MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY OF FIJI

Newsletter

Quarter 2

October-December 2024

The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) ensures the safety and security of Fiji's maritime sector. We regulate vessels , seafarers and ensure the protection of the marine environment.

We are committed to protecting lives, property, and the environment in Fiji's waters, promoting safety, and supporting sustainable practices. Let MSAF guide you to safer seas!

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EXPERT MISSION TRAINING

The 5-day Expert Mission training facilitated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) took place at the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji Headquarters in Suva from 30th September-4th October,2024.

The Chief Executive Officer, CMDR Joweli Ratulevu Cawaki officially opened the training.
Our staff members engaged actively in sessions led by AMSA experts, Mr. Josh Smith and Mr. Darryl Rosairo. The program covered essential topics, including PSC Procedures, MARPOL Annex I, MARPOL Annex II, and the ISM Code.
The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji also acknowledges the Tokyo MoU Secretariat.

MSAF CELEBRATES FIJI DAY WITH PATRIOTISM AND FAREWELLS

The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) marked Fiji Day with a warm celebration on 11th October 2024, bringing together its staff for a day filled with national pride and camaraderie. Hosted in Suva, the post-Fiji Day gathering was a perfect opportunity for MSAF staff to reflect on the nation's history and culture while enjoying a festive atmosphere.

The staff were treated to a traditional Lovo lunch, offering a delicious mix of Fijian and Asian cuisine, followed by a selection of sweet desserts that delighted everyone. The mouthwatering spread created a sense of unity and celebration among the team.

The occasion also held personal significance as MSAF bid farewell to a valued colleague, Mr. Malakai Nakurekure. His departure marked the end of a chapter, and staff took the opportunity to express their gratitude and well-wishes, making the day even more memorable.

The event was a fitting tribute to both the nation's independence and the contributions of the MSAF team, leaving everyone with a renewed sense of pride and togetherness.

Farewell To
Malakai
From MSAF...

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WIN TOP PRIZES IN WMD ESSAY CONTEST

Three high school students have emerged as the winners of the World Maritime Day Essay Contest, securing first-place awards for their insightful contributions to the maritime sector. The winners are Ms. Faiza Fahmiza from Nasinu Muslim College, Mr. Timoci Kurunawai from Pandit Vishnu Deo Memorial College, and Mr. Sevuloni Dibez from Marist Brothers High School.

In October, a team from the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) personally visited each of the winning students at their schools to present the prizes. During these visits, MSAF Chief Executive Officer, CMDR Joweli Ratulevu Cawaki, highlighted the critical importance of the maritime industry and the essential roles that ships and seafarers play in global trade and security.

Each of the talented winners received a $150 cash prize sponsored by MSAF, a Swire Shipping Fijian Drua Home Jersey, and a rugby ball sponsored by Swire Shipping and an umbrella and student diary sponsored by Carpenters Mobil.

The winners were announced at the World Maritime Day celebrations in Suva on 27th September 2024.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF THE ITAUKEI CULTURE
Family Spirit-Bai/Wiwa Mai
THE FIVE PILLARS OF THE ITAUKEI CULTURE
Presence - Buru/Vale Vaka/Viti
45th Anniversary

SWIRE SHIPPING

DRY DOCK OPERATIONS TRAINING KICKS OFF IN SUVA

A two-day training program aimed at providing participants with an in-depth understanding of dry dock operations for biofouling prevention and management was officially launched in Suva on 16th October,2024.

During the opening remarks, Commander Joweli Ratulevu Cawaki, CEO of the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji, emphasized that biofouling—the accumulation of marine organisms on ships' hulls—poses significant challenges beyond technical issues.

"It affects our ecosystems, economies, and the overall health of our oceans," said CEO Cawaki. He highlighted that the repercussions of biofouling include increased fuel consumption, costly maintenance, and the risk of introducing invasive species into our waters.

Running from October 16-17, 2024, this training features distinguished international experts Mr. Will Griffith and Mr. John Polglaze from the International Maritime Organization - IMO .
This initiative is also a collaborative effort with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

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As Fiji advances its maritime development, CEO Cawaki highlighted the necessity of balancing operational efficiency with environmental responsibility.

"The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji will commit to ensuring this balance through innovation and strict adherence to maritime laws and provisions," he affirmed.

He encouraged all participants to engage actively in the training, noting that the knowledge acquired will not only enhance their professional growth but also benefit the broader maritime community and contribute to the preservation of Fiji's invaluable marine environment.

Attending the event are representatives from key organizations, including the Ministry of Public Works, Met Services, Transport, Fiji Ports Corporation Limited, Industrial & Marine Engineering Ltd, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, Pacific College for Maritime Studies, Government Shipping Services, Aquamarine Services, Vatuwaqa Industrial Engineering, South Sea Slipway, Fiji Ships and Heavy Industries, the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji

Course Facilitator

Definitions

Pre-course Que
Please note, names w
used for certificates

MSAF
MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY OF FIJI
DRY-DOCK OPERATIONS FOR BIOFOULING PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT
IMO

MSAF PARTICIPATES IN IDEP & REACH PROGRAM IN SERUA

Representatives from the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) proudly took part in the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and the Rights, Empowerment and Cohesion (REACH) program, held at Galoa Village in Serua from 17th-18th October 2025. This two-day event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, each showcasing their work through information booths aimed at raising awareness on critical issues.

MSAF's booth was a major highlight, drawing the attention of many local Fijians, particularly high school students eager to learn more about the vital role MSAF plays in maritime safety. The booth provided valuable insights into the organization's efforts, offering key maritime safety information that sparked curiosity and engagement among visitors.

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has been observed annually since 1993, and this year marked the 31st anniversary of its declaration by the United Nations General Assembly. Held every 17th October, the day serves as a reminder of the global need to eradicate poverty and destitution, with a special focus on developing countries like Fiji.

MSAF's participation in this significant event not only contributed to raising awareness about poverty eradication but also highlighted the importance of maritime safety in Fiji, promoting a safer and more informed community.

NATIONAL BIOFOULING TASKFORCE HOLDS KEY MEETING IN SUVA

On 24th October,2024 stakeholders from various government bodies and organizations gathered in Suva for the second meeting of the National Biofouling Taskforce, led by the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji.

Chaired by Mr. Paula Baleilevuka, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Public Works, Transport, and Meteorological Services, the meeting aims to address the pressing global challenge of biofouling and develop a comprehensive strategy for its management and prevention in Fiji.

Notable participants include International Environmental Specialist Ms. Ernesta Swanepoel and representatives from the Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport, Biosecurity of Fiji, the Department of Environment, the Ministry of Fisheries, the University of the South Pacific, the Fiji Police Force, Fiji Ports Corporation Ltd, the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Republic of Fiji Navy.

The last National Biofouling Taskforce meeting was previously held on 19th April,2024.

SOUTHERN CROSS

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SOUTHERN CROSS

INTRODUCTION

MSAF ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE OFFICER REPRESENTS AT MACUATA PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Enforcement & Compliance Officer Level II Ms. Marie Akanisi Hanfakaga recently represented the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) at the Macuata Provincial Council meeting. The meeting took place at Qelewara village, Namuka from 7th-25th October 2024.

During the event, Ms. Hanfakaga delivered an informative presentation on the critical work of MSAF, emphasizing safety regulations and the relevant legislation that applies to the maritime community. Key topics included boat registration, captain licensing, and the importance of safety measures such as wearing lifejackets and ensuring essential items like flares, first aid kits, and fire blankets are kept onboard during journeys.

Ms. Hanfakaga also highlighted her ongoing advocacy since June 2024 for the enforcement of Marine Infringement Notices, particularly focusing on how they apply to observed offences, helping to enhance safety and compliance within Fiji's maritime sector.

This engagement highlights MSAF's commitment to educating local communities about maritime safety and the importance of adhering to regulations for the protection of life at sea.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT STORY-MISAELE VAKACEGUIDELANA: A NAUTICAL PIONEER CHARTING NEW WATERS

Misaele Vakaceguidelana, a Senior Port State Control Officer with the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF), has always harboured a passion for Nautical Science.

In mid-2023, the 40-year-old lad from Lomaiviti took a bold step towards realizing his ambition by advancing his qualifications from a diploma to a Bachelor of Applied Science (Nautical Science) at the University of Tasmania in Australia.

This program equipped Mr. Vakaceguidelana with the knowledge and skills needed to safely manage and operate any vessel within the merchant fleet. His dedication paid off when he successfully passed the Chief Mate Oral Exams administered by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Having served at MSAF for nearly three years now, Vakaceguidelana discovered this valuable opportunity through an Expression of Interest for study abroad programs circulated among staff.

“It was a good experience,” he reflected. “It contributed significantly to my personal and spiritual growth.”

Yet, studying abroad wasn't without its challenges. Mr. Vakaceguidelana often battled homesickness, a feeling he managed by staying connected with loved ones through video calls and joining a supportive group of friends on TikTok.

"We used to chat daily to uplift each other," he shared, emphasizing the importance of camaraderie during tough times.

Among his most cherished memories from his studies was the discipline he developed. Late nights of study became routine, as he dedicated himself to achieving his degree.

"This experience taught me commitment and resilience," he noted, skills he believes will serve him well in facing future challenges in his career.

For the younger generation exploring their career paths, he encourages them to wholeheartedly invest their heart, soul, and mind into their passions.

Outside of academics, he enjoys sailing, meeting new people, and immersing himself in diverse cultures.

The Senior Port State Control Officer plays an important role with MSAF, reporting directly to the Manager of Ships Inspection. This position involves conducting Port State Control inspections at various entry points across Fiji and assisting in other vital regulatory responsibilities.

MSAF proudly supports Misaele Vakaceguidelana as he embarks on new opportunities, confident that his dedication and expertise will continue to make an impact in the maritime industry.

MSAF CELEBRATES DIWALI

On 31st October,2024 staff of the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) came together today to celebrate Diwali, the vibrant Hindu festival of lights.

Diwali, also known as Deepavali, represents the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.

Our colleagues of the Hindu faith led the festivities, generously treating the MSAF family to a delightful array of Indian sweets.

Wishing everyone a joyful Diwali filled with light and prosperity!

During Diwali, peop
exterior of their hon
worship ceremonie
wealth, light firewor
(sweets) and gifts a
Happy Diwali!

FIJI'S MARITIME SECTOR GAINS NEW INSIGHTS AT GHG-SMART TRAINING IN KOREA

The Manager for Safety, Compliance, and Response Mr. Iliesa Batisaresare was part of a delegation representing Fiji at the GHG-SMART training held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from November 4-8, 2024.

This specialized training, hosted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Korean Maritime Safety Transportation Authority (KOMSA), provided an intensive, multidisciplinary program designed to support maritime decarbonization efforts across Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

With 18 participants from 13 countries, the training covered critical topics including greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies, alternative fuels, climate finance, and the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) for maritime decarbonization.

Mr. Batisaresare and fellow participants were given the unique opportunity to visit Korea's leading maritime facilities, gaining hands-on experience with cutting-edge technologies such as carbon capture systems, hydrogen generation facilities, and energy-efficient ship designs.

One of the highlights of the program was the in-depth exploration of port electrification initiatives, providing insights that could be directly applied to improving Fiji's own maritime sector. Collaborative group exercises and case studies fostered knowledge exchange, enabling participants to develop NAPs and project proposals tailored to their respective countries.

Reflecting on the experience, Mr. Batisaresare emphasized that the training will have a profound, lasting impact on Fiji's maritime industry. "The skills and insights gained will help accelerate our adoption of sustainable practices in areas such as ship and port efficiency, emissions reduction, and alternative fuel adoption," he said.

Mr.Batisaresare was also joined by Ms. Kesaia Masirewa, Transport Planning Analyst from the Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services, and
Transport.

MSAF JOINS GLOBAL EXPERTS AT THE 3RD GLOFOULING R&D FORUM IN SOUTH KOREA

Representatives from the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) were among over 250 participants at the 3rd GloFouling R&D Forum and Exhibition held at the Westin Josun in Busan, South Korea from November 4-8, 2024, at. The event focused on biofouling prevention and management in the maritime industry.

Organized by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of Korea and the Korea Research Institute of Ships & Ocean Engineering (KRISO), the forum served as a key platform for global stakeholders to exchange best practices and explore innovations in managing biofouling—the accumulation of aquatic organisms on ship hulls, which can pose environmental and operational risks.

Key Highlights of the Forum:

• Expert Presentations: Leaders in the maritime industry shared insights into managing invasive aquatic species (IAS) and biofouling.

• Site Visits: Participants toured facilities like Orient Shipyard, witnessing live dry-docking cleaning procedures, and the Korean Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST) and Korea Marine Equipment Research Institute (KOMERI), where innovative biofouling management technologies were demonstrated.

• Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs): Focused discussions on biofouling management strategies tailored to these ecologically sensitive areas, including prevention, early detection, and response to IAS.

• Thermal Dome PSSA Proposal: The forum also addressed the potential designation of the Thermal Dome as a PSSA, aiming to safeguard the region's unique marine ecosystem.
• Innovations in Shipbuilding: The event also featured a tour of Samsung Heavy Industries, where participants observed shipbuilding capabilities, including the construction of FPSOs (Floating Production Storage and Offloading units) and LNG carriers, both vital for the future of offshore oil and gas extraction.

MSAF was proud to be part of this important gathering, collaborating with international experts to strengthen Fiji's role in protecting our oceans and improving the sustainability of the maritime industry.

MSAF OFFICER COMPLETES KNOWLEDGE CO-CREATION PROGRAM IN JAPAN

Mr. Maika Lalakobau, a Marine Environment Pollution Officer at the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF), has successfully completed the Knowledge Co-creation Program on Maritime Search and Rescue, Maritime Disaster Prevention, and Marine Environment Protection for Coast Guard Officials.

Held in Yokohama, Japan from 30th September to 9th November 2024, this program offered insights into these critical areas of maritime safety.

The program aimed to help participants develop action plans to address key challenges within their organizations, with a focus on human resource development (HRD) and strengthening maritime search and rescue (SAR) operations, disaster prevention measures, and marine environmental protection efforts.

Sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and organized in collaboration with the Japan Coast Guard, Japan Coast Guard Foundation, and other related organizations, the program included a series of training sessions held across various locations in Japan, including Yokohama, Yokosuka, Tokyo, and Sendai.

MSAF SPORTS DAY: A DAY OF FUN, TEAM SPIRIT, AND FRIENDLY COMPETITION

On 16th November 2024, the staff of the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) gathered for a memorable Sports and Fun Day at Furnival Park in Toorak. It was a perfect opportunity for staff to relax, bond with colleagues, and enjoy a day full of laughter and friendly competition.

The staff were divided into four enthusiastic teams – Team Red, Team Green, Team Blue, and Team Yellow – each bringing their own energy and spirit to the games. Participants engaged in exciting sports such as volleyball, soccer, and touch rugby, with plenty of fun mini activities keeping the day lively. Highlights included the Egg and Spoon Race, Sack Race, Balloon Pop Relay, Three-Legged Race, "Two Guys and a Baby" challenge, and the ever-popular Tug of War.

The competition was fierce, but in the end, it was Team Red that claimed the title of overall sports champions. Team Green took home the prize for Best Dressed Team, while Team Yellow won the Best Cheer award, and Team Blue was recognized for their outstanding sportsmanship.

The event not only allowed the MSAF staff to let off steam but also fostered teamwork, camaraderie, and a sense of community. It was truly a day to remember, filled with fun, friendly competition, and lasting memories.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT STORY-FROM ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT TO SEAFARERS' SUPERVISOR: BULOU TAGICA'S INSPIRING JOURNEY AT MSAF

Bulou Raijeli Tagica, a Supervisor - Seafarers Registration Officer at the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF), has defied all odds to establish herself in her career.

The 35-year-old from Baidamudamu in Tavuki, Kadavu, started her career in 2018 as an Assistant Accountant with MSAF, Ms. Tagica later transitioned to the role of Clerical Officer. But it wasn't always clear that she would reach the heights she has today. After taking a year off to care for her children in 2017, she was seeking employment, and soon after, an opportunity with MSAF had emerged.

"This is my 6th year now at MSAF," Tagica reflects. "After spending a year at home caring for my kids, I prayed for employment, and God opened the path that led me to MSAF."

Her journey has not been without its challenges. As a married mother of two, balancing family life and a demanding career has tested her at every turn. However, Tagica attributes her success to staying open-minded, keeping a teachable spirit, and remaining steadfast in her principles.

One of the key factors that has helped her thrive in her role has been the strong support of male colleagues at MSAF.

"Having some supportive male champions within the organization has made my journey much smoother," she shares.

She holds a colourful background including qualifications in a Diploma in Project Management from the University of the South Pacific, a Diploma in Accounting from TAFE NSW in Australia, and a Certificate in Port Management from the Galilee International Management Institute in Israel, among others.
One of the most fulfilling aspects of her work, according to Tagica, is traveling to maritime communities and engaging with their needs.

Her role as Supervisor - Seafarers Registration Officer reports directly to the Manager Qualification & Licensing and involves verifying seafarers' certificates and assessing their competency and proficiency.
Representing Fiji at the Pacific Women in Maritime Meet has been one of Tagica's most memorable achievements.

Tagica's six-year journey at MSAF has been a testament to her ambition and drive. When she first joined, she set a goal to become a supervisor within five years—and she achieved it.

"When I joined, my goal was to see myself in a supervisory role within five years, and I'm proud to say I've accomplished that," she said. "Today, I feel content with what I've achieved, but I still aspire to grow further. I hope to take on a more senior position in the future."

Her vision extends beyond her own career. Tagica is passionate about seeing more women take on leadership roles in the maritime industry.

"I want to see continued growth in education and more success stories of women in leadership positions within the maritime industry," she says.

Outside of her professional achievements, Tagica's hobbies include traveling, watching movies, and listening to music—activities that help her unwind and recharge.

Tagica's advice to young women and aspiring leaders is simple but powerful: "Love the job, and not just the money."

"When you have passion, believe in yourself, be courageous, and speak up—use your voice and let it be heard."

MSAF is proud to support Bulou Raijeli Tagica in her ongoing career and recognizes the incredible contributions she has made. We wish her continued success in all her future endeavours and look forward to seeing the amazing things she will accomplish. Our support remains with her as she continues to thrive and grow

KIMFT REPRESENTATIVES PAY COURTESY VISIT TO MSAF

Representatives from the Korea Institute of Maritime and Fisheries Technology (KIMFT) visited the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) Headquarters in Suva on 3rd December,2024 strengthening ties between the two organizations.

During the courtesy visit, the two parties held a preliminary meeting in preparation for the 1st Steering Committee Meeting on Capacity Building for Maritime & Fisheries Education and the Establishment of a Master Plan in Pacific Island Countries, set to take place tomorrow.

This important meeting will bring together representatives from Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu to collaboratively develop a regional development plan for maritime education. Rather than focusing on individual country-based initiatives, the plan will address the needs of the entire Pacific region, considering population sizes and demand for maritime education in each country.

Key goals of the committee include:

- Identifying regional challenges in maritime and fisheries education
- Promoting joint educational initiatives across Pacific Island nations
- Creating a sustainable roadmap to strengthen maritime and fisheries capacity for the entire region.

As a token of appreciation, they presented a commemorative visit plaque to the Chief Executive Officer of MSAF CMDR Joweli Cawaki.

FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE FOR MARITIME EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC HELD IN SUVA

An important milestone was marked on 4th December,2024 in the development of maritime education for the South Pacific region, with the inaugural steering committee meeting taking place in Suva.

This program is the result of a collaborative partnership between the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) and the Korea Institute of Maritime and Fisheries Technology (KIMFT), aiming to address the growing demand for maritime education and training in the region.

Key figures at the meeting included distinguished experts Professor Park Jinsoo, Professor Yeongham Choe, LEAP Manager Mr. Song Senguk, and Senior Advisor Dr. Weon-Jae Ha, who presented valuable insights on KIMFT and the Capacity Building Project.

Countries represented at the committee included Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu, all of which share the common goal of improving maritime education. The committee recognizes that, given the region's population and diverse needs, a unified development plan for maritime education across all participating countries would be far more effective than addressing each country's needs separately.

The key outcome from today's meeting will contribute to KIMFT's upcoming 2025 and 2026 projects under the Capacity Building for Maritime and Fisheries Education & Training in Pacific Island Countries. These projects aim to create impactful and sustainable educational programs tailored to the unique needs of the Pacific, ensuring that maritime and fisheries training not only meets local demands but also contributes to the broader development of the region.

The committee's work marks an important step towards building a robust maritime education framework that will equip Pacific Island nations with the necessary skills and resources to thrive in the global maritime and fisheries sectors.

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DO NOT USE STICKY TAPES ON THE WALLS, FURNITURES, WHITEBOARD ETC (USE THE FLIP BOARD PROVIDED)
DO NOT OPEN WINDOWS IF AIR CONDITION IS IN OPERATION

KOREA

BULA

MSAF STAFF COMPLETE FIRE WARDEN TRAINING

On 13th, December 2024, staff members of the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) participated in a Fire Warden Training session, conducted by the National Fire Authority. The training, attended by eight MSAF staff, equipped them with the critical knowledge and hands-on experience necessary to ensure the safety of colleagues in the event of a fire emergency.

The comprehensive session covered key areas such as identifying escape routes, proper use of fire extinguishers, and familiarizing staff with first aid fire equipment available in the building. In addition, the training emphasized identifying fire risks in the workplace and understanding the causes of fires, enabling the team to take proactive measures to minimize risks.

Following the training, MSAF has appointed its newly trained Fire Wardens: Chief Warden Mr. Alipate Naka, and Fire Wardens Mr. Viliame Rokobuli, Ms. Kasanita Lau, Mr. Taniela Naitini, and Mr. Sanjeet Narayan. These individuals are now better prepared to respond swiftly and effectively in the event of a fire, ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff at MSAF.

This initiative reflects MSAF's ongoing commitment to safety in the workplace, ensuring that all employees are well-prepared for emergencies and are equipped to protect themselves and others.

MSAF CELEBRATES END-OF-YEAR PARTY

The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) wrapped up the year in festive spirit with a joyous End-of-Year celebration held at the Fiji Club in Suva on 14th December 2024.

The event, a delightful blend of Christmas cheer and camaraderie, was a joyous occasion for staff to come together and celebrate the season.

Organized by the MSAF Sports, Social, and Wellness Committee, the event featured an indulgent feast that included a traditional Lovo, fresh seafood, and a wide range of delicious Asian dishes and refreshing beverages.

Staff members also enjoyed a lively karaoke session, showcasing their vocal talents. Ms. Iliseva Karusi was awarded the Best Karaoke Crowd Pleaser, while Ms. Fulori Tawakedina won the title of Best Dressed Female, and Mr. Dinesh Chand took home the award for Best Dressed Male.

The celebration was the perfect way to end a successful year at MSAF, leaving everyone with lasting memories and a renewed sense of team spirit heading into the new year.

JOINT OPERATION YIELDS SIGNIFICANT RESULTS IN COMBATING ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

In a major success for national security and trade integrity, the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) joined forces with the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) and the Fiji Police Force in a joint operation that has disrupted multiple illegal activities. This collaborative effort highlights the importance of resource sharing and information exchange in achieving effective enforcement.

The operation, conducted at the Mua-i-Walu port premises and surrounding carrier stands, led to the discovery of high-value dutiable goods hidden in used water bottles—an alarming tactic that underscores the need for heightened vigilance. In addition, undeclared cigarettes were uncovered on a fishing vessel, revealing potential violations of trade regulations that could involve shop owners and maritime operators alike.

The success of this operation demonstrates the effectiveness of unified efforts in tackling illegal activities and enhancing trade compliance and serves as a reminder of the ongoing need for vigilance across all sectors. This operation marks a major step in safeguarding Fiji's borders, and its results will contribute to future enforcement strategies.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT STORY-SALASEINI LESIANAWAI: LEADING THE WAY IN OCEAN GOVERNANCE

Salaseini Lesianawai, a Senior Standard & Conformance Officer at the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF), is making waves in the field of ocean governance.

As a recent graduate of the United Nations Ocean Governance Fellowship for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), completed in early December 2024, Lesianawai's journey is a testament to the power of professional development and the importance of fostering expertise in one of the world's most critical sectors.

The Taveuni lass holds an academic background in Law—honed in both Vanuatu and Australia—which laid the foundation for her distinguished career in maritime safety. However, it was her participation in the SIDS fellowship program that truly expanded her horizons. From September to December 2024, she undertook specialized studies in New York City, USA, focusing on international ocean governance and the unique challenges facing small island states.

With MSAF's support, which included a thorough training needs analysis to ensure her readiness, Lesianawai was equipped to take on this high-level program.

Reflecting on the experience, she shared, "It was an enriching experience that broadened my understanding of ocean governance and the emerging threats to our oceans. There was no better way to learn than from ocean experts themselves."

Her gratitude towards MSAF, which encourages continuous learning in such a specialized field, is evident. Lesianawai highlighted the ever-evolving nature of maritime governance: "There are always developments to keep up with, from advancements in ship technologies and evolving maritime threats to amendments in treaties and the integration of sustainable development goals."

As the maritime industry adapts to rapid technological changes, digitalization, and an increase in global trade, Lesianawai notes that MSAF's ongoing commitment to professional development ensures that staff remain at the forefront of these shifts.

"Our office is continually engaged in every form of professional development because the maritime industry is expanding, ships are growing, and our ports are becoming smarter and larger," she explained.

The United Nations Ocean Governance Fellowship for SIDS is designed to enhance the capacity of government officials from small island nations, equipping them with the tools to implement effective ocean governance and international legal frameworks. Through this fellowship, Lesianawai gained critical knowledge and insights into the complex and often unique needs of island nations in managing their maritime resources.

For Lesianawai, the ocean is not just a professional domain but a personal connection. "Dealing with the ocean is a personal matter for me," she said. "As an islander, the ocean is intertwined with every aspect of life—it is my culture, my livelihood, and my healing place. This training has equipped me to better understand the science and governance behind managing such a precious resource."

In her role at MSAF, Lesianawai works directly in the Office of the CEO, where she reports to the Chief Executive Officer and plays a key role in ensuring compliance with maritime safety and regulatory standards.
Lesianawai's journey offers valuable advice for young women aspiring to follow a similar career path. "There will always be challenges, but managing them requires a solid spiritual foundation," she shared.

"A good heart leads to good principles in your work, relationships, and decisions. And from that foundation, growth follows."

The Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji wishes Salaseini Lesianawai all the best in her future endeavours and fully supports her continued career path. We are proud of her recent achievements and are excited to see how her growing expertise will contribute to the advancement of MSAF and the maritime industry.

UPCOMING EVENTS
JANUARY 2025

To all MSAF Staff!

EVENT: Welcome and celebration of newly appointed SSW Committee

DATE: Friday,17th January 2025

TIME: 1:00pm

VENUE: Board Room, Level 4, Kadavu House, Suva

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