these have changed people's perceptions and expectations of the Government and their role as participants in shaping Government's priorities and policies at the national level and abroad. A higher level of consultation with non-government organisations and civil society is essential.

7. Organisational Structure

The Ministry has an established career structure, organised into three core Divisions, comprising the Political/ Protocol and International Relations Division, Trade Division and the Scholarships, Training and Bilateral Division. The Ministry also has a Corporate Services Division, which provides support to the core divisions and overseas missions of the Ministry.

The Ministry operates overseas diplomatic posts and missions in Wellington, New Zealand; Brussels, Belgium, with accreditation to the United Kingdom and selected European countries and to the European Commission; New York, USA, with accreditation to the United States, Canada and the United Nations; Canberra, Australia with accreditation to Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore; Beijing, China; Tokyo, Japan; and Consulates-General in Auckland, New Zealand; Pago Pago, American Samoa; and Sydney, Australia. The Ministry also administers the Office of the Student Counsellor in the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. There are also a number of Honorary Consuls representing Samoa in various strategic locations around the world.

The current organisational structure is summarised in the following chart:



8. Values and Principles

The Ministry, in pursuit of its mission and objectives for Samoa to be recognised as a regional leader and an active participant in global decision making, as well as to improve trade prospects and opportunities for Samoa and to be able to attract national support and cooperation, the conduct of its staff and foreign representatives must be of the highest standard.

The Ministry is therefore fully committed to having its staff perform with professionalism, discretion, honesty and integrity. Officers must protect matters of professional confidentiality and act in an accountable, transparent and responsible manner.

Staff members are encouraged not to place themselves in situations that might involve a conflict or the perception of a conflict of interest, both in the administration of the Ministry's affairs and when dealing with its customers and stakeholders.

The Ministry is an equal opportunity employer and encourages both women and men to apply when vacancies occur.

9. Objectives

To realise our vision and achieve our mission, we pursue the following objectives:

1. to provide high standard policy advice on foreign affairs and trade development to the Minister and government;
2. to continue to strengthen Samoa's relations with traditional key development partners and to foster new, mutually beneficial partnerships;
3. to represent Samoa's interests at the international fora and to pursue and to advocate Samoa's interests in topical areas including economic development, trade, climate change, fisheries, human rights,
4. to maintain effective and efficient diplomatic representation at Samoa's overseas posts including the provision of consular services;
5. to effectively manage, coordinate and facilitate trade policy issues and trade promotion strategies and ensure Samoa's active participation in regional and international trading arrangements;
6. to manage Samoa's training and scholarship opportunities overseas and in local tertiary institutions in a transparent and accountable manner;
7. to provide essential and appropriate protocol services and government hospitality to visiting foreign envoys and dignitaries and effective management of Samoa's

host responsibilities to resident diplomatic missions and inter-governmental organisations in Samoa;

8. to provide an effective and efficient support structure to service the core work of the Ministry;

10. Operations of the Ministry

Descriptions of the main functions and activities of the Ministry are set out in the following pages:

10.1 Provision of Policy Advice on foreign relations with other countries

Description:

This is concerned with policy advice and representation activities directed towards the management of Samoa's foreign relations with other countries.

Policy advice and representation activities involve the maintenance of strong relationships with key governments of importance to Samoa thus facilitating advocacy and representation of Government's positions and views. The latter is performed in the Ministry's capacity as the internationally accepted channel of communication with other governments, including the negotiation of agreements. Comprehensive advice and recommendations on external issues and events are also made to the Minister based on thorough research and analysis. Furthermore, advice is provided to the Minister on proposals from other government departments that may affect the management of Samoa's foreign and trade relations with individual countries.

Performance Indicators:

The successful formulation and provision of policy advice on foreign relations with other countries should positively influence Government's decision and policy-making processes, and yield positive feedback from the Minister, Cabinet and other government agencies.

10.2 Provision of Policy Advice and Representation: International Organisations

Description:

This is concerned with policy advice and representation activities related to the management of Samoa's membership of, and foreign affairs and trade interests in, international and regional organisations. This include key areas of multilateral co-operation to which Government has decided to give special attention to, such as international trade in goods and services; international security and disarmament; social, humanitarian and cultural matters; human rights and international environment issues, to name a few. These international and regional organisations include:

- i. the United Nations and its specialised agencies, programmes and funds;
- ii. the Commonwealth Secretariat and its associated institutions;
- iii. the World Trade Organization and other trade-related institutions;
- iv. various international environmental organisations;
- v. various international disarmament organisations; and
- vi. Pacific regional organisations.

To ensure that Government's positions and views are advocated during discussions and/or negotiations of international agreements, it is imperative that an active level of representation or presence is maintained in international and regional organisations that Samoa is a member of. Comprehensive advice and recommendations are made to the Minister based on thorough research and examination of issues and developments in key regional and international organisations that are of priority and relevance to Samoa, and also on matters of mutual interests with partner countries.

Performance Indicators:

The successful formulation and provision of policy advice and representation activities relating to Samoa's membership in international and regional organisations should positively influence Government's decision and policy-making processes pertaining to

external issues. A further reflection of the success of Samoa's representation in key regional and international organisations will also be made evident in the effectiveness of measures taken or responses made locally, as a result of advice or recommendations provided by the Ministry.

10.3 Representation of Samoa's Interests in other Countries and Consular Services

Description:

This refers to the representation of Samoa's interests and the provision of consular services abroad through the Ministry's diplomatic Posts/Missions and Consulates-General based in Australia, Belgium, China, Japan, New Zealand and the United States of America.

Acting on behalf of the Government, the diplomatic posts/missions ensure that Government's interests and positions on specific issues are effectively represented and advanced in host countries as well as countries accredited to Samoa, including the promotion of trade and tourism activities. It also includes, where possible, the organisation of visits and meetings and liaising and consulting with officials of host countries and with other resident representatives that are accredited to and have diplomatic relations with Samoa.

The provision of consular services to Samoans abroad includes advice and assistance in cases of distress; immigration matters and emergencies; repatriation; support in cases of deaths; as well as the provision of assistance to Samoan scholarship students studying abroad. It includes, where possible, the provision of logistical support for visits and travel by the Head of State, Members of the Council of Deputies, the Prime Minister, Cabinet members and other VIP delegates.

Performance Indicators:

The successful operation of its diplomatic posts/missions abroad will ensure the maintenance of good and close bilateral/working relations with key partner nations, which in turn will encourage and increase the level of interest for further engagement with Samoa especially in the areas of trade and investment opportunities,

immigration, tourism, technical/economic cooperation and others. In addition, it will also promote positive and supportive responses, including increase aid flow into Samoa not only from host countries and international organizations, but also countries accredited to, and with diplomatic relations with Samoa.

10.4 Administration of Long and Short Term Study Opportunities Abroad and in Local Tertiary Institutions

Description:

This focuses on the administration and development of policies for the various scholarship schemes and short term training opportunities sponsored by the Government and partner governments undertaken locally and overseas.

The alignment of scholarships and training opportunities to the Human Resource Development priorities list is an undertaking that is aimed at ensuring that qualifications sought are aligned to the employment needs of the country. This process involves effective communication and coordination with relevant local and foreign government agencies, as well as with other regional and international institutions, to ensure the successful outcome and continued availability of such opportunities to the people of Samoa.

Performance Indicators:

The successful development and effective implementation of procedures for the administration of long and short term study and training opportunities will ensure the timely action of nominations and selection processes for such opportunities. The streamlining and refinement of necessary procedures for long term studies and short term training will assist in the provision of timely and quality advice to the Samoa Scholarships and Training Committee (STSC) as well as to other selection committees.

10.5 Trade Policy and Promotion Strategies

Description:

This is concerned with the formulation and development of appropriate policies and strategies, in consultation with stakeholders, on trade policy and promotion strategies. It also

ensures that Samoa's participation and obligations under regional and international trading arrangements are effectively implemented and that benefits from membership to such agreements are realised. This also involves the implementation of the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) and the Protocol of Accession to the World Trade Organization. It also involves the facilitation and coordination of Samoa's interests in the regional negotiations on PACER Plus and in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the Pacific ACP Countries and the European Union.

Pursuing excellent market access opportunities and integrating Samoa into the multilateral trading system as well as the provision of advice to Samoan exporters will remain important tasks for the Ministry. These will be supported by an efficient system for providing and disseminating trade-related information to all stakeholders. Comprehensive trade policy advice and recommendations made to the Minister are therefore based on thorough research and analysis of issues and developments on the multilateral trade agenda.

Performance Indicators:

The successful formulation and provision of policy advice and representation activities relating to trade policy and promotion strategies will create and promote market opportunities and provide practical assistance to the private sector. The Diagnostic Trade Integration Study identifies the sectoral strengths and weaknesses of Samoa's trading environment and provides the basis for policy direction.

Also, recommendations relating to Samoa's negotiating positions in the PICTA, PACER Plus and EPA as well as other preferential market access arrangements will be accepted as well as the timely implementation of Samoa's obligations under the WTO. Stakeholders' awareness on the implementation of trade arrangements that Samoa is a party to, as well as Samoa's obligations under these agreements will increase, as will the opportunities for the identification of new markets, improved productions and marketing strategies.

10.6 Administration of Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities

Description:

This covers the administration of the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1978 and the effective interpretation of diplomatic and consular privileges under the Vienna Convention. It includes making arrangements for the accreditation of Heads of diplomatic missions to Samoa, including Heads of accredited international and regional organisations; the processing of immigration entry requirements; importation and duty free entitlements; and issuance of appropriate documentation. It also includes liaisons with, and the provision of host government services to diplomatic and consular corps, as well as accredited international and regional organisations resident in Samoa and also for visiting foreign VIPs and official envoys/representatives.

Advice is also provided to the Minister as to the appointment of Samoa's representatives abroad, as well as to the application of diplomatic and consular privileges and immunities in Samoa in relation to members of the diplomatic corps and intergovernmental organizations based in Samoa, as appropriate.

From time to time, the Ministry reviews in a timely manner requests for diplomatic clearances visiting naval vessels and military aircraft to Samoa. The Ministry also maintains effective networking between local Government agencies to ensure protocol requirements and exemptions due to diplomatic privileges, are implemented accordingly.

Performance Indicators:

The successful administration of the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1978, and the effective interpretation of diplomatic and consular privileges under the Vienna Convention will ensure the existence of and adherence to high, internationally-recognized protocol standards. It generates positive responses from visiting foreign dignitaries and envoys/representatives, as well as the resident diplomatic corps and representatives of regional and international organisations, which in turn reflects positively on the Government and its officials.

10.7 Provision of Support Services and Staff Development and Welfare

Description:

The provision of support services to facilitate the operations of the Ministry involves the securing of necessary financial and human resources, the maintenance of an efficient and effective corporate framework, and the responsible use of available resources. It also involves the promotion of consistency, high morale and a high level of professional commitment and performance in the Ministry and the strengthening of its career service to adapt to new and changing global circumstances on a short, medium and long-term basis.

To ensure a good, healthy and safe working environment within the Ministry, monitoring of developments pertaining to conditions of employment within the Public Service and where required, within public service agencies of other countries on comparable policies regarding posted staff, takes place on a regular basis. Opportunities for further training are also monitored, and accordingly taken advantage of for both personal and professional development.

Performance Indicators:

Improved working conditions and environment as a result of maintaining an efficient and effective corporate framework to support the delivery of the Ministry's objectives will further improve the quality of overall services provided and increased customer satisfaction. It will improve processes leading to the development of policy advice to the Minister, as well as representation of Governments interests locally and abroad.