



## OFFICE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

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[www.opaguam.org](http://www.opaguam.org)

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**January 4, 2021**

### **Public Auditor Inauguration, 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Audit Plan Released**

*7<sup>th</sup> Inauguration for Elected Public Auditor*

Hagåtña, Guam – On Monday, January 4, 2021 at 3:00 pm, Benjamin J.F. Cruz will be sworn-in to a new four-year term as our island’s elected Public Auditor. Chief Justice F. Phillip Carbullido will administer the oath of office at the Guam Judicial Center. Due to the pandemic restrictions, the inauguration will be very brief with little to no fanfare.

Prior to the inauguration, Public Auditor Cruz has publicly released the 2020 annual report and 2021 annual audit plan. The 2020 annual report covers the activities of the Guam Office of Public Accountability and the 2021 annual audit plan outlines the audits to be undertaken in the first year of his new term.

The following is the Public Auditor’s remarks concerning the inauguration, annual report, and annual audit plan.

*Un Dangkolo Na Si Yu’os Ma’åse for electing me to a second term as your Public Auditor. Your continued trust and confidence in me is truly humbling and I consider it a tremendous honor to serve the people of Guam.*

*In my third annual report as Guam’s elected Public Auditor, 2020 was perhaps the most challenging year our island has faced with the many uncertainties surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. With the declaration of a state of emergency three months into the year, non-essential services and schools closed, large gatherings prohibited, and social distancing mandated, the work of the Guam Office of Public Accountability continued.*

*During 2020 and in completing the remainder of this term, we issued nine performance audits, had oversight over 25 financial audits, and administered nine procurement appeals. These audits identified over \$2 million (M) in financial impact and represented over \$202M in procurement value for the appeals. Our office also updated the audit contracts for two Government of Guam agencies, with a specific provision to issue financial audits no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> after the fiscal year ends.*

*Our budget for the last two years was \$1.25M for fiscal year (FY) 2020 and \$1.26 M for FY 2019, providing funding for a staff of 13. As of the writing of this report, our staff complement stands at 11, including the Public Auditor. We are working to recruit accountability auditors to increase our productivity and issue more audits.*



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*Our office has received numerous requests for audits that we have had to perform triage. We have prioritized those requests that will have a significant and immediate impact. Along with the ongoing audits from 2020, our office has issued its 2021 Annual Audit Plan that outlines the activities our office will engage in. In my second term, our goal is to be proactive and help the Government of Guam become more effective and efficient.*

*Government Auditing Standards require that audit agencies be reviewed every three years to assure compliance with the professional standards and legal requirements. OPA's next peer review will cover performance audits issued in calendar year 2017 to 2019. Due to the pandemic, our office has had to postpone our scheduled peer review in 2020. We requested for and received an extension with the US Government Accountability Office and scheduled our peer review for 2021.*

*Finally, my uncontested re-election would not have been possible were it not for the hardworking and dedicated staff whose professionalism, commitment, and integrity helped move the office forward, despite the circumstances. As an organization, we are blessed to have a group of professionals that continue to uphold the vision of auditing for good governance. The OPA continues to be a watchdog over government spending and promote accountability and transparency in the Government of Guam.*

Visit our website at [www.opaguam.org](http://www.opaguam.org) to download the annual report and annual audit plan.

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