



## OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

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### **Court Ruling: Refused NRBT Application To Strike Out ACC Claim**

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the Board of Directors of the National Reserve Bank of Tonga (NRBT) are currently involved in litigation. On 20 May 2025, the NRBT submitted Application to strike out the ACC's Statement of Claim or in the alternative parts of it concerning the extent of the ACC's powers according to the provisions of the ACC Act.

The NRBT challenges the proceedings on the basis that the ACC had no power to have documents produced under coercion on the understanding that they were required for an investigation by the ACC when the ACC without warning decided to seek judicial review using the documents produced by coercion.

On 30 June 2025 the Supreme Court issued a ruling where it refused the NRBT application.

The refusal of the application is the first time that there has been any decision under the Anti-Corruption Commissioner Act by any Court in Tonga. The NRBT as it is entitled to, will seek leave to appeal the decision to the Court of Appeal of Tonga.

#### ***Background to the Court Proceedings***

*The ACC brought a Judicial Review against the NRBT regarding a decision to pay out an award to the Bank's staff in recognition of their work and commitment, in marking the Bank's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 2024. This award of \$5,000 for each staff of the Bank, regardless of rank, did not include the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors' decision was confirmed by legal counsel.*

**For more information**, contact the National Reserve Bank of Tonga on (+676 24057) or email: [nrbt@reservebank.to](mailto:nrbt@reservebank.to), [tmoeaki@reservebank.to](mailto:tmoeaki@reservebank.to) | website: <http://www.reservebank.to>

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