


VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Accommodation Logistics Adviser (Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting – CHOGM – Samoa 2024)
Assignment Modality	Standard (ST2)
Assignment Number	41976
Country	Samoa
Location	Apia - Upolu Island
Partner Organisation	Samoa Tourism Authority
Duration	10 months
Sustainable Development Goals	

1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Authority was established as the Samoa Visitors Bureau in 1986 following the passing of the Western Samoa Visitors Bureau Act in 1984. The change of name to 'Samoa Tourism Authority' in 2002 was a shift to emphasize the broader concept of tourism. The objectives of the Samoa Tourism Authority as mandated in the Samoa Tourism Authority Legislation 2012 are to:

- Encourage private sector investment in the tourism industry
- Encourage visits to Samoa by people from other countries, including travel and holidays within Samoa
- Encourage the development and improvement of accommodation and facilities for tourists
- Coordinate and improve the activities of all sectors providing these services
- Advise the Government and the private sector on all matters relating to tourism
- Prepare, implement and maintain comprehensive tourism development and marketing plans for Samoa

2. Assignment Overview

The Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) has been tasked by the government of Samoa to oversee the logistics of the accommodation for all the delegates who will be attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in October 2024. Samoa, a proud member of the Commonwealth, is honoured to be the first Small Island Developing State from the Blue Pacific to host CHOGM 2024. This gathering will be a landmark event that aims to be a testament of our unity to the Commonwealth, but also a celebration of the shared commitment to resilience, sustainability, and progress.

The Accommodation Logistics Sub-Committee for CHOGM under STA is currently facing challenges in their preparations for this large-scale event, given the limited local expertise in this area, time constraints, and shortage of staff and manpower to execute all the planned activities for the event. STA urgently requires expertise and assistance in the following areas;

- technical support for online booking systems and reservations
- facilitating booking enquiries from delegates and accommodation providers
- successful monitoring of the CHOGM accommodation online booking payment system
- overall operational support in accommodation logistics

The volunteer's expertise in this arena, will assist STA in navigating through the complexities of planning, managing, and monitoring of the accommodation logistics, to ensure efficiency in the delivery of service for the CHOGM delegates.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

The CHOGM 2024 accommodation logistics operations (ie. systems and processes) will be efficient and well-organised, to ensure successful facilitation and monitoring of all enquiries and bookings, for the delegates and accommodation providers.

Outcome 1

Review the status of the Centralised Booking System and operations to date and provide support/advise to the CHOGM Accommodation Sub-Committee.

Alongside the local team;

- Verify and update accommodation information on the Centralised Booking System (CBS)
- Prepare regular reports to update stakeholders on accommodation availability and usage
- Compile regular reports on overall progress and to the CHOGM Accommodation Sub-Committee
- Train/mentor the local staff on the skills in this area

Outcome 2

Monitor the Centralised Booking System to ensure all the necessary information is accurate and up to date.

Alongside the local team;

- Regularly review and audit data in the CBS and report on accommodations inventory
- Update the system with any changes or modifications to booking enquiries
- Provide update reports on accommodation inventory
- Train/mentor the local staff on the skills in this area

Outcome 3

Oversee and ensure efficient management of bookings and enquiries via the Centralised Booking System.

Alongside the local team;

- Liaise with the Orbit team to rectify any discrepancies or errors in accommodation information and bookings
- Coordinate with accommodation providers to confirm, modify, or cancel bookings as necessary and in a timely manner
- Respond promptly to inquiries from stakeholders and registered delegates
- Train/mentor the local staff on the skills in this area

Outcome 4

Oversee and ensure timely and efficient disbursement of payments to accommodation providers.

Alongside the local team;

- Work closely with the CHOGM Finance team to ensure timely and accurate transfer of payments to accommodation properties
- Maintain records & provide updated database of all financial transactions related to accommodation bookings
- Train/mentor the local staff on the skills in this area

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

Capacity building and shared learning within the Samoa Tourism Authority team and associated public servants for CHOGLM will be achieved through close collaboration with the volunteer, through training mentoring and regular debriefings on the job. Reporting directly to the Co-chairs of the CHOGLM Accommodation Sub-committee, the volunteer will work alongside Booking System Officers, ORBIT team and other committee members daily. This hands-on involvement will facilitate knowledge transfer and best practice of sharing amongst individuals. Regular meetings, training sessions, and feedback will further reinforce learning and build collective expertise, ensuring effective management of the booking system and accommodation logistics for CHOGLM.

The volunteer will report directly to the Pativaine Petaia-Tevita (Sub-committee Chair) and Charlotte Brunt (Co-chair). The volunteer will be accountable to the CEO of Samoa Tourism Authority. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominantly work with the work closely with member of the CHOGLM Accommodation Sub-Committee.

The volunteer and Samoa Tourism Authority will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description **on arrival** in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- Extensive experience in accommodation coordination and logistics (ie. 5-10 years) for large scale events
- Proven knowledge and expertise in managing multiple bookings and logistics efficiently for large scale events
- Proficiency in the use of a Centralised Booking System (ie. Orbit) and relevant software for reporting
- Experience in event management and hospitality
- Excellent verbal writing and communication skills
- Proven ability to problem solve and be solution focus
- Proven experience in collaboratively working across various agencies in government community and private sector

Desirable

- Awareness of Samoa's tourism and travel industry
- Experience in dealing with people in different hierarchical levels

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Willingness to adapt to a changing working environment and work under pressure
- Patience tolerance and flexibility to changing priorities
- Hands-on solution focussed adaptable and organised

- Commitment to teamwork coaching and mentoring others
- Strong interpersonal and intercultural skills and awareness
- Ability to promote a positive attitude working in a diverse team

Desirable

- Can-do positive attitude
- Not easily stressed

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about Samoa, see [VSA in Samoa](#).

Refer also to the following links;

- Untold History of Samoa: [Untold Pacific History | Episode 3: Samoa - NZ's Colonisation of Samoa & the Mau Movement | RNZ - Bing video](#)
- New Zealand Aid Programme in Samoa: [MFAT NZ & Samoa-4YP.pdf](#)
- Samoa Government Website: [Government of Samoa \(samoagovt.ws\)](#)
- Samoa Tourism Authority: [Samoa Tourism Authority - Corporate Website](#)
- Pocket Guide of Samoa: [A Brief History of Samoa 📖 - Samoa Pocket Guide](#)
- Beautiful Samoa: [Uncover the History of Beautiful Samoa | Samoa Tourism](#)

8. Living and Working Situation

VSA Samoa team will source basic, comfortable and furnished accommodation that is within the budget of the programme, prior to the volunteer's arrival.

The assignment will be under the supervision of Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) in its capacity as the lead agency for the coordination of the accommodation planning for the CHOGM 2024. The Authority's headquarter is located at the Ground Floor of the FMFM Government Building in Eleele-fou. The area has a range of amenities and easy access to transportation, ensuring convenience for the team. Each division has their own office space and the volunteer will be based in the CEO's office.

STA also vehicles for transport for the staff for meetings, inspections and any work-related events. Public transport can also be accessed close to the FMFMII Building. There is also a re-creational park behind the FMFMII Building and with activities for visiting tourists and locals.

Apia is a secure town with regular police patrols both during the day and at night. The FMFMII Building also has security personnel around the clock and access to the building is highly restricted after closing hours. There are many retail shops, services and utilities within the vicinity of the FMFMII Building.

Additional Information

ST2 Assignment (6-11 months)

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However, volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers and accompanying partners to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group or friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children, and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. The volunteer may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a rest and respite grant after a specified period of active service in-country to encourage the volunteer to take a break away from the immediate assignment location. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.
2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of SAT \$1900.

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.