



**NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON  
ISLANDS**

**BILLS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

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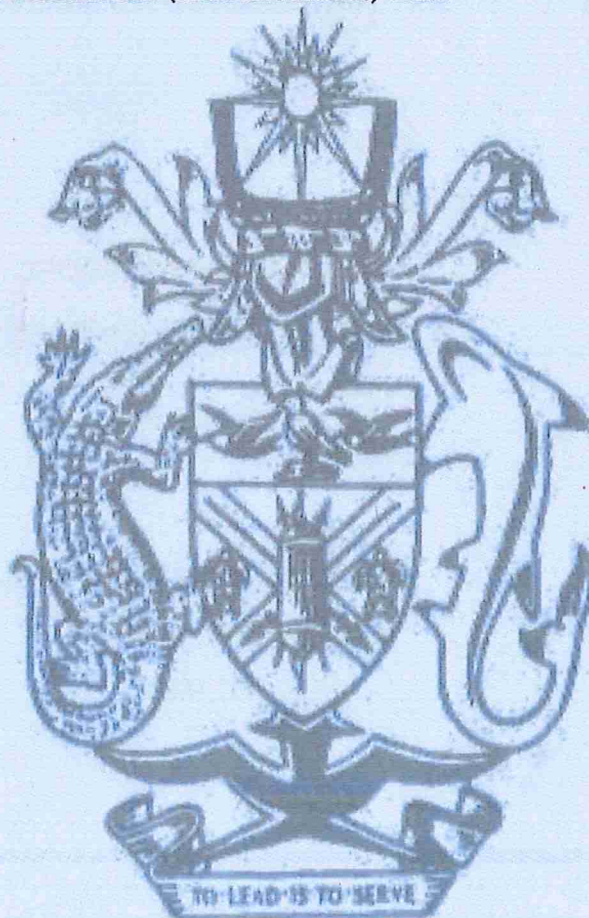
**Report on the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill  
2023 (No. 4 of 2023)**



**NP Paper No.16 of 2023**

**Presented on 12 May 2023**

**National Parliament Office**



## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The current members of the Bills and Legislation Committee (11<sup>th</sup> Parliament) are:

Hon. John Maneniaru, MP (Chairman)

Hon. Matthew Cooper Wale, MP

Hon. John Deane Kuku, MP

Hon. Rick Nelson Houenipwela, MP

Hon. Peter Kenilorea Jnr, MP

Hon. Lilly Maefai, MP

Hon. Derrick Rawcliff Manuari, MP

Hon. Silas Vaqara Tausinga, MP

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## CHAIR'S FOREWORD



Mr. Speaker,

Pursuant to Standing Orders No. 71 (g) of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands, it is an honour and pleasure for me, Sir, to present the Report of the Bills and Legislation Committee on the Inquiry into the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 (No. 4 of 2023) for laying before Parliament.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Maneniaru". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line. There is a long, thin, upward-pointing stroke extending from the end of the signature.

Hon. John Maneniaru, MP

Chairman

Bills and Legislation Committee

12 May 2023

## COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

Standing Order 71 of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.

There shall be a Standing Select Committee designated the Bills and Legislation Committee whose functions, in addition to the provisions in Orders 50 and 55, shall be to -

- a) examine such matters as may be referred to it by Parliament or the Government;
- b) review all draft legislation prepared for introduction into Parliament;
- c) examine all subsidiary legislation made under any Act so as to ensure compliance with the Acts under which they are made;
- d) monitor all motions adopted by Parliament which require legislative action;
- e) review current or proposed legislative measures to the extent it seems necessary;
- f) examine such other matters in relation to legislation that, in the opinion of the Committee, require examination; and
- g) make a written report to each meeting of Parliament containing the observations and recommendations arising from the Committee's deliberations.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee conducted an inquiry into the **Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023** as mandated under Order 71 (g) of the Parliamentary Standing Orders. During the inquiry, the Committee conducted hearings in Honiara on Friday 5 May and Monday 8 May 2023.

The objects of the Bill are to;

- a) defer the next ordinary election of members of the 7 Provincial Assemblies of the provinces listed in new section 9A(1) proposed in the Bill to be held on a date fixed by the Minister in accordance with the advice of the Electoral Commission that will enable the ordinary election of members of the 7 Provincial Assemblies, and the ordinary election of members of the Honiara City Council, to be held in 2024 on the same day; and
- b) defer the next ordinary election of members of the Provincial Assemblies of Choiseul Province and Western Province to be held in 2028; and
- c) require the Electoral Commission to register voters and conduct elections for members of the Provincial Assemblies; and
- d) require the Minister to make regulations relating to the conduct of elections of members of the Provincial Assemblies, questioning the results of those elections and the consequences of irregularities in accordance with the advice of the Electoral Commission; and
- e) require the date of by-elections of members of a Provincial Assembly to be fixed in accordance with the advice of the Electoral Commission; and
- f) correct section 15 of the Act to refer to section 49(1)(a) of the Constitution.

In its scrutiny of the Bill, the Committee noted a number of issues in terms of drafting and the administrative aspect of the Bill.

The Committee therefore recommends that;

1. To ensure administrative clarity on the conduct in the date-setting of elections that the bill clearly mandates the Minister only for by-elections.
2. The dissolution of the Parliament, Honiara City Council and all Provincial Assemblies should be synchronized.
3. The criteria for registration should include section 4 of the Electoral Act 2018.
4. We note that this Bill will not address the issue of "cross border" votes and therefore recommend that the matter is taken up in the amendments to the Electoral Act 2018.

5. Choiseul and Western Provinces must be included in the 2024 synchronized elections.
6. The disqualification for Provincial Members should not only confine to section 49 (1) (a) of the Constitution but also include the subsequent paragraphs for disqualification under the same section.
7. That for future electoral reforms, that all matters relating to the registration of voters and the conduct of the elections are clearly made the monopoly of the Electoral Commission.

The Committee registers its disappointment of being deprived of an overview of the reforms affecting the upcoming elections. The amendments to the Honiara City Act 1999, Provincial Government Act and the Electoral Act 2018 should be submitted together.

## CONTENTS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS.....	2
CHAIR'S FOREWORD .....	3
COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS .....	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	5
1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	8
2.0 BACKGROUND.....	9
3.0 GENERAL ISSUES.....	11
4.0 CONTENT ISSUES.....	15
5.0 CONCLUSION.....	17
6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	18
7.0 APPENDICES.....	19
Appendix 1: Witnesses.....	20
Appendix 2: Minutes of Proceedings.....	21
Appendix 3: Submissions.....	25

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. As required under the Standing Orders of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands ('the Standing Orders'), the Bills and Legislation Committee ('the Committee') conducted an inquiry into the **Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023** ('the Bill'). This Report presents the findings of that inquiry and the recommendations by the Committee.
2. The Bill's purpose is; Bill is to defer the next ordinary election of members of 7 Provincial Assemblies of the provinces listed in the new section 9A (1) of the Bill, to be held on a date in 2024, fixed by the Minister in accordance with the advice of the Electoral Commission<sup>1</sup>.
3. The hearings on the Bill were only held at the National Parliament of Solomon Islands, Conference Room II, Honiara on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May and Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
4. Relevant stakeholders<sup>2</sup> including the sponsoring ministry were invited by the Committee to the hearings in Honiara. They presented their opinions and make submissions on the contents, policy matters and intentions of the Bill. The List of witnesses who appeared before the Committee, the minutes of the proceedings, and list of submissions received are contained in Appendix 1, 2 & 3.
5. Other relevant stakeholders that were on schedule to appear before the Committee but did not manage, submitted their inputs by way of Written Submissions.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Jasper H Anisi, CEO, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1,2 & 3



## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### Synchronization of Elections

- 2.1 During the formulation of the Democratic Coalition Government for Advancement (DCGA), Solomon Islands Electoral Commission submitted its development priorities for the period of 2019 – 2023 to the Office of the Prime Minister. To achieve those priorities, The Electoral Reform Strategy Framework (ERSF) 2019-2023 was approved and adopted by the Electoral Commission in its meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019.
- 2.2 The concept of simultaneous elections was mooted by the Premiers at the Premiers Conference held in Gizo, Western Province in June 2013. At the end of the conference, there were 6 resolutions passed in which the fourth Resolution states:-
- “Resolution 4: To align the Provincial and Honiara City Elections with National Elections.
- Provincial, Honiara City and National elections are a costly exercise that involves an overlapping of many activities, such as voter registration. Given the potential changes to the National election system with the introduction of the Political Parties Integrity Bill 2013, the Premiers support a move to align Provincial and Honiara City elections with the National elections to save money and prevent duplication of services.”
- 2.3 The passing of the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 will enable the Electoral Commission to conduct simultaneous elections for members of provincial assemblies and members of parliament in 2024<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4 The current term for all of the provincial assemblies, except for Western and Choiseul provinces, will end in 2023 and it is therefore necessary to facilitate the passage of this Bill so that provincial assembly and Honiara City Council elections are deferred to 2024 in line with the national general elections for the purpose of synchronization of elections<sup>4</sup>.

### Consultations on the Bill

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<sup>3</sup> Mr Jasper H Anisi, CEO, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- 2.5 A Taskforce was formed way back in 2020-2021 under the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission and was in charge of the Electoral Reforms that includes the reforms for Provincial Government Act<sup>5</sup>. The taskforce is made up of top officials from the Ministries of Home Affairs, Justice and Legal Affairs, Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening, and Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- 2.6 The taskforce undertook tour to nine Provinces to ensure that the proposed Bill is appropriate and demonstrates best practices. The Provincial tours provide a valuable opportunity for officers to meet with their counterparts in the nine Provinces and obtain the views and advises of implementing the synchronized election system.

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<sup>5</sup> Mr Stanley D Pirione, Permanent Secretary, MPGIS, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May, 2023.

### 3.0 GENERAL ISSUES

#### Conduct of elections

- 3.1 The Committee is concerned with the conduct of the elections, where does it begin, is it from the declaration stage or voting stage? This is concerning because the three levels of the election have different time frames so how will the synchronizing of these three elections occur?
- 3.2 In response, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission referred the Committee to paragraph 15<sup>6</sup> of their submission which provides clarification of the National Parliamentary General Election timeline. Therefore, the election has a pre-election stage followed by the conduct of the election, this happens when the proclamation is done. According to the taskforce consultation, the conduct of all levels of elections will be synchronized so that all activities happen on the same day. The only difference is, as soon as the Honiara City Council and provincial elections dissolve elections must take place on the next day.
- 3.3 Furthermore, the Bill gives 56 days for the Commission to carry out preparations, starting from the proclamation day by the Governor General up until Election Day. However, currently, preparations have already begun and the list should be ready by July.
- 3.4 The Committee also raised that currently, the conduct of the National elections is 56 days while the provincial election is 35 days, how will they be synchronized with the different periods of conduct?
- 3.5 In response, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission stated that the reason for the 35 days for the provincial election is because provinces have wards so when notices are put up it has to be put up in all the wards hence, the lengthy process. However, when synchronization occurs the conduct will be less lengthy and easier to manage because when notices for the national election are put up so will that of the provincial elections and they will both have a period of 56 days.
- 3.6 In addition, the Permanent Secretary<sup>7</sup> informed the Committee that the conduct of election begins straight after the Governor General's proclamation, and include registration, nominations & withdrawals, campaign and elections. Conduct of elections is also the way in which elections are done. The timeline of election activities for the provincial assemblies and Honiara City Council is 35 days while for the National Parliament is 56 days. The reform is looking at amalgamating the timeline for these elections into one. The conduct of elections

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<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 15 states "National Parliament, Honiara City Council, and Provincial Assembly elections will be held on the same date in 2024..... The Commission intends to have an identical timeline for Honiara City Council and Provincial Assembly elections".

<sup>7</sup> Mr Stanley D Pirione, Permanent Secretary, MPGIS, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

includes the counting of votes and the day of declaration of the successful candidate which happens after the Election Day<sup>8</sup>.

- 3.7 The Committee is of the view that the synchronized elections does not only covers one particular event but covers a period of time where it starts on the day of proclamation and ends on the announcement of the results.
- 3.8 The Permanent Secretary<sup>9</sup> informed the Committee that according to the ongoing reform and consultations, the synchronization of election date could mean amalgamating the election timeline or the whole election process for the National, Provincial and Honiara City elections to occur at one time.

#### **Commencement date for all levels**

- 3.9 The Ministry also stated that one of the issues that the needs to be addressed is to have one commencement date for the National Parliament, Provincial Assemblies and Honiara City Council.
- 3.10 The Committee raised that it is important that the relevant body to consider a one commencement date for all levels.

#### **Structured Time frame for Legislations**

- 3.11 The Solomon Islands Credit of Trade Union<sup>10</sup> expressed in their submission the structured regular time frame on the actual proposed legal amendments or introduction of new laws. For instance the Honiara City (Amendment) Bill 2023, the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 and the Electoral (Amendment) Bill should come together rather than a piece basis as our nation requires legislations to be currently valid and where amendments have become necessary have to be addressed in time for the sake of our system and to make sure that out of date legislations do not hold up any needed changes which our system of governance and administration may need from time to time<sup>11</sup>.

#### **Fixed Election Date**

- 3.12 The exact date for the ordinary elections is not fixed in the Principal Act and was already fixed in the Bill. Predetermination of election date, implies undermining the Power of Electoral Commission as in Constitution 1978 58 (1) and 137 (4), as also in the Electoral Act 2018 Part 3 Division 1 Section 12 and Provincial Government Act 1997<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Ms Victoria A, Legal Draftsperson, AG Chambers, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Mr Stanley D Pirione, Permanent Secretary, MPGIS, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Mr David Tuhonuku, Submission on the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023, SICTU

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Mrs Jennifer Wate, General Secretary, DSE, Oral Evidence, Monday 8 May, 2023.

- 3.13 Delevopment Services Exchange<sup>13</sup> is of the view that Western Province and Choiseul Province election dates are fixed; fixing the date increase the Term of office of members for 7 years, which indicates the ordinary election will be on the seventh year. This idea has pose some issues as, violating the rights of the elector and violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual regarding peoples' political opinions as was in public interest.

#### **Impact on other existing Bills**

- 3.14 The Committee also raised its concern on the effect of the proposed amendments on the other existing Acts.
- 3.15 Solomon Islands Electoral Commission<sup>14</sup> stated that to close the various gaps this new Bill will create, an Electoral Amendment Bill will be brought to Parliament soon. The Commission is looking into the powers for making regulations, hence, referring the Committee to paragraph 22 of their submissions which states that *"the regulation-making powers of the Minister in Section 12 of the Provincial Government Act 1997 will now be effected on the advice of the Electoral Commission"*. Therefore, in future, such small changes will only be done under the regulations and will not need to be brought to parliament.

#### **Cost saving**

- 3.16 The Committee also noted that there will be a saving of close to \$50 million if there is synchronization of elections. The Committee states that the Commission to use this saving to invest in enabling counting to begin right after the elections at the polling stations instead of waiting for the ballot boxes to be transported to the polling centers for counting. The Committee is of the view that this will be an advantage in reducing petition cases and creating a more transparent election result. Furthermore, extra savings can be invested in improving access to the internet as well as security in these voting stations so counting can be made right after voting ends.
- 3.17 The Committee notes that the projected savings of \$50 million would almost cover the costs of including Choiseul and Western provinces in the synchronized 2024 elections.

#### **The case of Western Provincial Government & Choiseul Provincial Government**

- 3.18 The Committee understand that "the Bill will also defer the next ordinary elections of members of the provincial assemblies for Western and Choiseul Province to a date in 2028, fixed by the Minister on the advice of the Electoral Commission". Meaning those two assemblies will join the rest after 6 years in their term.
- 3.19 The Committee is interested to know the views of the Guadalcanal Provincial Government on that proposed amendment.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Mr Jasper H Anisi, CEO, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

3.20 The Guadalcanal Provincial Government registered their disappointment of such proposal as it will be unfair for the other 7 provincial governments, especially when it comes to prolong benefits of these MPAs.

**Cross-border**

3.21 The Committee is of the view that the proposed amendments in the Bill will not address the issue of “cross border” come the 2024 synchronized elections.

## 4.0 CONTENT ISSUES

### Clause 6- new section 9A inserted

- 4.1 Clause 6 inserts new section 9A to enable the next ordinary elections of members of the Provincial Assemblies of all provinces to be held on dates so that in 2028 the ordinary elections of members of the provincial Assemblies will be held on the same day in that year. This is done by providing for the holding of the next ordinary election for members of the 7 provinces on the same date in 2024 before 30 April 2024, and the holding of the next ordinary elections of members of the remaining 2 provinces (whose ordinary elections were held in 2022) to be held on the same date the ordinary elections of the other 7 provinces are held in 2028.

#### **Issues with the proposed Clause:**

- 4.2 The Committee is of the view that Clause 6 New section 9A (3) should be repealed given that Western and Choiseul Provincial elections should also be synchronized with the rest of the other seven Provincial Assemblies, the National Parliament and Honiara City Council.

### **Clause 10- Section 15 of the Principle Act is amended**

- 4.3 Clause 10 amends section 15(1)(a) of the Principle Act to correct the cross reference to section 49 of the Constitution included by the consequential amendment to that paragraph under section 41 of the *Citizenship Act 2018*. The reference to section 49(a) of the Constitution is corrected to be section 49(1)(a) of the Constitution

#### **Issue with the proposed Clause**

- 4.4 The Law Reform Commission<sup>15</sup> is of the view that such cross-reference correction can be done by an Order published in the Gazette by the Attorney General as provided for under section 27 of the *Interpretation and General Provisions Act [Cap 85]*<sup>16</sup>.
- 4.5 Furthermore, the Committee noted in section 15 (1) (a), on the disqualification of members of parliament must be a policy choice by the government otherwise other subsequent paragraphs under section 49 should have been considered as well.
- 4.6 The Transparency Solomon Islands responded by saying the disqualification period by parliament members is clear but not for the provincial members, there should be a mechanism to monitor areas where provincial members should also exercise their right and the dissolution of assemblies for them to do their campaigns while not operating as members.

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<sup>15</sup> Mr Philip Kanairara, Chairman, Law Reform Commission, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023.

<sup>16</sup> "Power to make corrections in Acts 15 of 1987, s3

27. The Attorney-General may by order published in the Gazette-

(a) rectify any printing errors;

(b) correct any cross reference;

(c) correct punctuations; or

(d) correct grammatical, typographical or similar errors,

Which appear to him necessary or expedient for the perfecting of any Act"

- 4.7 The Development Exchange Services also raised its disappointment of the cross-reference to section 49 (1) (a) which does not include the other subsequent paragraphs for disqualification of a Provincial Member.

**Drafting error**

- 4.8 The Committee also noted a likely error on the Minister signing-off section in the current draft<sup>17</sup>. Hon. Anthony Kamutulaka Veke is stated as the signing-off Minister. The Committee questioned whether it should be Hon. Rolland Seleso who is the current Minister for the Ministry of Provincial Government.
- 4.9 Solomon Islands Electoral Commission<sup>18</sup> in response stated that it is a drafting error and it will be rectified.

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<sup>17</sup> Table Bill

<sup>18</sup> Mr Jasper H Anisi, CEO, Solomon Islands Electoral Commission, Oral Evidence, Friday 5 May 2023



## 5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Committee commends the Bill to the House with the recommended amendments.
- 5.2 The Committee registers its disappointment of being deprived of an overview of the Reforms affecting the upcoming elections. The amendments to the Honiara City Council Act 1999, Provincial Government Act and the Electoral Act should be submitted together.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee, following its scrutiny of the Bill, makes the following recommendations:

### Recommendation 1

To ensure administrative clarity on the conduct in the date-setting of elections that the Bill clearly mandates the Minister only for by-elections.

### Recommendation 2

That the dissolution of the Parliament, Honiara City Council and all Provincial Assemblies be synchronized.

### Recommendation 3

That the criteria for registration include section 4 of the Electoral Act 2018.

### Recommendation 4

The Committee note that this Bill will not address the issue of “cross border” votes and therefore recommend that the matter is taken up in the amendments to the Electoral Act 2018.

### Recommendation 5

That the Choiseul and Western Provinces must be included in the 2024 synchronized elections.

### Recommendation 6

That the disqualification for Provincial Members is not only confined to section 49 (1) (a) of the Constitution but also include the subsequent paragraphs for disqualification under the same section.

### Recommendation 7

That for future electoral reforms, that all matters relating to the registration of voters and the conduct of the elections are clearly made the monopoly of the Electoral Commission.

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END OF REPORT

## 7.0 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Witnesses

Date	Name	Position & Organisation
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 09:40am – 10:49pm	Mr. Stanley D. Pirione	Permanent Secretary, MPGIS
	Mr. Robert Kaua	Deputy Permanent Secretary, MPGIS
	Mr. Metcalfe Puia	MPGIS
	Mrs. Linda Kopana	Financial Controller, MPGIS
	Ms. Victoria Aitken	Legal Drafter, AG Chambers
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 10:15am – 10:34am	Hon. Rose Tala	Minister for Women, Youth & Sport for Guadalcanal Province
	Hon. Francis Iso	Minister for Health
	Mr. Joseph Sua	Deputy Provincial Secretary
1:28 pm – 2:41pm	Mr. Jasper H. Anisi Mr. George Mali,	CEO, SIEC Legal Officer, SIEC
2:43 pm – 3:09 pm	Mr. Philip Kanairara	Chairman - LRC
3:16 pm – 4:41pm	Mrs. Jenifer Wate Mrs. Ruth Liloqula Mrs. Lovelyn M Ms. Samantha Lianga, Mrs. Nancy D. Nika, Mr. John Maetarua, Mrs. Dairus Korasi, Ms. Myealyn Komolo, Mr. Geoffrey Alacky,	General Secretary, DSE CEO, TSI Finance Officer, DSE Volunteer, DSE CBO Rep, DSE CBO Rep, DSE Admin Officer, DSE TSI Youth Rep, TSI Team Leader, SIFGA

## Appendix 2: Minutes of Proceedings



NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

BILLS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

P.O. Box G19,  
Honiara.

Tel: 28520/23424.

Fax: 24272

### Minutes of Proceeding

Committee Hearing into the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 (No.4 of 2023)

Day 1/2023

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023, CRII, Parliament Building, 09:40 AM

**1. Members Present**

Hon. John Maneniaru, MP- Chairman

Hon. Matthew Wale, MP

Hon. John Dean Kuku, MP

**2. Apologies**

Hon. Rick Houenipwela, MP

Hon. Peter Kenilorea Jnr, MP

Hon. Derrick Manu'ari, MP

Hon. Silas Vaqara Tausinga, MP

Hon. Lilly Maefai, MP

**3. Secretary**

Ms. Ivory Iruha'a

**4. Secretariat**

Ms. Salome Pilumate, Committee Secretary

Ms. Monica Sekonga, Senior Admin Officer-Committees

Ms. Theresa Nori, Hansard Officer

Mr. Pamentha Golo, IT Support Officer

**5. Prayer**

The MP for North New Georgia and Leader of the Independent Group, Hon. John Deane Kuku said the opening prayer.

**6. Welcome/ Opening remarks**

The Chairman of the Bills and Legislation Committee (BLC) welcomed members of the committee, witnesses, committee secretariat and supporting staff. Then said his opening remarks. The Chairman informed witnesses of the Parliamentary privileges.

**7. Inquiry into the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 (No.4 of 2023)**

The Hearing proper commenced and the following witnesses from the Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening were admitted.

*Hearing 1 Witnesses*

- i. Mr. Stanley Pirione, PS
- ii. Mr. Robert Kaua, DPS
- iii. Mr. Metcalfe Puia
- iv. Mrs. Lindina Kopana

The witnesses made their presentations before the Committee.

The Committee questioned the witnesses based on evidences presented. Discussion ensued. Evidence concluded and witnesses withdrew.

**8. Adjournment**

Closing prayer was said by Hon. Derrick Manu'ari

The hearing adjourned at 10:54 am

**Day 2/2023**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May, CRII, Parliament Building, 10:15 AM

**1. Members Present**

Hon. John Maneniaru, MP- Chairman  
Hon. Matthew Wale, MP  
Hon. John Dean Kuku, MP  
Hon. Peter Kenilorea Jnr, MP

Hon. Rick Houenipwela, MP  
Hon. Lilly Maefai, MP

**2. Apologies**

Hon. Silas Vaqara Tausinga, MP  
Hon. Derrick Manu'ari, MP

**3. Secretary**

Ms. Ivory Iruha'a

**4. Secretariat**

Ms. Salome Pilumate, Committee Secretary  
Mr. Whitmon Tabiru, Committee Secretary  
Ms. Cordney Wale, Committee Secretary  
Ms. Salome Pilumate, Committee Secretary  
Ms. Sherilyn Ragoso, Hansard Officer  
Ms. Hazel Fafale, Hansard Officer  
Mr. Philemon Loe, Media Officer

**5. Prayer**

MP for Small Malaita, Hon. Rick Houenipwela said the opening prayer.

**6. Welcome/ Opening remarks**

The Chairman of the BLC welcomes members of the committee, witnesses, committee secretariat and supporting staff and then said his opening remarks. The Chair informs the witnesses of the Parliamentary privileges.

**7. Inquiry into the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 (No.4 of 2023)**

The Hearing proper commenced and the following witnesses from the Guadalcanal Provincial Government were admitted:

**Hearing 2 Witnesses**

- i. Hon. Francis Iso, Minister for Health, GPG
- ii. Hon. Rose Tala, Minister for Women, Youth and Sport, GPG
- iii. Mr. Joseph Sua, DPS, GPG

The witnesses made their opening presentation before the Committee.

The Committee questioned the witnesses based on evidences presented. Discussion ensued. Evidence concluded and witnesses withdrew.

*Hearing suspends for lunch at 10:34 am*

*Resume at 1:28 pm*

The Hearing proper resumed at 1:28 pm and the following witnesses from the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission were admitted:

*Hearing 3 Witnesses*

- i. Mr. Jasper H. Anisi, CEO
- ii. Mr. George Mali, Legal Officer

The witnesses made their presentations before the Committee.

The Committee questioned the witnesses based on evidences presented. Discussion ensued. Evidence concluded and witnesses withdrew.

*Hearings suspends at 2:41 pm.*

The Hearing proper resumed at 2: 43 pm and the following witnesses from the Law Reform Commission were admitted:

*Hearing 4 Witnesses*

- i. Mr. Philip Kanairara, Chairman

The witnesses made their presentations before the Committee.

The Committee questioned the witnesses based on evidences presented. Discussion ensued. Evidence concluded and witnesses withdrew.

*Hearings suspends at 3: 09pm.*

The Hearing proper resumed at 3:16 pm and the following witnesses from the Civil Society Organisations – TSI and DSE and Independent Bodies - SIFGA were admitted:

*Hearing 5 Witnesses*

- i. Mrs. Jenifer Wate, General Secretary, DSE
- ii. Mrs. Ruth Liloqula, CEO, TSI
- iii. Mrs. Lovelyn M, Finance Officer, DSE
- iv. Ms. Samantha Lianga, Volunteer, DSE



- v. Mrs. Nancy D. Nika, CBO Rep, DSE
- vi. Mr. John Maetarua, CBO Rep, DSE
- vii. Mrs. Dairus Korasi, Admin Officer, DSE
- viii. Ms. Myealyn Komolo, TSI Youth Rep, TSI
- ix. Mr. Geoffrey Alacky, Team Leader, SIFGA

The witnesses made their presentations before the Committee.

The Committee questioned the witnesses based on evidences presented. Discussion ensued. Evidence concluded and witnesses withdrew.

### 8. Adjournment

Closing prayer was said by SIFGA Representative, Mr. Geoffrey Alacky.

The hearing adjourned at 4:41 pm

## Appendix 3: Submissions

No	Author
1.	1 MPGIS – Taskforce on Electoral Reform: Taskforce Briefing Session with Permanent Secretaries
	1a. MPGIS – Bills Generic Template
2.	MPGIS – Taskforce on Electoral Reform, Paper for Discussion with Members of Provincial Assemblies. Possible Synchronisation of General Election Dates at Parliamentary, Provincial and HCC levels for Simultaneous Elections.
3.	SIEC – Solomon Islands Electoral Commission: SIEC Submission on Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023
4.	SIEC – Commentary on Provincial Government Bill 2023
5.	SIEC – 2024 National Parliamentary General Election Timeline
6.	LRC – The LRC views on the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023
7.	DSE – Bill Inputs and Recommendation on the Provincial Act (Amendment) Bill 2023

8. NCW – Submission on the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill (No.4 of 2023)
9. SICTU – Workers Union of Solomon Islands – Submission on the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023.
10. GP – Seeking Notice of Confirmation of the Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 and GPG Approval or Endorsement of the PGA 2023 Bill.
11. TSI – TSI written Submission – Provincial Government (Amendment) Bill 2023 (No.4 of 2023)