



Nauru Bulletin

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Parliament passes bills including appropriation bill to support government's work

A sitting of the Nauru Parliament was convened on 10 March with the tabling of several bills and ministerial statements including the Electoral Bill 2016 and introduction of education assistance scheme.

The sitting commenced with an opening prayer by the Speaker of Parliament Ludwig Scotty followed by questions without notice time.

Minister for Finance Honourable David Adeang presented the Revenue Administration Amendment Bill 2016 which amends the Revenue Administration Act 2014 to provide the entering into and implementation of administrative assistance agreements.

Minister Adeang said once the Bill is passed it signals to the international community Nauru's "formal commitments to the principles of the OECD Global Forum in promoting international co-operation in tax matters through exchange of information."

"Nauru joined the Global Forum in 2009, and has committed to the international standards of transparency and effective exchange of information for tax purposes.

"This amendment to the Revenue Administration Act 2014 will re-inforce Nauru's commitment to work with the OECD to address harmful tax practices.

"The lack of effective exchange of information is one of the key criteria in determining harmful tax practices," Minister Adeang said.

The second bill to be presented was the Corporation (Amendment) Bill 2016. This is to amend the Corporations Act 1972.

Minister Adeang said the "amendment is to amend and remove the bearer shares and bearer debentures sections of the Act. This will provide legislative authority for the Government to meet transparency

requirement as these classes present a major deficiency in the transparency of ownership."

"This amendment to the Corporations Act 1972 will re-inforce Nauru's commitment to work with the OECD to address harmful tax practices, help eliminate vehicles for money laundering and promote transparency.

"For some years Nauru was identified as an offshore financial centre, a misconception still held to this day by some tax jurisdictions,

Changes have also been made to the registration process whereby a Nauruan citizen is automatically registered in the electoral roll once they reach the age of 20 years.

"This ensures a more streamlined process involving greater cooperation between the Electoral Commissioner and the Registrar for Births, Deaths and Marriages. Our customary links are also given great consideration and there is now included additional criteria that a voter can rely on if they are transferring registration between Districts," President Waqa said.

Minister Adeang concluded the presentation of bills with the Supplementary Appropriation Bill No. 5 2015-2016.

"Overall this will result in an increase in expenditure of \$8,566,914. Of this amount \$2,991,246 will be claimable as a reimbursable cost, resulting in an overall increase in aggregate outlays of \$5,575,668. This amount when added to current estimates brings the total forecast deficit for the year to \$6,196,948.

"The anticipated deficit will be funded from within the Government's existing cash reserves," Minister Adeang said.

The areas needing further funds include the Nauru Community Housing Scheme and special project funds to improve sanitary facilities within our schools; funds to prepare for the general election later this year; the creation of a separate department within the public service to handle refugee and asylum seeker affairs; as well as provisions for the maritime department for the replacement of the deep water mooring system; provisions for the foreign affairs consulate in Taiwan for repatriation costs of the Ambassador; security services for the RPC•



Parliament staff prepare parliament chambers prior to the commencement of the sitting on 10 March

overseas bankers and a portion of the general overseas community."

His Excellency President Baron Waqa then presented the Electoral Bill 2016.

"This Bill is a step toward adapting our electoral system in Nauru to better reflect new political realities. This is a critical task for every democracy, whether they are established or emerging democracies.

"Electoral systems are never a "one size fits all" concept and therefore with this law, we have taken the better concepts from across jurisdictions and tailored them to meet our own particular needs.

A major inclusion is the Electoral Commission and the Office of the Electoral Commissioner, which is an independent and impartial body.

Education dept conducts awareness about education assistance trust

The Education Department commenced the first of a series of public outreach sessions speaking with parents and guardians of school aged children about the Nauru Education Assistance Trust Scheme (NEATS) this week (14 March).

NEAT Scheme is an initiative of the Nauru government introduced as an incentive to raise school attendance. It is fully funded by the government with a budget allocation of \$2.2 million.

NEATS was implemented from the first day of the 2016 academic year. Under the scheme Nauru students from Year 4 up to Year 12 will be credited five dollars for each school day attended by the student. The five dollars is credited to a student's account under the Trust and will be accessible upon student's graduation at the end of Year 12.

The outreach team comprising of teachers, education officers and liaison officers conducted its first public outreach at Nauru College meeting with parents from Denig and Location area. A total of 35 parents attended the first meeting at Nauru College.

At that meeting, the education team explained the objectives of NEATS emphasising that the focus of the scheme is not only to improve student attendance, but for students to excel at school.

Chief Liaison Officer, Mr Taniela Laqeni explained that the liaison office will have a role in the NEATS program and is working with Nauru schools on a weekly basis to collect student attendance rolls from schools.

Analysis of the rolls is done by the liaison office. The information can be utilised by the schools to engage with parents and guardians to improve student attendance.

Parents who attended the first the meeting expressed their appreciation to the government for initiating the NEATS program, as well as raise concerns about student absenteeism because of illness.

Parents were assured by the outreach team that students will not be marked absent if they are away from school for good reason. The outreach team also advised parents to develop good relationship and communication with their child's school.

For the month of February, Mr Laqeni noted a 63 per cent school attendance, or 2259 students. Mr Laqeni notes that the Education department aims to advance student attendance to 75 -80 per cent which is the national target.

Mr Laqeni encourages parents and guardians to support the NEATS program so that Nauru can be competitive with other nations. Additionally, Mr Laqeni encouraged parents to seek assistance from teachers, as they are there to help.

The NEATS outreach team will continue its public awareness campaign and will hold its last session on Tuesday (22 March)•



Education liaison officer Taniela Laqeni leads NEATS outreach at schools

President Waqa presented the Order of the Star of Italy

President Baron Waqa was presented the Order of the Star of Italy in the class of Grand Officer on 18 February in recognition of His Excellency's fight against climate change.

The medallion was presented by the Italian Ambassador to Nauru Pier Francesco Zazo on behalf of the President of the Italian Republic, in front of the government building and the guard of honour mounted by the Nauru Police Force.

"His Excellency Mr Baron Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru, has distinguished himself for his strong and constant commitment in favour of a renewed approach to sustainable development and the fight against climate change," Ambassador Zazo said.

"In his action, he has directed, as President of the Republic and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the foreign policy of his Country, placing it with particular regard to issues related to development and environment on a line deeply consistent with Italian foreign policy in these specific fields."

President Waqa hosted a dinner reception for the Ambassador the same evening before his departure the following morning Friday 19 February•



President Baron Waqa receives the Order of the Star of Italy in the class of Grand Officer for His Excellency's fight against climate change

Acting British high commissioner visits Nauru

Last month (Sunday 28 February) the Acting British High Commissioner to Nauru Christopher John Trott, arrived on Nauru for an official two day visit.

The Acting High Commissioner's schedule commenced the day after arrival on 1 March with a courtesy call on the Acting Secretary for Foreign Affairs & Trade Sasi Kumar, after which Mr Trott was escorted to the office of the Acting President David Adeang for a brief meeting.

Following the courtesy call on the Acting President, the High Commissioner called on the Speaker of Parliament Ludwig Scotty before a final stop with the Secretary for Justice & Border Control Lionel Aingimea.

The High Commissioner was invited to lunch hosted by Acting President David Adeang.

On the second and final day of his visit, Mr Trott made courtesy calls on the Taiwan Ambassador Joseph Chow, Australian High Commissioner John Donnelly, Solicitor-General Graham Leung and Justice Khan. Mr Trott also met with opposition MPs, and the Regional Processing Centre Operations Manager Ms Berilyn



Acting President David Adeang receives acting British High Commissioner Chris Trott

Jeremiah. The High Commissioner ended the day with a final call on the Director of Government Information Office.

On the day of departure Mr Trott briefly met with His Excellency President Baron Waqa at the airport upon the President's arrival back on island, concluding Mr Trott's official visit to Nauru•

Hospital redevelopment completes first phase

The completion of stage one of the RON hospital redevelopment was officially marked with a ceremony and tour of the new facilities on Friday 5 February.

In attendance were His Excellency President Baron Waqa, Minister for Health Valdon Dowiyogo and members of the diplomatic corps.

The completion of stage one include the emergency department, radiology, medical records, acute ward and an operating theatre suite.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the landowners, for without their generosity we would not have this building, I would also like to thank the Australian Government for their contribution to this project, I would thank Jacobs – the designers and the Canstruct workers involved in the construction," President Waqa said.

His Excellency also thanked State owned enterprises for providing advice and support as well as the governments of Taiwan, Japan and Turkey for their contribution of beds and equipment.



Construction continues for the hospital redevelopment

The Australian High Commissioner to Nauru John Donnelly also delivered an address re-affirming Australia's continued assistance towards the hospital redevelopment scheme and to giving the local community better access to medical services.

At the conclusion of official proceedings the guests were taken on a tour of the completed facilities.

The re-development project is now well into phase two•

Nauru gives to cyclone Winston relief

The Government of Nauru has extended a helping hand to neighbouring Fiji Islands after the devastation of Tropical Cyclone Winston with a donation of AUD\$100,000.

Secretary for Foreign Affairs & Trade Michael Aroi was accompanied by the Acting High Commissioner to Fiji Ms Kim Aroi in presenting the donation to Fiji's Acting Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs Mr Esala Nayasi who was accompanied by the Roving Ambassador to Nauru Ms Litia Mawi.

Mr Nayasi thanked Nauru and was sincerely grateful for Nauru's swift response to assist Fiji. He said the gesture demonstrated a family bond between the two countries.

Mr Aroi said the discussions were sombre and the Fiji Government was grateful of Nauru's donation and to know that Nauru was ready to help the country during this very challenging time.

The Nauru High Commission remained on high alert to respond to any calls for assistance by members of the Nauru community•

Staff upskill their workplace management with leadership course

The Department of Human Resources & Labour in conjunction with the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) completed a short course in leadership development that is part of the three stage training initiative by the department of the Chief Secretary Human Resources department.

The two-day program was attended by 18 participants from various departments of the Nauru Public Service. The program provides the formal training and support to complement the technical skills required for management and to facilitate this often challenging transition.

It gives participants an opportunity to challenge their current management and leadership practices and learn new approaches to people management issues.

As leaders in their own workplaces, participants learn about balancing the needs of the task with the needs of the team and the individuals that make up those teams.

As the participants learn skills and ways to balance task and relationship with their staff, they adopt the SMART format.



Scott Bourke from the Australian Human Resources Institute facilitates the leadership course which is third and final stage of the HR training

SMART spells out specific, measurable, aligned, realistic, and timed. This is a guiding tool for leaders to develop their personal and organisational outcomes.

This leadership course is the final stage of the three stage management training. Course facilitator from AHRI Scott Bourke has taught all three stages of the training.

The training is in line with the Nauru Government's priority areas to up skill its public service•

Tourism holds meeting on historical society committee

The Tourism department hosted the second meeting of the Nauru Historical Society Committee (NHSC) at the Home Affairs conference room to discuss opportunities and directions of the society, on 26 February.

Discussions from the meeting primarily focused on three things, namely access to budget, a recall on source lists and ratification of the World Heritage Convention.

During the meeting, the NHSC general report was tabled and the NHSC gave its recommendation for the Nauru Government to endorse the World Heritage Convention.

The endorsement process is ongoing, but Mr Jace Halstead interim president for the NHSC is optimistic about their proposal to Cabinet regarding the ratification process.

"Hopefully by the next meeting we'll have word about where or what UNESCO is doing with our submission," Mr Halstead said.

Mr Halstead also hopes that by the next meeting work will be completed on compiling sources for NHSC work to resume on interdepartmental budgets.



Participants at the historical society committee meeting

The NHSC is continuing work on compiling credible sources of information which can be used by the society to identify Nauru's remaining cultural and natural heritage.

The tourism office extends an invitation for interested persons for the preservation of Nauru historical items or local knowledge to contact the Tourism office via email on jeh.tourism.ha@gmail.com or phone 5573142 for further information•

Nauru Airlines launches fifth aircraft

The national carrier Nauru Airlines welcomed the newest addition to its family VHXNU bringing a total five aircrafts to its fleet.

The launch was held at the Nauru International Airport on 31 January 2016 coinciding with the country's 48th Independence Day celebrations.

Nauru Airlines connects Nauru with Brisbane, Fiji, Majuro, Tarawa and the Federated States of Micronesia – Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Truk•



Nauru signs air services agreement with Australia

Earlier this month (Friday 4 March) the Minister for Nauru Air Corporation Honourable David Adeang and Australian High Commissioner to Nauru John Donnelly, signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the air service agreement between Australia and Nauru.

The signing took place at the cabinet conference room and was witnessed by a number of cabinet ministers and the Chairman and CEO of Nauru Air Corporation Geoffrey Bowmaker.

During the signing ceremony, Minister Adeang thanked the government of Australia for agreeing to the MOU concluding the agreement was critical for air services between Australia and Nauru.

“Just to thank the government of Australia for agreeing at very short notice to conclude what had been a series of talks between our two governments on critical air services, as you know we can’t take Nauru forward without the services provided by the team,” Minister Adeang said.

Following Minister Adeang’s remarks High Commissioner John Donnelly also offered his thanks and expressed the importance of the agreement in bilateral relations between Australia and Nauru.

“It’s a critical piece of the Australia Nauru relationship and it is yet another example of the broad Australia Nauru relationship how we work together in mutual supportive fashion in looking after our issues in the Pacific,” Mr Donnelly said.

Nauru joins the intergovernmental oceanographic commission

Nauru was welcomed by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO when it was made the 148th member of the Commission on 11 February.

The IOC-UNESCO has 35 member states that are Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

According to the UNESCO website, several areas of IOC activities are of interest to Nauru, among which tsunami warning, the development of predictive tools that address coastal areas of local interest to SIDS, sea-level monitoring, as well as capacity-building in climate change phenomena, impacts and adaptation strategies.

The participation of Nauru in the Commission’s activities will in turn contribute to the cooperation of the Member States of the region, primarily through the IOC Intergovernmental Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) and the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS).



Airline Minister David Adeang and Australian High Commissioner John Donnelly sign air services agreement

Nauru Airlines CEO Geoff Bowmaker also offered his remarks that the signing of the MOU in its current form signals a maturity in the air service arrangements between Australia and Nauru.

“The air service agreement really in my view signals a maturity in the air services relations between the two countries. Prior to the Air Service Agreement of course most of the rules and regulations around the air services have been in a series of letters... this single air service agreement brings all of that in but also adds very important elements.

Mr Bowmaker added that the MOU will offer opportunities for growth and development for the airline•



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