

*A Christmas and New Year message from Dr Colin Tukuitonga*

As 2011 draws to a close I would like to thank colleagues, supporters, staff and friends, and share some highlights.

Last year was one of remarkable social and economic volatility worldwide. But despite the flow-on effects in New Zealand the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs chalked up some notable successes. We'd like to share some of our 2011 highlights with you, optimistic that we will continue to build on them in 2012.

Hard times inevitably and disproportionately affect the lower-skilled and unskilled. Recognising this we're proud to be giving a hand-up to 335 young Pacific people through our PESS (Pacific Employment Support Services) project. Some will go on to complete apprenticeships or other skills training, others have their first job or, sometimes, a better job. Nearly a third of those enrolled since the scheme started are now in employment or further training.

Our research team is also working to help ensure good jobs for young Pacific people. They're now into year two of a three-year study to help tease out the link between subject choices and future careers. And, commissioned by the EEO Trust, we've published research to guide employers in getting the best out of their young Pacific staff.

There's a compelling logic to focusing on our young people – increasingly they are the future not only for our communities but for New Zealand. As the overall population ages our young people will come into their own as workers, consumers, voters and citizens. With this in mind we have also worked to recognise and nurture leadership.

A field of high-calibre entrants for the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Awards saw one sponsor decide to grant three awards. That meant the 2011 awards recognised six outstanding young people with demonstrable leadership potential. We also completed a leadership training course for Pacific public servants, the success of which has prompted over-subscription to a second run. The first alumni are now looking at producing a Pacific leadership guide, both to help others and to provide insight for non-Pacific employers and agencies.



Season's Greetings

Fakaalofa lahi atu

Talofa lava

Malo e lelei

Bula vinaka

Kia orana

Taloha ni

Kia ora

We've continued financial literacy work which grew out of the NZ-Pacific Remittance Project, presenting MoneyPACIFIC financial tips and information in a bilingual wall calendar.



This year we printed 120,000, with versions for Samoa, Tonga, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Twenty-seven thousand copies go to NZ-based communities, who use them as a fundraiser. We've also run a financial literacy pilot programme with a small group

of Tongans, designed to lead them towards home ownership.

RWC2011 provided a unique opportunity for not only showcasing our prowess on the park but our diverse cultures, enterprises and communities. I am proud of the way New Zealand's Pacific people stamped their mark on this festival, both on and off the field, and of our role in helping them to do so.

We've thought about how best to build and use our connections with Pacific communities, initiating a series of strategic dialogues with church leaders, facilitating meetings between community leaders and government, and supporting pan-Pacific education interest group, *Raise Pasifika*. We co-hosted meetings with the Pacific Peoples Advisory Panel to encourage Pacific submissions on Auckland Council's Auckland Spatial Plan and Green Paper, and are continuing to push for a Pacific focus in this work.

We've also focused strongly on the need to protect and promote Pacific languages, hosting nationwide fono to help shape our *Pacific Languages Framework*. We broadcast in seven different Pacific languages each fortnight, helped with the first-ever Tongan Language Week, and supported Niuean and Tokelauan communities to produce language-learning resources.



Our team has worked hard in earthquake-stricken Christchurch, initially using Pacific radio and taking mobile service vans out to communities. Later we set up a one-stop-shop, the Pacific Hub, in Aranui. They worked tirelessly to make sure communities registered for Red Cross and other assistance, despite the earthquake's effect on their own lives.

Gauging success is often problematic, but we took heart from results of a stakeholder survey in April in which more than 100 stakeholders reported a high degree of satisfaction with our work.

We look forward to even better results in 2012, and to working with many of you to achieve them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Tukuitonga'.

Colin Tukuitonga  
Chief Executive