



PRESS RELEASE

01 October 2025

Employers elect new president on the confidence of a strong federation

The Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation (FCEF) successfully held its 65th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Friday 26th September 2025, with members electing Mr Eldon Eastgate as its new President. Mr Eastgate, formerly the Vice President of FCEF brings extensive strategic and corporate leadership to the new role, and will serve two terms as President.

A stronger federation

This year's AGM recorded one of the largest member turn-outs in recent years, reflecting the growing confidence and high expectations of Fiji's national private sector organisation. During this meeting consulting firm Grant Thornton Fiji presented the 2024-25 financial statement highlighting, among other things, increased revenue through membership and donor mobilisation, strict controls on expenditure, and good financial governance.

Outgoing President, Mr. Vinay Narsey, outlined the Federation's achievements over the past year, which included effective advocacy on labour law reforms, particularly the review of the Employment Relations Act, the transition to digital membership registration, a rise in financial membership, and critical contributions to national policy development and the national budget submission. Mr. Narsey remains on the Board as Immediate Past President, ensuring continuity and supporting the leadership transition.

Board elections

Alongside the election of Mr. Eastgate, the AGM re-elected four Board members: Ms. Rowena Taito, Mr. Mike Spencer, Mr. Arvind Maharaj, and Mr. Himen Chandra. Newly elected members include Mr. Sandeep Chauhan and Mr. Karunesh Rao. Continuing their terms are Ms. Fantasha Lockington, Ms. Poonam Kritika, Mr. Harvie Probert, Mr. Watesoni Nata, and Mr. Jeetender Rai.

FCEF Trustees, Ms. Jenny Seeto and Mr. Viliame Leqa, attended the AGM and formally congratulated Mr. Eastgate and the incoming Board on their appointments.

Looking ahead

Accepting the presidency, Mr Eastgate pledged to strengthen the Federation's legacy by advancing its mission to Protect, Promote, and Preserve:

"Our mission is anchored in three powerful Pillars: PROTECT, PROMOTE, and PRESERVE. These are not just guiding words - they are the foundation of our shared vision in being the voice of the private sector.

PROTECT - We must continue to support policies that ensure a sustainable and conducive business environment. This means standing firm in our advocacy, engaging constructively with government and other tripartite partners, and ensuring that the voice of employers is not only heard - but respected. The work of the

Employment Relations Advisory Board (ERAB) on the Employment Relations Bill is a shining example of what collaboration can achieve. It reflects our commitment to shaping legislation that balances economic growth with social justice. As President, I will champion these efforts ensuring that our policy engagement remains principled, proactive, and impactful.

PROMOTE - Our Federation thrives when we foster dialogue, encourage innovation, and create space for consultation among our members. We must continue to be the bridge connecting businesses across sectors, across islands, and across borders. Healthy trade with our neighbours is not just an economic imperative, it is our regional responsibility. We will work to strengthen partnerships, open new channels of cooperation, and ensure that Fijian businesses are not just surviving but competing and excelling on the global stage.

PRESERVE - True progress is sustainable. And sustainability begins with people—with fair work, safe workplaces, and a culture that values dignity and equity. Our partnerships with organisations like the ILO and IOM are helping us build that future. Together, we are creating a level playing field—where businesses can grow responsibly, and workers can thrive. As President, I will continue to nurture these alliances, ensuring that our Federation leads by example in promoting ethical and inclusive business practices.”

Fiji's national private sector turns 65 this year. A milestone that will be celebrated at the Top Executive Conference (TOPEX 2025) from 20-22 November 2025 at the Sofitel Spa and Resort.

Pic 1: Eldon Eastgate - President

Pic 2: Rowena Taito - Vice President

Pic 3: Vinay Narsey - Immediate Past President

Pic 4: Watesoni Nata - MSME Chair

Pic 5: Sandeep Chauhan - Member

Pic 6: Arvind Maharaj - Board Member

Pic 7: Fantasha Lockington - Board Member

Pic 8: Harvie Probert - Board Member

Pic 9: Himen Chandra - Board Member

Pic 10: Jeetender Rai - Board Member

Pic 11: Karunesh Rao - Member

Pic 12: Mike Spencer - Board Member

Pic 13: Poonam Kritika - Board Member

-END-

For enquiries, please contact:

Mr Edward Bernard

Chief Executive Officer, Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation

T: +679 331 3188 | M: +679 9921990 | E: ceo@fcef.com.fj |

About Fiji Commerce Employers Federation:

The Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) is a prominent business organization representing the interests of the private sector in Fiji. Established in 1960, FCEF plays a crucial role in advocating for policies that promote business growth, economic development, and job creation in the country.

As a collective voice for businesses, FCEF engages with the government, policymakers, and other stakeholders to address key issues affecting the business environment in Fiji. These issues may include labor regulations, taxation, trade policies, and infrastructure development.

FCEF also plays a vital role in promoting responsible business practices, including adherence to labour standards, environmental sustainability, and corporate governance principles. By championing ethical and sustainable business practices, FCEF contributes to the long-term growth and resilience of Fiji's economy.
