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**ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL FOR A BASKETWARE PRODUCTION UNIT**

**UC/SOI/87/024/11-01**

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**Technical report: Examination of all aspects of basketware production\***

**Prepared for the Government of the Solomon Islands  
by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

**Based on the work of Joseph Hogan, expert basketmaker**

**Backstopping officer: V. Greger, Institutional Infrastructure Branch**

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Abstract

Project No: UC/SOI/87/024/11-01/J12103

Duration: Two months, from mid September to mid November, 1987.

This report was commissioned to examine all aspects of basketware production in the Solomon Islands. Its main conclusion is that the standard of basketware being produced is, in many cases, very high although the techniques used are very labour intensive. While not all of the baskets being made have commercial potential some of them could be easily sold in the more affluent markets of the developed world. Prospects for increased domestic sales are not encouraging.

The main recommendations of the report are:

1. That a marketing agency be established which as well as developing markets abroad would sell to these markets. It would buy directly from basket producers and finance its operations by adding a suggested 25% commission before exporting the basketware.
2. That a basketware unit be established to train apprentices in appropriate techniques for making baskets from the abundant supplies of rattan growing on the Solomon Islands. It is suggested that this training should be provided by an experienced basketmaker - probably from Europe - who would be expected to have established the basketry unit as a production unit after one year which is the length of contract suggested. As well as training apprentices the basketmaker would also be required to upgrade the skills of those already making baskets from rattan.

Abbreviations Used

**A.M.O. : Alternative Marketing Organisation**

**C.I.F. Price : The F.O.B. price plus sea freight, air freight or postage charges and insurance to the importer's premises.**

**F.O.B. Price : Free on Board price. Selling price from the country of origin including packing and distributor's overheads if any.**

Basketry Terms

**Base : The bottom of a basket.**

**Bordering : The process of finishing off a basket where the vertical uprights/stakes are turned down to finish the basket.**

**Foot : This is a special rim at the bottom of a basket to protect the base from wear. It can be formed by a special wale or by putting in stakes underneath the basket and bordering them.**

**Randing : A common basket weave, there are certain variations but basically it is where one weaving cane goes in front of one upright and behind the next.**

**Stake and Strand : A method of basketmaking where a weaving material is woven in between stakes to form the baskets. The weaving material is often lighter than the stakes.**

**Upsett : The first few inches of the vertical side of a basket. It is very important that the upsett should be properly shaped as it determines the shape of the basket. It is usually woven in a weave known as waling.**

**Uprights : Also called stakes, these are the vertical rods or canes in between which the horizontal weavers pass.**

**Waling : A specially strong weave used for the upsett or at any point where reinforcement is required. Usually in front of two or three stakes and behind one.**

### Introduction

This report was commissioned in order to assess the quality and commercial potential of the basketware being produced in the Solomon Islands. It was also expected to advise on marketing this basketware and on making suggestions regarding design if these were felt necessary. The question of whether new designs were needed and whether training would be needed to execute these designs was also to be addressed. The report was also required to investigate the sources of raw material available and the possibility of setting up a basketry production unit was also to be examined.

### Conclusions

In general terms the quality of the basketware produced in the Solomon Islands is exceptionally high but suffers from the disadvantage of being extremely labour intensive. In most cases this is inherent in the techniques involved. Basketmaking in the Solomon Islands usually supports subsistence agriculture and provides supplementary cash income to villagers without the necessity for them to drift towards towns or large settlements. As such it is a part-time rural activity rather than an industrial or semi-industrial activity.

This is entirely appropriate for most of the forms of basketry being carried on since the time involved in production means it would be very difficult to produce most of these baskets at a competitive price in any type of semi-industrial environment. In such a situation the need to cost all of the time involved in making baskets, including the time spent preparing the raw materials would make it very difficult to produce these baskets at a commercially acceptable price. In the rural areas baskets are usually made during lulls in agricultural work or at times when someone has to stay close to the village, for instance, to mind children. The raw materials, whether vines, rattans, coconut leaves, pandanus leaves or other vegetable barks or fibres are usually readily available from the countryside. It is important to realise that basketmaking, in such circumstances, has some of the qualities of leisure as well as work and is not merely a means of making money.

When these considerations are taken into account it can be understood why a labour rate which might be unacceptable in a structured employment situation might be considered satisfactory by a rurally based producer working to suit his or her own requirements. The prices being obtained by basket producers from retailers would, with a few exceptions, be acceptable to importers in the developed world having allowed for postage costs from the Solomon Islands but it is unlikely that prices could be increased significantly in the short term. However even at the prevailing prices available from retailers most basketmakers experience

difficulty in selling baskets since the supply of baskets usually exceeds the demand. As a consequence there is no certainty that a producer will receive a certain price for a basket. This is true even of producers who sell to shops since shopkeepers are not anxious to buy baskets if they have an accumulation of unsold stock. This discourages production and the potential to increase production significantly certainly exists. This will happen only if a determined effort is made to market the baskets being produced abroad since the domestic market is unable to provide sufficient demand and is unlikely to be able to do so in the foreseeable future. The export potential for Solomon Island basketware, particularly bukaware, is very significant. Because of the amount of work involved in making bukaware such baskets are fairly rare in the world market and the very high quality of workmanship evident in most of these baskets should result in their being readily appreciated by quality conscious consumers in the affluent markets of Europe and North America.

Apart altogether from economic considerations these baskets are an important and valuable part of the cultural heritage of the Solomon Islands but they will be more readily appreciated at home if they are valued abroad. In this sense the development of export markets has a cultural as well as an economic dimension. The setting up of a marketing agency to sell Solomon Islands basketware abroad forms one of the main recommendations of this report.

The other major recommendation is based on using rattan as a raw material for basketware. Rattan grows extensively in the Solomon Islands but is not much used for basketmaking except on the Island of Malaita where thick rattans are split to make loya cane baskets. Narrower diameter rattans could be used to make stronger baskets of more varied shapes in less time. Such baskets could be produced at a competitive price while at the same time providing those making them with at least an average wage. This is something which, for the most part, traditional basketry techniques in the Solomon Islands are unable to do. To realise this employment potential it would be necessary to employ a basketmaker to train apprentices in the Solomon Islands even though some of the techniques are closely related to those used in the making of loyacane basketware in Malaita.

#### Recommendations

1. It is proposed that a basketmaking unit be set up in Honiara which would act as a training unit for about twelve apprentices in Honiara and about six apprentices each from Makira and from Western Province since narrow diameter canes suitable for these baskets grow there. It would be necessary to recruit a basketmaker, with a high level of skill in stake and strand basketmaking and with practical experience in the running of a

basketry workshop, to provide this training. The duration of the basketmaker's contract should be one year. The basketmaker would also be expected to look after the day to day running of the unit and to develop it into a commercial production unit which should be able to sustain itself (after its initial phase) from the income obtained from the sale of baskets produced. It is suggested that these should be sold by the Marketing Agency whose setting up is also recommended in this report. The basketmaker would also be expected to ensure that the unit could continue to operate when his or her contract expired by training someone to run the workshop. The basketmaker would also provide training for those basketmakers already engaged in making loyacane baskets in Malaita. Because these basketmakers would already be familiar with many of the techniques involved they should be able to attain a high level of skill in a relatively short time. It is likely that a person recruited from this group would be most likely to attain the skills necessary to successfully run the basketry unit.

Detailed recommendations for the setting up of the basketry unit are contained in Chapter IV.

2. It is also recommended that a Marketing Agency be established which would have as its main function the marketing of Solomon Islands basketware on the export market. The Agency would buy baskets from the various producers while applying agreed quality standards and would sell these on both the European and North American markets. The affairs of the Agency would be in the hands of an administrator whose job it would be to solicit orders by contacting the various importers suggested. The administrator would also be expected to reply to all orders received and ensure they are dispatched. After the initial funding needed to establish it, the Agency would finance its operations from a commission earned on basket sales. The question of increased funding might arise if the Agency, having established itself successfully, wished to expand its operations.

Detailed proposals for the establishment of a Marketing Agency are contained in Chapter III.



I. TYPES OF BASKETS BEING MADE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

I propose now to review the types of baskets already being made in the Solomon Islands and to comment on them in terms of design, workmanship and saleability and also to make suggestions about possible design changes where I consider them appropriate.

A. Bukaware

Although some bukaware baskets are made in Western Province and Isabel Province, they are made mostly on the island of Guadalcanal in the villages around Kumakana and Kamasulu southeast of Honiara. At present there are about thirty six villages in this general area that are engaged in basketmaking with up to 100 villagers in each one who can make the baskets. Most of these villagers make baskets in their spare time when they are not at work in their gardens. The weaving is done by the men and women of the village as well as by the older (teenage) children. They are made from ASA or BUKA vine (*Lygodium Circinnatum*) and the technique employed is coiling. It is thought to have been introduced from Papua New Guinea. In coiling, a single strip of material called the core is coiled around and around with each coil being sewn to the preceding one. In bukaware the sewing material used is the buka vine with a strong woody core from a large vine about 6mm in thickness. The vine for sewing is first prepared by splitting with the thumbnail and the pith is then scraped with the back of a knife or with a blunt blade. Because of the branchy nature of the vine, it is unusual to have very long strips for sewing and the narrowness of the vine means that the work is exceedingly slow. The sewing is done by hand with a needle mounted on a handle (similar to an awl or a bodkin) inserted into the work to make room for the join. The work is kept very tight and the standard of the craftsmanship, in general, is extremely high. Most of the baskets have beautiful flowing curves and the geometric designs achieved by exposing the back of the vine are usually very well executed.

The range of bukaware generally available consists of trays, both round and oval, plain round baskets, hand baskets or shopping baskets of various sizes, coasters and mats from 8cm to 30cm in diameter and lidded baskets, usually curved in shape and with a bow or arched handles. One particular basket I saw, a curved linen basket with well integrated handles was superbly made and is justly treasured by its owner. Linen baskets similar to this are not generally available and the reason for this is probably partly because of the effort involved in making a large basket using such a slow technique but smaller baskets of a similar shape would, I feel, be popular.

In the case of the lidded baskets, the lids are often too tightly fitting and in this respect it is better for a lid to be slightly

loose rather than too tight. Also from the point of view of exporting these baskets the rigid bow handles would be liable to damage in transit and I feel that a hinged handle mounted on two lugs on the shoulders of the basket would be far more acceptable from a design point of view. (Such baskets were available in the past, see photograph no. 1). This is particularly so when one considers that the rigid handles in these lidded baskets are only four cores thick whereas the "shopping" or hand baskets usually have six cores in the handle and are as such much stronger though such a wide handle would not be all that suitable for the smaller lidded baskets, another reason why the hinged handle would be a better option on these baskets. Lidded baskets without handles as in photograph no 2 would also be very saleable but are rarely available.

The "shopping" baskets generally available are round with only an occasional oval amongst them. They are usually fairly shallow and the shaping is, in most cases, pleasing though in some instances the height of the handle bow seems a little too high for the size of the basket. While they would not be the easiest of baskets to transport by post any modification to make them stackable when inverted would give a far less pleasing shape. The trays or platters on the other hand would be very easy to stack and could be despatched very cheaply by parcel post. They are quite popular with visitors to the Solomon Islands, partly perhaps, because of the ease with which they can be carried in suitcases. While all woven trays have a slightly uneven surface and are thus not entirely suitable for carrying cups or glasses, they do have many other uses such as fruit trays etc. They also make very nice wall decorations.

The essential difficulty with bukaware is that the baskets take a long time to make. A shopping basket for example might take more than two weeks to make even though working on it for around three hours each day and a lidded basket would take around 3 weeks at the same rate of work. The villagers I spoke to were displeased with the prices they obtained from the shops especially as these varied considerably depending on whether shopowners thought they could sell the baskets quickly or whether they would have them on hands for several months. They also complained about the time spent selling their baskets and remarked that they would sometimes be forced to bring their baskets back home because they could not get a satisfactory offer for them. They were very keen on the idea of a central marketing agency and stated a willingness to make design changes if requested to do so. Nor would they mind making baskets to a particular specification or size. At present few baskets are made to a particular measurement and even though the basic shapes are generally fairly standardized all reckoning is judged by eye.

The current output of bukaware is greater than demand and indeed some villages have lessened production because of this. Present

sales are, for the most part, confined to the home market with sales being mostly to tourists and expatriates, though B.J.S. Agencies do export a small quantity to Papua New Guinea. The baskets are readily available all over Honiara, even in some hardware shops, and this certainly conveys to some tourists the mistaken impression that the baskets are massproduced. The best prospects for increased sales would be to export bukaware to specialist craft or museum shops abroad who should be in a position to sell these fine baskets to basket enthusiasts and collectors as well as to discerning members of the general public.

Approximate costings at November, 1987

**Small Plain Buka Baskets**

Quality Type: Good

Approx unit cost ex Kumakama	S.I.\$17.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$ 4.25
Postage: approx 12 in a 5kg parcel	S.I.\$ 1.00
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$22.25
Approx	U.S.\$11.12

Verdict: commercially viable for specialist importer.

Buka shopper/ hand basket. Average size.

Quality Type: Good

Approx unit cost ex Kumakama	S.I.\$21.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$ 5.25
Postage: 2 in 3kg parcel (per unit)	S.I.\$ 4.00
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$30.25
Approx	U.S.\$15.15

Verdict: commercially viable for specialist importer.

Buka Trays. Circular tray approx 40cm in diameter.

Quality Type: Good

Approx unit cost ex Kumakama	S.I.\$16.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$ 4.00
Postage: 10 approx in 5kg parcel	S.I.\$ 1.20
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$21.30
Approx	U.S.\$10.70

Verdict: commercially viable for specialist importer.

Lidded basket, hinged handle, average size.

Quality Type: Good

Approx unit cost ex Kumakana	S.I.\$30.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$ 7.50
Postage: 4 in 5kg parcel	S.I.\$ 3.40

Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$40.90
Approx	U.S.\$20.45

Verdict: should be commercially viable for specialist importer or retailer.

Lidded basket suitable for use as a needlework basket.

Quality Type: Good

Approx unit cost ex Kumakana	S.I.\$24.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$ 6.00
Postage: 4 in 5kg parcel	S.I.\$ 3.40

Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$33.40
Approx	U.S.\$17.00

Verdict: a very saleable basket at this price.

Bukaware tablemats 25cm

Approx unit cost ex Kumakana	S.I.\$3.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$0.75
Postage	S.I.\$0.15

Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$3.90
Approx	U.S.\$1.35

Bukaware tablemats 15cm

Approx unit cost ex Kumakana	S.I.\$1.00
Agency commission at approx 25%	S.I.\$0.25
Postage	S.I.\$0.10

Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$1.35
Approx	U.S.\$0.70

Verdict: These mats should be saleable at this price.

### B. Loya Cane Baskets

The making of Loyacane baskets is carried out in the island of Malaita. While they are made by both men and women, the majority are made by men. Loyacane is a rattan which grows abundantly in the bush in Malaita as well as in other islands in the Solomon group. The cane grows in long lengths and is generally a climber supported by trees or other undergrowth though it is also found as a ground creeper, especially where climbing support is absent. Provided not all canes from the parent stool are cut, the cane continues to grow and is apparently easily found under present conditions. It's habitat would probably be severely threatened by extensive logging but little is known in the Solomons about the extent to which rattan exists, whether it is being damaged, and if so to what extent, by current logging activities and how it regenerates itself.

The cane when cut is washed by scrubbing it with sand from the river bed, a slow and tedious process, and it is then left to season until it becomes fairly dry though still retaining enough sap for the cane to be pliant without soaking. This could take up to three or four weeks in overcast or showery conditions but as little as a week in hot dry weather. The cane would then remain in condition for at least two weeks. The cane, which ranges in thickness from 10mm to 20mm is then split, the split being started by a knife after which the hands are used to guide the splitting process. The pithy side (or inside) is then pared down to different thicknesses depending on whether the split cane is to be used for uprights or as weavers. The base is started with 16 sticks and as soon as the base has been opened out a further 17 bye stakes are handed. This generally suffices for smaller baskets but for larger baskets further bye stakes must be added as the base becomes larger. In all cases the base sticks are also the uprights for the baskets. The basket is woven in plain randing to the desired height and after shaving down the uprights further these are then turned and pulled down through the last two rows of weaving before being cut off. A rim of half round loya cane is put on both the inside and the outside of the top and this is then bound on with split buka vine to form the rim of the basket. The process of binding takes a long time, perhaps about 5 hours on a large, wide mouthed laundry basket and up to two hours for a shopping basket including the binding of the handle. Binding with glossy lapping cane as is used in the cane furniture process in the Solomons would be considerably quicker. Borders as such are unknown as are conventional one rod or two rod handles.

Saofura and Fauala are the two villages most associated with loyacane baskets. Saofura which I visited is about 10 miles from Auki and the villagers here engage in subsistence agriculture, mostly vegetable growing, and make baskets in their spare time. Access to wider markets was also the major problem for these basketmakers. At present, they bring their baskets to Honiara by

boat, leaving their village around 3 or 4 a.m. to walk to Auki unless they have arranged for a 4 wheel drive truck to collect them. They then incur the expense of a boat trip to Honiara where they may spend several days selling their baskets before returning to Malaita. Not surprisingly they would be willing to sell their baskets for less if they were to sell them in Auki.

The technique involved in the making of these baskets is considerably quicker than that involved in the bukaware baskets, and not surprisingly the baskets are cheaper while also providing their makers with a far better economic return than that received by the bukaware basketmakers. The general standard of the work is fairly high though I did see some examples which were lop-sided and badly shaped and also some baskets where the rim was somewhat kinked and not very circular.

The main types of loya cane ware available at present are

(i) Hand baskets or shopping baskets in various sizes. Some have fairly sharply angled sides but the majority have gently curving sides. The smaller sizes are sold for S.I.\$10.00 in Honiara but would be available for S.I.\$5.00 in Auki. The larger ones would be priced at S.I.\$8.00 to S.I.\$9.00 in Auki.

(ii) Laundry baskets: These are low, large mouthed baskets which can be various sizes but are usually quite large and probably larger than would be required for export. Prices for the large ones would be about S.I.\$35.00 in Honiara so it should be possible to have a smaller one available at S.I.\$15.00 at Auki.

(iii) These lidded baskets have a high bow handle and would not be suitable for export without altering the basket by replacing the large bow handle with two smaller handles. However, by virtue of their size and the fact that they cannot be stacked they would have to be despatched one to a parcel. Prices vary depending on the size but it should be possible to get a moderate sized linen basket for S.I.\$20.00 ex Auki.

At present all these baskets usually have a few lines each of coloured weaving the black being a naturally coloured vine and the yellow being derived from a vegetable dye based on taragon.

The technique employed for loya cane work imposes a number of limitations, not least the fact that the absence of a conventional border results in a lot of time being spent on the rim and thus forcing up the price. Also lapped handles are not as strong as roped handles i.e. handles which employ round material to cover and secure the handle bow, but it would not be feasible to put such handles on the baskets as they are presently constructed. Freedom to make various shapes is also curtailing the technique not being particularly suited to oval work and not at all suited to square or rectangular work.

I feel that this basketware could benefit from the introduction of new techniques, particularly the use of round narrow diameter cane for uprights so that bordering (as opposed to putting on a rim) would be possible. This would give the freedom to create more interesting shapes, make stronger baskets and save a considerable amount of time. To find out what the reaction to such techniques would be a two day workshop was held in Auki. This was attended by eight people from the village of Saofura who also brought along some loya cane, most of which was over 10mm in diameter. This was supplemented by cane brought over from Honiara most of which was approx 8 to 10mm in diameter. In general, I found the basketmakers who attended were very quick to learn and there was far less difficulty with bordering than I had anticipated. Some of the participants would certainly like to learn more about this type of basketry but one of the factors which might limit its application for these villagers is that canes under 10mm in diameter are not very plentiful on their village lands though I was informed such canes do grow in a more mountainous region a few kilometers away. While this land does not belong to the villagers they would be able to obtain permission to cut cane there but would probably have to pay for this concession.

Approximate Costings for Loya Cane Baskets 1987

Shopping Basket , small size, Quality: good

Approx unit price ex Auki	S.I.\$5.50
Agency commission 25%	S.I.\$1.35
Postage: 4 in 3kg parcel, unit cost	S.I.\$2.00
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$8.85
	U.S.\$4.45

Verdict: This should be commercially viable but the larger shoppers, which at any rate are a little large for everyday use abroad, would hardly be commercially viable. The greater price (approx S.I.\$8.00 ex Auki) and increased postage costs (only two per parcel) would, in my opinion put them outside the range of what people are prepared to pay for such baskets.

Small Laundry basket, approx 50cm diameter at mouth of basket..

Approx unit price ex Auki	S.I.\$16.00
Agency commission 25%	S.I.\$ 4.00
Postage: 4 in 5kg parcel, unit cost	S.I.\$ 3.40
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.I.F. Price	S.I.\$23.40
	U.S.\$12.00

Verdict: This price is probably slightly above the amount that a commercial importer would be prepared to pay but it might be an acceptable price for an A.M.O. who would probably be operating on

a lower mark-up. It is also possible that this basket would be available at a lower price ex Auki.

**Linen Basket**

Usually with a bow handle but design for export would have to have small handles

Approx unit price ex Auki	S.I.\$20.00
Agency commission 25%	S.I.\$ 5.00
Postage: 1 in 9kg parcel, unit cost	S.I.\$ 0.25
	-----
Europe/U.S.A. C.T.F. Price	S.I.\$33.25
	U.S.\$15.00

Verdict: I do not think this basket would find a market at this price - the high postage cost being the deciding factor. If general sales volume rose to container level the situation would probably be different.

**C Polynesian baskets or "bags"**

We are dealing here with very labour intensive baskets. Although the technique of plaiting used in these baskets is not usually as slow as coiling, the strips of material used in these baskets are exceptionally fine and thus the work is time consuming. In addition there is a considerable amount of time spent preparing the raw material which is generally pandanus leaf. Preparation of the leaves usually involves a process of soaking in sea water and bleaching over a fire as well as dividing the leaves into the weaving strips. This splitting is usually done with a shell. Many of the colours used are the result of synthetic dyes, particularly blues, purples and reds but black colour is sometimes obtained from natural sources.

The baskets most often seen are shoulder bags but there are also round baskets available which could be used for the storage or carrying of soft or lightweight items. Although in export terms these would probably be of more acceptable design than the shoulder bags the likely wholesale price would probably be at least S.I.\$25.00 as they are usually priced at S.I.\$40.00 by the makers when selling on the street. Unfortunately, I cannot see any commercial potential for these baskets.

**D. Other Baskets**

The rigid coconut leaf baskets which are used in many shops to store small items are attractive baskets though not very strong. They are usually two tone in colour, these being a black-navy and a cream-white colour. The technique used in these is plaiting also



but because the strands are quite wide they are relatively quick to make though allowance must also be made for the preparation of the material. Most of these baskets that I saw were quite well made with a little roped foot at the bottom. They are not meant for carrying but rather as display baskets. If the shapes were narrower and higher they could also serve as covers for plastic plant pots though the roped foot should be dispensed with in this case as it would collapse with the weight of the pot. They are usually available at around S.I.\$3.00 wholesale and I would certainly recommend including them on any proposed portfolio of Solomon Island baskets.

Other baskets made from coconut leaf are sun hats and other small baskets reminiscent of the crown of a hat without a brim. These small baskets could possibly be used for plant pot covers also and might also find a use as trinket baskets. They are priced at about S.I.\$1.00 to S.I.\$1.50 wholesale. The hats, which sell in the Honiara shops at around S.I.\$3.00 to S.I.\$3.50 would probably wholesale at around S.I.\$2.00 which is quite reasonable, especially when one considers the time spent in making them. The problem with these hats is that most buyers and particularly potential buyers in western countries do not even realize that they are hand made. This is probably true, to an extent, of other baskets also - particularly the polynesian bags and bark fibre bags - but more rustic hats with wider strips in the crown might be more readily distinguishable as hand made. At any rate the hats should probably have a sticker stating that they are hand made but such hats are also cheaply produced in other countries.

Bark fibre bags are small plaited baskets in plain white colour and are worn about the neck by many Solomon Islanders. These are nice baskets which are also slow to make and are often made by children as well as adults. Although it is unlikely that they would have any commercial possibilities it might be worth including them on a price list in the hope that they might be adopted as fashion accessories abroad. Pandanus leaf purses and handbags in large checks might also have some possibilities as fashion accessories though I think their appeal would be fairly limited. Larger box-like square or rectangular baskets in wide check pandanus leaf are unlikely to have any appeal.

Although coiled work using knotted pandanus leaves to make linen baskets and circular tablemats are shown amongst the photographs in Roy Scott's report for the Commonwealth Secretariat, I could not find these for sale anywhere. The only coiled basket in knotted pandanus that I saw was a poorly made shopping basket. The fact that these baskets are no longer being produced suggests that they were not finding a ready market but the production of samples, particularly of the table mats, should be encouraged as they should sell on the export market if they can compete with similar coiled mats from Africa. Samples of knotted pandanus leaf hats should also be test marketed if there are people interested

in making them.

I did not see any check weave pandanus table mats for sale either but the technique for making these is certainly widely known in the Solomon Island. Such skills are used to make large floor mats in check weave using fairly wide strips of pandanus approximately 15mm wide. Rectangular tablemats approx 40cm x 25cm or 45cm x 30cm should have possibilities for export and although the fine pandanus would probably be the most attractive mat, the wide pandanus could also make an acceptable place mat and it should be possible to sell it cheaply as it is a relatively quick technique.

**II. PRESENT POSITION REGARDING BASKET SALES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS AND A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR INCREASING THESE SALES.**

At present, the baskets which are made in the Solomon Islands are sold mostly to expatriates and to people visiting the islands although Loya cane baskets are bought by Solomon Islanders. The level of tourism is low. In 1986 there were 12,000 visitors by air to the Solomon Islands of which it is estimated that about 7,000 were tourists. It is estimated that there were approximately 5,000 visitors from cruise ships. While it is virtually impossible to say what amount was spent on handcrafts by all of these visitors current estimates from the Tourist Office put it at between S.I.\$30.00 to S.I.\$40.00 per person of which, it is thought, the major part was spent on carvings and other wooden objects.

The retailers currently selling baskets include B.J.S. Agencies, Betikama, The Museum Shop, The Market Store, The Pacific Diving Shop, and the Airport Shop as well as some of the hardware shops. B.J.S. Agencies, a general souvenir shop with a selection of handcrafts and carvings sell more baskets than any of the other retailers and concentrate mainly on bukaware but also sell polynesian "bags" and pandanus purses and clutch bags. They do not sell many loya cane baskets. The buka ware baskets are bought mostly from the villagers of Kumakama and Kamasulu and are usually delivered to the shop. Formerly, B.J.S. would collect them and might still do so if they had an order to fill. In this case advance notice would be given to the villagers by a service message over the radio. B.J.S. have also produced a catalogue for export sales. At present export sales represent 40% of total basket sales, the figure in 1987 being on average, S.I.\$800.00 (approx U.S.\$400) per month for domestic sales and S.I.\$600.00 (approx U.S.\$300) for export sales. The exports are mostly to Papua New Guinea where the technique of bukaware is thought to have originated. Dispatch is by parcel post for small orders though larger orders are sent by plane. There has been no attempt to export baskets to America, Europe or New Zealand though small quantities have been sent in the past to Australia.

The shop at Betikama helps support the Seventh Day Adventist school in Honiara and although mostly associated with carvings, they do have a good selection of baskets. They do not have loya cane baskets in stock but would be interested to have them if approached. Basket sales are estimated at approximately S.I.\$100.00 (U.S.\$50) per month.

Sales of baskets through the other shops mentioned are not significant. Few baskets are sold in any of the other towns, with the possible exception of Gizo.

Of all of the baskets sold in Honiara, a good proportion of these are sold in the street, usually by the producers themselves. In

fact many of the basketmakers I spoke to attempted to sell their baskets on the street before approaching the shops, both because of the higher price to be obtained by direct selling and because of a lack of demand on the shopkeeper's part. In fact a good deal of the basketweavers time is spent selling the baskets when it could more productively, but not necessarily more profitably, be spent making baskets. When tour ships come to Honiara, street selling is at its most intense and plans are underway to have an area prepared behind the Museum where hand craft workers can sell their goods.

The essential problem, however, is that there is insufficient demand in the Solomon Islands for the baskets already being produced. Furthermore it is unlikely that tourism will increase significantly in the foreseeable future, at least not in the short term. The amount of accomodation available for tourists would be inadequate for any large influx of tourists and, consequently, the aim of the Tourist Office is to improve the facilities available for tourists before increasing spending on promotional activity abroad. Obviously then, it is unlikely that there will be any immediate increase in domestic sales for handcrafts so that the strategy to be adopted for increasing basketware sales must be directed towards exporting. While Solomon Islands is relatively remote from the major commercial centres of the world, it does have the advantage through the major trade agreements, of duty free access for its handcrafts to all of the major markets of the world. I now propose to look at some of the conditions necessary for successful exporting and whether these conditions exist in the Solomon Islands.

#### A. Regular production and regular orders

While regularity in production is desirable for a domestic market, it is even more important in dealing with an export market. Dispatch of goods by ship or by surface post from the Solomon Islands can take up to two months to Australia or New Zealand and up to three months to Europe and the U.S.A. and any irregularity in production which delays the dispatch of an order can have disastrous consequences for subsequent orders from the same importer. Production of basketware at present is haphazard and is dependant mostly on the producers need for spare cash since regular orders do not usually exist. Those engaged in making baskets indicated, however, that they would be willing to make baskets on a more regular basis if they could be sure of selling them. This is borne out by the buyer at B.J.S. Agencies who told me that on the occasions that she placed orders for bukaware baskets these were always filled satisfactorily.

The problem of securing regular orders may be more acute than that of securing regular production. Importers are somewhat reluctant to do business with exporters they have not previously dealt with particularly if such exporters have not a proven track

record. Stories which circulate about exporters who failed to fill orders or who filled orders incorrectly or about others who sent goods of a poorer quality than those ordered serve to confirm this reluctance on the importers part to deal with new clients. It is important to give reassurances in this regard and to build up confidence by careful attention to the customer's requirements. Difficulties at the early stages of exporting in securing orders can often lead to cash flow problems as goods accumulate in stock while outgoings remain the same. It is important that there should be a sustained investment commitment directed at the long term development of the industry. This is not likely to happen while exporting remains solely in the hands of commercial interests. The present over-supply of baskets can in fact be seen as advantageous to the private business exporter since it means that baskets can be obtained in reasonable quantities at short notice and at a competitive price without the necessity for any long term investment. It must be pointed out that B.J.S. Agencies have invested in a catalogue of Solomon Islands handicrafts but it is unlikely that they will develop into a large exporter of basketware.

#### B. A Quality Product

As I have already outlined the general quality of Solomon Islands basketware is very good, though occasionally one does see baskets that lack finishing or have poorly made handles. In the long term, it is very much in the producers interest to make quality baskets. In the first place, the producer derives satisfaction from the work and the work is not just a means to an end. The producer becomes committed to the work and is more likely to work regularly and without supervision if the object of production is a worthy one. He or she is likely to remain making baskets even if other job opportunities arise if the work is satisfying and worthwhile.

A quality product is also of great importance to the buyer and should in time lead to regular repeat orders. It is also an important way of distinguishing one's baskets from other imports, some of which are hastily made and of poor quality.

The present situation in the Solomons does not provide for any structure to encourage top quality workmanship though some of the buyers of baskets for shops are quite conscious of quality and undoubtedly many of the basketweavers take pride in producing good quality work.

#### C. Efficient Marketing

Marketing of one's product is of paramount importance since the enterprise may fail, even with a top quality product, unless it is marketed properly. There has been no effort as yet to market Solomon Islands basketware in U.S.A. or Europe and very little

attention has been directed to the South Pacific countries, with the exception of Papua New Guinea. The first step would be to contact the importers, Alternative Marketing Organizations or specialist shops abroad who are considered most likely to be interested in the baskets, sending them some colour photographs (in the absence of a catalogue) and details of prices - including delivery costs - so that prospective importers could decide whether the baskets were of interest to them. It is usual to canvass a small number of importers at first so that reactions can be gauged and possible alterations made before further approaches are made.

Since importers are not always very good at distinguishing quality basketware, promotional literature explaining the length of time the baskets take to make and some of the processes involved is extremely important.

Although the world market for handcrafts seems to be static and may even be declining in certain countries, I am confident that with proper marketing certain of the Solomon Islands baskets could find a market abroad. Where the hand craft market has declined it is generally the bottom end of the market that has contracted caused partly by the flooding of the market with cheap low quality imports from the Peoples Republic of China and the Phillipines.

#### D. Competitive Pricing

Although in 1977 when Mr Roy Scott wrote "An Appraisal of Solomon Island Handcrafts and Development Prospects" prices of baskets were considered very high. I think this is no longer the case in relation to wholesale prices for bukaware and loya cane ware. Pricing of baskets at present has been influenced by the absence of a steady demand and as already observed many basketmakers are displeased with prices, most of which have not increased in recent years. This displeasure is aggravated by the perception of shop mark-ups as excessive. In most cases these are from 70% to 100% with the result that basketmakers try to get more from the shops for subsequent sales. Undoubtedly too, most producers initially ask for a higher price than they expect in order to allow room for bargaining which seems to be a usual practice. Nonetheless most makers would be satisfied to accept current wholesale prices, particularly if there were a guaranteed market for their produce.

The usual formula for fixing prices adds the cost of the raw material and a fair return for ones labour to the cost of transporting to the shop or distributor to arrive at a wholesale price. Most handcrafts, especially in developing countries, are not priced in this way. The over-riding concern is to remain competitively priced and the workers wages are as a result often unsatisfactory. It is unlikely that any major increase in wages for basket-makers in the Solomon Islands is likely in the short term but a guaranteed market for their produce and the collection

of baskets from the makers, thereby saving the time and cost involved in delivery, would be welcomed by the producers and would represent an improvement in working conditions.

#### E. Prompt and Efficient Dispatch

This is extremely important in the export market because of the long distance between the producer or exporter and the importer. Every effort must be made to reduce this physical distance by responding promptly to all enquiries and being able to give accurate and speedy quotations including costs of postage or shipping and packing and insurance if applicable. Information about the length of time it would take to fill an order would also be necessary and if an order is received dispatch must be exactly as ordered and any increased or unanticipated costs must be absorbed.

It is also essential that all of the relevant documentation needed for duty free entry be properly completed such as a certificate of origin or a Eur 1 certificate. Details of these requirements are contained in "Island Craft Exports. A Guide for Exporters of Pacific Island Crafts" in the section dealing with export documentation.

Having regard to the high cost of shipping from the Solomon Islands to the potential export markets of Australia, New Zealand, U.S.A. and Europe it is unlikely that dispatch by ship would be an economic option. This is particularly true when one considers that shipping costs are levied on a cubic metre rate rather than on a weight basis as is the case with the postal service. Containerised shipping rates from the Solomon Islands to Europe are U.S.\$158 approx per cubic metre which is not an attractive rate for a light commodity such as basketware though the rate for a full container of 30 cubic metres at U.S.\$1,650 is much more attractive. In both cases there is a handling charge of U.S.\$2.75 per cubic metre. Rates per cubic metre to the U.S.A. are extremely expensive and come to U.S.\$270 per cubic metre to the west coast of U.S.A.. Rates to Sydney, Australia are approx U.S.\$65 per cubic metre but all of these rates with the exception of the full container rate to Europe are less competitive than the postal parcel rate. It is unlikely that initial orders to any exporter of Solomon Islands basketware would be of sufficient volume to justify the use of a container and it must also be observed that committing a larger proportion of production to any one importer could be regarded as somewhat risky since one's fortunes would be too closely linked with those of a particular importer.

It is anticipated furthermore that initial orders at least would not be very large and in the case of bukaware in particular it is expected that the majority of orders would come from specialist shops who would not require large quantities. Baskets are very light relative to their bulk and are, in general terms, strong

enough to withstand the rigours of shipment without elaborate packing. For example, to dispatch baskets by parcel post, it should be sufficient in most cases to place them in polypropelene bags with no packing materials but the reservations already expressed under the bukaware and loya cane ware headings about the design changes for arched or bow handles should be borne in mind. I would also suggest that for the buka shopping/hand basket the stress on the handle could be reduced by placing a stick or lath of wood, with a fork or curve at one end to accept the handle, between the base and the handle bow. These could be produced in bulk from strips of hardwood and cut to size at the straight end to fit the basket.

The postal rates for overseas surface parcels are given in the annex and while the charges mean that postal costs would represent a sizeable proportion of the C.I.F or delivered price it would still be cheaper to use postal dispatch rather than direct shipment. Among the advantages of postal dispatch are that parcels are delivered directly to the importer and the need to collect at docks etc does not arise. This can be significant if an importer does not live near an overseas port. Furthermore, orders can be dispatched as the goods become available rather than having to wait until all the goods are ready before shipment can be effected. One can also deal with small orders from diverse sources and locations and with forethought in packing the cost of postage for each item kept at a minimum. The Solomon Islands postal service offer a commodity rate of approximately 15% which should be available to any agency marketing baskets. Handcrafts do not qualify for a more favourable postage than other goods and a concession in this respect would be welcome and should help to stimulate exports of handcrafts.

Dispatch by air freight is available in the Solomon Islands and is being used to send certain handcrafts to Papua New Guinea. It is not an economic proposition for dispatch to countries outside the South Pacific region. It should be noted here that in Papua New Guinea a reduced air freight rate exists for handcrafted artefacts not only within the country but also on certain international routes to Australia, Japan, Singapore and Hawaii. The reduction in the air freight rate on domestic shipments of crafts into Port Moresby offered by Air Niugini is 50% and if other airlines in the South Pacific Region were to introduce similar concessions, air freight could become an attractive proposition.

#### E. Agreed Payment Structure

Difficulties in obtaining payment can be extremely frustrating and it is important that methods of payment be agreed between the importer and the exporter. Most importers, especially those who have been in business for a good number of years, are reputable and have earned this reputation by correct business dealings. If such importers require credit terms they should be able to furnish



a list of their clients who can be contacted individually to vouch for the importer's credit worthiness. In the absence of this it is advised that all payment terms should be of the pro-forma type (payment before dispatch) or by the form of documentary credit known as irrevocable credit. Documentary credit seeks to reconcile the desire of the exporter to get paid as soon as he or she has dispatched the goods with the desire of the importer to have legal title over the goods before he pays an exporter. This problem is then resolved by the bank acting as an agent between them but the system is generally used for shipping rather than posting.

The customer first opens an account in a bank in his own country and in the name of the exporter after an order has been placed and confirmed. The amount is sufficient to cover the price of the goods and the carriage etc. according to the exporter's quotation. This bank is known as the exporting bank. There is also a second bank, known as the advising bank which is in the exporter's country and which pays the money to the exporter on instruction from the opening bank. The opening bank is normally chosen by the customer and the advising bank by the exporter. The terms agreed by the exporter and the customer are notified to the opening bank by the customer with instructions that the payment should be made to the exporter, only if all the terms are complied with by the exporter. Such terms would normally include considerations such as that the prices, sizes, number and quality of goods are according to the customer's instructions, that charges of insurance and handling are met as agreed and that dispatch of the goods are made by the specified dates.

It is essential that the type of documentary credit be irrevocable which means that the opening bank cannot revoke the credit unless the date of dispatch of goods has expired. Payment is usually executed when the exporter presents the shipping documents to the bank so this could be changed to payment on the presentation of a certificate of registration and posting from the postal authorities. A certificate of registration while not as specific as a bill of lading should be acceptable for this purpose.

Some importers might agree to payment before dispatch and it is suggested that where such terms are available it is worthwhile offering a discount of perhaps 2.5%.

The Alternative Marketing Organisations (A.M.O's) are certainly reputable and one could grant them credit terms if this were to prove necessary. It is important nevertheless to bear in mind as a general principle that in exporting, once the goods are dispatched, the exporter is almost powerless to exact payment if the importer defaults.

**III. PROPOSALS FOR A MARKETING AGENCY TO EXPORT BASKETS PRODUCED IN SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THE COST OF DOING SO.**

It is my opinion that the best way to promote the export of basketware is to set up a central marketing agency whose function would be to create and develop export markets for basketware from the Solomon Islands and to act as a central selling agency to such markets. The Agency should try to provide a steady and dependable outlet for those already engaged in basketmaking as well as for the proposed basketmaking unit. The following are some recommendations concerning the composition and management of the marketing agency.

**A.**

The day to day running of the Agency should be in the hands of a competent individual who ideally should have some marketing and organisational skills. Because the success of the Agency is so dependent on this appointee it is essential that he or she show a high degree of commitment and integrity. The salary for the post should be attractive and include an incentive bonus based on the level of sales. It is suggested that the administrator's salary should be funded from outside the Agency by a direct grant for the first year after which it should be met from the Agency's operational costs.

If it is felt that no Solomon Islander can be found to meet the recruitment requirements any expatriate hired should have the responsibility of training a Solomon Islander to take over the running of the Agency.

Among the duties of the administrator would be to obtain orders for Solomon Islands basketware abroad. Initially this would involve canvassing orders by post and the administrator would be expected to give prompt attention to all subsequent correspondence and to send out a confirmation for all orders received - or if there are any difficulties with an order the communication of these difficulties immediately to the importer. It would be the administrator's responsibility to issue all the invoices relating to an order and to ensure that payment terms and delivery times are clearly understood by both parties. It would also be expected of the administrator to pack the baskets for dispatch, to ensure that all relevant documents such as certificates of origin or movement certificates were completed, and that dispatch dates were strictly adhered to. Copies of invoices should also be furnished and one copy retained for the records of the Agency. The administrator would also be expected to keep an account of all of the financial transactions of the Agency and should update this daily by recording all outgoings as well as any income received. These records should be checked frequently by whoever is responsible for overseeing the project. Seasonal demand - particularly Christmas demand - should, where possible, be

anticipated so that dispatch can be made in good time. It is extremely important that the administrator should earn for the Agency a reputation for reliability and efficiency in its business dealings.

In addition to the above responsibilities the administrator would be expected to purchase baskets on behalf of the Agency and in the case of supply being greater than demand to allocate such purchases fairly between, for example, the various villages involved in making bukaware while having regard to the quality standards. It is envisaged that the basketmaker responsible for training should be asked to give advice on the extent to which particular baskets meet the suggested quality standards and could accompany the administrator when purchases are being made, which could be at approximately two to three monthly intervals.

B.

The Agency should produce a portfolio of baskets which it could circulate to prospective buyers. It is not suggested that a catalogue is necessary, at least initially, since the cost would hardly be justifiable and the flexibility to add new designs or to take away some that were not proving popular would be greatly reduced. It would however be necessary to provide colour photographs with the name of the basket or its number on a price list clearly written on each one. Some pictures of groups of baskets would also be advisable so that one of these together with one or two detailed photographs of individual baskets could be sent out to each prospective buyer. It will be necessary to procure samples of good quality baskets for such photographs and up to twenty developments should be made from each negative. A quantity of price lists with details of the cost of postage rates to various countries will also be necessary. It would also be advisable to have tie on cards printed with a suitable logo identifying the baskets as originating in the Solomon Islands. The cards should also give some details of the raw materials used, their preparation, and the process involved in making the basket. This would be particularly important in the case of bukaware since few buyers would realise the extent of the work involved.

It is strongly suggested that the Agency should strive to obtain orders from diverse sources and as a general principle to prefer five small orders to one large one. It would certainly be unwise to pledge a large proportion of output to one buyer if there were other options available since the consequences of losing such an order could have a very bad effect on the Agency's business.

It is envisaged that orders should be obtained by sending out price lists and descriptive material to buyers in various countries in the developed world. I have prepared lists of potential importers and these appear in Appendix Number 2. If there is a difficulty in obtaining orders it may be necessary to

consider attending a trade fair but the procurement of orders in this way is usually very costly. Notwithstanding the fact that certain Governments and organisations subsidise participation in these fairs - for example the West German Government and the Japanese External Trade Organisation (JETRO) - costs are still considerable. It must also be borne in mind that statistics for orders placed at such fairs are sometimes over-optimistic, particularly in the case of those trade fairs which subsidise the travel of potential buyers who, as a result, sometimes give the impression that they have placed more orders than is actually the case. I would certainly recommend contact with participants in previous trade fairs before any positive decision is made regarding attendance at a trade fair. Such participation would be more feasible if what was being attempted was a sales promotion of all of the handicrafts of the Solomon Islands when the cost of participation would be a smaller percentage of total sales achieved. In any event, I feel orders should be forthcoming through a mailing campaign.

In determining prices to be charged by the Agency it is suggested that 80% of the selling price (free on board or ex Agency price) be paid to the producers with the remaining 20% retained to cover the Agency's costs. This represents a mark-up of 25%. It is envisaged that the price paid to the producers, at least initially, should be approximately the same as they can get from the shops already selling basketware with a premium for quality along the lines suggested in the section dealing with quality control standards. I am aware that a commission of 25% of the producer's price might be regarded as inadequate but it is important to note that co-operation between the producers and the Agency will be facilitated if the Agency is perceived by the producers as being non-exploitative. Furthermore in dealing with organisations abroad that buy handicrafts from the developing world, it will often be necessary to demonstrate that the Agency exists to help the producers and is working on their behalf. Alternative Marketing Organisations (AMOs), in particular are anxious to have assurances in this regard.

In essence, then, the aim of the Agency would be to maximise turnover and so earn high commission in this way rather than to achieve a higher commission per item on a lower overall turnover. Consideration could also be given to expanding its activities into the general handicrafts area if it were felt that turnover from basketware sales alone could not sustain it.

C.

Office space and storage space would be necessary for the Agency to function effectively but these would not have to be very elaborate. A dry secure room which had a floor area of 20-25 square metres should be adequate for both needs. A telex facility would be advantageous. It might be easier to house the Agency and

the proposed basket-making unit in one building rather than hiring two facilities. A slightly larger storage facility could then be shared by both.

D.

The possibility of the Agency inviting basket-makers to register with it should be considered. The Agency could then contract to buy an agreed minimum quarterly output from each basketmaker or group of basketmakers. Initially this quota would be rather low particularly if a large number of basketmakers apply for registration. Among the advantages of registration are that it would allow for a reliable prediction as to what the minimum amount of stock available each quarter would be while providing basketmakers with a guaranteed market for at least some of their produce. It also provides a system for distributing orders equitably among basket-makers. Against this it might be argued that such a system would be cumbersome and difficult to operate and might also limit the flexibility of the Agency in determining the type of output required. A compromise proposal would be that registration could be introduced after a six month period if it were considered advantageous either by the producers or the Agency. By this time an idea of potential orders and types of baskets required should have been formed. Buying up until then could be on an ordinary commercial basis and these arrangements could continue if output was fairly regular and the producers were satisfied with existing arrangements. The Agency would be responsible for collecting the baskets from centres agreed with the producers, at least where there is a large nucleus of producers as near Kumakama in Guadalcanal and near Auki in Malaita, though this could be re-examined if it were costing too much.

E.

It is suggested that the Agency should have a fairly well defined set of quality control standards which would be communicated to the basketmaker in advance of orders being placed or baskets being bought. This should ensure that there would be little resentment among the makers if a basket fails to make a particular classification. In all cases attention to sizes as suggested by the Agency shall be very important.

The standards for bukaware could include three classes, the names given here are tentative and could probably be improved upon. These are Excellent or Collector's Quality which would attract a 20% premium over the normal price, Good Quality which would attract a 10% premium and Standard Quality which would qualify for the normal price only. In loya cane Excellent could attract a 10% premium with Good qualifying for normal price. Details of the standards proposed are given in Appendix Number 3.

G.

The availability of working capital will be of critical importance to the success of the Agency and for this reason it is imperative that the Agency should receive adequate funding to enable it to be set up on a sound commercial footing. It is envisaged that the Agency should subsequently be self-supporting and should be able to fund its operations from the commission earned on sales.

The total amount required to set-up the Agency would be approximately S.I.\$33,000 (U.S.\$16,500) in direct grants. Depending on the performance of the Agency it may be considered desirable to expand its operations by increasing sales targets for subsequent years. Such expansion could feasibly be financed by loans from commercial institutions. The proposed grant in aid funding would have two components.

(i) A grant to cover the wages of the administrator for the first year of the Agency's existence. The figure suggested is S.I.\$10,000 (U.S.\$5,000) which I understand would be an appropriate salary having regard to wage levels in the Solomon Islands. This figure assumes that the post would be filled by a Solomon Islander.

(ii) A set up grant of S.I.\$23,000 (U.S.\$11,500 approx) which would cover buying costs of baskets for the first four months. These costs are estimated at S.I.\$19,000 (U.S.\$9,500 approx) and of the remaining S.I.\$4,000 (U.S.\$2,000 approx), S.I.\$2,400 (U.S.\$1,200) has been allocated for a year's rental on office and storage space of 25 square metres and S.I.\$1,600 (U.S.\$800) has been allotted to defray other incidental costs such as those incurred in preparing promotional material, photographic costs, postage costs and the cost of bags for dispatching baskets.

This set up grant would be intended as a once only grant which would give the Agency the initial working capital essential to its operation. One could object that a loan for this purpose would be sufficient but I believe that the strain of attempting to repay it would be inimical to the development of the Agency and would certainly hamper any prospects of it expanding its operations since it would have to be constantly borrowing working capital. It should be remembered also that since the bulk of the grant would be used for the purchase of baskets the grant would be at least partly recoverable should the Agency not function properly.

I now propose to give some details of the proposed turnover target for the Agency in its first year of operation. The proposed turnover for the first year would be approximately S.I.\$70,000 (U.S.\$35,000 approx) on which the Agency should earn a commission of S.I.\$14,000 (U.S.\$7,000 approx). This commission would provide for wages for the administrator for the subsequent year as well as providing rental on the office and storage space, a bonus for the

administrator for achieving this figure and still have some funds to cover incidental expenses.

At a turnover figure of S.I.\$70,000 (U.S.\$35,000 approx), the outlay on baskets in the first year would be S.I.\$56,000 or U.S.\$28,000 approx. This outlay was arrived at as follows:

Bukaware Outlay S.I.\$34,000 (U.S.\$17,000).

This figure is certainly very feasible, both from the sales aspect and the production aspect. With around thirty six villages producing bukaware in Guadalcanal this represents only five baskets per month from each village at an average cost of S.I.\$20.00 (U.S.\$10) per basket. A sales target of S.I.\$34,000 (U.S.\$17,000) before commission is also realistic. This would represent U.S.\$21,000 worth of sales which is not a large amount in terms of a global market.

Loyacane ware Outlay S.I.\$4,000 (U.S.\$2,000).

These sales would probably be comprised mostly of small shopping baskets and also perhaps small laundry baskets. I have taken a figure of eight workers producing two days work per week for sale to the Agency, the output being conservatively valued at S.I.\$5.00 per day. This gives an approximate figure of S.I.\$4,000 (U.S.\$2,000) outlay per year and would represent a sales target of S.I.\$5,000 (U.S.\$2,500) for a year when the Agency's commission is taken into account. I believe this sales level should be fairly easily achieved. It is also very likely that output of loyacane ware could be increased should the demand warrant it.

Produce from the proposed basketmaking unit and from outworkers trained by the unit. Outlay S.I.\$12,000 (U.S.\$6,000 approx).

Since it is proposed that the unit be in operation three months before the Marketing Agency, it should have sales samples available for the Agency at its inception. While it is not envisaged that there would be saleable output of exportable quality from the unit for the first six months of its operation the Agency should be in a position to buy much of the output from then on. An estimate of output from the unit and its outworkers would be S.I.\$18,000 to S.I.\$20,000 (U.S.\$9,000 to U.S.\$10,000) for nine months so I have assumed that the Agency could contract to buy S.I.\$12,000 (U.S.\$6,000) of this output. The remainder of the output might also be taken by the Agency on a sale or return basis, i.e., payment when the sale has been achieved, thus earning extra commission for the Agency without the necessity of having to commit money in advance.

IV. PROPOSALS FOR THE SETTING UP OF A BASKETRY TRAINING AND PRODUCTION UNIT, THE EQUIPMENT NEEDED AND THE COSTS OF TRAINING.

4.1 Proposals for the establishment of a basketmaking unit.

While sales can be achieved for many of the baskets already being made in the Solomon Islands this does not mean that the designs and techniques currently used can have a wider commercial application such as providing increased employment in an urban centre like Honiara. Of the basket types examined only loya cane ware and possibly coiled pandanus work and rigid coconut leaf baskets could be regarded, in my opinion, as providing a reasonable economic return in a basketry workshop. Notwithstanding the beauty and excellent technique to be found in so many bukaware baskets this technique is more suited to the situation prevailing in the rural villages where it is still practised where it supports subsistence agriculture and the weaving of baskets is regarded not as work per se but as work and leisure combined. As such the bukaware basketmakers look to their skill to provide them with an extra income rather than regarding it as providing a full means of support which even if current prices were doubled would still not be the case.

Commercial basketmaking on the other hand requires not only that one produces a good product but also that it can be sold at a price which gives the maker a fair return for his or her labour. The best prospects for this seems to lie in developing a range of baskets which combine the techniques currently employed by the loyacane basketmakers of Malaita with new techniques involving the use of narrower cane used as uprights and bordered down (as in most stake and strand basketry in other parts of the world).

Cane grows abundantly throughout the Solomon Islands but the cane currently used by the basketmakers in Malaita ranges in thickness from 10mm to 20mm and must be split before use. Thinner cane does grow in Malaita but not as profusely. It occurs higher up in the mountains in land not belonging to the villagers who are engaged in basketmaking though the landowner told me that he would allow them access to cut this but would expect some payment for this concession. The cane I received for trial purposes - making trial baskets, samples, etc. - was cut in a lowland region of Guadalcanal, roughly in the Tachinboko Bay area, and while there were some narrow canes (minimum 6mm in diameter) the bulk of the cane was much larger and most was from 10mm to 20mm in diameter. I understand that thinner cane grows up in the more mountainous region south of the village of Kuminiboli but the widest distribution of these thinner canes seems to be on the Island of Makira and in the Islands of New Georgia. A private study by Mr. M. J. Corbett of A. Victor Leggo and Co. Ltd in November, 1986 identified a good supply of narrow diameter canes which he calls Bengii (4-6mm) and mono (7-10mm) in Makira and also found a cane of around 4mm in New Georgia which is believed to come from the



mountainous areas near Olive village. None of this cane is being used at the moment although Mr. Corbett claims that the villagers where it grows are anxious to see this resource developed. However the proposal by A. Victor Leggo to process these and other canes chiefly for export but also for domestic use was not acceptable. While this decision might be seen as a vindication of the Government's policy to extract secondary value from the country's natural resources it must also be borne in mind that the technology for processing canes is not highly developed in the Solomons. The present process of boiling in diesel used for the thicker furniture canes does not give a very clean finish and the technological expertise which would have been available in this proposal would certainly be very valuable. It must be borne in mind that even for secondary use, as for example making baskets from cane, the cane must first be processed or cleaned. This cleaning of cane for baskets is presently being done by hand scraping each cane repeatedly with sand and is not feasible on a large scale so some information on the cleaning process by soaking in a chemical solution will be necessary. In the absence of any other processor of cane the proposed basketmaking unit will have to try to procure its own supply of cane and it is suggested that this could be done in co-operation with the land owners or village groups where the cane grows, probably in Makira since the range of canes of varying thicknesses from 4mm - 10mm would be most suitable for basketry.

The consequences of having a supply of such cane would have many advantages for the development of basketmaking in the Solomons. Thinner cane could be used whole, particularly for uprights, and there would be many advantages to making at least some baskets this way. In the first place the possibilities for producing a much more varied range of baskets would be enhanced especially in the case of large baskets. Baskets made with round cane uprights would be stronger than those made with split cane, not only because the round cane has more body than split cane, but also because the technique of bordering used with round cane is stronger than the the rim employed when the uprights are of split cane. Bordering is also considerably quicker than a rim, particularly in the case of a large basket when the binding of the rim with buka vine, as is currently done, can take four to five hours as against 10 to 15 minutes for a border. Furthermore with a border it is possible to attach strong handles whether of a bow type, as in a shopping basket, or the smaller "two rod" handles used on ordinary baskets. Additionally, provision can be made for a foot on the basket which gives the base some protection from wear and should be an integral part of all baskets other than those which will not be subjected to much abuse. It is not feasible to put a foot on loyacane baskets so this limits their suitability for certain tasks.

In the face of these advantages then, are there any drawbacks in making baskets with round canes as uprights? There is no doubt

that unless fairly fine cane is used the baskets are slightly coarser in appearance than loyacane baskets. This is not of critical importance in the case of fairly large baskets where the customer seeks strength and durability as well as a pleasing shape and finish. This is particularly so where the basket is to be used for fuel or as a large pot plant container where a coarse or "chunky" look, as it is sometimes referred to, may even be an asset. Uprights any thicker than 7mm or 8mm would be inappropriate however, for baskets where fineness of appearance is of overriding importance as perhaps in the case of soiled linen baskets and perhaps shopping baskets which would mean lighter cane of 5 to 6mm in diameter would be needed for upsetting and handling. Upsetting is the first few inches on the siding (or vertical face) of a basket and is usually comprised of 4 rod or 3 rod wale, a special weave of in front of 2 or 3 uprights and behind one woven with canes lighter than the uprights.

It could also be argued that the introduction of new techniques might have a detrimental affect on other techniques traditional to the Solomon Islands. It must be stressed however that these stake and strand techniques now being discussed bear no relation whatever to the coiling techniques of bukaware or to the plaiting techniques used to make polynesian bags, coconutleaf baskets and hats and backfibre bags and would have no influence on the techniques themselves. If, however, there was only a fixed market for Solomon Island baskets the introduction of new types of baskets could have the affect of reducing the sales of the baskets currently being made. But since the function of the proposed marketing agency is to increase the total sales of baskets this risk is greatly diminished. The real threat to the survival of the above mentioned baskets is that the amount of money earned for making them will be considered inadequate as would probably already be the case if such basketmaking did not bring pleasure and satisfaction to those engaged in it.

It is on the loyacane baskets of Malaita, then, that these new techniques might have most affect but any changes that come about here will happen because thae basketmakers have adopted these techniques and made them their own. At the two day workshop already mentioned I found the basketmakers who attended very receptive to the new techniques and also quick to learn them while also realising that their application to fine work would be appropriate only if thinner canes than we had that day would be available.

I would suggest then that a basketware unit be set up which would have as its main functions the teaching of basketry to trainees with little or no previous experience of basketry and the upgrading of skills for those already engaged in loya cane basketry, while operating as a commercial unit producing baskets for sale. It could also investigate the possibilities for the development of other baskets with commercial potential such as

coconut leaf baskets (rigid) and knotted pandanus leaf mats if it is judged that these cannot be adequately supplied from other sources.

For the unit to succeed it will be necessary to recruit an experienced stake and strand basketmaker, probably from Europe where this tradition has its roots, though stake and strand basketmakers can also be found in China and U.S.A. and I understand in New Zealand where one has emigrated from England. Ideally the basketmaker employed should be making baskets commercially and should be skilled in all aspects of stake and strand work including fitching, scallowing, waling, bordering etc.. While it would also be an advantage if the basketmaker would have taught basketmaking in the past, especially if this were to apprentices in a workshop situation, I do not think this is essential provided the basketmaker has the ability to share his or her skills with others. As well as looking after the training programme the basketmaker would be expected to look after the day to day running of the workshop including estimating the amount of materials required to ensure a continuous flow of work, estimating the amounts to be soaked each week, producing good quality baskets for samples and trial marketing along the lines suggested in annex no. 4 and developing new designs as he or she judges to be appropriate. I have included a job specification for this position in annex no. 5.

It is convenient here to consider whether the availability of the raw materials on the island of Makira would be a compelling factor for siting the proposed unit there. Apart from the advantage of being near the source of raw material there is also the important consideration that one would be providing an opportunity for people in the province to obtain work without having to leave their own island. Furthermore, the workshop should be able to have some input in the cane processing and would be near at hand to advise on the suitability of the processed cane.

Amongst the negative factors would be the relative remoteness from the market of Makira and the fact that one would almost certainly have to transport all of the baskets to Honiara before dispatch to the export market which would add considerably to production costs. It is also possible that the basketmaker responsible for training might have some difficulty in adjusting to the relatively isolated living conditions in Makira. More importantly, perhaps, would be the difficulty of expanding the training programme to benefit other areas of the Solomon Islands.

What I would suggest is to base the training unit in Honiara but to train people not just from Honiara and Makira but also from the New Georgia group since indications are that small diameter canes are to be found there also. The trainees from the outlying areas should ideally live near areas where the cane is to be found, ie Rendova in the New Georgia group and the district around Arohane

Village in Makira. Up to six apprentices from each of these locations could be trained in addition to trainees from the Honiara district. If such a programme was adopted it would be necessary for selected apprentices from these provinces to travel to Honiara for training and I would suggest training sessions of two weeks duration with six weeks between sessions during which time the trainees would be expected to practice the techniques learnt in their own locations. Having trained people in basketry in this way I can state that it is a perfectly feasible method but it is important that the participants in such a training programme be keen to learn. The art of basketry is perfected by practice. Knowing what to do is insufficient and it is impossible to learn to make good baskets unless one is weaving often.

For this reason I am suggesting that the apprentices from these outlying areas be paid a daily rate even when not attending the unit at Honiara on the clear understanding that it is to support them while they practice basketry. It is essential that the training basketmaker should have the authority to suspend trainees from the training programme if he or she believes they are not making sufficient progress. Trainees in outlying districts will also have to obtain cane for weaving and should endeavour to do this in their own district. An allowance towards the cost of this cane should also be made by the training unit on the understanding that the baskets made by the trainees would become the property of the unit. This would be desirable for the first six months since it would ensure that the outlying trainees would have to produce evidence of their work between training sessions and it would be easy to assess from the number of baskets the time spent working. Such baskets would also provide the training basketmaker with a ready means to assess the progress being made.

After six months the aim would be to decrease financial support to these outlying workers, if their work is of a saleable quality, but to provide them instead with a market for their produce. I have budgeted also for some set up costs in these areas. If for instance there were four trainees from the same village in the New Georgia group it might be possible to share one processing tank. If the trainees are not living or working close to each other processing equipment would have to be less sophisticated; welded tar barrels would provide a cheap processing tank in such circumstances and could double as a soaking tank (see equipment at the end of this chapter). If there were a central processing tank serving scattered workers soaking could be by barrel-soaker or soaking in clean streams or rivers. Cane could be worked in a semi-dry state for certain types of baskets such as frame baskets but I would not recommend that ordinary type baskets be made from partly seasoned material.

In this programme the techniques taught could be modified to suit the type of cane growing in each district. Thus if the canes in Rendova for example are 4mm diameter and with no other cane

growing there except 20mm cane this material would be ideal for frame baskets with hoops and ribs from heavy cane and the narrow cane used for weaving. The thickness of cane available in Makira would suggest fairly fine baskets such as shopping baskets in whole cane with stakes of 7mm to 10mm cane and weavers and upsetting in 4-6mm. Baskets for Malaita district and Guadalcanal where 10-20mm cane is more abundant could incorporate split cane for weaving with round cane being used only for uprights, upsetting and handles. In this way the necessity for the movement of cane from one district to another would be minimised though the training unit in Honiara should have a good supply of all types of cane in its training phase so that the various techniques could be taught. It should also be the aim to familiarise the trainees with the processing of cane so that trainees in districts where cane is available but not being processed would be able to start doing this themselves. In this respect the basketmaker responsible for training should try to learn as much as possible about processing cane by visiting the processing unit or finding out the techniques involved. A limited amount of trial processing on green/fresh cane could be done in the Honiara unit using the workshop soaking trough to familiarise the trainees with the processing of cane.

It will also be necessary to upgrade the skills of those basketmakers in Malaita who are interested in such a programme and to this end it is proposed that the basketmaker hold a workshop for a few days each month at Auki in Malaita province. Because these makers are already familiar with many of the general principles of stake and strand work they would benefit greatly from this type of instruction which would also have the advantage of not disrupting their village life unduly. The basketmaker would also have to find a candidate to take over the day to day management of the workshop when his or her contract expires and it is probable that the skills for this position would most likely be found amongst the basketmakers of Malaita if one of these was willing to move to Honiara. Depending on the supply of fine cane the basketmaker could also decide whether the split-cane techniques used in Malaita should be taught to the trainees in Honiara. This might be appropriate if the supply of small cane is not as plentiful as implied in Mr. Corlett's survey or if there were difficulties in shipping cane from Makira which might lead to occasional shortages of supply. In this case shopping baskets could be made in split-cane but with rims bound with lapping cane which would represent a time saving over the lapping with buka vine.

The proposed intake of trainees to the centre would be ten to twelve people from the Honiara district and approximately six each from the New Georgia and Makira districts. In order to give proper attention to this number it is proposed that the trainees from Honiara should start three weeks before the trainees from the outlying districts. They should then be in a position to work with minimal supervision while the training basketmaker attended to the

needs of the trainees from New Georgia and Makira for the following two weeks. The training basketmaker would then spend another two weeks with the Honiara trainees before conducting the first workshop for upgrading skills in Auki which would be approximately three days in duration. It would then be approximately three weeks before the trainees from New Georgia and Makira arrive at the unit for further training and the basketmaker should get an opportunity to produce some baskets for samples as well as providing further training for the trainees from Honiara.

It should be emphasised that the normal process of training an apprentice involves a basketmaker making baskets in the same room as an apprentice and occasionally interrupting the work to provide guidance to the apprentice on various points. While training twelve apprentices will leave much less time for actual production by the training basketmaker it should still be relatively easy to have a full range of samples ready when the Agency for marketing baskets would be set up, approximately three months after the training unit has been in existence. Thus while the schedule proposed for the training basketmaker may seem very onerous I do not believe this is the case and the apparently high number of trainees is deliberate in order to increase the possibility of getting a reasonable number of interested trainees.

Before action is taken on this programme for a basketry training unit it is recommended that a survey be done in the Arohane village area of Makira Province to establish the extent to which the canes named by Mr. Corlett as "mono" and "sengii" occur there. Since Mr. Corlett did not penetrate the bush to a depth of more than a kilometre in this area it might be wise to establish beyond all doubt that a good supply of 4-10mm cane exists in this area. Such a survey should be not too difficult to carry out if contact is first made with the chief of Arohane Village, Thomas Taumi. The fact that no survey of stands of cane has been carried out by the forestry department is unfortunate as is the lack of information about the regeneration of cane, its propagation, and the possible damage being done to it by logging operations. The development of rattan as a resource also implies its protection from over-exploitation and a programme to ensure that this resource continues to be renewed. Unless the lack of information about the rattan reserves of the Solomon Islands is redressed, however, no policy for insuring that rattan is developed as a renewable resource is likely to emerge.

It is suggested that if suitable cane is found in reasonable quantities in the Arohane Village district, trial processing should be carried out using the chemical soaking process mentioned in Mr. Corlett's report but it will be necessary to obtain further information on this process and also more details on the cost of the process and what the eventual cost per 50kgs of cane would be, including shipping costs, delivered to Honiara. It is important to remember that the basketmaker recruited for the training programme

would be most unlikely to have any experience in the processing of cane as any cane he or she worked would have been already processed. It should be relatively easy to obtain information on the processing of cane from some of the commercial processors of cane in South East Asia or from the person responsible for giving advice on the rattan furniture industry in the Solomon Islands.

It is hoped that after a year, when the training basketmaker's contract would expire, the basketmaking unit would be functioning as a commercial production unit with a workshop manager - who would also be making baskets - from the Solomon Islands. It is also envisaged that the Marketing Agency should be able to sell the baskets made in the unit and as already suggested there would be scope here for flexible co-operation in respect of payment terms between the Agency and the production unit. I think it is probably fair to say that further inputs will be needed, especially advice on management and financial matters, to ensure the continued development of the unit. I think it is important that the unit should not be allowed to disintegrate, since, even though the individuals making baskets in it could of course work for themselves, the continued existence of the basketry unit would allow it to encourage further developments in training and design as well as co-ordinate the supplying of cane, if necessary, to the other workers trained by the unit.

#### 4.2. Equipment needed

The room for basketmaking should be as uncluttered as possible. Given the climate of the Solomon Islands a building with open sides might be suitable provided that there were two walls on either side beside which the basketmakers could sit. It is usual for a basketmaker in stake and strand to sit on a low seat about four inches from the floor with the wall behind providing support for the back. About 2.5 metres of wall space would be adequate for each worker - though three would be better - with each worker occupying 2.5 metres out from the wall also. Thus a room measuring 12 metres by 6 metres would accommodate 8 workers in comfort - four along each 12 metre wall but could also accommodate 10 workers with 5 along each wall.

The other essential as far as the building is concerned would be a soaking trough, which for cane, should be up to 4 metres long and could be of aluminium, fibreglass, or even mass concrete provided this was vibrated in or plastered afterwards. Internal dimensions should be approximately 75cm wide by 60cm deep. This size should easily be adequate for a unit with 12 full time basket-weavers, but the unit in Honiara should have some space around it to accommodate the larger numbers working when there are trainees from outlying districts. One or two people working on a smaller scale could make do with two tar barrels cut along their length and welded together to make a trough. It would be necessary to empty the soaking water fairly frequently and while it would be easy to

spill out a barrel trough a fixed trough should have a drainage plug with a water source nearby for refilling.

The purpose of the soaking trough is to render the cane pliable before working and it means that cane can be cut a long time before it is required and dried fully before storage. Seasoned cane can then be soaked for 3 to 4 days for smaller sizes and up to 8 days for larger sizes before working. The use of seasoned cane also eliminates the risk of shrinkage after the basket is made which is a risk with partly seasoned cane.

Tools for each worker (see photograph # 11) should include

1. A good sharp knife
2. A shears (also called a secateurs)
3. A rapping iron for beating down the work. This could be improvised if there is any firm with blacksmithing or welding skills on the island.
4. A bodkin - like a large awl - for inserting handles, completing borders, splitting base rods etc.
5. A lap-board can be of any timber and should be approximately 2.5cm thick with one planed face and be approximately 1 metre long and 45cm wide. The boards (or sheeting) are nailed to battens or framing stock approximately 7.5cm x 5cm at one end and 5cm x 2.5cm at the other so that it slopes slightly. This slope can be accentuated by the worker by placing a short block of 10cm square timber at one end of the lap board.
6. A yard rule or metre stick for measurement.
7. A sharpening stone.

Other useful tools which should be available in the workshop would be a screwblock for square or rectangular work and a greasing horn filled with tallow or soap for lubricating the bodkin before inserting it in the work.

#### 4.3. Costings for proposed Basketry Unit.

While it is difficult to say exactly what it would cost to set up such a unit I have arrived at an approximate figure of US\$63,370 (S.I.\$123,500) <sup>1</sup>.

This figure includes both wages and travelling costs for a training basketmaker as well as all wage costs for Solomon Island trainees, fares within the Solomon Islands for trainees and the training basketmaker, costs of raw materials (i.e. cane) and equipment, and rental on work space. Details of how this figure was arrived at are given below and it will be seen that all

1. The exchange rate used in this section is S.I.\$1.98 = U.S.\$1.00 Elsewhere in this report, an exchange rate of S.I.\$2.00 = U.S.\$1.00 has been used for convenience.



"hidden" costs have as far as possible been included. It is possible that the proposal could cost less than the figure I have suggested.

A. Wages and travelling costs for a basketmaker to train the apprentices and look after the management of the workshop.

Since this appointment would be for a year it would probably be necessary to offer travel costs for a family if this were required.

I would estimate that many basketmakers in Europe who run their own business earn from Pounds £10,000 - 12,000 (U.S.\$17,000 - 20,500) per annum. Some with retail outlets of their own might earn more than this while those who work for an employer might earn as little as Pounds £7,500 (U.S.\$12,750). It should be possible to employ a basketmaker for approximately Pounds £12,000 to 15,000 (U.S.\$20,500-25,500) though it might be necessary to add a living allowance if this practice is usual when hiring expatriate labour. If this is done a wage figure of U.S.\$22,000 should be adequate.

Travel costs for an average family to the Solomon Islands from Europe would be approximately U.S.\$11,000 though the figure could be less than that if the basketmaker travelled alone, for example, or was recruited from a region nearer the Solomon Islands.

Total cost: U.S.\$33,000 (Wages U.S.\$22,000 & travel U.S.\$11,000)  
This would be approximately S.I.\$65,340.

B. Costs of trainees wages

These costs are based on the Solomon Islands Government's approved first year apprenticeship rate of S.I.\$21.50 per week for trainees based in Honiara. Costs for the outlying workers are also based on this amount but I have added a provision for a living allowance of approximately S.I.\$4.00 per day (on a seven day week basis) while these trainees are attending workshops in Honiara. Rates proposed for those attending "upgrading skills" workshops in Auki are S.I.\$7.52 per day which is the Solomon Islands Government's approved rate for skilled final year apprentices and I have also included a provision for S.I.\$3.00 living allowance. I have made no provision for trainees wages after eight months, after which, in the basketry unit's case the sale of baskets produced should cover the costs of wages. In the case of trainees from Makira and Western Province I consider that they should also be able to support themselves from the sale of produce from this time on but I have provided for wages and living allowances for all six workshops they attend in Honiara on the assumption that saleable baskets produced at these workshops become the property of the basketry unit.

Details of costs:

Wages for 12 trainees based in Honiara.  
 Wages for 8 months S.I.\$8,256.00  
 (32 weeks at S.I.\$258.00 per week)

Wages for 12 trainees based in Makira and  
 Western Province.  
 24 weeks at S.I.\$258.00 per week S.I.\$6,192.00  
 8 weeks of the 8 months will be spent  
 attending workshops for which separate  
 provision has been made.

Wages and living allowance for 12 trainees  
 from Makira and Western Province to attend  
 six workshops in Honiara, each workshop  
 being of 2 weeks duration.  
 S.I.\$50.00 per person per week  
 Total cost per workshop S.I.\$1200.00 x 6 S.I.\$7,200.00

Wages for those attending workshops at Auki.  
 Calculated on the basis of 10 people  
 attending each workshop.  
 Wages and living allowances per day S.I.\$105.00  
 Each 3 day workshop S.I.\$315.00 x 9 S.I.\$2,835.00

Total wages and living allowances for  
 24 trainees and 10 basketmakers  
 receiving upgrading skills training S.I.\$24,483  
 or U.S.\$12,365

C. Fares

These are fares within the Solomon Islands. Included are 6 return  
 fares from Kira Kira to Honiara and 6 return fares from Moonda to  
 Honiara for each workshop. This makes 72 fares and I have taken an  
 average cost of S.I.\$60 per return shipping fare. This comes to  
 approximately S.I.\$4,320. I am also providing for 9 air flights  
 from Honiara to Auki at S.I.\$106 each and one flight each to  
 Western Province and to Makira, these journeys to be made by the  
 training basketmaker. This amounts to approximately S.I.\$1,500.

Total fares S.I.\$5,820  
 U.S.\$2,930

D Purchases of Cane

It is difficult to be very accurate about this. Pricing is on the  
 basis of payment by measuring the circumference of a bundle of  
 cane and paying at the same bulk rate as large cane but I have

added a 10% surcharge for shipping and I have also made provision for some wastage since this tends to occur, particularly in a training situation. The figure below is for cane costs for one year and covers cane costs for all trainees.

Total cane costs	S.I.\$17,000
	U.S.\$8,585

**E Equipment**

Minimum tool kit to include knife, shears, metre stick, bodkin, and rapping iron. Approximate cost S.I.\$60 per kit but I have budgeted this at S.I.\$40 per kit on the assumption that those receiving them would make a 33% contribution to the cost of the tools which could be deducted from their wages. It will be necessary for those receiving upgrading skills training to obtain tools also so this comes to 34 tool kits at S.I.\$40 each

Tool costs	S.I.\$1,360
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Workshop soaking trough, aluminium at S.I.\$800 and other miscellaneous equipment to include screwblocks, lap-boards, weights etc at an approximate cost of S.I.\$300

Soaking trough and miscellaneous	S.I.\$1,100
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A 75% contribution to set up equipment costs for trainees in outlying areas. If trainees in each district are able to share equipment it would be feasible to purchase 2 aluminium tanks. Otherwise less elaborate equipment would have to be used.

Total set-up for trainees	S.I.\$1,200
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Total Equipment Costs	S.I.\$3,660
	U.S.\$1,848

**F. Rental on a building to house the proposed unit.**

A building of approximately 70 square metres would be adequate. Rental charges are estimated at S.I.\$600 per month; year's rental S.I.\$7,200. Although a building will be necessary for the workshops in Auki I am presuming that the Province of Malaita will make a building available for this purpose and if there is a nominal charge, it is unlikely to be significant.

Total rental costs	S.I.\$7,200
	U.S.\$3,635

G. It is proposed that the basketry unit make a capital contribution of approximately S.I.\$1,000 towards the setting up of a processing unit in Makira. This contribution would be recoverable in the form of cane from the processors so is not an extra cost as such.

Annex No. 1

Postal charges for overseas surface parcels from the Solomon Islands

## OVERSEAS SURFACE PARCEL POST

(N.B. ALL RATES ARE IN SOLOMON ISLAND DOLLARS)

	up to 1 kg	up to 3 kg	up to 5 kg	up to 10 kg	up to 15 kg	up to 20 kg
Australia and Territories	\$4.10	\$5.50	\$7.50	\$11.70	\$16.80	\$19.60
New Zealand	\$4.50	\$7.60	\$11.10	\$19.30		
United Kingdom	\$6.30	\$9.10	\$12.20	\$18.50	\$28.50	\$32.70

## ALL OTHER COUNTRIES

	up to 1 kg	up to 3 kg	up to 5 kg	up to 10 kg
Zone 1 Fiji, Papua New Guinea & Vanuatu	\$4.50	\$6.80	\$9.40	\$15.90
Zone 2 Includes most other St Pacific countries	\$5.00	\$10.80	\$16.10	\$28.40
Zone 3	\$4.50	\$8.10	\$12.30	\$20.70
Zone 4 Includes U.S.A., Japan, India and the Middle East	\$4.80	\$8.70	\$13.00	\$22.10
Zone 5 Includes European countries other than United Kingdom	\$5.10	\$9.70	\$14.10	\$23.00

Surface post to Australia and New Zealand usually takes from four to six weeks but can take up to eight weeks for delivery. Surface post to the U.S.A. and Europe usually takes from 6 to 10 weeks to be delivered.

**Commodity Rates**

A discount of 15% on all parcel post rates is available as a concession to those sending a volume of commodities fairly regularly through the post. Applications must be lodged with the Postal Authorities and are usually processed within four weeks. The proposed Marketing Agency should qualify for this concession.

**Surface Air Lift**

This service is available to Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Rates are as follows:

	up to 1 kg	up to 3 kg	up to 5 kg	up to 10 kg	up to 15 kg	up to 20 kg
Australia and Territories	\$4.50	\$6.80	\$9.40	\$15.90	\$22.90	\$30.10
New Zealand	\$5.00	\$10.80	\$16.10	\$28.40		
United Kingdom	\$8.10	\$13.10	\$18.50	\$31.00	\$44.50	\$57.70

Annex No. 2

Lists of Potential Importers of Basketware

Addresses for the American Market

The American market for handcrafts is the largest single market in the world and the importation of handcrafts has been well established for a number of years. A 1974 study called "Marketing Crafts from the Third World" written by Arthur D. Little estimated that the total craft imports from developing countries were between 120 and 160 million U.S. dollars F.O.B. price at the country of origin and the market was predicted to grow at 20% annually. While further growth in the market did occur in the 1970's it is unlikely that it was as pronounced as 20% per year.

Nonetheless the American handcraft market has not contracted to the extent that the European market has and because it is extremely diverse it should be possible to find a niche in the market. It is a very competitive market being targeted by a large number of craft exporters from developing countries as well as those from developed countries. I feel that the quality ethnic baskets should attract consumer interest in the U.S.A. and there are various specialist importers whom it would be worthwhile to contact.

In the case of the bukaware it would probably be best to direct marketing efforts towards the museum shops and the smaller specialist importers whereas in the case of loyacane baskets and pandanus table mats, if available, some of the larger importers could be tried. I have not listed any of the very large mass market importers such as Pier 1 or Mass Market Craft Imports who operate minimum orders of up to 2000 - 3000 baskets.

Mark ups by U.S. importers tend to be fairly high with a mark up of 100% by the importer/wholesaler being common. Retailers typically add another 100% and there is a sales tax (average 8-10%) in most states so that the eventual selling price to the public might typically be 3 to 4 times the C.I.F. price. Direct contact with the sales outlets would certainly reduce mark ups but initial contact will probably have to be made through importers for the most part, because many retailers are unwilling to deal directly with producers.

The Alternative Marketing Organisations do not usually add a large mark up being more concerned with fair trading conditions for the producer groups but some are only interested in low priced handicrafts.

Commercial Outlets

Specialist Ethnic Craft Importers  
African Traveller Imports  
11612 Oak Creek Drive  
Lakeside, California 92040  
U.S.A.

They sell to over 1,500 clients including museum shops, small craft retailers, galleries and private collectors. Their contacts with museum shops and other specialist shops would render them ideally suited to test the Bukaware on the American market. They do not buy baskets from China, Taiwan or the Philippines.

Primitive Artisan  
125 W. Main St,  
Plainville  
CT 06062  
U.S.A.

They wholesale a very fine range of expensive ethnic crafts with an emphasis on traditional or useful handcrafted objects made from renewable resources. They are concentrating on the more exclusive designer market and should be another good outlet for bukaware. They are situated on the east coast of U.S.A. and sell mostly through their own showroom.

Diversified Design Industries  
325 East 57th Street,  
New York  
NY 10022  
U.S.A.

This retail outlet is quoted in the Commonwealth Secretariat Report of 1977 as being interested in bukaware with a possible order of 500 units per year. The suggested method of dispatch would be monthly parcels with payment at time of dispatch. Nobody has contacted them since.

Lilly Beecher Imports Inc  
247 East 77th Street  
New York  
NY 10021  
U.S.A.

This is an importing and wholesaling firm specialising in baskets, textiles and jewellery. Current supplies come mainly from Africa and South America.



Raquel's Collection  
4 North Road  
Great Neck  
New York  
NY 11024  
U.S.A.

An importer/wholesaler selling through showrooms in Los Angeles, Dallas and Denver as well as New York. They sell mainly baskets, wall hangings, rugs, pottery and carvings.

Vivian Burns Inc  
1303 Folsom St  
San Francisco  
CA 94103  
U.S.A.

An importing/wholesaling firm selling "folk art" and handcrafts to up market retail and gift stores, mainly from showrooms and by attending various U.S. trade shows.

Matus Imports  
24 Beck Road  
Arlington  
Mass 02174  
U.S.A.

Although this is a type of AMO it is run along normal commercial lines but it does buy from smaller community based producer groups rather than from commercial exporters. They sell general crafts including baskets especially "the more unusual and interesting types".

Ramona Enterprises Inc  
1133 Taft St  
Rockville  
MD 20850  
U.S.A.

An importer/wholesaler specialising in "handcrafts of natural textures" including basketware. Ramona Enterprises have a showroom in the Architects and Designers Building in New York city. They also have showrooms in a number of other American cities and attend all of the major U.S. trade shows for handcrafts/gift items.

Blackbeard and the Gipsy  
40 W 24th St  
New York  
NY 10010  
U.S.A.

A retail outlet specialising in baskets, wall hangings and jewellery who import their own stock.

World Handicrafts  
Norwich  
VT 05055, U.S.A.

This company imports handicrafts from all over the world and sells through its own retail shop and by a mail order catalogue.

World Wide Imports,  
304 Delaware  
Kansas City  
MD 64105(is this state correct??)  
U.S.A.

An importing company specialising in baskets, carvings, wall hangings, jewellery and native dolls. It currently imports mainly from Africa, Latin America and the Far East.

Heart of Africa  
9937 Main Ave  
Lakeide  
CA 92040, U.S.A.

An interior decor Art Gallery which imports various items including baskets and carvings. It currently imports from Papua New Guinea.

American Alternative Marketing Organisations

The Mennonite Central Committee  
21 South 12th Street  
Akron  
Pennsylvania 17501  
U.S.A.

A non-profit making organisation which works completely outside normal commercial channels to assist self-help programmes based on handicrafts in the developing world.

Aid to Artisans  
64 Fairgreen Place  
Chestnut Hill  
Mass 02167 U.S.A.

This is also a non profit organisation. It was set up in 1975 to give practical help to disadvantaged artisans and craftworkers throughout the world by providing a market for their products. It buys indigenous folk art as well as traditional crafts of high quality. They sell to museum shops so might be a good contact for bukaware sales.

Serrv  
Church World Service Centre  
New Windsor  
Maryland  
U.S.A.

This is the largest A.M.O. in the U.S.A. and it imports handcrafts, mostly basketware and wooden ware from various sources in the developing world. It buys from church and missionary personnel, co-operatives and self help groups, commercial exporters and government organisations. It sells through its own retail outlets, by mail order and also to gift shops.

United Nations Association Gift Shops

These non profit volunteer shops, located in various centres in the U.S.A. were primarily information centres that have since started selling hand crafts. Each centre undertakes its own buying.

UNA Center  
Tucson Chapter UNA-USA  
2931 E. Grant Road  
Tucson  
Arizona 85716  
U.S.A.

UNA Global Gift Shop  
Harbor Area Chapter UNA-USA  
940 S. Pacific Avenue  
San Pedro  
California 90732  
U.S.A.

United Nations Information Center  
UNA of Los Angeles  
3522 West Eighth Street  
Los Angeles  
California 90005  
U.S.A.

UN Association of the United States  
345 East 46th Street  
New York  
NY 10017  
U.S.A.

UNA/UNICEF Centre  
Fresno Chapter  
2311 West Shaw Avenue  
Fresno  
California 93710  
U.S.A.

UNA Global Gifts  
Long Beach Chapter UNA-USA  
3517 East Broadway  
Long Beach  
California 90803  
U.S.A.

UNA Center  
Mid-Peninsula Chapter  
552 Emerson Street  
Palo Alto  
California 94301  
U.S.A.

Further information on the USA handcraft market.

There is a comprehensive list of basketware importers in the U.S.A. in "The Handicrafts Importers Guide" published by the Trade Information Network, OAS-AICO, Bogota pages 14-17 inclusive. This is available from the Ministry of Trade Library.

The European Market for Handcrafts

Despite the existence of the European Economic Community, the European market is not really a single market. Only occasionally would an importer in one European country sell to retail outlets in another European country. Therefore it is necessary to make contacts in each country. Almost all European countries allow duty-free entry for handcrafts and this is standardised within E.E.C. countries so that the same form is suitable for each one.

Letters and price lists in the English language are generally acceptable when doing business in most European countries.

Addresses for the European Market

United Kingdom

Commercial Enterprises

Frida Craft Stores Ltd  
111 Long Acre  
London WC2 Phone 01 836 5054

Frida stands for the Fund for the Research and Investment for the Development of Africa but it does not confine its activities to Africa and has already bought small orders from certain Pacific countries. As well as being involved in retailing Frida wholesale to other retailers and the eventual selling price to the public can be up to four times the free on board (F.O.B.) price. As such they would probably be more interested in the cheaper types of baskets including those being produced by the proposed basketry unit.

Liberty and Co Ltd  
Regent Street  
London W1R 6AH Phone 01 734 1234

Although originally a fabric store this shop now stocks handcrafts though most of their stocks come from China, the Philippines and Taiwan. However, their buyer, when interviewed in 1981 in connection with Island Craft Exports (see bibliography), was very interested in new sources of supply. She was particularly interested in items which would be distinctive and easily distinguishable from mass import items from the Philippines and China. In this respect she expressed an interest in bukaware baskets from Papua New Guinea which would be basically similar to the ones produced in the Solomon Islands. In fact as we have seen buka baskets from the Solomon Islands are being exported to Papua

New Guinea. Since Liberty would be in a position to buy directly from the Marketing Agency mark up should not be excessive.

Habasco International Ltd  
Stafford Mills  
Milnsbridge  
Huddersfield HD3 4NB Phone 0484 642115

This company is a specialist importer of basketware from many places throughout the world, including China, Poland, the Philippines, Romania, Taiwan, Hungary and Vietnam. They do not have a retail outlet but sell wholesale and on a cash and carry basis. While it is unlikely that they would be interested in buka baskets, they might well be interested in cheaper baskets (loyacane and coconut leaf) and would also be an ideal source of orders for baskets produced in the proposed basketry unit. Since the company is large it might insist on a minimum order which might be difficult to meet.

Goods and Chattels  
57 Neale Street  
London WC2H 9PU Phone 01 240 5357

This is a large company which would more than likely be interested only in cheaper baskets which could be supplied in quantity. They would be quite interested in plant pot holders.

Opal Crafts  
968 North Circular Road  
London NW2

This company is a specialist importer of more unusual basketry items and imports from Kenya, Bangladesh, and the U.S.A. as well as from European Countries. They wholesale to various retail outlets throughout the U.K.

The Old Basket Supply  
Arch 868 Crucifix Lane  
Barnham Street  
London SE1 Phone 01 403 3171

A cash and carry trading company specialising in basketware.

Alternative Marketing Organisations. (AMOs)

Global Village Crafts  
South Petherton  
Somerset Phone 0460 40191

This organisation, which began as an effort to create jobs in developing countries, imports handmade articles from twenty countries in the developing world and is interested in expanding its product range.

Traidcraft Ltd  
India House  
Carlisle House  
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6TY Phone 0632 22714

Traidcraft buy a wide range of handicrafts including baskets, plant pot holders and tablemats as well as some commodities such as tea and coffee. It comprises a marketing company, concerned with direct action in the commercial world, owned by a non-profit making Trust engaged in educational and informative work. It is supported by and accountable to people of all denominations who believe that redressing economic injustices in the world is part of their responsibilities.

They propose to test market sample products through a panel of 50 experts in selling crafts and give advice on the technical quality of the crafts. A "library" of useful contacts including sources of technical and financial aid and general information for the use of producers will be built up to provide a further link as well as a quarterly newsletter sent to the various producer groups to keep them in touch.

They will buy suitable handicrafts from groups who satisfy some or all of the following criteria:

1. Organised for the benefit of their members
2. Concerned for the personal welfare of the producers
3. Paying wages and providing working conditions which are at least the average available in the locality
4. Making products which are now or potentially viable commercially
5. Paying no more than a reasonable service fee to agents (if any are involved)

Tearcraft Ltd  
Carliol Square  
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 6UF

This is a commercial company owned by The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund (TEAR), an international relief and development agency run and supported by Christians in the U.K. It prefers to buy from groups that it has visited and needs to have full details of the structure of the group, the number and background of the workers, how the group is funded, other agencies involved, types of goods produced, production rate and capacity, F.O.B. prices and desired method of payment. There must be involvement by Christians in the producing group.

It has a wholesale and mail order business and is interested in baskets.

Oxfam Bridge  
274 Murdock Road  
Bicester  
Oxon

Bridge is a marketing organisation for Third World Crafts to help create a better way of life for producers. The principal aims of Bridge are to provide employment, increase low incomes, buy directly from producers and increase the markets, capabilities of, and income of, Third World small industry sectors. It deals with large or small groups, experienced or inexperienced but will not deal with private commercial businesses and only rarely with Governmental Organisation. It should have no objections however in dealing with the proposed marketing organisation since its aims would be compatible with those of Bridge.

Bridge sells through approx 600 Oxfam shops in the U.K., a mail order catalogue and a small wholesale business.

Further information or advice can be obtained from:

Mr J. Nelson Lapraik, Chief Executive,  
U.K. Trade Agency for Developing Countries  
London Chamber of Commerce Building  
69 Cannon Street  
London EC4N 5AB

and the main directory of information on importers of handicrafts to the U.K. is:



The Directory of British Importers  
British Overseas Trade Board  
1 Victoria Street  
London SW1

Other European Countries

Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)

Dritte-Welt GMBH  
Sutthausen Str. 50/52  
P O Box 1661  
D-4500  
Osnabruck  
Federal Republic of Germany

This is the oldest of the AMOs in Germany and is registered as a charity. Its shareholders receive no return on investment nor do they participate in profits which are used to support projects in the poorer countries of the world. About 70% of its imports come from producers co-operatives, community development projects or non profit making organisations. The rest come from privately owned companies subject to their workers not being exploited.

Aktion Partnerschaft  
Dritte Welt  
Lessingstr 6  
7552 Durmersheim  
Federal Republic of Germany

This is an action group of teachers, students, housewives and craftsmen who want to back self-help groups in developing countries and to inform the public in Germany about injustices that exist in world trade. The criteria for choosing products are:

quality

saleability and promotability

whether they can be used as examples to indicate to Germans certain problems or successes of developing countries. It likes to have reliable information about the producers before buying from groups which it has not visited.

For more addresses and advice about exporting to Germany contact:

The Head of Department  
Federal Office of Foreign Trade Information (B.F.A.I.)  
Blaubach 13  
5 Cologne  
Federal Republic of Germany

Denmark

Kunstcentret Vejlegaard  
Frederiksborgvej 447  
Vejlegaard  
4000 Roskilde  
Denmark

This is a gallery near Copenhagen which specialises in handcrafts from developing countries. The company imports all the products directly and might also be in a position to wholesale to other shops in Germany, France and Scandinavia.

For more addresses and advice on exporting to Denmark contact:

Grossene Societet  
Chamber of Commerce  
Boersen (Royal Exchange)  
DK 1217  
Copenhagen  
Denmark

Norway

Samarbeidsprosjektet van Varden - Alternativ Handel  
Bispegata 8  
P O Box 3264  
7001 Trondheim  
Norway

This is a small voluntary organisation which buys quality products, either traditional arts and crafts or utilitarian articles, made of local raw materials from recognised co-operatives or small producer groups working in accordance with co-operative ideas. It would like to receive information about all kinds of handicrafts of traditional make and design from any developing country - the choice of producer being more important than the choice of country.

The address of the Norwegian Import Promotion Office for products

from developing countries is:

N.O.R.I.M.P.O.D.  
c/o The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Commerce  
P O Box 8147  
Oslo 1  
Norway

The Netherlands

Stichting Wereldhandel  
(World Trade Foundation)  
P O Box 25  
6460 AA Kerkrade  
The Netherlands

This is the trading company of the S O S Foundation with which it is very closely linked. S O S is an organisation that helps developing countries by raising funds which are used to finance projects which are likely to become self-supporting. Many of these projects are production centres which experienced problems due to an unstable market and as a result, The World Trade Foundation was set up to help with marketing.

They prefer to handle products for which there is also a local demand and buys mostly handicrafts, textiles and commodities such as tea and coffee. Before buying from a new group the World Trade Foundation first sends out a questionnaire which asks for details of the history of the project, its geographical location, its organisational structure, the people who work on the project and the money they earn as well as details about the products themselves.

The address of the Netherlands Centre for the promotion of imports from developing countries is:

C.B.I.  
Beursplein 37  
P O Box 30009  
3001 Da Rotterdam  
The Netherlands.

They should be able to supply names of handicraft importers in the Netherlands.

Sweden

"Sackeus"  
Swedish Free Church Aid  
Alvsjo Gardsvag 3  
12530 Alvsjo  
Sweden

Like most other AMOs Sackeus need details of the producer group including who is employed, wages received relative to the average wage in the country and how the profits, if any, are distributed. It prefers to visit groups that it buys from. It already buys handicrafts from Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Colombia, Kenya, Tanzania and Chile.

Information about other outlets in Sweden may be had from:

The Swedish Import Promotion Office for Products from Developing Countries (IMPOD)  
Norrmalmstorg 1  
P O Box 7508  
Stockholm 10392  
Sweden

France

Association Artisans Du Monde  
20 Rue Rochechouart  
75009 Paris  
France

This association imports handicrafts from various groups in Third World countries, particularly from co-operative groups and political refugees.

For further contacts in France, write to:

The Office for Foreign Exports  
Centre Francais du Commerce Exterieur  
10 Avenue d'lens  
75783 Paris Cedex 16  
France

Ireland

Concern  
1 Upper Camden Street  
Dublin 1  
Ireland

An Irish AMO and relief agency which in common with other AMOs likes to obtain details of the structures of the exporting group. It sells mostly through retail outlets and buys handicrafts from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Thailand and Pakistan as well as from various countries in South America.

Other import promotion offices in Europe include:

Belgische Dienst voor de Buitenlandse Handel  
Dienst Import vanuit Ontwikkelingslanden  
World Trade Centre  
Emile Jacqmainlaan 162  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

Department of Foreign Trade Promotion  
Office Suisse d'Expansion Commerciale  
Avenue de l'Avant - poste 4  
1001 Lausanne  
Switzerland

The Director of the Development Co-operation Programme (PRODEC)  
The Helsinki School of Economics  
Runeberginkatu 22-24  
00100 Helsinki 10  
Finland

Addresses for the Australian and New Zealand Markets

These are obvious markets for Solomon Islands handicrafts but neither market is large. Despite Australia's vast size, its population is less than 15 million and as such is not likely to import a large quantity of basketware. The market in New Zealand is even smaller. On the other hand communication between these countries and the Solomon Islands are good and postal charges are less than those to Europe or U.S.A.

Duty free access for handicrafts is available through the Spartecca agreement and handicrafts that qualify for duty free access are also exempt from sales tax in New Zealand.

Australia

Radiant Imports  
20B Edward Street  
Summer Hill  
Sydney Phone 02799 2247

Direct importers of a large range of basketware and cane products.  
This company wholesales to other retailers in Australia.

Baskets With Love  
401 New South Head Road  
Double Bay  
Sydney Phone 02 327 2735

A retail outlet specialising in baskets which are imported from  
many parts of the world.

Della's Cane Imports  
Birkenhead Point Shopping Centre  
Sydney Phone 02 816 6655

They have five retail outlets in New South Wales

Betty Hipwell Cottage Industries Ltd  
266 Yarra St  
Windyte  
Melbourne  
Australia Phone 03 844 3435

Importers and wholesalers of a wide range of basketware for  
retailers and also for florists and for packaging use.

Trade Action Pty Ltd  
1100 High Street  
Armadale  
Victoria 3143  
Australia

This organisation buys handcrafts and other handmade goods,  
sometimes to its own specific design or market needs, with a view  
to generating employment in developing countries. They also like  
to deal with suppliers who are experienced in documentation and  
export procedures so assurances in this regard should be given  
when applying as well as the amount that could be supplied monthly  
and of course photographs and price lists. It sells both wholesale  
to specialist shops and department stores and retail through its  
own shops.

Trading Partners (Aust) Ltd  
39 Pymont Street  
Pymont 2009  
Australia

This is a non-profit making import and wholesale operation established in 1977 by the Australian Council of Churches, Australian Catholic Relief, St Vincent De Paul Society, Community Aid Abroad and the Uniting Church Commission for World Mission to import and wholesale handicrafts from small producers with few or no other means of selling their craft. It buys mainly through mission and project personnel and other organisations assisting small producers and does not deal with agents who add commission to the producer's price. As with other AMOs it requires details of the producer groups in addition to the normal business requirements of price lists and product details.

Responsibility for import promotion in Australia lies with:

The Market Advisory and Preferences Section  
Department of Trade and Resources  
Canberra  
Australia 2900

New Zealand

Trade Aid  
14 Orari Street  
P O Box 18620  
Christchurch  
New Zealand

Trade Aid is a non profit making importer which aims to promote trade between New Zealand and the developing countries. They buy from developing countries in many parts of the world but buy about 15% of their stock from Pacific countries. Basketware (from many countries) comprises 30% of total stock. They sell through 24 affiliated third world shops.

Andrew Richards Ltd  
P O Box 1090  
Gisborne  
New Zealand

Importers of handicrafts including basketware who would be interested in dealing with self help groups in developing countries in the Pacific region.

The Museum Craft Shop  
Auckland Institute and Museum  
Private Bag  
Auckland  
New Zealand

This shop has already expressed interest in Solomon Islands handcrafts and might consider running and exhibition.

Further information on exporting to New Zealand may be obtained from:

The Executive Officer  
The Developing Countries Liaison Unit  
Dept of Trade and Industry  
Private Bag  
Wellington  
New Zealand



Annex No. 3

Suggested Quality Control Standards

Bukaware

Collector's Quality or Excellent Quality

Shaping must be perfect. designs must be perfectly executed. Handles on shoppers/hand baskets must be well shaped with no twisting. Lids, where present, should fit easily. Consideration could also be given to incorporating the plaiting finish seen on some baskets at the handles and the top into the quality control for this standard. (See photograph No. 8). I have not made a definite recommendation on this as it might be a tradition in some villages only.

Good Quality

Some small tolerances could be allowed in shaping, for instance some slight unevenness in the sides of the basket could be allowed or a slight twist on the handle of a shopping basket - it is difficult to get these absolutely straight. Lids should fit fairly easily. Some irregularity in designs could be allowed but the basket should have no obvious defects. Most baskets I saw would fit into this category.

Standard Quality

Baskets of saleable quality which did not qualify for the above standard.

Loya Cane Ware

Excellent

Rim perfectly round, cane perfectly clean and the general shaping of the basket to be flawless.

Good

Some irregularity in the rim allowed - it it would not have to be perfectly circular but should have no obvious kinks. Some slight irregularity of shaping allowed.

Any baskets which are obviously out of shape, either at the rim or in the body of the basket, or baskets which are badly mottled on the inside, i.e. when mould has attacked the split canes, should not be accepted.

Quality standards for other basketware would include attention to shaping, tightness of weaving and standardisation of sizes and design.

Annex No. 4

Some Proposed Designs for the Basketry Unit and Costings on these Designs.

1. Frame baskets woven with round cane approximately 4-7mm in diameter; ribs and the rim to be from thick cane 18-20mm in diameter.

Shape: round, size approximately 40cm diameter, simple gap handles.

Cost including freight (C.I.F.) price:

1 large rattan stick	S.I.\$0.15
Weaving cane	S.I.\$0.60
Time approximately 2.5 hours @ S.I.\$1.50 per hour.	
I am costing time at approx S.I.\$1.00 per hour labour and S.I.\$0.50 to cover workshop overheads and unproductive time	S.I.\$3.75
	-----
	S.I.\$4.50
Agency Commission @ 25%	S.I.\$1.12
	-----
	S.I.\$5.62
Approx postage cost based on 10 for a 5kg parcel (all postage costs are based on Zone 5 charges (Europe) but include 15% discount for commodity rate)	S.I.\$1.20
	-----
Total C.I.F price	S.I.\$6.82
	U.S.\$3.40

Comments: This should be commercially acceptable even to mass market importers.

2. Nest of 3 strong, handled baskets for heavy duty use; log baskets or strong plant pot holders.

Shape: round, bases 28cm, 33cm, and 38cm  
Uprights of whole cane 8-10mm in diameter, weaving in split cane.

C.I.F. price details

Cane	S.I.\$4.00
Labour 8 hours @ S.I.\$1.50	S.I.\$12.00
	-----
Nest ex workshop	S.I.\$16.00
Agency Commission @ 25%	S.I.\$4.00
	-----
	S.I.\$20.00
Approx postage on 3	S.I.\$13.10
	-----
	S.I.\$33.10
	U.S.\$15.05

Comments: Because of the higher postage costs associated with these baskets they would be less attractive to importers but should still have a distinct price advantage over Polish baskets with which they would be competing on the European market. The American market for such baskets is quite large. They are sold as plant pot holders there and the baskets should have a definite price advantage over similar quality baskets on this market.

3. Oval Shopper/hand basket

An oval basket approximately 30cm long at the base. Uprights of 7-8mm cane, weavers could be of split cane or thin cane of 4mm. Roped handle of 4mm cane on a stout handle bow.

C.I.F. price per basket

Cane	S.I.\$1.00
Labour costs 2 hours @ S.I.\$1.50	S.I.\$3.00
	-----
ex workshop	S.I.\$4.00
Agency commission @ 25%	S.I.\$1.00
	-----
	S.I.\$5.00
Postage (4 in a 3kg parcel)	S.I.\$2.10
	-----
	S.I.\$7.10
	U.S.\$3.05

Comments: Should sell fairly easily at this price.

4. Simple plant pot holder

Round canes for uprights, split cane for weaving, trac border.

C.I.F. price per basket

Cane S.I.\$0.30

Labour cost S.I.\$0.75

-----

S.I.\$1.05

Agency commission @ 25%

S.I.\$0.27

-----

S.I.\$1.32

Postage

S.I.\$0.80

-----

C.I.F. price

S.I.\$2.12

U.S.\$1.06

Comments: Should sell easily at this price. These baskets would be easy to make and would also use up short lengths of cane.

5. Other suggested designs

Fitted round baskets;

Various shapes low carrying baskets, oval and round

Some square and rectangular baskets should also be made and if the corners are kept soft and the uprights fairly light it should not be too difficult to manipulate the cane around the corners. I

would also suggest making the frame baskets in many sizes.

Although these were originally European baskets they have been made in the U.S.A. and the Carribean and although not traditional to the Solomon Islands or South Pacific could be quickly learned.

Annex No. 5

Job Specification for Basketmaker

**Job Title:** Basketmaker responsible for training apprentices and running a production unit.

**Job Duration:** One year.

**Job Location:** Honiara, Solomon Islands with approximately nine three day workshops at Auki, Malaita Province.

**Job Description:** The job entails the training of up to twenty four apprentices in stake and strand basketry. The working material will be cane similar in type to those commercially sold as "Kubu" and "Palembang".

The basketmaker will be required to set up a workshop and train apprentices to work in it, to look after the day to day running of the workshop including estimating material to be soaked, organising the work and continued training with an emphasis on quality and standardisation. The aim is to have the workshop running as a production unit by the time the basketmaker's contract has expired. He or she will also be expected to have trained someone to look after the running of the workshop by this time. In the early months the basketmaker will also be required to produce some high quality baskets which can be used to secure orders for the unit.

Finally the basketmaker will also be responsible for upgrading the skills of a group of basketmakers already familiar with stake and strand techniques. These are working with split cane and are not familiar with bordering, waling etc. but have shown themselves very keen and quick to learn at a trial workshop. It is envisaged that this training would be carried out by holding nine 3 day workshops in Auki, Malaita Province.

**Job Qualifications:** Ideally the person employed should be making baskets commercially and must be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of stake and strand work including bordering, fitting, scalloming, waling etc. Previous experience in working cane (not centre cane) would be an advantage. It would also be desirable that the person chosen for this position should have some experience in training apprentices.

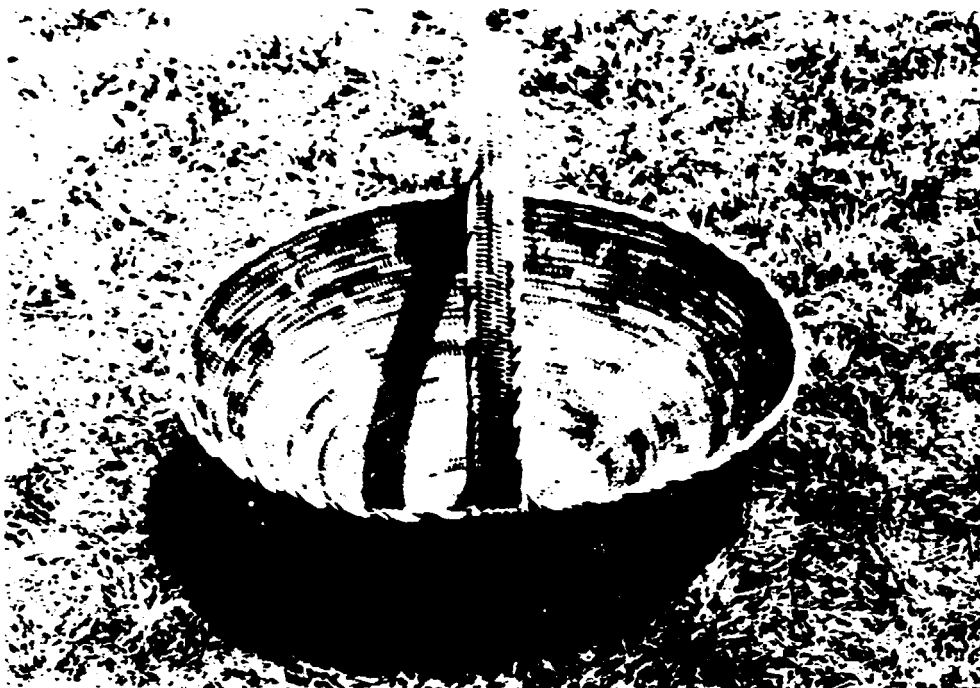
**Language:** English, though it would be necessary to learn some Pidgin English to facilitate communication.



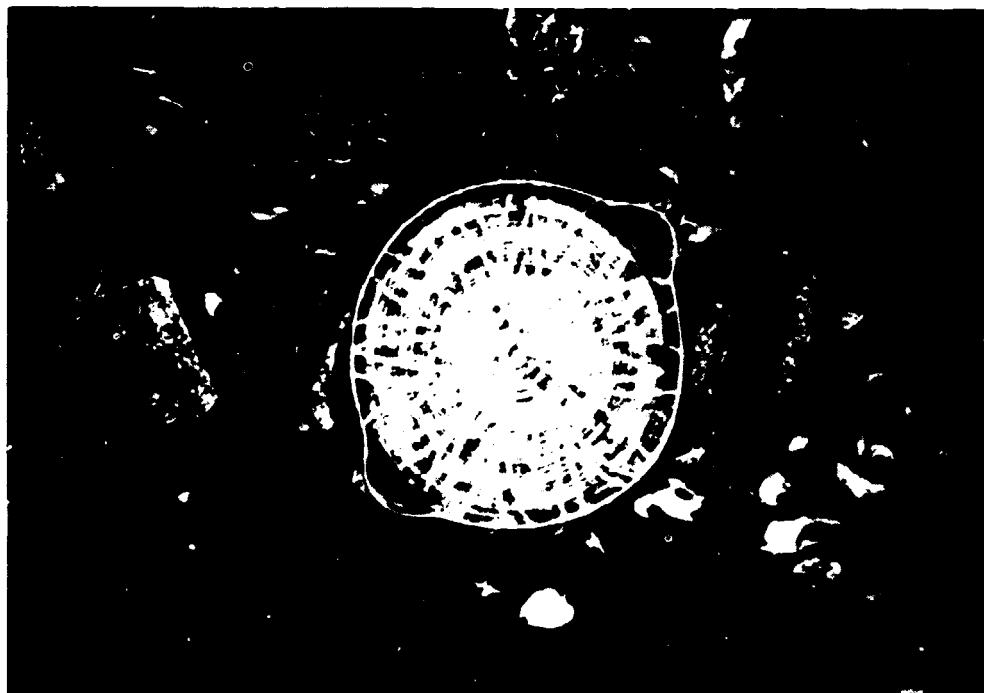
PHOTOGRAPH NO 1. LIDDED BUKA BASKETS. These were photographed by Roy Scott in 1977. The basket in the background has a hinged handle which is superior in technique to the rigid handle on the basket in the foreground.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 2. LIDDED BUKA BASKET. Suitable as a workbasket. Although most lidded baskets made at present have handles many would be very acceptable without them.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 3. BUKA SHOPPING HAND BASKET. The handle and rim are finished very well.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 4. BUKA TRAY OR PLATTER.





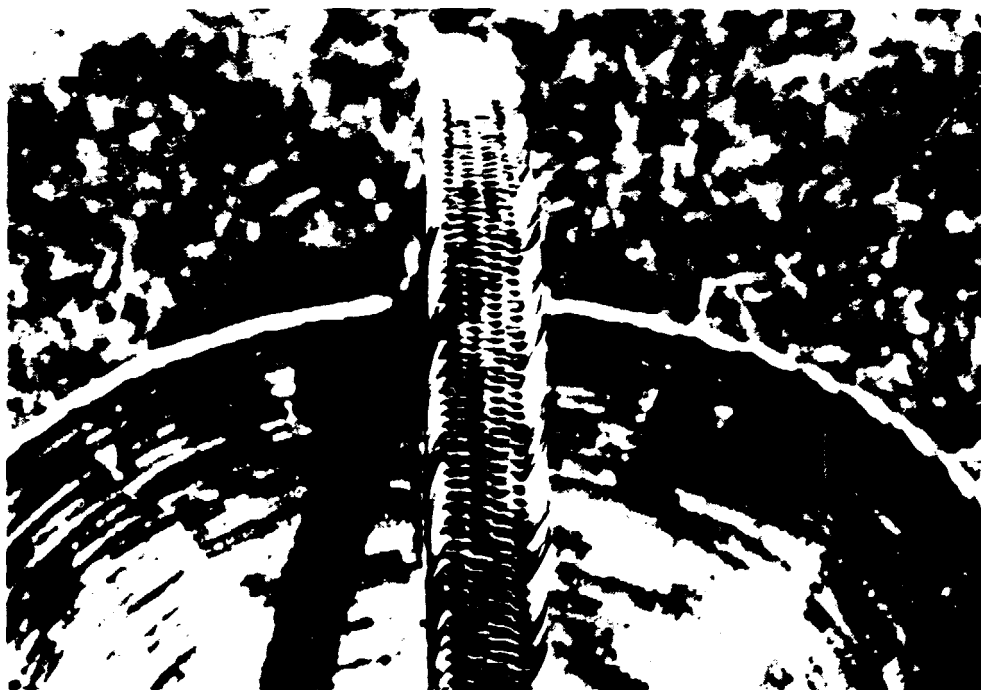
PHOTOGRAPH NO 5. Two ROUND BUKA BASKETS.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 6. Detail of an OVAL BUKA BASKET.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 7. Two SHOPPING BASKETS, one a BUKA basket, the other a LOYACANE basket. The Loyacane basket (on the right hand side has a band of colour half way up the side).



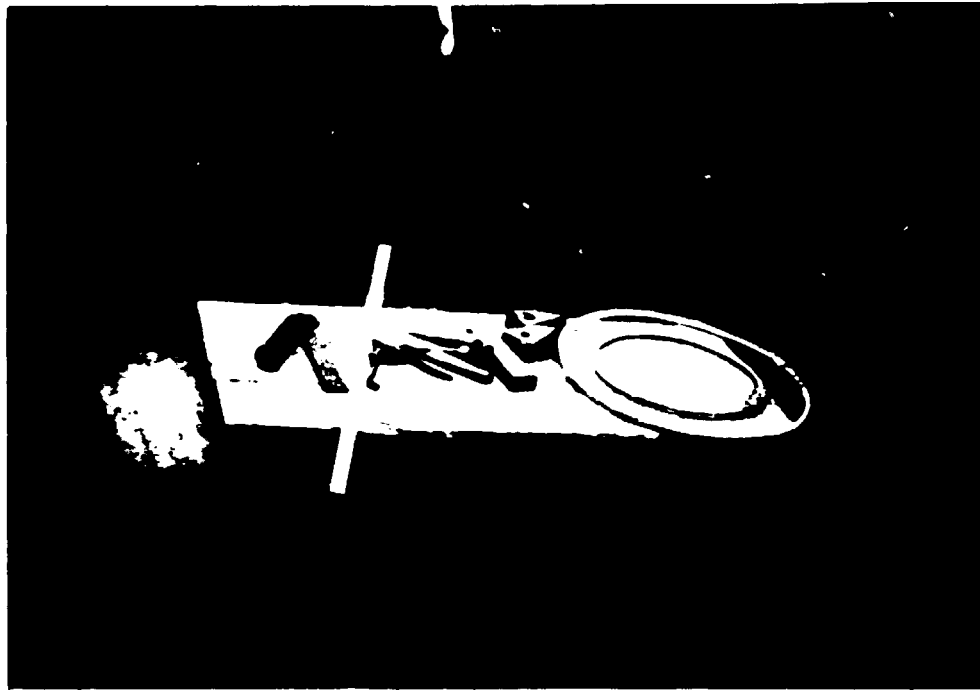
PHOTOGRAPH NO 8. Detail of the exceptionally fine finishing found on some BUKA BASKETS.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 9. LOYACANE LINEN BASKET. The shaping is very good but the arched handle would probably need to be replaced by two small handles.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 10. A group of basketmakers from SAOFURA village, Malaita Province who attended a workshop on stake and strand basketry.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 11. A typical tool kit for stake and strand basketry. The tools on the lab-board are from left greasing container, rapping iron, ruler, shears, knife, bodkin, trimming knife, sharpening stone, weights to hold the basket on the board and hoops of various sizes. Details of tools and their uses will be found in Chapter IV.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 12. Two baskets in stake and strand technique made by LOYACANE basketmakers from Malaita Province during a two day workshop held to gauge their reaction to these techniques.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 13. Partly made basket in stake and strand technique using cane from the Solomon Islands.



PHOTOGRAPH NO 14. Samples of baskets which could be produced, using Solomon Islands cane, by the proposed basketry unit.



No. 14 Polynesian bags in various patterns

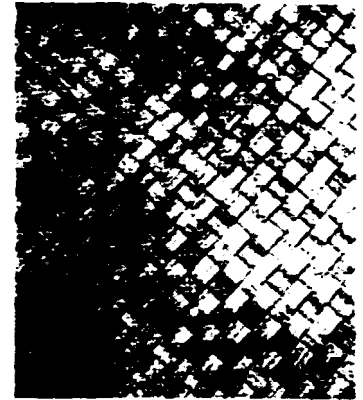
Bark fibre bags



No. 15



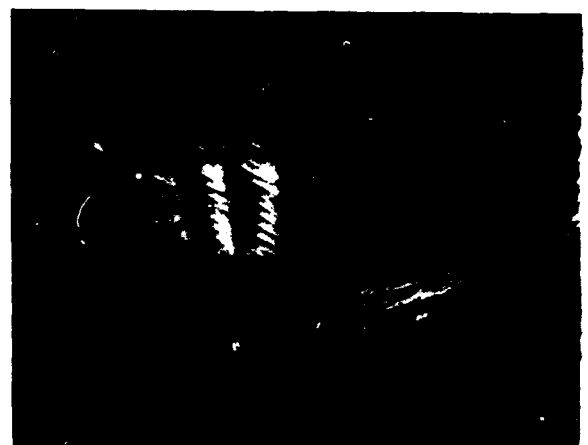
No. 16 Fine patterned pandanus mat



Plain pandanus mat, large weave



No. 17 Woven coconut-leaf hats



No. 18 Coconut-leaf baskets

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A Victor Leggo & Co. Pty. Ltd  
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