

# Annual | 20 Report | 23



OFFICE OF  
PUBLIC SOLICITOR



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Papua New Guinea

1st March, 2023

His Excellency Grand Chief Sir Bob Bofeng Dadae, GCL, GCMG, KstJ

Governor-General of Papua New Guinea

Government House

PORT MORESBY

National Capital District

Dear Governor-General,

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Your Excellency, I wish to present you the 2023 Annual Report for the Office of Public Solicitor pursuant to Section 19 of the Organic Law on Certain Constitutional Office Holders.

This Report covers the operation of my Office, the functions and duties of the Public Solicitor, the cases that the Office dealt with and the recommendations that the Public Solicitor makes to the National Parliament concerning improvements to the Office.

As a Constitutional Office-holder, this Organic Law requires me to present to your Excellency such reports, and for eventual presentation to the National Parliament.

It is my pleasure to present Your Excellency the 2023 Annual Report.

LESLIE BENJAMIN MAMU

PUBLIC SOLICITOR

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Office of Public Solicitor (OPS) is created and established by the Constitution and mandated to provide legal aid to the ostracized and impecunious of societies in Papua New Guinea. The Public Solicitor is one of three Law Officers (i.e. Attorney General and Public Prosecutor) and is duty bound to initiate Supreme Court special references to seek interpretation of constitutional provisions and to challenge unconstitutional enactments. The Constitution also requires the Public Solicitor, as a Law Officer, to take interest in the protection and enforcement of human rights. Generally, as a Law Officer, the Public Solicitor participates in the National Justice Administration together with the Courts and Minister for Justice.

As a constitutional office-holder, the Public Solicitor is required by the Organic Law on Certain Constitutional Office-holders to report to Parliament annually on the work of his office and make recommendations on improvements to his office. At this juncture, it is worthwhile to highlight the fact that the Public Solicitor has religiously complied with this constitutional requirement. Accountability is at the core of good governance and leadership. Conversely, lack of reporting equates to absence of accountability, good governance and leadership.

The 2023 Annual Report remains focused on the work of the OPS in providing legal aid, filing of special references, protection and enforcement of human rights, and the operation of OPS in terms of finance, personnel, assets and administration. The report highlights the number of legal aid applications received in 2023, and those granted and refused legal aid, number of criminal, civil, judicial review, human rights, family, land and appeal cases dealt with in 2023.



The highlights for 2023 begins with the launching of the new corporate plan for 2023 – 2027. This replaced corporate plan 2018-2022. Under the former corporate plan, OPS gained notable yards in its reform program. Indeed, having a plan in place helps navigate the course of an organisation in achieving much development. In addition, the OPS made significant progress in 2023 in securing the migration from the public service twenty salary grade structure to the compressed fourteen grade. Another achievement worth mentioning is the funding secured for additional positions both legal and corporate. With this funding, the Public Solicitor appointed a third Deputy Public Solicitor to head the administration. Lastly, in 2023, the National Executive Council (NEC) decision to pay our legal officers' additional allowances was partially implemented with over K4million received from Department of Treasury (DoT) which was specifically for transportation (vehicle) and accommodation (house).

The support that we have seen and received from Government has been pleasing and the Prime Minister and his cabinet deserve to be acknowledged and applauded.

Leslie Benjamin Mamu

PUBLIC SOLICITOR

# ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

## OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SOLICITOR

The Office of the Public Solicitor is one established by the *Constitution* of Papua New Guinea, making it a Constitutional office s176 (1).

### PUBLIC SOLICITOR

The Public Solicitor is appointed by the Judicial & Legal Services Commission by virtue of s.176 (2) of the *Constitution* and holds the Office of the Public Solicitor, making him a Constitutional officeholder. Constitutional officeholders as defined by s.221 of the *Constitution* and includes Judges, the Public Prosecutor, Public Solicitor, Chief Magistrate, Ombudsman, Electoral Commissioner, Clerk of Parliament, Public Services Commissioner, and Auditor-General.

The Public Solicitor is also one of three Law Officers in PNG. Others are the Attorney General and the Public Prosecutor.

### EXECUTIVES OF PUBLIC SOLICITOR

The PS is assisted by an Executive Secretary and an Executive Officer.

The OPS has an Executive Management Team (EMT) that generally oversees administrative matters and provides information, research and acts as a body that advises on policy and implementation. The EMT is comprised of:

- **The Public Solicitor**
- **Deputy Public Solicitor – Civil**
- **Deputy Public Solicitor – Crimes**
- **Deputy Public Solicitor – Corporate**

### FUNCTIONS OF THE PUBLIC SOLICITOR

Apart from establishing the Office of the Public Solicitor, the *Constitution* also prescribes the functions of the Public Solicitor s177 (2). The functions of the Public Solicitor are to provide legal aid, advice and assistance for persons in need of help by him. This service comes in:

- **LEGAL REPRESENTATION TO ACCUSED PERSONS IN NEED OF HELP AND CIVIL LITIGATION**
- **LEGAL ASSISTANCE PURSUANT TO A COURT DIRECTION**

- **LEGAL ADVICE AND DRAFTING IN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL MATTERS (WHERE RESOURCES ALLOW)**

### PUBLIC LITIGATION BY SPECIAL REFERENCES (S19)

The Public Solicitor, as a Legal Officer, has standing under the *Constitution*, s19 (3), to invoke the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court where either a constitutional provision requires interpretation or a law enacted by Parliament raises Constitutional issues.

### LEGAL AID IN HUMAN RIGHTS (S.57)

The Public Solicitor, as a Law Officer, is called upon by the *Constitution*, s.57, to take interest in the protection and enforcement of the *Constitution*. It is on this provision that the Public Solicitor finds his mandate to step in to institute legal proceedings to protect citizens of their rights under law.

### FACILITATING COURT ORDERS (S.155(6))

It is the duty of the Law Officers of Papua New Guinea in their respective official capacities to comply with and, so far as is within their respective lawful powers, to put into effect all decisions of the National Judicial System.

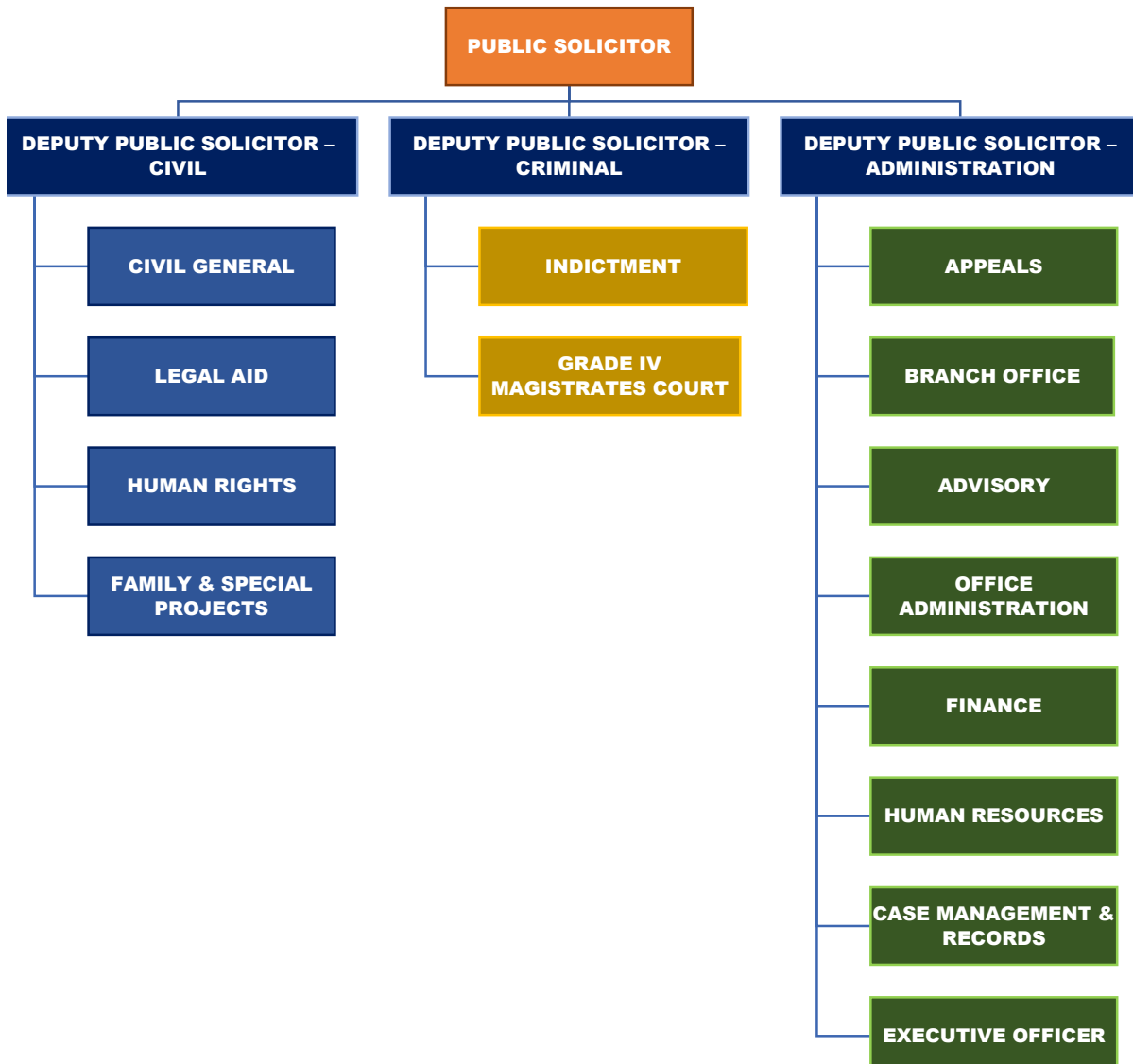
### EXTENSION OF LEGAL AID INTO LAND MATTERS

In 2019, OPS considered the extension of legal aid into land matters. This consideration was the result of increased land matters before the courts and in most cases land matters were between commercial entities and local land owners.

Whilst the commercial entities were able to afford private legal services, local land owners were usually self-represented due to inability to afford legal services. This exposed land owners to an imbalanced legal battle. The extension therefore, rendered an even playing field for all parties.



# REPORTING STRUCTURE



# ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE & VALUES

## VISION

To ensure that all our People and minority groups in Papua New Guinea are aware of their rights and have access to quality legal services.

## MISSION

To provide independent, accessible and quality legal assistance for socially and economically disadvantaged persons and minority groups.

## OUR VALUES

- To demonstrate compassion, understanding and respect for our clients.
- To ensure equality and fairness in our dealings with clients and equal opportunity for clients and staff.
- To demonstrate independence and courage in the performance of our duties.
- To act with utmost professionalism, integrity and competence and to be accountable for our actions.



## WHAT WE DO

- ❖ Appear in indictable offences before the National Court and District Courts
- ❖ Assist in committal proceedings before the District Courts
- ❖ Assists in bail applications and complaints for unlawful detentions
- ❖ Represent civil matters in different tracks of the National Court and District courts
- ❖ Provide legal services in land related matters, including filing reviews of Provincial Land Court decisions, and suits for compensations for damages to land/ environment
- ❖ Maintain the provision of legal advice and legal drafting for people in need
- ❖ Representation in child protection and welfare cases in Family Courts
- ❖ Offer legal representations in juvenile trials and associated proceedings
- ❖ Conduct awareness on the Office of Public Solicitor and Law & Justice agencies, sorcery, drug abuse, domestic violence, rule of law; motivational talk to students and youths and children.
- ❖ Participate in legal education and training for public and private agencies and offer assistance to UPNG Law School moot competitions and the Legal Training Institute.

## SERVICE LOCATIONS

## OFFICE OF PUBLIC SOLICITOR BRANCHES



## ESTABLISHMENTS IN PNG

Apart from the Headquarters in Waigani, NCD, the Public Solicitor has branches in all provinces, except Western, Hela and Jiwaka. A lawyer assigned to Jiwaka is currently housed in Mt Hagen and attends to circuits in Minj and Banz. As for Hela, the solicitor in charge is housed in HQ and only conducts circuit duties in Tari.

# ACTIVITY PLAN 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



The following activities were identified inline with Key Result Areas of the previous Corporate Plan 2018 - 2022. The implemented activities are highlighted in the sectional reports as well as activities that are ongoing. These are highlights of the OPS achievements from the planned activities for the year 2023.

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES 2023

- No.1 - Implementation Public Solicitor Act 2021**
- No.2 - Implementation of the OPS 2019 Organisational Structure**
- No.3 - Institutional Housing & Office Space**
- No.4 - Provincial Engagement**
- No.5 - OPS Server Replacement**
- No.6 - Establishment of OPS Branch in Western Province**
- No.7 - Purchase and Replacement of Existing Fleet**
- No.8 - Review and Redrafting of Contracts and Job Descriptions**
- No.9 - Capacity Building**
- No.10 - OPS Lawyers NEC Approved Allowances**



# OPS LEGAL DIVISION



**DEPUTY PUBLIC  
SOLICITOR - CRIMES**

MR LUKE SIMINJI

## CRIMES DIVISION

### INTRODUCTION

The Criminal Law Division of the Public Solicitor's Office is responsible for the core business of the Office and that is to advise, assist and legally represent persons who are charged with criminal offenses.

The division is headed by a Deputy Public Solicitor (DPS) – Crimes and consists of 2 sections.

Each section is headed by a Principal Legal Officer who is responsible for the operation of each individual section.

1. **INDICTMENT,**
2. **GRADE 5 MAGISTRATES & JUVENILE COURTS**

OPS branches has a current staff strength of 43 lawyers throughout the provinces.



**DEPUTY PUBLIC  
SOLICITOR - CIVIL**

MR THOMAS ILAISA

## CIVIL DIVISION

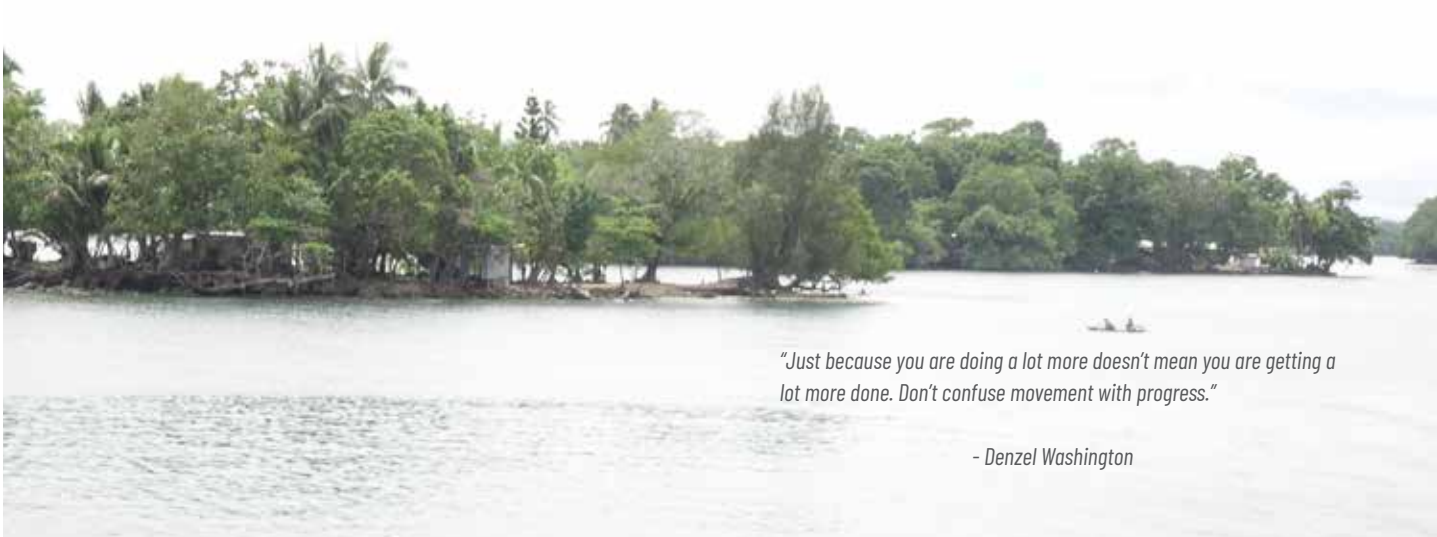
### INTRODUCTION

The Civil Division of the Public Solicitor's Office is responsible for all civil matters including consideration and approval of legal aid applications.

The division is headed by a Deputy Public Solicitor – Civil and consists of 4 sections.

1. **CIVIL GENERAL**
2. **HUMAN RIGHTS**
3. **FAMILY**
4. **LEGAL AID DESK**

Each section is headed by a Principal Legal Officer who is responsible for the operation of each individual section. The Civil Division operates on a staff strength of 14 lawyers.



*"Just because you are doing a lot more doesn't mean you are getting a lot more done. Don't confuse movement with progress."*

- Denzel Washington

# LEGAL DIVISION MANAGEMENT TEAM

## CRIMES DIVISION



### ■ INDICTMENT

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MR. BERNARD POPEU

The Indictments section deals with indictable offenses in the National Court.



### ■ MAGISTRATES

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MR. JEFFRY KOLOWE

This section is to assist in committal matters and bail applications at the District Court and the Juvenile Court.

## CIVIL DIVISION



### ■ CIVIL GENERAL

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MR. ADAM TOKEN

The Civil General section and Legal Aid Desk are the forerunners of civil matters within the OPS. Matters that fall under the civil track include personal injury claims, motor vehicle accidents, claims against the State, land and property matters, employment, torts and negligence.



### ■ FAMILY LAW

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MS. NATASHA KASA

The Family section is responsible for all family matters including Interim Protection Orders (IPOs), maintenance, adultery, divorce and separations. Due to shortage of staff, other lawyers from other civil sections assist to progress matters.



### ■ HUMAN RIGHTS

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MR. DOKO KARI

The Human Rights section is responsible for all matters relating human rights breaches. Matters include, unlawful detention, police brutality and any infringement of basic human rights.



### ■ LEGAL AID

PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER (PLO)  
MRS. SALLY KARAUT

The Legal Aid Desk is also responsible for drafting opinions for legal aid applications before the application is considered by the LA Committee.

# INDICTMENT

## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Indictments section is a section within the Crimes Division of the Public Solicitor's Office. The section is responsible for executing what is arguably the Public Solicitor's primary mandate under section 177 (2)(a) of the Constitution. In particular, to provide legal assistance to a person in need of help by him who has been charged with an offence punishable by imprisonment for more than two years. The indictments section is more focused on persons that are already in the National Court whilst persons still in the District Court or at the Summary Courts are the focus of the Magistrate & Juvenile section of the Public Solicitor's Crimes Division.

The Indictments section is headed by the Principal Legal Officer and supported by the designated Senior Legal Officer and two legal officers. The current number of lawyers attached to this section four (4).

The indictment section also accommodates a number of branch lawyers based in HQ. These are SIC's and Legal Officers who are yet to be deployed to the branches. These lawyers are utilized by the Indictments section in discharging the Public Solicitor's mandate. The Magistrate & Juvenile section and their PLO Mr. Kolowe deserve a special mention in this report as well for their ever-ready assistance to the indictment section files.

## MANPOWER

The section has noted active participation in 2023 from 19 lawyers within the Office which is reflected in the case-file tally aspect of this report. At the end of 2023 the staff on strength to carry out the function of this section stands at 12.

## ACTIVITIES

The focus activity of the section is the fulfilment of the Public Solicitor's mandate in providing Criminal Defense at the National Court. The Solicitors in Charge of the branches have been tasked to execute the Public Solicitor's mandate in their designated branches. The Indictment section on the other hand has been attending to the National Court in Waigani, Central Province and Provinces such as Gulf and Western which are serviced by travelling circuits.



The section also strives to implement **KRA No. 1 of the Public Solicitor's Corporate Plan 2023 -2027** which focuses on Criminal Defense (Representation). This KRA, in a nutshell, prioritizes prompt disposal of criminal cases through the highest standard of litigation this office can offer. So, another focus activity of the section apart from timely case disposal is capacity building through supervision, mentoring and continuous professional development. The Indictment section also assists whenever it can when called upon by the Public Solicitor to support the Legal Training Institute programs.

### WAIGANI, CENTRAL, GULF AND WESTERN PROVINCE NATIONAL COURT SITTINGS

2023 saw the return of General Crimes Track Administrator Justice Mogish in full swing after the renewal of his contract. He was more focused on the Central List than the Waigani list given the time dedicated to Kwikila Circuits. The year 2023 also witnessed the expiry of the acting Judges contracts in July, resulting in track 2 being without a judge since August 2023. Lawyers progressing indictment section files August onwards were only appearing for matters in Waigani Crimes track 1 and the Fraud track.

Acting Justice Kupmain was also appointed mid-year 2023 and circuited Daru Island in August and Kerema in October. A number of part-heard matters are from this circuit areas as would be noted in the sections case-file tally.

### INDICTMENT SECTION CASE-FILE TALLY ON CASE DISPOSAL

The table below summarizes the status of matters dealt with by each lawyer within and assisting the Indictment section.

From this table, it can be seen that Indictment section this year disposed or completed 102 cases, whilst 64 remains as part-heard matters in various different tracks of the National Court.

This brings the total of completed/part-heard cases to 166 for Waigani, Central, Kerema and Daru. These statistics also includes cases done by the Senior Legal Officer (SLO - Vanimo) in Vanimo during the November circuit.

	Part Heard	Completed	Total
Luke Siminji -	0	1	1
Friedrich Kirriwom - DPS Admin	1	1	1
Bernard Popeu - PLO Indictment	14	28	48
Jeffrey Kolowe - PLO Magistrates & Juvenile	4	17	21
Cecilia Koek - SIC Tari	1	6	7
David Kayok - SIC Kerema	8	14	22
Kim Watakapura - SLO Indictment	4	12	14
Tymillah Yapao - SLO M & J	4	8	12
Obediah Himore - SLO Vanimo	2	21	23
Angellus Koraino - LO Wewak	0	3	3
Trevor Kerari - LO Madang	0	3	3
Desmond Nilkare - LO Mandang	0	1	1
Emmanuel Ellison - LO Branch	0	1	1
Jimmy Rupavele - LO Advisory	2	3	5
Malcolm Sumbuk (Disengaged)	1	5	6
Ronald Lenalia - (Disengaged)	1	0	1
Fredah Bomal - LO Vanimo	0	0	0
Valiveuga Roka - LO M & J	0	0	0
Daniel Turalom - LO M & J	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>166</b>

## CHALLENGES

The three (3) main challenges faced by the Indictment section in 2023 are as highlighted.

### 1) WAIGANI CRIMES TRACK 2

A major setback in the disposal of cases in Waigani can be traced back to a stagnant Waigani Crimes track 2. The Chief Justice is yet to allocate a judge to progress matters in that track which has been kept in abeyance since August 2023.

### 2) SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PART-HEARD MATTERS

The table above shows a significant number of part-heard matters, 64 to be exact. Daru has 10 part-heard matters whilst Kerema has five part-heard matters wherein the Judge is yet to deliver his decisions. This might prompt circuits to these areas in 2024.

Former acting justice Linge also has four part-heard matters three of which might be re-allocated to another judge and one should be declared a mistrial.

### 3) DECREASE IN THE OVERALL NUMBER OF CASE DISPOSAL.

When measured against the 2022 individual quotas and the overall total of cases completed/part-heard, it would become apparent that the section did not yield beyond the results of 2022. In 2022 cases completed/part-heard matters stood at 218 compared to 158 for 2021. For this year the completed/part-heard total is at 166. The variance can be easily seen in a graph form below.

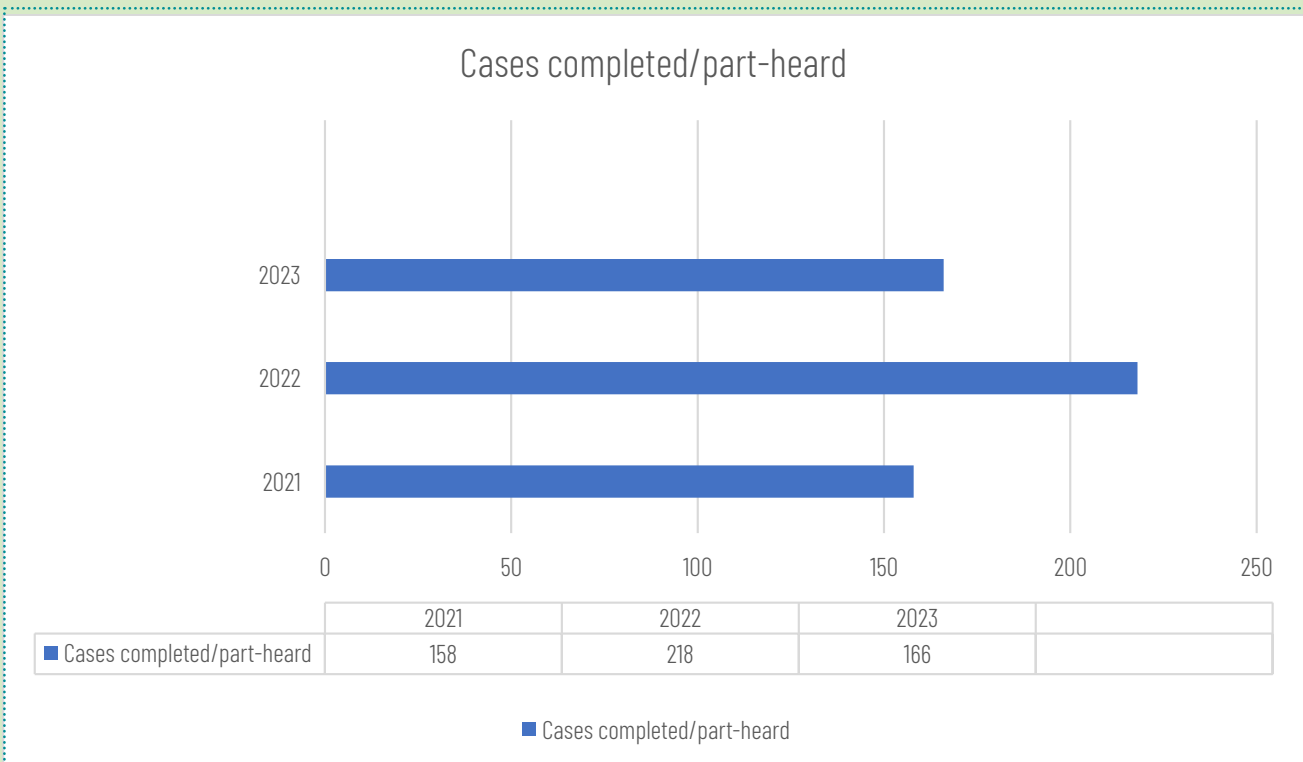
A contributing factor to the decrease could be the expiry of the acting judges' contracts whom I would assume were responsible for the spike in case disposal in 2022. Another factor could be the fact that Waigani Crimes track 2 has remained motionless for over 4 months as the fresh committals keep coming up. Whatever the contributing factor is, the indictment sections will formulate strategies to maintain a high volume of case disposal.

## RESULTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

There are three(3) results which I intend to highlight for the Indictment section for the year 2023.

### 1. TRIED AND TESTED LITIGATORS

In 2023, alot has been done in ensuring young lawyers were mentored and supervised well. Mentoring and supervision of young upcoming lawyers had resulted in some of these lawyers rising up through the ranks and awarded Senior Legal Officers positions. These were legal officers that were mentored and supervised in Court beginning 2022 and ended the year as tried and tested litigants. Their recent promotions attest to the level of confidence on their competencies and the quality of legal services the OPS lawyers and office provides.



## 2. CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH MENTORING AND SUPERVISION

Three (3) Junior Legal Officers were assigned files, mentored and supervised at Kwikila during the Central Circuit which had Justice Mogish sitting as the circuit judge. They have since been deployed to their respective branches with confidence to progress criminal cases therein.

Two (2) Female Senior Legal Officers from this section participated in the Police Prosecution workshop conducted in Port Moresby.

The Legal Training Institute was also assisted by the Indictments section this year. The PLO Indictment and Senior Legal Officers were part of the moot Court training. This included supervised tasks in taking instructions at Bomana Corrections Services, file Pre-trial Review statement, and observing in Courts.

## 3. HIGH STANDARD LITIGATION

The LBS & Fabian Hera joint trial captured the country's interest in 2023. The case is a modern day classic application of the historical and settled rule of circumstantial evidence. I will say a fine piece of artistry by Depury Public Solicitor Administration, Mr. Kirriwom during cross-examination laid the foundation of the defense case. The Defense's case was another reasonable hypothesis capable of being drawn from the evidence so the Court could not safely convict. I commend the case as a teachable illustration of the circumstantial evidence rule in application.

### WAY FORWARD

Moving forward, the section has four (4) new officers that require mentoring and supervision to be fully fledged trial counsels. This is so we give effect to **KRA No. 1** of the **OPS Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027** in raising and maintaining high litigation standards and a cutting edge in oral advocacy in criminal trial or plea. This can be achieved if counsels commit themselves to our Criminal Defense craft and the mentoring will follow suit by senior counsels.

The section also intends to utilize section 552 of the Code commencing 2023 to fast track case disposal, especially in Waigani Crimes Track 2. In order to accomplish that, counsel in carriage must be ready with instructions for trial before fast-tracking cases. Counsels will be tasked to get set instructions before proceeding to file the applications.

It is hoped that this approach will in turn increase the Public Solicitor's case disposal volume in the area of its primary mandate.



# MAGISTRATES & JUVENILE COURTS

The Role of Magistrates and Juvenile Courts section is to provide legal assistance in criminal cases that come before the District Court, especially in the Committal proceeding Courts, the Grade V Court and the Juvenile Court.

## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

The Magistrates and Juvenile Courts section (herein referred to as "the Section") is one of the two sections that come under the Criminal Division, which reports to the Deputy Public Solicitor - Crimes. The other is the Indictable Section.

### PRIMARY ROLE

The primary role of this section is to attend to and assist offenders who are being arrested and detained at the holding cells, and further by taking up their cases at the Committal Courts, Grade Five (5) Courts, and Juvenile Courts. This section also assists offenders by attending to cases at the Summary Courts. Apart from its primary duty, this section also assists the Indictable Section by attending to cases up at the National Court.

### STAFF ON STRENGTH

The manpower of the Section is five (5) lawyers, including the Principal Legal Officer, who is the sectional head.

Unlike previous years, 2023, this section had the benefit of seeing some of its officers promoted making way for newly recruited lawyers to take on the challenge and responsibilities left by the Senior Lawyers..

These new lawyers have made the section more formidable by appearing and taking more cases at the Magistrates and the Juvenile Courts, including Boroko Summary Courts. This has increased the work load for this section to two-fold.

Below is the graph reflecting the work this section had done in 2022 in comparison with the work this section had accomplished in 2023.

2023, has seen a significant increase of cases this section has handled because of the commitment, hard work and effort put in by each officer from this section.

Although you will note that some officers from other sections have also taken on board few Committal Court matters, which shows their willingness to venture into criminal cases too, and be multiskilled, which is an exercise that is being encouraged.

This chart also, does not include the total number of National Court cases each officer in this section has carriage of. Those are already covered by the sectional head of the Indictment Section.

### CONCLUSION

2023 was a successful year for the Magistrates and Juvenile section because of our increase presence at the Magistrate and Juvenile Courts, hence the results as reflected in the chart. This increase in cases was largely due to the increase in the manpower in the section.

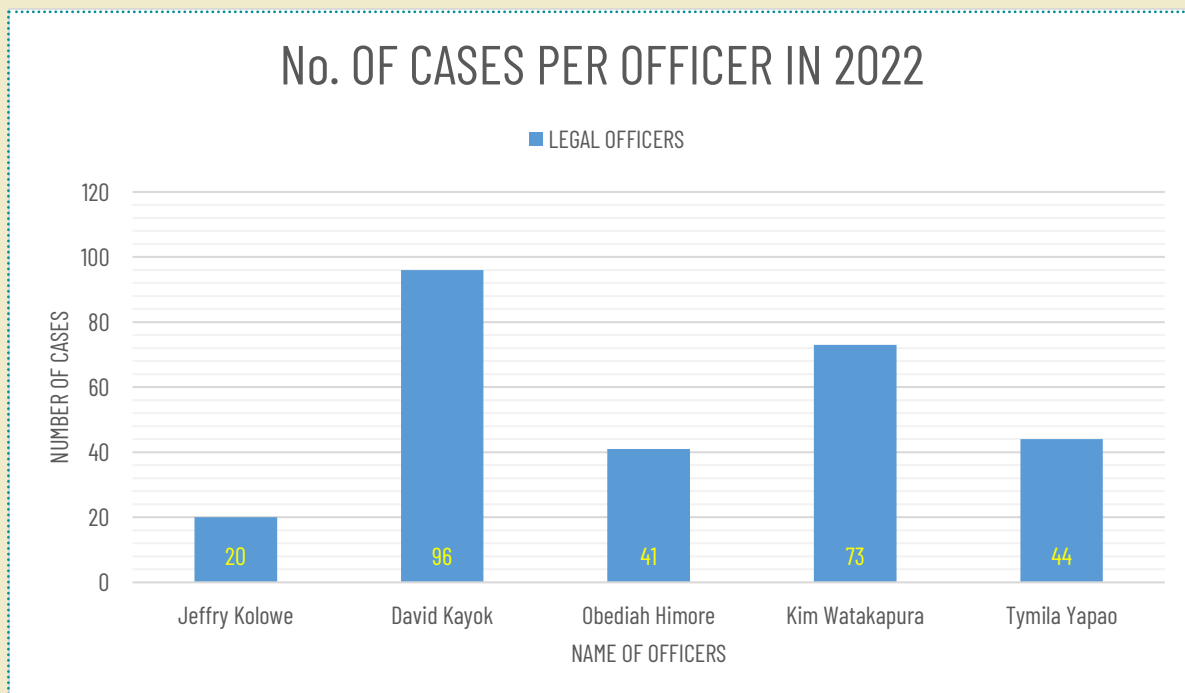
Those new recruits were fresh from LTI but stood tall amongst seasoned lawyers at the battle field to fight for the marginalised of society who needed the service of the OPS.

#### Mr Jeffrey Kolowe

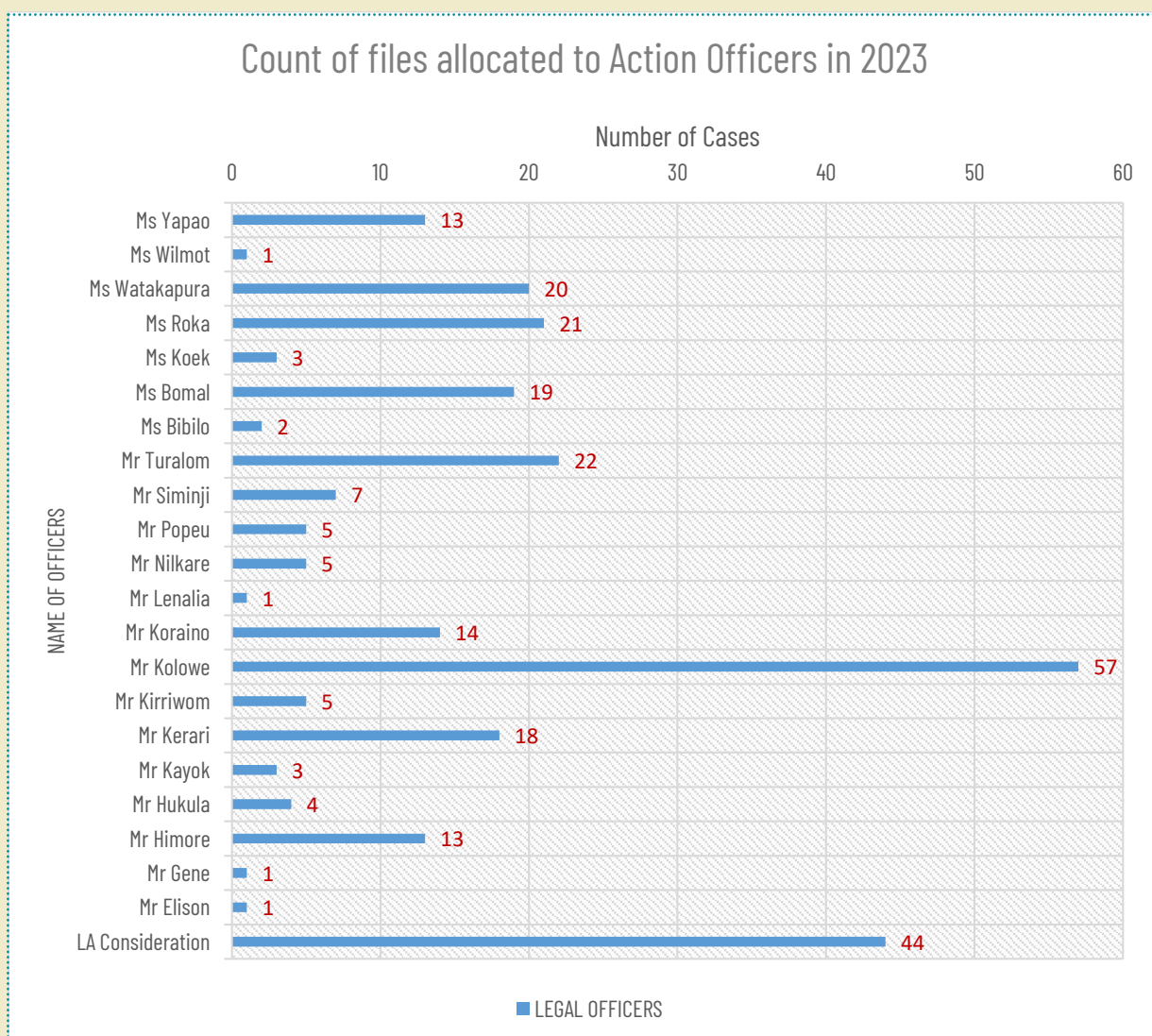
Principle Legal Officer (PLO)  
MAGISTRATES AND  
JUVENILE COURTS



WORK LOAD STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2022



WORK LOAD STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2023



## FAMILY & SPECIAL PROJECTS



This section is a specialized section within the Civil Division that deals with family related matters and matters involving discrimination and violence against the disadvantaged and minority groups and people living with disabilities and HIV & AIDS.

Strength staff of this section as of January 2024 consists only of the Principle Legal officer who reports directly to the Deputy Public Solicitor Civil.

### INTRODUCTION

The family Law section falls within the Civil Division and it carries out the Public Solicitor's role under section 177 (2) (c) **Constitution** to provide legal assistance in his discretion to matters that are civil in nature to impecunious persons in need of legal assistance. Our section focus more on people in need of assistance for family related matters

This section is unique as it borders within the ambits of Human rights and so it also performs the functions of the

Public Solicitor under section 57 of the **Constitution** which empowers the Public Solicitor to protect and enforce rights and freedoms of persons who are unable to do so.

In executing this role we assist Survivors of sorcery related violence, Gender based violence, discrimination of persons living with HIV & AIDS and other disabilities.

### PRIMARY ROLE

Apart from attending to court and providing advice to all family matters this section carries out activities with the aid of JSS4D to address issues of Violence of all forms, including violence against women and children, and provide legal protection to survivors of Sorcery accusation violence and people living with disabilities and HIV & AIDS.

Apart from measuring the legal performance of the family section this report will also reflect on JSS4D activities and outcomes that was successfully achieved in 2023.

### STAFF ON STRENGTH

As of December 2022 this section is represented by one legal officer, which is the Principle Legal Officer , who reports directly to the Deputy Public Solicitor - Civil.

## FAMILY LAW HIGHLIGHTS

### ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

The strength staff of family section as of January 2023 is one lawyer who is the principle legal officer as such the family sections begs assistance from civil General, advisory and LAD sections to assist with disposing of family matters in HQ. in the branches the Civil Lawyers are assigned family related matters to dispose off.

In 2022 the Public solicitors office Nationwide received a total of 256 Legal Aid applications for family related matters with the highest application received for the Momase region. In 2023 an increase of 620 applications was received thought the branches and HQ again with the highest application received in Momase region.

The table below shows the increase of Family LA from 2022 & 2023

Table 1: TOTAL NUMBER OF LA APPLICATIONS IN 2022 & 2023							
Year	Case Status	Highlands	HQ	Momase	NGI	Southern	Grand Total
2022	Active LA Application	1	6	20	25	15	67
	Active Legal File	15	38	61	26	27	167
	Closed LA Application				17		17
	Closed Legal File			5			5
2022 Total		16	44	86	68	42	256
2023	Active LA Application	8	9	20	48	13	98
	Active Legal File	15	34	158	35	10	252
	Closed LA Application		1				1
	Closed Legal File			12	1		13
2023 Total		23	44	190	84	23	364
Grand Total		39	88	276	152	65	620

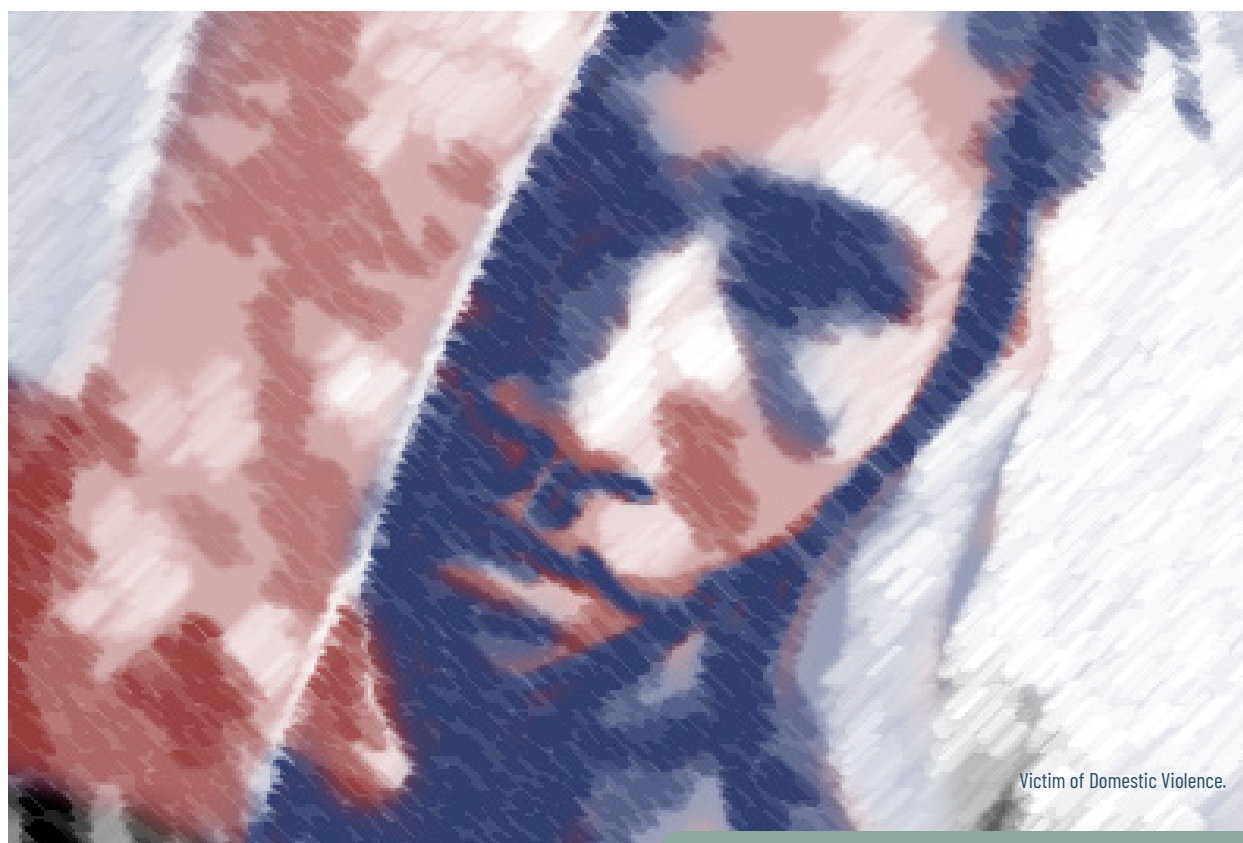
#### Notes:

Active LA Applications - Legal Aid Applications yet to be considered

Active Legal Files - Legal Aid already considered or approved

Closed LA Applications - Legal Aid already considered but are refused or not approved

Closed Legal File - Active files already worked on and are actually finalised or completed



Victim of Domestic Violence.

The highest applications received in 2022 and 2023 was for **custody/Maintenance** there was an increase from applications in 2022 with 95 to 175 applications in 2023 nationwide. **IPO is the second highest cause of action** that continues to increase from 53 applications in 2022 to 68 applications in 2023 Nationwide.

As of January 2024, the OPS database confirms a total of **1135** Active Family files Nationwide with the oldest file dating back to 2014.

The Family files shares jurisdiction with family and National court with 90% of the cases are filed at Family court while only 10 % are filed at National court in the likes of Legal Adoption, Custody under National Court Rules and Divorce proceedings.

## JSS4D ACTIIVTIES

In 2023 the family section also engaged in other activities apart from attending to cases in the family and National Court. The main activity in 2023 was to upskill people living with disabilities on basic legal knowledge. To achieve this activity, we did consultations in selected provinces to understand the legal issues faced by people living with disabilities so that our training can be tailored to reflect legal issues that are common in people living with disabilities.

There were four planned activities for 2023 they include the following;

- **Consultation with PLWD and their stakeholder in Lae, Morobe province**
- **Consultation with PLWD and their stake holders in Goroka Eastern Highlands Province**
- **Consultation with PLWD and their stakeholders in NCD**
- **Basic Legal training workshop cross country for PLWD**

From the four activities only two were achieved in 2023 that is the consultation in Lae and Goroka whilst the consultation in NCD and the workshop have been earmarked to be achieved in 2024.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITIES DONE IN 2023

The Lae consultation was one of the first engagement with PLWD and facilitators of the Public solicitor's office our two days consultation was held at Lae international hotel from 03rd -05th May the second consultation was held at Goroka from the 31st August -02nd September 2023.

From the two consultations we identified common barriers or legal issues that were faced by PLWD and they include;

- **Sexual abuse by the immediate family member or members of the community they belong to**
- **Not able to access the justice system because of the structural design of the service providers and barriers in communication (language interpretation)**
- **Lack of awareness of their rights and the legal services available**

Other issues they face are more societal discrimination and that is accessibility to Employment, education, information, transportation etc. these issues are most often neglected at the National Level and can be addressed collectively by all stakeholders.

## LAE CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

Participants and facilitators with members of PLWD of Morobe Province.





## GOROKA CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

Participants and facilitators with members of Eastern Highlands PLWD.

In terms of our core activity that is attending to family court matters in the National and Family court we are hoping to have at least two additional lawyers in our team this year as a result of the approved restructure. With the increase in strength staff the issue of urgent IPO applications can be dealt with in a timely manner. As well as timely disposal of family matters.

Another aspect of our section is the role this office plays in the referral pathway of Family & sexual violence and GBV in the country. OPS is an important referral partner and stake holder in providing assistance to survivors of family violence, sorcery accusation and GBV related matters.

Most often clients are referred to us by other referral partners such a Police, Femili PNG, BSP etc. currently there is no standard referral forms that we use to take in clients or refer clients apart from the legal aid application form as a way forward to provide an effective flow of FSV and GBV survivors and how they are being attended to we intend to create a referral form so correct statistics of referrals is captured to show how efficient OPS is as a referral partner of FSV and GBV.

# HUMAN RIGHTS

The Human Rights Section is a specialized section within the Civil General Division. Human Rights is an area of Law that not only deals with civil matters but also crossover into matters which are criminal in nature.

## INTRODUCTION

The Human Rights team in year 2023 was made up of Mr. James Gene, Mrs. Mildred Burain, Mr. Stephen Kuli and Mr. Caedmon Oresi. For almost half of the year there were four (4) Legal Officers in the human rights section based at the headquarters.

This update demonstrates what the Human Rights Section does in assisting the Public Solicitor's Office in carrying out its functions as mandated by section 57(2) of the Constitution . The update will show the role of the Human Rights Section and the successful outcomes and highlights of 2023, the

struggles faced and what can be done to make the Section more effective and efficient in 2024 and onwards.

## PRIMARY ROLE

Human Rights practice is often misconceived as being straight forward. On the contrary, the practice is challenging given that human rights law is a vastly developing area of law in Papua New Guinea. Human Rights Section of the Public Solicitors Office focuses on dealing with breaches of Constitutional Rights provided under Division 3 of the Constitution. Within the general breaches of Constitutional Rights, there are different nature of cases that we deal with involving different groups of people, both citizens and non-citizens.

The section categorizes matters into two categories:

Detainee matters (both females & males)



- i) applications by persons who are remandees which means accused's persons in either police custody or correctional services custody awaiting trial; or
- ii) applications by prisoners who have been convicted and sentenced or convicted and awaiting sentence; or
- iii) applications by persons seeking Asylum who have been brought into custody by PNG Immigration & Citizenship Authority

#### Non-Detainee matters

- i) applications by citizens
- ii) applications by non-citizens

Within these two general categories, we then further categorize individual applications into their different nature of cases. These are (and not exhaustive to):

### STAFF ON STRENGTH

As of December 2022 this section is represented by one Senior legal officer and two legal officers who report to the Principle Legal Office (PLO - Human Rights). The Principal Legal Officer reports to the Deputy-Public Solicitor (Civil).

#### Detainee Matters

- i. Unlawful Detention
- ii. Unreasonable Detention
- iii. Due Date of Release Calculations
- iv. Warrant of Commitment issues
- v. Parole Eligibility Calculations
- vi. Early Release Application (e.g. Release on License)
- vii. Parole Applications (mainly for CS to facilitate detainees parole process and/or Parole Board to sit and consider detainees parole application)
- viii. Transfer Applications (application by detainees to transfer to another Correctional Institute)
- ix. Immigration cases
- x. Dietary (Nutritional) Requirement Issues
- xi. Medical Issues
- xii. Welfare Issues (this mainly involves female detainees with children)
- xiii. Jail Condition & Classification Issues
- xiv. Delay in compiling Appeal Books

#### b. Non-Detainee Matters

- i. Immigration

- ii. Police Brutality
- iii. Unlawful Raids
- iv. Unlawful Evictions
- v. Correctional Service brutality
- vi. Sorcery-Accusation & Related Violence
- vii. Domestic & Gender Based Violence

Apart from matters relating to breach of Constitutional Rights, the section also assist in dealing with the following cases:

- a. Property
- b. Torts
- c. Deceased Estate claims
- d. Civil Debt Recovery
- e. Fraud
- f. Breach of Contract
- g. Employment
- h. Supreme Court Appeals

### 2023 SECTION ACTIVITIES

#### HIGHLIGHTS & RESULTS

In 2023 we filed all our originating processes through the Integral Electronic Case Management System (IECMS). However, most of which did not even get a first hearing date. Only a few of those reached the trial stage. With the abrupt introduction of the IECMS system and the recent supreme court judgments (i.e, Catherine Mal, Kenneth Siune, etc), our function and performance in court generally was restricted to a certain degree. 2022 is the only year we have slumped in our trial counts for a year.

Nonetheless, we still managed to serve the courts efficiently and progressed a good number of matters to trial. In 2022 we assisted all the other sections of the office but in 2023 we only assisted the civil general section, the legal aid section and the family section. We appeared in both national court appeals and supreme court appeals. We successfully argued default judgment applications and summary judgments.

In 2022 we successfully responded to an appeal filed by the State in the proceedings described as:

#### 1. SCA NO. 06 OF 2020, SCA NO. 07 OF 2020 and SCA NO. 11 OF 2020.

The Supreme Court comprising of Justice Hartshorn, Berrigan and Tusais upheld the submissions of the respondent and found that the court has the power to make such calculations and the calculations made by the National Court, with the absence of any legislation

providing to the contrary, is correct. Hence, the appeal was dismissed. The Supreme Court essentially adopted the calculation made by Cannings J in the national court case of Bradley Neri v the State [2020] N8577.

In effect, there is now a significant decline of human rights applications about prisoners' due date of release.

## HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023

### 1. HRA No. 541 of 2019:

In only his second year in practice, Mr. Gene was able to obtain a judgment sum of K218, 677.80 before Justice Cannings.

### 2. PS No. 985 of 2023:

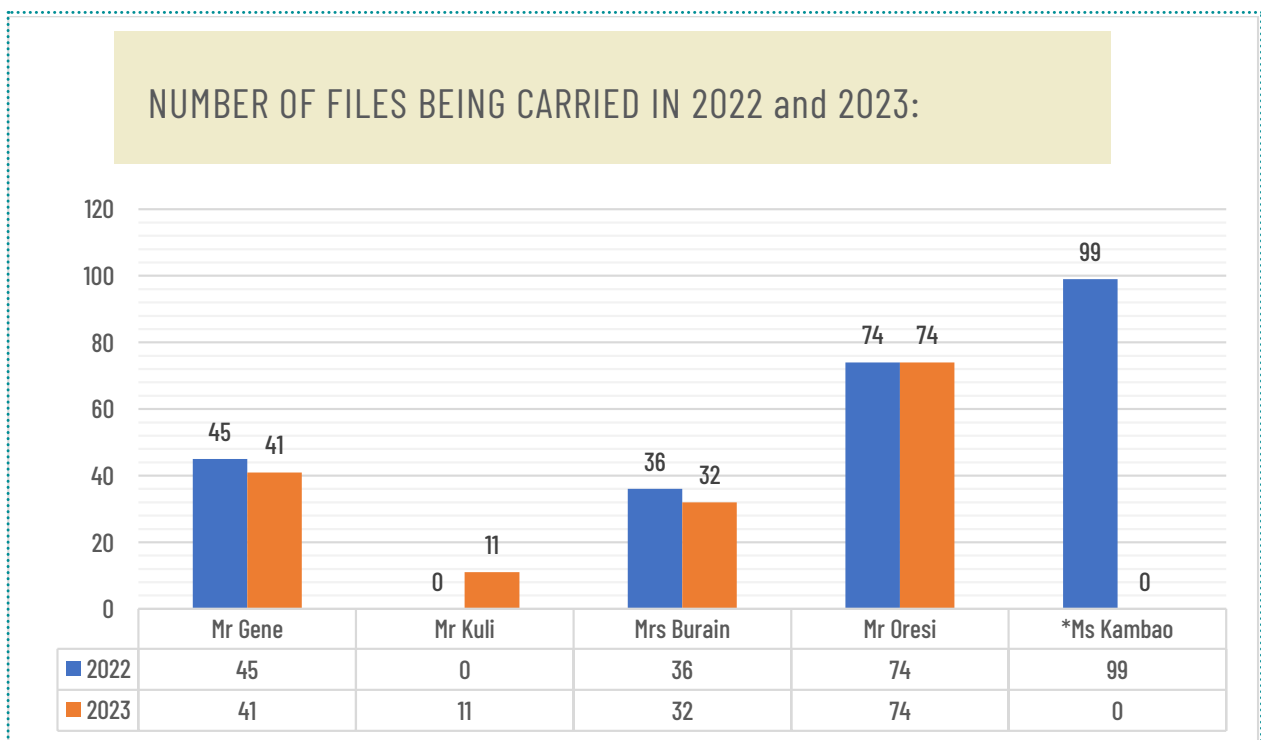
In his first year with the office, Mr. Kuli successfully settled a matter for K30, 000.00. The office will charge the client 5% of that the total sum and he will receive the balance.

### 3. OS (HR) NO.13 OF 2022; Dama & ors v Bleme & ors

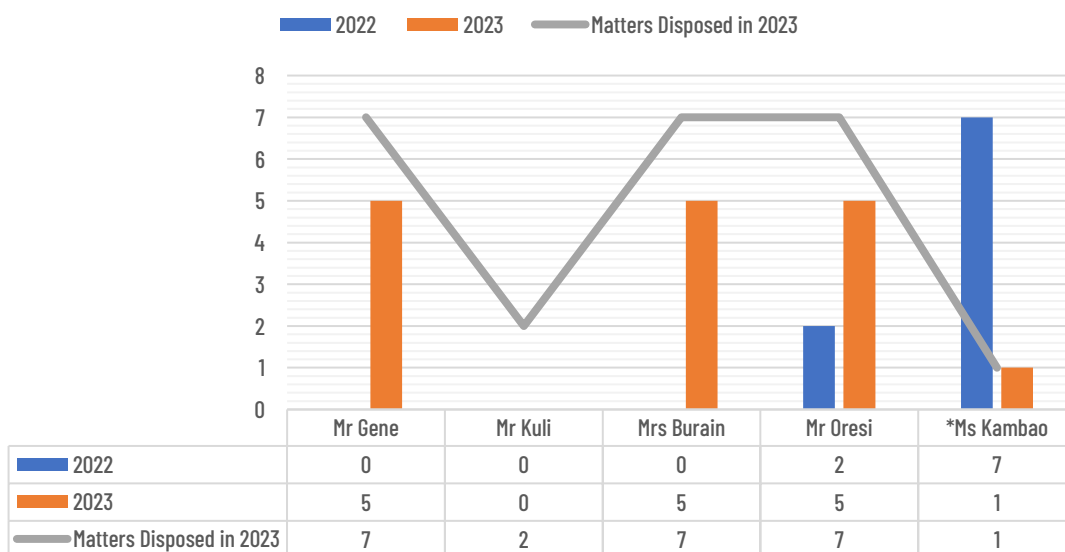
In the trial for assessment of damages, Mrs. Burain Burain was able to obtain a judgment sum of K5, 500 before the Deputy Chief Justice, Kandakasi J.

## KEY DATA

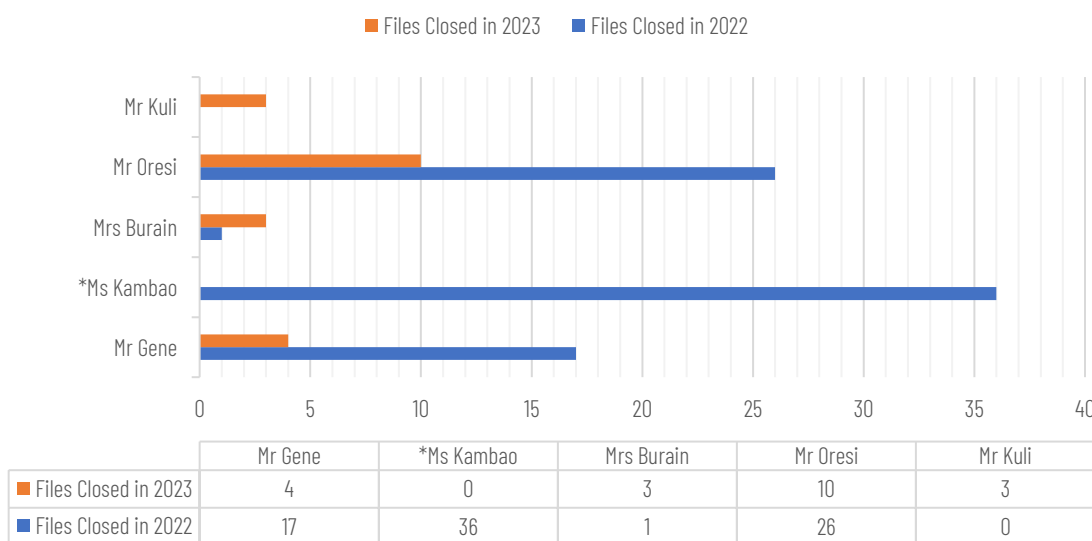
These are some of the statistics we collected in 2022 and 2023.



### TRIALS IN 2022/2023 and MATTERS DISPOSED OF IN 2023



### Number of files closed in 2022 and 2023



We have assisted the appeal section and upon our recommendation and their advice, we filed numerous National Court and Supreme Court appeals.

#### Appeal matters

Mr. Gene – 2 Supreme Court appeals

Mrs. Burain – 2 National Court appeals

Mr. Oresi – 3 Supreme Court appeals

#### WAY FORWARD

In 2022 we had the inclusion of two new lawyers namely Mr. James Gene and Mrs. Mildred Burain. In 2023, with Ms Kambao’s exit, we had the inclusion of Mr. Kuli. All of whom performed exceptionally well.

We have adapted to the recent changes in the law and practice in 2022 and applied them in 2023. As was alluded to earlier, we have filed a significant number of originating processes in 2022 and 2023.

We commenced work on the few goals we set for 2022 and we intend to progressively work on these set of goals also in 2023. In 2023 we brainstormed, researched, collected data and basically laid the foundation to work towards achieving these goals.

In light of the KRA Number 04, we have achieved the following:

1. Increase human rights case disposal through conduct of trials - 15 National Court civil trials and 23 matters disposed of;
1. Explored and successfully resolved disputes through alternative means - Mr. Gene obtained a judgment through consent, Mrs. Burain obtained a judgment through consent and Mr. Kuli was able to settle a matter out of court in the sum of K30, 000.00 (paid to the PS Trust account);
1. Have successfully built the capacity of human rights lawyers within the section at the headquarters (yet to include the branches).

As part of the Civil Division within the OPS, the Human Rights section have also contributed significantly to the Public Solicitor's trust account in 2023.

## Challenges

- DCJ filtering human rights matters proceedings by transferring these human rights matters to other tracks.
- DCJ's attitude towards prisoner matters - reference is usually made to the recent Supreme Court matters on human rights.
- With the Supreme Court settling the law on remissions we have a decrease of prisoner matters regarding due date of release and parole eligibility dates.
- The amendment to the Claims By and Against the State Act making it mandatory to name tortfeasors in our section 5 notices is slowing down the process of initiating genuine proceedings in court.
- To collect useful data regarding all human rights cases.
- Mentorship and motivation.

The real feasible challenge for the human rights section is improving or maintaining the statistics the section have this year, in 2024 thereon.



PLO HUMAN RIGHTS Mr Caedmon Oresi making his presentation at the 2023 Public Solicitors Leadership and Management Retreat, Madang.

# APPEALS AND JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Appeals & Judicial Review section works closely with other sections within the Office of Public Solicitor such as Indictment, Civil General, Legal Aid, Family law & Magistrate & Juvenile courts sections and also all OPS Branch offices throughout the country.

## APPEALS & JUDICIAL REVIEW

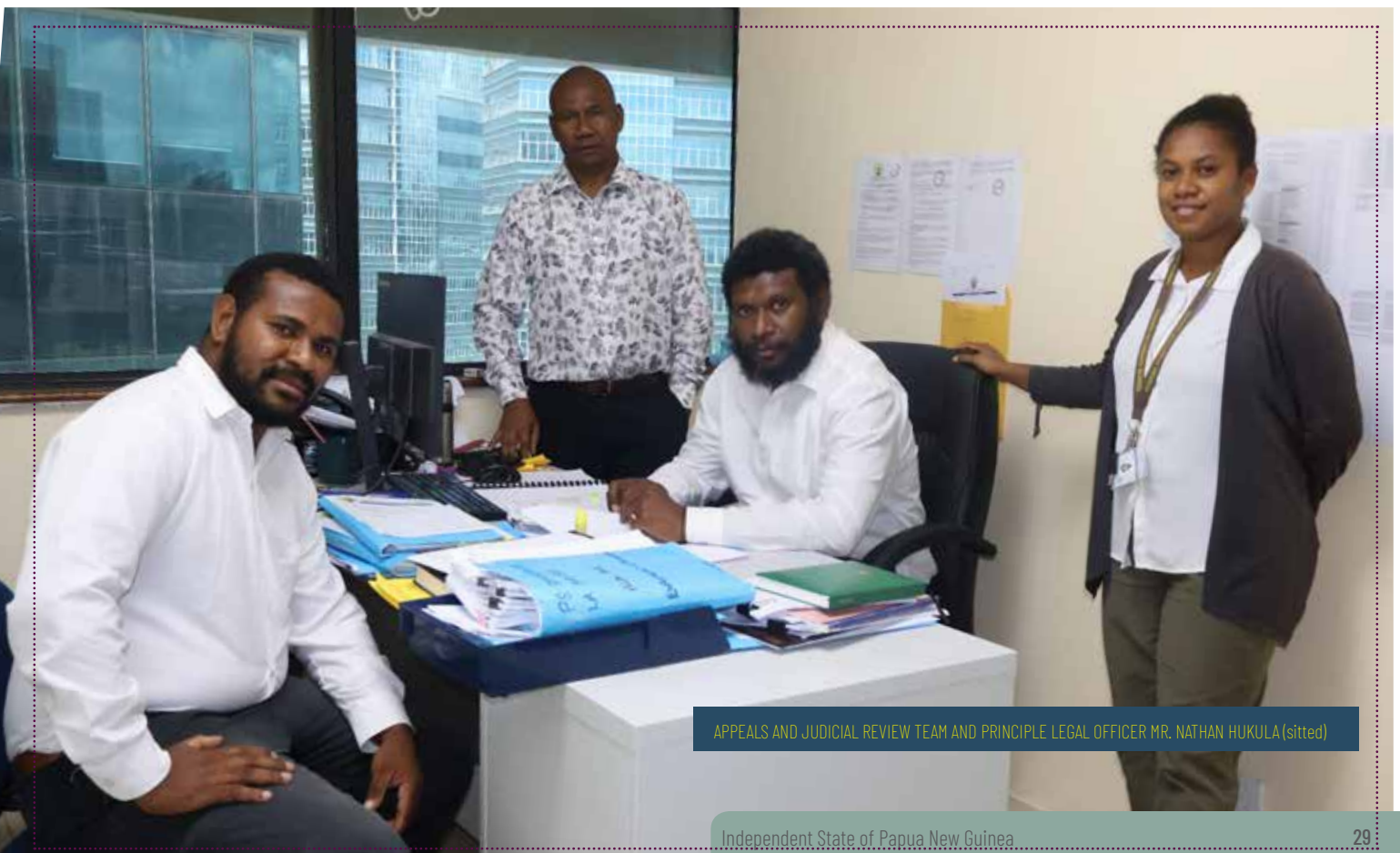
This is a report for the Appeals and Judicial review section within the Public Solicitor's office. The Appeals & Review section is headed by Mr. Nathan Hukula the Principle Legal Officer. The section is staffed by the By a Principle Legal Officer (PLO), a Senior Legal Officer (SLO) and a Legal Officer (LO). The appeals section throughout 2023 have been actively servicing the Supreme and National courts at Waigani and have also been involved in the preparation of Supreme court circuits throughout the country.

## ROLE OF THE SECTION

The Appeals & Judicial Review section reports directly to the Public Solicitor. The section has two functions within the public solicitor's office, the first being the provision of legal representation in the appellate jurisdiction ranging from appeals from the District court to the National court and National Court to the Supreme Court both in Civil and Criminal Matters The appeals section receives, vets and makes recommendations to the legal aid committee and the public solicitor to grant legal aid in all appeal matters.

The second function of the Appeals & Reviews section is that of reviews in both the National & Supreme Court either through Order 16(3) reviews in the National Court or Section 155(2) (b) reviews in the Supreme Court.

The section works closely with other sections within the public solicitor's office such as Indictment, Civil General, Legal Aid, Family law & Magistrate & Juvenile courts sections and also all PSO Branch offices throughout the country.



APPEALS AND JUDICIAL REVIEW TEAM AND PRINCIPLE LEGAL OFFICER MR. NATHAN HUKULA (sitted)

## 2023 SECTION ACTIVITIES

### RESULTS & HIGHLIGHTS

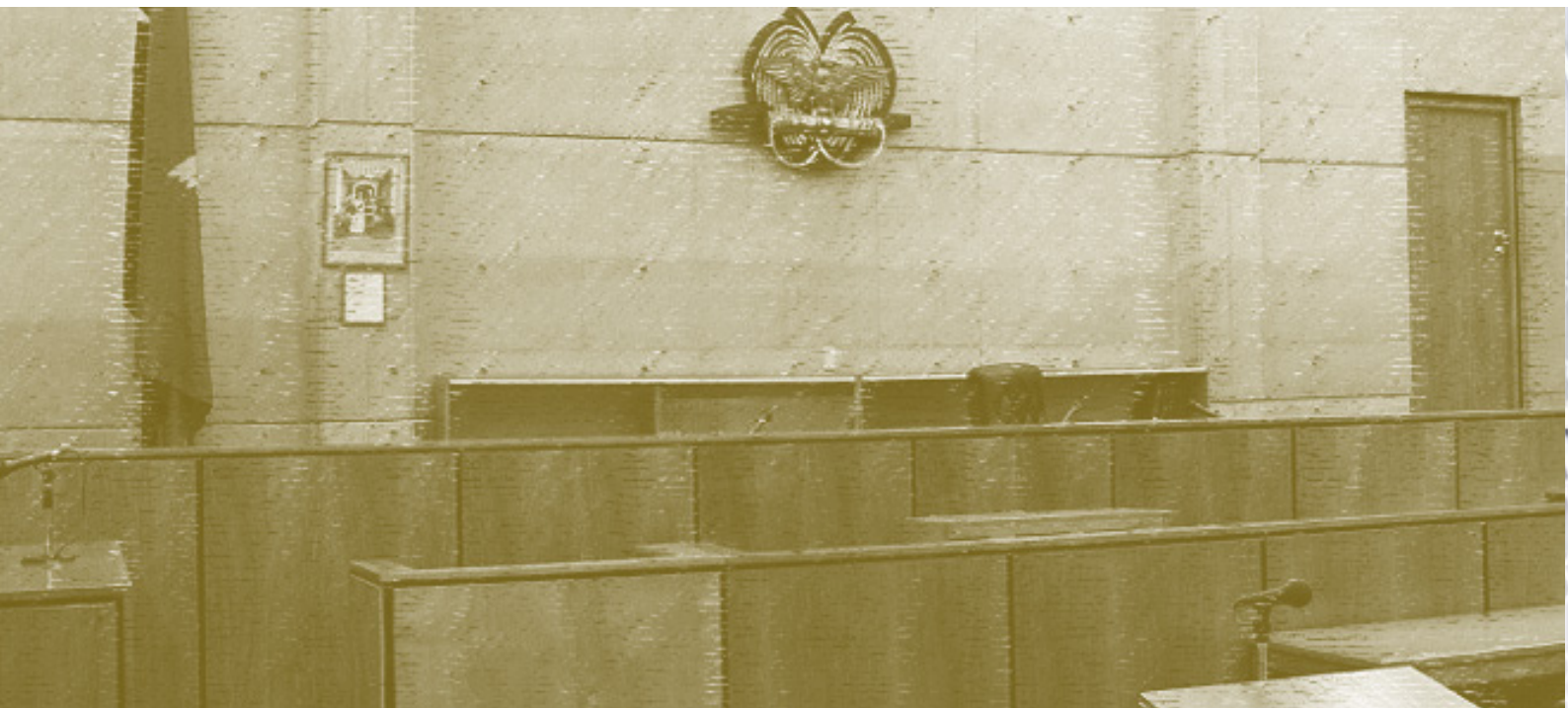
The Appeals & Review section continued to serve the National & Supreme courts both here in Waigani and throughout the country. The year 2023 saw new challenges in the administration of the supreme court matters especially in the criminal appeal track headed by His Honor Justice David Cannings. This year saw a new practice in the way of individual judge administrators in the provinces conducting directions hearings for supreme court criminal matters. Unfortunately, only the judge administrators in Lae, Kokopo were actively having directions hearings which culminated in supreme court sittings in Lae, Kokopo and an additional sitting in Alotau in the first half of 2023.

With this new approach the Public Solicitor has tasked our solicitors in Charge in our respective branches to take the lead in attending to the supreme court directions hearings in their respective centers. The section was also actively prosecuting matters in the Waigani supreme court both civil and criminal appeal matters. The section has successfully prosecuted a number matters in the supreme court, some cases worth mentioning are *Fayana v Waipo* [2023] PGSC 97; *Wereh v Wamuk* [2023] PGSC 136; *Haro v State* [2023] PGSC 151, SCREV 21 of 2022 *Nathaniel Sino v State* (unreported), SCRA 44 of 2018 *Alois Bailey v State* (unreported) and SCREV 35 of 2020 *Clement Tamapiau v State* (unreported Case)

Lawyers within the section have performed very well this year, as well doing appeals & Judicial review matters they have also been assisting civil general and Legal Aid section's in taking carriage of some matters from those sections. The number of matters under the carriage of each lawyer in the section is provide in the pie charts below. (refer to the charts attached)

### WAY FORWARD

The Appeals and Review section in 2024 will be looking at ensuring that matters both in the national and supreme court are dispose of in a timely manner. One way of achieving this is by proper supervision and consultation to ensure that matters are being progressed. The section will also be looking at increasing the number of Judicial Review matters brought to trial. As a section we will be looking to improve in our monthly and quarterly reporting and work more cohesively together as a team and we look forward to productive 2024 and will continue to maintain the public solicitors constitutional mandate in the National and Supreme Court.



# CIVIL GENERAL

The civil practice in the Public Solicitor is general. Civil General lawyers do not practice in a specific area of civil law. The civil litigation covers a wide range of area of law including contracts, debt recovery, employment, negligence, judicial review, probate and administration and land matters.

## PRIMARY ROLE

Civil General's primary role is to manage and progress civil cases here in the Headquarters at the Public Solicitors office in terms of civil litigation and advice.

## CIVIL GENERAL DIVISION

The Civil General Division provides legal representation to clients in a wide range of civil matters that are collateral or ancillary to the client's matter.

The types of collateral and ancillary civil issues these clients face is complex and almost limitless in number (adverse immigration consequences, loss of parental rights, loss of housing, seizure of property, loss of employment) and can arise even if the person is acquitted of the criminal charge or has been only arrested and never charged.

## CIVIL GENERAL LAWYERS

The Civil General Section is managed by a Principal Legal Officer (PLO-Civil) who is assisted by a Senior Legal Officer and two (2) Legal Officers. These lawyers are based in the Headquarter in Port Moresby. Other civil lawyers based in the provincial branches also assist them in civil matters.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 42

Civil General lawyers are expected to comply with the Public Solicitor's Administrative Order No. 42. This Order requires civil lawyers to: -

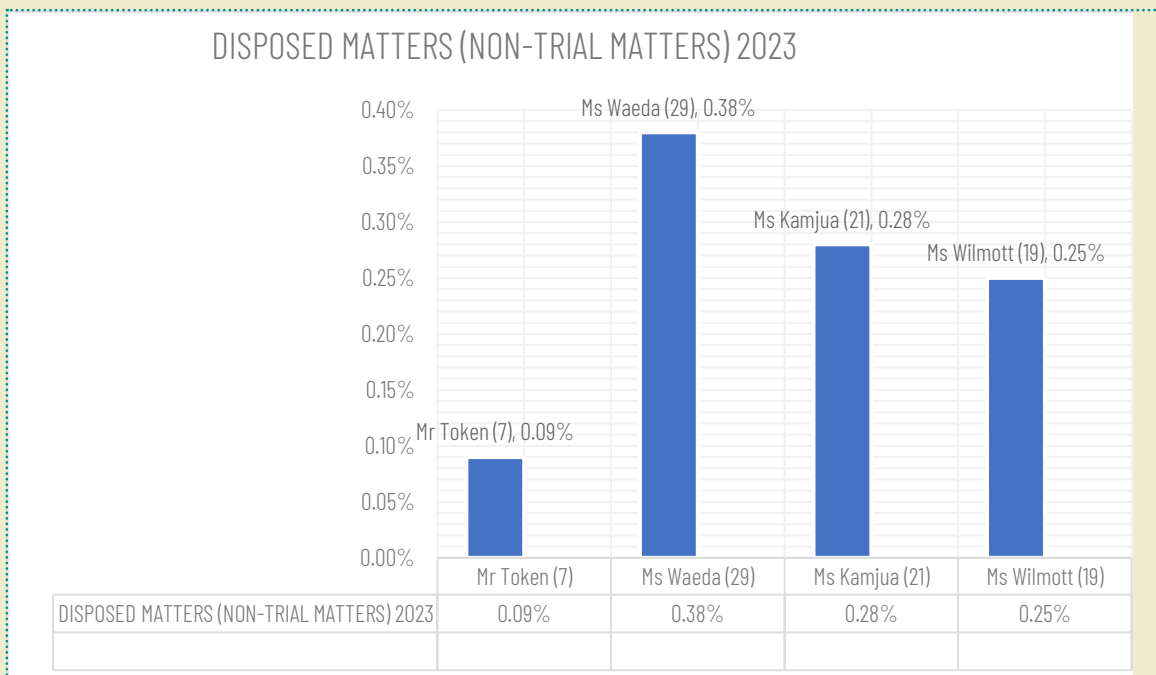
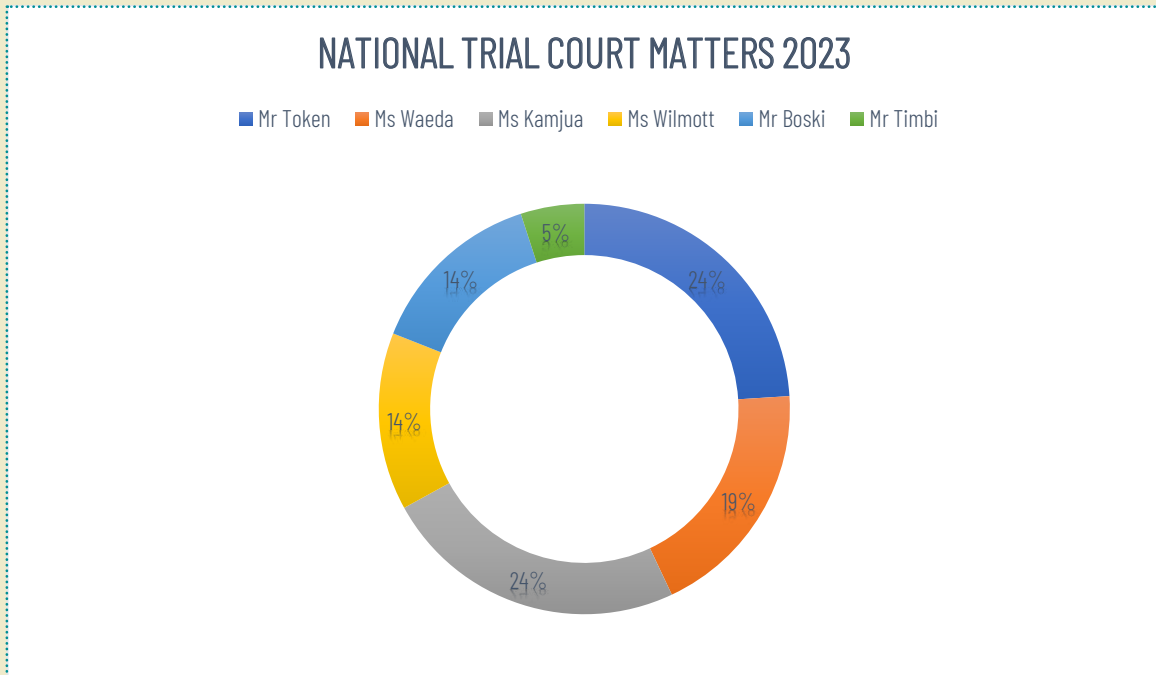
- Handle at least 50 active files
- Progress 50% of the active files to trial stage
- Expected to conduct 5 Trials
- Close 10 NC matters/year

## OPS CIVIL LAWYERS



## NO. OF TRIAL AND DISPOSED OFF MATTERS

The statistics of National Court trial matters conducted and matters disposed off by Civil General lawyers are captured in the graphs below.



The Civil General Lawyers performance in 2023 was quite exceptional. A good number of trials were conducted by this division at the National Court and the legal officers within this section were able to disposed off a good number of legal aid files in 2023.

## LEGAL AID DESK

The Legal Aid section was renamed from what had previously been the Legal Aid Desk section. Its predecessor was first established as the support unit within the office for what use to be Legal Aid Desk establishment in provinces such as Wewak, Manus, Kavieng, Bulolo, Maprik, Kainantu, Popondetta and Alotau. These Legal Aid Desks (referred to in short as LADs), were staffed by a paralegal clerk. Between 2010 and 2012, these LADs were upgraded to branch offices, and thus fully staffed with lawyers and support personnel.

Overtime, the Legal Aid Desk section was utilized as a section within the Civil Division, assisting mainly the Civil General section. In 2023, the Legal Aid Desk section was renamed Legal Aid Section, and tasked as the Secretariate to the Legal Aid Committee.

The Legal Aid Section is now charged with the responsibility of determining applications for legal aid from all across Papua New Guinea and providing recommendations to the Legal Aid Committee as to whether to grant or refuse legal aid. The reassignment of the Legal Aid Section was necessitated by a need to reduce the substantial backlog of legal aid application pending determination.

Thus, towards the end of December 2023, the lawyers within the Legal Aid Section and the Advisory section combined their personnel resources and completed over 100 legal aid application which had been pending. At the commencement of 2024, the pending legal aid application was reduced to less than 20 and for the first time in many years, the Legal Aid Committee is waiting for new LA applications to consider.

The new Legal Aid Section reports to the Deputy Public Solicitor – Administration who is also the Chairman of the Legal Aid Committee.



Former PLO LAD (2023) Making a cheque presentation of court awarded payment to a Legal Aid client.

# CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

## (PART A)

### PUBLIC SOLICITOR'S OFFICE 2023 CMS STATISTICS AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT.

#### Introduction

Basically, it highlights the activities undertaken as per its KRA defined under the Corporate Division of the Public Solicitors Corporate Plan (KRA 7-point no.4) inclusive of Activity 5 (CMS upgrade) .

It further provides the progressive status on task undertaken, issues & challenges that were encountered & notable recommendations that needs to be mentioned for consideration for improvement going forward.

#### 2023 Annual Work Plan- Major Activities

These are the main activity for the year;

- Legal Aid Application (on going activities)
- File Auditing Exercises (Continuous Reforms programs) among others/office re-location (File storage)
- CMS upgrade (user requirement)

The only new project undertaken was obtaining using requirement for CMS upgrade which will be rolled out in 2024, otherwise continuous operational activities as usual.

#### WORK AND PERFORMANCE- CASE STATISTICS

The results of all data collected are shown on tables & graphs attached on Part B of the report

#### The statistics are shown in the following manner. (Refer Attached-Part B)

ACTIVE CIVIL CASES -2023

CLOSED/COMPLETED CIVIL CASES -2023

ACTIVE CRIMES CASES-2023

CLOSED/COMPLETED CRIMES CASES -2023

SUMMARY OF CLOSED CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS

SUMMARY OF ACTIVE CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS

LEGAL AID APPLICATION SUMMARY FOR -2023

**Note: As mandatory Quarterly statistics were provided to Finance & Executive Section for their report respectively within the year for budget submission purposes**

#### LAWYERS MONTHLY REPORT (GENERAL CIRCUIT, MONTHLY FILE AUDITS AND GENERAL ADMIN REPORT)

#### Refer to Part C of the Report.

It outlined the number of Monthly Report (Circuit/Admin/File Audits) submitted by the Lawyers within HQ and from our OPS centres;

- **These reports include, Monthly Circuit Reports, General File Audit Reports, General Admin Reports and individual Case Reports with their file closure form on matters reported as closed/completed**
- Whilst most complied with the PSAO on report, few seem to fall behind and in doing so, submitted combine reports at the last minutes, very late report without proper explanation, no file closure form or individual Case Report on matters

reported (litigation & non-litigation) as closed for their respective report

- a) Few don't wish to report at all due to reasons known to themselves.
- a) All reports received were captured and updated on CMS database, in doing so PS numbers were provided to make sure that all information/data were captured.
- a) Apart from the actual General Court Circuit report, all lawyer was to submit 12 x monthly File Audit Report on activities they have carry out on a monthly basis per month where quiet a good of the officers did submitted (refer stats attached)
- a) Disciplinary action where taken for noncompliance of report by the disciplinary committee.

## REGIONAL OFFICES INSTRUCTION & LEGAL AID DESK

The performance of our OPS centres in brief;

### SOUTHERN

#### Kerema

Kerema Instruction Officer has been constantly in contact with HQ making sure that what was required of him was provided, in terms of weekly report and his local register.

- The last report sent was in August 2023
- No access to computers has been the setback
- ICT to confirm on the status of the IT needs and advice going forward for 2024

#### Popondetta

- We have not heard from this office for 1st to the 3rd until last quarter due to their computers being technically done.
- Until the legal secretary had to bring all their PCs for repair at HQ and have them repaired.
- She had managed to forward her 1st report last week.
- We hope to see some improvement in 2024

#### Alotau

- Instruction taking had improved unlike 2021&2022 because of the driver being elevated to the instruction officer position in terms of instruction taking.
- (Kainantu -Instruction Officer) who was attached to Alotau office was recalled back to HQ in the middle of the year however, resigned.
- Legal secretary position only is yet to be filled

### MOMASE

#### Wewak

- For 2023 we expect to receive a good number of LAs coming from that end as both officers (Instruction Officer & legal Secretary) were part of the paralegal training last year at Dixies, in October 2022.
- SIC was yet to report fully on his matters he took in carriage of for the last 6 months (see stats attached) as he just submitted only our reports for the year.

#### Lae

- A good number of Fresh LA applications were received, considered and dispatched
- The SIC & his lawyers have reported on matters that they have taken carriage off
- The lack of Monthly General & File Audit report submitted on time has been the setback for that office so that up to date information can be provided when CMS statistical report is provided/presented at the end of year as mandatory
- Although, combined report was being sent towards the end of the year like it doesn't capture the workload for the whole year as they weren't captured on CMS when it was generating its yearly report for the year as indicated

#### Vanimo

- For this year, there was no LA received compared to last year 2022
- It was noted that the instruction officer has been drafting District court matters without PS numbers and sending in her report.

## **Madang**

- Fresh Legal Aid Application were receipt as expected
- SIC was making sure that all his officers are doing what they supposed to do in term of accessing PS numbers and submitting their reports.
- Now that there is a change of SIC, we expect to see the same for 2024

All in all, the regional centres had improved greatly apart from few centres as a result of constant reminders/dialogue through the region CMS officers concern apart from other three regions.

## **HIGHLANDS Regions**

### **Mendi**

- The officer concern had performed to our expectation as expected in sending her weekly & other reports that was required.
- The only legal officer in Joshua John was moved to Lae, what will be the outcome for Mendi is something for PS to think about as far as the District Court is concern for 2024

### **Kundiawa**

- We have no issue with this office as the SIC and his officers where up to date with their reports in making sure that both instruction desk & Legal secretarial duties were taken care of.
- The only setback is in submitting the lawyers monthly report on time.

### **Wabag**

- We have received Local Registers from the instruction officer & Monthly Reports from the SIC. (see stats attached - Part B)
- 2022 Election related issue has had an impact on the office like Mendi office, otherwise the Office has managed to do what it can in making sure that our office has progressed thus far for the year.
- The good SIC had managed to submitted all his monthly Case Reports on time although he had some challenges.

### **Hagen**

- The SLO (Kewa) had taken on board all the Active Civil matters but yet to report on the progression of those matter for the last three months, after the former SIC left the office.
- Otherwise, we have no issue with instruction taking

### **Goroka**

- The Monthly report was received from two officers whilst one yet to report on matters she was taking carriage of
- The Instruction officer has complied with his task in submitted his report by way of local registers.

### **Jiwaka**

- The SIC is yet to report on matters he has in carriage of for the last 12 months. So far, no report, of any sort was sighted. Also, no report was submitted for 2023
- Whilst his sub ordinate was reporting, he hasn't to date as yet.

## **New Guinea Islands**

### **Kokopo**

- The reports from the lawyers on the ground were up to date for the last 12 months
- The latest being September batch

### **Buka**

- - Monthly Circuit & General reports from both Buka & Sub-Arawa officers were received from the two lawyers.
- - Apart from that instruction taking has been an hinderance for 2023 but we hope to see some changes in this area when Mr Kugunia who is still attached here at HQ is sent over.

### **Kavieng**

- The instruction officer has been sending his report and the last being September batch

**Kimbe**

- - There was only one batch received for the month of January to August in August, otherwise, nothing was sent for the last two months.
- - This office needs to be visited in 2024 to find out what their records setup
- - This office was yet to report on any activities undertaken for the year as indicated

**Manus**

- Nothing was received for the last 1st & 2nd Qtr. of 2023 in terms of instruction taking until for the last qtr.
- SIC had to step in to update CMS on its progression through his monthly report & Local Registers for all matters attended at the District court among Ors.

**Disposal of Closed Files.**

- There was no disposal of Closed Case files for the last 4 years from the last exercise with Phil Smith in 2019
- But this year in October we have started the first process of identifying, listing & sorting out of the above from our records area upon the directive from DPS-Admin.
- The same was communicated to our branch offices as well through the respective regional CMS officers
- Two urgent file audits were done for two notable centres that needs urgent attention, Lae & Madang office
- The next task (on going) is to forward the identified Closed Case files that reached the maturity period (above 6yrs) for disposal using the disposal schedule
- This list will be sanction by the PS & DPS-Admin before this exercise is carryout
- The reservation will be made for the infant settlement relates case files & Civil Case that comes with claim again state where payment was made or other matters where payment is involves from our client trust account that needs to be kept for more than the said period.
- The same will be applied for all the other centres as well when we are done with HQ.

**PSO -Library**

- After the refurbishment at 9th Floor at the beginning of the year, all the library books such as Law Reports, text books and other reference material those that have their call numbers were brought over from the old office (garden city) were shelved right away.
- The second wing for the library was set up for the secondary materials, like recent titles/publication and reference book such as Oxford Dictionaries and reading area created.
- By the end of 1st or 2nd Qtr. of 2024 the cataloguing of those new Titles will be completed and placed on the shelves once new shelves are put up.

**CMS Upgrade (ICT)**

- As ICT has laid the foundation in both the Hardware, software and the network component of it as reported CMS task for 2023 & 1st Qtr. of 2024 was to have all the requirement/specification in terms of forms ready for the second phase for the development which we have started.
- CMS will work alongside with ICT in making sure that this project is carryout as indicated so that this system will be user friendly & provide reliable information that is required on a timely basis.

**IECMS**

- a) Based on the policy issued by NJSS for all fresh matters for all the civil matters to be filed through the web-based filing system in 2020 because of Covid period, CMS section has done its best in making sure that we complied with that.
- b) In do so all CMS regional CMS officers, help desk officer and the filing clerks were trained / inducted on how to go about this system. Only the new officers are yet to.
- c) A good number of our Civil lawyers have access to IECMS account and utilizing it. The other new legal officer and paralegal officers will be encouraged use/utilized them as well going forward.
- d) The two Legal Secretaries too have access to the same and assisting as well. Those don't have access are being assisted.

### CMS –Section

- 1.CMS Manager-F.Kuna
- 2.Teamleader-CMS (Mr. F.Waeda)
- 3.Regional CMS officer -NGI (Natalie Tamate)
- 4.Regional CMS officer-Momase- (Nemika Puek)
- 5.Regional CMS officer -Southern (Nao Airi)
- 6.Regional CMS officer -Highlands (Jamilah Happen)
- 7.Instruction Officer (Ian Kopi)
- 8.Helpdesk Officer (Fafasi Fomin)
- 9.Filing & Search Officer (Dinnah Wessah)

### HQ Attached Officers

10. Paralegal officer -Maprik (Kili Kari kava)
11. Paralegal Officer-Daru (Wycliff Kuadumo)
- 12.Paralegal officer -Tabubil (Allan Gabara)
- 13.struction Officer -Buka
- 14.Instruction Office- Tari/Hela
- 15.Instruction Officer -Kainantu (Shane Barubia)(resigned)

## **CMS STAFF**

The section is comprised of the following officers as shown by the table indicated;

**HQ staff = 9**

**Attached Officers = 6 with a total of 15**

It is upon PS discretion to send them to their designated branch of attachement, otherwise, Regional Officers are still attached to the HQ CMS office assisting in filing, file search, service, archiving, instruction taking & assisting the help desk.

## **TRAINING OF CMS OFFICERS**

There hasn't been any training for the year for my officers but only in housing training on the usage of CMS databse & instruction taking & revise forms on a quarterly basis, otherwise, one or two officers have attended to workhouses on family PNG related matters.

## **CASE FILE AUDITING**

### **(Active Case Files)**

An ongoing exercise carried out at HQ for proper file management

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) We have not fully complied with PSAO 42 .5-6 & 42 but with the new arrangement under the chairmanship of the DPS-Admin, we hope to see some improve on this area.
- b) The Crimes lawyers have to be encouraged to fill out an LA form whilst taking in new instruction and have them passed on to the instruction officer for PS numbers at the first instance. This applies to both HQ and centres
- c) Lawyers to obtain PS numbers through their instruction officers via the regional CMS officers before they submit their reports
- d) Constant reminders have to be made on reporting to the PSO centres so that they don't get carried away and avoid sending combined reports at the end of the year making it cumbersome for the regional CMS officer to update them on CMS dB
- e) The SIC to vet on all LA before they are sent to HQ for consideration making sure that all requirement is met so that unnecessary document is not sent or wastage of paper and ink and TNT services as well
- f) File Audit for each centre have to be made in making sure that they are doing the right thing on ground

## **Conclusion**

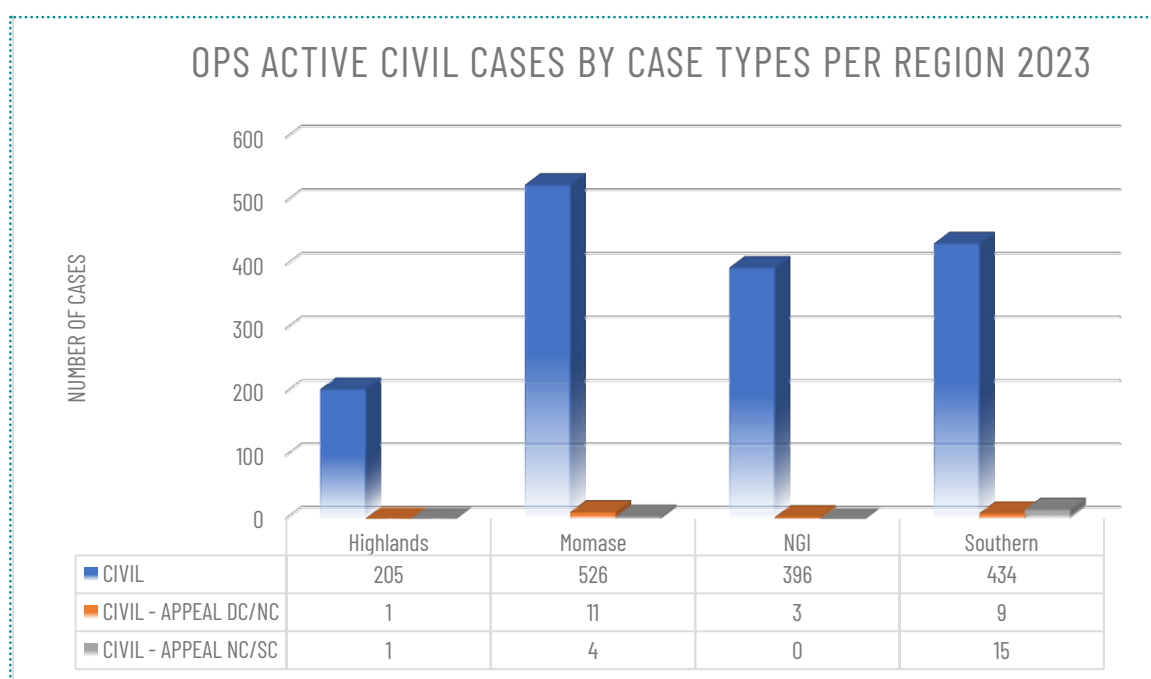
- a) The last 12 months was full of activities with challenges as we were part of an organisation that provide legal services to the little people who cannot afford legal service from private firms and in doing so CMS had done its part in facilitating that in terms of Case management & records keeping and we will continue to maintained that for 2024.
- b) We envision 2024 to be a year of development & progression as far as this section is concern.

## PART B - OPS CIVIL & CRIMES CASE STATISTICS -2023

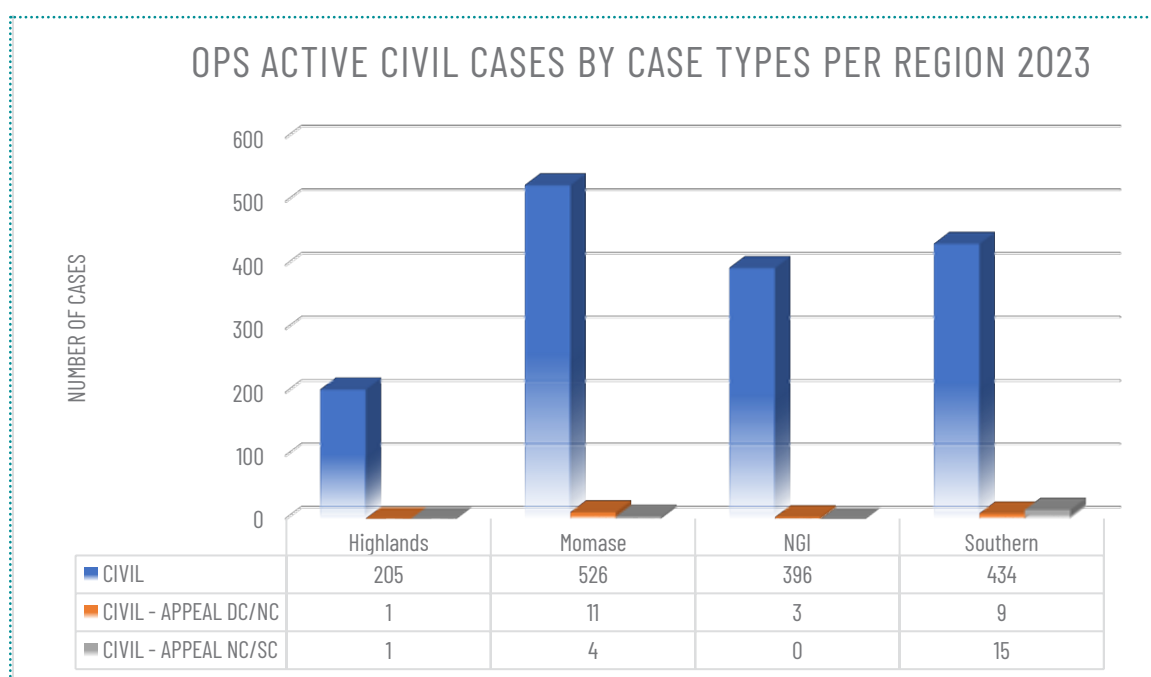
The following as indicated in graph forms;

- ACTIVE CIVIL CASES -2023
- CLOSED/COMPLETED CIVIL CASES -2023
- ACTIVE CRIMES CASES-2023
- CLOSED/COMPLETED CRIMES CASES -2023
- SUMMARY OF CLOSED CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS
- SUMMARY OF ACTIVE CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS
- LEGAL AID APPLICATION SUMMARY FOR -2023

### 1. ACTIVE CIVIL CASES PER REGIONS -2023

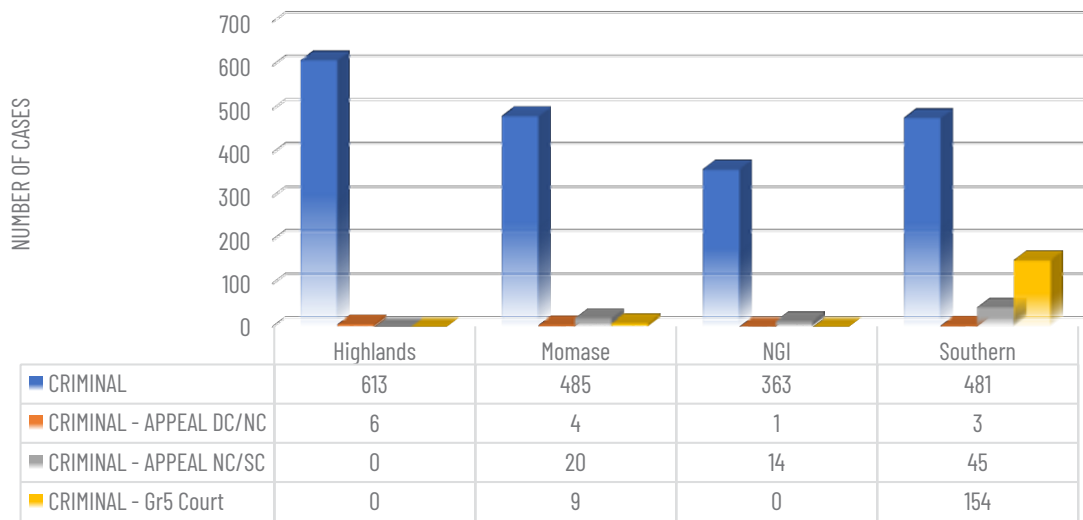


### 2. CLOSED/COMPLETED CIVIL CASES -2023



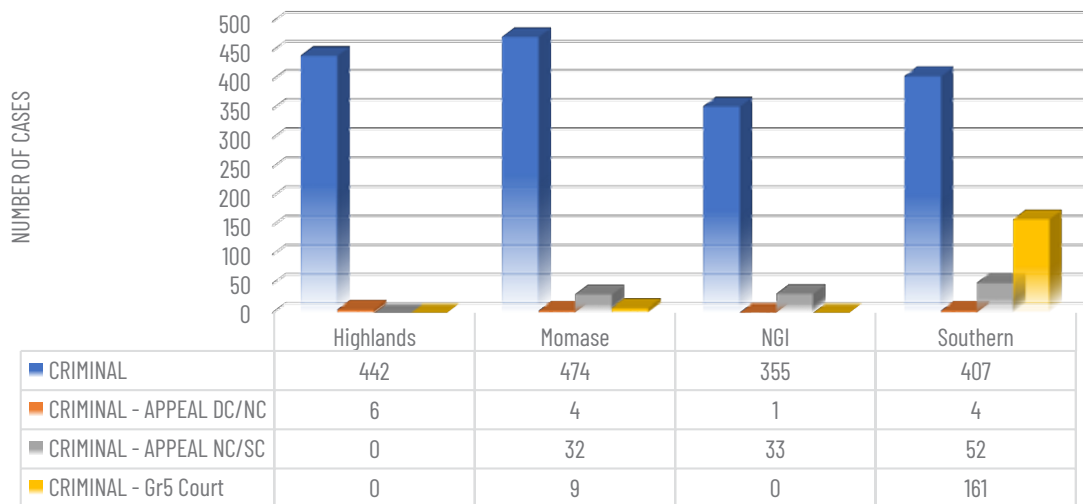
3. ACTIVE CRIME CASES PER REGIONS -2023

### OPS ACTIVE CRIMINAL CASES BY CASE TYPES PER REGION 2023

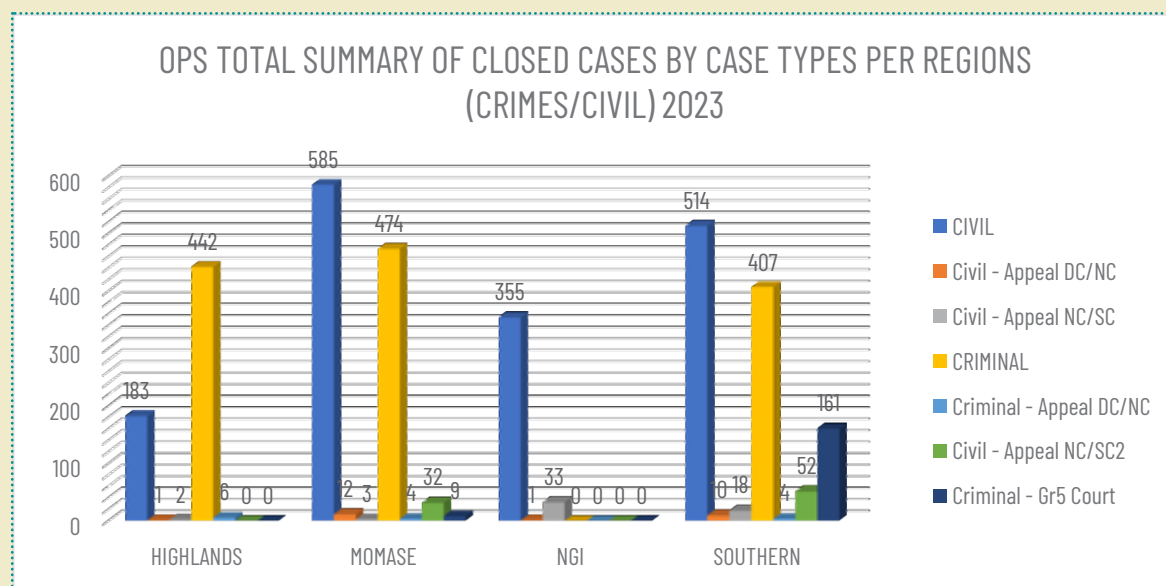


4. CLOSED/COMPLETED CRIMINAL CASES -2023

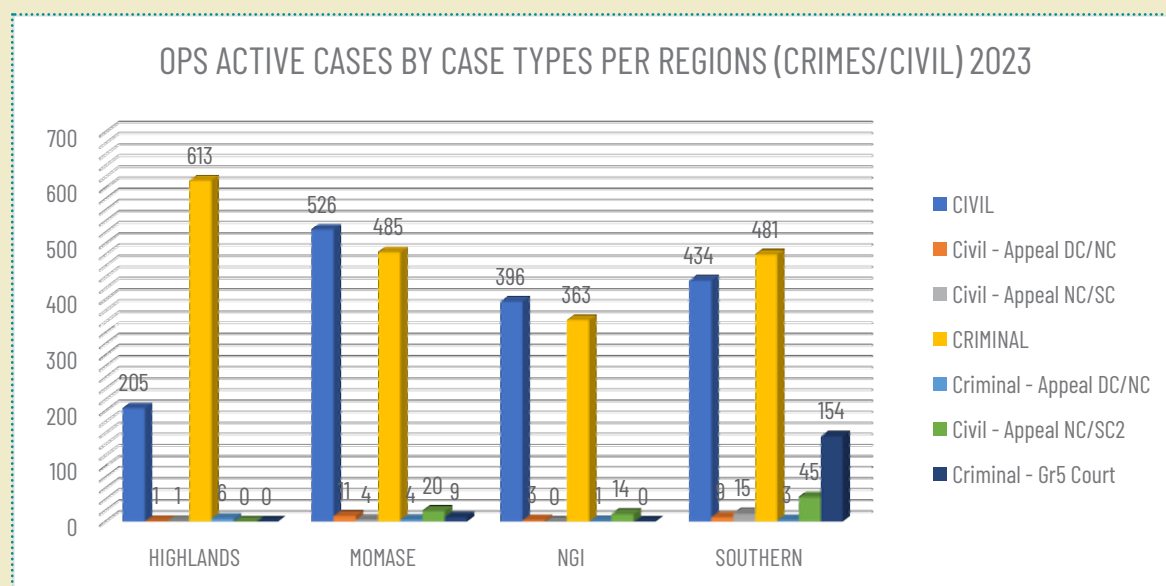
### OPS TOTAL NUMBER OF CLOSED CRIMINAL CASES BY CASE TYPES PER REGION 2023



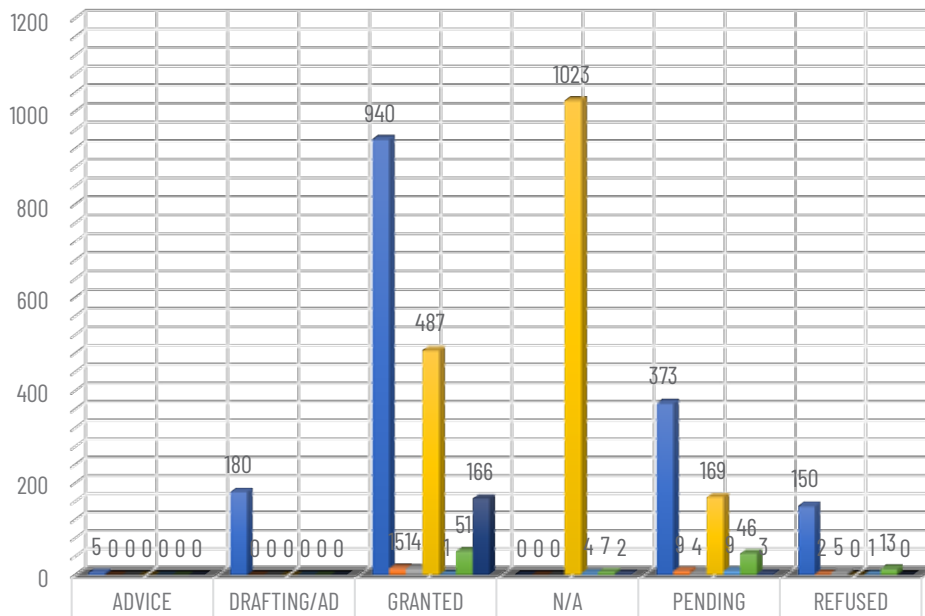
5. SUMMARY OF CLOSED CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS 2023



6. CSUMMARY OF ACTIVE CASES FOR BOTH CIVIL & CRIMES MATTERS -2023



### OPS LEGAL AID SUMMARY BY CASE TYPES (CRIMES & CIVIL) 2023



Case Type	ADVICE	DRAFTING/ADVICE	GRANTED	N/A	PENDING	REFUSED
CIVIL	5	180	940	0	373	150
Civil - Appeal DC/NC	0	0	15	0	9	2
Civil - Appeal NC/SC	0	0	14	0	4	5
CRIMINAL	0	0	487	1023	169	0
Criminal - Appeal DC/NC	0	0	1	4	9	1
Civil - Appeal NC/SC2	0	0	51	7	46	13
Criminal - Gr5 Court	0	0	166	2	3	0



CMS Manager Mr Kuna (sitted) and his team.

# FINANCE

## INTRODUCTION

The Finance section is an integral part of the organisation that plays a pivotal role in complementing the core function of the Public Solicitor by prudence financial management in discharging the scarce resources in meeting the mandated duties.

The section operates within the corporate division as a section under the heading of Finance Section in administering both Recurrent and Development Budget funding secured from Go PNG.

It is referred to as the nerve centre of the OPS that distribute financial resources to harmonise for effective management on operational matters so that it does function at the same pace to complement different tasks performed across the horizontal axis.

### Primary Role.

The main function of the section is to complement the operation of the Public Solicitor's office in discharging its constitutional Duties in discharging Legal Aid as a support service in complementing the constitutional obligation.

## ADMINISTRATION

The National Budgetary Appropriation comes in two forms;

- i) Recurrent Budget Appropriation
- ii) Development Budget Appropriations- (PIP) Priority.

## RECURRENT BUDGET

The Recurrent Budget forms the largest share of the pie. The Recurrent Budget has two components and they are; Personal Emoluments and Goods & Services.

There was an increase by K4million to the 2023 budget appropriations compared to last years. The reason for the increase is justified from;

- Increase in number of fleets which is aligned with OPS priority activity no.8 of the 2022 annual plan which was carried forward to 2023; *Purchase and replacement of the existing vehicle fleets.*
- Increase In budget for Personnel Emoluments to include *NEC Decision on improved terms and conditions for state lawyers including lawyers from the Public Solicitor's Office.*
- Increase in budget for maintenance and renovation of institutional houses units for staff and lawyers which is also aligned to the planned activity no.3 of the 2022 annual plan; *Institutional housing and office construction;*

## COMPARISON TABLE: RECURRENT BUDGET APROPRIATIONS

EXPENSE ITEM	2023	2022	VARIANCE
	APPROPRIATIONS	APPROPRIATIONS	(Increase/Decrease)
Salaries & Allowances	14,141,160	9,843,003	4,298,157
Wages	100,000	92,000	8,000
Overtime	50,000	50,000	-
Leave fares	540,000	500,000	40,000
Retirement Benefits/Pensions/Gratuities	320,000	694,000	-374,000
Domestic Travel & Sustenance	1,106,128	1,336,000	-229,872
Office Materials & Supplies	172,283	142,000	20,283
Operational Materials & Supplies	580,137	163,000	417,137
Transport & Fuel	130,443	71,000	59,443
Other Operational Expenses	886,732	622,000	267,732
Training	14,064	40,000	-25,936
Rentals of Property	394,142	1,121,000	-726,858
Routine Maintenance	101,963	155,000	-53,037
Membership Fees, Subscriptions & Contributions	207,443	150,000	57,443
Office Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	256,667	50,000	206,667
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,001,162</b>	<b>14,998,000</b>	<b>4,003,162</b>

## EXPENDITURE REPORT: RECURRENT BUDGET

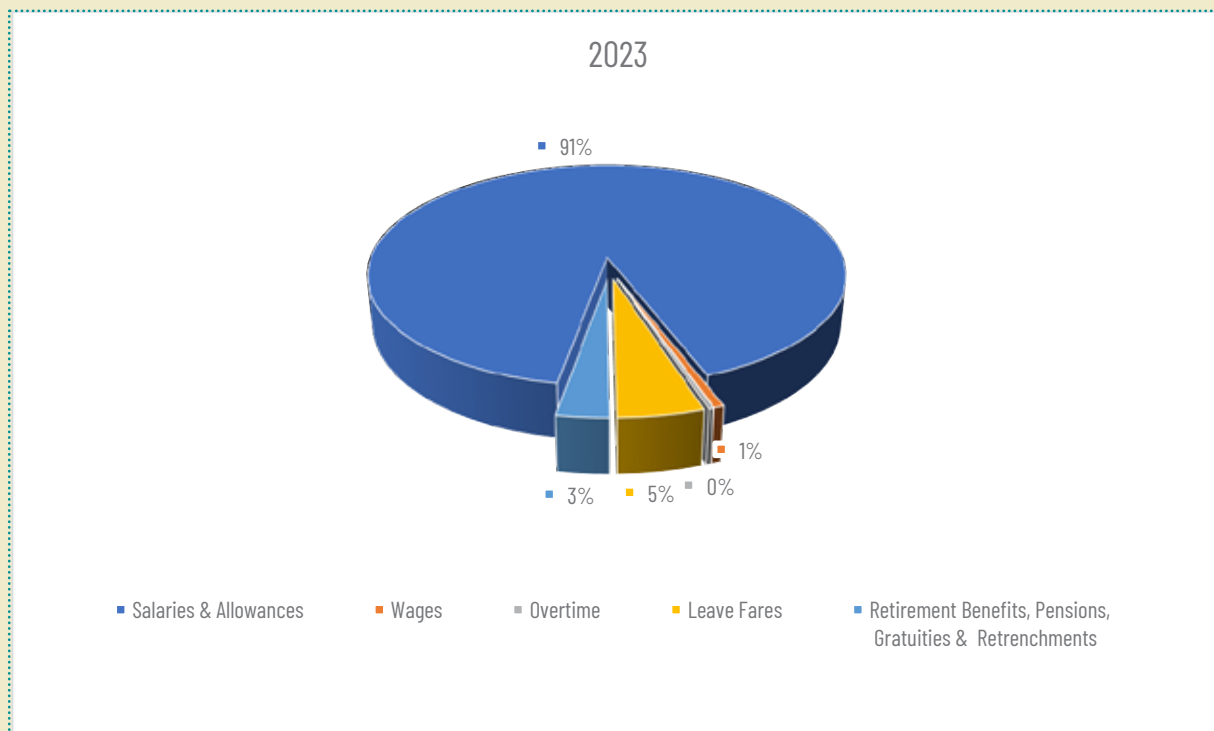
The section's objective is to secure funding from Treasury, plan, manage, direct and distribute scarce resources so that it harmonises the operation at equilibrium hence the fair distribution of quantity of resources to all divisions and sections within the office.

Resource allocation and prisionization of expenditure have been the mammoth task. This has been a difficult situation repeatedly for the office where there is only one source of income, which is the grant from the government of PNG through National Budgetary Appropriation.

It is crucial to maintain a financial expenditure report. Aside from giving an actual record of all OPS expenses, it also shows the areas where the office is spending the most. Knowing this information is vital in cutting down.

Below is the PE and G & S financial expenditure report for 2023 depicted through pie graphs.

### Personnel Emoluments

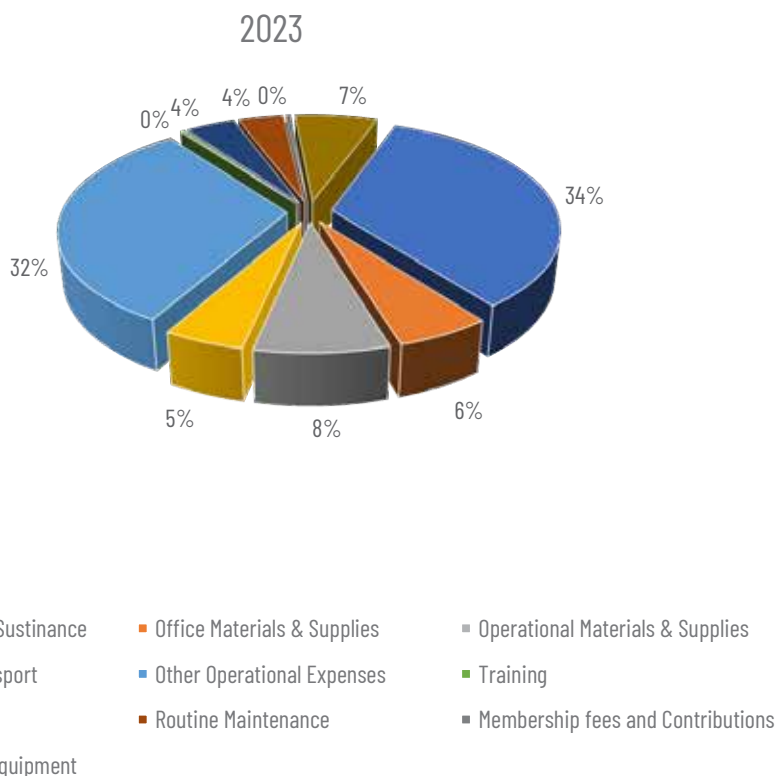


### INDICATORS;

The Personal Emolument (PE) are funds that directly affect officers and critical management of this fund demands a lot of strict control mechanism to be employed so that every officer's welfare is taken care off.

The Pie graph shows that the office has so far spent 99% of its 2023 PE budget on salaries and allowances, leave fares for its employees and gratuities for contract officers and settling in allowances for new appointments. This expense will further increase due to push factors such as inflation etc.

**Personnel Emoluments**



**Indicators;**

The Pie graph shows that 66% of the G & S budget was spent on sending lawyers out to the provinces for court circuits and maintenance and renovation of units at the Kennedy Estate, Kundiawa and Buka SIC houses and purchase of new vehicle for Wabag office.

At the end of the year, there was a request for transfer of K200,000 within the GS allocations for purposes of maintaining smooth operations of the office as there was a massive cut in the supplementary budget from the 2021 National Budget however, there was no feedback from the Treasury Department.

**DEVELOPMENT BUDGET**

There was no funding appropriated for the Housing Infrastructure and Case Management Project despite the

2023 annual budget submissions.

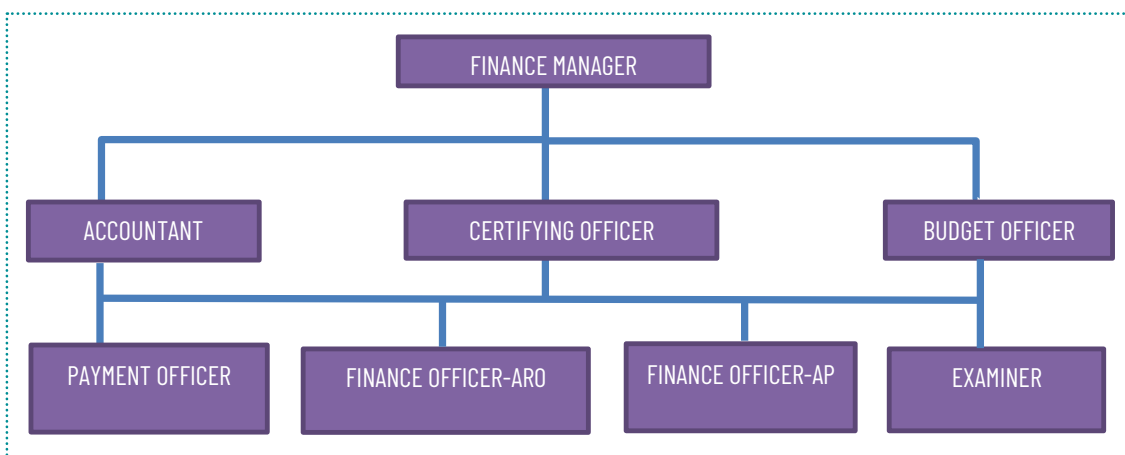
**FINANCE SECTION REPORTING STRUCTURE**

The Section is complete, all positions occupied to effectively manage the segregation of duties in the accounting process to avoid same person performing more than one role at different interval.

This can be avoided by placing different human creature for different functions of the whole accounting process to avoid, conflict of interest, arm length transaction and conspiracy in discharging the accounting function.

Finance Section staff structure on the organisational structure is placed on a horizontal axis. Therefore, communication channel either downward or upward has been a major contributing factor in assigning and delegating tasks to junior officers.

**FINANCE SECTION REPORTING STRUCTURE**



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Budget

- The section is not administering activities but facilitating the process for effective and efficient discharging of duties at the operational level by making funds available as per request. This year the section was not able to carry forward any expenses incurred in 2023 brought forward to 2024's. Therefore, prudent fund management was employed from the beginning of 2023. We have a very cooperative staff in the team and work flow runs very smoothly at all times;
- Successful Implementation of the Section 30 of the PS Act 2021 in relation to opening of a Trust account under the Lawyers Act. The account was opened with BSP Bank.
- Successful Implementation of the Section 31 of the PS Act 2021 in relation to establishment of a General Account with BSP bank;

### TRUST ACCOUNT

Reporting period ended 28th February, 2024 is the date when the Auditor Sinton

Spence will be conducting 2023 annual audit for the New Trust Account. The Office will be anticipating issuance of an UNQUALIFIED audit report and issuance of an Unrestricted Practising Certificate for the Public Solicitor to practice in court.

### WAY FORWARD

The section does have its challenges which are contributed by both internal and external forces.

Coordination of officers in the section is pretty hectic and the decision to move to our new location or new office at Sir Buri Kidu Haus has assisted a lot. Finance Section can easily be managed and control thus, the effective and fast workflow. Coordinate, direct, control, planning and management of man power is no longer an issue.

The Section however, requires effective security access due to confident financial records kept. High confidentiality eliminates the chance of misuse of data and sensitive information. Confidentiality keeps Public Solicitor's Office reputation intact. prioritising the protection of financial data will assist Stakeholders and other suppliers make sound decisions on whether to provide business and services to OPS or not.



FINAL MEETING BETWEEN BSP STAFF AND OPS STAFF FOR THE OPENING OF THE NEW PS TRUST ACCOUNT AND GENERAL ACCOUNT.

# INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights the progress of the project with recent details of activities undertaken to progress the project, its progressive status, issues and challenges encountered, way forward, summary and recommendations.

### Background

This project was initiated in 2019 by way of a Project Formulation Document submitted for 2020 funding through the PIP arrangement. The project is categorized into three categories and are as follows;

- a) a) ICT Infrastructure Refreshing – Head Office
- b) b) Provincial Connectivity – Linking 20 Provincial Office to Head Office
- c) c) CMS Database Design and Development. – Case Management Electronic Database

An appropriation of K1million was appropriated for 2020, however only K500,000.00 was released and utilized for the ICT Infrastructure Refreshing for our Head Office. There was no funding allocated in 2021 for project continuity and implementation.

In 2021 a revised PFD was submitted with the inclusion of Provincial Connectivity and CMS Database Design and Development for 2022. This increased the total funding of the entire project to K6million as detailed below.

- i) I. ICT Infrastructure Refreshing – Head Office (Server replacement / Networks) – K1.5
- ii) mil
- iii) II. Provincial Connectivity – Linking 19 Provincial Office to Head Office – K1mil
- iv) III. CMS Database Design and Development. – (Electronic Database) – K3.5mil

There was no funding allocated for 2022 project implementation for all law and justice sector agencies including Public Solicitors Office.

This report outlines and reports on the K1.5 million appropriated for the ICT Infrastructure Refreshing at the Head Office. The ICT Infrastructure Refreshing included the following;

- Purchases of a new Dell PowerEdge Blade Server including storage and back-up equipment at the cost of K494,000.00
- Purchases of Server Software Licences, application software licenses (Microsoft

Office 2021), Sophos Anti-virus Software and firewall and security licenses for a total cost of K494,120.00

- Purchases of Networking hardware and devices including server racks, network core switches, networking cables, physical firewall devices, Server UPS and cable cabinets or racks for all offices within the head office. A total of K495,990.00 was expended.

### 1.3. Milestone and Deliverables

	Project Activities	Milestone / Deliverable Name	Target Delivery Date	Actual Delivery date	Status	Comments
1	ICT INFRASTRUCTURE REFRESH Head Office - (SBKH)	Purchase of Office New Server	August 2020	27 <sup>th</sup> Nov 20	ACHIEVED	Awaiting procurement of Software and Networking components before fully installation and commissioning
		Purchase of Server Application Software	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 22	ACHIEVED	Server Software Applications procured, awaiting supplier to supply items for installation
		Purchase of Networking Devices / Accessories	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	10 <sup>th</sup> Dec 22	ACHIEVED	Items procured, supplier to supply items for installation
		Full installation / commissioning of Head Office Server	10 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2022	31 <sup>st</sup> June 22	ACHIEVED	Delivery of Software/ Networking component for full installation. Full installation and commission of new server completed.
2	PROVINCIAL CONNECTIVITY Linking 19 Provincial Office to Head Office	Full installation of Network Links (21) locations (Provincial Connectivity)	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2023	18 <sup>th</sup> Dec 23	Work-In-Progress	Commenced setup of networking devices for 10 provincial sites (branch offices). Full implementation of this activity entirely depends on 2023 PDF submission for 2024 funding allocation.
3	DATABASE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT	Development, Design of CMS Database Phase 1 – Collection of User requirements	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2023	18 <sup>th</sup> Dec 23	PENDING	Conduct awareness, Collection of Database specifications from end-users (branch offices, sections and divisions during installation of network links for provincial connectivity.

## 1.4. Project Status

Under this project the Infrastructure Upgrade or Refresh is only activity progressed so far. The image below main server for the Head Office purchased at the cost of K494,890.00 in 2020. A total of K990,110.00 was committed to purchase the other component of the Head Office Infrastructure upgrade that is the hardware and software component this year (2022).



Few items that have also been delivered and are currently being installed at our new office at Sir Buri Kidu Haus, Waigani, includes;

- 3x 42RU cabinet for Server, UPS, PABX, 5 floor Cabling.
- 5x network switches for 5 offices

## 1.5. INSTALLATION OF HEAD OFFICE INFRASTRUCTURE

The head office infrastructure phase is completed with installation of our new server, back-up facility, UPS, networking devices, software and firewalls. All offices, (7th floor - 11th floor) are all connected to our main server at level 9.

Images of our new server room with all necessary equipment required for delivery of ICT services,



**Physical Server** – Hardware that contains electronic mechanism to process, manipulate, store, secure and share data. It requires software categorized as operating system such as Windows Server 2019, 2021 and other software applications such as Microsoft Exchange 2019/2021, Veeam Back-up, Sophos Endpoint Security and other application software that forms a fully functional server.

**Software/Licenses** – There are two categories defined in or as Software. The first category is known as the Operating System of which Windows Server 2019/2021 falls under while Microsoft Exchange Server, Antivirus Software, Back-up Software and other software falls under the Application Software category. These two categories of software enables the entire server to function giving effect to its services such as file server, email server, data storage and backup. It also and allows and provides services such as networking, access to internet and others for end users in workplace, schools and homes. However, this two software requires licenses to operate.

**Networking Component** – This are physical hardware that are mainly used for (routing) sending, receiving and processing data. These components are also known as communication devices such as routers, switches, patch panels and network cables that make the networking aspect of ICT business.

They provide link, access and security to the main servers, storage and shared resources in a networking environment. Public Solicitors Office has finalized its ICT Infrastructure Upgrade for its Head Office and have the following configured, setup, installed and commissioned for production.

### 1.5.1 Physical Server

Dell Power Edge Blade Server consist of more than 30TB of hard disk space, has faster processing speed and is suitable for our organisation's growth and expansion. It also has the capabilities to expand storage capacity, data backup and redundancy.

It houses the following organisational servers;

- a) File Server – Files and documents
- b) Exchange Server – Emails and mailbox
- c) Application Server – Database
- d) Web Server – Websites, Internet access
- e) Back-up Server – Data Back-up
- f) Management Server – ICT Services Management

### 1.5.2 Software / Licenses

The following software were acquired and installed, setup and configured for our six (6) servers for our office;

- a) Operating System Software
  - i) VM Ware Essentials 8.0 - Non-Expired License
  - ii) Windows Server 2021 - 8 Licenses with extra 5 CAL
- b) Application Software
  - i) Microsoft Office 2021 Professional - 150 User Licenses
  - ii) Sophos End-Point Security - 150 User Licenses (3yrs subscription)
  - iii) Sophos XG300 Series Firewall - 3yrs subscription
  - iv) SD-WAN RED - 3yrs subscription
  - v) Sophos Cloud Central Management - 3yrs subscription

### 1.5.3 Network Components

- a) Network Access & Security Devices
  - i) Dell Core Network Switches
  - ii) Dell High-Speed switches
  - iii) Sophos XGS-3000 Firewall/Router
  - iv) Sophos SDWAN-RED switches
- b) Other Network Accessories and Devices
  - i) Network Cabling (Voice/Data)
  - ii) Wall Mount Racks – 6RU Cabinets (5)
  - iii) Server Mount Racks – 48RU Cabinets (3)
  - iv) 10KVA UPS – Power Backup (2)



## 1.6. Work-In-Progress

In reference to activities No. 2 and 3 for Milestone and Deliverables, ICT intends to perform the initial stage of Database Development process by collecting user requirements from users at the provincial branch offices during the course of establishing network connectivity for provincial connectivity for the first 10 branch offices.

The user requirement phase is the first, vital and crucial phase in the Case Management System Database Development life cycle. This is where information relating to the features, type and specification of the database are gathered. Data sampling are collected to determine the type of application required to develop the Case Management System Electronic Database to meet the needs and requirements of Public Solicitors Office and its clients.

Provincial Connectivity is scheduled for 2024, however we were fortunate to find savings within our development funding for the Networking and was able to procure 10 network devices for 10 provinces for temporary connectivity while project funding becomes available in 2024 for provincial connectivity and database development.

The selected 10 provinces are as follows;

- • Lae Office
- • Madang Office
- • Goroka Office
- • Mt. Hagen Office
- • Kokopo Office

- • Kundiawa Office
- • Popondetta Office
- • Alotau Office
- • Manus Office
- • Kimbe Office

We were not able to physically link or connect these 10 offices in 2023 to our network due to these two main factors;

- a) No budget allocated under PIP program for this activity however I did sought funding assistance from recurrent and was advised that there is no funding available under the appropriate code to facilitate this activity.
- b) Supplier providing the main link (Telikom PNG) would not proceed any further in assisting in establishing the Wide Area Network link for the reason that we did not have funds to make payment for their Technical Team to install all necessary services to our proposed provincial offices.

We have scheduled all installation of Telikom services together with connection of provincial offices under the "provincial connectivity" activity to 2024 when funding under PIP becomes available.

In house arrangement for collection of user requirements for CMS Database Development have been discussed and progressed with relevant section especially Case Management Section and they are well into collation of necessary documentation required for software development of CMS database.

Further discussion will be made during our leaders and managers annual conference in December 2023.

## BUDGET AND COSTS

This section clearly indicates the total break-up of the total appropriation of the project funding that is spread throughout the last two years of expenditure.

Expenditure	2020 & 2022				Total cost
	Budget Line	Amount	Budget Line	Amount (Balance)	
<b>Infrastructure<sup>1</sup> (K)</b>	<b>K1.5 m</b>		<b>K1.5</b>		<b>K1.5m</b>
1. Physical Server	K500,000.00	K494,890.00		K5,100.00	<b>K1,485,000.00</b>
2. Software/Licenses component	K500,000.00	K497,090.00		K2,910.00	
3. Networking Component	K500,000.00	K493,020.00		K6,980.00	

## 2. ISSUES & CHALLENGES

### 2.1. DELIVERY OF PROJECT COMPONENTS

The delivery of project items has been challenging for us due to the fact that stakeholders assisting in providing essential information relating to their services have not been providing information on time as required, however we are determined to see the provincial connectivity established before the end of 2024.

### 2.2. CONTINUED FUNDING SUPPORT

The continuity of this project is reliant and dependant heavily on the submitted Project Formulation Document 2024 for the remaining component of the entire project.

The success of this project is promising and clearly indicates that leadership, collaborative effort and commitment is vital in-service delivery especially when confronted with the challenges in organisational change, transition and transformation.

## 3. SUMMARY

The project has thus far progressed well in terms of procurement of goods and services required to enable the project to progress.

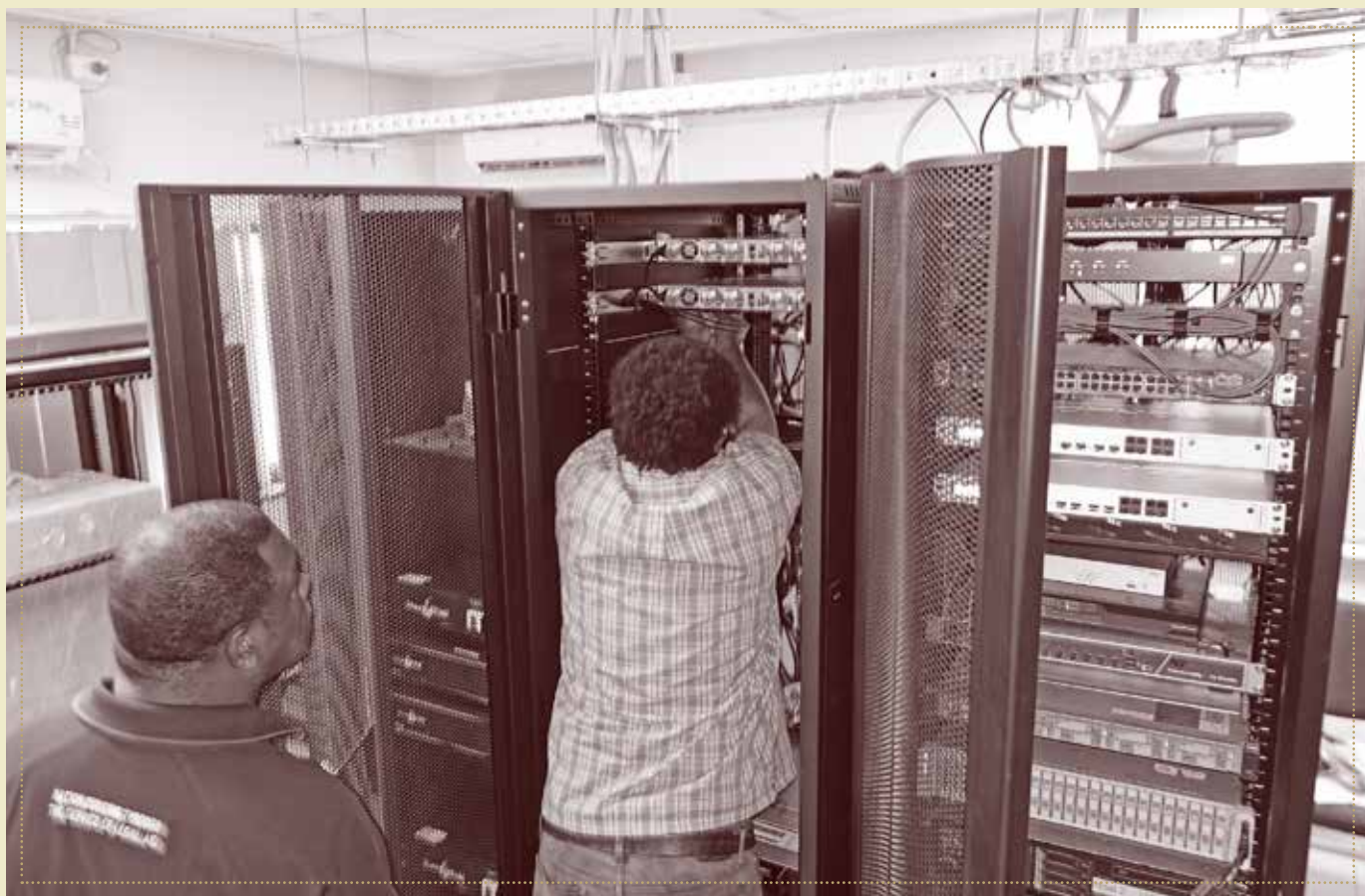
Our sincere appreciation to the DNPM team for their continuous technical support and assistance in facilitating and funding the project.

## 4. RECOMMENDATION

In our effort to comply with government policies, MTDP, MTDS, law and order sectoral framework and strategy, Department of ICT 2022 Act and other relevant statutory requirement our office hoped to successfully implement this project.

However, without the continuous funding support from the government through the PIP Funding arrangement, our effort will not be fully realized.

It is therefore our hope that this project is fully realized and that funding for this project is considered in order to achieve our organisational goals and objective in the delivery of legal aid services.



# OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

The Office Administration section is one of the five sections under the Corporate Division of the Office of Public Solicitor. Its function is to ensure that there is necessary and sufficient logistical support and to facilitate and effectively deliver the Constitutional functions and responsibilities of the Office of the Public Solicitor.

## INTRODUCTION

The following are duties performed in order to effectively and efficiently deliver the Constitutional functions, operation and responsibilities of the Office of the Public Solicitor:

- Management of stationery and fuel requests for branch offices.
- Management of vehicle fleets at headquarters and in branch offices.
- Management of office space and Institutional housing.
- Consultation with Department of National Planning and Monitoring for OPS PIP Funding of OPS Infrastructure project.
- Liaise with Government Office Allocation, and with property landlord in matters relating to rental and maintenance issues for headquarters and branch office properties.
- Management of assets.
- Provide support functions such as;
  - Cleaner duties,
  - Office Driver and
  - Secretarial duties.

## STAFF ON STRENGTH

This section has nine staff members currently occupying the funded positions. It is represented by one Manager (Office & Assets) and two Legal Secretaries, one Corporate Secretary, one Receptionist (Front Desk Officer), one Maintenance officer, two Drivers and two Janitors and four casual maintenance staff.

## SECTION ACTIVITIES

### Results and Outcomes

#### Outcomes

Following are the key result areas and outcomes which the Office Administration Section has achieved throughout the year in line with the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027, and Annual Plan 2023.

*Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 - Key Result Area no. 07. Transforming the Corporate Services through;*

- a) Secure additional office space for an increased number of officers at Headquarters and Branch offices,

- b) Identify a cost effective and workable assets management system to capture all office assets.

### Key Result Area 11. OPS Institutional Staff Housing.

2023 Annual Plan, Planned Activity no. 3 Institutional Housing and Office Space. Planned

Activity no. 7, purchase and replacement of the existing vehicle fleet.

Securing additional office space for increased number of officers at Headquarters and branch offices.

### Results

Securing additional office space for increased number of officers at Headquarters and branch offices.

Approval was granted by State Solicitor's office for lease agreements to be drafted for the respective branch offices;

- Kombukama Haus Sec 11 Lot 44, Kundiawa, Simbu Province
- Hamamas Investment, PO Box 334, Kimbe, WNB
- G27 Investment Ltd, PO Box 543, Popondetta, Oro Province
- Alex Hearo Haus, PO Box 764, Kerema, Gulf Province
- Gapina Ltd, PO Box 1053, Mt Hagen, WHP
- Approval was granted by GOAC for 6th floor to be occupied as additional office space at Headquarters, NCD.
- Kokopo - ENBP, Assurance letter granted from GOAD for OPS to lease building at Tammur Centre.
- Madang-MP, Assurance by Director GOAD for renewal of lease agreement for the Supreme Investment property.
- Inspections were done at the following locations to identify possible office space;
  - Lae Office,
  - Mendi, SHP.

Identify a cost effective and workable assets management system to capture all office assets.

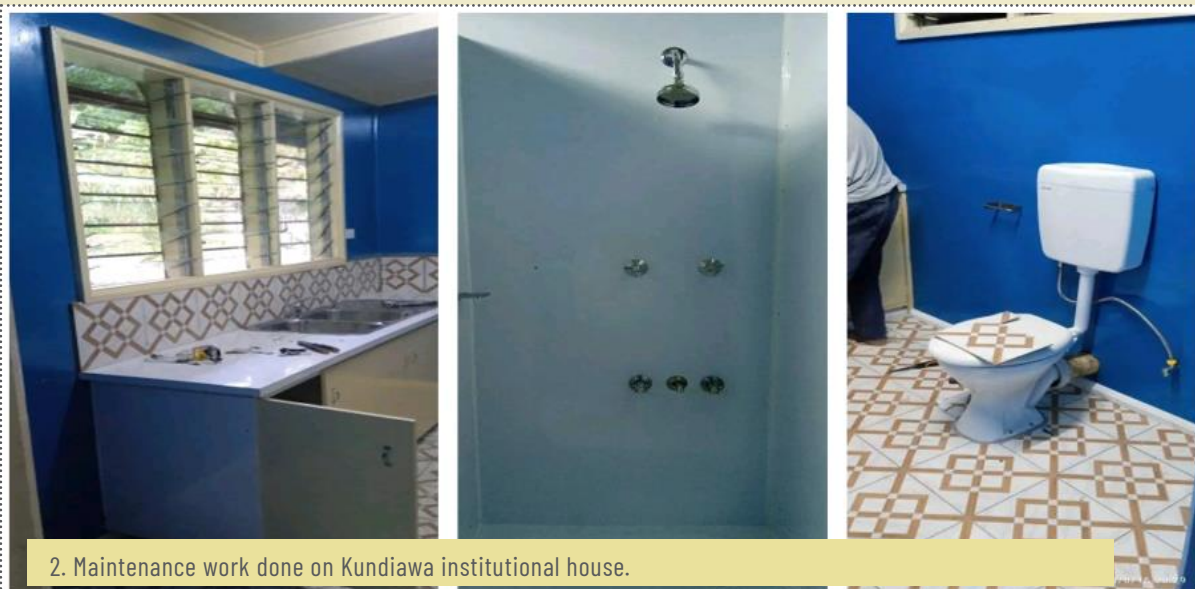
This activity is work in progress.

A physical inventory was conducted for assets for the OPS office at headquarters from the 11th floor to the 6th floor then the ground floor in December 2023. This exercise was timely since we had relocated from the Garden city building and needed to take a stock take of all our assets. By conducting the physical inventory, we were able to identify assets for disposal and management was able to make sound decisions in terms of purchasing new items to replace old furniture's and equipment's.

### OPS Institutional Staff Housing.

The remaining funds from the purchase of the 5th duplex in 2022 was used to construct two, two-bedroom flats below Section 52 Allotment

105 as flat 2 and below Lot 135 as flat #3, at Kennedy Estate, 8 mile, National Capital District. The flats are now occupied by the respective managers.





## PURCHASE AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING VEHICLE FLEETS.

This year the office has purchased two vehicles and the payment for Wabag vehicle is in progress.

1. Nissan Urvan low roof 15-Seater bus, for headquarters,
2. Toyota Vanguard Station wagon, this vehicle was shipped to Kokopo office,
3. Toyota Landcruiser 10 Seater for Wabag office. The payment of this vehicle will be done in 5 installments, so far 3 installments have been paid, the other remaining two installments will be done in 2024.

## FUNDING

### Recurrent Budget

Line Item	Allocated/Budgeted	Expenditure	Balance
223-Office Materials & Supplies	172,283.00	159,507.00	12,776.00
224-Operational Materials & Supplies	580,137.00	410,524.00	169,613.00
225 Transport & fuel	130,443.00	127,241.00	3,202.00
233-Routine Maintenance	101,963.00	101,930.00	33.00
271-Office equipment, Furniture & Fittings	256,667.00	209,325.00	47,342.00

This table shows expenditure items from the recurrent budget the Administration division utilized during the financial year of 2023.

Line item 223 – Office Materials and supplies much of these payments represent purchase of stationeries and supplies for both head office and branch offices.

Line item 224 Operational Materials & Supplies some of the expenditures under this item are for materials for repair maintenance of properties.

Line item 225 Transport and Fuel this line item is specifically for fuel for vehicles at branch offices and headquarters.

Line item 233 Routine maintenance this line item is for maintenance and repair of office space and staff housing both at headquarters and branch offices.

Line item 271 Office equipment, Furniture & Fittings. Purchase of office equipment's, furniture and fittings, such as tables, computers, printers, desks, chairs, etc.

## DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

Line Item	Allocated/Budgeted	Expenditure	Balance
2956000 Public Solicitor Infrastructure-PIP	-0-	-0-	-0-

There was no funding allocated for OPS Infrastructure project for 2023 by the Government, therefore, the table reflects -0- both allocated and expended.

## CHALLENGES

The main challenges are as follows:

- Delay in disposing of vehicles continues to be a challenge. Request to NPC to tender and dispose of the vehicles was unsuccessful as there were no bids received for the tender. We will continue to pursue this matter until they are disposed in a timely manner.
- Conducting physical inventory for branch office. An email was sent out in December and the inventory was conducted by the branch office staff and the listing were sent to headquarters. Using this mode to make sure the inventory is done is good, except it is not verified by the Asset officer from headquarters.
- Lack of funding for the Infrastructure project by the Government delays the project which results in the delay for staff to be accommodated in Institutional houses.

## WAY FORWARD

### Goals and Expectations for the Section.

- Housing continues to be a Priority for this Section. Construction of housing will commence at the following locations; Vanimo, Alotau & Kerema in 2024.
- Asset Management; Conduct physical inventory for branch offices to verify the list that they sent to headquarters (4 offices per quarter).
- Training of Staff; this is one of the vital tools in any organization to upgrade and upskill staff especially when they have been on the same position for a long period of time. Eg, drivers to go for safety driving skills plus some basic mechanical courses. Training will also assist and support them to take on challenges in terms of new developments taking place in their respective fields. Training can also be seen as an incentive for staff which will boost their morale and performance.

## RECOMMENDATION

- Asset Management; Conduct physical inventory for branch offices (4 offices per quarter). This is a major activity for this section and I am emphasizing this again. It was strongly emphasized during the auditing exercise by the Auditor General's staff, that this work must be done. There was inventory

list submitted by the branch offices last year in December. We must verify whether the listing is true and correct, by way of conducting the physical inventory at the branch office. Upon conducting the physical inventory, we are able to plan, budget and submit funding for furniture and equipment and also recommend them for disposal.

- Pursue tender of old and unused vehicles for tender through NPC or the Department of Works, Plant & Transport Division at 4 mile.
- Training of Staff; this is one of the vital tools in any organization to upskill staff especially when they have been on the same position for a long period of time and they can become complacent. Training will also assist and support them to take on challenges in terms of new developments taking place in their respective fields. Training can also be seen as an incentive for staff which will boost their morale and performance.
- Installation of Asset Management database System. An updated and user-friendly
- database system needs to be installed as the Asset Management System to capture Assets in stock, newly purchased Assets and assets to be disposed and replaced. This will also introduce tracking systems for incoming and outgoing consumables.
- Provincial Engagement; Consultations to commence with Provincial Government to secure land for staff housing. At the same time request for counter funding for the construction of the properties in the provinces.
- Continue to seek funding through PIP for the infrastructure project to purchase or construct staff housing at the branch offices.

# HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The Human Resource Section is an integral part of the Corporate Services Division and the Office of Public Solicitor. Its main role is to ensure that the office maintains the development of the competent human resources, to perform its mandated duties and responsibilities, to achieve its goals and missions through the provisions of the Payroll Administrations, Trainings and Development, Recruitments, Staff Establishments, Staff Appraisals, Discipline matters and other functions required for the smooth running of the office.

The Human Resources section is primarily responsible for the management of personnel and personnel matters of the employees of the Public Solicitor.

Towards the end of November 2023, our then HR Manager Mr. Obed Dadai had to resign, sadly, for medical reasons. We thank him for his service to the Public Solicitor, to the employees of the Public Solicitor and to our country as a whole. As Deputy Public Solicitor in charge of the corporate division of the office, Mr. Kirriwom assumed the role of Acting HR manager. A new HR Manager has been appointed, in Mr. William Yatapy, who assumes this role in January 2024.

Nevertheless, I am pleased to present this brief, on behalf of the Human Resources section of the Public Solicitor's Office.

In 2019, the Department of Personnel Manager approved an organizational restructure for the Office of the Public Solicitor, which would ultimately increase the staff establishment ceiling to 251 personnel (lawyers and corporate staff).

As at the end of 2023, the OPS staff establishment stood at 210 funded positions whilst a total of 41 positions remains unfunded. It is expected that the remaining 41 positions or at least a portion which may be funded in 2025.

This year has been somewhat rewarding from a Human Resource perspective, insofar as concerns the implementation of the NEC decision 235 of 2022, relating to the improved terms and conditions of lawyers in State Law Offices.

We are pleased to report that as at pay period 26 of 2023 all lawyers (with exception to new engagements) within the Public Solicitor's Office are receiving the benefits of the Housing and

Vehicle allowances, as a result of the partial implementation of the NEC Decision 235 of 2022. The government has allocated a total of K6m in the 2024 National Budget for OPS, to continue the implementation of NEC Decision 235 of 2022. It is expected that by Pay period 1 of 2024, all OPS lawyers will be entitled to receive the new State Lawyers allowances.

In October 2023, SCMC approval was given for the OPS Remuneration Structure migration. The result of this would see the Public Solicitor's Office migrate from the current Public Service 20 Grade remuneration structure to the compressed Public Solicitor's Office 14 Grade remuneration structure.

It is thus expected that come Pay Period 1 of 2024, all employees of the Public Solicitor will be entitled to the increased salary benefits which come with the positions they occupy under the new structure. No doubt, there will be a lot to be done at the earlier part of 2024 to facilitate the transition. The Government has allocated a total of K3.5m for this exercise.

Whilst the staff establishment continues to increase, it is however, unfortunate that the Human Resource section is understaffed, and is supported by a team comprising five (5) officers, which includes the sectional manager.

It is desirable that some attention be directed at increasing the number of staff within the Human Resources section so as to be able to efficiently and effectively manage the personnel affairs of the employees of the Public Solicitor.

I have no doubt that the Office of the Public Solicitor will continue to grow beyond the current staff establishment ceiling of 251; and as it is our recommendation that some priority be given to increasing the number of corporate support personnel particularly, in regards the Human Resources section.

# PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT

At its core, provincial engagement embodies the principles of inclusivity, participation, and empowerment, endeavoring to amplify the greater need of service delivery to every level of society.

One key priority area of the Office Public Solicitors captures that aspect of provincial participation and engagement with stakeholders at all levels. Public Solicitors responsibilities in National Justice Administration and duties in providing greater access to justice provides this platform to engage with provincial authorities .

This section aims to highlight the participation of the OPS in several activities on provincial engagement, through different activities in association with stakeholders, represented by the Solicitor in Charge on the ground along with their support staff. These activities are aligned with the OPS Corporate Plan 2023 -2027 under "KRA No.08" and given priority in the OPS Annual Plan of 2023 as Planned Activity No.4 on "Provincial Engagement".

## MILNE BAY PROVINCE

### HIGHLIGHT: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

#### The Biggest Organized Surrender Program in Milne Bay Province: WEST FERGUSSION YOUTHS SURRENDER.

General law and order issues are common occurrence right across Papua New Guinea and Milne Bay Province, once known for its cleanliness and public and general safety, is no exception. The year 2022 and the first half of 2023 was a tough period for residents of Alotau and Milne Bay Province in general.

Sea piracy was a constant threat for islanders and burglary, aggravated armed robberies on the highways were a daily occurrence. The Governments response to this general lawlessness was to send a Police Mobile unit to Alotau to halt this upheaval. The effects of this undertaking resulted in senseless killing of youths by the Police throughout the province. This undertaking had the opposite desired effect and the law and order issues were not resolved and in turn the province experienced an unprecedented upward spiral in law and order issues.

#### Special invitation from the Provincial Administration

The Office of Public Solicitor, Alotau, through the Solicitor in Charge (SIC), received a special request from the Provincial Administrator's Office to part take in a special community

engagement with the Governor, Hon. Gordon Wesley. Due to the large number of youths that were expected to turn up for the laying down of arms, coupled with an expected heavy police presence, former Milne Bay Provincial Administrator, Mr. Ashan Numa made a special request to the the Solicitor in Charge - Alotau to accompany him and his travelling party to provide legal advice and guidance on issues arising from that ceremony. The travelling party boarded three (3) patrol boats belonging to the National Maritime Safety Authority (NMSA) and made the journey to Mapamoiwa Government Station.

#### Provincial Stakeholders in the program;

1. Milne Bay Provincial Administrator;
2. Provincial Police Commander;
3. Journalists from the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC);
4. Milne Bay Provincial Administration Divisional Heads; and
5. Police escorts



#### The Surrender Ceremony

Mapamoiwa is a small government station located about 3-4 hours away from East Cape. It is nestled on the Western part



of Fergusson Island, and a 30 minutes dinghy ride away from Goodenough Island in Milne Bay Province. The ceremony witnessed over 200 youths come forward to surrender. The youths that surrendered that day were mostly members of a local gang known by the locals and the surrounding maritime community as the “Morima Cowboys”. They were known for sea piracy and had for years dominated the seas with their fast boats and guns which targeted mostly the passenger boats.

On the day of the ceremony, the youths were received by the Provincial Administrator and the Provincial Police Commander. Formalities and pleasantries were exchanged and a large number of guns, both homemade and factory made, were handed over to police. Apart from the guns, other items such as world war 2 ammunitions, live rounds, flares, and uprooted marijuana plants were also surrendered. This ceremony is considered as the biggest organized surrender program in Alotau to date.

While the ceremony was going on, the Provincial Administrator kept the Public Solicitor’s lawyers close by for legal advice. Advice was given for the purpose of this ceremony on;

- the arrest process,
- the rights of accused persons (before and after arrest),
- the different types of charges, etc.

On one occasion after the surrender, the Solicitor in Charge and delegates were informed that police were trying to organize boats to arrest and take all the surrendered youths to Alotau town to be processed. The SIC advised the PA that the proper approach to take, was for CID and Prosecutions

officers present at the surrender program to interview each of the surrendered youths with a view of capturing each person’s particulars and creating their individual profile. That information can be taken back to Alotau and checked against the Daily Occurrence Book (OB). Those persons who have complaints or pending cases registered against them can be brought into town with the assistance of community and church leaders to be processed accordingly.

This was the approach taken. The Public Solicitors Lawyers were also able to provide legal advice to most of the youths who were uncertain of their status after surrendering.

The Public Solicitors lawyer’s presence at the ceremony gave them assurance that the Office representatives were there to assist them should they require legal representation.

### Awareness at Mapamoiwa

The Public Solicitors legal and administrative staff continued with an awareness program on the role of the Office of Public Solicitor.

The villages were given talks on the roles and functions of the office of the office and the vision of our forefathers through the CPC who saw the need for the Office of Public Solicitor. The nature of legal aid (free), types of cases the office handles (i.e., crimes, and civil), time limitations on certain cases, how to access our services, and where our office is located in Alotau.

It was a successful event and the OPS officers gained vital exposure especially to the challenges of taking instructions out in remote places. The SIC and his team were satisfied with the support the Office provided to both the Provincial Administration and the Provincial Governments office in terms of providing legal advice and guidance towards the surrender process. Overall, the surrender program provided the Office an opportunity to engage with the Provincial leaders and create awareness about the services it provides to the impecunious people of the country and Milne Bay Province.



## NOTHERN (ORO) PROVINCE

### This report highlights the office Administration and Operations for the year 2023 for the Popondetta Branch.

As a Law Organization, we are also engaged in the Provincial Law and Order Committee, the Provincial Juvenile Justice Committee and such other related committees.

#### New Office Environment

Under the leadership of the current Public Solicitor Mr. Leslie Benjamin Mamu and his Administration, the Popondetta Branch witnessed the opening of a new branch office and presentation of a new office vehicle, formally handed over to the Office on the 29th of April 2022. These new office and vehicle has boosted the level of performance and moral of the staff which has enabled them to execute their duties more effectively and efficiently.

The new office space is fully furnished with new chairs, tables, and bookshelves and It contains five (5) office spaces for lawyers, one (1) conference room, four (4) workstations for staff, client's waiting area, and three (3) in-built rest rooms; all fully air-conditioned.

#### Office Rental

The current office space occupies 195m<sup>2</sup>. The office rental costs K13, 406.25 (inclusive of GST) rental p/m, and further K2, 437.50 (excluding GST) fit-out cost p/m, hence, a total of K15, 843.75 per month. This is based on Government Office Allocation Committee (GOAC) current calculation of K750.00 per square meter.

#### Court Sittings

The Principal Magistrate Michael Apie'e sat throughout the year in the District Court for both civil and criminal cases as well as land matters. The OPS Solicitor in Charge, Popondetta has appeared in his court occasionally.

For the National Court Jurisdiction, Oro Province had three (3) circuits in the year. Cases disposed by OPS lawyer total a number

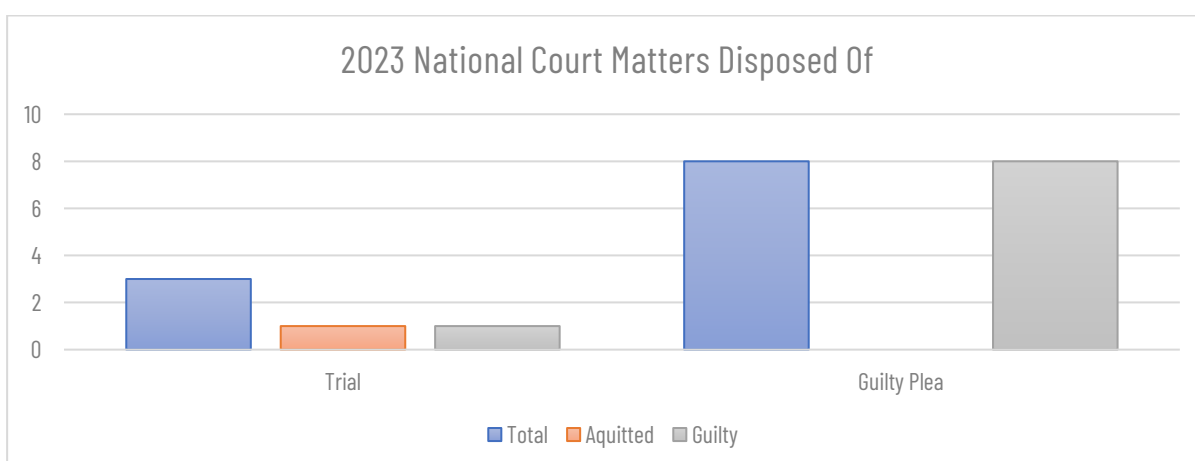


of 11 criminal matters. Only Liosi J had time to hear few civil matters in the September Sittings. Most of the time were given to private counsels to deal with their long outstanding matters.

Following is the summary of the National Court Criminal Cases dealt with;

Month	Judge	Trial Verdict		Guilty Plea	Total
		Acquittal	Guilty		
May	Batari J	1	1	3	5
June	Liosi J	Nil	1	3	4
September	Liosi J	Nil	Nil	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		1	2	8	11

*All in all, a total of 3 trial matters and 8 guilty pleas*



For civil matters in 2023, the Office attended to few matters and made short applications for Extension of time to serve Section 5 Notice on the State pursuant to Claims By & Against the State Act.

The Office attended to numerous bail and committal matters in the District Court, however, the exact statistic for the cases dealt with cannot be provided due to lack of proper record update and record keeping.

### National Court Criminal Offences Statistic by CR Numbers

Homicide cases dominates the National Court Lists for the year 2023 carried over from 2022. Sorcery related killings records the highest whilst other offences like injuries to persons follow after. A good number of homicide matters were dealt with during the year which resulted in the reduction of the list.

The table below indicates the Criminal Offences Statistics by CR Numbers between January and December 2023 (only the matters that came before the NC);

Offence	Cause			Total
	Sorcery Related	Land Related	Others	
<b>Homicide</b>	10	0	58	68
<b>Injuries Persons</b>	9	0	34	43
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	0	0	6	6
<b>Fraud</b>	0	0	18	18
<b>Arson</b>	0	0	6	6
<b>Armed Robbery</b>	0	0	11	11
<b>Stealing</b>	0	0	2	2
<b>Others</b>	0	0	4	4
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	19	0	139	158

### Challenges & Setbacks

The only challenge the Office has in the Popondetta Branch is the requirement for additional lawyers. Currently the Office has only one lawyer dealing with both criminal and civil file matters.

### Provincial Engagement

The Office is engaged with several working committees within the Provincial Law and Justice sector and these includes:

- Provincial Law and Order Committee (PLOC);
- Provincial Juvenile Justice Committee (PJJC);
- Family Sexual Violence Action Committee (FSVAC); and
- The Peace and Good Order Committee (PGOC).

Most of these establishments were not functional in the year 2023 except for the Provincial Law and Order Committee which the Office is a part of.

The Solicitor in Charge, Popondetta was appointed as a member to the Secretariat of the Committee under the leadership of Mr. Wep Ninau from the Department of Justice & Attorney General through a Provincial Law and Order Committee meeting. The job of the Secretariat is to oversee the administration of the PLOC. During the year we had four (4) meetings, and in the last meeting we were privileged to have the Provincial Governor Garry Juffas' attendance.

Due to increase in the law and order issues in the province, the PLOC identified one of the major contributing factors is the abuse of alcohol and illicit substances. During the discussions, a Sub-Committee was formed to collect data and provide assessment on the Cheap Alcohol Products and its effects on the users, with the possibility of totally banning the product in the province. Representing the Public Solicitor, the Solicitor in Charge, Popondetta, was appointed as one of the member of the sub-committee under the leadership of Mr. Philip Taudevin.

On the other hand, as a partner to the Family Protection Partnership & Referral program, the Office, through its SIC.



# RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Public Solicitor has managed to utilize and maximize its resources it has been allocated annually to fully cater for its operational needs in service to the people of Papua New Guinea.

This report highlights the operations and challenges and our commitment to the functions and duties of the Public Solicitor and its role in justice administration in Papua New Guinea. As reflected in this report, the challenges faced as an organisation are unique, however, our goals remain the same in providing quality legal.

These following recommendations are made in order to improve operations of the Office and the delivery of legal aid services to those who are in need of legal aid.

## Alignment:

1. VISION 2050, CHAPTER 3, 21. CROSSCUTTING ISSUES (21.3); and
2. 2010-2030 National Development Strategy;
3. MTDP IV (2023 -2027) Strategic Priority Area (SPA) 5: DIP 5.2 and SPA 8.

## Recommendations:

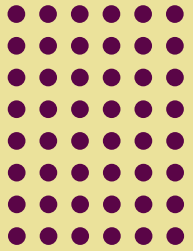
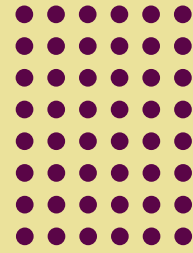
- funding of remaining approved positions in the corporate structure.
- adequate funding be allocated for the establishment of these branch offices;
  - Western,
  - Hela, and
  - Jiwaka Province.
- appropriate funding be allocated to cater for Housing Projects for OPS head office and OPS branches in through out PNG.



# OFFICE ADMINISTRATION - BRANCH CONTACTS & ADDRESSES

		
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ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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