Solomon Islands Parliamentary Induction Program

An intensive Induction Program for Members of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands took place in Honiara from 29 May-2 June 2006.

The week-long program was held in the National Parliament of Solomon Islands and aimed to assist Members in their important responsibilities as public leaders, as the representatives of their constituencies and in their work in Parliament.

This program encouraged greater understanding of public leadership, constitutional frameworks, accountability, transparency and parliamentary oversight amongst both continuing and newly elected Members of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands. Through a combination of formal presentations from other Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Island parliamentarians, local and international experts, breakout workshops and one-on-one discussions, it raised awareness among participating parliamentarians of their functions, responsibilities obligations in relation to leadership and accountability. The programme also served as an introduction to new MPs about the constitutional structure of Solomon Islands, the role of parliament, and the operation of key government departments, commissions, offices, and committees by explaining their structures, functions, services.

By balancing MPs’ need for capacity building and skills transfer with demands for the greater engagement of MPs in public policy discussions, the induction program served to transfer skills, knowledge and practical know-how on the role of a parliamentarian to the Solomon Islands MPs. This required a combination of informational and participatory sessions, including presentations by local and international experts and the work-shopping of core procedures and practical skills, such as committee work, parliamentary speechmaking, question time and debate.

A feature of the program, which took place on the floor of the National Parliament, was the very high levels of participation from MPs themselves. In addition to the new members, a large number of continuing members also attended the sessions. As the first induction program ever held for a new Solomon Islands parliament, both groups stated that they found the training of great value.

As one of four supporting agencies to the UNDP, CDI played an important role in the conception, design and implementation of the workshop. In February, CDI Deputy Director Michael Morgan took part in a planning workshop organised by the National Parliament of Solomon Islands and the United Nations Development Programme to develop the outline of the induction program. At the induction program itself, CDI was represented by Dr Morgan and CDI Director Dr Benjamin Reilly, and CDI also supported the participation of The Hon John Elfertick (former member of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly) and the Hon Dame Carol Kidu MP from
Papua New Guinea, all of whom spoke and offered their insights at various points in the induction program.


The program was led by Sir Peter Kenilorea (Speaker of Parliament) and Warren Cahill (Project Manager UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project, Solomon Islands). Other key resource people included Taeasi Sanga (Clerk of Parliament, Solomon Islands), Jude Solomon Devesi (Induction Program Coordinator), the UNDP/Solomon Islands Parliamentary Staff (Celsus Talifilu, Richard Alu, David Kusilifu, Atenasi Ata-Wasuka, Stella Delaverata and Alice Piko), Dr Michael Morgan (CDI), Professor Don Patterson (University of the South Pacific), and Carol Rankin (Senior Parliamentary Officer, Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives of New Zealand).