

December 17

Fiji National University has made new appointments following the merger of former Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji.

The former TPAF has now been merged into the FNU. The FNU decree was amended to incorporate this and was gazetted on November 29.

Former TPAF will now continue to function as the National Training and Productivity Centre of the FNU.

Jone Usamate (Former Director General of TPAF) has been appointed as the Director for Technical and Vocational Education and Training while Yogesh Karan is now the Director for National Training and Productivity Centre.

"I look forward to this appointment because it involves a number of functions that are new to me, and at the same time I am aware of how critical they are for the University. There are a number of functions that I shall be carrying out such as looking after the Training Grants system that are very familiar to me, whilst the Quality Assurance responsibility for the University as a whole is a new function, and a very important one at that," said Mr Usamate.

Mr Usamate joined the old Fiji National Training Council on 10 January 1989 as a Training Officer and progressed through the ranks and became the Director General in 2000.

The Old FNTC became the Training & Productivity Authority of Fiji in 2004 and he was the first Director General of TPAF and also the last.

"I am really privileged that I was the first person to be appointed as CEO of the organisation after coming through the ranks. All my predecessors were brought in as CEOs from outside the organisation. I have been with the organisation for 21 years," said Mr Usamate.

Mr Usamate has a Bachelors degree from the University of the South Pacific and a Masters degree from Southern Cross University.

Mr Usamate said there are many challenges and the major one is that FNU remains committed to the TVET cause, and ensures that it becomes the leading edge provider of TVET services in Fiji and the region.

"This is something that is already very close to my heart, and I am glad that I have been given this role," he said.

"This is a great challenge, and one that is absolutely critical for the nation," he said.

"Ensuring high levels of quality across all programs of the University is another challenge that I look forward to," he said.

"I shall be also looking after the Training Grants system, and will therefore be looking very closely at how to provide the kinds of assistance that employers need by way of skill development that will ensure that they do well, and this in turn will help the country prosper and grow," he said.

The private sector is the engine growth in the economy, and it is my intention that the grants System will be used innovatively to assist them in skills development.