



Nauru Bulletin

Issue 18 - 2024/283

Nauru-Australia treaty

Treaty to bolster Nauru's economic security and resilience

His Excellency President David Adeang and Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced the elevation of their two nations long-standing relationship to an integrated economic, social and security partnership by signing the Nauru–Australia Treaty, 9 December.

In a joint statement, the two leaders said, as highlighted by the United Nations Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI), Nauru faces significant economic challenges due to its limited natural resources, connectivity, geographic isolation, narrow economic base, and small exclusive economic zone.

These vulnerabilities, compounded by de-banking and climate change risks, demand urgent, collaborative action to build resilience and sustainable growth.

The Nauru–Australia Treaty is a testament to our bilateral relationship that builds on the shared history, cultural affinity, and love of sport which bind our people.

Respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence will remain the cornerstone of our relations.

Under the Treaty, Australia will provide \$100 million over five years in direct budget support to further strengthen Nauru's economic security and resilience.

This support will assist to give the Government of Nauru fiscal certainty to invest in Nauru's future, including by making deeper and long-term investments in education, health and social services to enhance the well-being of the Nauruan people.

Through the Treaty, we will ensure Nauru does not risk being de-banked again, which is a fundamental threat to its economic security and access to banking services.

We are pleased to announce that the Commonwealth Bank of Australia will commence banking operations in Nauru in 2025, replacing services currently provided by the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank. We thank the Commonwealth Bank for its support.

We are committed to a peaceful, prosperous, and secure region.



Australia will provide budgetary support to further strengthen Nauru's economic security and resilience, and policing needs.

Our new partnership is about contributing to that — for our people, our countries and our region.

We will do this by expanding and deepening our security cooperation and committing to consult on developments that threaten our sovereignty, peace or stability.

Australia commits to maintaining its standing as Nauru's primary security partner through \$40 million in new investments that will support Nauru's policing and security needs. This includes Australian support for police and broader national security, capital infrastructure, training, equipment, recruitment and retention.

To underpin this commitment, both countries will mutually agree on any engagement by others in Nauru's security and key critical infrastructure sectors and have agreed that critical infrastructure shall not be used by any third party for security purposes.

This reflects our understanding that as Pacific countries our interests are intertwined and decisions taken by one can affect the interests of the other.

Work is underway to establish a joint committee to support the Treaty's implementation and regular consultation and dialogue between our nations. We share an intention for the Treaty to enter into force at the earliest possible date in 2025. //

November parliament sitting

2023-24 Annual development fund

His Excellency President David Adeang presented the Annual Development Fund report for financial year 2023-24 which outlines the status of Nauru's development cash funding in the manner required by the Development Fund Act 2011.



The President said the total of \$4.9 million received in cash from development partners is 169 per cent of what was projected in the Development Fund Projection FY 2023-24.

“It is a welcome result, showing the shared commitment with donors and partners towards the development of our nation.”

Forty-one per cent of spending went towards the social sector, with \$2.2 million spent on education including securing TAFE Queensland licencing and programs set for 2024-25 and supporting the government scholarship scheme.

Health received \$240,000 including for the trachoma research project and the HIV/STI project.

The infrastructure sector spending of \$2.1m accounts for 33 per cent of total expenditure focused on energy programs such as the Nauru Energy Efficiency Demand Side Project (NEEDS) and Supporting Mainstreamed Achievement of Roadmap targets for Energy (SMARTEN) in Nauru.

The economic sector accounts for \$1m or 16 per cent for development focused on fisheries and Nauru Ocean Resources Inc., (NORI); while the the cross-cutting sector utilised \$700,000 for climate change and environment activities.

President Adeang say the government continues to work with line agencies and state owned enterprises through challenges and thanked donors and development partners for their continued support towards Nauru's development goals. //

Audited financials

President David Adeang tabled the audited annual financials for fiscal year 2019-20 which highlights both major and minor issues, including lapses, errors and non-compliance with some statutory requirements.



While these findings are not uncommon in complex financial management, President Adeang says they are taken seriously.

“The auditor-general has provided valuable recommendations to address these issues, and the government is committed to implementing necessary measures to strengthen our financial systems and prevent similar issues in the future,” President Adeang said.

The department of finance is addressing the backlog of past years' reports to bring up to date and ensure compliance with all statutory requirement and enhance timeliness and accuracy of Nauru's financial reporting.

President Adeang then referred the 2019-20 Annual Financials and the Audit report to the Public Accounts Committee for examination who then will report back to parliament with recommendations. //

Budget review meetings

The government's newly established mid-year budget review process is now one of the key tools used to improve accountability and transparency among government departments and state-owned entities.

Alongside the annual budget sessions, they will form the backbone of the national fiscal oversight system.

The process invites departments and SOEs to make a presentation to a combined treasury and ministerial team on their budget performance for the previous financial year and on their progress in the current financial year.

As minister for finance, President David Adeang presented the first roll out of the process to parliament saying he was highly impressed by the high-quality

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Budget review meetings

...from pg 2

preparation by entities and the serious and cooperative nature of their responses to questions and challenges posed by the minister and the finance panel.

“A key feature for me has been the possibility to view the plans and prospects of related SOEs and to better see how their joint pursuit of their plans could further advance our economic development and how the failure of collaborating might hinder growth,” the President said.

The first review meetings were held in October and November for government departments and SOEs, respectively.

A key message from the departmental review was the importance of maintaining a consistent and efficient flow of activities throughout the financial year. Failure to spend allocated budgets is inefficient and often leads to frivolous expenditure in the closing weeks of the year.

“Hopefully this process will help to eradicate this practice and move us to a more efficient and sustainable fiscal operation.”

The meetings are an opportunity for departments and SOEs to explain their successes and challenges as well as to provide an indication of the risks they face in carrying out their mandates.

Annual operating plans (AOP) are compared with budget and expenditure information for department, and SOEs, Statements of Corporate Intent (SCI) are compared with current accounting reports and audited financial statements. //

Ministry of transport

Minister for Transport Reagan Aliklik updated the parliament on recent and ongoing developments of the department covering improvements to the flight information centre (FIC) communication system, runway resurfacing, vehicle registration and insurance, and the reintroduction of public transport service with electric buses.

The Nauru Civil Aviation Authority and Airservices Australia carried out significant work on the FIC communication equipment and radio systems in October.

The five-member technical team from Airservices Australia were in-country for a week and replaced the satellite phones in the FIC tower and the communication equipment fine tuned at the non-directional beacon site. Enhancing communication with aircraft pilots.

“This is a significant improvement which has increased the high frequency communication signals reaching up to 450 nautical miles from shore thus putting safety at the forefront of Nauru’s aviation agenda,” Minister Aliklik said.

The recent procurement of a lighting tower and a 250kVA generator with a capacity of 25 hours of continuous operation will provides the necessary emergency power backup bringing the authority a step closer to complying with international safety standards.

Recently, six staff members from the aerodrome, safety, security, and maintenance sections, completed training at the Singapore Aviation Academy.

Sponsored by the Singapore Civil Aviation Authority, the training covered auditing techniques and best practice in aviation security; International Civil aviation Organisation (ICAO) annex 14 requirements; aviation foundation program; air traffic flow management; climate change and aviation sustainability.

Discussions are being held with the Singapore Civil Aviation Authority to expand the co-operation into broader training programs.

After several setbacks in the COVID-19 period, the runway resurfacing project has regained momentum following the scoping team’s visit in recent weeks to assess the final preparations.

Stemming from the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP), the project is expected to commence in April 2025 beginning with the investigation of potential anomalies which have been identified under the existing runway.

The resurfacing works will be implemented between October and December 2025.

The Vehicle Registration and Insurance Division (VRID) purchased a vehicle number plate embossing machine and will soon be producing plates locally after the machine’s arrival in January 2025.

The overhead cost savings from printing plates locally will be significant and the turnaround time for orders will be quicker and more affordable for the public.

Meanwhile, one of two electric buses have arrived and their use in the public transport system will mark the first step in Nauru’s transition towards a more sustainable and cleaner future.

Led by the SMARTEN project under the Department of Climate Change and National Resilience the second bus is expected in the next voyage.

The electric buses will provide public transportation servicing the main bitumen roads, avoiding unsealed off-road areas including the MQ residences in Denig-Aiwo until access and road conditions are improved.

The service will eventually be a user-pay system to ensure sustainable operations. The regular conventional fuel-based buses will continue to operate on a non-profit program providing transport of schools and churches free of charge. //

Ministry of Education

The Department of Education and Training remains steadfast in providing quality learning environment for both students and teachers.

Minister Asterio Appi said in parliament, 26 November, the department is on track to increase the number of senior school graduates, both locally and abroad.

The introduction of targeted literacy and numeracy interventions in early education, designed to improve foundational skills are closely monitored.

A number of infrastructure projects for classrooms and ablution blocks are expected to open in the new school year catering to the growing school population.

Efforts to improve the teaching workforce is reflected in the newly established unit focused on recruitment and teacher retention. Particular attention is on the welfare of the expatriate teaching staff.

The number of local teachers with a minimum diploma qualification has increased due to the pre-service and in-service training program with the University of New England supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Two graduates with associate degree in secondary education and a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education are recent additions.

The temporary support staff project at Nauru College achieved addressing long-running issues of bullying and antisocial behavior, and provided a layer of guidance for the students and strengthened ties between the community and the school.

Improving student attendance rates is addressed through a community outreach program involving direct engagement with parents, district communities and stakeholders, emphasising the importance of education both for individuals and for societal advancement.

Meanwhile, six secondary school recipients of the 2019 Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) completed their high school education, while this year's government scholarship allocations were increased from 20 to 30 providing the opportunity for the recipients to continue their secondary education in either Australia or Fiji.



The final Ronwan distribution

Minister for Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust (NPRT) Shadlog Bernicke announced in parliament that the NPRT will distribute the final Ronwan capital instalment of five per cent commencing Monday, 9 December.



In accordance with the Ronwan Consolidation Act 2014, the NPRT had declared a total of \$115 million in Ronwan Capital for redistribution in 2014. Since then, beneficiaries of Ronwan have received a total of over \$109 million (95 per cent) of the amount through scheduled annual payouts. The remaining five per cent is set to be distributed next month.

This accomplishment reflects our steadfast dedication to safeguarding the interests of the Trust's beneficiaries and ensuring a comprehensive and meaningful conclusion for all those it has supported.

In his written statement, Minister Bernicke mentioned the NPRT will officially begin the process of winding down its operations upon completion of 100 per cent Ronwan payout.

The NPRT is expected to conclude its activities by 30 June 2025, and further announcements will be made regarding its closure plans and the final days for conducting Ronwan inquiries and other services for its beneficiaries.

The Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust Act was made in 25 January 1968 for the management of specific funds derived from payments made under the Nauru Phosphate Royalties payment and investments. //



Starlink in Nauru

Minister for Cenpac Corporation Shadlog Bernicke announced in November parliament the inauguration of the Pacific's first Starlink community gateway services in Nauru to commence on December 15. This initiative will significantly enhance regional connectivity and digital infrastructure.



The Starlink community gateway offers advanced technology for faster, more reliable data services at competitive prices, benefiting commercial enterprises and government entities.

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Cenpac's partnership with SpaceX aims to improve the quality of life for Nauruans by providing affordable internet and mobile services.

Additionally, Nauru plans to launch its 5G network by January 2025, with all preparatory work completed and the ground work completed with nine towers installed. This network will enhance mobile connectivity and digital experiences and services across the island.

Cenpac is dedicated to strengthening Nauru's telecommunications sector, addressing the fundamental internet needs of all citizens, as reliable internet is crucial for growth in today's world. //

RonPhos

Minister for RonPhos Shadlog Bernicke presented an update to parliament regarding the company's operations for the current year, which are focused on ensuring a sustainable future for both RonPhos and Nauru.

This year, RonPhos has successfully completed six phosphate shipments and is actively engaged in exploring and exporting to the Chinese market, reaffirming RonPhos commitment to expanding trade ties and strengthening its global presence.

Recently, RonPhos signed two contracts for shipments scheduled for December and January.



The company has successfully renegotiated its daily demurrage rates, achieving a 50 per cent reduction, and has significantly lowered demurrage payments through effective planning and timely stock preparations prior to vessel arrivals.

Additionally, several refurbishment initiatives have been finalized, resulting in marked improvements to RonPhos facilities and reinforcing the company's dedication to fostering a sustainable industry for the future.

Currently, RonPhos is pursuing a loan facility aimed at refurbishment, with the priority on upgrading the cantilever loading system to enhance and sustain the quality and efficiency of phosphate exports.

These achievements and initiatives reflect RonPhos' unwavering commitment to sustainable planning, ensuring that every decision made today contributes to a resilient and prosperous future for the company and the nation. //

Nauru Air Corporation

Minister for Nauru Air Corporation Asterio Appi tabled the key financial outcomes for the airline and related companies for the period ending June 2024 with some loss but an overall positive investment in services.

Nauru Air Corporation (NAC) and its subsidiaries, Nauru 33003 Leasing Corporation, SUNco Pty Ltd Holding Inc., and Nauru Leasing Corporation, are all wholly owned and ultimately controlled by the Government of Nauru.

The board of directors reported that NAC delivered on its primary mission of maintaining passenger and freight air services connecting Nauru to Australia and the Pacific.

Minister Appi said the last financial year also saw growth in passenger air services following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had on travel in preceding years.

The key financial outcomes for the 2024 financial year recorded a loss of \$6.6 million following four consecutive profitable years. However, the total consolidated equity increased from \$53.01m in 2023 to \$59.94m this financial year, and gross revenue is up by \$34.3m to \$108.4m. This is made up of \$95.5m in sale of services.

In the year ending June 2024 passenger flights increased to 933 flights carrying 52,248 passengers compared to 500 flights the previous year.

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The weekly Brisbane-Pacific connector service, supported by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT), was extended from Pohnpei to Palau in December 2023; while the weekly Brisbane to Palau service commenced in May for six months.

Freight air services maintains a healthy contribution to the company's financials, despite the slight drop in the number of flights and freight tonnage from 905 last financial year to 812 this year.

Minister Appi says charter and ACMI services remain critical to the airline's commercial sustainability.

"Looking ahead, the airline continues to strategically shift its cash and retained profits into asset and capability expansion, particularly in newer aircraft and critical spare parts, as well as pilot, engineers, crew and other operational staff needed for a larger operation." ENDS///

Anti-money laundering

As minister for finance, President David Adeang presented to parliament the report on the status of the government's anti-money laundering policies and practices.

Since 2004 the government embarked on a new path to achieve best practice amongst the international community and certainly the Pacific via policies and practices on anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing.

This led to the passing of suitable acts of parliament in 2004, and again in 2008 and 2018 and updates of such acts in 2023, bringing Nauru fully in line with the international community.

Nauru was forced into a cash economy following the demise of the Bank of Nauru exposing the country to suspicions of being soft on money laundering policies and vulnerable to external parties.

Joining the Asia Pacific Group on Anti Money Laundering (APG-AML) in 2012, Nauru had its first mutual evaluation

to determine its level of compliance with best practices in anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing, and Nauru was determined as a low risk jurisdiction.

In 2015 a banking agency with Bendigo Bank was established operating under the jurisdiction of Australian bank regulators APRA and ASIC which includes Australia's anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing regulator and financial intelligence unit, AUSTRAC.

The arrangement gave Nauru immediate access to Australian best practices and the assurance that cross-border crime will be detected and appropriately responded to.

A subsequent evaluation was conducted in October 2023 by the APG-AML.

President Adeang said there are a few areas that needs improvement and protocols continue to evolve under external guidance, but the benchmarking report it has received proves conclusively that Nauru is a low crime environment that is not a risk to the international financial system, nor does it tolerate or facilitate financial crimes on Nauru. //



Nauru Fisheries

The Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA) continues to make progress in various work and is actively collaborating with regional and international organizations, including the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Nauru's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the western central Pacific.

An aerial surveillance operation is scheduled for November 25-29, 2024, to address IUU fishing, with five NEMA personnel participating.

Nauru has sold all 3,873 fishing days for 2024, with only 22.9% remaining before they expire on December 31, generating \$13 million in revenue from the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS). Four NFMRA officials are currently in Suva, Fiji, attending WCPFC meetings to review Conservation and Management Measures.

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Nauru Fisheries

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NFMRA is engaged in regional talks to promote sustainable tuna management, with four NFMRA officials attending the annual WCPFC meetings in Suva, Fiji.

They will review and adopt Conservation and Management Measures, discuss climate change impacts on local fisheries, and focus on improving data collection and electronic monitoring systems.



The Coastal Fisheries project on Fishing Aggregate Devices (FADs) is ongoing, with plans to install new FADs for local fishers' safety.

Tuna Artisanal Data collection is active, with data collectors visiting Gabab and Anibare Boat Harbour daily to gather crucial catch and effort data for understanding domestic tuna fisheries.

A recent Letter of Agreement between SPC and NFMRA will initiate an e-monitoring trial for Nauru's artisanal fishing. Additionally, biological sampling is underway to support management measures for various species, aiding in the establishment of fish size regulations and seasonal closures in spawning areas.

Minister Aliklik announced the upcoming projects for NFMRA including the Resilient Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RFCAN) Project which focuses on improving coastal fisheries and aquaculture in Nauru.

This project aims to help the community adapt to climate change by enhancing aquaculture and fisheries opportunities. SPC will manage the funds, transferring a total of USD 1,357,000 in installments to the Nauru Government for project activities.

And the MiCOAST Project, which promotes community-based fisheries management as a nature-based solution for coastal resilience. Nauru joined this sub-regional project in 2022.

It aims to strengthen and expand community-based management activities to improve climate adaptation, food security, and biodiversity in the Micronesia region. According to the agreement, a grant of up to €432,787 will be provided for the Nauru MiCOAST Project. //

National Emergency Services

Minister for National Emergency Services Jesse Jeremiah delivered his ministerial statement to parliament, 26 November, on the department's progress and Nauru's current drought season urging members to be vigilant and proactive during these challenging times.

The Minister said the drought is likely to continue to December, according to reports by the Nauru Meteorology Services.

In response to the drought, his office engaged in joint ventures with various stakeholders and agencies to combat water scarcity, including educational programs on water conservation and management for the public and communities.

In the past month the Nauru National Emergency Services (NES) attended five bushfires, one minor structure fire, and one vehicle fire; and also assisted with patient transport and a road accident.

The NES ambulance underwent a minor but necessary repair, without disrupting its usual service.

"I want to make it clear to the public that at no time do we have no ambulance on standby," the Minister said. "There is always at least one ambulance ready on standby if the others are under repair."

He added that several NES and Nauru police officers completed advanced first aid training with St John Ambulance in Queensland, Australia, enhancing our first responder's lifesaving capabilities.

Minister Jeremiah warns that the latest meteorological outlook indicates that Nauru is under a La Niña watch.

"While this may suggest the possibility of increased rainfall in other regions, for Nauru, the immediate outlook from October to December presents a fair chance of drier conditions."

As of October Minister Jeremiah says the rainfall status indicates that Nauru is in a period of seriously dry conditions, with extreme weather events observed during the last 12 months and predictions for the next three months suggesting a heightened risk of drought.

In the meantime, the ministry is actively coordinating with stakeholders to ensure adequate preparedness measures are in place to manage the impacts of these dry conditions, including water conservation initiatives, implement educational programs for communities on water usage, and collaborating with relevant agencies to monitor and respond to any signs of drought-related distress in the agricultural sector.

Nauru Utilities Corporation

Minister for Nauru Utilities Corporation (NUC) Reagan Aliklik told parliament in November about NUC's performance. The power generation capacity rose from 6.1 to 8.6 megawatts, with total generation reaching 9.7 megawatts, which is above the consumer demand of 5.8 megawatts. Renewable energy now provides about 700-900 kilowatts, making up 10% of the total.

The water service team encountered difficulties due to an unexpected drought, which required the use of private water trucks to satisfy demand. Water production fell to 900 thousand litres per day because one reverse osmosis (RO) unit was out of service, but it has since increased to 1.7 million litres per day, surpassing the demand of 1 million litres.

The minister also mentioned that NUC has improved its sanitation services, now able to treat wastewater with help from the Education Department. Additionally, storage capacity has grown from 84,000 to 240,000 litres, although sewage collection still poses a challenge that the team is working to address. ENDS.//

Anti money laundering and counter terrorist financing measures report

Minister for Justice and Border Control Lionel Aingimea presented to parliament an update on the successful completion of Nauru's mutual evaluation on anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing measures report, 26 November.



Nauru joined the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG-AML) in 2007 and as part of member requirements, members must undergo a mutual evaluation (ME) – a peer review process at certain periods.

The ME report has since been published on the APGML website.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, Nauru produced its second ME in 2024.

The Financial Action Taskforce's (FATF) 40 technical compliance standards and 11 immediate outcome standards were used to assess Nauru's AML-CFT framework.

Of the technical compliance assessment against the 40 FATF Standards, Nauru received the rating of 19 compliant, 18 largely compliant, and three partially compliant. This rates Nauru second in the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering on its technical compliance and the highest in the Pacific region.

In relation to the assessment against the 11 immediate outcomes, Nauru received seven moderate ratings and four low ratings. Two of the moderate ratings were upgraded from a low rating because of Nauru's submission made during the MEC and plenary in Abu Dhabi.

The technical compliance component is a desk-based review of Nauru's law.

In preparation of the ME and during the assessment period, Nauru reformed its entire body of AML-CFT laws, which is made up of 20 acts and up to 20 subsidiary legislation, including the enactment of the new Anti-Money Laundering and Targeted Financial Sanctions Act 2023.

The second phase of the assessment is to evaluate how effectively a country is implementing its AML-CFT measures and goes beyond mere technical compliance, and focuses on actual results. //

Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation

Minister Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC) Reagan Aliklik provided a brief update on the ministry's activities for this year.



He announced in parliament the initiation of the NRC's first Financial Audits for the previous financial year 2023-24, commending the board, management, and staff for their efforts.

Minister Aliklik also confirmed that the much-anticipated 5mm dust is now in stock, easing concerns for the Nauru Port Redevelopment Project, with plans to maintain inventory for future projects, including next year's Runway Resurfacing Project.

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Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation

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He reported that land clearing for the stadium project is still ongoing, with adjustments made based on expert engineers' recommendations from the Chinese project partner. While these changes may delay the project, NRC is committed to expediting the process.

Other initiatives and ongoing projects include the Vital Fire Break Project at Tank Farm and land preparation for the Nauru Sustainable and Resilient Urban Development Project (NSRUDP), with BECA consultants completing their visit in November to provide updates on their work.

The NRC remains dedicated to advancing both the corporation and the nation of Nauru. //

Jeremiah on asbestos cleanup and awareness campaign

Minister Jesse Jeremiah updated parliament at its sitting, 26 November, on the asbestos clean-up efforts of the Department of Environmental Management and Agriculture (DEMA) and the health of the community.



Historically, asbestos has been used in Nauru for its affordability, durability, and fire resistance properties, and today people are still unaware of the fibre-like substance contained in asbestos which poses a perilous health risk to Nauruans and the community.

“However, over time it has become quite clear that asbestos poses severe health risks, which are threatening the very lives of our people.”

Minister Jeremiah said DEMA is working with the departments of justice, and customs, the Secretariat of The Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to develop comprehensive regulations targeting to ban the use of asbestos-containing materials (ACM).

They are also finalising logistics proposals to ensure the best plan to safely and effectively remove these hazardous substances from the communities.

Currently over 200,000m² of asbestos is lying around the communities and is improperly stored.

With the collaborative efforts of DEMA, RONPHOS, and SPREP, they have provided a storage site for safely handling ACM.

Previously DEMA disposed of five containers of asbestos from the RON Hospital, in the deep ocean.

“This process has proven to be a costly one, prompting us to explore more affordable options,” Mr Jeremiah said. “Consequently, we are considering the safe disposal of legacy asbestos in deep waters within our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).”

The Minister said this method aims to ensure responsible management while minimizing potential health risks associated with its presence on land. However, the project experienced slight delays in ensuring compliance with the London Convention 1972 and Protocol 1996 which regulates the dumping of hazardous materials at sea to protect the marine environment.

Mr Jeremiah added that to facilitate this, “we are reinforcing the containers to ensure they remain submerged in deep waters and do not resurface in the future”.

Educational and awareness campaigns are underway for the local communities to get a full understanding on identifying ACM and what proper steps to consider before handling the material, and to not hesitate in contacting DEMA regarding ACM.

ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

- Buckle up**
Wear your seat belt at all times. Wear a helmet when driving a motorcycle.
- 50 Observe the speed limit**
Speed limit: 50kph
Driving past schools, churches and hospital: 20kph.
- Pedestrian crossing**
Drivers should slow down at traffic stops and give way to pedestrians at a zebra crossing.
- Never drink and drive**
Have a designated driver if you plan to drink. Don't operate a vehicle when you're intoxicated.

Carry your driver's licence and ensure your vehicle is registered and roadworthy.

Parliament: Introduction of bills and amendment bills

Supplementary Appropriation Bill #1 2024-25

As Minister for Finance, President David Adeang tabled the Supplementary Appropriation Bill #1 2024-25 accounting for new revenue and expenditure measures including external budget support, and new revenue from RPC operations.

he revenue changes include \$13.7 million in budget support from development partners, and appropriate additional expenditures of \$23.9 million.

The expenditure measures in the supplementary will be funded by a \$10.3m reallocation of savings with the remaining \$13.6m covered by the increase in revenue, leaving a small surplus of \$223,000.

The fiscal cash buffer account was also depleted to cover priority expenditures that were operationally required before the date of this supplementary budget. The cash buffet is therefore replenished with \$5.3 million. //



Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information (Amendment) Bill 2024

Based on the assessment undertaken in 2018 Nauru was rated as largely compliant under the OECD common reporting standards, and has consistently been maintained after 2018.

The proposed amendments to the Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information Act are to further maintain Nauru's good rating with OECD, and provision for payment of penalties by a legal entity.

The provision now allows the liability to be imposed on directors and shareholders of corporations, partners, trustees, members of ventures, or on members in any other legal form of relationship.

Additionally, the liability is joint and several for the members or other person who form part of the relationship or arrangement with the entity.

This is to comply with the Common Reporting Standards for the OECD.

Amendment to section 14 is to negate any agreement, arrangement or understanding which has the purpose of avoiding the application of the Act in relation to reporting matters under the Act. //

Constitutional (Amendment) Bill 2024

President David Adeang tabled the Constitutional (Amendment) Bill 2024 which proposes to remove the required minimum number of cabinet ministers under the existing Article 19 (1) of the Constitution of Nauru, giving the president the power to appoint up to seven ministers.

This gives the president wide discretion on the appointment of the Cabinet. The maximum number of ministers will then be eight, including the president. The minimum number of ministers can be decided on by the president.

It is noted that the functions, duties and responsibilities of ministers have increased over time and so has the number of departments and state own enterprise, which are assigned to ministers.

Having considered the workload of the ministers, the government agreed that the number of ministers needed increasing.

With the appointment of seven ministers, the proportion of Cabinet positions remains at 37 per cent, thus maintains enough members of parliament to provide the check and balance for the work of the Cabinet and ministers.

This bill was tabled but not yet passed by parliament. //

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Parliament: Introduction of bills and amendment bills

Refugee Convention (Amendment) Bill 2024

The amendments to the Act relate to reduction of time limits for reviews, appeals and reconsideration of court matters for refugee cases.

In line with the current appeal time of 21 days, it is proposed that the time limit in section 31 to file a review of merits to the Tribunal is reduced from 28 days to 21. This is consistent with the application for review or appeal made under the Supreme Court Act 2018, and the Nauru Lands Committee Act 1956.

The second amendment for section 33, to which the Tribunal is to complete its review of a determination or decision, is reduced from 90 to 60 days.

The third amendment under section 43 proposes to regularise the appeal period for filing appeals from the Refugee Determination Status Tribunal to the Supreme Court.

The period of 42 days is reduced to 21 days, making it consistent with other time frames and serves to expedite the review process of the Tribunal.

Section 46 provides for the reconsideration of any matters which are referred back to the Tribunal and the time for this is reduced from 90 days to 60.

The reason for the time reduction is that the matters on appeal take a substantive period of time and it is important that the review process by a Tribunal is expedited.

After the review, the decision of the Tribunal is still subject to appeal to the Supreme Court and Nauru Court of Appeal.

Insertion of a transitional provision in a new section 56 which is proposed to provide for the transitional provision relating specifically to the Refugee Convention (Amendment) Bill 2024, once it is enacted.

It provides for any review, appeal or reconsideration of a matter that was filed before the commencement of the amendments. //

Nauru Court of Appeal (Amendment) Bill 2024

Changes to the Nauru Court of Appeal Act 2018 amends the definition of 'court' to clarify that when referring to court, it includes where the court is constituted by a single justice of appeal under the Act or any other written law.

The new section 14A provides for the appointment of a deputy registrar; while the new section 14B provides for the functions, powers, and qualifications of a deputy registrar.

Subject to the directions of the president of the Nauru Court of Appeal and the registrar, the deputy registrar will be able to perform any function or exercise any power of the registrar. //

Naoero Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2024

The bill sought to amend the Naoero Citizenship Act 2017, specifically repealing section 24 thereby allowing a naturalised Nauruan citizen to retain their Nauruan citizenship after they remarry a non-Nauruan.

Section 24 of the 2017 law stipulates that a foreigner who marries a Nauruan and is granted citizenship under section 13 of the Act, will lose that citizenship once they remarry another foreigner.

The citizenship of their children will not be affected due to them becoming citizens by birth, however the consequence is that their parents will have to depart Nauru or apply for the appropriate visa. In turn, the children, who hold Nauruan citizenship will either be left behind in Nauru on taken by their parent overseas and faced with issues adapting to the new country.

The amendment will allow a naturalized citizen to lawfully remarry a foreigner and that person can accompany him or her to Nauru. //

Vessel Registration Bill 2024

The bill repeals the two existing Acts, the Shipping Registration Act 1968 and the Shipping (Registration of Foreign) Vessels Act 2018.

The intention of the Vessel Registration Bill 2024 is to consolidate the registries existing under the two Acts into one. It is also to ensure that in future there is only one registry which is located in Nauru, bringing it over from Singapore where it has been based.

The bill is divided into nine parts. Part one provides for the preliminary provisions including procedures for registration of vessels and domestication of international maritime conventions and instruments related to the registration and operation of vessels; safe operation of vessels and crew, and compliance including with the Financial Action Taskforce Standards in particular with international law on counter terrorism and transnational organised crime, targeted financial sanctions and other related matters.

Part two provides for the interpretation provisions and part three for the administration provisions. Part four provides for the registration process of a vessel, and part five for the rights and obligations of Nauruan flagged vessels.

Part six is for the enforcement of the bill whose very nature is allowing for extra-territorial jurisdiction to Nauruan courts. In case of offences, vessels are liable to be seized or forfeited.

Part seven provides for the requirement to keep records, sharing and disclosure of information with relevant institution, departments and law enforcement agencies. Part eight deals with miscellaneous matters while part nine contains repeals and transitional matters.

This bill was tabled but not yet passed by parliament. //

Nauru launches new climate citizenship program at Singapore global conference

His Excellency President David Adeang launched Nauru's innovative Economic and Climate Resilience Citizenship Program at the 18th Global Citizenship Conference in Singapore, 28 November, and urged attendees to join Nauru in the transformative journey focusing on climate resilience and sustainable development.

"This is a historical moment for Nauru. Once defined by phosphate reserves, our nation now faces the dual challenges of climate vulnerability and economic diversification.

Yet, in these challenges, we see opportunities to lead with resilience and innovation," President Adeang said.

Listed by the United Nations as the fifth most vulnerable country in the world based on the Multidimensional Index (MVI), Nauru is still waiting for development partners and financial institutions to adopt the MVI and formally recognise Nauru's unique vulnerabilities.

In the meantime, and in the shadow of a failed so-called finance COP29, President Adeang says Nauru does not have the luxury of time to wait for the rest of the world to wake up to the unique and special circumstances of Nauru and other small island economies.

Nauru is taking proactive steps through initiatives like its new economic and climate resilience citizenship program that will provide an innovative avenue to secure funding for a sustainable Nauru, helping to address and overcome the devastating impacts of climate change.

The program offers visa-free access to 89 destinations and addresses financing gaps while fostering global partnerships.

Contributions from the program will directly fund critical projects including coastal protection, renewable energy infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions, sustainable agriculture to enhance food security, water resource management to combat saltwater intrusion and intensified droughts, and biodiversity conservation.

Nauru also has the Higher Ground Initiative (HGI) which aims to relocate 90 per cent of families and infrastructure from coastal areas to higher ground, ensuring their safety from rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

Over the past decade, Nauru has transformed its financial governance and accountability, including through the establishment of the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund, now valued at nearly US\$300 million, locked until 2033.

Work with the International Seabed Authority to advance responsible deep-sea harvesting issues is an effort aiming to harness the potential of polymetallic nodules as a vital resource to support the global shift towards renewable energy and reduce carbon emissions.

The recent Mutual Evaluation Review of Nauru's technical compliance rating with the Financial Action Taskforce (FATF) underscores Nauru's position as a credible and responsible global partner.

"The newly introduced citizenship program is a testament to this commitment to compliance. Our legislation mandates that citizenship criteria align with FATF Standards, a necessary measure to uphold the integrity of this initiative."

Despite so many challenges, President Adeang says Nauru refuses to be a victim of circumstance but rather will pioneer solutions that align global investment with climate resilience. //



Nauru takes proactive steps to secure funding for a sustainable future through the new economic and climate resilience citizenship program

Inauguration of the first Pacific Starlink Community Gateway

Today marks a historic breakthrough as Nauru officially inaugurates the first ever Starlink Community Gateway in the Pacific, marking a transformative milestone in the region's infrastructure.

His Excellency President David Adeang and Cenpac Chairlady Zikki Eoe unveiled the commemorative plaque at Command Ridge, next to the gateway's parabolic antennas.

Following the agreement signed with Starlink and state-owned Cenpac Corporation in August, this initiative symbolises Nauru's unified commitment to progress, resilience, and prosperity, and poised to enhance the quality of life for Nauruans by delivering significant social and economic benefits to the local community and beyond.

Chairlady Eoe says the initiative has transformative potential.

"This initiative signifies more than a mere enhancement in technology, but a profound commitment to bridging the digital gap and fostering innovation, ensuring that Nauru thrives in a rapidly changing world. This gateway will serve as a conduit for knowledge and economic development, cultivating pathways for a more prosperous future for our younger generations," Mrs Eoe said.

The ground-breaking satellite communication hub represents cutting-edge technology, delivering faster, more reliable data services with significantly reduced latency.

During the inauguration attendees witnessed a live demonstration of the high-speed internet connection.

The Starlink Gateway services are now operational and have begun serving Cenpac's customers. These services will continue to expand, enabling more entities and individuals to gain access in the coming days.



President David Adeang and Cenpac Chairlady Zikki Eoe unveil the Starlink plaque symbolising a leap forward in regional infrastructure

By January 2025, the mobile services of Cenpac's joint venture partner, Nauru Telikom, trading as Neotel, are scheduled to go live with its 5G network.

The service will enhance the current Starlink presence on island with competitive bandwidth pricing, unlocking substantial cost savings for homes, and particularly for commercial enterprises and government services.

Customers will have the option to either retain their existing Starlink kits or transition to the community gateway service, as well as register using a local Nauru address.

A backup server located at the Civic Centre in Aiwo will ensure continued internet access should the Command Ridge servers encounter a power outage.

A total of nine towers for 5G mobile services have successfully been installed with a coverage range exceeding 20 kilometres.

Chairlady Eoe expressed her appreciation to the Government of Nauru for their support and visionary leadership and to Nauru Telikom for their technical expertise and hard work that was crucial in realising this initiative. //



President Adeang with ministers and officials at the inauguration of the first Pacific Starlink Community Gateway

Nauru's first-ever electric buses

Nauru launched its first-ever electric bus in front of the government office last week, edging closer to clean energy targets.



Climate minister Asterio Appi cuts the ribbon launching Nauru's first electric bus

Minister for Climate Change and National Resilience (CCNR) Asterio Appi performed the ribbon cutting with UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Kevin Petrini.

"Today we celebrate one of the most tangible achievements of SMARTEN, the procurement of two electric buses and establishment of a fast charging station," Minister Appi said.

The initiative is part of many of Nauru's SMARTEN projects under the energy division of CCNR, partnering with the Department of Transport and Nauru Utilities Corporation (NUC), and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Five Nauruan mechanics from different corporations went, to a six-day training on the maintenance and repair of the e-buses in Ankai, China, 14 May. Ankai is a Chinese automotive manufacturer that specializes in producing high-end light buses.

The introduction of these e-buses is Nauru's future pathway in moving forward with its transitions from using fossil fuels to more clean energy resources.

The buses contribute to the reduction of fossil fuel dependency, greenhouse gases, and noise pollution. It has eighteen seats including the driver and can accommodate up to sixty-three passengers.

"With the two e-buses, this would be equivalent to planting approximately five thousand trees a year or removing twenty-three vehicles from the road," Mr Petrini said. //

Officials raise concerns at World Bank, IMF meetings

Nauru attended the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings at their headquarters in Washington, DC, in October and was presented with the opportunity to raise Nauru's profile through networking and engaging with executive directors and high-ranking officials.



DM Thoma has meeting with Executive Director of Nauru's IMF constituency Rob Nicholl

Deputy Minister Delvin Thoma, Secretary for Finance Novena Itsimaera, and Principal and Agency Manager Greg Watson attended the meetings which included seminars, discussion groups and displays of innovations in technology.

This year Nauru supported the recognition by World Bank and IMF of the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI), adopted recently by the United Nations.

In addition, Nauru attended a high-level meeting held at the US Treasury, on de-banking and de-risking following on from the Pacific Banking Forum held in Brisbane in July and the PALM 10 meeting held in Tokyo, Japan in the same month.

Following Nauru's recent joining of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and V20 finance ministers (CVF-V20) group, representatives attended the Ministerial Dialogue XIII, and met with the secretary general of CVF who well-recognises the unique vulnerability of small Island countries like Nauru.

This year the annual meeting was attended by 15,000 delegates including leaders, ministers, governors, and officials from member countries. //

Students marching parade

Acting President Jesse Jeremiah and Acting Minister for Nauru Police Force (NPF) Charmaine Scotty witnessed and inspected the cadetship passout parade by Nauru College and the Sacred Heart College students in front of the government office, 11 and 13 December last week.



Students showcase their cadet skills after weeks of training with the NPF

The student cadets from the two colleges underwent three months of training on school grounds twice a week by NPF officers.

Forty-eight Nauru College student cadets with commander Qourin Agigo, platoon commanders, Roseanne Menke with Lisamaree Bitau, and colour sergeant Lorna-Gem Clodumar performed their marching parade, 11 December

Twenty-one student cadets from the Sacred Heart College did their marching parade with commander Kantera Ietewa, assisted by colour sergeant Boyka Tom, 13 December.

The cadetship program is an NPF initiative that started in 2020. It aims to engage school students in law enforcement and community safety.

The program provides students with insights into police work, nurture a sense of discipline, leadership, responsibilities, understanding law enforcement and community safety, and critical decision-making in everyday life.

Minister Scotty acknowledged the work and efforts of the NPF, parents, guardians and the students who participated in the Cadetship program.

“By the end of the program, individuals are well-equipped to make a positive impact in both their personal and professional lives,” carrying forward the principles of leadership and services.

The educational component not only enhances the cadet's knowledge but also encourages informed citizens and respect for the laws of Nauru. //

UNFPA opens new office space

His Excellency President David Adeang and Cabinet Ministers joined the UN Under Secretary General and UNFPA Executive Director Dr Natalia Kanem in celebrating the official opening of the United Nation's Nauru office, 6 December.



The office symbolises collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility to collectively achieve the SDGs and lift the lives of people, particularly the most vulnerable

The office opening and associated meetings and events were part of the program of the three-day official visit by Dr Kanem.

Speaking on behalf of the government and people of Nauru Minister for Health Charmaine Scotty said the provision of the office space signifies Nauru's recognition of the critical role UN agencies play in addressing the developmental priorities of Nauru.

“This space, therefore, is not just a physical structure – it is a symbol of collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility. It will serve as a hub for planning, partnership, and action, as we collectively strive to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, and uplift the lives of our people, particularly the most vulnerable.”

Dr Kanem said “this new office represents the enduring partnership between the UN and the Government of Nauru and reaffirms your unwavering commitment to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for your people”.

The United Nations Population Fund is the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency. Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. //



UNFPA reaffirms commitments during visit to Nauru

His Excellency President David Adeang welcomed the UN Under Secretary General and UNFPA Executive Director Dr Natalia Kanem, in the Office of the President on her first official visit to Nauru, 5-7 December.

Dr Kanem's visit reaffirms the shared commitment to advancing reproductive health, gender equality, and the well-being of all people in Nauru.

She also called on Minister for Health Charmaine Scotty and discussed matters centred on mutual cooperation and support in areas of family and reproductive health, and women and children.

Dr Kanem later visited the RON Hospital's maternity ward antenatal clinic and Naoero Public Health Centre where she witnessed the insertion of a birth control implant and officially opened the UN office in Yaren District.

Appointed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in 2017, Dr Kanem has more than 30 years of strategic leadership experience in the fields of preventive medicine, public and reproductive health, social justice and philanthropy.



UNFPA's visit reaffirms the shared commitment to advancing reproductive health, gender equality, and the well-being of Nauruans

She started her research career in academia with the Johns Hopkins and Columbia University schools of medicine and public health. //

Water, sanitation project gears up with community awareness

To celebrate World Toilet Day on 19 November, the Asian Development Bank-funded Nauru Sustainable and Resilient Urban Development Project (SRUDP) showcased a modern septic tank model and answered questions about the project to improve access to water supply, sanitation and solid waste management services for Nauru.

SRUDP Communications and Social Marketing Specialist Penelope Dutton explained the importance of having a good toilet, proper sanitation, and safe disposal of septic waste.

While the health benefits are reasons to celebrate World Toilet Day, it also irradiates diseases like typhoid, dysentery, intestinal worms, skin problems, and diarrhoea which are most common in areas where there is no access to bathrooms. Other benefits are dignity and safety, particularly for women and girls.

World Toilet Day raises awareness of the 3.5 billion people living without access to safe toilets.

This year's campaign, 'Toilets – A Place for Peace', highlights how broken or inadequate sanitation systems affect people's lives, and shows how sustainable sanitation is essential to a healthy and stable society.

A week later on 27 November, project lead agency the Department of Climate Change and National Resilience (DCCNR) worked alongside the Department of Environmental Management and Agriculture and Nauru Utilities Corporation, on a two-week program including a community workshop on plumbing conducted by Nauru TVET.



SRUDP Communications and Social Marketing Specialist Penelope Dutton explains the importance of having a good toilet, proper sanitation, and safe disposal of septic waste

Up to 50 individuals registered for the plumbing workshop that taught water saving techniques, storage and sanitation.

TVET's casual trainers for plumbing Gerard Garabwan and Conroy Caleb delivered the first flush and sanitation session, and #WASH advisor Ian Cunningham delivered the water quality session.

The workshop is geared towards preparing the community for the roll out of the project to improve access to sustainable and resilient water supply, sanitation and solid waste management services for Nauru.


Find out more [facebook.com/NSRUDP](https://www.facebook.com/NSRUDP)



THE GOVERNMENT OF NAURU
WISHES YOU

Merry Christmas

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!





The Nauru Police Force expresses its gratitude to all who contributed to their welfare through food, snacks, and beverages during today's operations, wishing everyone a joyous and safe festive season.

As the festivities continue, our officers remain committed to maintaining safety and ensuring that celebrations are filled with joy and harmony.

We encourage everyone to drive safely, look out for one another, and cherish the time spent with loved ones during this special time of year.

Merry Christmas




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