



DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Office of the Secretary

MEDIA RELEASE

First-Ever Government Degree in Public Administration

Papua New Guinea has reached a historic milestone with the validation of the country's first-ever Government Degree in Public Administration, an initiative led by the Somare Institute of Leadership and Governance (SILAG) in partnership with the Department of Personnel Management (DPM).

Officiating on behalf of the Minister for Public Service Hon. Joe Sungi, Secretary of the Department of Personnel Management, Ms. Taies Sansan, described the event as "a watershed moment for the country" that signifies a new chapter in public sector education and capacity building.

"For the first time, public servants in Papua New Guinea and across the region will have access to a specialized degree in Public Administration that builds the knowledge, skills, and competencies essential to modern governance," Secretary Sansan said.

The validation workshop brought together key government officials, academics, and stakeholders including PMNEC Secretary Ambassador Ivan Pomaleu, SILAG CEO Mr. Michael Barobe, Retired Professor Graham Hassall, and Professor Maretta Kula Alup-Semos, who played leading roles in designing the new program.

Building a Stronger Public Service Secretary Sansan, who also chairs the SILAG Board, commended the SILAG management and development team for their vision and commitment to advancing the institution's capacity.

"For 71 years, SILAG has offered certificates and diploma programs, and in 2022 introduced the Advanced Diploma of Government (Leadership & Management).

Today, we are validating the first-ever Government Degree in Public Administration — a proud achievement that reflects SILAG's transformation into a higher learning institution for public servants," she said. She acknowledged the leadership of CEO Michael Barobe, the dedication of

SILAG staff, and the contribution of course consultants including Professor Hassall, who guided and mentored the degree development process.

“Professor Hassall has been a true friend to Papua New Guinea and the Pacific. His guidance, along with the work of Dr. Mareta Kula Alup-Semos and SILAG’s academic team, has laid the foundation for a program that is locally grounded but regionally relevant,” Sansan added.

Alignment with National Development Goals The new degree aligns with the Marape-Rosso Government’s Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP IV 2023–2027), which aims to convert four national institutions into universities by 2027. Secretary Sansan said the program is also consistent with one of the six key pillars of the DPM Human Resource

Development Strategic Plan 2020–2040, which seeks to address capability challenges across all levels of the public service, particularly at the sub-national level.

“We are now creating a clear academic pathway for career growth within the public service. After 2027, the current qualification bottleneck will be removed, allowing for proper career and succession planning, and ensuring merit-based appointments become a reality,” she said.

Degree Focus and Future Programs the Bachelor of Public Administration is a three-year degree that builds upon SILAG’s existing Diploma of Public Administration (DPA).

It incorporates core subjects such as Public Policy and Administrative Law, Public Sector Procurement and Finance, Leadership and Ethics, Digital Government and Service Delivery, Project Management, and Strategic Planning. SILAG will also soon develop a Degree in Public Finance and Accounting, expanding its portfolio of specialized public sector qualifications.

“For the first time, Papua New Guinea will have a specialized public sector university that trains future leaders in the very skills required to deliver effective, efficient, and accountable government services,” Secretary Sansan stated.

Secretary Ms. Sansan thanked all validation workshop participants for their input, describing their involvement as essential to shaping the final curriculum before it is submitted to the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST) for formal accreditation.

“Your participation and feedback today will leave a legacy for future generations of public servants. This degree represents your collective effort and commitment to improving governance in Papua New Guinea,” she said.

A Game-Changer for PNG and the Pacific Secretary Sansan concluded by reaffirming the Marape-Rosso Government's vision for human capital development through education and professional training. "This program is a game-changer — it will forever change the human development landscape of our nation and the region.

It marks the beginning of a new era where the public service is not only a workplace but a place of continuous learning and growth," she said.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

TAIES SANSAN
Secretary

PICTURE ATTACHED:



Caption: PMNEC Secretary, Ambassador Ivan Pomaleu, Lead Designer for the Government Degree in Public Administration Retired Professor Graham Hassall; Professor Maretta Kula Alup-Semos; SILAG CEO, Mr. Michael Barobe and DPM Secretary Taies Sansan after the validation ceremony.