



## PRESS RELEASE (No. 4 of 2014)

### **DPP CLARIFIES RELATIONSHIP WITH AG'S CHAMBERS**

In reference to an article in the Fiji Times by Mere Naleba entitled "CID reviews alleged murder case" it was reported that Nausori Magistrate Mr Charles Ratakele had said while delivering his verdict after the inquest into the Sereima Berwick matter that "the DPP and Attorney-General's Chambers would decide whether to lay murder charges against four men who had been named during the inquest."

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions wishes to clarify that it is the Director of Public Prosecutions that will make a decision on this matter and not the Attorney -General's Chambers.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Christopher Pryde, said:

"As far as criminal prosecutions are concerned, section 117 of the Constitution states that it is the Director of Public Prosecutions that is the sole authority in deciding whether to initiate criminal proceedings. That decision is made according to the sufficiency of evidence and whether it is in the public interest. A decision to prosecute or to discontinue criminal proceedings is made by the DPP alone and without reference to or in consultation with the Attorney-General or any other Minister or Government entity".

In relation to the Sereima Berwick matter Mr Pryde said:

"The file will be reviewed by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in the normal course once investigations from the Police have been completed. A final decision on what charges, if any, will then be made by the DPP".

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2 May 2014

*The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is an independent office established under section 117 of the 2013 Fijian Constitution. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is motivated by the principle that it is in the interests of justice that the guilty be brought to justice and the innocent are not wrongly convicted.*