

The sounds of the drums from the Pacific known either as the Lali or the Pātē or the Nafa is one that has become synonymous with Polynesia. Its rhythm echoes a style that is uniquely their own. For many Pacific Island nations the drum is a tool of communication used to unite, entertain and inform their people. The symbolism of the drum is why the Department of Social Welfare has entitled its strategy document for Pacific Island peoples the Lali, Pātē, Nafa. Like the Lali, Pātē or Nafa this document is seen as a tool of communication that will be used to inform and unite the Department in achieving its strategy for the employment and service delivery needs of Pacific Island peoples. Like the Lali, Pātē or Nafa this document will communicate a style of understanding that is uniquely our own.

Foreword

In 1994, the Department of Social Welfare published “Te Punga - Our Bicultural Strategy for the Nineties”. This built on the foundations of “Puao-te-Ata-tu”, the 1986 Report of a Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare.



In my foreword to Te Punga I stated that I could not envisage how the Department could provide sensitive and fully accessible services to the people of New Zealand without a strong bicultural awareness and the application of the principles underlying the Treaty of Waitangi, Puao-te-Ata-tu and the State Sector Act of 1988. I stated also that my vision is for a Department which contributes to, and reflects, a fair and just society where there is equality of opportunity.

When we were going through the process of introducing “Te Punga” many Pacific Islands staff asked when a similar approach was planned to take account of their needs and those of their people. The Department has quite large numbers of Pacific Islands staff - particularly in the Auckland region.

In response to the request General Managers and I met with Pacific Islands staff throughout the country during the first half of 1995 at a series of fonotaga. The purpose of the discussions was to identify what strategies the Department of Social Welfare should adopt which will improve the employment conditions for Pacific Islands staff and the relevance of services to Pacific Islands peoples. The focus of the discussions was on the areas of management, staff matters and sensitivity to customers.

In terms of my responsibilities under the State Sector Act “good employer” provisions I have an obligation to ensure that staff from all ethnic groups are provided with equality of opportunity in advancing their career aspirations.

We know that Pacific Islands people are disproportionately represented in the client base for both Income Support and the Children, Young Persons and their Families Service (although there is insufficient hard data to quantify this). When, many years ago, I worked in Auckland as a Public Health Nurse I was in contact with

many of the Pacific Islands people who were arriving in New Zealand looking forward to a new life with prosperity. Many subsequently found difficulties in coping here during a period of economic downturn. Now that the economy is improving we can play our part in helping to ensure that their aspirations are realised. I look to a commitment from all staff throughout the Department to work in support of this goal. In departmental terms this will mean ensuring that:

- our policy development takes account of the needs and aspirations of Pacific Islands peoples;
- our service delivery is sensitive to the cultural preferences of Pacific Islands peoples; and
- the Department is transformed so that Pacific Islands staff can be themselves at work rather than “honorary palagi”.

“Lali”, our strategy for Pacific Island staff and clients, is built upon the foundation of Puaote-Ata-tu and has the firm commitment of all of the Department’s senior management. The name was so chosen because we wish it to send out the message of our commitment. The strategy is a compilation of sub-strategies presented as short-term (year 1) and medium-term (1 - 3 year) undertakings. Some of the issues that arose are, I believe, so important that decisions should be made immediately. These issues are responded to by way of policy statements which appear on page 7.

This document is, as far as I know, the first of its kind in the public sector. As the Government Department with the most contact with Pacific Islands peoples and employing the most Pacific Islands staff it is appropriate that we should take a lead in addressing the issues set out in this booklet. We in the Department of Social Welfare have a collective responsibility to implement our strategy effectively and see to it that it works.



Margaret Bazley
Director-General of Social Welfare

Introduction

It is probably fair to say that most New Zealand adults have grown up with a mono-cultural perspective. Many think of Pacific Islands people as one people. This is a bit like regarding Europeans as one people. And yet we all recognise that the French people are not the same as the German or Spanish or Italian or Swiss people. So it is with Pacific Islands people.

New Zealand is itself a Pacific Islands nation. As the largest of the Pacific Islands nations, New Zealand has an indigenous tangata whenua and a richly varied assortment of immigrant peoples who arrived here during the past two centuries from, amongst other places, Britain, Europe, Asia, the Americas and the other Pacific Islands.

For the purposes of this booklet we are concerned with the peoples of six Pacific Island nations - Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, Niuē, Fiji and Tokelau.

Samoans make up the largest Pacific Islands group in New Zealand comprising 53 percent of this country's total Pacific Islands population. The population figures¹ comprise:

Samoans	85,743
Cook Islanders	37,857
Tongans	23,175
Niuēans	14,424 <small>6 times larger than the population of Niuē</small>
Fijians	5,097
Tokelauans	4,146

It is important for us to understand that just as we must recognise the importance of acknowledging cultural differences between Pacific Islands people and other New Zealand citizens, we must also recognise the differences between one Pacific Islands people and another.

A brief outline of some of the differences amongst Pacific Islands groups appears in the appendix. All staff are encouraged to read whatever material can be found in libraries about the lifestyles and cultures of Pacific Islands peoples, our close neighbours and, in substantial numbers, our fellow citizens.

In “Te Punga”, the Department’s Bicultural Strategy for the Nineties, emphasis was put on “getting it right” for Maori. In the same way we should be aware that getting it right for Pacific Islands peoples means, for example:

- Pacific Islands perspectives are a key part of policy development and service delivery.
- The Department must be an organisation in which Pacific Islands staff are comfortable in the workplace.
- Pacific Islands staff have equal access to employment opportunities within the Department.
- Cultural skills are utilised effectively and recognised.
- All staff are culturally aware and sensitive to Pacific Islands needs, customs and issues.
- There is active promotion of policies and practices which will result in improved outcomes and greater well-being for Pacific Islands people.

This booklet sets out an overall Department of Social Welfare framework for the application of Puaote-Atatu to Pacific Island people. Each business unit will develop its own approach to fit within the departmental framework. Each is responsible for ensuring that our strategy will succeed.



The Relevance of Puaote-Atatu

Puaote-Atatu is fundamentally about the nature of the relationship which should exist between the Department of Social Welfare and Maori. That relationship still requires a lot of effort on the part of the Department and “getting it right” with Maori continues to be our first commitment. However, in the development of Puaote-Atatu, it was recognised and acknowledged that the principles involved in getting it right with Maori should be able to be applied to all minority groups.

The essential spirit of Puaote-Atatu lies in its commitment to partnership. It looks to the needs, interests and aspirations of Maori within the wider New Zealand society in which all peoples have a share. It seeks justice and equity. It seeks an end to racism, not the substitution of one form for another. It recognises the inherent dignity of Maori **and of all people** and sees a need for Maori to break away from a cycle of dependency. This same need applies to New Zealand’s Pacific Island peoples.

The principles of Puaote-Atatu, which are relevant to the Department’s relationship with Pacific Islands people, have to do with:

- A commitment to end all forms of racism.
- Incorporating the values, cultures and beliefs of the Maori people (and other major minority groups) in all policies.
- Attacking and eliminating deprivation and alienation.
- Ensuring that departmental recruitment, staffing and training policies do not disadvantage Maori and Pacific Islands people.
- Recognising and utilising appropriately different skills of Maori and Pacific Islands staff.
- Ensuring that communication practices take account of the needs of Maori and other ethnic groups.
- Promoting/funding schemes which harness the initiative of Maori, Pacific Islands people and the wider community to address problems.
- Ensuring effective coordination of planning, policy, and practice to tackle serious economic and social problems.

Our Strategic Direction

The strategies which follow on from the Policy Statement below are based to a considerable extent on the fono recommendations. Priority will be given to addressing four broad categories - policy and service delivery, management, staff matters and sensitivity to customer needs - which require attention in order to give proper effect to our cultural awareness approach. Short and medium term strategies have been identified for each of the latter three categories.

Progress with implementing these strategies will be monitored and reported on regularly.

Statement on Policy and Service Delivery

The Department of Social Welfare aims to be an organisation that is culturally aware and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Pacific Islands people. It accepts that this involves a shift in attitudes and a revision of the cultural assumptions which underpin social policy and planning of service delivery. It is not simply a matter of adding a Pacific Islands flavour to existing assumptions. The challenge is to ensure that our advice to Government, and our service delivery planning, addresses Pacific Islands people's needs in ways that are appropriate for each Pacific Island grouping.

Policies for Immediate Implementation

The following policy statements have been developed following discussions at fono and are effective immediately. They will be incorporated into the Human Resource handbooks, guidelines and codes of the Department and its constituent businesses as appropriate.

Bereavement Leave

The Department recognises the obligations Pacific Islands staff have at the time of a family bereavement and managers are expected to be flexible about the period of bereavement leave. This may be particularly so when an employee:

- Has specific responsibilities in relation to the funeral requiring a somewhat prolonged absence; or
- Is required to attend the funeral of a close family member in the Islands.

As a guideline on the definition of what constitutes “family” or “close family”, managers are expected to have regard to the definition used in the departmental publication “Social Services Strategic Directions”, reproduced at Appendix 2 of this document.

Dress Standards

The Department considers it appropriate that dress standards, and in the case of Income Support, corporate wardrobe guidelines, permit the introduction of a Pacific Islands “flavour”.

Pacific Islands staff may wear formal Pacific Islands dress to work provided this is of a standard which is not in conflict with current dress standards policy.

Income Support, in future updates of its corporate wardrobe, will have regard to cultural requirements and expects to incorporate Pacific Islands designs and patterns and include accessories such as combs, hairclips and tie clips.

Pacific Islands Decorations

The Department recognises the value of Pacific Islands decorations, particularly in those offices which serve large Pacific Islands populations and the display of suitable Pacific Islands artwork will be promoted.

Traditional Healers

The Department recognises the validity of the use of traditional healers by Pacific Islands staff and the use of practitioners of alternative medicines by any staff. The Department has a policy on medical and dental appointments and this will be extended to include the use of traditional healers. Under this policy staff are expected to schedule appointments outside work hours. However, when this is not possible, staff will be permitted up to a maximum of three hours for such appointments. Time taken in excess of three hours will need to be made up during the week in which it was taken.

Staff Providing Benefit Services to Family Members

The Department recognises the difficulties faced by its Pacific Islands staff in balancing the conflicting requirements of the Code of Conduct (in relation to the avoidance of conflict of interest) and the Pacific Islands values of family involvement.

Whilst it is unable to relax the rules that apply to the processing by Income Support staff of benefit applications by family members (which are for the protection of both the staff member and the organisation), the Department accepts that it is appropriate for Pacific Islands staff to welcome into the premises clients who are family members. They should then introduce them to the Customer Services staff who will deal with their enquiries and take any necessary steps to ensure that they are at ease. In such cases occurring in the Children, Young Persons and their Families Service, the Pacific Islands staff member may stay with the family member during the process, if that is desired.

Interpreting

Staff should not be called upon to interpret for family during the interview. Interpreters need to be arranged by the office where necessary.

Strategies

The strategies that follow (set out under the categories of Management, Staff Matters and Sensitivity to Customers and Clients) are designed to address the following Key Results Areas:

- Development of culturally appropriate employment and service delivery.
- Design and implementation of special initiatives to improve opportunities for Pacific Islands staff.
- More Pacific Islands staff to progress to policy and management positions.
- Greater awareness of and respect for Pacific Islands cultural norms, language and traditions amongst all staff.
- Provision of helpful and more culturally appropriate information to the Pacific Islands communities with attention to most suitable media.
- Becoming an organisation in which Pacific Islands staff feel valued as Pacific Islands people, and Pacific Islands clients feel understood and supported.
- Implementation of policy and service delivery planning decisions monitored to check that they are achieving the desired outcome for Pacific Islands people.

Short Term Strategies (Year 1)

Management

The Department of Social Welfare is committed to incorporating Pacific Islands perspectives into all of its policies and to providing within the Department an equal employment opportunities environment.

The purpose of the management strategies that follow are to raise levels of awareness amongst managers of the values, cultures and beliefs of Pacific Islands peoples so that management practices and new policies are sensitive to these issues.

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
Lack of understanding about the different and distinct cultures of Pacific Islands staff.	All Managers to attend cultural awareness courses and cross-cultural training for insight into working with Pacific Islands staff and communities.	General Managers
Lack of understanding of the Pacific Islands communities expectations of their people who work in the Department.	Include in all district or area managers' performance agreements a requirement to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish contact and maintain regular liaison with Pacific Islands communities; • Commit themselves to developing and supporting Pacific Islands staff. [These two strategies are designed to address both issues]	General Managers
Under-representation of Pacific Islands staff in policy and management makes it difficult to take account of Pacific Islands perspectives in policy for services as well as for internal policy.	Facilitate collective Pacific Islands input into important management decisions via regional/national fono.	Director-General & General Managers
Lack of communication between staff and management.	Clarification of management structures and communication lines between management and staff/community.	General Managers
Little commitment shown by some Managers to implementing EEO policy.	Implement monitoring programmes designed to ensure that policy is applied in practice to Pacific Islands staff and applicants.	General Managers

The "Issue" column of the section above and each of those sections that follow reflects the points made by Pacific Islands staff who attended the series of fono held in 1995. The "Strategy" column represents the Department's acceptance of that issue as one it should address - and its undertaking to do so.

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
The high number of Pacific Islands staff being employed on short term contracts rather than in permanent positions.	Policies on use of temporary staff to be clarified	HR Managers
Lack of recognition for culturally appropriate support structures for staff to ensure high level of service delivery.	<p>Provide culturally appropriate supervision for all staff (ie supervisors are to be culturally aware)</p> <p>Assess the feasibility of developing Pacific Islands models of social and community work practise.</p> <p>Investigate the implications and appropriateness of a Pacific Islands Team in office structures</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>Local Managers IS, CYPFS</p> <p>General Manager CYPFS</p>
Lack of Pacific Islands community representation on district planning sessions	Management to investigate and report back to General Managers on the implications of having Pacific Islands community representation on district planning sessions.	Local Managers IS, CYPFS

Staff Matters

Strategies relating to staff matters are designed to ensure that departmental recruitment, staffing and training policies do not disadvantage Pacific Islands staff and, where appropriate, recognise and utilise their special skills.

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
<p>Lack of structured career development for Pacific Islands staff :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited choices • Lack of funding • Lack of commitment from management. 	<p>Carry out a training needs analysis for Pacific Islands staff.</p> <p>Identify funding requirements to meet training needs identified.</p> <p>The Department will investigate fast-track schemes which might include, for Pacific Islands staff with potential, concurrent full-time study/ work in middle management.</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p>
<p>Lack of courses directly targeted to Pacific Islands staff focused on their own cultural growth.</p>	<p>Encourage Pacific Islands staff to attend courses for their personal cultural development.</p> <p>Release staff to attend outside training.</p>	<p>General Managers</p>
<p>Role and responsibilities of the Pacific Islands Unit is not widely known.</p> <p>Need for the Pacific Islands Unit to be more proactive on Pacific Islands issues.</p>	<p>Develop a pamphlet outlining the role and functions of the Pacific Islands Unit.</p>	<p>Corporate Communications/ Pacific Islands Unit</p>
<p>There is no recognition of language skills of staff speakers of Pacific Islands languages who are called on for translation and interpretation services.</p>	<p>Building on existing provision for recognising language skills, investigate the implementation of the use of language skills as an element in performance objectives and assessments so that it becomes part of the normal performance-based remuneration process.</p>	<p>General Managers & HR Managers</p>
<p>Language skills not recognised in remuneration on the basis that staff have not been certified as translators.</p>	<p>Facilitate opportunities for Pacific Islands staff who choose to attend certification courses for translators.</p> <p>Develop clear guidelines/policy direction on interpreting work.</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Manager Corporate Support and Development</p>

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
<p>Lack of communication about availability of training courses.</p> <p>Pacific Islands staff not advised of funding availability for training for staff.</p> <p>No transparent process for seeking approval for training.</p>	<p>National offices to provide regular information on training opportunities. All staff to have access to information on the process for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking training opportunities • Obtaining approval and funding for attending chosen training courses • Having the process reviewed if a training request has been declined 	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p>
<p>Recruitment, Retention and Promotion.</p>	<p>Identify Pacific Islands staff with management potential. Allocate a coach or mentor to work with such staff to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriate training and career plan is developed; • Plans are reviewed regularly • Learning and work skills objectives are being achieved as planned. 	<p>General Managers</p>
<p>The current selection interview process places Pacific Islands people at a disadvantage.</p>	<p>In cases where a Pacific Islands perspective is appropriate or a requirement, all interview panels have a Pacific Islands representative on the panel who is involved in all stages of the selection and interview process. Also ensure that the Pacific Islands representative has been engaged on the basis that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know something about the area of work in which the appointee will operate • Are familiar with the needs of the local area • Are able to assess applicants' commitment to a bicultural approach. • Ensure that the interview process is sensitive to Pacific Islands applicants. 	<p>General Managers</p>
<p>Payment of overtime preferred to time in lieu when Pacific Islands staff visit community groups outside of work hours.</p>	<p>Have consideration given to the implications for Business Units making overtime payments instead of granting time off in lieu.</p>	<p>General Manager Corporate Support and Development</p>

Sensitivity to Customers/Clients

The Department is committed to provide a service that its Pacific Islands customers and clients can easily access, and an environment in which they will feel comfortable. Our services should be customer-friendly and the form of communications we use should be sensitive to the users' needs and easily understandable.

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
The use of form letters is inappropriate for Pacific Islands people, particularly those for whom English is a second language.	<p>The Department's services to be made more accessible to Pacific Islands people through liaison officers who speak their language.</p> <p>Identify language in written communication that is ambiguous and make it more direct.</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers and Corporate Communications</p>
Services need to be presented in a more positive way to customers/clients.	Develop and implement a community awareness/public relations campaign.	General Managers
Customer/client work should be done by mutual agreement.	Income Support to consider the practicality of the income support customer being offered an element of choice (subject to HR policies on Page 8 and the mutual agreement of the staff member) about who will serve them.	General Manager IS
Pacific Islands people who have English as a second language have some difficulties in accessing services or understanding entitlements.	<p>Arrange, wherever possible, for fluent Pacific Island language speakers to be available to assist customers/clients.</p> <p>Develop pamphlets, tape recordings, video presentations in Pacific Islands languages explaining services and entitlements.</p> <p>Provide better community communications through the use of Pacific Islands forms of media for distribution/dissemination of information. Media to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific Islands radio • Pacific Islands newspapers • Television <p>and direct networking within Pacific Islands communities.</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p>

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
<p>The workplace environment is not customer-friendly for Pacific Islands people.</p>	<p>Implement consultation with customers/clients on changes that could be made to DSW offices in order to create a more customer-friendly atmosphere.</p> <p>Develop a process for accessing departmental services which minimises the obstacles and barriers for Pacific Islands people.</p> <p>Provide, to the fullest extent possible, signage in different languages within and around offices.</p>	<p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p> <p>General Managers</p>
<p>Lack of Pacific Islands input into DSW policy.</p>	<p>Institute procedures for ensuring collective Pacific Islands input into policy decisions (staff and community).</p>	<p>General Manager Social Policy Agency</p>

Medium Term Strategies (Years 1 to 3)

Management

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
Under-representation of Pacific Islands staff in policy and management makes it difficult to take account of Pacific Islands perspectives in policy for services as well as for internal policy.	Encourage exchanges between National and District offices/ branches, bringing Pacific Islands staff into National Offices. Pacific Islands staff in districts/areas to engage in more direct networking with Pacific Islands staff in National Offices.	General Managers Pacific Islands staff
The self-assessment component of the Performance Appraisal process is not appropriate to Pacific Islands people and is therefore insensitive to their respective cultures.	Investigate amendments to the Performance Appraisal process to make it more appropriate and suitable for Pacific Islands staff.	General Managers

Staff Matters

Issue	Strategy	Responsibility
There are no internal management development programmes available for Pacific Islands staff.	DSW will aim to provide at least one bursary per annum per business unit for Pacific Islands staff to attend management courses.	General Managers
Lack of Pacific Islands trainers.	Seek assistance of suitable Pacific Islands people to contribute to training programmes.	General Managers
Induction training for all staff should include cultural awareness training.	Induction training for all staff to include cultural awareness training.	General Managers
Lack of opportunities for Pacific Islands staff to negotiate transferring amongst business units of the Department.	Secondments of staff around different business units e.g. TRITEC, SPA, National Offices. (This could apply to all staff). Recruitment of staff should reflect the make-up of the customer/client base.	General Managers General Managers
Limited opportunity to network with other Pacific Islands staff across the Department locally, regionally and nationally.	Organise Fonotaga on an annual basis (within, and perhaps across, business units) having regard to year 1 strategy for regional and national fono.	General Managers

The term “Pacific Islands Nations” itself signifies the uniqueness of each Pacific Island group’s way of life. Each group has a structure and a cultural system based on two categories for social control:

- The category of ideas which reflects a notion of culture as not observable - something which is internal but which also can be explicitly described (i.e. values, beliefs).
- The category of behaviours and products which reflect a notion of culture as observable (i.e. phenomena such as language, customs, habits, food, arts, folklore, music).

The following examples help to illustrate cultural differences amongst Pacific Islands peoples -

1. The Kingdom of Tonga has a noble system of 31 noble titles which relate to their lands. Tonga’s village/kainga (extended family) structure is based on:

- Father is always the head of the family.
- Elders are masters of the young.
- Sisters are socially superior to brothers.

2. Samoa has a matai (two tier chiefly) hierarchical system (totally different from the Tongan structure) based on Titles and Lands (Fanua ma Suafa). Even though its power and authority has been diluted by Christian philosophies, the Aiga (clan) structure and support system is strong in decision-making and self management.

3. Tokelau comprises three jealously independent atolls: Atafu, Nukunono and Fakaofu. The Tokelau system is based on the Faipule ma Toeaina (village elected leaders and representatives) as a ruling body for each atoll. In turn, elected representatives from each atoll make up the (National) Fono a Faipule ma Toeaina (Parliament). The village/kaiga (extended family) structure for self management is based on the Toeaina (elder) as the leader of the kaiga (extended family).

4. Niuē - Its village system is based on the authority of the Magafaoa (Family Unit). Unique to Niuē, the Ulu-Magafaoa (elderly male) directs the Magafaoa in decision-making and self management. (Currently, on a larger scale, Niuē is structured into Church Leaders who take care of the spiritual affairs of the people, and the Village Council which, with government involvement, deals with lands and village affairs).

5. Cook Islands - The Cook Islands is made up of 15 islands. The 15 islands are split up into two groups, the Northern and the Southern Groups. The Southern Groups comprises Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Mangaia, Atiu, Manuae, Mauke, Mitiaro and Takutea.

Departmental effort aimed at achieving these social service outcomes is drawn from the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989. This Act is premised on the belief that extended state involvement in the lives of children, young people and their families is likely to have harmful effects on their well-being and disrupt or destroy family relationships. Thus, intervention must be the minimum necessary to resolve care and protection or offending matters. Also, intervention must be done in a way that strengthens families and their ability to look after their own.

While this approach may seem to apply only to social work activities, it should also apply to general welfare services purchased by the Department. Individual and family responsibility, and state assistance to enhance their ability to resolve their own crises, is the only sustainable option in delivering or purchasing social services in all areas the Department is involved in.

With this as the context then, what should our overall vision be for social services development and delivery over the next ten years? It is proposed that the vision for social services is:

That all families are meeting their care, control and support responsibilities

where

families means groups and individuals which are primary sources of interpersonal support and guidance, including kinship groups, enduring relationships of mutual commitment between couples, and enduring networks of friendship

and

care, control and support responsibilities means the responsibilities of families to ensure the emotional, mental and physical well-being of their members, including setting boundaries which promote responsibility and self-reliance, and giving good advice, guidance and counsel which promote social contribution.