



PRESS RELEASE

Press Release No	: 33/2009	Phone:	(679) 331 3611
		Fax :	(679) 330 1688
Date	: 21 August 2009	E-mail:	info@reservebank.gov.fj or info@fijifiu.gov.fj

New Guidelines to Facilitate Customers' Access to Financial Services

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has issued a new *Guideline* on how to identify customers who conduct financial transactions in Fiji. The guideline will be used by financial institutions that are covered under the Financial Transactions Reporting (FTR) Act.

The *Guideline* puts in place comprehensive requirements on financial institutions to adequately identify and verify their customers when they establish a business relationship, open bank account or conduct financial transactions.

Mr. Razim Buksh, Director of the FIU said that these requirements are put in place to safeguard our financial system from misuse by money launderers and other criminals.

Financial institutions may now use the new *Guideline* and apply the customer identification measures on a *risk based approach*. This is to ensure that the customer identification procedures are not stringently applied "across the board" for all types of customers. Thus certain low risk customers may be subjected to less stringent procedures for identification by a financial institution whereas those customers that pose greater risk to money laundering and fraudulent activities will be subject to enhanced level of scrutiny.

Mr. Buksh said that low risk customers such as rural dwellers, farmers, micro-finance industry, students, senior citizens will now be able to seek financial services with less difficulty with only certain minimum ID documents.

The *Guideline* will enable financial institutions to meet the requirements of the FTR Act without hindering access to financial services by the ordinary citizens. Mr. Buksh said that this will also facilitate personal savings and will encourage participation in micro-finance activities in Fiji. The *Guideline* can be accessed using the following link:
<http://www.fijifiu.gov.fj/docs/Guideline%20Customer%20Due%20Diligence%20Aug%202009.pdf>