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Our Reference: **ESU M79**

From: The Permanent Secretary for Education, Heritage and Arts

To: Divisional, District Offices and School Heads

Ref: MEHA CIRCULAR 79

Date: 13 November 2018

SUBJECT: TOUR OPERATORS AND RESORTS VISITING SCHOOLS UPDATE

Dear Colleagues

Following Circular 78 of 29 October 2018 on tourists visiting schools facilitated by tour operators and resorts, we have met the Fiji Hotels and Tourism Association (FHTA) to plan a way forward to meet the needs of the tourism industry and our schools. As a result, we wish to proceed as follows:

1. We acknowledge that school visits provide many benefits to the schools visited by tour operators and resorts and for that we are grateful.
2. However, there are also important legal, safety and educational issues arising from the current practice of tourists visiting schools in an ad hoc manner.
3. As a result, the FHTA has developed the attached indemnity form for all tour operators and resorts to sign and we ask that the head of school check that this has been done before a group is allowed onto the compound.
4. The head of school should also check that each member of the tour group has signed an indemnity form before they come into the school compound – this can be done before the group's arrival.
5. Therefore, we ask that such visits occur outside school hours, not during exam periods and with the approval of the head of school – this is to ensure that teaching and learning is not disrupted.
6. All tourists should be accompanied by a FHTA member representative.
7. Any building or repair work is approved by the Ministry prior to commencement and assessed upon completion by a qualified professional – this is to ensure that we continue the approach of “building (back) better” and to ensure that there is no “double dipping” by schools.
8. Any donations made, including books and other items, will be reported to the Ministry by the FHTA every six months – again, to ensure parity and no double dipping.
9. We will in the next days send out a form requiring parental consent for any photographs or videos to be taken of students for heads of schools to ask parents or guardians to sign for the academic year. These forms should be managed by the head of school.

We believe that with the support offered by the FHTA and its members in implementing this approach, we will jointly ensure a strategic, safe and fair process for schools while supporting Fiji's tourism industry.

Please work with the district and divisional offices on this matter and should you require additional support, please contact the DSPS, Mr T Bure 3220470 or timoci.bure@govnet.gov.fj.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alison Burchell'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALISON BURCHELL
Permanent Secretary