



Nauru Bulletin

Issue 6-2021/231

2 November 2021

Parliament September

The September Parliament sitting was held over three days culminating with 31 ministerial statements, five Bills and supplementary appropriation delivering a \$30,000 surplus balance.

Following opening prayers, Speaker Marcus Stephen opened question time then delved straight into the presentation of ministerial statements.

Two-year notice, International Seabed Authority

President Lionel Aingimea presented the first statement on Nauru's two year notice to complete the development of the draft regulations on exploitation on seabed minerals at the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

The official notification, signed by President Aingimea was addressed to the president of the Council of the 26th session of the ISA, was dated 9 July 2021.

While this gives the ISA Council to complete the Exploitation Code in July 2023, the draft regulations has been under negotiations for over seven years.

Nauru has been a sponsoring state with Nauru Ocean Resources Incorporated (NORI); and this decision provides NORI the legal certainty to operate in a new industry, safely and responsibly.

"The decision aligns with this government's vision of 'Desperate Imagination' in finding



Parliament staff prepare documents before the start of a sitting

new economic opportunities for Nauru as we continue to work through challenging times we are in – the COVID pandemic and climate crisis.

"Accessing these polymetallic nodule resources will be vital to building a clean energy transition for large economies like the US and the European Union.

"This government strongly believes that these nodules can provide large economies an environmentally and socially responsible supply chain for clean energy transition at the scale required in the near future."

Budget Outcome-COVID Measures and Outlook

Minister for Finance Martin Hunt then presented the 2020-21 budget outcome,

COVID-19 measures and outlook.

The minister advised members that the 2020-21 final budget outcome was a deficit of \$14 million, or eight per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

However, government anticipated the deficit owing to the government's commitment to pay an advance to support the Nauru Airlines aircraft fleet improvement program ahead of a loan being finalised with Exim Bank.

The minister says while total actual revenue collected was \$265.9 million, 17 per cent below budget levels, total actual expenditure was \$279.8 million, marginally below expectation.

The decrease in revenue stems from a substantial drop in grant, financing and dividends revenue and attributed also to the delayed timing of the proposed EXIM bank aircraft loan and the slower than expected RPC reimbursements for activities of the multicultural affairs department.

Inter sub-head transfers (ISHT) account for 18 per cent of total budget expenditure compared to seven per cent the previous year.

The government's total support for COVID-19 response was \$9 million, or five per cent of GDP; and COVID-19 contributions from the Asian Development Bank and the Republic of China (Taiwan) amounting to \$5.8 million.

COVID-19: Fishermen are reminded to stay away from foreign sea vessels that are currently in Nauru's waters, either close to shore or further out at sea.

This includes cargo, fuel and fishing vessels such as purse seiners.

Do not accept anything from the vessels either unless cleared by local health and quarantine authorities.

This is an important precautionary measure to keep you and the Nauru community safe from coronavirus.

Fishermen warned to stay away from ships at sea

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Additionally Taiwan met a \$1 million in principal and interest payments for an EXIM bank loan taken out to support RONHOS to purchase mining equipment. The loan balance stands at \$5.3 million at 30 June 2021.

Windfall revenue was used to address historic debt liabilities related to Yen Bearer Bonds issued in the 1980s, and to progress the Bank of Nauru liquidation.

Minister Hunt explains the reduction in Nauru's debt sustainability with estimated total outstanding debt reduced from over 100 per cent of GDP to 36 per cent of GDP at 30 June.

As part of COVID-19 response, the government paid Nauru Airlines \$4.7million to ensure regular air freight and passenger services.

The minister says the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects a stronger recovery in 2021 for the global economy compared to the previous forecast with growth projected to be six per cent in 2021.

Inflation remains at 1.2 per cent making Nauru one of very few countries in the world projected to see growth in 2021; and economic growth of eight per cent from \$166 million of GDP to \$179 million.

Meanwhile, the Nauru Trust Fund has grown by 78 per cent to \$200 million at the end of June 2021.

Minister Hunt warns however, that significant fiscal risk remains acknowledging the uncertain future of the RPC and the duration of the COVID pandemic.

Update on People Living With Disabilities

Minister for People Living with Disability, Isabella Dageago, shared her statement that she presented virtually in June, on the margins of the UN Conference of State Parties for the Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The minister advised the meeting of State Parties that despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Nauru government continues to provide support mechanisms such as disability pensions, modifications to their homes, special school for disabled children and assistive devices provided at no cost.

Additionally, the Ministry of Health provided a door-to-door service administering the COVID-19 vaccine for those with mobility issues.

A thematic analytical report on disability is also now included in the national census; and an inclusive education policy program providing a multi-pronged approach is also developed.



Linesmen hard at work to maintain safe and efficient power supply

Sports

Sports Minister Maverick Eoe congratulated weightlifter Nancy Abouke and track athlete Jonah Harris for representing Nauru at the Tokyo Olympics; as well as teams and players who took part in the Nauru football competition.

RONPhos

National phosphate company, Ronphos, is facing challenges with phosphate exports due to a global spike in freight costs.

But Ronphos minister, Reagan Aliklik says despite these challenges the company has secured buyers up to the first quarter of 2022 and is currently in discussions with other potential buyers.

While rent and permanent installation payment have been made, royalty payments for the March quarter will be paid in instalments.

Work between Ronphos and the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC) on land portion 230 is progressing on schedule and expected to be complete by the end of the 2022 third quarter.

Utilities

The national utilities provider continues its positive financial trend for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 July 2021, with a review and independent auditing of its financial statements underway.

Minister for Nauru Utilities Corporation, Wawani Dowiyogo informed the House of the key performances of the different sections of the state-owned enterprise, notably the 13 per cent increase in revenue from the previous year to \$22.3 million.

This reflects the increase in electricity sales by 11 per cent and water by 46 per cent.

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National Disaster Risk Management Act 2016

Coronavirus Travel Restrictions Order No. 04/2021

Effective 19 October 2021

As Minister for National Emergency Services, President Lionel Rouwen Aingimea hereby issues the following order:

(1) A person travelling to Nauru is required to spend a minimum of fourteen (14) days in any of the following countries or territories prior to travelling to Nauru:

(a) Queensland; (b) South Australia; (c) Tasmania; (d) Western Australia; (e) New Zealand; (f) Northern Territory; (g) Cook Islands; (h) Kiribati; (i) Marshall Islands; (j) Micronesia (Federated States); (k) New Caledonia; (l) Niue; (m) Palau; (n) Samoa; (o) Solomon Islands; (p) Taiwan; (q) Tonga; (r) Tuvalu; and (s) Vanuatu.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt and until further notice, no person shall travel to Nauru, if within the 14 days prior to travel, the person has spent any time or transited through:

- (a) Fiji;
- (b) Papua New Guinea; and
- (c) any of the following States or Territories of Australia:
 - (i) Australian Capital Territory; (ii) New South Wales; and
 - (iii) Victoria.

Government Gazette 128-21 <http://naurugov.nr/government-information-office/government-gazette.aspx>

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The company's financial statements year ending 30 June showed net earnings before tax of \$149,512.

Minister Dowiyogo says the positive financial result is sufficient to cover NUC's operating expenses including depreciation.

The situation is assisted by contributing factors including the government community service obligations on monthly electricity for households, increased water sales owing to the drought, lower fuel prices and increased demand for electricity; and "prudent financial and operational management".

Notably, NUC has maintained its financial position without changes to current electricity and water tariffs and charges, and are expected to continue in the new financial year.

Water production saw an increase of 24 per cent from 220.2 million litres to 289.8 million litres in 2021.

Deliveries increased 26 per cent to 247.4 million litres, with the peak period from August 2020 to April 2021 demanding 1.5 million litres per day – approximately 16 to 19 water truck deliveries a day, equating to 65 litres of water per person in the last year.

Meanwhile, electricity production increased seven per cent to 38.7 million kilowatt hours (kWh), and total energy consumption at 33.6 million kWh and NUC energy losses reduced from 21 to 18 per cent.

Cost of diesel purchased by NUC also dropped 13 per cent owing to fluctuations in oil prices, and diesel at the bowser dropped to 99 cents a litre from \$1.12 in 2020.

Electricity customers increased by 271 totalling 3,809 – and a monthly average of 2.8 million kWh hours for the year.

The minister says the overall demand for electricity remains steady with a nine per cent increase compared to last year.

The NUC's renewable energy sector installed 2.4 megawatts of solar PV which equates to 13 per cent of total available generation capacity while total renewable energy generated for the financial year was 3.92 million kWh or 10 per cent from all sources.

The solar-generated energy offset diesel fuel of approximately 96,500 litres – a saving of \$95,000 based on the average diesel price of 99 cents.

Minister Dowiyogo adds that the 6 megawatt solar project, expected to be complete at the end of 2022, will likely exceed Nauru's renewable energy target of 50 per cent.

Meanwhile, the NUC's low carbon fund valued at \$176,035 continues to be rolled out providing customers with a 30 per cent rebate towards the purchase of approved energy efficient fridges, freezers and washers.

A total of 69 rebate applications, totalling \$26,626 were approved this year.

USP

Having recently completed his chancellorship at the University of the South Pacific (USP) President Aingimea recalls his tenure coming at the most challenging times for the university, with COVID-19, severe funding crisis, including Fiji's refusal to pay its share of the funding, and the deportation of the vice chancellor and president.

President Aingimea reiterates that "USP as a regional university does not belong to any one country."

The president noted Nauru's unwavering support for the USP since its



*USP does not belong to any one country, says President Aingimea
[Pictured Nauru campus]*

inception when in 1975 Nauru provided a large grant of FJ\$249,750 – the largest donation of that year.

"Our (Nauru's) donation represented almost half of all aid received [that year]. Indeed, there has never been a doubt about our commitment to USP," the President said affirming the "vision and hopes of our forefathers remains strong and alive in the quest for good governance."

Amidst all the challenges of the past year, USP however joined the ranks of top universities worldwide by taking place in the top 10 per cent in the Times Higher Education World Rankings (THE).

This follows the earlier ranking of 11th place for crisis management in the World Universities Ranking Impact (WURI).

The president acknowledges the dedication of the VCP and his management team in ensuring the USP's good standing and success.

President Aingimea is particularly pleased that as a result of the deportation from Fiji of VCP Pal Ahluwalia, he has resided in Nauru since February, and is confident this has allowed Professor Ahluwalia to have a clearer understanding of the challenges arising from being in a regional campus.

This year the USP has been fraught with senior staff allegations, USP council and executive committee interventions and decisions, including a report by New Zealand accounting and auditing firm, BDO.

"The BDO completed their investigation and unequivocally confirmed a number of serious breaches of university processes and procedures that resulted in the leakage of millions of dollars of member country taxpayers and donor's funding," President Aingimea said.

The President said key findings of the BDO report illustrated there were clear violations of university rules, unethical conduct, and gross financial mismanagement by the previous administration including elements of then senior management team.

President Aingimea highlighted six cases involving contract renewal and inducement allowances, remuneration issues, superannuation entitlements, and irregularities in promotion, allowances and back payments.

Going forward, President says he will be urging the USP council to develop strategies to ensure the university remains financially sustainable, noting its record \$34.2 million surplus which helped the university survive in 2021.

Development Fund Report

Minister for Finance Martin Hunt tabled the development fund report 2020-21 in which Nauru received a total of \$4.7 million.

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While this is a reduction of 63 per cent compared to the previous year's development revenue, the minister says the actual revenue increased by \$2.3 million.

Underspending from previous years also impact development fund revenue, in particular the COVID-19 and education funds.

However, expenditure doubled the previously years' spending at \$6.2 million; largely as a result of line departments spending previous years' revenue.

Of the 65 per cent spending across the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) sector, the minister says \$1.8M was spent on education including teacher accreditation and training; \$6.1M on health largely for COVID-19 responses as well as ongoing public health programs.

The infrastructure sector spent \$3.1M (26 per cent) including the procurement of the cargo ship *Micronesian Pride*.

The cross-cutting sectors accounted for eight per cent or \$1.1M and one per cent towards the economic sector.

Women's and Social Development

Minister for women's and social development affairs, Isabella Dageago says the department is developing and reviewing various concept papers, national plans and policies, review of legislation for the protection and care of women, men and children; and an opinion paper on Article 74 of the Constitution which pertains to the citizenship of a foreign woman married to a Nauruan man.

Minister Dageago is pleased with the work thus far assisted by gender equality advisors Amelia Siamomua and Hannah Jay.

Justice – Revised Law Books

Justice Minister Maverick Eoe was pleased to announce the recent completion of the revised written laws of Nauru in loose leaf and bound volumes, made possible with funding by the Australian Government for the compilation and freight.

This project is also made possible with the collaborative work of Lexis-Nexis. The digital and electronic versions are now available on the company's website and on RONLaw.

Nauru joined the World Intellectual Property Organisation as the 193rd member and Minister Eoe stresses the importance of recognising and protecting ones intellectual property rights.

Since the establishment of the office, Minister Eoe says there's been 59 patent applications and 30 trademark applications. He encourages the public to register they trademarks and names with the office.

"These are your unique names and brands. You must protect them. The protection is only provided if it is registered. Once registered, no one can copy it," Minister Eoe said adding that training in intellectual property law for locals is being looked at including a Master of Laws program.

At the time of the sitting of parliament Minister Eoe says over 900 dogs have been licenced with the Dog Management Unit and over 1,000 dogs destroyed over the past 12 month period since the introduction of the dog population reduction program.

The minister however, stresses that despite the success of the program, incidents of dog attack remains and in many instances involves attacks on children.

Minister Eoe encourages dog owners especially dangerous dogs to keep them on leashes and must be accompanied by the owners while on walks.



The digital and electronic versions of Nauru's revised written laws are now available to view online

Internal Affairs

Minister Dageago thanks the Ministry of Internal Affairs and everyone that helped in the successful three-day celebration of Aroeni Day, Tribe day, from 19 August.

The Youth Affairs life-skills program started with 15 students. Six of them have since applied for the trainee teacher program under the education department, two employed with Nauru Media and Eigsaw Enterprise, while the rest are furthering their studies at the USP Nauru campus and starting their own small businesses.

The department also organised community food planting programs for International Youth Day under the theme 'Transforming food systems: Youth innovation for human and planetary health'.

Fisheries

Minister for Fisheries, Wawani Dowiyogo says the authority's oceanic sector continues to monitor foreign vessel compliance in Nauru's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) including the 22 Nauru-flagged vessels which continue to generate revenue for Nauru.

The minister confirms that due to COVID-19, 100 per cent purse seine observer coverage has been suspended, forcing a reliance on other means to observe fish catches.

"Observers have always played a vital role in verifying vessels' catch and compliance."

The minister adds that the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) are working on a plan to redeploy observers and develop procedures and protocols to ensure the safety of observers from COVID and prevent the virus from coming to shore.

Despite COVID and the temporary suspension of fisheries observers, Minister Dowiyogo confirms there has been no difficulty in selling its fishing days for 2021 and following bilateral agreements, the sale of Nauru's fishing days for 2022 are confirmed.

Community consultations on establishing community fisheries management sub-committees is progressing as well as a milkfish fry survey to assess the abundance and distribution of fries around Nauru. The first review of the survey results will be available after six months – in November.

Mullet fries were also collected during the process and will be used to experiment how fast they will grow.

Meanwhile the fish aggregating device (FAD) monitoring and deployment is an ongoing program and new materials haven been received to replace missing FADs.

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The COVID pandemic and flight disruptions have halted milkfish farming and giant clam activities preventing the import of fries, clam seedlings and brood stocks.

Training in mid-water fishing methods and giant squid exploratory fishing has also been delayed.

Transport

Minister Hunt says the transport department signed an MOU acknowledging Nauru's commitments to the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program (USOAP) which ensures Nauru maintains aviation safety standards as well as completing draft civil aviation safety and security compliance documents.

The minister thanks the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) for supporting a solar photovoltaic project valued at US\$400,000. The installation of the solar system at the airport has the potential to conserve 40 to 60 per cent of the power consumption rate during daylight hours.

Also in airport infrastructure, initial expert scoping for the runway resurfacing project was undertaken in late July under the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP)

The vehicle registration and infrastructure division (VRID) continues to operate at a steady pace, with an android mobile app in operation enabling authorities to access vehicle registration information instantly on site whenever needed.

The app is used by the land transport team and the Nauru Police Force.

Minister Hunt confirms the provision of five coaster buses by the Chief Secretary's Administration and Operations division which will also provide transport for education staff.

Justice – Correctional Centre

Justice Minister Eoe highlights that reform and rehabilitation programs for inmates are vital to the detention of a person, noting the concern in the growing number of young offenders being imprisoned.

"The whole process is to ensure that the person is rehabilitated and is able to return to the community as a reformed person," Minister Eoe said.

Correctional Centre projects - poultry, egg and vegetable farming and the reintroduction of fish farming are going strong with the support of the Taiwan Technical Mission.

The correctional services is working with the justice department to introduce a learning program for juvenile inmates as part of their rehabilitation program to ensure entry in to learning institutes such as TVET and USP.

The correctional service has also been helpful in the reduction of dogs program and cleaning of cemeteries.

Chief Secretary Department

President Aingimea updated parliament on the recent work of the department of chief secretary, first with the 95 per cent department restructure and 95 per cent completion of public servant oaths.

For two months up to September the HR department had advertised 90 job vacancies across 17 departments, attracting 182 applications and 67 appointments.

The introduction of the biometric clocking system has seen ten clocks placed around various departments in the overall effort to improve service delivery for the public through better staff attendance. The clocks are shared among 17 departments.

The 2016 initiative was implemented in March this year and 20 additional biometric clocks are expected to ensure full coverage across government departments including those located off-site.

A recent adjustment in the pay cycle now reflects salaries paid in real time rather than assumed attendance. A pay period will now commence from Wednesday to Tuesday each fortnight and salaries paid the day after, Wednesday, fortnightly.



Nauru Health to include pneumococcal, rotavirus and HPV vaccines in immunisation schedule

Health

In health, two medical charters to Taiwan were conducted in March and August. Thanks to the accepting generosity of the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) a total of 73 patients with additional family escorts were able to undergo urgent treatment, some of which were life-saving.

Health Minister Dageago was also pleased to announce the donation of four dialysis machines by Taiwan.

In addition to the existing five units, the department has further purchased three units to boost the level of dialysis service and care.

The immunisation schedule is expanding to include the pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines for infants, and the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine to be introduced to girls aged 11 to 14 years.

Minister Dageago says Nauru has high rates of cervical cancer and the introduction of the HPV vaccine will help reduce the rates.

"Nevertheless, women are encouraged to visit the hospital or Naoero Public Health Centre for your yearly or two-yearly pap smear test for early detection and treatment of cervical cancer."

The department also welcomed the new Deputy Secretary for Health Andrew O'Connell, Director of Medical Services Dr Lincoln Menda, and ER physician Dr Samuel Andrews.

Although COVID-19 has delayed many processes, local and overseas recruitment plans are underway to fill the gaps in medical staff workforce which is at 68 per cent.

The six month bulk order of medical supplies continues to be flown in on Nauru Airlines while activating the procurement and stock system, M-Supply has given foresight for tracking, consumption, order and deliveries minimising the risk of stock-outs.

Currently there are nine active cases of tuberculosis (TB) on treatment and one on presumptive treatment.

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TB nurses and support staff visit patients at home daily to ensure they are compliant with their medication; while education, awareness and aggressive TB screening is also being carried out on a house-to-house approach.

Minister Dageago adds that TB is a curable disease and should not be stigmatised against.

Health - COVID-19 Vaccine Roll Out

In regards to COVID-19, Minister Dageago says cases of the Alpha variant has been reported in 193 countries; 141 countries reported cases of the Beta variant; the Gamma variant in 91 countries, and the Delta in 170 countries.

Nauru is among ten Pacific island countries who remain COVID-free; however new cases continue to be reported in a number of countries in the Western Pacific region.

The Taskforce was able to acquire 5,850 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and is expected within the last quarter of the year.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) granted the Pfizer vaccine emergency use listing (EUL) on 31 December 2020, and recommends use in children aged 16 to 12 years.

NRC

Minister for Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation, Reagan Aliklik says the higher ground initiative (HGI) plans to move people from the coastal area to topside “must be more than just a hasty retreat from the ocean.”

“On Topside, we have the opportunity to build a new future, a better way of doing things, a smarter nation.”

The joint collaboration project team of NPC and Ronphos are working on the 10 hectare land portion 230 that will be the site of Nauru’s first smart village.

The minister is confident the work will be complete by the end of the third quarter of 2022 with sections of it ready for construction earlier.

Minister Aliklik says one of the biggest challenges at the moment is not having enough workers to move the project forward faster.

The company is also investing in its workers through literacy and skills development.

The minister announced the creation of an HGI Ministerial Troika comprising Minister Aliklik, Minister for Finance Martin Hunt and Minister for CIE, Infrastructure, and Climate change and National Resilience, Rennier Gadabu.

The Troika will provide ministerial guidance and support to the HGI steering committee.

On top of the ongoing support offered to the port and government housing scheme, NRC continues to offer assistance to ongoing national developments including land clearing requests for new homeowners.

Finance – Higher Ground Initiative

Minister Hunt says financing for HGI is a critical investment in Nauru’s future and will create good paying jobs and new domestic industries in Nauru.

“If we do this correctly, the investments we make today will pay for themselves many times over in the years to come.



Additional AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccine for under 18s expected soon

“This is obviously in addition to the clear and immediate benefits of things like quality housing, parks, and community spaces,” Minister Hunt said.

Infrastructure - Higher Ground Initiative

As the Minister for CIE, climate change and infrastructure, Rennier Gadabu agrees that HGI is more than an adaptation response to climate change – “it is about building a smarter nation.”

American urban design and planning firm, Metrocology, has been engaged to support the master planning process for land portion 230.

Minister Gadabu says Metrocology has experience in working with small island communities and has recruited a team of internationally recognised urban planners, architects, and designers selected to meet Nauru’s specific needs for HGI.

Micronesian Presidents’ Summit

President Aingimea updated parliament on the virtual meeting of Micronesian Presidents from 30 August to 2 September, which culminated in the five presidents endorsing and adopting the Naoero Communiqué.

The summit centred on development of air and sea transportation, highlighting the high and fluctuating costs and spasmodic servicing; subregional security including climate change and sea level rise, transnational crime, and illegal fishing.

Nauru will continue in its role as interim secretariat of the MPS until the establishment of the secretariat.

NORI

President Aingimea continued to present the recent initiatives of Nauru Ocean Resources Inc., (NORI) to the community such as training and capacity building through tertiary scholarships and funding a science program for high school students which will take them through to foundation science programs with the USP and onto degree level studies at USP, New Zealand or Australia.

Up until August, NORI has awarded seven small to medium scale community projects totalling \$46,500, for education-based projects and sports.

NORI has also committed to assist the Nauru Farmers and Growers Association to provide breadfruit seedlings as part of long-term food security planning.

Public Service Report

President Aingimea then presented the public service annual report ending June 2020 noting that the last report was tabled in parliament in August 2017 for the financial year ending June 2015.

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The annual report provides an overview of achievements against operational performance of departments as well as the government's approach to good governance, transparency, and accountability in the management of government resources.

The president says the report is instrumental in its approach to the increase or decline in public service performance in achieving its development goals under the NSDS.

Education

Minister for Education Richard Menke says the department has surpassed one of its key performance indicators of student attendance by a significant margin of 15 per cent.

Although another tough year lies ahead with teacher shortage, budgetary measures this year looks to double the numbers for teacher training in early childhood education.

Other developments include a 12-month MoU with the Australian Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) to provide up skilling for TVET trainers, course subsidies and micro-credential opportunities in digital literacy essentials.

As Fiji remains in lockdown, the minister assures the House that the 14 government-sponsored scholarship students in Fiji continue their studies through online learning and weekly allowances provided for them and their billeted host families.

The students eligible to receive the COVID vaccine have done so with two doses; similarly for government-sponsored students in Queensland.

Congratulations go to recent university graduates Jeson Peo and Clance Harris for attaining a Diploma of Science from Griffith College and Bachelor of Government and International Relations from Griffith University, Queensland, respectively.

The minister also acknowledges recently announced scholarship awardees for 2019 and the 2020 national awardees which were dominated by five females.

“The results for our national exams for 2020 were just two per cent short of its targeted key performance indicator. Despite this shortfall, the pass rate exceeded the results of the previous five years,” Minister Menke said.

Incidents of school bullying have dropped notably with the three schools involved in the Adopt a Cop program.

The Able-Disable Centre recently acquired a special bus, courtesy of the government of Japan; and 12 bicycles and scooters from DFAT Australia.

Another achieved key performance indicator is the establishment of the TVET Industry Advisory Committee comprising state owned companies, designed to strengthen TVET's relations and improve compliance with local industry skills and needs.

Multicultural Affairs

Deputy Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Asterio Appi says regional processing remains a key pillar of the Australian government's Operation Sovereign Borders in combating people smuggling throughout the region.

Australia has reiterated its commitment to an ongoing regional processing capability on Nauru, and signed an MoU for enduring capability of the centre.

The enduring capability of regional processing is a contingency model focusing on facilities management and is expected to take effect on 1 January 2022.

Nauru Post

Nauru Post continues to seek a waiver of Nauru's long standing UPU debts in arrears which go as far back as the 1980s, totalling approximately AUD\$3 million.

A proposal to reserve a seat on each of the UPU's Council of Administration and Postal Operations Council was met with unanimous support at the 2021 UPU Congress.

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2020 national exams just 2% short of targeted key performance indicator, minister says

Gazette 156-21: Electoral (Survey or Poll) Regulations 2021

Gazette 156-21: Electoral (Survey or Poll) Regulations 2021.

1. Citation - Electoral (Survey or Poll) Regulations 2021;
2. Commencement - 12 October 2021;
3. Notice for survey or poll – will be published in the Gazette outlining the details of the proposed survey or poll;
4. Eligibility to participate in survey or poll - you are eligible if you are registered on the Roll of voters;
5. Voting in survey or poll - is compulsory and a voter who fails to vote and is not exempted from voting commits an offence and is liable to a penalty not exceeding \$100;
6. Procedures for voting in survey or poll - the necessary modifications for voting in or conducting a survey or poll will be used;
7. Manner of voting - shall be by ballot contained in Form 1 in the Schedule and each voter shall indicate his or her 'Yes' or 'No' vote;
8. Determining result of survey or poll - ballot papers will be counted and the results certified by the Electoral Commission;
9. Declaration of result of survey or poll - the Electoral Commission will certify the number of Yes and No votes; provide the results to Cabinet or Speaker; and publish the results in the Gazette.

The Regulations also contain a schedule with Form 1 (Ballot paper) and Form 2 (Certificate of Results of [Survey/Poll*]).

View the full regulations (Gazette 156), notices of registration and electoral transfer and other gazettes at <http://naurugov.nr/government-information-office/government-gazette.aspx>

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Deputy Minister Menke says the Pacific islands have not been represented on either body in the past 50 years.

Nauru Post has also been proactive when it chartered a flight, at a cost of \$135,000, to bring in subsidised essential food products in response to sudden food shortage when cargo vessel MV Papa Mau returned to Fiji after its crew tested positive for COVID-19.

ICT

Deputy Minister for ICT, Pyon Deiye says the department is making progress in connecting all government departments to the network, while fibre connectivity at the Meneñ offices have been established.

In recent months ICT has hosted cyber security workshops with various departments and training commenced at the training centre funded by Taiwan with lessons delivered virtually by the Taiwan Digital Opportunity Centre.

NRPC

Deputy Minister Appi says the assistance of Wilson Security in providing training for Certificate II of security operations saw 38 Nauruans qualified in the subject.

Training for certificate in first aid was also undertaken with 523 participants from government departments, state owned companies and the community complete the training.

Nauru Airlines

Mr Appi went on to present an update on Nauru Airlines outlining that the COVID environment continues to reshape regular airline business.

Despite changes to travel the airline maintains passenger flights, which have increased to weekly with additional freighter flights to help keep the island stocked with essential food and medical supplies.

Deputy Minister Appi says airline crew continue to “endure repeated quarantine, frequent COVID testing and many personal restrictions making their lives difficult.”

In the last quarter, passenger numbers allowed in to Brisbane dwindled to 25 per fortnight but since the introduction of weekly passenger flights, that number increased to 25 a week.

While passenger numbers could double, the airline remains challenged to make operations viable.

The airline has also been able to provide special charters for repatriation, Qantas freight, and an Olympic charter to transport athletes from Nauru and other Pacific Island teams making their dreams to participate at the Olympic Games a reality.

The airline’s human resource assets continues to flourish with funding for cadet pilot training, pilot engineer and CEO qualifications and licencing, manager and quality assurance certifications.

Meantime, the redeployment program is in its second year keeping airlines’ staff employed, albeit in other workplaces, as flying operations are reduced.

NPRT

The Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust (NPRT) continues to work on consolidating its operations in Australia, the US, Philippines and in Nauru.

Deputy Minister Appi announced the government has increased the payout rate for RONWAN from five per cent annually to 10 per



Challenges remain for airline to make operations viable despite weekly passenger flights to Australia

cent commencing this year. This requires a total commitment from treasury of \$11.6 million this financial year.

The 2021 RONWAN payout is therefore expected to be distributed closer to the end of the 2021 calendar year.

The eight-year long legal proceedings between the NPRT and a former expat staff reached successful negotiations and settlement and were officially closed, ending NPRTs operations in Australia.

DM Appi says this was the one outstanding matter in Australia since NPRT’s Melbourne office was closed in 2015.

BILLS

Five bills were tabled in parliament on 7 September proposing amendments and subsequently passed by the House.

Nauru Lands Committee (Amendment) Bill 2021

President Lionel Aingimea tabled the bill explaining it is a procedural amendment as a consequence of the Nauru Court of Appeal Act 2018. The Nauru Lands Committee Act 1956 established the Nauru Lands Committee, and provides for the powers and functions of the Committee.

Section 7 (3) of the Nauru Lands Committee Act makes it mandatory that there shall be no further appeals of decisions made by the Supreme Court which was the final appellate court of Nauru until 2018 when the Nauru Court of Appeal was established.

Cont pg 9...

Price Control Order No.4-2021 replaces all previous price orders for the following items as follows:

- i. Maximum wholesale price at which diesel may be sold as \$1.6291/litre
- ii. Maximum wholesale price at which petrol may be sold as \$1.7475/litre
- iii. Maximum wholesale price at which JetA1 may be sold as \$1.0938/litre
- iv. Maximum retail price at which diesel may be sold as \$1.9291/litre
- v. Maximum retail price at which petrol may be sold as \$2.0475/litre
- vi. Maximum retail price at which Jet A1 may be sold as \$1.3938/litre

Prices in this order become effective within 7 days from the date of Gazette notice 165-2021, published on 21 October 2021.

Parliament September

...from pg 8

Upon establishment it replaced the High Court of Australia as the final appellate court.

“The High Court of Australia, then, was deliberately not given the jurisdiction to hear any appeals relating to land and constitutional matters as they were more domestic matters for the Republic and its people,” President Aingimea said.

The amendment to section 7(3) now reads: A judgment of the Supreme Court given on an appeal under this Section is appealable to the Nauru Court of Appeal on a point of law only.

The Nauru Court of Appeal gives an opportunity for any aggrieved person to challenge the decision of the Supreme Court.

The proposed amendment also makes the Act consistent with Section 19(2)(c) of the Nauru Court of Appeal Act 2018.

Motor Traffic (Amendment) Bill 2021

Finance Minister Martin Hunt tabled amendments to the Act which focus on the rules of classical vehicles and their importation.

The definition of classic vehicle is used to import vehicles older than 12 years, such as vintage cars and land rovers.

Minister Hunt says many importers abuse this by labelling their vehicles, which have a short operational life and not environmentally compliant, as such to subvert the 12-year rule.

Such vehicles quickly break down resulting in being discarded on road sides or topside, posing an eyesore and severe environmental hazards.

The Bill also prohibits importation of non-environmentally-friendly vehicles.

The transfer of vehicle number plates is permitted provided there is prior approval of the registrar of motor vehicles.

Section 38 now provides speed limits for different areas such as schools, hospitals and churches, to ensure the safety for school children, patients and church members in and around these places.

A driver who fails to stop at a police check point will now also be fined.

Section 69 inserts a new section allowing police to detain a driver who is intoxicated for up to 12 hours to prevent them from endangering themselves or others.

The detention allows the person to sober up before he or she is interviewed or interrogated – a value judgement that the police will have to exercise to ensure that a person being interviewed is fully conscious and sober enough to speak, otherwise evidence will not be allowed in court.

The Bill’s explanatory notes suggest that “blacking out or excessive alcohol consumption should not be used as a defence in court.”

The Bill also provides the inclusion of speed measuring devices such as amphoter, radar gun and laser gun. The laser gun is currently used in Nauru.

Illicit Drugs Control (Amendment) Bill 2021

Home Affairs Minister, Isabella Dageago says the 24-hour reporting period for the seizure of suspected illicit drugs, drug test and informing the suspect and the lawyer of the results is impracticable, and proposed an extension for 72 hours.

The minister says this “will allow the police to do their job properly and carefully.”

Issue 6-2021/231 • 2 November 2021



Motor Traffic Act amendment allows police to detain an intoxicated driver for up to 12 hours

“The proposed timeline of 72 hours will not only ensure that evidence is collected and properly preserved, but it is sufficient time for an illicit drug test to be carried out, a certificate of the test to be issued and a report to be completed.”

Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2021

Minister for Justice, Maverick Eoe tabled amendments to the Legal Practitioners Act 2019 which makes provisions for the provision of legal services by legal practitioners, regulate their conduct and the practice of law, and introduce a framework for people to raise complaints on the quality and costs of legal services.

The amendment also reconstitutes the tribunal to consist of three persons rather than one, which was a judge of the Supreme Court or a person duly qualified under the Constitution to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court.

The three members of the tribunal now include a person qualified to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court, who will also be the chairperson; a legal practitioner employed by the government; and a legal practitioner who has practiced for 10 years or more in private practice.

The appointing authority for the members of the tribunal is now replaced to be the minister for justice; and the Nauru Law Society is given a say in the appointment process.

The Act provides that the practicing certificate of a legal practitioner may be cancelled if they have been convicted of a criminal offence involving dishonesty and fraud, to now include conviction of a criminal offence under the Crimes Act 2016.

The Bill also ensures that a complaint against a legal practitioner is heard and determined by the tribunal within three months, otherwise the legal practitioner’s practicing certificate may be suspended until the determination of the complaint.

Parliamentary Pension (Amendment) Bill 2021

President Lionel Aingimea proposed changes to the Parliamentary Pension Act 2008 to amend the fixed pensions of members of parliament (MP) to one linked to the ratio of the salaries of MPs.

The president says while the salaries of MPs and public servants have increased, the parliamentary pensions have not.

“In the past on some occasions, members of parliament pensions have been affected due to the issues raised in parliament of differences amongst politicians. We need to stop this culture.”

Clause 7 provides that the pension cannot be reduced by another parliament •

Acts of Parliament and subordinate legislation can be found at http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/

Gazette 172-21: Notice of Poll

Electoral Act 2016
Office of the Electoral Commission

Notice is hereby given to persons whose names are registered on the Roll of voters that the Electoral Commission will carry out a Poll seeking voters' opinions on the following issue:

'Should the membership of Parliament including the Office of the President and Ministers be reserved for Nauruans and their descendants, who became Nauruan citizens in 1968, when the Constitution came into force?'

The Poll will be conducted on 13th November 2021 from 9am to 6pm at the following locations:

- Aiwo [Centennial Hall]
- Buada [Buada Chapel Hall]
- Denigomodu [Nauru College]
- Nibok [Nibok Infant School]
- Uaboe [Lands Committee vicinity]
- Baiti [Old petrol station, Beduwo]
- Ewa [Sacred Heart College, Kayser College]
- Anetan [Anetan Infant School]
- Anabar [Fishers of Men Church Hall]
- Ijuw [Open area, Volleyball court]
- Anibare [Nauru Fisheries]
- Meneñ [Meneñ Infant School]
- Yaren [Yaren Primary School]
- Boe [Boe Infant School]

The counting of the votes will take place at the Parliamentary Chamber, on Saturday, 13th November 2021, at 7pm.

The Electoral Commission shall, immediately after the counting of the votes, certify the results of the Poll and publish the certified results of the Poll in the Gazette.

The manner in which the Poll shall be conducted shall include voting in person or by Proxy Voting.
Take notice that voting in the Poll is mandatory.

Published in Government Gazette 172-21, 29 October 2021.

Gazette 160-21: Dog Management and Control (Import) Regulations 2021

1. Citation - Dog Management and Control (Import) Regulations 2021.
2. Commencement – 18 October 2021.
3. Restriction on importation of dogs – an import permit is required from the Director of Quarantine before importation; failure to do so attracts a fine not exceeding \$5,000.
4. Seizure and destruction of dog - a dog imported without a permit will be seized and destroyed.
5. Application for dog import permit – owners to fill in Form; comply with importation requirement - 14 days prior to lodging the application for a dog import permit with the Director of Quarantine; provide the approval letters from quarantine and the aircraft or vessel carrying the dog; evidence of payment of the fee.
6. Dog import requirements - Before a dog is imported, it shall be: desexed and vaccinated for rabies, canine parvovirus, distemper, canine hepatitis, and leptospirosis.
7. Dog import permit – will be issued by quarantine.
8. Dog import permit shall not be assigned by the applicant to another person; failure attracts a fine not exceeding \$5,000.
9. Aircraft or vessel not to permit transportation of dogs to Nauru without a copy of a dog import permit; the Director of Quarantine shall decline to off-load the dog if it's without an import permit.
10. Prohibited dogs - American pit bull terrier; Rottweiler; American bulldog; Bullmastiff; Siberian husky; Staffordshire bull terrier; Bull terrier; American bully; Miniature terrier; Boston terrier; Boxer; Alapaha blue blood bulldog; Dogo argentine; Doberman.
Penalty not exceeding \$10,000; seized dogs shall be destroyed; the Minister may amend the list of approved dog breeds; prohibited dogs may be imported only with approval of the Cabinet.
11. Approved country of import – only from Australia.
12. Import permit fee - \$1,000.

View the full regulations (Gazette 160), the schedules and other gazettes at <http://naurugov.nr/government-information-office/government-gazette.aspx>



republic of nauru

President receives German ambassador

President Lionel Aingimea virtually received the credentials of Germany's Dr Thomas Fitschen accrediting him as Ambassador of Germany to Nauru, 16 September.

President Aingimea offered Nauru's congratulations and looks forward to engaging in positive dialogue and cooperation in areas of mutual interest and concern.

The histories of both countries are interwoven since Nauru became a German protectorate from 1888 to 1914. German words such as the days of the week are incorporated in the Nauruan vernacular.

"Stretching over many years, this relationship has prospered and strengthened through mutual cooperation and shared values and goals within international forums," President Aingimea said.

The President expressed the government's appreciation for the many initiatives and support Germany offers to Nauru in climate change and resilience as well as the many programs in capacity building.

Nauru and Germany officially established the Group of Friends on Climate Change and Security in the United Nations in 2018, realising the detrimental impacts of climate change to livelihoods and society and as the biggest security risk to small island states such as Nauru.

Ambassador Fitschen is confident that Germany and Nauru's cooperation against climate change "can contribute to preventing people from being deprived of their livelihoods and to strengthen security particularly in the Pacific."

"But ultimately, it is diplomacy that is key to success in order to tackle our challenges."



Ambassador of Germany to Nauru, Dr Thomas Fitschen presented his credentials virtually on 16 September

The Ambassador says, over a hundred years after Germany ended its protectorate status over Nauru, "our countries still have special ties. Our countries are connected via diplomacy, international relations and development."

"Our friendship has an outstanding basis to further strengthen our ties and to build upon existing cooperation.

"This I will keep supporting until the remainder of my term," the Ambassador said.

Ambassador Fitschen joined Germany's foreign service in 1990 and since 2019 is currently the ambassador of Germany to the Commonwealth of Australia in Canberra.

Prior to arriving in Australia, the ambassador was the Federal Foreign Office's Special Representative for Cyber Foreign Policy and Cybersecurity •

Gazette 149-21: Illicit Drugs Control (Drug Testing Kit) Regulations 2021

Gazette 149-21: Under the Illicit Drugs Control Act 2014, the Commissioner of Police, Iven Notte, appoints the following as authorised persons for the purposes of conducting illicit drug tests under the Illicit Drugs Control (Drug Testing Kit) Regulations 2021:

1. Deputy Commissioner of Police Kalinda Blake
2. Superintendent Imran Scotty
3. Inspector Fernando Dabuae
4. Inspector Iyo Adam
5. Sergeant Dan Botelanga
6. Sergeant Rory Detageouwa
7. Constable Aduor Tom
8. Constable Febrela Ika
9. Senior Constable Troy Detageouwa
10. Senior Constable Lambrusco Namaduk
11. Sergeant Seraima Aremwa
12. Sergeant Kitty Biang
13. Sergeant Kirsty Karl

Gazette 173-21: Notice of Delivery of Written Declaration of Intent to Contest General Election For 2022

Electoral Act 2016
Office of the Electoral Commission

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 135A(3) of the Electoral Act 2016, a person intending to contest the General Election for 2022, must deliver his or her written declaration of intent to the Electoral Commission by no later than 5.00pm on the 30th day of November 2021.

Any declaration delivered after 5.00pm on 30th November 2021 will not be accepted pursuant to the requirements of Section 135A(1).

FORM OF DECLARATION OF INTENT

A declaration of intent to contest the General Election for 2022 is to be made in the prescribed Form 1 of the Electoral (Declaration of Intent) Regulations 2021.

The form can be accessed at <https://www.nauru.gov.nr/government-information-office/government-gazette/gazette-2021.aspx>

Published in Government Gazette 173-21, 29 October 2021.

First Polish ambassador accredited

President Lionel Aingimea received Michal Kolodziejski as the first ambassador of Poland to Nauru in a virtual ceremony, 16 September.

President Aingimea acknowledged the momentous appointment and looks forward to fostering and strengthening the relationship for the mutual benefit of Nauru and Poland.

“Poland’s successful economic transformation is well noted and indeed we look forward to the sharing of experience and Poland’s support for our national development efforts including economic development,” President Aingimea said.

Ambassador Kolodziejski expressed appreciation for Nauru’s support of Poland so far in elections to international bodies, noting the shared historical similarities such as the struggle for independence and strong commitments to the United Nations.

“We would be pleased to continue our multilateral collaboration to promote our shared interests, in particular regarding global security and stability, as well as action against climate change.

“During my mission I would like to enhance our [Poland] modest economic cooperation,” the Ambassador said, underscoring Poland’s continued support for Nauru’s economic development and prosperity in the whole region through contributions within the European Union.

President receives Australian ambassador

President Lionel Aingimea received the new Australian high commissioner to Nauru at the presentation of credentials, 6 October.

On arrival at the government offices, High Commissioner-designate Dr Helen Cheney presented copies of her letter of credence to Secretary for Foreign Affairs & Trade, Ms Chitra Jeremiah before being received by the Commissioner of Police, Iven Notte for the playing of the national anthems of Nauru and Australia and the inspection of the Nauru Police Force Guard of Honour.

Following was the presentation of credentials in the Office of the President.

President Aingimea congratulates High Commissioner Cheney and expresses full confidence in her ability to further strengthen the positive ties of friendship and family between Nauru and Australia and their people.

“Nauru has benefitted immensely from Australia’s generous assistance and support over the years and when needed most, especially during this difficult time of COVID-19 you [Australia] have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Nauru,” President Aingimea said.

Dr Helen Cheney is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and was most recently director, Regional Trade Agreements Division. She has previously served in Bangkok and Jakarta and in Australia Dr Cheney has had extensive experience in the non-government sector focused on development, sustainable communities and policy research.

Dr Cheney holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Development Studies); and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from La Trobe University; a Master of Arts (Women’s Studies) from the University of Melbourne; and a Graduate Certificate (Mineral Economics)



Ambassador Michal Kolodziejski became his country’s first ambassador to Nauru

Ambassador Kolodziejski began his diplomatic service in 2004 and is also accredited to Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Vanuatu and the Marshall Islands.

On a lighter note, it’s acknowledged that a people-to-people connection long exists with the two countries in the marriage of Polish national, Miroslawa, to former president of Nauru Kinza Clodumar •



Dr Helen Cheney inspecting the police guard of honour before presenting her credentials to President Aingimea

from Curtin University.

Dr Cheney succeeds Angela Tierney who served in the role from 2018 until June 2021.

Australia and Nauru share a long history of friendship and support with deep historical and cultural ties, and strong people-to-people connections. Nauru looks forward to further deepening the relations and cooperation in the bilateral, multilateral and international arena.

Australia has stood with Nauru in its pursuit of keeping Nauru coronavirus-free and assisted with procuring vaccines and personal protective equipment for frontline workers.

Australia is Nauru’s key partner in trade, investment, and development. Both countries value the partnership against people smuggling and the regional processing centre hosted by Nauru.

The Government of Australia is working to support sustainable infrastructure, strengthened health and education sectors, and economic resilience in Nauru •

Nauru pays tribute to former honorary-consul Kartar Singh Bhalla

Nauru pays tribute to former honorary-consul Kartar Singh Bhalla

On behalf of the government and people of Nauru, His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea pays tribute to the late Kartar Singh Bhalla, who served Nauru as parliamentary counsel from 1982 to 1984, then as honorary-consul of Nauru in India from 1985 until November 2017.

In a condolence letter addressed to Mr Bhalla’s son, Charan, President Aingimea said, “He worked tirelessly during his tenure for the benefit of the people of Nauru. He valued his work with Nauru in a way that was unique in all of Nauru’s diplomatic corps.”

“He saw it through the eyes of someone who had been colonised and who knew what it means to serve the interests of one’s own country for the benefit of another.

“He worked hard in diversifying Nauru’s phosphate customer base in the early days. A work he and the late Hammer DeRoburt were in some way successful in doing.

“I salute his work. He was a remarkable human being, and, in his demise, Nauru lost a true friend and India lost one of their best diplomats and author who had written and published many books.”

My Bhalla passed away at home in India on Wednesday 6 October •



WARNING: DO NOT TOUCH Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

Report all discoveries of UXO and bullets, to the police (110) and emergency services (111), for removal.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), or more commonly referred to in Nauru as ‘bombs’ continue to be discovered around the island. The most recent find was around the Florro West store in Aiwo by Nauru Utilities linesmen during underground cable works.

While some may look harmless, they may be live and still pose serious harm or death if handled.

Anyone discovering UXOs are strongly advised to step away, do not touch or tamper with them and report them immediately to police on 110 or the emergency services on 111, for removal.

The Naoero Museum is also available on 5573999, to answer any questions relating to artefacts and other war-related items.



UXO found in Boe district was removed by authorities

The Nauru Bulletin is a fortnightly publication of the Government of the Republic of Nauru.

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Republic of Nauru

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