

Risky, treacherous roads all part of PNG research challenges

By Henry Yamo

DATA COLLECTION for my recent research into use of mobile telephones in Papua New Guinea's health sector communications involved driving thousands of kilometres to rugged outposts for interviewing health workers.

I talked to 43 people in Western Highlands and Jiwaka provinces using mobile phones to communicate with the provincial office or with colleagues—including specialist doctors—to seek information that would assist them handling health cases.

Data was collected in three weeks (June 30-July 22) among health workers in seven districts from the two provinces.

I endured risky and treacherous road conditions—which were quite challenging—to reach my interview subjects.

The first three days in Mt Hagen Hospital were spent making contact with administrators and sending out research invites, including research information and invitation forms through mass text messaging and written circulars.

Actual data collection commenced on June 30, starting with the first district. While I managed to cover all six districts, I was not able to physically cover the seventh district due to impassable road conditions.

I couldn't risk going in and getting stuck if my exit got blocked by a landslide or something.

Data collection proved to be a good experience to see first-hand the working conditions of the health workers and listen to them talk about delivering this most basic service.

Early indications from the data show that mobile phone communication has a huge potential to assist delivery of health



Henry Yamo (inset) crossing a river near Kotna, Dei District, on his Western Highlands research field trip.

services in Papua New Guinea.

But there needs to be better maintenance and support for the system to ensure delivery of enhanced and better services in the rural sectors.

My MCS thesis and full findings are due to be completed in February 2013.

The research has been supported by funding from the NZAid Pacific Scholarship programme, an AUT Vice-Chancellor's Research Grant, the School of Communication, the Pacific Media Centre and AusAID in PNG which was sought with assistance from my supervisor, Professor David Robie.

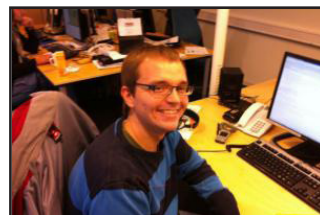
New PMW editor lined up for media freedom job

NORWEGIAN radio journalist Daniel Drageset (pictured) has been appointed as the new *Pacific Media Watch* freedom project contributing editor and will take up his new role early next year while completing his postgraduate communications degree.

This is a capacity-building research and publication post reserved for current postgraduate students in AUT University's School of Communication Studies. It is advertised among students and the job goes to Pasifika students or other students with strong Pacific credentials.

Drageset, 27, will be the fifth student in the post since 2007, following editors from Australia, Kiribati, Samoa and Tonga

From Ålesund, Norway, Drageset completed his Bachelor of



Journalism degree at the University College of Volda in 2008, majoring in radio journalism.

Drageset worked as an all-round radio news reporter in the nationwide public service broadcaster Radio Norge from

June 2008 to January 2012. In 2010, he received the Norwegian Radio Talent of the Year Award. He will succeed Alex Perrottet, who has been *PMW* editor for the past two years.

"I cherish the opportunity to voice the opinion of sources that are rarely heard in mainstream media," Drageset says.

Professor warns on media 'blind spots'

RESTORING public trust, engaging in critical journalism, and opening the media's eyes to common "blind spots" were all on the agenda for the inaugural professorial address of Dr David Robie at AUT University this month.

In his inaugural speech 'Coups, Crises and Human Rights' Pacific Media Centre director Professor Robie presented his insights into contemporary Asia-Pacific media issues to a crowded conference room representing many cultural communities.

Professor Robie, who is the first person in New Zealand and the Pacific to become a professor in journalism studies, has authored nine books on Asia-Pacific media, politics and human rights issues, including *Mekim Nius: South Pacific media, education and politics*.

Beginning with the Hackgate affair in Britain and other media credibility issues, and touching on various "hot topics" throughout the presentation, Professor Robie charted the course of his life's journey through New Zealand, Africa, Europe and back to Oceania.

He spoke of media issues confronting the Pacific region such as covering climate change, the legacy of military-backed censorship in Fiji and the current "greatest threat" of new so-called 'e-martial law' in the Philippines—a digital throwback to the days of dictator Marcos that effectively gags cyberspace with truth being no defence.



Dr David Robie and Rupert Murdoch at the inaugural professorial speech.

"It would be disastrous if any Pacific country, such as Fiji, wanted to do a copycat law." – Alex Perrottet

- Read the full story on *Pacific Scoop* and in *Fiji Sun*
- Watch video on AUT on demand:
<http://tinyurl.com/8g7evyw>

PMC is moving house — to the new WG building

THE PACIFIC Media Centre is moving office – for the third time since we started in 2007. From January, we will be in the new heart of AUT University, the WG Communications building. Look for us on the postgraduate 10th floor, next door to Colab.

Pasifika student adviser **Isabella Rasch** has become the new chair of the Pacific Media Centre advisory board and has already been eyeing up the new WG Communications building for an Oceania touch. She was elected mid-year and takes over from TVNZ's *Tagata Pasifika* producer/reporter **John Utanga**, who remains on the board.

Board member **Dr Camille Nakhid** from Culture and Society has been awarded an AUT Special Award for Services to Teaching for her contribution to equity and diversity. She has been active in developing and leading new programmes and papers, spanning from pre-degree to masters on topics including: Aotearoa and Pacific studies, multicultural communities, Māori and Pasifika research methodologies and conflict resolution.

Board members **Tui O'Sullivan** and **Kitea Tipuna** lined up the popular *Nga Iwi E* as the "official" waiata for the PMC, and Kitea adapted a verse to incorporate Te Amokura into the words. The PMC version was sung by supporters at David's professorial.

PMC postgraduate students **Alex Perrottet** (MCS) and **Rukhsana Aslam** (PhD) represented AUT at the Media and Democracy in the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, along with director



Professor David Robie. They were assisted to attend the conference by the Dean, Desna Jury, and presented excellent papers—Alex on a Fiji and Vanuatu development journalism case study, and Rukhsana on the synergy between investigative and peace journalism. David also presented two papers and two panels at the conference, and also presented at the Media and Democracy conference at Canterbury University in October.

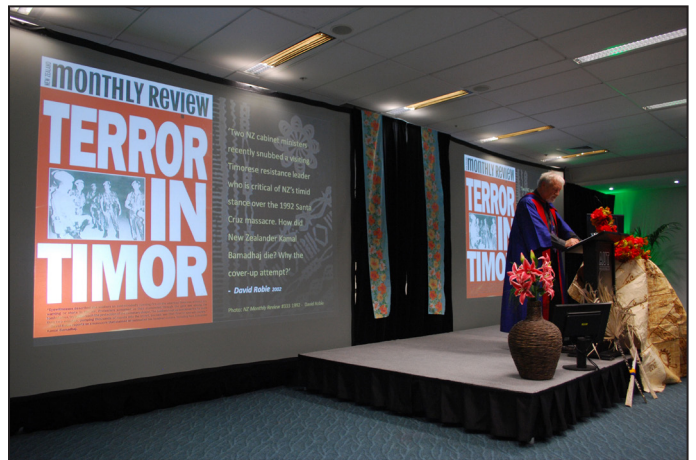
Layout designer **Del Abcede** produced two *Pacific Journalism Reviews*, two *Pacific Journalism Monographs* and two editions of the newsletter *TOKTOK* along with a host of other contributions. Del's voluntary hard work has been a key to PMC activities and keeping the centre running smoothly.

Taberannang Korauaba has won a Vice-Chancellor's Doctoral Scholarship, which he will be taking up in 2013 to pursue further research into climate change and the media in the South Pacific. The PMC hopes to publish a *Pacific Journalism Monograph* on his MCS findings in Kiribati.

Selwyn Manning's 90-minute documentary *Beyond the Shroud* about the Ahmed Zaoui case and state intelligence and media policy, completed as part of his MCS degree, has just gone on general DVD release. It can be ordered from **lonewolfilm-snz.com**

Henry Yamo covered the Pacific Islands Forum in Rarotonga for our news website *Pacific Scoop*, thanks to help from Professor Dick Bedford. The Pacific Media Centre partnered with the *Cook Islands News* to provide the coverage.

David Robie's professorial lecture, 16 October 2012



John Pulu

Director/Reporter, Tagata Pasifika TVNZ
Bachelor of Communication Studies in Television

While still at high school John Pulu was lucky enough to get work experience through Gateway on TVNZ's *Tagata Pasifika* programme.

Work experience opens doors

"I then kept in touch with *Tagata Pasifika* during my study – just persisting nicely – and one holiday break they arranged work for me on TV2's *Studio 2*."

John also took up other work experience offers, including freelance reporting for Tongan TV programme, *TNews*, and a bit of radio announcing with *Niu FM*.

His industriousness paid off. After John graduated at the end of 2009 *Tagata Pasifika* employed him on contract and in 2011 he became a permanent staff member.

Gaining practical skills

"The hands-on experience I gained through the Television major, which included directing, camera operation and presenting, prepared me well for this job. I also really enjoyed creating visual documentaries."

"Another great resource was AUT's Pacific Media Centre," says John.

The Pacific Media Centre offers courses and information for Pasifika students studying towards a career in the media industry.

Future in Pacific media

John feels strongly about telling Pasifika stories. "In the future I would like to pursue documentary making because there are so many tales from the Pacific yet untold."

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Alison Young Photography