

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE &
ATTORNEY GENERAL

"A Safe, Secure & Peaceful Society"



March - April, 2024
Issue No. 2

PM opens Village Court House



Prime Minister Hon. James Marape and Morobe Governor Hon. Luther Wenge recently opened the Markham District Village Court House in Morobe Province.

PM James Marape opens the Gama
Village Court House at Markham
District, Morobe Province

The Prime Minister Hon. James Marape and Morobe Governor Hon. Luther Wenge officially opened the Gama Village Court House of Markham District in Morobe Province on the 29 of March, 2024.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Hon. John Rosso, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Markham MP Hon. Koni Iguan, and Secretary for Justice Dr. Eric Kwa.

During the opening, Prime Minister Hon. Marape praised Markham District for putting its Village Court House, the Police Station, and the District Administration all in the district. He emphasized that this will boost law and order in the district and the community.

Morobe Governor Hon. Luther Wenge extended his appreciation to the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG), led by Dr. Eric Kwa, for their efforts in constructing the Village Court House. He emphasized its significance in delivering justice services to the people of Markham.

Meanwhile, a Magistrate from the Village Court expressed gratitude for the new Village Court House, highlighting its potential to streamline operations and enhance the management of village court affairs.

In addition to the Court House opening, Village Courts officers were presented with uniforms and VCLM Manuals from the Department. The Markham District Development Authority (DDA) further supported the initiative by providing PNG flags and furniture's in support of the opening ceremony.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Inside This Issue

Content	Pg. No
JLSC appoints new Acting Solicitor General	3
DJAG Set to Address Corruption Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans	4
SARV National Action Plan reviewed in the Highlands	5
NBC Radio Talk Back Show - Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa Stresses Vitality of Information Seminars	6
National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan Workshop	7
Count Her In: Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress	8
Ms. Miriam Dondo: A 25-Year Journey of Service	9
Over 10 Officers graduates, Celebrates Academic Achievement	10
DJAG Enhances Transportation, Vehicle Management and Security	11
DJAG Events in Pictures	12
National Women's Day Address: Ms. Kalamo Urges Daily Recognition and Calls for Action	13

Secretary's Desk



Dr. Eric Kwa, PhD

Dear readers,

I am thrilled to introduce the second edition of our department's bi-monthly Newsletter for the year 2024. I am confident you will find it both informative and engaging as it delivers the latest updates from our department.

I extend my gratitude to all of you for your tireless efforts, and I eagerly anticipate your continued collaboration and dedication in the months ahead.

During this two-month period, the department has demonstrated outstanding performance.

I extend my appreciation to the Judicial and Legal Service Commission (JLSC) for appointing Mr. E'ava Geita as the new Acting Solicitor General and congratulate Mr. Geita on assuming this challenging role.

Additionally, the Department has recently opened a Village Court House in Markham. We actively commemorated the National Women's Day, participated in the Corruption Risk Assessment Training, and hosted the National Oceans Policy (NOP) Implementation Plan workshop, among other activities.

Recently, I had the opportunity to discuss parole on the NCB Radio Talk Back Show. This dialogue is crucial as it informs the public and prisoners' about the services we provide and the systems in place to support them. It is imperative for the public to know that the Government is committed to delivering services to enhance their quality of life.

The Department of Justice & Attorney General (DJAG) has been tirelessly working to provide justice services to the State and the people of Papua New Guinea. I commend each of you for your dedication to your duties.

Dr. Eric Kwa, PhD
Secretary

JLSC Appoints New Acting Solicitor General



Acting Solicitor General, Mr. E'ava Geita (left), and Justice Minister and JLSC Chairman, Hon. Pila Niningi (right), shaking hands during the appointment announcement at a recent Press Conference held at West New Britain House, Waigani, Port Moresby.

Mr. E'ava Geita is the newly appointed acting Solicitor General of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. E'ava Sotutu Geita biography

Mr. E'ava Sotutu Geita is currently the Acting Solicitor General of Papua New Guinea. He holds a Master of Law (LLM) from the University of Melbourne and a Bachelor of Law (LLB) from the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG).

Recently appointed in March 2024, Mr. Geita previously served as Acting Deputy Secretary for Corporate Affairs and General Administration since 2023. His previous roles include Deputy Solicitor General, State Defense, for 11 years.

With over 21 years of experience in the legal profession in both public and private sectors, Mr. Geita brings extensive knowledge and expertise to his current position.

The Judicial and Legal Service Commission (JLSC) recently appointed Mr. E'ava Geita as the Acting Solicitor General of Papua New Guinea

The Minister for Justice and Attorney General, and Chairman of JLSC, Hon. Pila Niningi, announced this appointment during a press conference held on Wednesday 13th of March, 2024. The Minister, thanked the outgoing Solicitor General, Mr. Tauvasa Tanuvasa and acknowledged his role and leadership in the office in the last 5 years.

He wish Mr. Tanuvasa all the best in his future endeavors.

He noted that the term of the outgoing Solicitor General, Mr. Tauvasa Tanuvasa, had expired. "Mr. Geita's appointment as Acting Solicitor General will continue for an indefinite period until JLSC makes a decision," he said.

The Office of the Solicitor General

The office of the Solicitor General is a deemed department under the department of Justice & Attorney General.

The office of the Solicitor General is established under the Attorney General's Act 1989. It has five Divisions which are: Judicial Review & Commercial; Police; Torts & Negligence; Regional Operations; and Cost & Taxation. In those Divisions, the Solicitor General defends government agencies in Court with the aim of reducing the number of claims and the liability of government in monetary damages.

In short, the Solicitor General is responsible for providing litigation services and cost recovery services to the executive government, government departments, and provincial governments.

These services include defending these governments entities or referred to as State in Court or in other adversarial or quasi-judicial forums.

DJAG set to address Corruption Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans to improve governance processes

Officers undertake Corruption Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans Training

*M*ore than 30 officers from the Department of Justice & Attorney General (DJAG) recently participated in the Corruption Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans Training held on Thursday 4th of April at Lamana Hotel in Port Moresby. This training equips them with the skills needed to identify and manage corruption risks within the department and to improve governance processes.

The initiative, funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with support from DJAG, is part of the Preventing and Countering Corruption effort. It underscores the government's commitment to combating corrupt practices within the public sector and across Papua New Guinea.

Dr. Eric Kwa: "Be the light, fight against corrupt practices."

"Stand up and don't stay silent about corrupt practices within the Department of Justice & Attorney General."

"If the public perceives the Public Service as corrupted, then the Department of Justice must rise and set the example as a corruption-free organization, shedding light on integrity and accountability," he said.

Dr. Kwa's perception on Corruption

*D*uring his keynote speech, Secretary for the Department of Justice and Attorney General Dr. Eric Kwa stressed the critical role that each individual public servant must play in combating corruption. He stressed the importance of adopting a mindset focused on doing what is right and ethical to combat corrupt behavior and practices.

Highlighting the important role that the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) played in the establishment of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), Dr. Kwa emphasized the need for the department to set an example of good governance practices.

Dr. Kwa urged department staff to take full advantage of the training provided to identify and address corruption risks and threats within their operations.

He also thanked the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for their support in organizing and facilitating the training sessions.



Dr. Eric Kwa shares insights on combating corrupt practices during the Corruption Risk Assessment & Mitigation Plans Training at Lamana Hotel in Port Moresby.

SARV National Action Plan reviewed in the Highlands



ABOVE: Participants of the program posing for a group photo after the program (Day 3), Highlander Hotel.



ABOVE: Participants of the program posing for a group photo after Day no. 1 at the Highlander Hotel.

A Core Committee Meeting for the National Action Plan (NAP) against Sorcery Accusation Related Violence (SARV) was successfully carried out in Mt Hagen recently with more than 60 participants from the Highlands Region.

Speaking at the gathering Deputy Secretary (Justice Administration), Mrs. Josephine Pitmur stressed the importance of having a good and strong partnership in this fight to curb sorcery accusation related violence.

Mrs. Pitmur said good partnership and communication with each other is the way forward for all of us dealing with SARV in the country; if we work well together, we will see great results.

"At the end of the day, we will find the solutions to our own problems and no one outside will do it. We are the experts in our field and what we do in this space. Donors will come and go but we will remain in our country with these issues," she said.

"Hence, we must learn to work closely with each other; that is the State and Non-State Actors and the communities. In this space, partnership is very vital and there is no room for us to work in isolation but to hold each other's hand and move forward," she said.

Mrs. Pitmur was also impressed to see a fair representation from both genders and a good number of the younger generation in the room of participants.

"I am pleased to see a good number of men participating in this program. SARV work needs a lot of male champions to help stand alongside our mothers, sisters and daughters who are very vulnerable in these situations. I acknowledge the men in the room, thank you for taking up the challenge to stand up for the women of this country," she said.

On that note, she also encouraged the younger generation to work closely with the older generation so that knowledge can be passed on.

The three-day program was co-funded by Oxfam PNG along with the Department of Justice and Attorney General.

Participants from State and Non-State Actors including civil society organizations, churches and community leaders attended the program held at the Highlander Hotel, Mt Hagen.



Radio Talk Back Show



Left to Right: Parole officer Mr. Malone Naki, Chief Parole Officer Ms. Elizabeth Mirio, Secretary for Justice Dr. Eric Kwa, NBC host Steven Mase and Correctional Service Commissioner Stephen Pokanis posing for a group photo after the Radio Talk Back Show.

Awareness on Parole Services

In a recent National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) Radio Talk Back Show held on Wednesday 10th of April, Secretary for the Department of Justice and Attorney General Dr. Eric Kwa, along with Correctional Service Commissioner, Mr. Stephen Pokanis and Chief Parole Officer, Ms. Elizabeth Mirio, engaged in an informative session to raise awareness about Parole Services.

Dr. Kwa emphasized the importance of the Parole Act and the legislative framework governing parole services. He elaborated on the establishment and critical functions of the Parole Board, shedding light on its important role in the parole process.

Furthermore, Dr. Kwa discussed the significance of the Power of Mercy Committee and its role in dealing with prisoners.

Dr. Kwa emphasized that the government is committed to ensure prisoners are also entitled to government services. In fact, the government endeavors to ensure fairness for prisoners by utilizing all available resources and powers.

Through these discussions, the government aims to enhance public understanding of the parole systems and its intricacies and principles guiding its implementation. Such efforts are crucial for fostering transparency and accountability while promoting the effective rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders into society.

Secretary Kwa Stresses Importance of Information Seminars



Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa (right) participated in Human Resource Management Information Session.

In his ongoing commitment to staff enrichment, Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa emphasized the significance of information seminars. The seminars are designed to empower staff with comprehensive knowledge of the operation of the department. The department, boasting of four divisions, each with respective branches under its purview, operates under his guidance.

These seminars serve as a platform to educate staff members on departmental roles and functions and foster collaborative endeavors crucial for the department's success.

The information session started last year following Dr. Kwa's direction. Dr. Kwa highlighted that all Branches and Units in the Department will take turns to present on their roles and functions.

For this year since January, nearly 13 branches have conducted successful presentations, marking a significant stride in staff development and organizational unity.



Chief Information Officer Mr. Thomas Kome present during ICT Information Session.



National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan Workshop

Review of the Draft NOP Implementation Plan, 2023-2030

The Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG), through its Office of Ocean Affairs and in consultation and collaboration with stakeholders, is progressively crafting the National Oceans Policy (NOP) Implementation Plan, 2023-2030. This plan serves as a pivotal action blueprint, complimenting the overarching National Oceans Policy, 2020-2030.

With the funding from South Pacific Community (SPC), a successful workshop was held on March 13th at Lamana Hotel aimed at reviewing and amending the proposed draft NOP Implementation Plan. This draft emerged from an extensive consultation workshop involving stakeholders held last year.

DJAG farewells outgoing Acting Director

The Department bids farewell to the outgoing acting Director of Oceans Affairs, Ms. Grace Kaue, and extends a warm welcome to the newly appointed acting Director, Ms. Fiona Pagla.

The farewell ceremony took place on April 9th at the West New Britain House.

Acting Solicitor General Mr. E'ava Geita expressed his admiration for Ms. Kaue's ambition, dedication, commitment, and passion in leading the Oceans Office thus far. He acknowledged her significant contributions and wished her well in her future endeavors. Additionally, he congratulated Ms. Pagla on assuming this new role.

Ms. Kaue expressed her gratitude for being part of the department and welcomed Ms. Pagla to her new role. Ms. Pagla also thanked Ms. Kaue for



The outgoing Director Ms. Grace Kaue (left) and the newly appointed acting Director Ms. Fiona Pagla (right) cutting the farewell cake.

her leadership and expressed her commitment to take up this new role. She extended gratitude towards Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa for his confidence in her to lead this important office.

[Read More](#)

1. National Policy of Papua New Guinea 2020-2030.
2. PNG Marine Scientific Research Guidelines 2021.

Count Her In: Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress

DJAG Celebrates National Women's Day



DJAG women who participated in the National Women's Day celebration at Gateway Hotel in Port Moresby.

The Department of Justice and Attorney General's (DJAG) commemorated the National Women's Day with a celebratory luncheon at the Gateway Hotel on March 25th, 2024, showcased its dedication to advancing gender equality and empowering women. With the theme, "Count Her In: Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress," underscored the department's commitment to inclusivity and acknowledging women's invaluable contributions.

The approval of the event by Dr. Eric Kwa, Secretary of DJAG, carried weight as he is not only a key figure within the department but also a notable advocate for women's rights. This endorsement through the Human Rights branch highlighted the department's holistic approach to fostering gender equality.

During the luncheon, discussions revolved around various facets of gender equality, with a significant focus on enhancing women's involvement in decision-making processes and leadership roles within DJAG. This emphasis reflects the department's proactive stance in addressing systemic barriers that impede women's advancement in the workplace.

DJAG's achievement of having three female deputy secretaries stands out as a significant milestone, distinguishing it as a frontrunner in promoting gender parity within government entities. This accomplishment not only symbolizes DJAG's commitment to empowering women but also serves as a testament to its efforts in elevating women to influential positions within the organization.

Overall, DJAG's National Women's Day luncheon exemplifies its proactive approach towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment, setting a commendable precedent for other government agencies to emulate.

'DJAG echoes women participation in leadership roles.'



Ms. Miriam Dondo: A 25-Year Journey of Service



Ms. Miriam Dondo graduating with her Bachelor of Management Degree at the Divine Word University (DWU).

Ms. Miriam Dondo has served the Department and the State for 25 years. For 17 years, she worked at the Village Courts and Land Mediation Secretariat (VCLMS), and for eight years at different branches within the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG). Ms. Dondo's journey shows her strong dedication and growth.

She began her career in January 1999 as a clerk at the Solicitor General's office after leaving the Police Force. Later, she was seconded to work at the PNG Australia Law and Justice Partnership Program (PALJP). Then she moved to the Human Resource Management Branch (HRMB), working as a clerk in charge of legal division.

In 2007, Ms. Dondo joined the Village Courts Secretariat. In 2012, the Department sponsored her to study for a Diploma in Public Administration at the Institute of Public Administration, showing the department's support for her development.

Ms. Dondo is grateful for the department's commitment to employee growth. She encourages her colleagues to continue their studies. She stressed the importance of following the proper process for study applications, ensuring that the training committee recommends and approves them. This helps to improve qualifications alongside practical experience gained over time.

Ms. Dondo thanked Dr. Eric Kwa, Chairman of the DJAG training committee, and its strong support. Their approval of her study application to Divine Word University (DWU) allowed her to graduate with a Bachelor of Management Degree on March 15, 2024.

Ms. Dondo said, "When I joined the department, I only had Certificates (Grade 10 Certificate, Police Recruit Certificate, and Certificate in Accounting), but it was just the start of my journey. Graduating with a Diploma and then a Bachelor's Degree while working in the Department is a big achievement for me. I'm not after a higher position, but what matters to me is serving the people. Knowing that there are individuals who rely on our services inspires me to keep improving my knowledge and skills. It's our responsibility to keep enhancing ourselves to better serve those in need."

Additionally, Ms. Dondo received training from International Education Agency (IEA) on Certificate 4th Training and Assessor, funded by the Law and Justice Sector. As a qualified trainer endorsed by the National Training Council, Ms. Dondo possesses the ability to prepare training materials, develop session plans, and deliver trainings. These additional skills have been improved over time through her experience in the department.

Over 10 Officers graduated, Celebrate Academic Achievement

*M*ore than 10 officers recently graduated and received their Masters and undergraduate degrees from a prestigious higher institution.

The University of Papua New Guinea's 69th Graduation Ceremony held on the 22nd to 26th of April was graced by the presence of these accomplished individuals. Among them were Mrs. Wilma Marakan from the Library & Records Management Branch, Mr. Joel Dami from the Financial Management Branch, Mr. Joe Nixon from the office of the Solicitor General, Carol Noel also from the Library and Records Management Branch, Estancia Kapera from the Juvenile Justice Service Branch, Sendy Jawa from the National Narcotics Bureau, and others.

Their successful completion of advanced education is a clear testament to their unwavering dedication and ambition. Through their hard work and perseverance, they have set a shining example for their colleagues and demonstrated the importance of lifelong learning and personal growth.

Their achievements not only reflect positively on the Department of Justice and Attorney General but also highlight the value of education in fostering professional development and excellence. As they embark on the next chapter of their careers, these graduates are poised to make even greater contributions to their respective fields, their families and communities.

The Secretary for the Department extends his congratulation to these officers and looks forward to their strong contributions to the department and the country.



Mrs. Wilma Marakan- Library & Information Management Branch



Estancia Kapera - Juvenile Justice Services Branch



Sendy Jawa - National Narcotics Bureau Branch (NNB)

DJAG Enhances Transportation, Vehicle Management and Security



DJAG vehicles set with tracker installation by Brave security Consortium.



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Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa briefing branch heads during the presentation of the new vehicles at the Executive Car Park Level 1, WNBH, on April 25th, 2024.

Installation of Tracking System

The Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) has signed a contract with the Brave Security Consortium in 2021 to provide vehicles tracking security service and other related support services to the department.

In an effort to bolster accountability in fleet management and reinforce vehicle security, the department has recently made a significant investment by acquiring seven new Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs). These vehicles have been specifically designated for use by Deputy Secretaries and Branch Heads within the Department.

This proactive measure was initiated following explicit directives from Department Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa, who recognized the critical need for improved oversight and security measures within the department's transportation infrastructure. Consequently, the decision was made to outfit the newly acquired SUVs and all other vehicles with state-of-the-art vehicles security trackers.

These cutting-edge tracking systems have been strategically deployed with the primary objective of enhancing accountability in fleet management and fortifying the security of departmental vehicles. By implementing these measures, DJAG aims to optimize transportation services, ensuring swift and secure mobility for its various Divisions and Branch Heads.

With the incorporation of these seven new SUVs, DJAG's fleet now boasts a total of 35 vehicles. Each vehicle, including the recent acquisitions, is equipped with the Vehicles' Monitoring (DJAG_VTM) software, enabling real-time monitoring and management capabilities to further streamline operational efficiency and ensure the highest standards of safety and accountability.

New Vehicles Allocated to Branch Heads

On April 25th, 2024, an exciting event unfolded in the department as nine new vehicles were purchased and distributed to selected branch heads during the lunch break.

Among these vehicles were six Haval, one Proton, one Kia, and one Hyundai Tucson, totaling nine in all.

Secretary Dr. Eric Kwa in his address to the branch heads, emphasized on the policies in place, including GPS usage, and the consequences of breaching these policies. Dr. Kwa mentioned that this was the third round of vehicle distribution and encouraged those who did not receive a vehicle on that day to await future opportunities.

Following the briefing, the Department's Pastor Daniel Hewali led a prayer, committing the vehicles and their recipients to a sense of responsibility. The Pastor advised the recipients to take accountability for this opportunity.

The vehicle keys were handed over to the branch heads by the Fleet team, led by Mr. Forova, fleet coordinator.

DJAG EVENTS



Mrs. Josephine Pitmur accompanied by EU Development partners.



DJAG staff undergo a Risk Assessment Training.



DJAG Women participated in the National Women's Day



DJAG & CS participated in a NBC Radio talk back show.



The Markham village court house had officially opened for operation.



JLSC announced the appointment of newly Acting Solicitor General Mr. E'ava Geita.



DJAG held NOP Stakeholder Consultation Workshop



DJAG undergo Vehicles Security Tracking Installation



DJAG Information Sessions

National Women's Day Address: Ms. Kalamo Urges Daily Recognition and Calls for Action



GEDSI Manager Ms. Teisi Kalamo speaking during the National Women's Day Celebration at Gateway Hotel, Port Moresby

In her address during the National Women's Day celebration held on the 25th of March at Gateway Hotel in Port Moresby, Ms. Teisi Kalamo, the Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Manager, emphasized the importance of recognizing and supporting women and made calls for action.

Marking the National Women's Day, Ms. Kalamo highlighted the theme "Count her In: Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress," is a Global Theme that echoes the call to empower women and girls.

Ms. Kalamo stressed the need for daily acknowledgment of women's contributions in the department. She highlighted the challenges faced by women within the department in accessing training opportunities, revealing a lack of awareness of their rights.

She made calls for action and commitment in the following areas:

Removing Systematic Barriers: "It is imperative to eliminate obstacles preventing both women and men from reaching their full potential. This responsibility lies with all Branch Heads and the Department of Personnel Management (DPM), particularly in reviewing the Public Service General Orders (PSGO). Laws and policies must be sensitive to the current socio-economic situations, acknowledging challenges such as transportation issues impacting punctuality. Instead of penalizing tardiness, reasonable accommodation should be made for parents juggling work and childcare responsibilities. Such actions are essential to addressing pervasive inequalities and support all individuals, irrespective of gender, in fulfilling their roles effectively."

Prioritizing Data Governance: "Data governance must be a priority to understand the impact of investing in women, such as through further training programs. Qualitative research conducted by the HRM and Research and Development branches can shed light on these outcomes, enabling informed decision-making and resource allocation."

Revisiting PNG Ways: "It is crucial to revisit traditional Papua New Guinean values and integrate local contextualized interpretations into internal workplace policies. This responsibility also falls on all Branch Heads, emphasizing the foundation of respect in guiding workplace behaviour and interactions."

She said, "these calls for action aim to unlock the power of mutual respect and inclusivity, creating an environment where individuals can thrive and contribute meaningfully."

"One year from now, let's review these calls to action or commitments to measure our performance as the agency entrusted with one of the most crucial responsibilities: providing law and community justice services to our people," she stated.

Ms. Teisi Kalamo Appointed Chair of Law and Justice Sector GEDSI CoP

In acknowledgment of her contributions to advancing Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) within the Department of Justice & Attorney General (DJAG) and as well as in the Law and Justice Sector (LJS), GEDSI Manager Ms. Teisi Kalamo has been appointed as the Chair of the Law and Justice Sector Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Community of Practice (CoP).

Ms. Kalamo's appointment reflects her dedication and expertise in promoting gender equality and social inclusion initiatives within the department and the Sector. Her leadership in this space is expected to drive collaborative efforts aimed at addressing gender gaps and ensuring inclusivity within the sector.

As Chair of the GEDSI CoP, Ms. Kalamo will play a crucial role in facilitating knowledge-sharing, coordinating activities, and fostering partnerships among stakeholders committed to advancing GEDSI objectives within the LJS. Her appointment underscores the sector's commitment to prioritizing gender equality and social inclusion as integral components of its operations and policies.



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE & ATTORNEY GENERAL

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MISSION

To Provide Quality, Reliable, Timely and Accessible Legal & Justice Service to the State and the People of Papua New Guinea.