



Nauru Bulletin

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First narcotics training for health and law enforcement

The Nauru Police Force in collaboration with Australian Border Force and the Australian Federal Police conducted a drugs training for police and border control personnel in how to detect illicit drugs coming into Nauru.

The training is facilitated and funded by ABF as part of ongoing efforts to train and up-skill law enforcement agencies such as the police force, border security personnel and health.

NPF Superintendent Training Kalinda Blake confirms drugs have been discovered in Nauru and the training is essential for border protection officers.

“The training is important as drugs have been found and confiscated in Nauru, (and) legally officers in our border agencies have not been trained to test the drugs they seize.

“With this training they can use the test kits, analyse, do up a case and present it to court for prosecution,” Superintendent Blake said.

This is the first time the ABF has conducted this training outside of Australia and says it is “pleased to support the Government of

Nauru Police Force and customs services by sending a trainer to Nauru to deliver a one day course in drug detection, search and testing. Ten officers will be trained each day from Tuesday to Thursday this week [4-6 July].”



Mick Serbatoio from the Australian Federal Police introduce the training to local officials prior to training commencement

The training was designed for police, customs, quarantine, immigration, corrections, and health staff.

The training focused on the proper use of the narcotics identification kits (NIK) which uses a colourmetric testing system that can presumptively identify a range of

substances including narcotics, stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens.

The training is essential to provide operators with the necessary skills to use NIK in a law enforcement environment and to ensure consistency and increase reliability of NIK use.

At the end of the training, participants are expected to be able to correctly use a NIK as well as explain the capabilities and limitations of NIK, and explain how different physical drug forms may influence field colour testing.

The training also covered detection and search principles such as examination procedures when dealing with bags and cargo; understanding of safety issues related to exams; and post detection procedures.

The participants viewed video footage of drugs standards being tested and had the opportunity to demonstrate loading a NIK test pouch and neutralising it for safe disposal.

Participants received a certificate of attendance at the end of each day. A total of 30 police, border personnel and health staff participated in the training.

Independence 2018 celebrations commence

January 31st 2018 will mark Nauru’s 50th Independence Day anniversary but celebrating the milestone has begun with a carnival at the weekend, 1 July.

The carnival also celebrated the anniversaries of state owned enterprises Ronphos, Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA) and Nauru Airlines, and over 50 stalls comprising the different sporting federations, food and display stalls were put up by individuals, companies and organisations as part of the festivities.

A national holiday is declared every year to commemorate the handing over of the phosphate industry from the British Phosphate Commission to the Nauru Phosphate Corporation (NPC) on 1 July 1970. NPC was later re-established as Ronphos on 1 July 2005.

The event was opened with the Nauru national anthem sung by nine year old Joyful Ytuaeb Sosefo.

Minister for Health and Education Honourable Charmaine Scotty delivered the President’s address on behalf of His Excellency who was abroad.

“Today also marks the anniversary of Ronphos, Nauru Airlines, and the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority.

“I am sure that the sentiments of today would be one of pride and joy and to be part of this beloved nation. We all feel proud to be Nauruan, in our freedom, in our democracy, in our culture and in our Christian values whereby we hold dearly and to proudly proclaim our national motto of ‘God’s Will First’.

[Cont pg 2...]

Nauru prepares for independence 2018

[...from pg 1]

“We also remember our forefathers who worked so hard to gain our independence. They laid the foundation for building up this beautiful nation for us.”

Acting President Aaron Cook also acknowledged and paid tribute to Nauru’s forefathers in their decision almost 50 years ago that the Nauruan people “will stand together and become a nation.”

“We decided that we will run our own affairs, have our own flag and have our own political system to manage our country. Most importantly, we decided that we will live under God’s commandments inspired by our motto of God’s Will First.

“Our forefathers choose 31 January 1968 as our independence day, which is a significant date in our history. 31 January also signifies the return of our people from Truk in 1946, which is more than 71 years ago. While we commemorate 31 January as our day of independence, we must not forget that this was also a very meaningful and emotional period in our history,” Acting President Aaron Cook said.



Odn Garabwan (wearing green) of Yaren defeats Tiana Waidabu of Anabar in the traditional wrestling

Local artists and dancers entertained the crowd with closing performances by church groups.

Nauru will host various events and regional meetings throughout the anniversary year 2018, including hosting the regional meeting of leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in September•

Thank you RAMSI - Waqa

The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) has come to a close after fourteen years of regional effort to build a stable Solomon Islands.

RAMSI, or Operation *Helpem Fren*, was set up in July 2003 at the request of the Solomon Islands Government to help lay the foundations for long term stability, security and prosperity in the county.

The mission which was mostly funded and led by Australia is a partnership between the people and government of Solomon Islands and 15 contributing countries of the pacific region.

The Nauru Police Force deployed 29 officers to RAMSI from 2003 until the mission ended in June 2017.

His Excellency President Baron Waqa attended the farewell program in the capital Honiara from 25 to 29 June and delivered thank you remarks at the official cultural welcome ceremony on 28 June.

“Special recognition and acknowledgement goes to the Chiefs of Solomon Islands for believing in RAMSI and for your wise counsel.

“We thank the nine Premiers for their outstanding leadership in support of RAMSI.

“We thank the women and the youth for your patience and support during those difficult times.



President Waqa offers thank you remarks for the work of RAMSI and to the Solomon Islands people and government

“Thank you to Chief Sir Paul Tovua for representing the Chiefs and for the wonderful gifts. We accept these gifts with great respect and humble hearts.

“We acknowledge the leadership of the Governor General and the Prime Minister in according us the traditional welcome and we thank the Government of Solomon Islands and the people of the Solomon Islands for welcoming us to your beautiful and friendly country,” President Waqa said.

All of the Pacific Island Forum countries participate in RAMSI which benefits from the diverse culture and experience from those countries.

Since its beginning, thousands of police, military and civilian personnel from across the region have served with RAMSI and worked side by side with Solomon Islanders•

NEWS IN BRIEF: MAN generators’ transporter to receive new wheels this week

Last week, 26 June, two new MAN engines landed on Nauru destined for Nauru Utilities (NUC) for installation, but operations were however halted due to a burst tyre on the transporter.

The transporter blew a tyre while transporting the generator around the island from the causeway to NUC. One generator is now at Uaboe waiting for the transporter to be repaired while the other is still on the causeway.

The transporter’s four special wheels are made in Italy and currently are in transit to Brisbane from where they will be flown to Nauru.

NUC expects to receive the wheels this week, Friday 7 July. Upon receipt of the wheels NUC intends to repair the transporter and transport both generators to the power station.

Meanwhile works are continuing in the power station to prepare for the generators•

Discussion on refugees convention act

Secretary for Multicultural Affairs Barina Waqa was recently on the weekly radio program Discussion Desk to talk about issues of import regarding the Refugees Convention Act 2012, on 28 June.

The Act is based on the United Nations 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees which was established as a consequence of the issues arising from the enormous number of people displaced by war.



Secretary for Multicultural Affairs Barina Waqa talks to Discussion Desk about the refugees act

States that have signed on for the UN Refugees Convention declare their commitment to the provisions outlined in the Convention whereby countries are obligated to the fair treatment of asylum seekers and to recognise their rights.

Nauru became party to the UN Refugees Convention in 2011 along with 144 other states.

Having ratified the UN Convention and in light of Nauru's hosting of the regional processing centre for asylum seekers and refugees, Ms Waqa said the Act is important for Nauru in its obligation to protect and recognise the rights of refugees as outlined in the Convention.

In addition, Ms Waqa highlighted that Nauru took a step further when it incorporated the UN Convention into its own laws, making Nauru's commitment legally binding.

The definition of a refugee and an asylum seekers are similar in the UN Convention and the Nauru Act.

Nauru provides that asylum seekers may obtain legal assistance during the determination process at no cost to have their applications prepared and submitted.

Under the Act, the determination process is undertaken by the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) office and information collection for determinations can take many forms. This may include face-to-face interviews and other research. This information is checked by the RSD office before the resulting status is approved by the Secretary for Multicultural Affairs. Once this happens the protection mechanisms provided under the act will automatically be activated to protect the refugee.

On the other hand refugees with negative determinations can appeal their claims with the Refugee Tribunal, thus activating a second review process which is also referred to the Supreme Court.

Ms Waqa explained that the Supreme Court then reviews the legal framework used by the tribunal followed and if legal discrepancies are found then the matter is referred back to the tribunal for another decision. The final step is a review by the High Court of Australia. At the time of the program, 28 June, Ms Waqa said six cases were currently being reviewed in the High Court of Australia.

Ms Waqa clarified that under the Act individuals who are outside their own country and are unwilling or unable to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution, yet found to be a refugee can have their status canceled for two reasons. Firstly, if the refugee no longer needs protection; secondly if evidence emerges after the initial declaration that shows that claimants have submitted a false application.

Another provision of the determination procedure is the removal process in place for asylum seekers who have exhausted all avenues of appeal and yet are not determined to be refugees.

Ms Waqa said that to date no removal orders have been issued to any asylum seeker.

The Tribunal functions as a court system except it deals only with cases for asylum seekers.

The Tribunal comprises of a principle member, deputy and other members and according to Ms Waqa tribunal members must have qualifications equivalent to that of Supreme Court judges with vast experience and expertise in immigration law.

All Tribunal hearings are closed proceedings except to Tribunal members, the applicant and their legal representative, and Nauru legal representatives.

The Tribunal can exercise the right to summon individuals for evidence as other courts. Matters dealt with at the Tribunal are dealt with in confidence and Ms Waqa emphasised that the issue of confidentiality is very important for the protection of asylum seekers and their families during the review process.

Ms Waqa explained that unlike other Conventions, the UN Refugees Convention has no reporting mechanism, however it outlines the obligations of signatory countries towards asylum seekers and refugees.

Ms Waqa observes that Nauru is progressing ahead of the international community in terms of good practice and in-country services provided for asylum seekers and refugees•

New honorary consul for India

Nauru's honorary consul in India has retired and the appointment of his successor formalised this week (5 July) through a Consular Commission signed by Nauru's President Baron Waqa.

Mr Kartar Singh Bhalla was appointed Honorary Consul of Nauru in New Delhi India on 21 August 1985. His association with Nauru began in 1982 when he served as Parliamentary Counsel until 1984, and subsequently served in other positions and duties for the Republic.

Mr Bhalla's son, Charan Kamal Bhalla, is now appointed as the new Honorary Consul to Nauru.

Charan Bhalla graduated in chemical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology followed by an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management.

He is currently a practising strategist focusing on organisational improvements and efficiency in management, and is the founding president and chief executive officer of Savant Associates. He does consultancy work on strategy, governance, risk and compliance, marketing and sales management.

Mr Charan Bhalla will continue the good work of his father who served Nauru well during his tenure of 32 years•

DDesk talks about the telecom and regulatory affairs act

The Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs Act 2017 was explained on the radio show Discussion Desk, this week (5 July).

Discussion Desk co-hosts Rhona Bop and George Joram spoke with Secretary for Telecommunications and Media Joel Waqa and Sanjay Bhaskaran advisor to the Minister for Telecommunications and Media about the act.

Mr Waqa detailed that the Act provides the regulator that the ICT department authorises and monitors the use of telecommunications systems and services as well as establish and monitor rates and charges paid by subscriber.

Mr Bhaskaran explained the regulator is appointed by Cabinet under the act is responsible for updating the ministry and cabinet about developments and all that is happening in telecommunications and media services.

The regulator is responsible in regulating the Act to the fullest extent possible, which includes issuance of telecom licensing to the service providers, monitoring and regulating approved licenses. The regulator's other duties include ensuring infrastructure sharing by service providers.

The regulator is also responsible for establishing a phone numbering plan for service providers as well as set procedures and guidelines including monitoring illegal telecommunication services such as those services which operate without the regulator's approval.

Under the act, telecommunications service providers should be registered with the regulator and thereupon the regulator will issue a license to the service provider and assign a frequency before it can operate. The regulator can revoke the license of a service provider if seen breaching the provisions of the telecommunications act.

Penalties include a fine not exceeding \$100,000 and a term of imprisonment not less than 10 years for persons committing offences under the act.

In addition, the regulator can discontinue an unlicensed telecommunication service or equipment of service providers and ascertain whether a person has committed an offence under the act. The regulator is authorised to seize equipment and documents for evidence in court application.

The term of a license 5 years however, depending on the regulator and Cabinet approval, Cabinet may decide to grant more or less depending on the investment that the service providers are engaged in.

In the case of persons receiving threatening or offensive phone calls Mr Waqa said the complaint should file a police report then



Secretary for Telecom and Media Joel Waqa (right) with Adviser to telecom minister Sanjay Bhaskaran speak with Discussion Desk hosts Rhona and George

seek further authorisation from the regulator who will then assist police.

Mr Bhaskaran explained that eventually customers will need to provide detailed information and this information will be kept confidential and accessible only by the regulator through the service provider on a need by need basis.

Under the Act the service providers are allowed to keep customer information for a length of time not exceeding seven years for verification purposes.

Depending on individual case, Mr Waqa said licenses may be revoked if a service provider fails to meet customer requirements

It was highlighted that service providers as well as the regulator have the authority to access areas where transmission equipment are located. Transmission equipment is inspected on a quarterly basis to check that equipment is maintained.

Inspectors are allowed to enter any business facility without any notice. However, the inspector will have to obtain a warrant from police or permission from home owners if they need to inspect enter a residence or dwelling for inspection purposes.

Mr Bhaskaran explained one major setback for telecommunication services are overgrown trees of which service providers are responsible for.

Mr Waqa highlighted that streamlining telecom processes keeps costs down and affordable as well as encourage competition for service providers.

Mr Waqa confirmed that a second service provider for telephone, internet and television called ACC links is on island and is well on the way to setting up on Nauru. It was highlighted that the establishment of a second service provider will improve the competition and lower the cost for telecommunication services•

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