

PSC CIRCULAR NO 34/2006

To : Chief Executive Officers and
Heads of Departments

File : PSC5/55
Date: 12/9/06

Subject : APPLICATIONS FOR FIJI GOVERNMENT IN-SERVICE
TRAINING SPONSORSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2007 – FIRST
SEMESTER STUDIES AT USP AND FIT

1.0 PURPOSE

One of the core responsibilities of the Public Service Commission is to enhance capacity building and productivity in the public sector aligned to the **Manpower Development and Training needs** and **government's EEO policy**. Thus, the PSC will be considering applications for sponsorship from serving officers to pursue studies at the institutions as at **2.0**, who meet the **eligibility criteria** as at 3.0 for studies commencing *Semester 1, 2006*.

2.0 INSTITUTIONS FOR SPONSORSHIP

2.1 *University of the South Pacific* – Sponsorship is provided for studies in the following categories

- (i) Full time
- (ii) Part-time
- (iii) Distance & Flexibility Learning (DFL)

2.2 *Fiji Institute of Technology* – Full time studies.

3.0 AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be complied by the government agencies in reference 2.1 and 2.2:

- To enable the Commission to short list officers for consideration, thus, it is important **for the agencies to submit their Human Resource Training and Development Plan** aligned to their agencies Strategic and Corporate Plans reflecting priority areas of study programmes that would enable agencies to meet the occupational & organizational needs.
- The Agency Heads are requested to submit in writing the names of **recommended candidates in priority order in reference to 2.1 and 2.2**.
- Training Needs Analysis and Training Nomination Selection forms (TNA/TNS) in respect of recommended officer.
- Certified copy of Birth Certificates – Officers must be under 45years of age by 30/11/06.
- Letter of confirmation of appointment. Must be confirmed and have served at least three years in the service after the date of confirmation.
- Attach certified copies of transcripts for all units completed to-date
- Attach copy of letter of acceptance from the institution, confirming admission to the course programme & units pursued.

4.0 The Agency Heads must inform the Commission in writing in respect of the officers recommended for full time studies whether their release is under:

(1) **GO 717(b) (iii) – Leave without Salary**

(2) **GO 900(b) (i) – Leave with Salary**

5.0 **UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AWARDS**

5.1 **FULL-TIME NEW AWARDS**

5.1.1 There will be a limited number of new awards for Full Time studies and consideration will only be given to the priority areas as reflected in the agencies Human Resource Training and Development Plan.

- i) Sponsorship for a maximum of three (3) units will be considered provided an officer has successfully passed at least ten course units towards the degree or five course units towards diploma programmes at USP. **Preference will be given to those who are left with only one or two semesters to complete their studies.**
- ii) Sponsorship will cover tuition, book allowance and student association fees. All other cost to be borne by the officer.
- iii) Officers are required to make their own arrangements for registration with the institution.
- iv) Officers are reminded that their release for full-time studies will not be accepted as a ground for refusing a posting or transfer to another station or institution.
- v) Officers will be bonded prior to being released for studies

6.0 **CONTINUING AWARDS**

6.1.1 Officers already sponsored for Full-Time, Part-Time and Distance and Flexible Learning will only be considered for a continuing award; if the officer(s) academic performance and results for the previous semester have been satisfactory, with a pass rate of 50% and above. Achievement below 50% will result in the termination of the award.

6.1.2 In addition to the above *officers sponsored for three units on a full time basis who fail two units will result in the termination of the award.*

6.1.3 Sponsorship for continuing award will be subject to availability of funds.

7.0 **PART- TIME AWARDS**

7.1.1 Sponsorship for Part-time studies will be considered if an officer has successfully attained more than one unit on their own.

7.1.2 Officers undertaking part-time studies, continuation of sponsorship will depend on the successful completion of the sponsored unit and subject to availability of funds. Sponsorship will be for one course per semester in exceptional cases officers may be allowed to take two units (e.g. Where only two courses are required for an officer to complete his/her programme of studies and both these courses are available in one semester only. A confirmation letter from the institution to this effect must be attached.

- 7.1.3. Government will only be responsible for payment of tuition fees, all other fees to be borne by the officers.
- 7.1.4 Officers are advised to enroll for courses for which tuition is held outside normal working hours. Where this is not practical, officers may be given time –off to attend lectures **provided** they make up for the official time (hours) lost through special arrangement with their Agency Head. School teachers should enroll for units offered outside normal school hours.
- 7.1.5 Agencies must ensure that the work flow of the organization is not affected significantly, in the absence of the desk officer(s) pursuing part –time studies.
- 7.1.6 Officers should be released only for a maximum of four (4) hrs in a week and an additional one (1) hr if it requires lab attendance.
- 7.1.7 Absence from work during normal working hours to undertake lectures, tutorials, field visits or lab attendance should be appropriately recorded and monitored by the supervising managers.
- 7.1.8 Officers –in –charge of a Unit, Division or Head of an institution or school **should not** release or recommend an officer for Part /Full –time studies if it is considered that the officer’s absence from work would be disruptive or detrimental in the achievement of work output and goals in the delivery of services.
- 7.1.9 Officers are reminded that their release for part –time studies will not be accepted as a ground for refusing a posting or transfer to another station or institution.

8.0 **DISTANCE AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING (DFL)**

- 8.1 The studies offered through Extension mode by the USP has now been renamed as the “**Distance and Flexible Learning Support**” with the responsibility for all professional aspects of distance learning and teaching.
 - 8.1.1 The purpose of DFL is to enable serving officers, particularly those stationed outside the Central Division to successfully complete the entire academic programme without having to attend on campus lectures.
 - 8.1.2 To facilitate such request, the Commission will be considering *sponsorship for DFL studies only from Officers who are stationed outside the Central Division and have successfully attain more than one unit on their own. Sponsored officers will be exempted from paying tuition fees. All other expenses to be met by the officer.*
 - 8.1.3 Sponsorship for DFL studies from officers in the Central Division will only be considered if the unit(s) is not offered on campus and is compulsory for the officer to complete his/her programme. To facilitate this, a confirmation letter from the institution must be attached.
 - 8.1.4 Officers undertaking DFL studies, continuation of sponsorship will depend on the successful completion of the sponsored unit and subject to availability of funds. Sponsorship will be for one course per semester in exceptional cases officers may be allowed to take two units (e.g. Where only two courses are required for an officer to complete his/her programme of studies and both these courses are available in one semester only. A confirmation letter from the institution to this effect must be attached.

9.0 **SPONSORSHIP FOR FIJI INSTITUTUE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Sponsorship offered at the Fiji Institute of Technology is for full time studies only and consideration will be given in the areas of priority needs as at 3.0 (Agency Requirements.)

9.1 Sponsorship will cover fees for enrolment, tuition, course materials, student association and enhancement.

10.0 **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- 10.1
- (i) Officers should be under the age of 45 years by 30/11/06.
 - (ii) Confirmed in their appointment.
 - (iii) Have served at least three years in the service after the date of confirmation.
 - (iv) Recommended by their CEO/HOD for the course programme aligned to the agencies Human Resource Training & Development Plan.
 - (v) Qualify for admission to the programme applied for.
 - (vi) Attach copy of the letter of acceptance of the course programme from the institution.
 - (vii) Officers to make their own arrangements for registration with the FIT.
 - (viii) Officers who are required by the institution to be attached to an organization as a pre-requisite to the course programme must attach a copy of the letter from the institution whilst seeking approval from the Commission.
 - (ix) Officers will be bonded prior to being released for studies.

11.0 Duly completed attached application forms with relevant documents under covering memorandum for either of the institution to reach the Center for Training & Development on or before **11th November, 2006.** ***Please note that late application (s) will not be considered***

11.1 ***Failure to non- submission of information and documents as per circular and attached form will result in the non- processing of received applications***

12.0 **GENERAL NOTIFICATION**

- (i) Officer (s) who are sponsored either as Full Time, Part –Time or for Distance and Flexible learning studies ***if for some reason(s) is not able to use their sponsorship for the given semester, the sponsorship can not be deferred to the next semester. Officers will need to re -apply when the relevant circular is issued.***
- (ii) Officers applying for sponsorship from other scholarship agencies are required to liaise with their Agency Heads first regarding their release on study leave with or without salary.
- (iii) Officer (s) wishing to pursue studies at their own expense will be granted study leave with or without salary subject to the recommendation of their respective agency Heads and the study programme to be aligned to the agencies Human Resource & Training Development Plan. It should also be directly relevant to the officer (s) work output.
- (iv) The agencies must ensure that there is budgetary provision to meet the Personal Emoluments of the officer (s) recommended for study leave with salary.

13.0 **BONDING REQUIREMENTS AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE**

- i. Officers studying as full time students on government expenses must be bonded before they proceed on training.
- ii. If the officer is unable to complete his/her training through no fault of his/her, then the bond obligations shall be deemed to have been cancelled. However, if he/she fails to complete the course due to his own negligence or misconduct the bond obligation shall continue to apply.
- iii. Officers currently serving bond will not be granted another study leave with or without salary until the current Bond period has been served in full.
- iv. If an officer in anyway defaults his/her bond, his/her guarantor(s), who should be a Fiji citizen and Heads of Agency must be satisfied of their ability to meet their bond obligation. If the bondee default the guarantor(s) will be required to pay one third of the bond amount immediately in one lump sum and the balance to be paid by monthly installments over a period of three (3) years or such shorter period as the Head of Agency may determine. The execution of the bond will commence immediately upon completion of the undertaking in advance by the bondee/guarantor(s).
- v. A bondee who wishes to leave the country must notify the CEO, PSC in writing through the respective Agency Head at least six (6) weeks in advance. Approval will only be given subject to the full payment of the bond amount to the Fiji Government.
- vi. Serving officers who are bonded and wish to transfer their bond to a statutory body or government owned organization or institution must submit in writing through the agency Heads for consideration and decision of the Public service Commission regarding the transfer of their bond.
- vii. In the event of a transfer of bond to other private sectors, a supplementary bond must be entered into between the bondee, the government and the recipient institution on the tenure of service at that institution outlining the guidelines that are to be invoked should the bondee decide to leave before the bond period expires.

14.0 **VACATION WORK DURING SEMESTER BREAKS**

14.1.1 The policy on vacation work by officers other than teachers attending local institutions in reference to the PSC circular No. 10/95 should be applied as follows:

- During mid- semester breaks, officers will not be required to report to duty.
- Where the break between semesters is three (3) weeks, officers will be allowed to enjoy two (2) weeks leave (the first & the third week). **However, officers are required to report to duty in the second week.**
- Officers are allowed to take two (2) weeks leave immediately after the end of second semester of the institutional calendar year **before resumption of duties in their respective agencies.**

- Release from duty in respect of continuing officers to the respective institution will be a week prior to the commencement of the institutions new calendar year.

15.0 **SUBMISSION OF CERTIFICATES**

- 15.1 Officers on completion of their study programme at the USP and FIT must ensure to submit a certified copy of their certificate to the Center for Training Division of the PSC.

16.0 **CLARIFICATION**

- 16.1 For any further clarification, please contact Mrs. Manjula Sologar, msologar@psc.gov.fj at the Public Service Commission, Center for Training and Development, Nasese, Suva on telephone number 3315688.

A Jale
Chief Executive Officer for the Public Service