



GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

17 SEPTEMBER 2022

INFORMATION RELEASE

NIUE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS AWARDED TO HON. POKOTOA IKIUA LALOTOA SIPELI FOR HIS LIFETIME SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE OF NIUE

Sydney, Australia – 17 September 2022 - The Government of Niue (GON), on Saturday, 17 September 2022, awarded The Distinguished Cross to Hon. Pokotoa Ikiua Lalotoa Sipeli for his dedication and lifetime services to the people of Niue.

The award was presented by the Premier of Niue, Hon. Dalton Tagelagi to Hon. Pokotoa Sipeli in Sydney, Australia, in a special ceremony outside the National Constitution Commemoration day.

The Distinguished Service Award – Niue Distinguished Service Cross (NDSC) Hon. Pokotoa Ikiua Lalotoa Sipeli, NDSC

Hon. Pokotoa Sipeli has continued to serve Niue for the last 62 years, with 32 years in the Niue Public Service in the Education sector and 30 years and counting as a Member of the Niue Legislative Assembly for the Constituency of Liku.

Hon. Sipeli was educated in Niue and trained as a teacher at Niue's Teachers' Training Centre. His career as a teacher started in 1960 as a teacher trainee and then as a teacher at Halavai Primary School for 11 years. In 1982 he worked in the Education Department's Curriculum Unit, followed by a further six years as an Education Production Officer.

In 1992, he retired from the Niue Public Service after serving 32 years in the Niue Government at the Education Department. During this time, he significantly contributed to imparting knowledge, shaping the minds, and inspiring many Niuean children who are now leaders. He undertook short-term training stints in NZ, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Australia.

Hon. Sipeli was appointed a Commissioner of the Niue Land Court in 1992.

Hon. Sipeli was first elected into the Niue Legislative Assembly in 1993 as a member of the Liku Village Constituency, a post he holds today. At the 2008 General Elections, after he was again elected unopposed for the Liku village seat, he was appointed a Cabinet Minister under a new Government led by Hon. Toke Talagi, who unseated Hon. Young Viviani as Premier.

He is now serving his 10th term as a member of the Niue Legislative Assembly for the village of Liku. A political career that spans 30 years and counting. He served as a cabinet minister for 12 of these years.

- Minister of Natural Resources 2008-2011
- Minister of Social Services 2011-2014
- Minister for Infrastructure 2014-2017
- Minister for Infrastructure 2017-2020

Hon. Sipeli has represented Niue at many high-level meetings both within the region and as far away as Paris and New York, Tokyo and at the FAO headquarters in Rome, where he presented a statement on behalf of Niue alongside other world leaders, including Pope Benedict XVI. He has also led several Niue delegations to meetings such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Conference of the Parties (COP) Annual meetings. He has also represented Niue at the University of the South Pacific Annual Council Meetings.

Away from Government, Hon. Sipeli's other life-long commitment has been as Deacon and the Treasurer of the Liku Ekalesia church since 1970. He was an elected member of the Liku Village Council during the 1970s and 1980s, always happy to lend a hand, whether it is bookkeeping, mowing the greens, or fixing lawnmowers. As a keen sportsman, he was also the reigning captain of Liku's island cricket team for many years.

Hon. Sipeli's hobbies include floor tiling (Fun Fact: Hon. Pokotoa Sipeli was the tiling contractor of the Fale Fono, Tialekula foyer), photocopier repairs and lawn mower repairs, and being a true handyman. He is an ardent grower of traditional food crops, especially taro, and a skilful fisherman.

Hon. Sipeli is a great mentor to many current and past politicians, a great listener and communicator, and a man with a big heart, presence, and a great sense of humour.

For this reason, he was awarded the Distinguished Cross Medal, an honour bestowed on him for his many years of outstanding service to the people and nation of Niue.

Hon. Pokotoa Sipeli's name will be added to the 2022 Honours List.

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Distinguished Service Award:

This award celebrates the achievement of individuals who have contributed many years of outstanding service to the people and nation of Niue.

The National Awards Committee will be looking for initiatives that demonstrate outstanding services through:

- Nominee's achievements
- How they have made a difference in Niue and its people.
- Longevity of service
- How they have demonstrated innovation or entrepreneurship and improvement of the lives of others.
- Exemplified selfless voluntary service

The recipient receives: The Distinguished Cross

More information: [Niue Honours Awards](#)