LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

Practice Direction 1 of 2024

Closing Submissions and Court Matters

1. Once the evidence in a case has concluded, lawyers are expected to present their closing submissions immediately. Counsel should undertake to craft their closing submissions as the case is proceeding, rather than relying on lengthy extensions for preparation.

2. This marks a shift from the usual practice where lawyers were typically granted weeks for preparation. Moving forward, this will be the expected practice in all cases, with adjournments only granted in exceptional circumstances, typically not exceeding one day.

3. The Crown Prosecution is required to ensure that all relevant documents are translated into English for cases committed from the Magistrates' Court to the Supreme Court. **The relevant documents include those contained in the trial booklet prepared by the Crown Prosecution, (i.e. witness statements and interviews).**

4. The complete file, including all translated documents, must be lodged with the Supreme Court Registry **and any evidence relied on (i.e. witness statements and interviews) and referred to in the trial booklet must be translated.**

5. It is the duty of counsel to translate documents into Tongan for their clients when requested. The court will not translate documents for clients; this responsibility falls to the counsel representing them.

6. This Practice Direction shall take effect from 1 November 2024.

Malcolm Leslie Bishop KC

Lord Chief Justice of the Kingdom of Tonga

Nuku'alofa

21 October 2024

Supreme Court, Land Court, Court of Appeal P.O. Box 11, Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu, Kingdom of Tonga
Email: malcolmbishop@justice.gov.to
Tel: +676 7400 834 PA: 7400 838 Registrar: 7400832
www.justice.gov.to/supreme-court