



# Doing Business in Fiji: 2015 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

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## Chapter 1: Doing Business In Fiji

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### Market Overview

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#### Major Trends and Outlook

- The Fiji government forecasts a 4 percent growth in 2015, following a strong performance of 4.2 percent in 2014. According to the latest figures available, estimated earnings from tourism, Fiji's largest foreign exchange earner, in 2014 is forecasted to reach US\$700.32 million with visitor arrivals reaching about 692,630. Sugar remains of national importance with government reforms improving quality, farm productivity, and mill efficiency. Sugar production is expected to increase in 2014 by 28.4 percent. The government's GDP forecast in 2015 is US\$2.86 billion. Inflation was at 2.4 percent in March 2014.
- Fiji's trade balance continues to deteriorate. Mineral fuels remain the country's largest import. Other major imports include machinery, transport equipment, food, and manufactured goods. Major exports include sugar, fish, gold, mineral water, and garments. Foreign reserves were around US\$877.4 million by March 2015.
- U.S. exports to Fiji continue to increase, growing by 19 percent in 2014. According to U.S. Department of Commerce statistics, U.S. exports to Fiji amounted to US\$79.60 million in 2014, compared to US\$66.93 million in 2013. U.S. imports from Fiji also increased to US\$183.75 million in 2014, compared to US\$174.04 million in 2013. The main products imported to the U.S. from Fiji include mineral water and tuna. U.S. exports to Fiji were mainly transport equipment and parts, food manufactures, computer and electronic products, and machinery.

#### Principal Growth Sectors

- The tourism sector remains Fiji's principal economic driver and major source of foreign exchange. The industry contributes an estimated 30 percent of GDP. Visitor arrivals totaled 692,630, a 5.3 percent increase compared to 2013.
- Growth in 2015 is expected to be driven primarily by a number of large construction projects, boosting employment and economic activity, and rising private sector investments are expected to support growth in 2015.

#### Government Role in the Economy

- In 2015, the government's projected net deficit is US\$107.6 million (F\$213.9 million), equivalent to 2.5 percent of GDP. The revenue forecast for 2015 is US\$1.57 billion (F\$3.12 billion), with expenditure estimated at US\$1.68 billion (F\$3.34 billion).
- Fiji's government controls essential public utilities (water and sewerage), power generation and supply, and port management. However, the government is expected to complete the sale of a number of its blue-chip public assets, including Airports Fiji Limited, to raise an estimated US\$268 million (F\$534 million) to fund public expenditures. Since 2013, the government has invested heavily in upgrading road infrastructure and bridges.
- Infrastructure support is fairly reliable in the urban centers, but less developed in rural Fiji. There are numerous air and sea connections to the United States, Asia, and the Pacific Region, as well as local air and sea transport to all major centers on the larger islands in the country. Given Fiji's heavy reliance on diesel fuel, the Fiji authorities continue to explore renewable energy alternatives, such as hydro, solar, and wind power.

Domestic and international telecommunication links are relatively reliable. Other service infrastructure, such as insurance, banking, accounting, local transport, investment finance, and real estate, are available in urban centers.

## **Market Challenges**

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Some of the common market challenges experienced in doing business in Fiji include:

- Government limitations in capital borrowing by non-residents;
- Slow, lengthy, and often inefficient processing of government approvals;
- Poor infrastructure in rural areas;
- Relatively high costs of utilities, especially power and communication;
- Small population base; and
- Geographic isolation and time differences between the United States and Fiji.

## **Market Opportunities**

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Hospitality industry supplies and services; consumer goods; agricultural and food processing machinery; data processing and telecommunication equipment; power generation, transmission and distribution equipment; offshore and "back office" data processing; medical services.

## **Market Entry Strategy**

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To successfully enter the Fiji market, it is essential that American firms have local market expertise. American firms often work with an appropriate business partner in the local market to provide on-going support to ensure an amicable long-term relationship.

- The majority of Fiji's business community is of Indo-Fijian ethnicity; however, the number of indigenous Fijian businesspersons is growing. While English is widely

spoken in Fiji, the cultural and ethnic differences between the United States and Fiji should not be overlooked.

- As Australia and New Zealand companies dominate the local business scene and have a long standing relationship with local companies, American companies need to be prepared to be able to match strong competition from Australia and New Zealand.
- It is highly recommended that due diligence be undertaken prior to entering any contract or making any long-term commitment.

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## **Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment**

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link below to the U.S. Department of State Background Notes.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1834.htm>

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### Using an Agent or Distributor

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Some local companies are interested in establishing agent or distributor arrangements with foreign companies.

The General Contract Law governs agreements between foreign suppliers and local agents and distributors. It establishes a buyer-seller relationship under a sale of goods contract between the two parties. It is the responsibility of the local agent or distributor to apply for necessary licenses and import permits.

New market entrants should seek an established agent/distributor with good local contacts, market expertise, and technical know-how. U.S. exporters must often provide training, marketing, and technical support. Frequent contact with local representatives is critical, especially at the outset, in order to build a good working relationship based on shared values and objectives, and to ensure there are no misunderstandings or communication problems.

The Economic/Commercial Section at the U.S. Embassy in Suva can provide valuable assistance in locating potential representatives and acquiring preliminary market data. The staff can also help companies identify agents and distributors.

### Establishing an Office

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The primary forms of business organizations in Fiji are: companies, including branch offices; joint ventures; partnerships; and trading trusts. U.S. firms may elect either to incorporate a subsidiary or establish a branch office by registering itself as a foreign company. The new Companies Law is expected to increase efficiencies, but will create new reporting requirements for companies. U.S. firms may wish to enter into joint-venture arrangements with one or more parties on an unincorporated or incorporated basis.

Contact: Investment Fiji, Chief Executive, P.O. Box 2303, Government Buildings Suva, Telephone: (679) 3315-988, Fax: (679) 3301-783, Email [info@investmentfiji.org.fj](mailto:info@investmentfiji.org.fj), Website <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>

## **Franchising**

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There are no restrictions placed by the Fiji government on franchising arrangements. U.S. firms operating in Fiji under franchise agreements include Independent Grocers Alliance (IGA), Gloria Jean's Coffee, and McDonalds. The small market size imposes some limitations in Fiji, but many companies use Fiji as an export base to other Pacific Island countries.

## **Direct Marketing**

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Direct marketing is used widely in the sale of cosmetics, health products, cleaning and household consumer goods, electrical appliances, and in service businesses. Major U.S. brands in Fiji include General Mills, Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, Johnson and Johnson, and Procter and Gamble.

## **Joint Ventures/Licensing**

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The Fiji Government through Investment Fiji encourages joint ventures in Fiji to stimulate local entrepreneurship and the transfer of technical know-how and skills.

Joint ventures and licensing agreements are important market entry strategies for American exporters. Joint-venture partnerships offering technology transfer, specialized expertise, and training opportunities are effective mechanisms to reduce costs.

Some Fiji firms are actively seeking American joint-venture partners who can provide much needed capital, as well as technical, marketing, and management skills, to a business relationship. Fiji firms generally offer assets, local vendor and government contacts, and established business relationships throughout the Pacific region.

The Economic/Commercial Section at the U.S. Embassy in Suva can provide assistance in locating potential joint-venture partners for American companies.

## **Selling to the Government**

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All requests for proposals and tenders are offered in newspapers and in government publications. Multilateral lending institutions, such as the Asia Development Bank and World Bank, also sometimes sponsor projects, all open to U.S. bidders. Fiji is not a party to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement.

## **Distribution and Sales Channels**

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Two major channels of distribution are available to U.S. exporters. The first is via large, well-established trading companies with strong financial resources and sales volumes, as well as an extensive presence in many industrial sectors. In many cases, these large traders form marketing or production joint ventures with foreign firms when demand volumes are sufficient to justify local investment. In highly specialized markets, these companies rely on agents who have appropriate contacts or expertise.

The second available channel is through small importers. These importers generally specialize in one line of business where they have proven networks and market knowhow.

It is advisable for U.S. companies to perform careful due diligence to assure that a potential agent or distributor is financially healthy and able to fulfill obligations.

## **Express Delivery**

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A number of internationally recognized express delivery and courier services are available and have agents in Fiji, including Fedex, UPS, DHL, and TNT. The estimated time of delivery between large U.S. cities and Fiji can range from 3-4 working days for small packages. Under Fiji Customs regulations, a commercial invoice is a requirement for all commercial imports and exports.

## **Selling Factors/Techniques**

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To differentiate themselves from local and third-country competitors, U.S. firms should emphasize their strengths in quality, innovation, technology, and customer service.

Fijians have come to expect more and better styles and designs, regular product upgrades, and updated technology from U.S. companies and will often choose U.S. products and services on the basis of "value for money," not just on the basis of cost. Training is an effective means to make potential customers aware of the quality of products and services.

## **Electronic Commerce**

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The development of the country's ITC infrastructure has increased access to the Internet and lowered costs, although electronic commerce still has a limited market reach.

Notable developments in the consumer to business market segment include the growing popularity of electronic commerce for bill payments through the commercial banks and mobile phone money transfers.

## **Trade Promotion and Advertising**

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The majority of Fijians receive information from radio and television. Advertising and trade promotions are important marketing tools in Fiji. In particular, foodstuffs and consumer products should be promoted heavily via a full range of mass media.

There are three commercial free to air stations which companies can promote and advertise their products and services on: Fiji TV, Mai TV, and FBC TV. The two main radio broadcasters, Communications Fiji and Fiji Broadcasting Corporation operate a total of 11 radio stations including broadcasts in English and Fiji's other two main vernacular languages, the indigenous iTaukei language and Hindustani.

There are two major English-language newspapers, "The Fiji Times," and "The Fiji Sun," which largely cater to an urban readership. The Fijian language newspaper "Nai Lalakai" and "Volasiga" can be used for marketing to the Fijian sector of the population, and the Indian-language newspaper "Shanti Dut" for Indo-Fijians.

Companies in Fiji also use two business monthly magazines, "Pacific Business" and "Islands Business" for advertising. There are a few lifestyle magazines including Marama, Turaga, and Mai Life, which also accept paid advertisements.

Special promotional campaigns are frequently conducted at local shopping centers, hotels, and convention halls. Movie theaters and television are also means of reaching the public. It is advisable to translate all product literature into Fiji's other two main languages, Fijian and Hindustani.

There are two major trade shows held annually where products can be promoted – "Showcase", a consumer fair held in Suva that is organized by Communication Fiji's Total Event Company and the hospitality show "HOTEC", targeting hotels and resorts is organized by the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association.

### **Contact:**

The Fiji Times, Fred Wesley, Editor-In-Chief/ Publisher, P.O. Box 1167, Suva,  
Telephone: (679) 3304-111 Fax: (679) 3301-521 Email: [timesnews@fijitimes.com.fj](mailto:timesnews@fijitimes.com.fj),  
Website: <http://www.fijitimes.com.fj>

Fiji Sun, Peter Lomas, Publisher, Telephone: (679)3307-555, Fax: (679) 3311-455,  
Email: [fijisun@fijisun.com.fj](mailto:fijisun@fijisun.com.fj), Website: <http://www.fijisun.com.fj>

Fiji TV, Mr. Geoffrey Smith, Chief Executive Officer, 20 Gorrie St, Suva, Telephone:  
(679) 3305-100 Fax: (679) 3304-630 Email: [csr@fijitv.com.fj](mailto:csr@fijitv.com.fj), Website:  
<http://www.fijione.tv>

Communications Fiji Ltd, William Parkinson, Managing Director, Telephone: (679) 3314-766 Fax: (679) 3303-748, Email: [news@fm96.com.fj](mailto:news@fm96.com.fj), Website: <http://www.cfl.com.fj/fiji>

Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd, Mr. Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Chief Executive, P.O.Box 334, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3314-333 Fax: (679) 3220-990, Email: [infocenter@fbc.com.fj](mailto:infocenter@fbc.com.fj), Website: <http://www.fbc.com.fj>

Mai TV Fiji Ltd, Mr. Richard Broadbridge, Chief Executive, Private Mail Bag, Raiwaqa, Telephone: (679) 3275-051 Fax: (679)3275-052, Email: [feedback@tv.com.fj](mailto:feedback@tv.com.fj), Website: <http://www.tv.com.fj>

## Pricing

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The Fiji Commerce Commission monitors competition in the market and controls the prices of basic goods, which include food items, fuel, and hardware products. Prices of products not monitored by the Commerce Commission are determined by the market.

Contact: Commerce Commission, P.O. Box 5031, Raiwaqa, Telephone: (679) 3372-178 Fax: (679) 3372-389, Email: [helpdesk@commcomm.gov.fj](mailto:helpdesk@commcomm.gov.fj)

## Sales Service/Customer Support

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All businesses operating in Fiji need to provide warranty service, maintenance contracts for parts and supplies, and return policies.

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The Copyright Act of 1999 protects products from intellectual property infringement, but enforcement is very weak. Trademark and patent laws are outdated. Illegal materials, illegal reproductions of films, sound recordings, and computer programs are widely available throughout urban centers in Fiji.

### Protecting Your Intellectual Property in Fiji:

Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property (“IP”) rights in Fiji. First, it is important to have an overall strategy to protect your IP. Second, IP may be protected differently in Fiji than in the United States. Third, rights must be registered and enforced in Fiji, under local laws. For example, your U.S. trademark and patent registrations will not protect you in Fiji. There is no such thing as an “international copyright” that will automatically protect an author’s writings throughout the entire world. Protection against unauthorized use in a particular country depends, basically, on the national laws of that country. However, most countries do offer copyright protection to foreign works under certain conditions, and these conditions have been greatly simplified by international copyright treaties and conventions.

Patents are generally granted based on a first-to-file basis. Similarly, registering trademarks is based on a first-to-file, first-in-right basis, however laws are archaic and enforcement of patent and trademark protection is problematic in the Fiji market. It is vital that companies understand that intellectual property is primarily a private right and that the U.S. government cannot enforce rights for private individuals in Fiji. It is the responsibility of the rights' holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants who are experts in Fiji law. The U.S. Commercial Service can provide a list of local lawyers upon request <http://suva.usembassy.gov/attorneys.html>.

While the U.S. government stands ready to assist, there is little we can do if the rights holders have not taken these fundamental steps necessary to securing and enforcing their IP in a timely fashion. Moreover, in many countries, rights holders who delay enforcing their rights on a mistaken belief that the USG can provide a political resolution to a legal problem may find that their rights have been eroded or abrogated due to legal doctrines such as statutes of limitations, laches, estoppel, or unreasonable delay in prosecuting a law suit. In no instance should U.S. Government advice be seen as a substitute for the responsibility of a rights holder to promptly pursue its case.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on potential partners. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Consider carefully, however, whether to permit your partner to register your IP rights on your behalf. Doing so may create a risk that your partner will list itself as the IP owner and fail to transfer the rights should the partnership end. Keep an eye on your cost structure and reduce the margins (and the incentive) of would-be bad actors. Projects and sales in Fiji require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with Fiji laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses, and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

It is also recommended that small and medium-size companies understand the importance of working together with trade associations and organizations to support efforts to protect IP and stop counterfeiting. There are a number of these organizations, both Fiji or U.S.-based. These include:

- The U.S. Chamber and local American Chambers of Commerce
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy
- International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

## **IP Resources**

A wealth of information on protecting IP is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the US and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT** or visit [www.STOPfakes.gov](http://www.STOPfakes.gov).
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: **1-800-786-9199**, or visit <http://www.uspto.gov/>.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the United States, contact the U.S. Copyright Office at: **1-202-707-5959**, or visit <http://www.copyright.gov/>.
- For more information about how to evaluate, protect, and enforce intellectual property rights and how these rights may be important for businesses, please visit the “Resources” section of the STOPfakes website at <http://www.stopfakes.gov/resources>.
- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: [www.stopfakes.gov/businesss-tools/country-ipr-toolkits](http://www.stopfakes.gov/businesss-tools/country-ipr-toolkits). The toolkits contain detailed information on protecting and enforcing IP in specific markets and also contain contact information for local IPR offices abroad and U.S. government officials available to assist SMEs.

## Due Diligence

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Businesses and investors can hire professional accountancy companies to do due diligence and check bona fides of any company with which they plan to work. There are a number of reputable accountancy firms to provide this service.

The services of a credit bureau can also be obtained through the Data Bureau Ltd, which is affiliated with Baycorp Advantage Ltd. Other resources include business organizations such as the Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Fiji American Chamber of Commerce, and Investment Fiji.

Contact:

Data Bureau Ltd, G.P.O Box 17910, Suva, Telephone: (679) 330-2400 Fax: 330-4430 (679) 3303227, Email: [info@databureau.com.fj](mailto:info@databureau.com.fj)

Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation, Contact: Mr. Nesbitt Hazelman, Chief Executive Officer, Gorrie St., Suva; Telephone: (679) 331-3188; Fax: (679) 3302183; Email: [ceo@fcef.com.fj](mailto:ceo@fcef.com.fj)

Fiji-US Business Council/ American Chamber of Commerce (Amcham), Maxumise Fiji Ltd, Level 4, FNPF Place, 343 Victoria Parade, P. O. Box 12499, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3305510, Email: [secretariat@fijiamcham.com](mailto:secretariat@fijiamcham.com)

Fiji Retailers Association, P.O. Box 598, Suva, Telephone: (679) 330-3366, Fax: (679) 330-2434, Email: [fijilords@gmail.com](mailto:fijilords@gmail.com).

## Local Professional Services

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The services of a local attorney are required for executing agreements and setting up offices in Fiji. Normally paperwork can be completed quickly and easily. Law firms also advise on the various types of business organizations that can be established, assist in registering firms, and in obtaining permits. Lawyers are needed for registering patents and trademarks and for taking other legal measures to protect products from intellectual property right infringements. Most commercial and civil law is based on the British system. A list of practicing Fijian accountants can be found on the Fiji Institute of Accountants website.

## Principle Business Associations

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The Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) is the premier private sector organization in Fiji. Any organization that is registered as an employer with the country's pension fund, the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF), is eligible to be a member. The FCEF is the private sector representative in the tripartite arrangement with government and the trade unions, to manage labor relations in Fiji. Other active business associations can be found representing industry specific interests, such as the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association, the Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Retailers Association, and business councils with major trade links including Australia, New Zealand, USA, PNG, and recently, China. The associations provide valuable networking and training opportunities, host business forums, and conduct some advocacy towards creating a conducive environment for business and investment.

## Limitations

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A number of investment activities are reserved for Fiji nationals or subject to restrictions. There are 15 reserved activities and 5 restricted activities. Full listings of reserved and restricted areas can be found at: <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj/pages.cfm/for-investors/doing-business-in-fiji/foreign-investment-act-foreign-investment-regulations.html>.

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Fiji/US Business Council (Amcham affiliate), <http://www.fijiamcham.com/>

Fiji Institute of Accountants, [http:// www.fia.org.fj](http://www.fia.org.fj)

Fiji Times, <http://www.fijitimes.com.fj>

Fiji Sun, Website: <http://www.fijisun.com.fj>

Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd, <http://www.fbc.com.fj>

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## Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment

### **Commercial Sectors**

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- [Agro-processing](#)

## Tourism & Hospitality

### Overview

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Unit: USD million

	2013	2014 (estimated)	2015 (estimated)	2016 (estimated)
Total Visitor Arrivals	657,706	694,016	692,630	722,183
Average Length of Stay (days)	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5
Earnings from Tourism (\$ million)	665.20 (F\$1,322.3)	678.8 (F\$1,349.3)	700.32 (F\$1,392)	721.34 (F\$1,433.8)
Exchange Rate: 1 USD=1.98FJD				

(source: Fiji Budget 2015)

Tourism remains Fiji's fastest growing industry and is the largest foreign exchange earner. Industry earnings in 2014 are expected to exceed the combined revenues of the country's top five merchandise exports (water, sugar, fish, garments, and timber). The industry provides direct employment to an estimated 40,000 people, and 116,500, indirectly. Gross earnings from tourism in 2014 is expected to total US\$721.34 million (F\$1.43 billion).

According to the World Travel and Tourism, in 2013, 40 percent of the 1.5 million visitors to the South Pacific region, travelled to Fiji. Visitor arrivals in 2014 totaled 692,630, with record visitor arrivals from Fiji's largest source markets Australia and New Zealand.

New tourism developments already underway include the redevelopment of the Marriott Resort at Momi Bay, owned by the nation's only pension fund. The 250-room project, including over-water bungalows, was halted seven years ago due to internal business disputes. The five-star resort is expected to be completed by 2016, generating employment for an estimated 400 workers during the construction phase and contributing around two percent to the gross domestic product. The Nadi International Airport Modernization Project, owned by Airports Fiji Limited, a state-owned enterprise, is estimated to cost \$53.8 million (F\$112.41 million), with construction of the airport's new departure lounge to be finalized in 2015.

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The hotel and hospitality industry requires a large variety of products, such as the following:

- Food – dairy products, fruit, vegetables, beverages, condiments
- Building materials
- Furnishings (drapes, carpet, linens)
- Kitchen equipment
- Furniture and appliances

- Sporting equipment
- Toiletries
- Wireless technology & IT related to hotel and guest services

While government is encouraging dependable local production for tourist and up-market consumption to reduce reliance on imports, developing local capacities will take time.

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Tourism Fiji: <http://www.fiji.travel>

Fiji Islands Hotel & Tourism Association: <http://www.fhta.com.fj>

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism:  
<http://www.mit.gov.fj>

south-pacific.travel: <http://www.spto.org>

## Power Generation (Energy)

### Overview

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Unit: USD million

	2013	2014	2015 (estimated)	2016 (estimated)
Import – Mineral Fuels	613.73 (F\$1,219.9)	695.84 (F\$1,383.1)	723.81 (F\$1,438.7)	752.94 (F\$1,496.6)
Total Imports	2619.39 (F\$5,206.5)	2470.27 (F\$4,910.1)	2633.88 (F\$5,232.3)	2672.62 (F\$5,312.3)
Percentage of Total Imports (%)	23%	28%	27%	28%

Exchange Rate: 1 USD=1.98FJD  
(source: Fiji Budget 2015)

The country's energy needs are met from a variety of sources, including hydro and diesel generation, wood, coal, and petroleum products. The state-owned Fiji Electricity Authority's (FEA) is currently the main generator and sole distributor of grid-based power to an estimated 90 percent of the population on the main islands of Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, and Ovalau. FEA's installed capacity is around 237 MW. In 2014, total electricity produced by the Fiji Electricity Authority increased by a 0.2 percent to 859,715 megawatt-hours (MWh). Power generation from renewable energy sources, mainly hydro, accounted for 47.1 percent, lower by an annual 23.8 percent. This was mainly due to lower production from the hydro dams, ongoing refurbishments at the power stations, and a dry season towards the end of 2014. Independent Power Producers (IPPs), namely Tropik Wood Industries Limited (TWIL) and Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC) produce an estimated two percent of electricity annually.

Mineral oil imports in 2014 is estimated to total US\$ 698.5 million (F\$1.4 billion), accounting for 28 percent of Fiji's total national import bill. The transport sector is the main consumer of commercial fuel, mostly gas, oil (diesel), and aviation turbine fuel.

Fiji continues to seek alternative energy sources to supplement its heavy dependence on imported fuel with a targeted goal to be fully reliant on renewable energy by 2030. The government is also seeking to divest investment in the FEA.

### Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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Given Fiji's heavy reliance on diesel fuel, Fiji is exploring viable alternative energy sources available locally such as hydro, solar, wind, and wave energy generation, and hybrids. The use of renewable energy sources is strongly encouraged by government. Government is actively seeking partners in the energy sector, as Fiji explores ways to increase its generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure, both to its urban centers and to rural users. The FEA supplies power to an estimated 90 percent of Fiji's population, in primarily urban areas.

To electrify isolated villages in rural areas, independent stations are planned. Potential suppliers must work with Fiji government authorities on these projects. The presence of small, isolated population centers on Fiji's smaller islands presents a potentially good market for tailored diesel-powered generation solutions. For rural communities, the government will facilitate the sustainable production and management of solar power and non-grid electrification systems, such as the further development of solar home systems (SHS), solar power water supply systems, solar systems for schools and clinics, and solar water heating systems for homes and institutions.

## Web Resources

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Fiji Department of Energy: <http://www.fdoe.gov.fj/>

Fiji Electricity Authority: <http://www.fea.com.fj/>

Pacific Power Association: <http://www.ppa.org.fj>

Secretariat of the Pacific Community: <http://www.spc.int>

## Agro-processing

### Overview

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	Unit: tons			
Domestic Production	2010	2011	2012	2013
Papaya	2,190	3,065	3,371	2,112
Ginger	2,338	2,575	2,833	2,019
Cassava	51,690	69,910	76,901	74,039
Dalo	60,283	67,179	73,897	133,310
Rice	7,684	7,914	8,706	6,282
Beef	1,761	2,197	2,306.9	2,272
Dairy	10,200	9,600	10,100	12,035
Exchange Rate:	1 USD=1.98FJD			

The agriculture sector contributes around 10 percent of GDP. Sugar remains a significant industry employing an estimated 200,000. Agro-based exports account for approximately 18 percent of Fiji's total exports, including sugar, lumber, molasses, and coconut oil. Other agricultural exports include ginger, kava, papayas, and fresh vegetables. While most fruit and vegetables are sold fresh, there are a few establishments engaged in processing of local fruits and vegetables, mainly for the domestic market, and in producing fruit juice concentrates (pineapple, orange, guava, mango, passion fruit, and other citrus fruit juices).

To encourage investment in agriculture and agro-processing, the government's tax incentives include a tax exemption for any new businesses established before 31 December 2018. The length of the tax holiday is dependent on the level of capital investment. For investments of approximately USD \$1 million) F\$2 million or more, companies are eligible for a 13 tax holiday. Small and micro-enterprises with maximum turnover threshold of approximately USD \$250,000) F\$500,000 in selected sectors are also tax exempted. The importation of all agricultural items for commercial agriculture and agro-processing establishments is subject to zero duty. The government subsidizes the cost of fertilizer, feed and chemicals through a fertilizer subsidy for non-sugar farmers, including ginger farmers, and farmers in the dairy and livestock sector.

### Sub-Sector Best Prospects

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Despite the slow development of the agro-processing sector, potential commodities for value-added and niche-market processing include papaya, tomatoes, pineapple, coconut, duruka (*Saccharum edule*), mixed vegetables, guava, mango, and herbal kava products. Potential also exists for snack-food processing of readily available taro, tapioca, breadfruit, and banana. As fruits and vegetables are seasonal crops, processing facilities will need to have flexibility so as to allow processing of all these items, utilizing the same plant throughout the year.

Investment, equipment, and supplies needed to expand and support these industries are in demand. The sector also faces a number of challenges including natural disasters, inadequate infrastructure, and high transportation and input costs.

## **Web Resources**

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Investment Fiji: <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>

Ministry of Primary Industries: <http://www.agriculture.org.fj>

## Chapter 5: Trade Regulations, Customs and Standards

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- [Trade Barriers](#)
- [Import Requirements and Documentation](#)
- [U.S. Export Controls](#)
- [Temporary Entry](#)
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### Import Tariffs

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Import duties for goods range from 0 to 32 percent. Tariffs rates are, broadly, as follows:

0 percent	Raw materials, pharmaceutical products;
5 percent	Production items and capital goods;
15 percent	Intermediate goods (including most luxury items); and
32 percent	Specific finished goods and protected items.

A 15 percent Value Added Tax (VAT) is applicable on all imports. Businesses registered under the VAT legislation can claim an input tax credit in relation to VAT paid on their imports.

While Fiji's VAT is generally similar to that found in the EU and New Zealand, there are some differences. It is a single-rate tax. The VAT is imposed on imports of all categories of professional services. The importer of such services is required to pay the required VAT to the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority.

### Trade Barriers

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Exporters to Fiji do not require import licenses for most goods. Most imports are subject to duty. Drawback of duty can be claimed for re-exported goods. Quarantine policies for agricultural products sometimes present a trade barrier.

Contact: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, P.O. Box 2118, Government Buildings, Suva, Telephone:(679) 3305-411, Fax: (679) 3302-617

Director General, Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority, GPO Box 175, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3302-322, Fax: (679) 3305-138, Website: <http://www.frca.org.fj/customs/>

## **Import Requirements and Documentation**

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The Biosecurity Authority of Fiji must license certain types of agricultural imports, such as rice, dairy, poultry, and meat. The Ministry of Finance issues import licenses for gold and other precious metals. Import licenses for products such as lubricants, transformer and circuit breaker oils, cleansing oils, and hydraulic brake oils are issued by the Ministry of Industry.

## **U.S. Export Controls**

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<http://www.bis.doc.gov>

A list that consolidates eleven export screening lists of the Departments of Commerce, State and the Treasury into a single search as an aid to industry in conducting electronic screens of potential parties to regulated transactions is available here:

<http://developer.trade.gov/consolidated-screening-list.html>.

## **Temporary Entry**

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There are arrangements for the temporary import of goods for alteration or repair; of goods for public exhibition, trial or entertainment; of specialized goods and equipment not normally available in Fiji to be used solely in connection with some particular project; and of goods for use by temporary residents. The Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority or a local customs agent needs to be contacted prior to the arrival of such goods.

## **Labeling and Marking Requirements**

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For packaged goods, quality certification and weight must be on the label. Labels must also specify the company that produced the goods.

Food items also need to adhere to the Ministry of Health's food safety regulations.

For more information contact: Department of National Trade Measurement and Standards, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, P.O. Box 2118, Government Buildings, Suva, Tel: (679) 3305-411, Fax: (679) 3302-617

Ministry of Health – Food Unit, P.O. Box 2223, Government Buildings, Suva, Tel: (679) 3306-177, Fax: (679) 3221-434

## **Prohibited and Restricted Imports**

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Prohibited imports include weapons, illegal drugs, and pornography.

Contact: General Manager, Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority, GPO Box 175, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3302-322, Fax: (679) 3305-138, Website: <http://www.frca.org.fj/customs/>

## Customs Regulations and Contact Information

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All imports into Fiji are subject to classification by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority, and rates of duty vary with the type of goods. Imports are subject to import duty (Fiscal Duty and VAT), which is levied in accordance with rates outlined in the schedule of customs tariffs. VAT is fixed at 15 percent. Duty at a higher rate is generally levied on automobiles, ready-made garments, tobacco, liquor, beer, and wines.

For customs requirements: General Manager Customs, Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority, P.O. Box 175, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3301-551, fax: (679) 3315-537, Website: <http://www.frca.org.fj/customs/>

For standards and quality control: Department of National Trade Measurement and Standards, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, P.O. Box 2118, Government Buildings, Suva, Telephone:(679) 3305-411, Fax: (679) 3302-617

For quarantine requirements: Chief Executive - Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Telephone: (679) 332-512, Fax: (679) 3385-048

For general questions on trade regulations, customs and standards: Chief Executive, Investment Fiji, P.O. Box 2303, Government Buildings, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3315-988, Fax: (679) 3301-783, Email: [info@investmentfiji.org.fj](mailto:info@investmentfiji.org.fj). Website: <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>

## Standards

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## Overview

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In 1992, the Fiji Trade Standards and Quality Control Office (FTSQCO) was established by the Trade Standards and Quality Control Decree 1992, to ensure that Fiji's products and services standards are aligned to international standards. The FTSQCO is commonly known as the Department of National Trade Measurement and Standards.

The Trade Standards Advisory Council (TSAC) was formed in conjunction with FTSQCO. The role of the TSAC is to consider and recommend to the Minister for Industry and Trade the declaration of Fiji standards specifications, including for processes, practices, quality, composition, labeling, and codes of practices.

## Standards Organizations

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The FTSQCO is the only standards-setting organization in Fiji and is a full member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) since January 1, 2006.

### **NIST Notify U.S. Service**

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

## Conformity Assessment

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At present there are no conformity assessment bodies.

The National Trade Measurement Laboratory is the only national metrology laboratory. However, manufacturers needing products tested send them to accredited laboratories in Australia or New Zealand, or to the University of the South Pacific's Institute of Applied Science (USP/IAS) laboratory, which is ISO 17025 certified.)

## Product Certification

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Products carrying the "Fijian Made" brand are required to obtain a license from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and comply with local product content as in the Industry Emblem Decree and Regulations 2011. The brand categories, aimed at promoting and raising the profile of Fijian made products locally and internationally, include 'Fijian Made', 'Fijian Product', 'Fijian Packed', 'Fijian Crafted', 'Fijian Grown', 'Fijian Assembled', 'Fijian Designed', and 'Fijian Sewn'. By November 2014, a total of 94 companies and 668 products were certified to carry the Fijian Made logo.

## Accreditation

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Water bottled in Fiji must be accredited. The Bottled Water Standard requires that facilities bottling water in Fiji provide test results from approved laboratories for accreditation.

## Publication of Technical Regulations

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There are approximately 60 standards in place, though not all are technical, covering areas such as building and building material, telecommunication cabling, safety footwear, electrical installation, quality management systems, food, fuel, corporate governance, bottled water, and fireworks. However, the majority of the standards have been adopted from Standards Australia as best practice standards and are voluntary. Two mandatory standards are the Bottled Water Standard Order 2004 and the Fireworks Labeling Standard 2005.

All technical regulations are published in the Fiji Islands Gazette. The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Standards Australia International. Information on Fiji standards can be found at <http://www.pasc.standards.org.au>.

## Contacts

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For more information contact: Department of National Trade Measurement and Standards, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, P.O. Box 2118, Government Buildings, Suva, Tel: (679) 3305-411, Fax: (679) 3302-617

## Trade Agreements

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Fiji manufacturers enjoy preferential access under a number of multilateral and regional trade agreements. The country is also pursuing further bilateral trade agreements where diplomatic missions have opened in Brazil, Korea, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, and South Africa.

The South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Agreement (SPARTECA) grants preferential access for Pacific island exports into Australia and New Zealand. The SPARTECA TCF scheme in particular, which was extended to the end of 2014, is of great benefit to the garment industry. The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) grants market access to MSG member countries including Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Fiji is a party to the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA). Fiji ratified the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the E.U. on trade in goods in 2014, which secures preferential access to the E.U. market for some Fiji exports (notable exception being sugar).

## Licensing Requirements for Professional Services

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To practice in Fiji, lawyers are required to obtain practicing certificates from the Chief Registrar in the Judicial Department. Accountants are also required to obtain membership with the Fiji Institute of Accountants (FIA). The FIA

recognizes 18 overseas accounting institutes, including the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and may consider membership in the FIA.

## Web Resources

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Investment Fiji, <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>

Judicial Department of Fiji, <http://www.judiciary.gov.fj>

Fiji Government, <http://www.fiji.gov.fj>

Fiji Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ,  
<http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj>

Fiji Institute of Accountants. <http://www.fia.org.fj>

Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority, <http://www.frca.org.fj>

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, <http://www.mit.gov.fj/>

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), <http://www.spc.int>

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, <http://www.forumsec.org.fj>

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## Chapter 6: Investment Climate

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### Openness to Foreign Investment

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#### Attitude toward Foreign Direct Investment

The Fiji government welcomes foreign investment, assuring investors that Fiji is a safe place to do business. The return to parliamentary democracy and re-engagement of diplomatic relations with international partners has improved investor confidence.

Although Fiji has a tradition of a strong judiciary system, where contractual rights are generally upheld, the independence of the judiciary and the lengthy legal process raise concerns about due process of law. Furthermore, all cases challenging the actions of the interim government since December 2006, were dissolved by decree. This prohibits the judiciary from hearing challenges to the actions of the government since April 2009, such as the 2006 coup and the abrogation of the constitution in April 2009.

Following a strong performance of 4.2 percent in 2014, the Fiji government expects the economy to grow by 4 percent in 2015. Increased activity in the construction, manufacturing, financial, and insurance sectors should fuel growth in 2015. According to 2014 figures, earnings from tourism were US\$695.2 million with visitor arrivals reaching 692,630. The number of U.S. visitors went up 12 percent in 2014, accounting for nearly 9 percent of total visitors. Tourism remains Fiji's largest foreign exchange earner, and the country has liberal visa requirements— allowing nationals of 132 nations to enter the country without acquiring a visa in advance. Remittances from Fijians working abroad

are a second pillar of the economy. Sugar exports remain important. While the sector is a major employer, production is below its peak performance. The government is funding reforms to improve quality, farm productivity, and mill efficiency to bolster sugar production. Additionally, the sugar sector is diversifying into co-generation facilities for producing energy. U.S. exports to Fiji increased by 19 percent in 2014, and two-way trade with Fiji totaled about US\$240.95 million.

#### Other Investment Policy Reviews

The Fiji government is reviewing its investment policies in order to improve efficiency in the approval processes of foreign investment proposals. Fiji's last WTO trade policy review was in 2009.

#### Laws/Regulations of Foreign Direct Investment

The Foreign Investment Act (FIA) and the 2009 Foreign Investment Regulation regulate foreign investment in Fiji. All businesses with a foreign-investment component in their ownership are required to register and obtain a Foreign Investment Registration Certificate (FIRC) from Investment Fiji. Investment Fiji is responsible for the promotion, regulation, and control of foreign investment in the interest of national development. The government is developing an Investment Approval Tracking System (IATS) to enable online applications for an FIRC and payment of the requisite application fee of US\$1,438 (F\$2,875). Investors are also required to obtain the necessary permits and licenses from other relevant authorities and should be prepared for delays.

Information on the registration procedures, regulations and registration requirements for foreign investment is available at the Investment Fiji website:

<http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>.

#### Industrial Promotion

The government has identified and promoted extensively through the media, overseas investment trade missions and trade shows, opportunities for investment in the sectors of agribusiness, food processing, information and communication, mining, services, and travel. Specific sector investment incentives have also been developed to encourage investment in these sectors.

#### Limits on Foreign Control

A number of investment activities are reserved for Fiji nationals or subject to restrictions. There are 15 reserved activities and 5 restricted activities. Full listings of reserved and restricted areas can be found at: <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj/pages.cfm/for-investors/doing-business-in-fiji/foreign-investment-act-foreign-investment-regulations.html>.

In 2013, the government amended the foreign investment law to allow the government to confiscate assets, interests, and/or shares or properties of foreign investors who do not comply with FIRC conditions, thus leading to a termination of its FIRC.

#### Privatization Program

The government is expected to complete the sale of a number of its blue-chip public assets, including Airports Fiji Ltd. and the Fiji Government Printing and Stationary Department, to raise an estimated US\$267 million (F\$534 million).

#### Screening of FDI

Investors are required to meet the requirements listed under the Foreign Investment Act (FIA) and the 2009 Foreign Investment Regulation, as well as ensure that the investment activity is not under the Reserved and Restricted Activities list. The following documents must accompany the FIRC application: if a company is being listed as a Shareholder, then a certified copy of the certificate of incorporation and name(s) of those associated with the Shareholding Company; if local equity contribution is required, a copy of the Shareholders Agreement and a copy of the Declaration of Shareholders, witnessed or certified by a justice of the peace, lawyer and/or chartered accountant, are to be submitted; a certified copy of the passport bio-data page, together with a recent colored passport size photo of all those associated with the business; a police clearance report from the country of residence in the last 12 months or more; and proof of company registration abroad (if applicable).

Contact: The Chief Executive, Investment Fiji, P.O. Box 2303, Government Buildings, Suva; Telephone: (679) 3315 988; Fax:(679) 3301 783; Email: [info@investmentfiji.org.fj](mailto:info@investmentfiji.org.fj); Website: <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj/>.

The approval process for investment applications takes 5-10 working days. Depending on the nature of the business, investors may also be required to obtain permits and licenses from other relevant authorities and should be prepared for delays.

#### Competition Law

The Fiji Commerce Commission (FCC), established under the 2010 Commerce Commission Decree, regulates monopolies, promotes competition, and controls prices of selected hardware, basic food items, and utilities, in order to ensure a fair, competitive, and equitable market.

#### Investment Trends

Interest in foreign investment are on the rise, with Investment Fiji registering a total of 257 new investment applications, valued at US\$627 million (F\$1.25 billion) in 2013.

Interest from American investors also grew in the first half of 2013, with 22 applications, with an estimated value of \$169 million (F\$338 million). Although registration is a precondition, it does not necessarily mean that actual investment will be made.

Table 1

Measure	Year	Index or Rank	Website Address
<b>TI Corruption Perceptions index</b>	2014	n/a	<a href="http://transparency.org/cpi2014/results">transparency.org/cpi2014/results</a>
<b>World Bank's Doing Business Report "Ease of Doing Business"</b>	2015	81 of 198	<a href="http://doingbusiness.org/rankings">doingbusiness.org/rankings</a>
<b>Global Innovation Index</b>	2014	95 of 143	<a href="http://globalinnovationindex.org/content.aspx?page=data-analysis">globalinnovationindex.org/content.aspx?page=data-analysis</a>
<b>World Bank GNI per capita</b>	2013	\$4,370.00	<a href="http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD">data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD</a>

## *Millennium Challenge Corporation Country Scorecard*

This section does not apply to Fiji.

### **Conversion and Transfer Policies**

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#### Foreign Exchange

The Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF) relaxed a number of foreign exchange controls, including increasing delegated limits for commercial banks and authorizing foreign exchange dealers to process some payments in 2015. The Fiji dollar remains fully convertible. The Fiji dollar is pegged to a basket of currencies of Fiji's principal trading partners, chiefly Australia, New Zealand, the United States, the European Union, and Japan.

The Reserve Bank of Fiji has not removed its suspension of offshore investments by non-bank financial institutions and companies. Although no limits were placed on non-residents borrowing locally for some specified investment activities, the RBF placed a credit ceiling on lending by commercial banks to non-resident controlled business entities.

#### Remittance Policies

Profit and dividend remittances above US\$500,000 (F\$1 million) per company, per annum, and large payments still require RBF approval. Tax compliance may restrict foreign investors' repatriation of investment profits and capital. Provided all required documentation is submitted, the processing time for remittance applications is approximately three working days. Remittance through parallel markets requires prior approval by the Reserve Bank.

### **Expropriation and Compensation**

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Expropriation has not historically been a common phenomenon in Fiji. A foreign investor theoretically has the same right of recourse as a Fijian enterprise to the courts and other tribunals of Fiji to settle disputes. In practice, the government has acted to assert its interests with decrees affecting foreign investors.

In 2013, the government amended the Foreign Investment Decree with provisions to permit the forfeiture of foreign investments as well as significant fines for breaches in compliance of foreign investment registration conditions.

In 2010, through the Natadola Development Decree, the foreign investment certificate of the project developers was cancelled, and its shares in the project forfeited. The government's 2010 Media decree, which limits foreign ownership of media organizations to 10 percent, forced the sale of Australia-based News Limited's controlling stake in the Fiji Times, the country's oldest and main daily newspaper. Also, in the same year, a director of a major U.S. investor, FIJI Water, was deported, and the same company was singularly targeted with an increased export tax, from 0.33 of a cent per liter of water to US 8 cents (FD 16 cents) per liter of water.

The 2010 Natadola and Momi Bay Decrees effectively forced the takeover of private assets, extinguished creditors' claims, and excluded the jurisdiction of the courts from the transfer of properties in dispute to the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF). This action left no recourse for foreign investors who had filed legal challenges, as those challenges were terminated from the court process by the Natadola and Momi decrees. Further taxes imposed on Fiji Water and other water companies cannot be challenged in the courts, and the decisions of Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority (FRCA) in this respect are also outside the purview of the courts, by government decree.

## **Dispute Settlement**

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The legal system in Fiji developed from British law. Fiji maintains a judiciary consisting of a Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, a High Court, and magistrate courts. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal.

In April 2009, upon the abrogation of the constitution, the entire judiciary and the Director of Public Prosecutions were dismissed and required to reapply for their jobs, with only legal officials considered friendly to the coup regime re-appointed. To fill vacancies in the judicial system, Fiji has recruited prosecutors and judges on contract mainly from Sri Lanka.

Both companies and individuals have recourse to legal treatment through the system of local and superior courts. Laws govern all aspects of commercial transactions, including bankruptcy law, and the courts have generally enforced these laws in a transparent and consistent manner. A foreign investor theoretically has the right of recourse to the courts and other tribunals of Fiji with respect to the settlement of disputes, but government decrees have been used to block foreign investors from legal recourse in investment takeovers, tax increases, or write-offs of interest to the government.

### **Bankruptcy**

Fiji has bankruptcy laws. According to World Bank Doing Business 2015 survey, in terms of resolving insolvency, Fiji was ranked at 91 out of 189. The survey estimated that it took 1.8 years at a cost of 10 percent of the estate to complete the process, with an estimated recovery rate of 46.2 percent of value.

### **Investment Disputes**

Past investment disputes have often focused on land issues, particularly in the mining and tourism sectors. Such disputes have been resolved through labor-management dialogue, government intervention, referral to compulsory arbitration, or through the courts. Fiji is a party to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes Between States and Nationals of Other States.

### **International Arbitration**

Fiji has been a party to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes Between States and Nationals of Other States since 1977.

### **ICSID Convention and New York Convention**

Fiji acceded to the New York Convention in September 2010.

### Duration of Dispute Resolution

The World Bank Doing Business 2015 survey ranked Fiji 81 out of 189 on the efficiency of the judicial system to resolve a commercial dispute. According to the survey, Fiji required 34 procedures to enforce a contract and took 397 calendar days to complete procedures at a cost of 38.9 percent of the value of the claim.

## Performance Requirements and Incentives

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### WTO/TRIMS

Fiji has been a member of WTO since January 1996. According to Fiji's trade profile on the WTO website, there are no records of disputes.

### Investment Incentives

Foreign investors can apply for incentives following registration with Investment Fiji. Information on incentive packages for investors can be obtained from the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority (<http://www.frca.org.fj/>). Incentives offered include preferential tax treatment and duty free or low duty treatment of imported materials and equipment. The incentives reflect the Fiji government's long-term concerted efforts to encourage exports and develop priority sectors, including tourism, commercial agriculture, fisheries, forestry, the filmmaking and audio visual industry, and the information technology industry. Fiji also established a tax free region in the northern and maritime island regions of the country to encourage rural development, and introduced incentives to encourage investment in bio-fuel and renewable energy.

Tourism incentives include tax-related investment allowances for approved expenditures on tourist boats/ships and approved building and expansion projects. The tourism incentive package provides a 10-year tax holiday for approved large tourism development projects with capital investments of more than US\$3.7 million (F\$7.4 million) to be completed before December 31, 2018. Filmmaking and audio-visual incentives include a 47 percent tax rebate on production costs spent in Fiji up to US\$12 million, which is a maximum allowable tax rebate of US\$5.64 million. There are various incentives to encourage investment in the agriculture, fisheries, and forestry industry including zero-rated fiscal duty on imported agricultural machineries, equipment and inputs, and specialized equipment and machinery for forestry and fisheries. The benefits, which can be up to a 10-year tax holiday, vary by industry and nature of the investment.

### Research and Development

U.S. and foreign firms may participate in government financed or subsidized research as well as development programs, as technical and in-country capacities is limited. However, as such programs are usually financed by foreign development partners and donors, any conditions and limitations may be dependent on the source of project financing.

### Performance Requirements

Many jobs are reserved for Fijian citizens, and work permit applications for expatriate employees may face delays or denials. Potential employers and employees should consult Fiji Immigration for further information prior to making any binding commitments as it can be difficult to secure employment visas for non-Fijians.

To support the implementation of newly approved investments, Investment Fiji established a monitoring system to assist companies in obtaining necessary approvals to commence operations. The investing firm must ensure that commercial production begins within 12 months for investments under US\$1.25 million (F\$2.5 million) or within 18 months of the date of approval of the project for investments above US\$1.25 million (F\$2.5 million).

#### Data Storage

There is no policy of "forced localization" in which foreign investors must use domestic content in goods or technology. However, investors intending to export their goods under preferential trade arrangements may be required to show a minimum local content in the product.

### **Right to Private Ownership and Establishment**

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Foreign and domestic entities are able to establish and fully own their business in Fiji. However, foreign investment may be restricted in industries such as fisheries that require local partnerships (see restricted investment activities <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj/pages.cfm/for-investors/doing-business-in-fiji/foreign-investment-act-foreign-investment-regulations.html>). Foreign investors typically operate through a branch or a local subsidiary in Fiji. Formation of both public and private companies is possible; the process takes about a month to complete. The South Pacific Stock Exchange is able to approve investments by non-resident individuals and businesses in publicly listed companies, and authorized banks in Fiji are allowed to approve investments by non-resident individuals and businesses in fixed deposit accounts. A public company must have a minimum of seven shareholders, with no maximum; a private company must have a minimum of two shareholders and a maximum of 50. There are no nationality or residence restrictions on shareholders, but applications for the issue of new or additional shares for increased capitalization should be submitted to the Reserve Bank of Fiji for processing before share certificates may be issued to non-residents.

### **Protection of Property Rights**

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#### **Real Property**

Land tenure and usage is a highly complex and sensitive issue. Fiji amended the Land Sales Act in December 2014 to restrict ownership of freehold land inside a city or town council boundaries areas to Fijian citizens. There are exceptions to allow foreigners to purchase strata title land, which is defined as ownership in part of a property including multi-level apartments or subdivisions. Foreigners will also still be allowed to purchase, sell, or lease freehold land for industrial or commercial purposes, residential purposes within an integrated tourism development, or for the operation of a hotel licensed under the Hotel and Guest Houses Act. The Land Sales Act also requires foreign land owners who purchase approved land to build a dwelling valued at a minimum of US\$125,000 (FJ\$250,000) on the land within two years, or land-owners face an annual tax valued at 20 percent of the land value (applied as 10 percent every six months). Freehold land

currently owned by a non-Fijian can pass to the owners' heirs and will not be deemed a sale.

The government of Fiji received criticism from foreign owners for the speed at which the act was passed and the perceived lack of consultation with foreign land owners and developers. The application of the Land Sales Act continues to create uncertainty among foreign investment as the Fiji government has yet to provide further clarification of the act, such as defining what constitutes an integrated tourism development. There is also limited capacity of construction and architecture firms, making it difficult to comply with the two year time frame of building a dwelling before tax penalties set in.

According to the World Bank's Doing Business Report, on 'Registering Property' took a total of 69 days to register property and four main processes, including conducting title searches at the Titles Office, presenting transfer documents for stamping at the Stamp Duty office, obtaining tax clearance on capital gains tax, and settlement at the Registrar of Titles Office.

Ethnic Fijians communally hold approximately 87 percent of all land. Crown land owned by the government account for 4 percent, while the remainder is freehold land, which private individuals or companies hold. All indigenous land, commonly referred to as iTaukei land, is held in a statutory trust by the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) for the benefit of indigenous landholding units.

To improve access to land, the government established a "land bank" in the Ministry of Lands under the land use decree for the purpose of leasing land from indigenous landowning units through the TLTB and subleasing the land to individual tenants for lease periods of up to 99 years. As of November 2014, 8,579 hectares of land had been registered with the Land Bank. The Land Bank, however, began leasing land directly to tenants, without TLTB involvement and sometimes with undue pressure on landowners to "deposit" their land in the land bank. In 2011 revisions were made to the formula for distributing lease proceeds to indigenous landowners, abolishing the system of chiefly privilege in land lease income distribution and providing for a "one person, one share" system. This change contributed to an increase in lease renewals, as individual members of landowning units received a greater share of lease monies than under the previous system.

The constitution includes other new provisions protecting land leases and land tenancies, but observers noted that the provisions seemed to have unintended consequences, including weakening the overall legal structure governing leases and other such contracts.

The availability of Crown land for leasing is usually advertised. This does not, however, preclude consideration given to individual applications in cases where land is required for special purposes. Government leases for industrial purposes can be up to 99 years with rents reassessed every 10 years. TLTB leases for land nearer to urban locations are normally for 50-75 years. Annual rent is reassessed every five years. The maximum rent that can be levied in both cases is 6 percent of unimproved capital value. Leases also usually carry development conditions that require lessees to effect improvements within a specified time.

Apart from the requirements of the TLTB and Lands Department, town planning,

conservation, and other requirements specified by central and local government authorities affect the use of land. Investors are urged to seek local legal advice in all transactions involving land.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Fiji's Copyright Laws are in conformity with World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) provisions. Copyright laws adhere to international laws, and while there are provisions for companies to register a trademark or petition for a patent in Fiji through the Office of the Attorney General, trademark and patent laws are outdated. Furthermore, the enforcement of these laws remains inadequate. There is no protection for designs or trade secrets.

Illegal materials, and illegal reproductions of films, sound recordings, and computer programs are widely available throughout Fiji. In 2013, a local company was fined for the illegal sale and reproduction of movies. The government is reviewing trademark and patent laws, but capacity is a challenge.

### *Resources for Rights Holders*

Fiji Intellectual Property Office  
Office of the Attorney General  
Level 7 Suvavou House, Victoria Parade, P.O. Box 2213 Government Buildings, Suva, FIJI  
Telephone Number: (679) 3309866

American Fiji Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) Level 4 FNPF Place  
343 Victoria Parade  
PO Box 12499  
Telephone Number: (+679) 3305510

For additional information about treaty obligations and points of contact at local IP offices, please see WIPO's country profiles at <http://www.wipo.int/directory/en/>.  
U.S. Embassy Point of contact: U.S. Embassy Suva Commercial Office  
[commercialsuva@state.gov](mailto:commercialsuva@state.gov)

Link to public list of local attorneys: <http://suva.usembassy.gov/attorneys.html>.

## **Transparency of Regulatory System**

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Although the government has made some positive efforts, there is a perception among foreign investors of a lack of transparency in government procurement and approval processes. Some foreign investors considering investment in Fiji have encountered lengthy and costly bureaucratic delays, shuffling of permits among government ministries, inconsistent and changing procedures, lack of technical capacity, and slow decision-making. The Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) regulates all food and animal products entering Fiji and has stringent and costly point-of-origin inspection and quarantine requirements upon foreign goods. United States dairy, fresh food, and frozen food exports face severe bureaucratic hurdles entering the Fiji market.

Fiji's constitution provides for public access to government information and for the correction or deletion of false or misleading information that affects each person. The constitution requires that a freedom of information law be enacted, but does not specify a deadline for parliament to pass such a law.

## **Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment**

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The capital market is regulated and supervised by the Reserve Bank of Fiji. Eighteen companies were listed on the Suva-based South Pacific Stock Exchange (SPSE) in 2014. At the end of 2014, market capitalization at US\$453 million (F\$907 million) rose by 14 percent. To promote greater activity in the capital market, the government lowered corporate tax rates for listed companies from 18.5 percent to 10 percent and has exempted income earned from trading of shares in the SPSE from income tax and capital gains tax.

### **Money and Banking System, Hostile Takeovers**

Fiji has a well-developed banking system supervised by the Reserve Bank of Fiji. The RBF regulates the Fiji monetary and banking systems, manages the issuance of currency notes, administers exchange controls, and provides banking and other services to government. In addition, it provides lender-of-last-resort facilities and regulates trading bank liquidity.

There are six trading banks with established operations in Fiji: ANZ Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of South Pacific, Bred Bank, Home Finance Corporation and Westpac Banking Corporation. Non-banking financial institutions also provide financial assistance and borrowing facilities to the commercial community and to consumers. These institutions include the Fiji Development Bank, Credit Corporation, Merchant Finance, and insurance companies. The banking sector is well capitalized and as of December 2014, total assets of commercial banks amounted to US\$3.8 billion (F\$7.4 billion).

## **Competition from State Owned Enterprises**

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State-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Fiji are concentrated in utilities and key services and industries including Aerospace (Fiji Airways, Airports Fiji Limited); Agribusiness (Fiji Pine Ltd); Energy (Fiji Electricity Authority); Food processing (Fiji Sugar Corporation, Pacific Fishing Company); Information & Communication (Amalgamated Telecom Holdings); and Media (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd). There are 11 Government Commercial Companies which operate commercially and are fully owned by government, six Commercial Statutory Authorities (CSA) which have regulatory functions and charge nominal fees for their services, six Majority Owned Companies (MAC), and one Minority Owned Company (MIC) with some government equity in the company. The SOEs that provide essential utilities, such as energy and water, also have social responsibility and non-commercial obligations.

Aside from the CSA's, SOEs do not exercise delegated governmental powers. In the energy sector, the Fiji Electricity Authority is the generator and distributor of energy as well as the industry regulator. SOEs benefit from economies of scale, and may be

avored in certain sectors. The Fiji Broadcasting Company Ltd (FBCL) is exempt from the Media Decree which governs private media organizations and exposes private media to lawsuits and has been designated an essential industry under the Essential National Industries Decree (ENID). In some sectors, the government has pursued a policy of opening up or deregulating various sectors of the economy, even those where an SOE had a monopoly status, such as international airline routes. The government is expected to complete the sale of a number of its blue-chip public assets in 2015, including Airports Fiji Ltd and Fiji Government Printing and Stationary Department, to raise an estimated US\$267 million (F\$534 million).

#### OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of SOEs

SOEs follow a normal corporate structure with a board of directors and executive management. All SOEs have boards of directors who are appointed by a cabinet minister. Some SOEs have board seats allocated specifically to the heads of certain government departments. Usually the Permanent Secretary for Finance is a board member. There is no explicit requirement for SOEs to consult government before making policy decisions but officials probably do so under current government scrutiny.

All SOEs are required to publish annual reports, although not all SOEs comply. Fiji hosts domestic and international auditing firms, and Fijian standards are comparable to international financial reporting standards. Although the government requires a rate of return of 10 percent by SOEs, this is not strictly enforced, and generally the performance of SOEs is poor.

#### Sovereign Wealth Funds

There is no sovereign wealth fund or asset management bureau in Fiji. The country has the Fiji National Provident Fund which manages and invests members' savings for their retirement. The fund invests in equities, bonds, commercial paper, mortgages, real estate and various offshore investments.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

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Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) is still a relatively young concept in Fiji, although it is increasingly promoted, with both multi-national companies and established large local companies practicing RBC through charitable foundations. Major companies' advertising often promotes the company's social benefits or charity sponsorships. There is no official favoring of RBC-friendly businesses, and consumers tend to seek value for price. The government has included a social responsibility component for SOEs that provides essential utilities.

#### OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

Although the government has included a social responsibility component for SOEs, there are no requirements for companies to publicly disclose information on its RBC.

### **Political Violence**

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The country has been a constitutional republic since general elections held on September 17, 2014 ended eight years of military rule. In an election deemed free and

fair by the international community, citizens elected Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama as prime minister. Bainimarama overthrew the elected government in a bloodless coup in 2006. In 2009 the interim government he headed abrogated the existing constitution, imposed a state of emergency, and, in the absence of a parliament, ruled by decree until national elections returned the country to democracy. The Public Order (Amendment) Decree (POAD) restricts freedoms of speech, assembly, and movement. The POAD, media decree, and other decrees promulgated since the 2006 coup remain in force under the new constitution.

Although there have been human rights concerns in previous years, the possibility of civil disturbances is deemed to be fairly low.

## Corruption

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Corruption, including bribery, raises the costs and risks of doing business. Corruption has a corrosive impact on both market opportunities overseas for U.S. companies and the broader business climate. It also deters international investment, stifles economic growth and development, distorts prices, and undermines the rule of law.

It is important for U.S. companies, irrespective of their size, to assess the business climate in the relevant market in which they will be operating or investing, and to have an effective compliance program or measures to prevent and detect corruption, including foreign bribery. U.S. individuals and firms operating or investing in foreign markets should take the time to become familiar with the relevant anticorruption laws of both the foreign country and the United States in order to properly comply with them, and where appropriate, they should seek the advice of legal counsel.

The U.S. Government seeks to level the global playing field for U.S. businesses by encouraging other countries to take steps to criminalize their own companies' acts of corruption, including bribery of foreign public officials, by requiring them to uphold their obligations under relevant international conventions. A U. S. firm that believes a competitor is seeking to use bribery of a foreign public official in international business, for example to secure a contract, should bring this to the attention of appropriate U.S. agencies, as noted below.

**U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act:** In 1977, the United States enacted the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), which generally makes it unlawful for U.S. persons and businesses (domestic concerns), and U.S. and foreign public companies listed on stock exchanges in the United States or which must file periodic reports with the Securities and Exchange Commission (issuers), to offer, promise or make a corrupt payment or anything of value to foreign officials to obtain or retain business. The FCPA also applies to foreign firms and persons who take any act in furtherance of such a corrupt payment while in the United States. In addition to the anti-bribery provisions, the FCPA contains accounting provisions applicable to public companies. The accounting provisions require issuers to make and keep accurate books and records and to devise and maintain an adequate system of internal accounting controls. The accounting provisions also prohibit individuals and businesses from knowingly falsifying books or records or knowingly circumventing or failing to implement a system of internal controls. In order to provide more information and guidance on the statute, the Department of Justice and the

Securities and Exchange Commission published *A Resource Guide to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act*, available in PDF at:

<http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/guidance/>. For more detailed information on the FCPA generally, see the Department of Justice FCPA website at: <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/>.

**Other Instruments:** It is U.S. Government policy to promote good governance, including host country implementation and enforcement of anti-corruption laws and policies pursuant to their obligations under international agreements. Since enactment of the FCPA, the United States has been instrumental to the expansion of the international framework to fight corruption. Several significant components of this framework are the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (negotiated under the auspices of the OECD), the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UN Convention), the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (OAS Convention), the Council of Europe Criminal and Civil Law Conventions, and a growing list of U.S. free trade agreements.

**OECD Antibribery Convention:** The Antibribery Convention entered into force in February 1999. As of January 2015, there are 41 parties to the Convention, including the United States (see <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/oecdantibriberyconvention.htm>). Major exporters China and India are not parties, although the U.S. Government strongly endorses their eventual accession to the Antibribery Convention. The Antibribery Convention obligates the Parties to criminalize bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions, which the United States has done under U.S. FCPA. [ Fiji is not a party to the OECD Convention.

**UN Convention:** The UN Convention entered into force on December 14, 2005, and there are 174 parties to it as of March 2015 (see <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/signatories.html>). The UN Convention requires countries to establish criminal and other offences to cover a wide range of acts of corruption, from basic forms of corruption such as bribery and solicitation, embezzlement, and trading in influence to the concealment and laundering of the proceeds of corruption. The Convention contains transnational business bribery provisions that are functionally similar to those in the OECD Antibribery Convention and contains provisions on private sector auditing and books and records requirements. Other provisions address matters such as prevention, international cooperation, and asset recovery. Fiji acceded to the UN Convention Against Corruption in 2008.

**OAS Convention:** In 1996, the Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the first international anticorruption legal instrument, the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (OAS Convention), which entered into force in March 1997. The OAS Convention, among other things, establishes a set of preventive measures against corruption, provides for the criminalization of certain acts of corruption, including transnational bribery and illicit enrichment, and contains a series of provisions to strengthen the cooperation between its States Parties in areas such as mutual legal assistance and technical cooperation. As of January 2015, the OAS Convention has 34 parties (see <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/Sigs/b-58.html>) and the follow-up mechanism created in 2001 (MESICIC) has 31 members (see [http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/mesicic\\_intro\\_en.htm](http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/mesicic_intro_en.htm)). Fiji is not a party to the Council of OAS Convention.

**Council of Europe Criminal Law and Civil Law Conventions on Corruption:** Many European countries are parties to either the Council of Europe (CoE) Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, the Civil Law Convention on Corruption, or both. The Criminal Law Convention requires criminalization of a wide range of national and transnational conduct, including bribery, money-laundering, and accounting offenses. It also incorporates provisions on liability of legal persons and witness protection. The Civil Law Convention includes provisions on whistleblower protection, compensation for damage relating to corrupt acts, and nullification of a contract providing for or influenced by corruption, inter alia. The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) was established in 1999 by the CoE to monitor compliance with these and related anti-corruption standards. Currently, GRECO comprises 49 member States (48 European countries and the United States). See [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/general/about\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/general/about_en.asp). As of January 2015, the Criminal Law Convention has 44 parties and the Civil Law Convention has 35 (see <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&NT=173>; <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&NT=174>). Fiji is not a party to the Council of Europe Conventions

**Free Trade Agreements:** While it is U.S. Government policy to include anticorruption provisions in free trade agreements (FTAs) that it negotiates with its trading partners, the anticorruption provisions have evolved over time. The most recent FTAs negotiated now require trading partners to criminalize “active bribery” of public officials (offering bribes to any public official must be made a criminal offense, both domestically and trans-nationally) as well as domestic “passive bribery” (solicitation of a bribe by a domestic official). All U.S. FTAs may be found at the U.S. Trade Representative Website: <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements>. Fiji does not have a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in place with the United States.

**Local Laws:** U.S. firms should familiarize themselves with local anticorruption laws, and, where appropriate, seek legal counsel. While the U.S. Department of Commerce cannot provide legal advice on local laws, the Department’s U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service can provide assistance with navigating the host country’s legal system and obtaining a list of local legal counsel.

**Assistance for U.S. Businesses:** The U.S. Department of Commerce offers several services to aid U.S. businesses seeking to address business-related corruption issues. For example, the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service can provide services that may assist U.S. companies in conducting their due diligence as part of the company’s overarching compliance program when choosing business partners or agents overseas. The U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service can be reached directly through its offices in every major U.S. and foreign city, or through its website at <http://www.trade.gov/cs>.

The United States provides commercial advocacy on behalf of exporters of U.S. goods and services bidding on public sector contracts with foreign governments and government agencies. An applicant for advocacy must complete a questionnaire concerning its background, the relevant contract, and the requested U.S. Government assistance. The applicant must also certify that it is in compliance with applicable U.S. law, that it and its affiliates have not and will not engage in bribery of foreign public officials in connection with the foreign project, and that it and its affiliates maintain and enforce a policy that prohibits bribery of foreign public officials. Problems, including alleged corruption by foreign governments or competitors, encountered by U.S.

companies in seeking such foreign business opportunities can be brought to the attention of appropriate U.S. government officials, including local embassy personnel, and reported through the Department of Commerce Trade Compliance Center “Report a Trade Barrier” Website at [tcc.export.gov/Report\\_a\\_Barrier/index.asp](http://tcc.export.gov/Report_a_Barrier/index.asp). Potential violations of the FCPA can be reported to the Department of Justice via email to [FCPA.Fraud@usdoj.gov](mailto:FCPA.Fraud@usdoj.gov).

**Guidance on the U.S. FCPA:** The Department of Justice’s (DOJ) FCPA Opinion Procedure enables U.S. firms and individuals and issuers to request a statement of the Justice Department’s present enforcement intentions under the anti-bribery provisions of the FCPA regarding actual, prospective business conduct. The details of the opinion procedure are available on DOJ’s Fraud Section Website at [www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa](http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa) and general information is contained in Chapter 9 of the publication *A Resource Guide to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act*, at <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/guidance/>. Although the Department of Commerce has no enforcement role with respect to the FCPA, it supplies general information to U.S. exporters who have questions about the FCPA and about international developments concerning the FCPA. For further information, see the Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Commerce, website, at <http://www.commerce.gov/os/ogc/transparency-and-anti-bribery-initiatives>. More general information on the FCPA is available at the websites listed below.

Exporters and investors should be aware that generally all countries prohibit the bribery of their public officials, and prohibit their officials from soliciting bribes under domestic laws. Most countries are required to criminalize such bribery and other acts of corruption by virtue of being parties to various international conventions discussed above.

## Anti-Corruption Resources

Some useful resources for individuals and companies regarding combating corruption in global markets include the following:

- Information about the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), including *A Resource Guide to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act*, translations of the statute into numerous languages, documents from FCPA related prosecutions and resolutions, and press releases are available at the U.S. Department of Justice’s Website at: <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa> and <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa/guidance/>
- The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission FCPA Unit also maintains an FCPA website, at: <https://www.sec.gov/spotlight/fcpa.shtml>. The website, which is updated regularly, provides general information about the FCPA, links to all SEC enforcement actions involving the FCPA, and contains other useful information.
- General information about anticorruption and transparency initiatives, relevant conventions and the FCPA, is available at the Department of Commerce Office of the General Counsel website: <http://www.commerce.gov/os/ogc/transparency-and-anti-bribery-initiatives>

- The Trade Compliance Center hosts a website with anti-bribery resources, at <http://tcc.export.gov/Bribery>. This website contains an online form through which U.S. companies can report allegations of foreign bribery by foreign competitors in international business transactions
- Additional country information related to corruption can be found in the U.S. State Department's annual *Human Rights Report* available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/>.
- Information about the OECD Antibribery Convention including links to national implementing legislation and country monitoring reports is available at: <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/oecdantibriberyconvention.htm> See also Antibribery Recommendation <http://www.oecd.org/daf/anti-bribery/oecdantibriberyrecommendation2009.htm> and Good Practice Guidance Annex for companies: <http://www.oecd.org/daf/anti-bribery/44884389.pdf>.
- GRECO monitoring reports can be found at: [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/index\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/index_en.asp)
- MESICIC monitoring reports can be found at: [http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/mesicic\\_intro\\_en.htm](http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/mesicic_intro_en.htm)
- The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders have also recognized the problem of corruption and APEC Member Economies have developed anticorruption and ethics resources in several working groups, including the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group, at <http://businessethics.apec.org/>, and the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group, at <http://www.apec.org/Groups/SOM-Steering-Committee-on-Economic-and-Technical-Cooperation/Working-Groups/Anti-Corruption-and-Transparency.aspx>. For more information on APEC generally, <http://www.apec.org/>.

There are many other publicly available anticorruption resources which may be useful, some of which are listed below without prejudice to other sources of information that have not been included. (The listing of resources below does not necessarily constitute U.S. Government endorsement of their findings.)

- Transparency International (TI) publishes an annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The CPI measures the perceived level of public-sector corruption in approximately 180 countries and territories around the world. The CPI is available at: <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>. TI also publishes an annual *Global Corruption Report* which provides a systematic evaluation of the state of corruption around the world. It includes an in-depth analysis of a focal theme, a series of country reports that document major corruption related events and developments from all continents, and an overview of the latest research findings on anti-corruption diagnostics and tools. See <http://www.transparency.org/research/gcr>.
- The World Bank Institute's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project reports aggregate and individual governance indicators for 215 economies over the period

1996-2013, for six dimensions of governance (Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption). See <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>. The World Bank Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Surveys may also be of interest and are available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/BEEPS>. See also the World Bank Group *Doing Business* reports, a series of annual reports measuring regulations affecting business activity, available at: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/>

- The World Economic Forum publishes every two years the *Global Enabling Trade Report*, which assesses the quality of institutions, policies and services facilitating the free flow of goods over borders and to their destinations. At the core of the report, the Enabling Trade Index benchmarks the performance of 138 economies in four areas: market access; border administration; transport and communications infrastructure; and regulatory and business environment. See <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-enabling-trade-report-2014>.
- Global Integrity, a nonprofit organization, publishes its annual *Global Integrity Report*, which typically assesses anti-corruption and good governance mechanisms in diverse countries. (The 2012 and 2013 reports covered a small number of countries as the organization focused on re-launching a modernized methodology in mid-2014.) For more information on the report, see <https://www.globalintegrity.org/global-report/what-is-gi-report/>.

## **Bilateral Investment Agreements**

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Fiji has double taxation agreements with Australia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and United Kingdom. Fiji has not entered into a bilateral investment treaty or a double taxation agreement with the United States.

## **OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs**

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The U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) provides investment insurance in Fiji for qualified applicants, including political risk insurance and loans. The risks of currency convertibility are safeguarded under Fiji's foreign-exchange regulations. Fiji is not a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.

## **Labor**

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The labor force in 2013 was estimated to be 344,739. Education is compulsory until age 17, with male and female students in Fiji achieving largely the same level of education. The labor force participation rates (for population ages 15-64) for men and women were 74.3 percent and 39.3 percent respectively. National unemployment stands at around 8.1 percent, although the rates for youth and women are higher, at 19.2 percent and 11.4 percent respectively.

Fiji continues to face acute labor shortages in a broad range of fields, including the

medical, management, engineering, and financial sectors, and to a lesser extent, for competent trade-skilled people in the construction and tourism industries.

The Ministry of Labor, Industrial Relations, and Employment has responsibility for the administration of labor laws and the encouragement of good labor relations. The Employment Relations Promulgation (ERP) provides for the rights of workers to join trade unions. Trade unions are independent of the government. The ERP prohibits forced labor, discrimination in employment based on ethnicity, gender, and other prohibited grounds and stipulates equal remuneration for work of equal value. There are workplace safety laws and regulations, and safety standards apply equally to both citizens and foreign workers. However, many work areas did not meet standards, and not all were monitored for compliance by the Ministry of Labor. The national minimum wage rate is US\$1.16 dollar (F\$2.32 dollars).

In 2011, under the Essential National Industries Decree (ENID), the government restricted trade union and collective bargaining rights for workers in designated industries and corporations deemed “essential” to the national economy. These include 12 corporations in five sectors: finance, telecommunications, forestry, the public sector, and the airline industry. Fiji has been a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO) since 1974 and has ratified 37 ILO conventions of which 32 are in force and five conventions were declined.

In March 2015, the governing body of the ILO agreed to defer a commission of inquiry into allegations of violations of Fiji's commitments under ILO Conventions 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining when Fiji agreed to implement at Tripartite Agreement to address long-standing complaints of anti-union intimidation, restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and interference in trade union activity by administrative decree.

## **Foreign-Trade Zones/Free Ports**

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The northern and selected maritime regions of Fiji have been declared Tax Free Regions (TFR) to encourage development in these isolated outposts. The specific areas include Vanua Levu, Rotuma, Kadavu, Levuka, Lomaiviti, and the Korovou-Tailevu area in the east of Viti Levu. Businesses that are established in such a region and meet the prescribed requirements will enjoy a corporate tax holiday up to 13 years and import duty exemption on raw materials, machinery, and equipment.

The Kalabu tax-free zone, near the capital of Suva, hosts garment factories with designated tax-free factory status and eligible companies in the information communication technology (ICT) sector.

## **Foreign Direct Investment Statistics**

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*Table 2: Key Macroeconomic Data, U.S. FDI in Host Country/Economy*

Economic Data	Host Country Statistical source*		USG or international statistical source		USG or International Source of Data: BEA; IMF; Eurostat; UNCTAD, Other
	Year	Amount	Year	Amount	
<b>Host Country Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$M USD)</b>	2013	\$4,248 (F\$8063)	2013	\$3,855	<a href="http://www.worldbank.org/en/country">www.worldbank.org/en/country</a>
Foreign Direct Investment	Host Country Statistical source*	USG or international statistical source		USG or international Source of data: BEA; IMF; Eurostat; UNCTAD, Other	
<b>U.S. FDI in partner country (\$M USD, stock positions)</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2013	-\$29	<a href="http://www.bea.gov/international/di1usdbal.htm">http://www.bea.gov/international/di1usdbal.htm</a>
<b>Host country's FDI in the United States (\$M USD, stock positions)</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2013	n.a.	<a href="http://bea.gov/international/direct_investment_multinational_companies_comprehensive_data.htm">http://bea.gov/international/direct_investment_multinational_companies_comprehensive_data.htm</a>
<b>Total inbound stock of FDI as % host GDP</b>	n.a.	n.a.	2013	4.1%	<a href="http://data.worldbank.org/country/fiji">http://data.worldbank.org/country/fiji</a>

\*Source: World Bank, BEA

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TITLE: U.S. Embassy Suva Commercial Office  
ADDRESS: 158 Princes Road, Tamavua, P.O. Box 218, Suva, FIJI  
TELEPHONE: (679) 331 4466  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [commercialsuva@state.gov](mailto:commercialsuva@state.gov)

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## Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing

- [How Do I Get Paid \(Methods of Payment\)](#)
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### How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)

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Fiji has a stable financial and banking system, but the international services division of a U.S. or Fiji bank should be consulted for recommendations regarding the best method for a given transaction.

Options for payment include:

- Telegraphic Transfers
- Cash in Advance
- Commercial Bills of Exchange
- An Open Account
- Letters of Credit

A letter of credit is a very secure form of payment and is used frequently for new or unknown clients perceived to offer relatively more risk of nonpayment.

### How Does the Banking System Operate

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Fiji has a developed banking system controlled by the Fiji Government through the Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF). The Reserve Bank regulates the Fijian monetary and banking system, manages note issues, administers exchange controls, and provides banking and other services to government. It provides and regulates trading-bank liquidity via the government's monetary policy. In addition to managing the credit environment, the RBF has responsibility for foreign exchange controls and management of Fiji's international reserves position.

There are six commercial banks licensed by the Reserve Bank of Fiji and with established operations in Fiji. There are also non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) providing financial assistance and borrowing facilities to the commercial community and to consumers. The non-bank institutions are: the Fiji Development Bank, the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF), the Housing Authority, the Credit Corporation, the Merchant Finance & Investment Company Ltd., and a number of insurance companies. The newest credit institution in the market is Kontiki Finance.

The commercial banks are:

- ANZ Banking Group Limited, P.O. Box 179, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3213-000, Fax: (679) 3213-756
- Bank of Baroda, P.O. Box 47, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3311-402, Fax: (679) 3302-510
- Bank of South Pacific (BSP), Private Mail Bag, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3314-400, Fax: (679) 3303-448
- Bred Bank, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3100-222, Fax: (679) 3100-555
- HFC Bank, P.O. Box 161, Suva, Telephone: (679) 331655
- Westpac Banking Corporation, P.O. Box 238, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3300-666 Fax: (679) 3301-838

Principal credit financial institutions are:

- Credit Corporation, Credit House, 10 Gorrie Street, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3305-744, Fax: (679) 3305-747
- Merchant Finance and Investment Co. Ltd, 91 Gordon Street, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3314-955, Fax: (679) 3300-026
- Fiji Development Bank, 369 Victoria Parade, Suva, Telephone: (679) 3314-866, Fax: (679) 3314-886
- Kontiki Finance, Level 5, Tappoo City Building, Thompson Street, Suva, Telephone: (679) 330-3400, Fax: (679) 330-3401

Services provided by the banks include: lending, overdraft facilities, full-drawn advances, housing loans, leasing finance, personal loans, bankers opinion, credit card facilities, money transfers/remittances, trade finance, trade enquiries, letters of credit, documentary collections, travelers checks, foreign-currency accounts, forward exchange (restricted to trade), and foreign currency loans (residential and trade).

The assets of all commercial banks in Fiji at the end of December 2014 totaled \$3.62 billion (F\$7.188 billion). Fiji's foreign currency exposure policy places limits on banks' net, foreign and open positions, and gross forward, foreign-exchange and sales contracts, in relation to an individual bank's level of capital in Fiji.

## **Foreign-Exchange Controls**

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Exchange control is administered by the Reserve Bank of Fiji through the Exchange Control Act and subsidiary legislation.

The following areas are affected by exchange control:

- transactions in foreign currency;
- transfer of currency into and out of Fiji;
- transfer of property and securities out of Fiji;
- export and import transactions; and
- issue of shares/capital in locally registered companies to foreign investors.

Investments from outside Fiji, overseas equity, loan investment into Fiji, and the flow of funds arising from commercial and private transactions into and out of Fiji are subject to exchange controls.

All commercial banks operating in Fiji, along with non-bank financial institutions, act as agents of the Reserve Bank in matters affected by the Exchange Control Act. Limited authority has been delegated to the commercial banks. The Reserve Bank maintains tight exchange controls on non-resident borrowing. The exchange control policy guidelines and delegated limits for authorized dealers can be found on the Reserve Bank of Fiji's website - <http://www.rbf.gov.fj>

### **U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks**

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Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ) - with Citibank, New York, for drafts; ANZ Bank, New York, for outward telegraph transfers; and Bank of America, San Francisco, for negotiation of checks.

Bank of Baroda – Bank of Baroda, New York branch: <http://www.bankofbaroda-usa.com/>

BSP Fiji – with Bank of America, San Francisco, CA

Westpac Banking Corporation – with Bank of America, San Francisco, CA.

### **Project Financing**

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The Reserve Bank of Fiji's exchange control policy guidelines may impact project financing and limit the amount foreign owned companies may borrow from local banks. Local borrowing to non-resident individuals and non-resident controlled companies by commercial banks are subject to a ceiling and debt/equity guidelines by the Reserve Bank.

Multilateral banks such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank, and some bilateral institutions, offer loans for specific government projects.

### **Web Resources**

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Trade Finance Guide: A Quick Reference for U.S. Exporters, published by the International Trade Administration's Industry & Analysis team:  
<http://www.export.gov/tradefinanceguide/index.asp>

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Country Limitation Schedule: [http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country\\_limits.html](http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country_limits.html)

OPIC: <http://www.opic.gov>

Trade and Development Agency: [http:// www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov)

SBA's Office of International Trade: <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

The Australian and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ): <http://www.anz.com/fiji/>

Bank of Baroda: <http://www.bankofbaroda-fiji.com>

Bank of the South Pacific: <http://www.bsp.com.fj/>

Bred Bank (Fiji): <http://www.bred.com.fj/>

HFC Bank: <http://www.hfc.com.fj>

Westpac Banking Corporation: [http:// www.westpac.com.fj](http://www.westpac.com.fj)

Credit Corporation Fiji Ltd., <http://www.creditcorporation.com.pg/index.php/pacific/fiji>  
Fiji Development Bank, <http://www.fdb.com.fj>

Reserve Bank of Fiji: <http://www.rbf.gov.fj>

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## Chapter 8: Business Travel

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- [Travel Advisory](#)
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- [Telecommunications](#)
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### **Business Customs**

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Although Fiji has a unique local culture, there are no local business customs, beyond the bounds of normal courtesy, which visitors should feel compelled to observe in normal business transactions. Business in Fiji tends to be conducted in a less formal manner than in many other countries. The use of first names is common. Business meetings often begin with small talk and sometimes proceed more slowly than an equivalent meeting in the United States.

It is advisable to reconfirm business appointments and meeting arrangements. However, U.S. business people should not be unduly surprised when kept waiting beyond scheduled times. In the government and financial sector, men usually wear collared shirts and ties during work hours. Very casual attire, including shorts, should be avoided. Evening functions are normally informal (colorful Bula/Aloha shirts, or shirt and tie and slacks or dress, or skirt and blouse), unless otherwise specified. Many offices wear Bula/Aloha shirts on Fridays.

Fiji adopts a relatively conservative approach toward Sunday religious observance. Most retail business is closed on Sunday, but basic services are available. There are sizeable minorities of Hindus and Muslims in the population who have special religious observances regarding food and drink.

Fiji uses the metric system of weights and measures. Dates are written in the order: day, month, year: 10 January 2015 or 01/10/15. In writing numbers, commas denote thousands and periods denote fractions as follows: \$1,000.50, as in the United States. Household electrical current is 220 volt, 50 cycle.

### **Travel Advisory**

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[http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel\\_1744.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html)

## Visa Requirements

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A passport valid for at least three months beyond the intended period of stay and a ticket for return or onward travel is required. Entry visas are granted on arrival for a stay of up to four months for U.S. nationals. U.S. business people do not require special visas to visit Fiji. Visas may be extended for up to six months on application to the Department of Immigration in Suva, Lautoka or Nadi. It is necessary to have an onward or return ticket and sufficient funds to cover costs. Those wishing to reside and work in Fiji, even on a temporary basis, require proper authority to do so before arrival. In most cases, prospective employers will make necessary arrangements to sponsor such people. Visitors who intend to reside or work must make certain they have satisfied immigration requirements.

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links.

State Department Visa Website: [\\_http://usvisas.state.gov](http://usvisas.state.gov)

Fiji Embassy in Washington, D.C.: <http://www.fijiembassydc.com/>

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov>

U.S. Embassy Suva: [http://suva.usembassy.gov/information\\_for\\_travelers.html](http://suva.usembassy.gov/information_for_travelers.html)

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links.

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english.html/>

[http://suva.usembassy.gov/information\\_for\\_travelers.html](http://suva.usembassy.gov/information_for_travelers.html)

## Telecommunications

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Fiji's telecommunication systems are fairly well developed, though costly. Fiji has connectivity via the Southern Cross Cable fiber optic network. The high speed network can deliver a 240Gbps (capacity of submarine cable system) and a direct and secure bandwidth from Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii.

Mobile phones are the most common means of communication. There are three mobile service providers including Vodafone Fiji, Digicel, and Inkk Mobile. Vodafone Fiji, the country's first mobile service provider boasts more than 750,000 active subscribers. Mobile phones operate on a 900 MHz frequency and any GSM dual band or tri-band mobile phone will work with Vodafone Fiji.

Internet access is available in most urban centers and can also be accessed casually from internet cafes and business bureaus. There are several Internet service providers (ISP), including Connect, FINTEL's KIDANET, Unwired Fiji Ltd., and mobile service

providers Vodafone Fiji and Digicel. While dial-up connections are available in Fiji, there is a greater demand and use of high-speed Broadband, pre-paid Internet access and wireless Internet access.

Telecom Fiji Limited (TFL) is the sole provider of local and national (trunk) telephony services. Its network throughout Fiji and Rotuma consists of 55 telephone exchanges and connects over 101,000 customers in all major towns. The range of products and services offered by TFL include local and national (trunk) telephony services, data services, private leased lines, switched digital data circuits, information processing, maritime telecommunications, and emergency services.

## **Transportation**

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American business travelers to Fiji should not encounter unexpected difficulties and can use normal reservation services for travel and accommodation. Visitors are advised to take into account the requirement to have a valid Fiji visa (obtainable upon arrival), a passport valid for at least three months beyond the intended period of stay, and a ticket for return or onward travel to another country.

Fiji is at the crossroads of the South Pacific, central among the southern Pacific island nations, and a mid-way stop for some flights from Australia and New Zealand to America. On average, there are 30 international flights landing or departing Fiji daily.

Fiji's national carrier, Fiji Airways, flies to six Pacific island nations as well as New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong and the United States. The airline offers code share flights with American Airlines between Fiji and the United States. Other airlines servicing Fiji are Aircalin, Air New Zealand, Air Niugini, Air Vanuatu, Jetstar, Korean Airlines, Our Airline, Pacific Blue, Qantas, and Solomon Airlines.

Fiji has two international airports, both on Viti Levu, the largest island. Most overseas flights arrive and depart from Nadi (pronounced Nandi) on Viti Levu's west coast. The other international airport is on the eastern side at Nausori, outside the capital of Suva. A third port on the outer most Northern island of Rotuma was declared an international port of call in 2008.

Fiji Link (previously known as Pacific Sun), a Fiji Airways subsidiary, is Fiji's main domestic airline. Northern Air provides special chartered flights for specific inter-island routes. Rising fuel costs are resulting in increased inter-island fares.

Visitors to Fiji may drive on a valid driver's license from their home country for the same class of vehicle, or a valid international driver's license. Driving is on the left side of the road. The maximum speed limit on the open road is 80 kilometers per hour (50 mph), and 50 kilometers per hour (30 mph) in urban areas. Rental cars are available from internationally known companies at Fiji's gateway airports and in major urban areas.

## **Language**

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Fiji is an English-speaking country, although Fijian and Hindustani are also widely

spoken.

## Health

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Fiji is free from malaria, yellow fever, and many tropical diseases endemic to tropical countries. Typhoid, dengue fever, chikungunya, and leptospirosis have periodically been reported. Fiji has a fairly effective medical system, but emergency care is largely restricted to urban centers. Tap water in Suva, Lautoka and the other major towns has been treated but may not always be safe to drink. Bottled water is readily available. Outside of these urban centers and large resorts, tap water should not be considered potable.

## Local Time, Business Hours, and Holidays

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Listed below are national holidays and their dates for 2015.

New Year's Day	January 1
Prophet Mohammed's Birthday	January 5
Good Friday	April 3
Easter Monday	April 4
Sports Day	June 25
Fiji Day	October 10
Diwali	November 11
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 28

## Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings

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Machinery and equipment imported for temporary use and for a specific project in Fiji and then re-exported, may be allowed as "Privileged Goods" on a check-in/check-out basis, without payment of normal duties. Security in the form of a cash or bond must be deposited with the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority at the time of importation. Upon re-exportation of such goods, the cash deposit will be refunded or bond cancelled.

Personal and household effects may be imported free of fiscal/ excise duty, though this is subject to conditions set out by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority. For the importation of personal motor vehicles, normal duties must be paid.

## Web Resources

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State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov>

Centers for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

Fiji Embassy, Washington DC: <http://www.fijiembassydc.com/>

Fiji Immigration Department, <http://www.immigration.gov.fj>

Tourism Fiji, <http://www.fijime.com/>

Investment Fiji, <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj>

Fiji Government, <http://www.fiji.gov.fj>

Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority: <http://www.frca.org.fj>

FINTEL/KIDANET: <http://www.kidanet.com.fj/>

Telecom Fiji, <https://www.tfl.com.fj>

Vodafone: <http://www.vodafone.com.fj>

Connect Fiji: <http://www.connect.com.fj>

Digicel Fiji: <http://www.digicelfiji.com>

Unwired Fiji: <http://www.unwired.com.fj>

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## Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events

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### Contacts

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The Embassy of the United States of America:

Nathan Carter, Political and Economic Section Chief  
Repeka Ufiamorat, Economic Assistant

158 Princes Road or P.O. Box 218  
Suva, Fiji  
Telephone: (679) 331-4466  
Fax: (679) 330-8685  
Email: [commercialsuva@state.gov](mailto:commercialsuva@state.gov)

Website: <http://suva.usembassy.gov/business.html>

Fiji:

Investment Fiji - <http://www.investmentfiji.org.fj/>

Fijian Government – <http://www.fiji.gov.fj>

Fiji-American Business Council (AmCham) - <http://www.fijiamcham.com/>

Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) - <http://www.baf.com.fj/>

Ministry of Lands, Mineral Resources & Environment - <http://www.lands.gov.fj>

Reserve Bank of Fiji - <http://www.rbf.gov.fj>

iTaukei Land Trust Board - <http://www.tltb.com.fj/>

Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority - <http://www.frca.org.fj>

Fiji Bureau of Statistics - <http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj>

U.S. Government:

U.S. Embassy Suva, Commercial Services: <http://suva.usembassy.gov/business.html>

U.S. Foreign Commercial Service, Sydney, Australia: <http://www.export.gov/australia/>

Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration: <http://www.trade.gov/>

OPIC <https://www.opic.gov>

U.S. Trade & Development Agency: <http://www.ustda.gov/>

U.S. Food & Drug Administration: <http://www.fda.gov/>

U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/>

USAID Pacific Islands Office, Papua New Guinea: <http://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands>

Regional Organizations:

Pacific Islands Trade & Invest <http://www.forumsec.org>

Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) - <http://www.pipso.org/>

UN International Labor Organization - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/suva/>

Asian Development Bank – South Pacific Subregional Office -  
<http://www.adb.org/offices/south-pacific/main>

U.S. Department of State Office of Business Affairs Telephone: (202) 746-1625, Fax:  
(202) 647-3953

U.S. Department Of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Trade Assistance and  
Promotion Office, Telephone: (202) 720-7420

Individual U.S. State Trade Offices: check in U.S. local listings or the Internet.

## **Market Research**

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To view market research reports produced by the U.S. Commercial Service please go to the following website: <http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp> and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens and U.S. companies. Registration to the site is required, and is free.

## **Trade Events**

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Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events.

<http://www.export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>

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## Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services

### **SelectUSA:**

SelectUSA was created by President Obama in June 2011 through Executive Order 13577, as the U.S. government-wide program to promote and facilitate business investment into the United States, including foreign direct investment (FDI) and reshoring.

The program is housed within the Commerce Department and coordinates investment-related resources across more than 20 federal agencies through the Interagency Investment Working Group (IIWG).

SelectUSA provides services to two types of clients: investors and U.S. economic development organizations at the state and local level. Services include:

Information Assistance:

- SelectUSA provides information to investors on the benefits of establishing operations in the United States, as well as the information needed to move investments forward. Investors can access facts, data and local contacts for the U.S. market.
- SelectUSA also works closely with state, local and regional economic developers to provide counseling on strategy, best practices, and on-the-ground intelligence from the Foreign Commercial Service network across more than 70 foreign markets.

Ombudsman Services: SelectUSA coordinates federal agencies to address investor concerns relating to a wide range of federal regulatory issues – helping them to navigate an unfamiliar system.

Investment Advocacy: U.S. state and local governments often find themselves competing with a foreign location for a project. SelectUSA can coordinate senior U.S. government officials to advocate to the investor to bring those jobs to the United States.

Promotional Platform: SelectUSA brings the power of the “USA” brand to high-profile events, such as the upcoming 2015 Investment Summit, to attract investors to learn about our nation’s investment opportunities. SelectUSA organizes international Road Shows and missions to trade fairs, while also offering tailored on-the-ground assistance in more than 70 markets.

Note: SelectUSA exercises strict geographic neutrality, and represents the entire United States. The program does not promote one U.S. location over another U.S. location.

For more information on SelectUSA and services provided for investors and economic development organizations please click on the following link:

<http://selectusa.commerce.gov/>

### **National Export Initiative:**

The President’s National Export Initiative/NEXT marshals Federal agencies to provide customer service-driven services and actionable information resources that ensure American businesses are able to capitalize on expanded opportunities to sell their goods and services abroad.

The U.S. Commercial Service offers customized solutions to help U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium sized businesses, successfully expand exports to new markets. Our global network of trade specialists will work one-on-one with you through every step of the exporting process, helping you to:

- Target the best markets with our world-class research
- Promote your products and services to qualified buyers
- Meet the best distributors and agents for your products and services
- Overcome potential challenges or trade barriers
- Gain access to the full range of U.S. government trade promotion agencies and their services, including export training and potential trade financing sources

To learn more about the Federal Government's trade promotion resources for new and experienced exporters, please click on the following link: [www.export.gov](http://www.export.gov)

U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance or country-specific commercial information can also contact **(800) USA-TRAD(E)**.

To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report is accurate as of the date published. However, **The Department of Commerce** does not take responsibility for actions readers may take based on the information contained herein. Readers should always conduct their own due diligence before entering into business ventures or other commercial arrangements. **The Department of Commerce** can assist companies in these endeavors.

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