



## **Centre for Democratic Institutions**

### **SKILLS FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING**

Loloata Island (Port Moresby),  
29 November-2 December 2004

Four Solomon Islands journalists joined 14 PNG news media colleagues in Port Moresby for a four-day workshop on skills for investigative reporting.

The program included exercises on the personal skills needed by journalists engaged in sustained reporting work, such as training in assertiveness and personal communication skills, as well as professional information-gathering skills.

The workshop was developed and delivered for the Centre for Democratic Institutions by the Melbourne-based Asia Pacific Journalism Centre [www.apjc.org.au](http://www.apjc.org.au) after a request by the Media Council of Papua New Guinea for a program to help PNG journalists expose corruption and scrutinise government in PNG. It followed two similar workshops in PNG in 2003 – one in Madang, the other the other in Port Moresby.

“Journalism in the two countries faces similar challenges,” APJC program director John Wallace said, “so we thought it would be a good idea to include some Solomon Island journalists in the program.”

Feedback from participants indicated that they valued the opportunity to compare notes with their Melanesian colleagues, with some participants asking for a follow-up program to enable PNG journalists to visit Honiara.

Other feedback supported the model of including personal skill development in the program.

John Wallace said: “There is growing awareness that to improve the quality of reporting, then as well as working on the technical information-gathering side, you also need to strengthen the resolve of reporters to pursue their work with high professional standards.”

He said the program was a good example of how Australian organisations can build on and encourage professional linkages between journalism communities in the southwest Pacific, in this case through working with the MCPNG and the Media Association of the Solomon Islands. “Both organisations played an important role in making the program a success.”

#### **The instructors**

Instructors were APJC program director John Wallace, Dr Steve Tanner, of the School of Media, Communication and Culture at Murdoch University, and Robyn Wallace, an educational management consultant specialising in affirmative action and

mentor programs. The workshop was assisted by University of PNG journalism lecturer, Leo Wafiwa, who was a participant in the program.

### Participants

Mr Andrew Alphonse	journalism student	DWU	Madang
Mr Brian Beti	manager/editor	New ZFM100	Honiara
Ms Natasha Fabila	reporter	FM Central	Port Moresby
Mr Clifford Faiparik	police & crime reporter	The National	Port Moresby
Mr Alfren Inomae	superv. news curr't affairs	SIBC	Honiara
Mr Harold Kalava	presenter/announcer	FM Morobe	Morobe
Ms Jessie Lapou	reporter	Post Courier	Rabaul
Mr William Natera	sub-editor	Word Publishing	Port Moresby
Mr Issac Nicholas	senior political reporter	The National	Port Moresby
Ms Deily Oso	editor	National Express	Honiara
Ms Isabel Popal	asst admin. officer	MCPNG	Port Moresby
Ms Denyse Ray	senior reporter	NBC	Port Moresby
Mr Alex Rheeny	chief court reporter	Post Courier	Port Moresby
Ms Mataria Rupa	news editor	FM100	Port Moresby
Mr Donalson Rusa	senior reporter	Solomon Star	Honiara
Ms Clara Sam	reporter	PNGFM	Port Moresby
Mr Paul Taumick Jr	sports reporter	NBC	Port Moresby

### Guest speakers

Guest speakers were the director of the Institute of National Affairs, Mr Mike Manning, and risk consultant and former chief of staff of the PNG Defence Forces, Colonel David Takendu. Mr Manning spoke on impediments to good government in PNG and related challenges facing PNG journalism. Colonel Takendu spoke on what he described as the increasing relevance of risk awareness in PNG, including in the news media, and the need for journalists to be able to report the subject.

Certificates were presented by the president of the Media Council of PNG and general manager of PNGFM, Mr Peter Aitsi, with support from MCPNG education and training committee member and general manager of Word Publishing, Mr Justin Kili.

### The program

#### Day 1

- Overview and goals
- Personal skills needed for committed reporting: exploring our identities and values
- Introduction to investigative reporting, understanding corruption
- Accessing information from public records and the web

#### Day 2

- Personal skills: the power of assertiveness, communication skills
- World Bank hypothetical
- Databases and manipulating data

### **Day 3**

- Personal skills: networking, mentoring and teamwork, dealing with stress
- More on databases
- Introduction to financial statements

### **Day 4**

- More on financial statements
- Company reports and balance sheets
- Legal and ethical issues

### **Participant evaluation**

A questionnaire sounded out participants' views on the content and delivery of the program and found high levels of satisfaction. Both the personal skills and technical skills sections of the program rated very highly in terms of providing useful insights, standard of instruction and value of practical work, with a matching high rating for the program overall.