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Ombudsman Receives Strong Support for Future Plans

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At a planning day this week the Ombudsman received a strong message about the important role the Ombudsman plays in building public confidence in the government by holding public servants to account.

The message came during a special planning day held by Office of the Ombudsman. Key stakeholders who attended the day included the Attorney General, Transparency Solomon Islands, the National Council of Women and Solomon Islands Council of Churches.

The Office of the Ombudsman is a vital agency for government accountability. The Ombudsman deals with complaints about government agencies and can investigate complaints about public service actions and decisions to see if they are wrong, unjust or discriminatory.

It has a key role to play in ensuring that government workers carry out their roles and responsibilities.

The Ombudsman, Mr Joe Poraiwai said seeking the views of key stakeholders was the best way to get feedback on the public perception of the role and function of the Office.

“Public sector accountability means holding public servants in all areas of government to account for their actions: as school teachers, as nurses and other public servants delivering government services to the people in every ministry,” Mr Poraiwai said.

“The planning day and feedback from our key stakeholders will assist our Office to develop a “roadmap” that sets the direction and pace of reform over the next three years,” Mr Poraiwai said.

The planning day included presentations by a number of government, church and NGO stakeholders, including Attorney General, Gabriel Suri; Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, James Remobatu; the Executive officer of Transparency Solomon Islands, Jean Tafao; the Chair of SICA, Rev. Philemon Riti, and the General Secretary of the National Council of Women, Ella Kahue.

The Attorney General emphasised the Ombudsman’s role in promoting good governance.

“When the Ombudsman tells an authority to correct its actions, it is lawfully condemning maladministration and bad practices and hence promoting good governance and leadership. This action reinforces public confidence in public administration,” Mr Suri said.

The Office of the Ombudsman’s planning day was supported by RAMSI. RAMSI seeks to contribute to improved government accountability in Solomon Islands by supporting the three accountability institutions: the Office of the Ombudsman, the Leadership Code Commission and the Office of the Auditor General.

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