



Nauru Bulletin

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Our Airline resumes Majuro service

Nauru's national carrier *Our Airline* resumed commercial air services yesterday (10 Dec) between Nauru and the Marshall Islands.

While the air services agreement has been in place for several years, commercial flights have not. This commercial arrangement was sealed last month (13 Nov) in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Marshall Islands government and *Our Airline* Chief Executive Officer Geoff Bowmaker on behalf of the Nauru government.

The official function to launch yesterday's (10 Dec) inaugural flight (Nauru, Majuro, Tarawa and Nadi) will be held this evening in Nadi Fiji at the



Nauru's national carrier *Our Airline* resumed commercial services to Majuro yesterday (10Dec)

Tanoa International Hotel. The event will be hosted by Nauru's High Commissioner Jarden Kephas.

Minister for Finance Hon Roland Kun and Secretary for Transport Lesi Olsson were on the flight and will be attending the event.

The round trip service will link Brisbane, Nauru, Majuro and Tarawa each week and Nadi every other week.

The destination was revisited several months ago with chartered flights to the Marshall Islands' capital Majuro. The resumption of the route is a welcome move for Nauruan families living in the Marshall Islands – offering a direct flight to Nauru.

Our Airline staff have also conducted training of local staff in Majuro in the areas of sales and reservation, check-in procedures, catering, security and safety awareness▪

Haulagi takes out Dux award

Twenty year old Nauruan student Niga Haulagi recently graduated from high school taking with him the Dux award and eight other academic and sports achievements.

The awards Niga achieved are Dux, Best All Rounder, Sportsman of the Year, First Place (in class), Most Improved, Leadership Award, Subject prize in maths, physics and introduction to technology.

In his final year at high school Niga was elected head boy at Levuka Public Secondary School on Fiji's Ovalau Island where he attended for five years.

Niga was accompanied at the awards ceremony by High Commissioner Jarden Kephas.

Niga's tuition in Fiji was funded by his parents - Samson and Lilly until this year when he was awarded a full scholarship by the Nauru government. His achievements have made both his family and country proud.

"I wasn't expecting the Dux prize, since there were a lot of smart students in my form. I believe that my patience and hard work has got me through.

"I want to thank the Almighty Lord for having favour in my life, in choosing me to be the Head Boy, Dux and the Best All Rounder," Niga said.

Niga is looking at furthering his studies in aircraft engineering in the new academic year▪



Niga Haulagi - surprised by his school Dux award

Nauru's development since 2004

Perspective of an Australian expat on Nauru



Peter Depta was deployed to Nauru in 2004 as secretary for Finance when reform measures were introduced by then Nauru government

Reform is an ongoing process and Nauru should not be complacent and slip back into the ways of the past: Depta

Peter Depta is from the Australian Treasury and has been deployed to the Nauru Department of Finance three times since 2004. He is now here as a Finance Adviser to build capacity with the Acting Secretary for Finance and finishes up in January (recruitment for his replacement is currently underway through PACTAM).

Nauru Bulletin asked Peter for his unique perspectives on how Nauru has changed since 2004 and his views on Nauru going forward.

“When I first came to Nauru as the Secretary for Finance in July 2004 Nauru was a very different place to what it is today. In 2004 the budget was only \$13 million and the Government could not afford even basic services; today it's over \$62 million (excluding donor funds).

Salaries were only paid periodically (if at all), electricity supply was sporadic, fuel rationing was commonplace, phones largely didn't work (there were no mobiles), there was no mining, etc.

In this environment the Australian finance team was deployed to assist the new reform Government to turn this around and tough decisions were made. These included introducing new

and higher taxes and charges and cutting many government programs and some departments. We also cut the payroll introducing the \$140 per fortnight salary for all Government employees.

Things were tough.

I remember one time a mother and her young child came into my office wanting \$10 for food because they were hungry. Turning her away empty-handed was one of the toughest things I have ever had to do.

However, I think many of these hard decisions have paid dividends and over the past 8 years or so I have noticed a dramatic difference. Incomes are higher, there is more local farming/fishing, you see more people exercising, the Island is looking great thanks to clean and green, infrastructure is better (power, water, telecommunications, fuel etc) and mining has commenced again.

In the department of Finance processes are running more smoothly and budget processes are more transparent.

Nevertheless, reform is an ongoing process and Nauru should not be complacent and slip back into the ways of the past. In developing further reform I think Nauru

needs to keep its sights looking forward and not backward. Instead of focusing on what the previous generation was or was not paid or is owed, I think the budget should be clearly directed at NSDS priorities, in particular, the next generation of Nauruans should be given top priority through better education/training and health services and infrastructure, employment opportunities, as well as financial systems which will provide a secure future for Nauru's children.

So as I approach the end of my current deployment people ask me will I be back? The last two times I was here I left never expecting to be back. However, in my experience 'never' is a really long time and who knows, you 'never' know what the future holds.”

Contributed by Peter Depta

Goodwin joins finance team



Sarah Goodwin joins the finance team as deputy secretary to Treasury

Last month (Nov) the Department of Finance welcomed Sarah Goodwin as the new deputy Secretary for Treasury, taking over certain checks and balance procedures while at the same time build local capacity for the position.

Ms Goodwin also took over responsibilities of authorizing payment vouchers and cheque signing from Javan Tamakin who has also been acting in the position of Secretary for Finance.

One of the key aims of Ms Goodwin's assignment is to implement mechanisms to reduce unnecessary repetition and to enable continuity in the whole PV process.

Ms Goodwin is also responsible for the continued implementation of the Financial Management Information System (FMIS). FMIS is a fully integrated accounting budgeting system that was installed in Treasury and across all government departments last year.

Ms Goodwin is recruited under the Australian Volunteers program Pacific Technical Assistance Mechanism (PACTAM).

Her career in finance spans more than a decade. Her most recent work has been in Afghanistan as finance advisor to a non-government organization and in 2009 was the trust accounts advisor in Papua New Guinea*

Taiwan volunteer donates IT resources

Last week (3 Dec) the Taiwan Embassy held a special luncheon to hand over Information Technology (IT) books to the Minister for Education Roland Kun and Director for ICT Geoffrey Harris.

The donation of 26 IT books was initiated by Mr Ryan Liang a Taiwan volunteer who has been working with the ICT department for the past year.

Mr Liang who has finished his deployment in Nauru last week was responsible for developing the government website and troubleshooting its network and printers.

His role was later expanded when the education department required an IT to train teachers and principals on how to use the computer.

"I find that there were no professional books at the schools so that the teachers could use to help themselves, so I put in a proposal to the [Taiwan government's] International Cooperation Development Fund (ICDF).

"ICDF approved and got 20 books, two for each of the schools where I have worked and another extra 6 for ICT Nauru. The books are Windows seven and Office 2010," Mr Liang said.



Minister Kun thanked Mr Liang for his good work at ICT and the schools and wished him a safe journey home.

Mr Liang departed Nauru last week (5 Dec) for Taiwan. He plans to travel and climb Mount Everest as mountaineering is also one of his passions*

ICT Director Geoffrey Harris (L) accepting book donation from Taiwan IT volunteer Ryan Liang

Nauru schools expect volunteer teachers in 2013

The Education Department is expecting five senior teacher volunteers recruited under the Fiji Volunteer Scheme (FVS) before the start of the 2013 academic year.

The recruitment process is underway with the Nauru High Commissioner Jarden Kephas, Third Secretary Masau Detudamo and a member of the Fiji education department making up the selection panel.

“Seven expatriate teachers have decided not to renew their contracts so the five volunteers will replace them and the rest will be covered by our local teachers,” Secretary for Education Dr Maria Gaiyabu said.

Since the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for



Nauru's High Commissioner to Fiji Jarden Kephas (L) and Fiji's Permanent Secretary Public Service Commission Pramesh Chand following the MoA signing in October

senior volunteers to undertake work with Nauru Education, there had been a significant number of applicants because of the popularity of the scheme.

This agreement allows Nauru to co-partner with the government of Fiji to meet the costs of the volunteers.

The volunteers will be paid an allowance indexed to the average salary in that profession. Fifty per cent will be paid by the FVS in Fiji dollars and the other 50 per cent for transportation and accommodation will be provided by Nauru.

The return airfares for the volunteers will be met by the Fiji government.



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