



# Nauru Bulletin

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## Leaders urge all to get COVID vaccine

**Adult population estimates exceeded but vaccine hesitancy looms**

The COVID-19 vaccination team administered 7,457 first doses, pushing projected population numbers.

The initial deadline for the first shot set at 7 May recorded 7,392, but a steady flow of late comers up to 21 May, recorded another 65 doses being administered.

An initial deadline of 7 May was given to allow an eight week interval between dose one and two.

But with the expiry date of the first batch of vaccine not until the end of May, continued vaccinations were accepted.

The heads of the three arms of Government say getting vaccinated is important to further protect Nauru.

President Lionel Aingimea, Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen and Chief Justice Daniel Fatiaki, and their spouses are among the first to receive the first dose of the COVAX AstraZeneca vaccine on launch day, 9 April.

President Aingimea says, with a vaccinated population, the government hopes to be able to set up travel bubbles with Nauru Airlines' usual destinations.



*President Aingimea gets the first COVID vaccine shot, administered by Health Minister Dageago*

This is especially so for Australia being an important destination for Nauru for medical referrals and education purposes.

The President hopes that Australia's easing of border restriction would be a reality closer to when Nauru is expected to have fully vaccinated its population around mid-July.

Speaker Stephen says vaccination is important for "family," but as the president of the Nauru Olympic Committee, he says "athletes and officials will need to get

vaccinated to be able to participate," at events and especially at the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.

"Even now with potential athletes, who can qualify for the Tokyo Olympic Games, are also getting vaccinated," the Speaker said.

Chief Justice Fatiaki says "it's an important day for Nauru" and strongly recommends that everyone who has the opportunity - to get vaccinated.

"The courts overseas where COVID has been in full swing have to either close or have limited court sitting and they're not been able to open to the public."

While Nauru's Courts have not been subject to COVID distancing measures, the Chief Justice still urges everyone to get vaccinated to keep COVID out of Nauru and the courts.

"It's a very important part of the law that we should be open and transparent to the public. So, open court is fundamental to any democracy.

"Nauru is very privileged in that sense," the CJ said.

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## Commemorating 53 years of the Constitution

Constitution Day is celebrated each year on 17 May with a national athletics carnival. However, it is a day which commemorates the formation of the Constitution of Nauru – the supreme law of the land.

The Constitution was enforced on 31 January 1968, but alterations were made to it by the Constitutional Review Committee on 17 May that same year, hence is the date recognised as Constitution Day.

The foreword of the Constitution of Nauru reads:

*Whereas we the people of Nauru acknowledge God as the almighty and everlasting Lord and the giver of all good things:*

*And Whereas we humbly place ourselves under the protection of His good providence and seek His blessing upon ourselves and upon our lives:*

*And Whereas we have declared that Nauru shall be a republic:*

*And Whereas a Constitutional Convention representing us has prepared a constitution for Nauru:*

*Now Therefore we the people of Nauru in our Constitutional Convention this twenty-ninth day of January, One thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight, do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution to come into force on the thirty-first day of January, One thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight.*

A constitution is the backbone to independence, and for Nauru, it meant breaking away from its administrators – the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

The first Cabinet took office on 17 May 1968, Constitution Day, with Hammer DeRoburt as President and Cabinet Ministers Detsimea Audoa, Austin Bernicke, Ategan Bop and Buraro Detudamo. Itubwa Amram served as the first speaker for the Parliament of Nauru from 31 January 1968 •

## Leaders urge all to get COVID vaccine

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In a COVID-19 public update, President Aingimea warns about the rise of infodemic during the pandemic.

Infodemic is described as an overabundance of information - good or bad - that makes it difficult for people to make decisions for their health; and undermines the emergency responses and extends the pandemic.

The President warns about the damaging effect that misinformation can cause.

The warning is in line with the advice of the World Health Organisation Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, that “we’re not just fighting a pandemic; we’re fighting an infodemic.”

The President encourages the public to listen to reliable sources of information regarding the coronavirus and the vaccine, rather than social media discussions, which tend to be sources of misinformation and disinformation.

The health vaccination team administered 168 doses of the COVAX AstraZeneca vaccine on launch day, 9 April.

Invitations were sent to 106 people to take their first dose on launch day, with additional walk-ins willing to get ahead and get immunised.

By the end of the first week, 1,266 (20 per cent) adults received their first shot, equating to 18.6 per cent of the target population.

This result demonstrates the high level of confidence people have in getting their shot and being protected against COVID-19.

The first week of the COVID vaccine program (9 April and 12-16 April) was targeting people in Phase 1, which includes airline staff, border control, quarantine workers including at the sites, health department, the Nauru Police Force, police protective services, community liaison officers (CLO), teachers, elderly and most vulnerable including dialysis patients and others with chronic medical conditions.

From week two, a vaccine schedule by district was followed, for the general public including workplaces and other groups to ensure everyone was covered.

Up to 350 people a day were scheduled to take their first shot, with varying numbers turning up.

Seventy-five per cent was achieved at the start of week three, with Monday 3 May recording 776 (11 per cent) taking their first dose – the highest number of doses administered in one day since the start of the vaccine roll out.

While the target is to deliver 7,000 doses for the first shot, there was capacity to deliver 8,500 doses.

Nauru is not only fortunate to be able to roll out its COVID vaccination program ahead of most countries, but it has received the full 100 per cent doses required to give every adult their two recommended doses of the vaccine.

With Nauru maintaining regular shipments, cargo and passenger flights to Brisbane, the likelihood of COVID-19 entering Nauru remains a possibility.

The Government is direct in its appeal to all eligible adults on Nauru, 18 years and over, to get vaccinated.

With the global demand for vaccines, the government allocated funds to secure procurement of vaccines very early on.

The second dose will be rolled out from mid-June to mid-July •

## Sole citizenship awarded for 2021

A humble citizenship ceremony welcomed Meleoni Uera to the Nauruan family, 11 May.

Mrs Uera is the newest and only recipient of Nauruan citizenship this year; it was granted on 2 July 2020.

She was awarded her citizenship certificate by President Lionel Aingimea in the Cabinet room.



*President Aingimea presents Nauruan citizenship certificate to sole recipient, Meleoni Uera*

In reading the citizenship pledge, Mrs Uera pledges, “under God”, her “loyalty to Nauru and its people, whose democratic beliefs I share, whose rights and liberties I respect, and whose laws I will uphold and obey.”

Mrs Uera is married to a Nauruan and employed as HR consultant with the Department of Chief Secretary.

Chief Justice Daniel Fatiaki presided over the ceremony, witnessed by President Aingimea, Minister for Justice Maverick Eoe, Justice secretary Jay Udit and Mrs Uera’s husband, Daleon, and their two children.

The granting of citizenship is done throughout the year but the ceremony to award certificates is held on or around Constitution day on 17 May.

Later in the week, His Excellency President Aingimea and Madam Ingrid Aingimea hosted the State Banquet in celebration of Nauru’s 53rd Constitution Day at the Meneñ Hotel, 14 May.

In his address, President Aingimea warned against an infodemic which is misinformation about COVID-19 and the vaccine; and reflects on the hardships the world is facing during this pandemic.

“Our prayers of course are with those around the world, especially here in the Pacific who have gone through these tough times.”

And turning to today’s occasion, the President said, is a day of celebration.

“We celebrate our Constitution.

“Our Constitution has guided us through the tough times and the good times. It has defined our laws.

“It tells us who we are in terms of how parliament operates. It tells how judiciary operates, how government operates; [and] what defines a Nauruan.

“It tells us about our rights and how we are to enjoy those rights.

“The enjoyment of those rights is incumbent upon everybody else making sure that they hold in high esteem, everyone else’s rights, everyone else’s health, and everyone else’s safety, that is absolutely necessary,” the President said •



## Parliament, 30 March

The Speaker of Parliament called for the sitting of the Parliament on 30 March which heard several ministerial statements and four Bills tabled.

Minister for Finance Martin Hunt presented the first statement announcing the resolution of outstanding Japanese Yen bonds held by U.S based fund manager, Firebird.

“In a negotiated settlement, Firebird has surrendered all claims, and the liability can now be considered resolved,” the Minister said.

The Minister explains the claims were recognised as a contingent liability in Nauru’s whole of government financial statements, and the government, as guarantor of RONFIN, defaulted on the bonds in the 1990s.

“Firebird held a substantial proportion of Series B and Series C bonds. In addition, they held a court awarded legal claim for payment which included an interest penalty.”

Minister Hunt says resolution of the debt was a priority under Nauru’s Debt Action Plan and brings to a close the resolution of legacy historical external debt.

“This will significantly improve the assessment of Nauru’s debt sustainability and is a critical step in enabling Nauru to access a broader range of funding options in the future,” Minister Hunt said.

Minister for People Living with Disability, Isabella Dageago says the department has been working closely with the health department to re-establish the Disability Assessment Committee (DAC) to assess requests for financial welfare assistance and disability home renovations.

The department also seeks additional funding on top of the \$50,000 provided under the health department allocations which Minister Dageago says caters for a small portion of the disability request list requirements.

The DAC also wishes to partner with the social welfare section under the Finance Department to ensure accountability of welfare expenditure.

In regards to mental health, the Minister says teens are the most susceptible.

“At a teen’s development stage, their stress tolerance is at its most vulnerable level where they may not be mentally equipped to understand the rigors of life.”

The Minister proposes that the disability department initiates discussion with education about early intervention for teenagers still in the education system.

Finance Minister Hunt presented an update of the Intergenerational Trust Fund based on the last quarterly meeting held virtually on 25 February underscoring that financial markets continue to be supported by a combination of central bank monetary policy – swamping the bank sector with funding – and fiscal activity by governments in response to COVID-19.

“The announcements of COVID vaccines and the results of the U.S general elections during the quarter, with the expectation of further U.S fiscal stimulus, also provided a boost to share markets.”

The Minister said even with the impact of COVID-19 on

## First shot roll-out, success

With a comparatively young population, over 60 per cent are adults who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Nauru’s Bureau of Statistics estimates there are 6,812 adults living in Nauru; 7,457 vaccines were administered to 21 May.

The COVID-19 vaccination team administered 7,392 first doses in the recommended first month, but a consistent flow of late comers requested vaccination in the following weeks.

The National Coronavirus Taskforce is extremely pleased with this world record result.



*Dr Bill briefing vaccine registration support staff before the launch*

Nauru is one of the few countries in the world remaining COVID free. A lot of ongoing testing has yet to detect a single case in Nauru.

With every arriving traveller, the risk of the coronavirus entering Nauru remains, and recent events in PNG, Fiji and India have shown how quickly the situation can change.

Taskforce Chairman, Dr Kieren Keke, has repeatedly warned that Nauru cannot be complacent and we need to further protect our people by getting vaccinated.

Health Minister Isabella Dageago stated in Parliament, “our prayers have been answered”.

“Nauru has been blessed with a supply of vaccine, enough to enable us to immunise 100 per cent of our adult population”.

Minister Dageago reminded the public that many countries are struggling to secure supply of the vaccine and the Government is grateful that everyone on Nauru has made the most of the opportunity given.

The Taskforce is also reviewing the Vaccine Register database to generate reports on vaccine coverage by age groups, districts, nationalities, occupation and priority target groups.

The register will also enable government to have an accurate population database.

The Taskforce continues to work with the office of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM) and the Immigration Department to ensure the accuracy of the database which will assist the work of other departments in delivering services to the people of Nauru.

Multiple vaccination centres including the Public Health centre were opened up with extended hours to accommodate work schedules for maximum coverage.

Population estimates have been projected from figures obtained in the 2019 mini census, adjusted for 2020 age groups, births and deaths.

The latest addition of nursing staff from Fiji bolstered the human resources to fully implement the rollout and support other community and workplace health visits that were running concurrently •

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financial markets and the world economy as a whole, the Fund was able to return a positive result as of 31 December 2020, with a return of 7.8 per cent for the quarter.

As of 25 February, total ITF investments exceeded \$193 million, owing primarily to a bonus contribution by the government of \$10.435 million and \$2.6 million from the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Additionally another \$2.5 million from Australia was approved on top of its initial \$1 million in May 2020.

The Nauru Government has also made budgetary provisions to prepay its 2020-21 contribution of \$5.269 million before the end of June; thus bringing the fund value to over \$200 million.

Meanwhile, the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC) is making good progress in production of rocks required for the Nauru port project while also stockpiling 5mm-dust for local building and construction and the government's housing scheme.

NRC Minister Reagan Aliklik says development work is ongoing on mined out lands on the last 1.3 hectares designated for the solar farm.

The country's dumpsite is causing some concern with the landfill producing dangerous levels of toxins and leachate, which poses a serious public health hazard for nearby residents, dumpsite workers and dangerous to the environment.

Minister Aliklik says the root of the problem is the sheer quantity of waste being generated and no segregation of the different types of rubbish.

The NRC plans to convene a meeting with stakeholders and community leaders to explain the scope of the problem and improve compliance with dumpsite rules, and a durable solution.

In regards to the higher ground initiative (HGI), there is steady progress towards the deliverables, the first of which is the completion of the review of the 1994 Land Use plan; and completion of the initial sea level rise assessment for Nauru.

The final deliverable of this work is the adaptation planning workshop to be organised by the CSIRO, and is scheduled to follow the completion of the sea level rise assessment.

Minister Aliklik says the deliverables will be useful inputs to an updated Master Land Use and Urban Development Plan for Nauru.

The Cabinet-approved HGI Political Narrative frames the HGI for Nauru's most urgent challenges as climate change, overcrowding in residential housing, and develop a more diversified economy.

The Minister says the narrative offers a vision to advance development priorities in key areas such as affordable housing, food, water, energy security, economic diversification, and cultural and environmental restoration.

Minister Dageago presented the Internal Affairs progress report firstly with the language division who has been conducting workshop on mother language with each tribe.

The Minister says this work aims to promote, preserve and protect Nauru's "unique mother language to maintain our socio-cultural identity and intangible heritage, our sustainability as a people."

The culture division works with the education department in



*NRC provides rocks required for the Nauru port project while also stockpiling 5mm-dust for local construction and the housing scheme*

regards to cultural studies while also working to document Nauru's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as part of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) to conserve and preserve Nauru's culture, tradition and heritage sites.

Youth Affairs conducted an orientation day on vocational life skills on 5 March with school drop outs and youths who were unable to go through formal schooling.

Youth Affairs is also partnering with the division of family and community services to address butane gas sniffing and marijuana use among the youth and juveniles.

Minister Aliklik then announced that primary phosphate mining has reached the final stage of depletion.

He adds that since February Ronphos exported three of five shipments of phosphate to three buyers totalling 83,000 metric tonnes.

The Minister says the target is to deliver five shipments by June which will fulfil Ronphos' financial budget goal and move on to addressing the possibility of secondary phosphate mining which will be the company's next chapter in export trading.

Ronphos has also commenced royalty payments for landowners for September and December 2020 quarters for full payout from the proceeds of the two remaining shipments.

Minister Dageago informed the House that the top five outpatient encounters in the month of March include disease and infection of the skin, respiratory and circulatory systems which calls for the heightened need to take extra precaution in maintaining hygiene practices and infection control measures – especially given the current pandemic state of the world.

With border restrictions in place, overseas medical referrals has been significantly difficult to organise with the receiving country and hospital but the embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in Nauru negotiated strenuously with Taiwan authorities and successfully arranged for the transfer of 39 Nauruan patients to Taiwan for medical treatment.

A charter flight on Nauru Airlines to Taiwan was arranged for the patients and their accompanying 21 family escorts and three medical escorts.

This was the first occasion in which this many patients have gone on medical referrals in a single flight and given the pandemic restrictions, is a remarkable achievement on the part of Ambassador Dean Wang and his Embassy.

Plans to improve and revamp the dialysis unit are in place; there

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## Parliament, 30 March

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are currently five dialysis machines in operation for 24 patients.

The Nauru Health Professional Training Institute is fine-tuning their program to commence the preliminary nursing 10-week course around May; which will continue on to a three-year diploma in nursing.

During school health visits across February and March, the health team discovered the two most compelling issues were overweight-obesity and skin problems among students.

Minister Dageago also noted the sanitation and hygiene standards in the schools were well below standard but further collaboration with the education department will be had to address this issue.

“There will be periodic school inspections at the schools and strengthened efforts to ensure that our schools are not sources of infections and diseases,” Minister Dageago said.

Meanwhile, the Food Safety and Environment team completed an island-wise restaurant inspection, resulting in a number of closures due to food safety violations and 80 per cent of retail shops inspected and substandard products removed from shelves.

Health promotion activities in the past couple months included COVID awareness and safety sessions with over 200 participants aged 5 to 17 years.

Deputy Minister for Education Richard-Hyde Menke says the average school attendance rate from the start of the academic year has surpassed the previous five years’ which averages 50-59 per cent.

The deputy minister says the increased attendances meets one of the key performance indicators as well as exceed the 2021 goal by five per cent.

The improved attendance rate comes at a time when teacher recruitment is difficult and the impact of the teacher shortage not conducive to the learning environment.

Guided by data from last national exams, there is a need to address borderline students with 300 students from years two to 10 identified for the program which will focus on literacy and numeracy.

Minister Menke adds that school bullying persists, with primary level as the most problematic.

“The forms of bullying that trend to be formally reported are of aggression and serious physical threats.

“Responses to incidents have greatly improved from increased reporting, to swift and decisive consequences of actions.

“This, however, is an issue that needs strong community and parental support,” Minister Menke said.

A recent convocation was held for Pacific members of the Commonwealth to recognise the completion of online qualifications through a partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning and the Coursera Recovery Program and member states.

The program targets displaced workers affected by COVID and offers free courses from reputable universities in the Commonwealth.

Over 70 Nauruans applied, five of whom completed at least one qualification; while a further 30 enrolled in another Commonwealth of Learning flexi-course initiative to up-skill



*Health minister says sanitation and hygiene standards in schools are below standard*

teachers for online delivery of student learning.

The Australian Pacific Technical Coalition (APTC) Certificate IV in leadership and management saw nine graduate from the Australian government-sponsored program.

Twelve secondary school teachers also commenced training with the University of New England program that is being delivered by two lecturers.

Minister Dageago advised the House of the work by the Department of Women’s and Social Development Affairs, in the progressive realisation of the rights of women and girls, children and gender equality.

Preparations in the lead up to International Women’s day in March were coupled with celebrating the ten year anniversary of the Safe House on 6 March.

The Gender Mainstreaming unit is making good progress including work on the gender policy that is expected to be completed by mid-2021.

The department is also making good progress in other areas, including preparation work for the State Report for the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the State Report for the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – due in August and November respectively.

Minister Dageago then presented the Nauru Taskforce COVID-19 annual operational report for the last 12 months since it was established.

The report highlighted the timeline since President Aingimea declared a national emergency for the management and minimisation of the impact of coronavirus in Nauru. This continues to be extended every 30 days.

Due to Nauru’s population and size, the government saw it as imperative that immediate action be taken to capture and contain the virus at the border.

The activities that ensued since March 2020 included setting up the Taskforce which is mandated by Cabinet under the National Disaster Risk Management Act (NDRM), to develop and drive a strategy that will protect Nauru’s borders from the COVID-19 virus.

The Taskforce has a supporting team of nine volunteers who extend their services on a part time basis in addition to their current core roles in their respective departments; as well as the CCC volunteers who support the Taskforce in the daily operations.

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## Parliament, 30 March

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The capture and contain strategy include strengthened border operations and improve the legal framework, quarantine requirements, COVID testing, 11 community drills with different scenarios, hospital upgrades, community awareness initiatives, health procurement and monitoring of personal protective equipment (PPE),

In the very early stages of the implementation of border restrictions, there were five quarantine breaches from April to June 2020.

The review of some rules resulted in the improvement of behaviour and adherence to quarantine residence procedures.

Minister Dageago highlighted Nauru's good fortune in having strong support from friends Taiwan, Australia, Japan, Israel and India, throughout the pandemic.

Nauru's supply of the vaccine is donated by Australia, 7,200 doses, and 10,000 doses from India.

Throughout vaccine roll-out, the health teams and the Taskforce faced criticism and hesitancy from the public.

"Fake news and misinformation are a real threat and I encourage anyone with questions or concerns to see our Health and Taskforce officials and to get your information from the experts such as WHO and UNICEF," Health Minister Dageago said.

The Minister reflected on how quickly COVID changed the landscape of Papua New Guinea, within just a couple weeks 5,000 cases were reported with 45 deaths, at the time of sitting.

"It is this sudden change in our lives that the vaccine will prevent. If we do not take our shot, if we do not get the COVID vaccine, Nauru remains threatened just like PNG."

While Nauru's capture and contain strategy is proving successful, Minister Dageago warns "the virus can reach our border on any flight, on any ship. Anyone could carry the virus to Nauru any day."

"The virus will spread in our community and many people on Nauru will get very sick, our hospital and health services can become overwhelmed and people will die."

The Minister concluded the vaccine is an answered prayer.

"Let us not ignore what God has given us."

Deputy Minister for Nauru Airlines, Asterio Appi says as the airline's operations continue to be drastically reduced due to COVID-19, has nonetheless maintained essential services to Nauru with a fortnightly passenger flight to Brisbane and a minimum of weekly freight flights.

Beyond these flights, the airline has provided repatriation charter services for Nauruans as well as a charter flight to take numerous patients for medical treatment in Taiwan.

The deputy minister says supporting these core essential services has been contract and charter work the airline has been successfully operating out of Brisbane.

He adds that while the airline operations have been affected, the impact on individual flight crew has been immense as they have had to endure more than a year of repeated quarantine, frequent COVID testing and many personal restrictions making their lives so much more difficult.

On 19 March, passenger aircraft VH-PNI suffered an engine compressor stall which the Deputy Minister Appi says is "not



*Nauru Airlines maintains a busy schedule despite COVID; pilot and engineer cadets and recruits steam ahead in their training eager to join the national airline team*

a serious problem and occurs when there is a disruption to the smooth flow of air through the engine and results in flames discharging from the engine."

The minister confirms there was no loss of engine power at any time and the aircraft landed safely without incident. The engine was subsequently replaced with a spare.

The airline has established a scholarship program to support Nauruans to become pilots and engineers.

Aoki Limen is in final year to obtain a pilot's licence, while Royce Detabene is in his first year of experience and training with the engineering section on Nauru.

Following a highly competitive application process, Jet Jeremiah, Aiue Harris and Jonah Harris, were selected as new cadets to start their scholarship this year.

Lance Harris and Daleon Uera join the airline after years of engineering and flying experience in New Zealand and Tonga respectively.

The airline has successfully converted a passenger plane to a freighter with the second conversion expected to be completed by mid-June.

As the airline is reviewing the purchase of two new generation aircraft, it's also aiming to settle the purchase of a 2006 manufactured B737-700 aircraft in June.

"The airline will push the focus on the second new aircraft to the latter half of 2021 and after ensuring the first aircraft is well on its way to flying for Nauru," DM Appi said.

On the eve of the third anniversary of Nauru Post, the corporation paid a \$200,000 dividend to the government for the 2020-21 financial year, and \$71,895 in profit tax for 2019-20.

Deputy Minister for Nauru Post Richard-Hyde Menke said the past year has been a promising year for Nauru Post as sustainable growth and business activities were expanded; and thanks the governments of Australia and Taiwan for their continued support.

As Deputy Minister for the Regional Processing Centre, Asterio Appi says negotiations with landowners continue while negotiations for RPCs contingency state for the next 12 months are being finalised.

Planning for the transition for critical RPC infrastructure is also underway; and assessment reports for related sites and repurposing of these sites are complete.

### **BILLS**

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President Aingimea tabled the Nauru Police Force (Amendment) Bill 2021, establishing the position of deputy commissioner of police and the relevant powers and delegations.

The number of police officers has increased gradually to over 200, thus equates to the increase in the administrative and supervisory work of the commissioner of police, and subsequently recognising the need to establish the deputy position.

The establishment of the deputy position was gazetted in 2020.

Finance Minister Martin Hunt then tabled the Civil Aviation (Amendment) Bill 2021 amending Section 73(2)(d) of the Act to streamline the process of approving aircraft landing rights to the minister.

The Act required Cabinet approval but the amendment seeks to allow the minister for transport or any other minister responsible for the Act to exercise such powers.

The proposed amendment also gives absolute discretion to the

minister to refer any request for landing to the Cabinet.

Justice Minister Maverick Eoe tabled the Bail (Amendment) Bill 2021 to amend Section 4B(1)(a)(iii) by deleting the words 'assaulting' a police officer 'in the execution of the police officer's duties' and substituting with the words 'causing harm to a police officer'.

This amendment ensures that Section 4B(1)(a)(iii) is consistent with Section 77 of the Crimes Act 2016 which is the provision containing the offence of 'causing harm to police officer'.

Minister Hunt tabled the Development Fund (Amendment) Bill 2021, to amend section 2 of the Act by including definitions for 'financial year' and 'mid-financial year'.

The quarterly reporting requirements are also reduced to twice a year; the second report will be the annual report covering the entire financial year.

Acts of parliament can be accessed at [http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru\\_lpms/](http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/) •

## Vaccine doses, more than enough

Nauru received a total of 17,200 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, which allowed it to be able to fully immunise its adult population of over 6,000.

The Nauru Government extends its gratitude to the Governments of Australia and India for their generous support in securing and enabling the delivery of the vaccines.

The first consignment of 7,200 doses arrived on Thursday 1 April. The Government of Nauru initially purchased the vaccines however, have since been reimbursed by the Government of Australia as part of its assistance to Nauru in achieving its COVID-19 prevention measures.

Additionally, the Australian High Commission confirms further funding for vaccine supplies worth \$80,000 for Nauru directly with UNICEF for delivery later in the year.

This will assist Nauru in catching up with any missed immunisations.

Australia entered into an agreement with UNICEF to procure approximately 20 million doses of "safe and effective vaccines for allocation to partner countries in 2021," across the Pacific and Nauru.

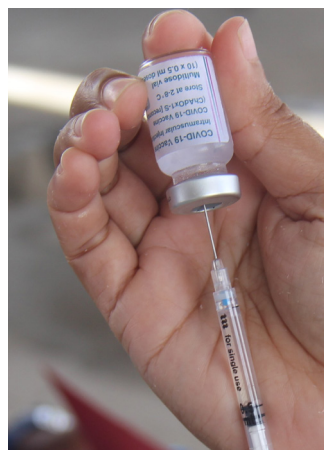
This arrangement also covers the costs of the associated injection devices, safe disposal containers, and freight to ports of entry.

As the largest buyer of vaccines and procurement agent for the COVAX Facility, UNICEF has an unparalleled understanding of the global vaccine market, and is well placed to understand and monitor Nauru's needs.

The High Commission says Australia will continue to coordinate closely with Nauru and UNICEF to enable the effective delivery of doses from Australia's supply line as soon as they become available.

The second consignment of 10,000 doses arrived a week later on Thursday 8 April as a donation from the Government of India, thus securing 100 per cent coverage of the adult population including foreigners living on Nauru.

The High Commission of India in Suva, Fiji says the vaccines are supplied by its Government through grant assistance as a "special gesture of friendship and solidarity with the people and



*Nauru is administering the COVID vaccine from two consignments of the AstraZeneca vaccine*

Government of Nauru.

"This is in line with India's commitment to use India's vaccine production and delivery capacity to help partner countries in the fight against COVID pandemic.

"Nauru is an important partner for India for ensuring an open, inclusive, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. India is committed to assist Nauru in its fight against COVID-19," the statement said.

President Lionel Aingimea says although Nauru is receiving the vaccines from two different countries, there is no difference other than the packaging and labelling.

Both vaccine consignments are developed and created by a team at Oxford University who entered into an arrangement with AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals; who then licenced SK Bio in Korea and the Serum Institute of India to manufacture the vaccine.

The World Health Organisation, the COVAX Facility and other expert advice confirms that both vaccines are the same and are fully interchangeable.

The Nauru COVID vaccine Technical Working Group (TWG) had its first meeting on 3 March in preparation for vaccine receipt, community scheduling and administration.

The TWG is headed by Taskforce chair Dr Kieren Keke and key personnel from health and the Government Information Office.

Nauru has received other offers of assistance in terms of additional supplies of the vaccine for on-going need •

## Truk memorial relocated

Care and respect were paramount in the demolition works and relocation carried out for the Truk Memorial in Aiwo, 26 March.

The demolition and relocation of the memorial makes way for heavy port construction activity and vital on-going port work to bring in supplies to the island.

The consultations resulting in this arrangement was done with the previous administration in negotiating the project works for the redevelopment of Nauru's main sea port.



*The Truk Memorial is being reconstructed at the Aiue Boulevard*

An important aspect of food and supplies import, the port is a lifeline for Nauru and the necessary changes imperative for the successful reconstruction and on-going operations of the port.

A new sea intake line from the north side of the port to the south will be re-laid.

This line will run straight to the Nauru Utilities Corporation's reverse osmosis plant for fresh water production for the island.

The new sea intake pump will also be housed at the harbour's reef edge.

As demolition works took place, the new memorial was being built at nearby Aiue Boulevard.

Parts of the memorial were conserved and will be placed at the new site.

President Lionel Aingimea periodically visits the new site to inspect the construction and ensure plans are on track.

Special lighting will highlight the display of Truk and Nauru sands collected from special areas in the two countries and other special features of the memorial.

The raised stage will feature polished Nauru phosphate rocks fashioned into small tiles, bearing the names of the 1,700 individuals who remained on Nauru, those exiled to Truk, and the leper victims.

The memorial is expected to be completed in July •

## Medicines quality assurance agreement signed

The governments of Nauru and Australia sign an agreement which will continue Nauru's access to Australian medicines quality assurance testing services, 20 May.

Health Minister Isabella Dageago and Australian High Commissioner Angela Tierney signed the documents on behalf of their respective governments.

Nauru was one of the four participants, along with Tonga, Kiribati and Tuvalu, that participated in the Pacific Medicines Testing Program pilot from 2018-2021.



*Australian High Commissioner Tierney and Health Minister Dageago co-sign the agreement to continue Nauru's access to Australian medicines quality assurance testing services*

Phase two will include 13 countries - Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Timor Leste.

High Commissioner Tierney says the testing of medicines will be conducted by Australia's regulator of medicines and medical devices, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA); and under the pilot program, Nauru will be able to send five medicines per year for quality testing by the TGA in Australia.

The program will also include training and laboratory placements for chief pharmacists.

This program will continue to assist the government of Nauru make informed decisions about medicine and suppliers and enhance health security in Nauru and the region •

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It's the law:  
 Drive safely. Speed limit is 50 km/h  
 Wear a helmet  
 Don't drink and drive  
 Be considerate of fellow motorists and pedestrians  
 Keep Nauru safe!

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## HC Tierney bid farewell

The President and cabinet ministers bid farewell the Australian high commissioner after three and a half years in the post, at a private lunch, 20 May.

High Commissioner Angela Tierney describes her time in Nauru as “amazing”.

She will head home for a well-deserved break before resuming duties.

President Lionel Aingimea presented the high commissioner a copy of the 2008 Webster’s Nauru-English Thesaurus Dictionary; a gift, she joked, she wished she had three years ago.

“I have been in Nauru since the lights went out on George Baker at Centennial Hall, until Blues snatched victory back from Evergreen in the Constitution Day Athletics Championship; and for everything that has happened on this beautiful island in between.

“It has been an amazing three and a half years, starting with Nauru’s Golden year of 50th Anniversary of Independence celebrations and hosting of the Pacific Islands Forum, through to Australia standing shoulder to shoulder with Nauru through the COVID-19 pandemic.”

High Commissioner Tierney describes many highlights of her time here, including sampling noddly bird and Nauru’s world class tuna.

“I had the honour of being here for the launch of the USP campus and community library and the sports complex, supported by Australia.

“Seeing the new port take shape, and commencing a project to resurface the runway and road network have also been highlights.

“Our great partnerships across government in women’s affairs and disability, health, education, ICT and much more, have produced great outcomes and programs for the people of Nauru.



*High Commissioner Tierney concludes her extended term on Nauru*

“I have loved working with the Nauru Chamber of Commerce to build the private sector, and with our many civil society partners including Rotary, Unique Lee and Amatalines, to name just a few.

“Promoting participation in sport has also been very rewarding, from upgrading tennis, volleyball and basketball courts around the island to handing over equipment to the Community Sports Program, AFL Nauru, Nauru Rugby and the Nauru Tennis Association.

“The true highlight was the visit of three Adelaide Crows players in 2019, and watching the explosion of women’s AFL in Nauru since.

“Sincere thanks to the people of Nauru for welcoming me into this unique and special community, for the generous hospitality, and the fond farewells.

“My time in Nauru has been the highlight of my career. I look forward to returning on a tourist visa to support Nauru Tourism.”

Ms Tierney presented her credentials accrediting her as Australia’s high commissioner to Nauru on 5 January 2018 •

## New health staff boost capacity

The Ministry of Health and Medical Services welcomed its newest staff from Fiji that will fill the critical staff shortage in the clinical and specialised fields.

The 20 health professionals underwent orientation on 23 April.

Welcomed by Minister for Health Isabella Dageago who said “it’s a big thank you” to have the new health staff here; while Secretary for Health Chanda Garabwan describes the recruitment as a “boost to our establishment” and “a great achievement for us, gaining you to come.”

The large recruitment was a challenge logistically but was made possible through a repatriation flight from Fiji which Nauru Airlines was operating; thus the opportunity to maximise the charter flight to recruit the urgently needed staff.

The group consists of 14 nurses, and a doctor, radiographer, pharmacist, biomedical technician, nutritionist, and lecturer.

They each introduced themselves and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work in Nauru and contribute to its health services.



*Fiji health professionals boosts capacity, arrive at an opportune time as the COVID vaccine rollout is underway*

The recruitment coincided with the roll out of the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccines to the adult population.

The new staff jumped straight into the vaccination program as they also filled their respective fields of work.

Minister Dageago says recruitment of additional doctors is in motion •

## Second HOM held virtually

Nauru's Heads of Mission met virtually over two days, to expand on discussions set last year on the government's "Guiding Vision 2020 – Desperate Imagination" theme.

His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea convened the second annual meeting, 26 and 29 March.

The high-level plenary meeting serves as a platform to enable the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Heads of Mission (HOM), relevant line ministries and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to identify the missions' comparative advantages in addressing the issues, challenges and solutions identified in the first HOMs meeting in 2020.

In his opening statement, the President reiterated the purpose of the government's guiding vision as a strategy to diversify the Nauru economy under limited natural resources' circumstance to secure a sustainable future and better quality of life for Nauruans.

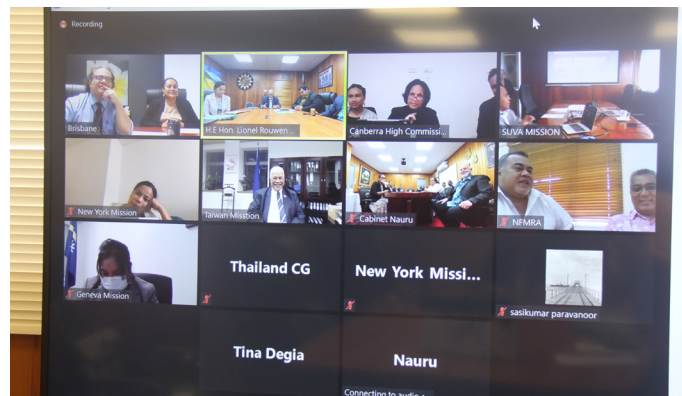
President Aingimea posed the question, 'Where are we now?', with regards to progress on establishing Nauru, resources and products.

Participants' attention was drawn to address the vision of sustainability on 'Enabled in Nauru, Trained in Nauru and Made in Nauru.'

Discussions and presentations made by the HOMs and SOE chiefs relate to three thematic areas focusing on current challenges and identification of comparative advantages of missions in finding solutions to identified challenges.

The meeting addressed the question 'what can Nauru do to ensure sustainability of its national budgets post-2020 and into the future?'

Several sectors were already identified as possible revenue streams.



*Heads of foreign missions sacrifice sleep to connect from different time zones for the second annual summit*

Those sectors include sports tourism, health tourism, tuna processing centre, hydroponic/aquaponic and livestock farms, manufacturing plant, insurance, higher ground initiative and the port harbour project.

The first session provided the opportunity for line ministries and SOEs to deliver updates on progress of activities under the Desperate Imagination agenda.

In session two, the heads of the foreign missions presented updates that identify key ideas, targets and efforts to progress priorities with particular focus on trade.

The third session, 29 March, was a closed meeting with DFAT and the HOMs to discuss issues pertaining to foreign policy.

In particular, to look at areas for improvement in coordinating and aligning partnership opportunities between local stakeholders and donor partners.

The session also facilitated an interactive dialogue on general administrative matters between Nauru DFAT and the missions to better coordinate the shared functions under the government's guiding vision of Desperate Imagination and Nauru's foreign relations and trade policies •

## Post presents \$200k dividend

On the eve of celebrating its third anniversary, Nauru Post proudly presents another dividend cheque to the government for the financial year 2020-21, 4 March.

The \$200,000 dividend doubles what Nauru Post had budgeted.

It also handed over \$71,895 in business profit tax for FY 2019-20.

As Minister for Nauru Post, President Lionel Aingimea presented the cheque to Finance Minister Martin Hunt who also received the bank transfer confirmation from Deputy Minister for Post Richard-Hyde Menke.

During 2019-2020, Nauru Post expanded its trading services to include business activities embracing air and sea freight, management of the Meneñ warehouse, procurement and supply of goods.

This year it has taken over the Denig warehouse and managing logistics and looks to further expands its services in the near future •



*Nauru Post dividend doubles what it budgeted*



## International women's day

Nauru declared a public holiday and joined the world in celebrating International Women's Day, 8 March 2021.

The program, organised by the Department of Women and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) was themed "Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a COVID-19 World", promoting equality in Nauru.

A morning walk on 6 March kicked off the program with First Lady Madam Ingrid Aingimea leading the group of women and young girls.

Participants wore purple to demonstrate support and solidarity for women and young girls around the world.

On 8 March Reverend Roger Mwareow led a church service at Orro Congregational Church.

The service was attended by President Aingimea, Madam Aingimea, Chief Justice Fatiaki, cabinet ministers, and dignitaries.

Prayer requests were shared and the Nauru national women's anthem sung before the service ended.

The occasion coincides with the 10th anniversary of the safe house "Ewak In Erateko," established on 8 March 2011.

The safe house offers shelter and protection to those who are experiencing domestic abuse in the community.

The Department of WASDA encourages people to visit it should they need a place of protection regardless of gender, making sure that all are being protected.

In a statement released by WASDA, "the Department is ever conscious of the mandate of the Safe House in providing a place



*Womens day celebrations culminated in fun activities commencing with a morning walk and wrapping up at the Centennial hall*

of safety irrespective of gender and so the celebration of the 10 years since its inception allows for an opportunity to take stock and build on what we have accomplished so as to always do better.

"The work of the department is to always ensure that women are engaged more in the decisions that could change their future.

"Despite their barriers, the department of WASDA is appreciative of the support given by all for this year's International Women's Day.

"International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women, who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities."

According to UN Women, one in three women have experienced physical violence around the world •

## Nine awarded Australia scholarship

The Australian High Commission congratulated the latest recipients of the annual Australia Awards Scholarships in a ceremony, 16 March.

The nine students will pursue studies at the bachelor, masters, and doctorate levels.

The Australian Awards Program aims to enhance the skills and further knowledge of nationals in their chosen fields.

Students are expected to return to Nauru to contribute and give back in their respective fields of study.

"I wish you all the best in your studies, and look forward to your return to Nauru and to the contributions to the betterment of our country," Deputy Minister for Education Richard-Hyde Menke said.

However, due to COVID-19 related restrictions, the recipients will be deferring studies until 2022.

"The health and safety of our scholars remain the highest priority," High Commissioner Angela Tierney said.

This group takes the total number of Nauruans who have been awarded these scholarships to 185, since its introduction in 2012.

Eight of the candidates will be studying in Australia and one will be studying in Fiji.

The ceremony took place at the Australian High Commission, attended by President Lionel Aingimea, Deputy Minister fMenke, and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Asterio Appi.



*High Commissioner Tierney confers last batch of dfs Australia award scholarship before finishing Nauru tenure*

The award recipients as follows:

Momoyo Scotty (AAS) - Doctor of Philosophy, International, Political & Strategic  
Deane Adeang (AAS) - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery  
Grace Debao (AAS) - Master of Public Health  
Masau Detudamo (AAS) - Master of International Trade & Commerce Law  
Elsie Dowiyogo (AAS) - Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)  
Remik Scotty (AAS) - Bachelor of Urban & Environmental Planning  
Paul Joram (AAS) - Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (Prosthodontics)  
Jeruska Togoran (AAS) - Bachelor of Laws (Honours)  
Deborah Togoran (AAPS) - Bachelor in Psychology & Bachelor of Law •

## E-commerce readiness assessment

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade is partnering with the Pacific Islands Forum in rolling out the National e-Commerce Readiness Assessment, with financial support from the Government of Australia.

The virtual stakeholder meeting held at USP Nauru, 19 March, was facilitated by Director for Trade Masau Detudamo and assisted by National Consultant Alumita Lekenaua and Trade Specialist Rahul Bhatnagar, who will lead the consultations and assessment work.

The goal of the assessment is to guide the government towards developing Nauru's capability in e-commerce, and produce recommendations towards addressing and finding solutions to the problems which uniquely impact Nauru.

The assessment is aligned with many other similar projects used to analyse the economic status and environments and to eventually produce a common vision for individual countries, which will further develop the e-commerce capabilities of Pacific island nations.

According to DFAT, "the business case for undertaking Nauru's e-commerce readiness assessment stems from a number of structural challenges constraining small-medium enterprises (SMEs) development and broader economic growth.

"Additionally, the on-going COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated e-commerce adoption globally, translating to exponential increase in consumers and enterprises to introspect on how to leverage this shift towards online behaviour.



*The goal of the assessment is to guide government towards developing Nauru's e-commerce capability*

The department further explains, "Nauru's e-commerce readiness assessment is precisely aimed at assisting the government take stock of the current e-commerce ecosystem and position e-commerce as a driver of domestic trade, regional integration and broader trade competitiveness for Nauru."

The Nauru Government, the Australian Government's Aid Program, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific e-Commerce Initiative, will continue to work together to produce an action plan that will enable the people of Nauru to utilise tools which much of the business world currently uses.

Stakeholders from government departments as well as the private sector include Capelle & Partner, Nauru Post, Chamber of Commerce, Digicel, and USP, were in attendance •

## World water day

The Department of Climate Change and National Resilience hosted World Water Day celebrations under the theme 'Valuing Water' which translates to 'An Gogando ebok' with the main events culminating on 22 March.

The main competition events took place at the Centennial Hall with stalls and small house model competitions on display.

While short video clips, pop quizzes, and school water irrigation systems were judged the previous week.

The Department of Health, Eigigu Solutions Corporation and Nauru Utilities Corporation set up stalls showcasing how their departments can impact directly towards water distribution, how to save and conserve water during droughts and methods that can be utilised to help with cleansing contaminants in water supplies.

World Water Day raises awareness of the global water crisis, and a core focus of the observance is to support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030 •



*Multiple stalls were set up on Water Day demonstrating the various ways water can be stored and kept potable*

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## First Nauru high comm to Australia appointed

The appointment of Nauru's first high commissioner to Australia will further bolster key discussions of mutual interest for Nauru and Australia.

Camilla Solomon is the new high commissioner at the helm of these negotiations.



*Solomon inspects the guard of honour on the day of presenting credentials accrediting her as Nauru's first high commissioner to Australia*

The High Commissioner arrived in Canberra on 7 March and presented her credentials to Australian Governor General David Hurley, AC DSC (retd) on 8 April at Government House, the official residence of the Governor-General.

A private meeting between High Commissioner Solomon and Governor-General Hurley followed the presentation with discussions on matters of mutual interest to both Australia and Nauru, particularly on the impacts of COVID-19.

Nauru's presence in Canberra is important on many fronts and signifies the ever-strong relationship between the two countries.

The high commission office was established 12 March 2020 but due to COVID-19, operations were postponed for almost a year.

It is now staffed by First Secretary Kellen Deiye and office manager Yannick Harris.

Prior to taking up the position, High Commissioner Solomon was Nauru's acting secretary for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Her foreign service began in 2000 as Nauru's high commissioner to Fiji, but her notable career includes serving in various roles with the Asian Development Bank including director's advisor to the Board of Directors, Australia, ADB; Nauru's chief secretary and acting secretary to cabinet; assistant director for the UN/Commonwealth at DFAT; and was a teacher and principal prior.

Ms Solomon holds a Masters in Public Policy Management from Monash University, Australia.

The Nauru Mission is located in Barton, Canberra, in the Australian Capital Territory •

## President receives Spain ambassador

The Ambassador-designate of Spain to Nauru, Ms Alicia Moral virtually presented her Letter of Credence to His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea, 3 May.

President Aingimea congratulated the Ambassador and exchanged statements before a closed bilateral meeting.



*Ambassador Moral virtually presents her credentials*

Ambassador Moral joined the Spanish diplomatic service in 1991 and held various positions including advisor for foreign policy and common security of the European Union; deputy director in various divisions; and served abroad as deputy head of missions in Tanzania, Indonesia, and Bulgaria as well as Counsellor to The Netherlands.

She was also on the the Permanent Delegation of Spain to the OECD, representative of Spain to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and Ambassador of Spain to Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi.

The Ambassador holds a Bachelor of Law from the University of Valladolid, Spain, the Joint Command and Staff College from the Spanish Armed Forces and a Master of Defence Policy and International Security from the Complutense University of Madrid.

Ambassador Moral succeeds Mr Manuel Cacho Quesada •

### It's the law:

#### Section 14 of the Education Act 2011:

**Each parent of a school-aged child must ensure the child attends school of each school day.**

\$50 fine per child, first offence

\$250 per child thereafter

## Meeting owl launched in court

Chief Justice Daniel Fatiaki praises first audio-visual hearing of witness testimony, a “roaring success”, 30 April.

Nauru’s Supreme Court conducted the hearing using the multiple-camera device, Meeting Owl and virtual meeting tool, Zoom, to connect the now Fiji-based doctor to the Nauru Courts.

The doctor did a post mortem in Nauru last year but was unable to return for the hearing due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

The pandemic restrictions present logistical and difficult problems for the courts in terms of travel.

The time lapse between countries also presents a different kind of logistical problem.

For a conservative law veteran, CJ Fatiaki says the opportunities the new technology offers are valuable and a “huge plus” given the possibility to cross examine a person versus a witness statement.



*The Meeting Owl is a simple device yet transcends border restrictions and enables important court proceedings to go ahead*

“It’s very exciting times for our court.

“This is a new process, it’s never been used and generally courts frown upon that; they want their witnesses in court, facing the defendant, eye to eye with the lawyers, person to person.”

Last year the Nauru Parliament passed the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) No.2 Act 2020 to allow evidence by AV link of the testimony of witnesses in a foreign jurisdiction.

This ensures cases are heard and disposed of in a timely manner.

For this particular hearing, two defence lawyers and the prosecutor were all able to examine the doctor.

While this trial by AV link may be the first for Nauru, CJ Fatiaki says it could also be for most of the Pacific.

Witnesses take a special oath and must be alone in the room that they are giving evidence from.

“That was complied with and it was a roaring success actually. I’m very proud to say.”

The CJ sees its value for Nauru in the examination of doctors who have examined victims of assault, rape, and murder, but are no longer on island.

Nauru engages the services of many foreign doctors including pathologists and recently some of those doctors have returned home at the end of their contracts.

This presents logistical and difficult problems for the court, and with the lockdown, flying in a doctor from neighbouring Fiji for a court hearing is difficult.

Approximately five cases remain that require medical evidence of doctors that have left.

The CJ commends the ICT department for the uninterrupted connection which could have posed its own difficulties •

## Museum acquires historic photos

The Australian High Commissioner to Nauru Angela Tierney presented 37 historical photographs of Nauru to the Naoero Museum, 1 April.

Deputy Minister for Nauru Museum Russ Kun received the photos which were obtained from the collection of the National Archives of Australia, and thanked Ms Tierney for the valuable contribution.



*Deputy minister for Nauru Museum and Australia’s high commissioner unveil historic photos donated by the high commission*

The Australian High Commission has previously presented the first drafts of Nauru’s Constitution.

High Commissioner Tierney says the new donation of photographs serves to further “complement” their contributions to the museum.

The museum recently set-up a ‘Nauru heritage and museum’ Facebook page, with images of Nauru’s history attracting interactive public views.

The page content includes historical photos, wartime documents and Nauru’s culture and heritage.

The museum is open for public viewing of its collection which includes war relics, photographs and other pieces of history.

The museum welcomes public donations of artefacts, war relics and historical photos •

*Make a donation of artefacts, war relics and  
photographs to the Naoero Museum  
Contact the Director Horacio Cook  
horasio.cook2418@gmail.com  
or call 5573999*



## Nauru endorses declaration against arbitrary detention

Nauru joins sixty states endorsing the declaration against arbitrary detention for diplomatic leverage, 6 April.

The Government of Canada launched the Declaration Against Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State Relations on 15 February 2021 in Ottawa.

The declaration aims to protect citizens of all countries who live, work and travel abroad through a concerted commitment to core principles of human rights, consular relations, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

Through diplomatic note sent by the Department of Foreign Affairs to Canada, President Lionel Aingimea's approval of Nauru's endorsement of the declaration.

The declaration states, "The arbitrary arrest or detention of foreign nationals to compel action or to exercise leverage over a foreign government is contrary to international law, undermines international relations, and has a negative impact on foreign nationals traveling, working and living abroad.

"Foreign nationals abroad are susceptible to arbitrary arrest and detention or sentencing by governments seeking to compel action from other States.

"The purpose of this Declaration is to enhance international cooperation and end the practice of arbitrary arrest, detention or sentencing to exercise leverage over foreign governments."

States are called upon to take concrete steps to prevent and to put an end to harsh conditions in detention; denial of access to legal counsel; torture; and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Not only is this practice contrary to international law, but it also undermines friendly relations between states, global cooperation, travel and trade.

The guiding principles of the declaration reaffirm established principles of human rights, the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.

These principles are guided by international instruments such as in Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states -- *No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.*

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also declares in Article 9, section 1 -- *No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.*

The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, Article 36, Section 1(c), affirms -- *Consular officers shall have the right to visit a national of the sending State who is in prison, custody or detention, to converse and correspond with him and to arrange for his legal representation. They shall also have the right to visit any national of the sending State who is in prison, custody or detention in their district in pursuance of a judgement.*

By endorsing the declaration, states agree to stand in solidarity against arbitrary arrest, detention or sentencing by other states seeking to exercise leverage over them.

Canada encourages all like-minded states to endorse the Declaration to reaffirm grave concern about the use of arbitrary arrest or detention by States to exercise leverage over foreign governments, contrary to international law.

This applies equally to individuals with dual citizenship.

In the region, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga and Tuvalu have also endorsed the declaration •

## Customs armed to detect contraband

The Nauru Customs office launched its new mobile luggage scanning unit on 26 March and received new narcotics detection kits on 9 April.

Australian High Commissioner Angela Tierney presented the narcotics kits to Deputy Secretary for Customs, Jennifer Clarke who said "Customs service fully appreciates the ongoing assistance received from the Government of Australia, through the Australian Border Force and the donations of the narcotics detection kits."

The RapiScan mobile van and the detection kits now makes it considerably easier for airport customs staff to discern and detect illegal contraband and narcotics being smuggled into Nauru's borders and further reduces the amount of time needed to inspect luggage and cargo being unloaded.

The equipment can be used at all ports of arrival including at the seaport and post office, thus increase border security measures and bolster detection of unsolicited items which authorities say have been detected in the past.

Customs has recorded dozens of other cases relating to passengers trying to smuggle drugs and narcotics into Nauru's borders in the past.

Nauru Customs will continue to work vigilantly to ensure drugs and illegal substances are detected at the border ensuring the safety of the general public •



Top: RapiScan van in action on all ports of entry  
Bottom: Australian high commissioner donates narcotics detection kits



## Covid awareness outreach

Several hundred rapid antigen tests carried out on the general public and some departments, from March to April, all returned negative results.

The National COVID-19 Taskforce and Ministry of Health join forces in this initiative which further promotes the protection of the health and safety of the general public and demonstrates the effectiveness and efficiency of the measures being taken for the management of the coronavirus pandemic.

Participants of the tests are shown a power point presentation which highlights the effectiveness of preventing the spread of COVID-19 by taking care of one's own working environment and encouraging healthy hygiene habits.

Other COVID vaccine awareness outreach sessions are held with frontline workers, church and community groups.

In her presentations, Director for Training and Development Vania Scotty urges that we continue to work together and make sure our families and friends are being protected from COVID-19 •

## Customs broker training

The Nauru Customs office conducted the second customs broker training on the foundational knowledge of being a broker and topics on the procedures, policies, and international agreements for increasing commerce and economic growth, 26 April.

Deputy Secretary Customs, Jennifer Clarke, welcomed 34 participants to the two-week training which was delivered by consultant Viliame Raikuna at the Multicultural Affairs office in Yaren district.



*Customs brokers' assessment papers still being marked*

Mr Raikuna who also consults for the Oceania Customs Organisation conducted the first brokers training in Nauru in November 2016, followed by training on customs tariff harmonisation for brokers in 2017.

“One of the most important developments over the past few centuries is the integration of national economies into a global economic system.

“I therefore urge you all to make the most of the opportunity that is being presented,” Ms Clarke said.

The training concluded on 7 May and participants are now awaiting notification of their results •

## Anzac day

The flags of Nauru, Australia and New Zealand flew at half-mast to commemorate Anzac day and honouring the service men and women of Australia and New Zealand, 25 April.

Nauru Police Commissioner Iven Notte, Australian High Commissioner Angela Tierney, Paul Finch of New Zealand and the Australian Federal Police laid wreaths at the cenotaph in front of the government offices at Yaren.



*A low-key Anzac day is in keeping with Australia's COVID measures*  
Photo: Aus HC

This year's Anzac Day marks the 106th anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand soldiers known as the Anzacs, on Gallipoli in 1915, and was first observed in 1916.

Although, Nauru is COVID-free, the Australian High Commission has kept the Anzac event low-key in keeping with Australia's practices of social distancing and other associated health measures •

## \$20k tobacco, products destroyed

An estimated \$20,000 worth of tobacco products and other illegal goods were disposed of at the dump site after Nauru Customs determined the products did not meet legal requirements, 11 May.

Around 33 sleeves and 42 kilos of dry tobacco leaves, as well as ointments, oils, herbs that were without English labelling, and T-shirts displaying profanity were also seized and disposed of.

Customs Director David Detudamo said it is necessary to destroy the tobacco products as they did not have English labelling, as required under the Tobacco Control Act.

The seizure and disposing of the prohibited goods are part of their efforts towards enforcement and compliance.

Nauru Customs are mandated to dispose of products that breach the Tobacco Control Act, which requires all foreign tobacco products arriving from overseas to have English labelling.

For environmental reasons, instead of burning the illegal items, they were unwrapped and destroyed by burying in a pit.

This is the second occasion this year that Nauru Customs has had to dispose of goods which fail to meet standard requirements •





## Nauruan joins new lawyers admission to bar

The applications by four lawyers to practice as barristers and solicitors in Nauru were considered and granted approval by the Chief Justice, 18 May.

Surely Grace Kamtaura is one of the four, making her the fifth Nauruan female to do so; bringing the total number of Nauruan lawyers to nine.

Alongside Ms Kamtaura, giving their oaths before Chief Justice Daniel Fatiaki are Fijian lawyers Thomson Lee, Francis Leba Puleiwai, and Saif Izaan Shah.

With varying years of experience, they each bring much needed human resources to the legal fraternity of Nauru.

Mr Lee will join the Public Legal Defender's office; while Ms Puleiwai and Mr Shah will join the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; and Ms Kamtaura with the Department of Justice and Border Control.

CJ Fatiaki congratulated the lawyers and, known for his thorough and direct approaches in court, advised them to be well prepared for court.

The lawyers' petitions to practice were filed in March and April, and followed the process of gazettal and approval.

Following the admission, the lawyers would apply for a practicing certificate before they can start appearing in the Nauru Courts.

Secretary for Justice and Border Control Jay Udit says an additional four legal practitioners means more practitioners to assist with the enforcement of the laws and representing the people in court.

Additionally, he says accused persons are dealt with fairly and justly and that there is equal access to justice for all persons in the Republic.

"The three expatriate lawyers who were admitted bring a wealth of experience to their respective offices and to Nauru.



*(L-R) Shah, Kamtaura, Puleiwai, Lee; bring additional experience to the Nauru courts*

"In addition to their work, they are to assist with building capacity of the young lawyers and pleaders in their offices and department as a whole."

The total number of legal practitioners, pleaders and expatriate lawyers, in Nauru exceeds 50.

Mr Udit says about five Nauruans are studying law abroad, and hopes more pleaders will take up the challenge and study law.

"During this period, it has been a great achievement to see that the Department of Justice including the private bar have been serviced by Nauruan practitioners.

"It is an impetus which should be encouraged to continue."

Mr Udit highlights that expat lawyers will eventually return home, leaving the Nauruan legal practitioners to continue the work to serve Nauru and its people •

## Public service oaths continue

Staff from the transport department and Nauru police took their public service oath on 23 and 30 April respectively.

Eighty transport staff took their oaths at the airport while the 18 police staff members took theirs at the office of chief secretary.

The ceremonies were presided over by the acting Chief Secretary Sasi Kumar, witnessed by Secretary for Corporate Services Peta Gadabu and a legal representative from the justice department.



*Transport and NPF staff are the latest group to take the public service oath*

## Canstruct donates negative pressure unit

Canstruct International donated a containerised negative pressure unit at the Public Health Centre that's expected to be up and running soon, making it the second NPU on the island.

These units are equipped with environmental controls to reduce the risk of transmission of airborne diseases; the unit restricts inside air from flowing outside.



*Canstruct's mobile negative pressure unit will complement the Nauru government's ward that's now complete and ready for official handover*

On 9 April, the Minister for Health Isabella Dageago led the inspection of the interior of the NPU, accompanied by Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen, Chief Justice Daniel Fatiaki, Ambassador for Taiwan Dean Wang and other members of parliament.

The negative pressure unit has been fully furnished, has electricity and running water.

The Government of Nauru commenced reconstruction of the former acute block at the RON hospital in 2020 into a negative pressure ward. Construction is complete and a handover expected soon.

The NPUs will play an important part with the government's efforts to minimise the impacts of COVID-19 to help ensure the health and safety of the general public •

## Unexploded bomb unearthed

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) was unearthed during initial ground works for a residential house in Boe District near the Nauru International Airport, on the southern part of the island, 17 March.

Minister for Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation Reagan Aliklik and the extraction team identified the UXO as a 50kg German smoke bomb -- a remnant of the invasion of Japanese-occupied Nauru during World War II.

The discovery was reported to Nauru Police, NRC and Nauru Emergency Services who then removed the bomb and moved it to a safe location at Topside where it will be stored until arrangements are made for explosives experts to detonate.

The NRC does explosives-related work on the island as required to flatten pinnacle rocks in the phosphate mined out lands and assist in detonating UXOs as they are discovered around the island.

## NPF complete qualifying course

Thirteen members of the Nauru Police Force (NPF) graduate after completing a four-week qualifying course, 14 May.

The Non-Commissioned Officers Qualifying Course ran from 19 April to 7 May, and focuses on building capacity and skills in regards to incident management, supervisory roles, leadership and investigative principles.



*NPF is dedicated in training up staff across the multiple roles of policing work*

In her address, Inspector Sheeva Cook says, "the community is our real goal to make change," and with the training, it encourages peoples' trust in the NPF "even stronger".

On behalf of the NPF, Acting Superintendent Gregor Garoa thanks the Australian Federal Police for their support in offering the course, which would bolster confidence and leadership skills in their policing work.

The training was delivered by Inspector Cook and NPF Legal Advisor Peter Leaupepe •



*Fireman manoeuvres the unexploded bomb into a waiting truck to be transport to a designated holding site at Topside*

Anyone discovering bombs are strongly advised to step away and not tamper with them and report them immediately to police on 110 or to emergency services on 111 •



## Team Up supports rugby

The Australian government-funded sports initiative, Team Up, launched the Nauru Rugby Inclusion Impact program, 2 March.

This new sports development program is being rolled out across the Pacific. Nauru's funding of \$130,000 is for two years.

The Nauru Rugby Inclusion Impact program will support rugby in Nauru, in particular with the goal of inclusion of women and girls in all aspects of rugby union.

On behalf of the Sports Minister Maverick Eoe, Secretary for Sports Dagan Kaierua welcomes the funding and thanks the Australian government for the continued support underscoring that AFL-Nauru received similar support in 2018 and the success of that program evident since.

Australian High Commissioner Angela Tierney says the initiative is a broader support to sport in Nauru.

"The Australian Government is really a strong supporter of sport here because we know it links to education, health, gender equality, disability inclusion.

"It's such an important part of community life and it's a passion that we share in common," the High Commissioner said.

She congratulates Nauru Rugby on this "amazing achievement" highlighting it is a very competitive process.

Team up will support 30 of these sports partnerships in six Pacific countries.

In Nauru the program will be delivered by Nauru Rugby in partnership with Rugby Australia and Oceania Rugby.

The program complements other support being offered by the Australian government through its high commission •



*Nauru Rugby excited to be part of Team Up program*

## Nauru College cadets pass out parade

Nauru College students performed an impressive pass-out parade on 31 March at the government office complex, after completing nine weeks of cadet training with the Nauru Police Force.

The cadet training is an initiative of the NPF and the Education Department to help promote and restore discipline, order, and a sense of pride in schools.

"In your future endeavours, students, whether you go into a disciplinary force, whether it be the Nauru Police Force, security or whatever it may be, remember one thing, always put God first," President Lionel Aingimea told the cadets.

Cadet trainer Inspector Sakiusa Tikotani says the 64 male and female form 7 and 8 students completed 27 hours of training in marching skills, discipline, obeying orders, listening skills, and responding to commands – to demonstrate the students' concentration skills.

Inspector Tikotani says the training will be a bi-annual event.

The parade was ultimately led by four cadets – Parade Commander X-Sina Grundler, Detachment Commanders Mofete Tavita and Sulanna Notte whose roles are to give the orders as the parade march into position, and Colour Sergeant Wimbeldon Hubert who issues the in-line dressing orders.

The cadet initiative has certainly become a successful project in improving and instilling skills and discipline in Nauru's young generation.

Kayser College students will have their turn in training in term three •



*Schools cadet training helps to promote and restore discipline, order and pride in schools*

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**Republic of Nauru**

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