



Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation

Fiji Corrections Service Career Expo 2025

Opening Address by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation

Friday 28 November 2025
1:00 PM

FCS Coffee Shop
Korovou, Suva

Opening

The Commissioner of Corrections,

Senior Officers,

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and gentlemen and the young men and women gathered here today, thank you for your presence.

Ni sa bula vinaka and a very good afternoon to you all.

Before I proceed any further, I pay homage and respects to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, **Ki Nadonumai, vua na Turaga na Tui Suva.**

We recognise their enduring stewardship of land and sea, their guardianship of culture, and we offer blessings upon them and their people.

Why We Are Here

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Expo opens pathways to careers that will shape your future. It reflects the Fiji Corrections Service's commitment to building a workforce that is strong, skilled, and forward-looking.

This work aligns with our **National Development Plan**, because community safety, rehabilitation, and human development are foundations of national progress.

This gathering rests on a history of deliberate effort. The first Employment Expo was held in **Suva in 2018** under the leadership of former Commissioner **Commander Francis Kean**; it moved to **Lautoka in 2019**, returned to **Suva in 2020**, paused in **2021** due to Covid restrictions,

and resumed in **2023**. Since 2018, **59 individuals** under the care of the Fiji Corrections Service have secured employment directly through this initiative.

The Expo is part of **Through Care**, connecting qualified participants who meet early-release criteria with employers.

It reflects a vital truth: corrections work does not end at the facility gate. Reintegration succeeds when families, communities, and employers stand together to ensure former inmates do not reoffend.

Rehabilitation and National Responsibility

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Rehabilitation sits at the heart of modern corrections. It restores trust, strengthens families, and reduces harm.

And it is measurable. The clearest measure is **recidivism**, and Fiji now records one of the **lowest rates in the world**.

Fiji's recidivism rate has fallen dramatically—from nearly **50% before 2006** to **7.9% in 2009**, and then to **1.06% by 2021**. After a slight rise during Covid, it now stands at an **all-time low of 0.58%**, representing just **ten individuals** in custody. This progress marks a historic shift from high reoffending rates to one of the lowest globally.

This success reflects long-term community engagement and national support. Initiatives such as the **Yellow Ribbon Project** (launched in **2008**), the Employment Expo, and community walks have strengthened understanding and trust.

Corporate partners have played a decisive role by providing employment and stability to ex-offenders.

The Responsibility of Rehabilitation

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Reintegration is the bridge from incarceration back to community life, the phase where rehabilitation is tested. Reintegration must be structured and supportive, and **employment** is the single most important factor.

Work restores dignity, sustains families, and reduces risk. It strengthens national stability.

We acknowledge the leadership of companies that stepped forward: **Raiwaqa Bakery, Flow Valves, SNP, China Railway, Tanoa Group of Companies, Quality Print, and CJ Patel.**

Their example shows what is possible when the private sector partners with national efforts.

In the grand scheme of things, national security improves when individuals leave the system **rehabilitated and employed**.

They return to communities with purpose, strengthening families and creating safer neighbourhoods. A small minority may still question the work done behind corrections walls; but the results speak clearly.

Discipline, consistency, and an evidence-based model have delivered outcomes worth defending and strengthening.

Role of a Corrections Officer

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This mission depends on disciplined, capable officers. The role is demanding yet deeply rewarding, a profession grounded in **discipline, integrity, and service**.

Officers safeguard facilities, monitor inmates, and enforce rules to ensure safety. They support rehabilitation

through **education, skills training, and counselling**, while modelling positive behaviour.

Accurate reporting, clear communication, teamwork, and readiness to respond to emergencies with precision are essential.

Beyond security, this role carries **national responsibility**: to uphold the law, foster transformation, and represent the Fiji Corrections Service with honour, on and off duty.

It requires balance: **firmness anchored in law, empathy guided by humanity**, and the courage to **contain, maintain, and rehabilitate** those in custody.

Through continuous training, ethical judgment, wellness support, and collaboration, officers embody accountability and the promise of renewal.

This is not just a job; it is a **calling** to serve your country and restore lives.

Your Path and Your Growth

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If you choose this path, know what it offers:

- Structure that builds confidence
- Leadership shaped through daily practice
- Skills that open doors to future opportunity
- A team bound by integrity and service
- A role that advances national development and changes lives

You will enter the field young and eager, and you will meet individuals hardened by experience, some highly educated, some deeply versed in law, and others with histories that test society's resilience.

This work demands strength and discipline, but also wisdom and resilience. Your duty is to uphold safety while enabling **rehabilitation and restoration**.

Here, your character will be tested and your leadership refined; here, **service becomes transformation**, for those in your care, and for you.

Those who serve today once stood where you stand. Through discipline, learning, and purpose, they built careers of impact. Their example shows that success is earned through **steady commitment**.

A Message for Your Future

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Approach today with intent. Ask about training, standards, cadet programmes, scholarships, and career pathways. Speak with officers.

Learn about roles across operations, rehabilitation, administration, and technical services. Take notes. Plan follow-up conversations. Every step brings you closer to a future shaped by service.

The Future of Fiji Needs You

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Fiji needs disciplined young people who choose responsibility. Our progress depends on individuals who see **service** as a pathway to national strength.

Over the next decade, you will help build a country where rehabilitation is sharper, education inside corrections is stronger, and technology enhances safety.

Guided by our values and by working together, your leadership will influence communities across Fiji.

Closing

So in conclusion, I commend the Fiji Corrections Service for this initiative and for its steadfast commitment to rehabilitation and reintegration.

To the young people here today: may this Expo elevate your ambition.

Go out there and visit the booths, meet the teams, explore the opportunities, and step forward with purpose. Each of you has a role to play in building a safer and more prosperous Fiji.

Vinaka vakalevu, dhanyavaad, and thank you.