



MO LE SILAFIA QUARTERLY



APRIL - JUNE 2026 ISSUE 2

Komesina o Sulufaiga

International Human Rights Engagements in Geneva

30 March - 2 April 2026



Lagafuaina Tavita (Chair of CFNHRI) & Ellenina Moala (Principal Human Rights Advisor)

On 2 April 2026, the Office chaired the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) Annual General Meeting. Major outcomes included the legal registration of CFNHRI in Samoa, approval of the Draft Outcome Statement on Civic Freedoms, endorsement of governance reforms, and the Office's unanimous re-election as Chair for another term. The office is the first SIDs member to chair this forum.

The Office participated in a week of regional and international human rights engagements in Geneva, Switzerland, from 30 March to 2 April 2026, strengthening Samoa's role within the global human rights community.

The Office attended the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) Annual General Meeting, where members elected regional representatives, discussed priority human rights issues, and the Office volunteered to serve on an APF thematic working group.

The Office also participated in the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Annual Meeting and plenary sessions, strengthening partnerships, sharing experiences with fellow National Human Rights Institutions, and delivering a presentation on digital rights following a last-minute invitation.

The Office acknowledges the support through the British High Commission, Honorable of the United Kingdom in Samoa for enabling its participation.



AFIGOA LAGAFUAINA TAVITA

Talofa lava.

It is my pleasure to present this edition of the Mo le Silafia (MLS) Newsletter for April–June 2026. During this quarter, the Office continued to promote good governance, protect human rights, and strengthen public awareness through complaint handling, detention inspections, public agency information sessions, and community outreach.

A significant highlight during this period was the re-election of the Office of the Ombudsman as Chair of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions for a second consecutive term. This achievement reflects the confidence and trust placed in our Office by our regional and international counterparts.

I thank our dedicated staff and valued partners for their continued commitment to serving the people of Samoa with integrity, accountability, and respect for human rights.

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Trivia Night with TV5 Samoa - 27 June 2026

On Saturday, 27 June 2026, the Office successfully hosted an exciting Trivia Night in partnership with TV5 Samoa, which aired from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. This was an effort to increase the awareness of the public of the complaint handling functions of the office.

The event attracted more than 150 participants, who joined online using their mobile phones to test their knowledge while learning more about the Office of the Ombudsman and its functions. The interactive event provided an engaging platform to raise public awareness of the Office's role and services.

The winners of the competition were:

- 1st Prize: Joe Michael AINU'u, who received a \$200 Gift Voucher sponsored by SSAB Apia Samoa and a \$100 Coffee Roaster Samoa Voucher.
- 2nd Prize: Salome Lole, who received a \$150 Gift Voucher sponsored by Business Systems Limited (BSL) and a \$50 Coffee Roaster Samoa Voucher.
- 3rd Prize: The winner received a \$100 Gift Voucher sponsored by Maxkar Samoa. (The prize had not yet been collected.)

The prizes were presented by the Acting Ombudsman, Lagafuaina Tavita, who congratulated the winners and thanked everyone for their participation.

The Office extends its sincere appreciation to its generous sponsors—SSAB Apia Samoa, Business Systems Limited, Maxkar Samoa, and Coffee Roaster Samoa—for their valued support in making the event a success. The Office also thanks all participants whose enthusiasm and involvement contributed to an enjoyable and informative evening. The success of the Trivia Night demonstrated the community's interest in learning more about the Office, and similar public engagement activities are anticipated in the future.



1st Prize – Joe Michael AINU'u



2nd Prize – Salome Lole (Employee of the Ministry of Women)



SPECIAL INVESTIGATION UNIT

Complaint Box Inspections – Vaiaata Prison & Police Stations - 7- 8 May 2026

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) conducted inspections of the Office's complaint boxes at Vaiaata Prison and designated Police Stations. The visits ensured that complaints lodged by members of the public and persons in custody were collected promptly and handled confidentially. This initiative strengthened access to the Office's services, ensuring that individuals who were unable to visit the Office in person could still submit written complaints for investigation. The SIU remains committed to safeguarding access to justice and ensuring every complaint is heard and addressed promptly.



(L-R) Senior SIU Investigations Officer & CSU Driver at various Police Post Vaiaata Prison

Radio Talk Show with HAMO FM - 23 June 2026

The Office participated in the Hamo FM Morning Talk Show as part of its public awareness campaign. The programme highlighted the Office's constitutional mandate, core functions, and services, while promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance. It also encouraged members of the public to seek the Office's assistance on matters relating to maladministration, human rights, and access to justice.



(L-R) HAMO FM Host Young Sefa, Leota Taalo Leota (Principal SIU Investigations Officer) & Manino Eveni (Senior GGU Investigations Officer)



PUBLIC AGENCY INFORMATION SESSIONS – EPC SAVAI'I STAFF (7 MAY 2026) MNRE FORESTRY SAVAI'I STAFF (10 JUNE 2026) MINISTRY OF LAND & SURVEY (11 JUNE 2026)

The Office conducted Complaint Handling Information Sessions with the Electric Power Corporation (EPC) – Moata, Savai'i, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) – Moata, Savai'i, and the Ministry of Lands and Survey (MLS) – Taunimato, Upolu. The sessions strengthened understanding of effective complaint handling, accountability, transparency, and good governance within the public service. The Office thanks the management and staff of all three agencies for their active participation and remains committed to delivering capacity-building initiatives that promote integrity and improve public service delivery across Samoa.



Electric Power Corporation (EPC Staff - Moata Savaii)



Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE Forestry Staff - Moata Savaii)

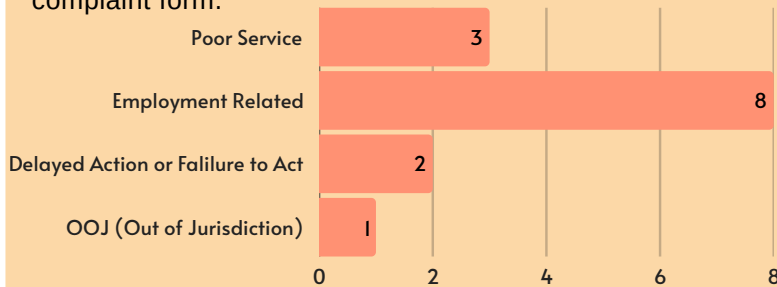


Ministry of Land and Survey (MLS Staff - Taunimato Upolu)

COMPLAINTS OVERVIEW (APRIL – JUNE 2026)

GOOD GOVERNANCE UNIT: NATURE OF COMPLAINTS

Between April and June, the Good Governance Unit (GGU) received a total of 20 complaints, with 12 either closed or suspended, 9 ongoing, and 1 referred externally. Most complaints were lodged against Government Ministries (10) and State-Owned Enterprises (9), with one complaint involving a private company. The majority of complainants were male (16), and 80% of complaints (16) were received in person, while 20% (4) were submitted through the online complaint form.



GGU INVESTIGATIONS FOR APRIL – JUNE

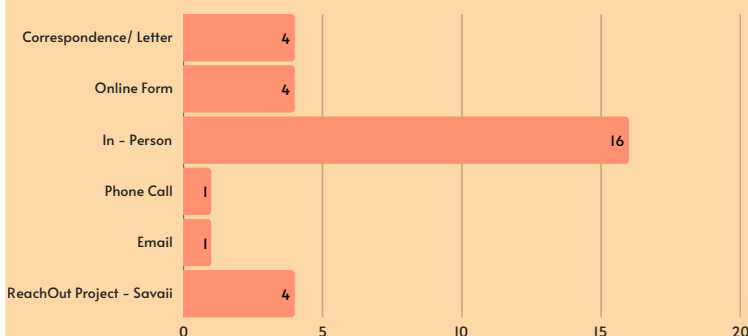
CASES CLOSED

CASES REFERRAL

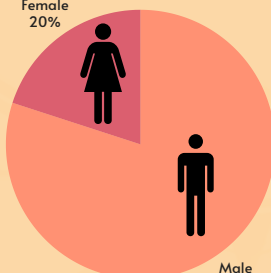
CASES SUSPENDED

CASES ONGOING

COMPLAINT LODGED ONLINE



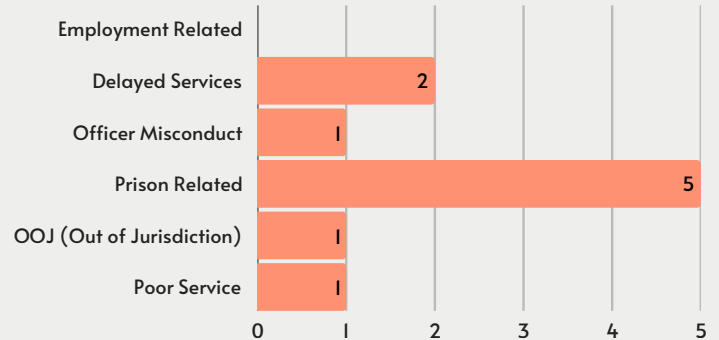
Female
20%



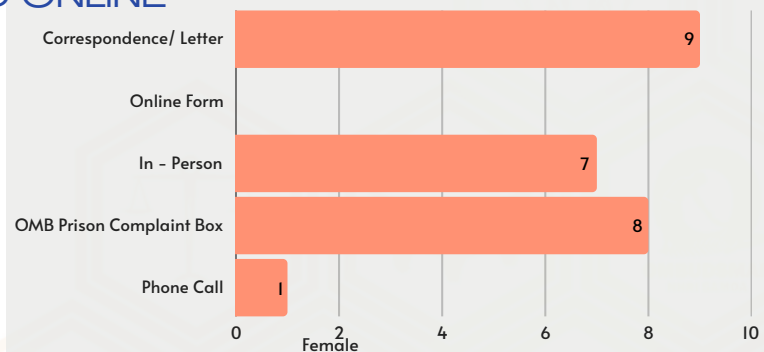
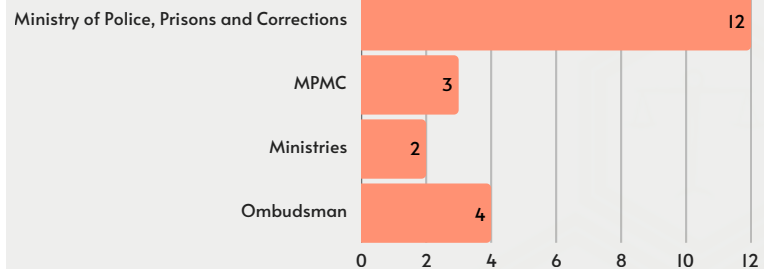
GENDER COMPLAINT

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT: NATURE OF COMPLAINTS

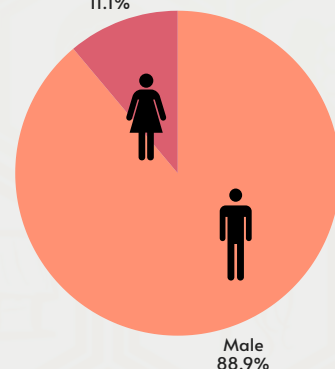
Between April and June 2026, the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) recorded 21 complaints, with X resolved through early resolution, 3 referred, 6 closed, 3 monitored, and 1 remaining active. Most complaints concerned prison matters, officer misconduct, and poor service, with one case found to be out of jurisdiction.



COMPLAINTS DURING THIS PERIOD WERE LODGED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING ENTITIES:



Female
11.1%



COMPLAINT HANDLING

YOUR VOICE MATTERS: HOW TO LODGE A COMPLAINT?

If you have been **treated unfairly** by a government ministry, public body, or official, the Office of the Ombudsman is here to help.

You can lodge your complaint by:



- Visiting our office: Level 2, SNPF Plaza, Savalalo
- Writing a LETTER and address: The Office of the Ombudsman Samoa, PO BOX 3036, APIA, Samoa
- Calling: (+685) 25394 & 23317
- Emailing: complaints@ombudsman.gov.ws OR
- Filling a complaint form on our website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.ws/lodge-a-complaint/>

Please visit our website for our full complaint handling process
<https://www.ombudsman.gov.ws>



Good Governance Unit (GGU)

Purpose of the Good Governance Unit

- 1 The Good Governance Unit aims to ensure that public institutions effectively deliver their mandates while satisfying public expectations. It focuses on promoting principles such as transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in governance.

Core Attributes of Good Governance

- 2 Key attributes of good governance include transparency in actions, accountability to the public, responsible management of resources, active participation of citizens, and responsiveness to the people's needs. These elements are fundamental in fostering trust and integrity in governmental functions.

Limitations of Investigation

- 3 The Good Governance Unit does not have jurisdiction over private individuals, court decisions, or statutory tribunal outcomes. Additionally, it may refuse to investigate complaints based on criteria such as the existence of another remedy, the age of the complaint, and lack of public interest.

ALL OUR SERVICES ARE FREE OF CHARGE !!



SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU)



RECEIVING, INVESTIGATING AND DETERMINING ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT A POLICE OFFICER, PRISON OFFICER OR OFFICER OF OTHER PRESCRIBED DISCIPLINED FORCE;



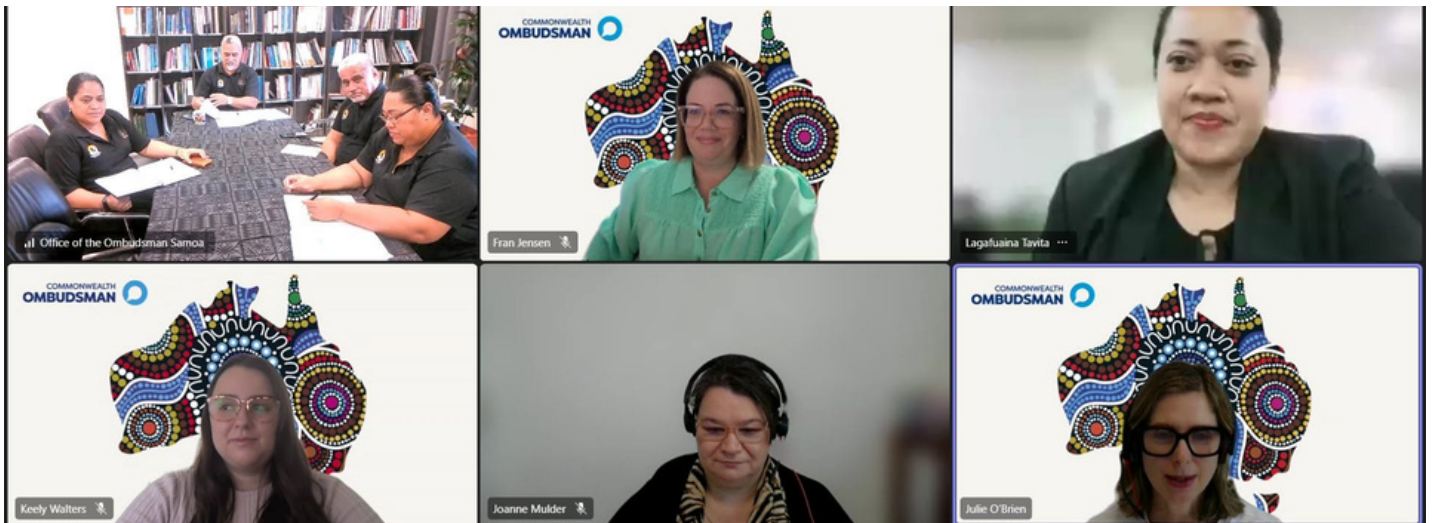
CARRYING OUT ANY OTHER FUNCTIONS, DUTIES OR POWERS UNDER ANY OTHER ACT OR AS ARE PRESCRIBED BY REGULATIONS.



Meeting with the Commonwealth Ombudsman - 16 April 2026



Management team members connecting with Australian colleagues via Zoom



Collaboration and learning between offices was the order of the day when our Office participated in a fruitful and engaging Zoom meeting with the Commonwealth Ombudsman based in Canberra, Australia. The virtual discussion brought together representatives to exchange ideas, experiences, and best practices on matters relating to accountability, transparency, and good governance.

During the meeting, participants discussed common challenges and opportunities in strengthening oversight mechanisms and improving public service delivery within their respective jurisdictions. The discussion also highlighted the importance of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and continuous learning in promoting integrity and public trust in government institutions.

The meeting provided a valuable platform to strengthen professional relationships and reaffirm a shared commitment to serving communities effectively and responsibly.

The Office appreciated the opportunity to engage with international counterparts and looked forward to continued collaboration, future exchanges, and mutual learning initiatives that would further enhance the work of both institutions in the years ahead.

HUMAN RIGHTS

NHRI Advancement Workshop

14 - 16 April 2026 | Fiji, Suva

During the three-day Pacific NHRI Advancement Workshop, the Office joined regional NHRIs and government representatives to strengthen National Human Rights Institutions across the Pacific. Discussions focused on the Paris Principles, accreditation, legislative development, and national roadmaps. Our office is the only Austral Pacific NHRI and as such we were reinforced the importance of regional cooperation, peer learning, and knowledge sharing in advancing human rights, with support from the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) and the Pacific Community (SPC).



(L -R) Phaedra Lameko (Senior Human Rights Officer), SIU Director Lagafuaina Tavita and FHRADC Director Loukinikini Lewaravu (Human Rights Commission Fiji)

Women, Peace and Security Programme

27 May 2026

The Office participated in the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Programme, where it presented its constitutional mandate and role in promoting human rights, good governance, and addressing maladministration. The session highlighted the importance of protecting the rights of women and girls, promoting inclusive leadership, and strengthening access to justice. It also reinforced the value of collaboration with government and civil society in advancing equality, human rights, and peaceful, inclusive communities.



(Above) Workshop Participants with Phaedra Lameko (Senior Human Rights Advisor), Rachel Chadwick (Human Rights Lawyer) & Taalo Leota Taalo (Principal Investigations Officer SIU)



info@ombudsman.gov.ws



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[SamoaOMBNHRI](https://twitter.com/SamoaOMBNHRI)



Youtube

[Samoa Office of the Ombudsman NHRI](https://www.youtube.com/SamoaOfficeoftheOmbudsmanNHRI)



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HUMAN RIGHTS

Friendly Schools Programme - Savaii

8 -12 June 2026

College students across Savai'i learned about their fundamental human rights through the 2026 Friendly Schools Program, an innovative outreach program from the Office of the Ombudsman. The programme is part of the Office's ongoing commitment to promoting human rights education throughout Samoa.

Year 9, 10 and 11 students participated in four interactive learning stations covering the following themes:

- The Right to Education
- The Right to Health
- The Right to Security
- Human Rights in a Digital World

Each student received a Human Rights Passport, which included a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) together with interactive questions that encouraged discussion and reinforced key human rights concepts.

Students actively participated in each session, demonstrating enthusiasm and a growing understanding of their rights and responsibilities. By understanding their rights, students developed greater confidence to speak out against unfair treatment, showed increased respect for the rights of others, recognised that rights are accompanied by responsibilities, and became more aware of where to seek assistance when their rights are at risk.

The Office of the Ombudsman extends its sincere appreciation to the students, principals, teachers, and staff of Vaiola College, Tuasivi College, Uesiliana College, and Don Bosco College for their warm hospitality, active participation, and commitment to promoting human rights education. Their support contributed significantly to the success of the 2026 Friendly Schools Programme in Savai'i.



Vaiola College



Tuasivi College



Don Bosco College



Uesiliana College

DIGITAL RIGHTS IN SAMOA WORKSHOP | OMB CAPACITY BUILDING – 30 APRIL, 2026



The growing impact of digital media and the wider digital environment on the Office was the topic of a staff capacity-building programme held on 30 April. Staff members completed an online course on Digital Rights for National Human Rights Institutions prior to the in-house workshop which was facilitated by the Engagement & Communications' team member and Australian Volunteer Lisa Wyld.

The training explored the growing impact of digital rights on the work of the Office and key topics discussed included privacy, access to information, online safety, and the importance of protecting human rights in an increasingly digital society.

The session also encouraged meaningful discussions on how digital rights can coexist with fa'asamoa, ensuring that cultural values and traditions continue to be respected while promoting and upholding the rights and freedoms of all people.

COMMUNITY BOOTH – 7 - 8 MAY, 2026



As part of its ongoing commitment to bring its services closer to the people, the Office of the Ombudsman returned to Savai'i to host another Community Booth and provided members of the public with the opportunity to learn more about the Office's role in promoting good governance, protecting human rights, and investigating complaints of maladministration. Staff were available to answer enquiries, provide information on complaint procedures, and assist individuals wishing to lodge complaints or seek guidance.

IN-HOUSE MATTERS

NUS GRADUATION RECOGNITION – 1 APRIL, 2026



Congratulations to two of the Office's staff members who each graduated with a Post-Graduate Certificate in Executive Leadership from the National University of Samoa on 1 April 2026.

Ms. Muliagatele Loau Davina Rasch-Salanoa, Director of the Corporate Services Unit, and Ms. Nepa Camilla Papalii-Saua, Principal Investigations Officer of the Good Governance Unit have both shown dedication, discipline, and commitment to professional excellence. The achievement also highlighted the Office's continued investment in developing strong and capable leaders who are equipped to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of the organisation and public service sector.

The Office acknowledges and extends appreciation to the Samoa Public Service Commission through the Samoa Scholarships Programme for supporting their studies and providing opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.

OFFICE PROMOTIONAL VIDEO ADVERTISEMENT – 25 JUNE, 2026



As part of its ongoing commitment to raising public awareness, the Office of the Ombudsman produced a new promotional video advertisement showcasing its mandate, functions, and services. The video aims to increase public understanding of the Office's role in promoting good governance, protecting human rights, and investigating complaints of maladministration.

The Office extends its sincere appreciation to Passion Studios for the production, Young Sefa of Hamo FM for his outstanding role as the presenter, and Maria Enosa, Sign Language Interpreter from NOLA/WIDI, whose contribution helped ensure the video is accessible and inclusive for all members of the community. To watch the advert : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOxdAAZUxuk>

MO NI ISI FA'AMATALAGA - FOR MORE INFORMATION

O FEA E TU AI LE TATOU OFISA O SULUFA'IGA - WHERE WE ARE LOCATED



Afio mai: Fogafale 2, SNPF Plaza



Come see us: Level 2, SNPF Plaza

A TU'UINA MAI SAU FA'ASEĀ - TO LODGE A COMPLAINT



Vala'au mai: 25394

Call us: 25394

**Lodging a
Complaint**



Tusi mai i le imeli / Email us:
complaints@ombudsman.gov.ws



Submit the online form on our website:
www.ombudsman.gov.ws

OUR SERVICES ARE FREE !!