



# Nauru Bulletin

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## Nauru passport holders granted new Australian visa privileges

The Minister for Justice and Border Control, Hon David Adeang, MP., has announced new arrangements granting Nauru passport holders extended visa privileges to Australia.

The new arrangements will now enable multiple entry and multiple year visas and a streamlined application process.

“It gives me great pleasure to announce that, following intense negotiations, the Government of Australia has agreed to extend visa privileges to Nauruans who wish to travel to Australia,” Minister Adeang said in a media statement.

“The new traveller facilitation

arrangements for Nauru passport holders will provide a more streamlined approach to the visa application process. Applicants considered low risk with a need to travel regularly will be able to apply for a visitor visa that enables multiple entry and multiple year grants.

“Nauruan visa applicants will now be able to apply for the new electronic Visitor Visa (subclass e600) using a 24/7 internet lodgement facility. This will mean faster lodgement and faster visa assessment for Nauruan nationals who have access to the internet. The visa is also available for paper-based applications where there is no access to

the internet.

“For previous Australian visa holders who complied with their visa conditions, the documentary requirements for both the electronic and paper-based Visitor visa applications have been significantly streamlined.

“The new arrangements are effective from 20th September 2013. The Government of Nauru is appreciative of the new arrangements, given the frequent travel of nationals between the two countries and their close and continuing bilateral ties,” Minister for Justice and Border Control David Adeang said•

## The peoples' store re-opens at full capacity



*H.E President Baron Waqa leads the tour at the re-opening of the Eigigu Supermarket in downtown Aiwo*

The Nauru Government-owned Eigigu Holdings Corporation (EHC) officially reopened its revamped supermarket, *Eigigu*, this month (7 Sept) with President Baron Waqa doing the honours of cutting the ribbon signifying the opening.

The President along with several Cabinet ministers and caucus members were the first group to enter and tour the variety of goods Eigigu Supermarket had to offer.

A free sausage sizzle and refreshments were made available to the crowd of people that attended the opening.

EHC had a shipment of 27 containers of a variety of food and household products. Another nine containers of mostly fruit and vegetables are expected soon.

EHC partnered with an Australian-based supplier, Australian World Wide, which supplies groceries, consumables and personal care products.

The new supermarket is coupled with a fully integrated online procurement, stock ordering platform and in-store support systems. It is also the first store outlet on Nauru to use ATM facilities.

Australian High Commissioner Mr Bruce Cowled, and Taiwan Ambassador Mr Timothy Hsiang were among the first group to take a tour inside the newly refurbished Eigigu Supermarket.

Trading hours are Monday to Saturday, from 7am-9pm•

## Parliament convenes, 2013-14 budget tabled

The Parliament of Nauru met for the first time in over three months on Friday 13 September since the installment of the 21st Parliament in June this year.

The two-day sitting began with opening prayers led by Speaker Ludwig Scotty followed by a statement reporting on his recent overseas business travel.

Following the speaker's statement, ministers discussed several issues, including education scholarships, hospital re-building and the Regional Processing Center (RPC).

During time for Questions without Notice, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the RPC dominated discussions with members repeatedly putting questions about the provisions of clauses 12 and 13 of the processing of refugees.

Minister of Finance Hon David Adeang forecasted the payouts of several funds including the RONWAN capital, Superannuation Fund B and benefits for the aged and disabled.

Minister Adeang also announced a ten per cent salary increase for public servants including back payments of the increase dating back to June this year.

Following two hours of Questions without Notice, ministerial statements were read out by government ministers reporting on the current status and outcomes of plans from their respective departments.

Coinciding with the announcement for payment of the RONWAN capital, Finance Minister Adeang also highlighted the establishment of the Bank of Bendigo, which is expected to be established no later than January 2014. The Minister emphasised the importance of having parallel progression of capital payments and the establishment of banking services, to enable the fluid transfers of beneficiary funds.

During the presentation of ministerial statements, the finance minister also tabled the Development Fund annual report and annual projections adding that the government expects an income of \$38.9-million for 2013-14 to be added to the Development Fund.

Minister Adeang informed the House that while the budget continues to deliver more for the people of Nauru, the budget is projected to maintain a small cash surplus of \$58,497 for the financial year.

"This Budget ensures a clear focus on priorities and strives for efficiencies to ensure continued improvements and results and that the quality of life on Nauru continues to be raised.

"The 2013-14 Appropriation Bill provides for a total Treasury expenditure of \$96,406,870.

"The expenditure is fully funded by a total Treasury revenue estimate of \$96,465,367. This includes domestically raised revenue of \$87.8 million and \$8.7 million in general budget support by our development partners.

"However, cash flow will remain tight so Government will remain vigilant in closely monitoring our cash management throughout 2013-14," Finance Minister David Adeang said.

The House was recessed until the next day (14 September) when Members of Parliament debated a number of issues on the new budget such as taxes on sugar and tobacco, debt repayments, foreign aid, business with the Regional Processing Centre (RPC), and the new visa fees•

## Turkey vies for support to host 2020 world expo

His Excellency President Baron Waqa received a courtesy visit from Mr Veysel Yilmaz Temizocak and his delegation primarily to discuss Turkey's bid of the 2020 World Expo.

Mr Temizocak and his two member delegation arrived on 11 September to pursue Nauru's support for the 2020 World Expo.

Mr Temizocak is a member of the EXPO 2020 IZMIR Steering Board for Turkey, which is one of four countries vying to host the 2020 Expo. The other candidates are Russia, Brazil, and the United Arab Emirates.



*HE President Waqa with Mr Temizocak following discussions on Turkey's bid for the 2020 World Expo*

Following the meeting with the President, the delegation met with Cabinet ministers and several members of parliament (MPs) to further promote their bid. The group had been travelling around the Pacific and had been to Kiribati prior to coming to Nauru.

Every five years World Expos are hosted and remain a key meeting point for the global community to share innovations and make progress on issues of international importance such as the global economy, sustainable development and improved quality of life for the world's population.

The delegation departed on Thursday 12 September, following a tour of the hospital and Nauru Utilities Corporation (NUC)•

## Asylum seeker numbers on Nauru reach 710

Additional groups of asylum seeker families to arrive in Nauru this month (11, 18 and 21 Sept) has brought the total on island to 710.

The latest group of 23 individuals consisted of 11 females and 12 male; among them are seven children between the ages of seven to 17. The group is of mixed nationalities from Iran, Somalia, Myanmar and Malaysia.

The group arrived in Nauru on Saturday, 21 September on board a chartered flight of Nauru's national carrier, Our Airline, from Christmas Island.

To date, there are 219 individuals in family groups.

Like previous arrivals they completed brief immigration formalities before boarding mini-buses to take them to the third Regional Processing Centre site at Topside, where the other families are residing. The groups received an induction to the facility by service providers and are providing support to settle them in to their new environment.

The transfer from aircraft to Topside was without incident•



## University New England offers degree study programs to locals

The Ministry of Education has agreed to an offer by Australia's University of New England (UNE) for undergraduate and post graduate studies in teaching for Nauruans.

Local teachers will now have the opportunity to study on-island, courses offered by UNE in what is the first bilateral arrangement with Nauru's Ministry of Education and the Government of Australia.

Dr Penelope Serow and Professor Neil Taylor from UNE were on island to make the initial arrangements of the training program which has commenced this month (September).

The training program will see 49 local teachers enrolled from various levels from secondary, primary and early childhood training for an Associate and Bachelor degrees in teaching.

"We're actually beginning with a cohort of 47 in the undergraduate program and we have two teachers that qualify for the postgraduate program, which is the Masters of Education," Dr Serow said.

Dr Serow highlighted the training program will be in two phases, beginning with the associate degree in teaching specialising in the three areas of primary, secondary and early childhood education. The associate degree will take two years to complete.

Graduates may progress to the second phase which is the Bachelor degree program, which will also take two years to complete.

Professor Taylor added that the program will be beneficial in two ways as teachers undertaking the program will receive an internationally recognised qualification and Nauru will have a supply of teachers produced locally.

"It should offer, first of all teachers the possibility of getting an internationally recognised qualification. But more importantly it should offer something that's sustainable in an ongoing way so you would continue to produce your own teachers," Professor Taylor said.

Teachers will have a range support from UNE including on island expertise, as well as online support from the university.

Training programs began this month (10 Sept) and will continue through to next year•



*Dr Pep Serow (L) and Prof Neil Taylor made initial arrangements in preparation for the commencement of the training program*

## WHO consults community on public health

Two World Health Organisation (WHO) consultants conducted a workshop at the parliament committee room this month (6 September) with community members to collect data from the community about public health issues.

Community representatives and staff from Naoero Public Health Centre explained the processes and provided preliminary data pertaining to the effects and environmental changes resulting from the phosphate dust clouds coming from the phosphate processing plant located in Aiwo District.

The two consultants, Dianne Katscherian and Dr Rohko Kim explained the purpose of the meeting and outlined the targets of the program and the data that is expected to be collected at the conclusion of the consultations.

Ms Katscherian stated that while the research is primarily aimed at collecting data on the effects of the phosphate plant on nearby residents and the surrounding environment, the research will also look at other relevant issues.

"It is advantageous if the research could look at a broader spectrum of health and environmental impacts that are otherwise may be overlooked," Ms Katscherian said.

At the meeting community leaders participated in group activities to provide information about their communities' environment and possible health effects associated with their environment. Issues ranged from noise pollution, to aircraft activity, underground water contamination and sewage disposal.

The data received will be collated into a report and forwarded to the department of Commerce, Industry and Environment (CIE). CIE will then seek approval from Cabinet for further action. The report is expected to be completed by the end of October.

Dr Rokho Kim is the environmental health specialist with the division of Pacific Technical Support at WHO and Ms Katscherian is a Senior Research Fellow at the WHO Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Impact Assessment at Curtin University in Western Australia•

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**Republic of Nauru**

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