



Nauru Bulletin

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15 June 2022

Queen's platinum jubilee celebration

President Lionel Aingimea congratulates Queen Elizabeth II on platinum jubilee

Your Majesty,

I am honoured to convey on behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Nauru, and on my personal behalf, salutations, and heartfelt felicitations on the special occasion of Your Majesty's birthday.

This year's celebration is particularly momentous as it is commemorated during Your Majesty's Platinum Jubilee – marking 70 years of Your Majesty's exceptional service to the United Kingdom, the Realms, and the Commonwealth.

The Republic of Nauru and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland share a historic and enduring relationship. As we navigate a world of



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Photo: elle.com

uncertainties, I remain confident that the relationship between our two nations will continue to flourish and prosper for the mutual benefit of our peoples. I join all

Nauruans in wishing Your Majesty continued good health and God's Blessings for many years to come.

I also recognise your stewardship to reinforce the unity of Commonwealth countries as a family of nations working towards shared goals of prosperity, democracy, and peace.

Your Majesty, please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours Truly,

*H.E Hon. Lionel Rouwen Aingimea, MP
PRESIDENT*

Budget 2022-23

The 2022-23 Budget recognised expected revenues of \$252.5 million and expenditure of \$251.9 million with a \$549,000 surplus balance. The surplus will be used to build up cash reserves at the bank and support Nauru to manage the uncertainties in the year ahead.

The 2022-23 Budget tabled by Minister for Finance, Hon Martin Hunt was approved by Parliament on 1 June 2022.

The 2022-23 Budget has been framed to support Nauru's sustained resilience through responsible economic management, easing cost of living pressures, and investing in service delivery and in productivity enhancing infrastructure. It builds on the strong performance in 2021-2022.

Key revenue estimates

- \$134.3m from RPC related activities
- \$54.5m from Nauru Fisheries
- \$19.3m of import related revenue
- \$20.8 anticipated from development partners

Expenditure estimates

- \$28.6m (10.1 per cent) of adjusted revenue to the Nauru Intergenerational Trust Fund -- \$9.3m has been prepaid in 2021-22 and \$19.3m will be paid this financial year
- \$5.8m to the Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust for a five per

cent Ronwan capital re-distribution, leaving \$11.3m balance

- \$1m for Bank of Nauru bank book holder payments reducing the debt to \$30m
- \$12.9m for education
- \$29.4m for health
- \$1.4m for sports
- \$5.8m for COVID Taskforce's 48-hour pre-travel quarantine in Brisbane
- \$800,00 for other COVID Taskforce work
- \$5.4 for land rentals
- \$3.4m ex-gratia payment to public servants, SOE staff and pensioners, to ease cost of living pressures, and payment will range from \$600 to \$1000 for individuals depending on their fortnightly pay, with the lower end of income scale receiving more.
- \$3.8m for the aged and disability pensioners
- \$4.3m to Nauru Shipping Line for essential maintenance of the Micronesia Pride and charter to service Nauru's freight needs while the ship is on dry dock
- \$1.4m for fisheries
- \$1.7m for the Higher Ground Initiative
- \$1.5m for NRC for a cemetery site at Topside

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- \$9.1m for Nauru Community Housing
- \$2m for the Smart Village project
- \$3.1m clean and green program
- \$742,000 seawall construction
- \$350,000 for twin chamber and concrete septic tanks
- \$354,000 to improve dwelling environment of people living with a disability
- \$40m aerodrome runway resurfacing -- grant from the Government of Australia
- \$2.1m port redevelopment
- \$1.5m to refurbish the tank farm
- \$8.4m for community service obligations to support electricity supply, regular air freight services and port service charges
- \$2.5m for tug-boat hire for phosphate loading and cargo unloading
- US\$11.3m for purchase of second passenger aircraft
- \$2.7m cash buffer

Nauru's financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June.

Nauru operates on a cash basis and appropriations lapse on 30 June each year.

Supplementary appropriation bills will be available through the year.

Quarterly budget performance reports will be available to track expenditure and revenue performance through the year •

Supplementary 2021-22

During the parliament sitting, 26 May, Minister for Finance Martin Hunt tabled the Supplementary Appropriation Bill #4, 2021-22 which recognises \$10.1 million in revenue with the same to be spent, leaving a small surplus of \$50,000.



The \$10.1m is received from the six month extension of the RPC arrangement with Australia, comprising \$2.2m from Employment Services Tax and \$7.9m from Business Profits Tax.

Of that amount, \$5.5m is provided to cover conversion cost of the VH-XNU aircraft from a passenger to freighter plane; \$2.8m for the community housing scheme; \$500,000 for overseas medical referrals; \$300,000 for ministerial to cover purchases of plant and equipment and furnishings of the cabinet room; \$260,000 for presidency; \$150,000 for additional sporting equipment for community gyms; and \$500,000 as fiscal cash buffer •

Parliament, May-June sitting

The Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen opened the 26 May sitting with the Lord's Prayer followed by a message from the president addressing the overwhelming number of impounded vehicles.

President Lionel Aingimea said while this contributes to revenue derived from fines associated with unregistered vehicles, it's a clear message that individuals are not complying with the law.

Unregistered vehicles are impounded and their owners fined. Up to \$200,000 worth of fines has been issued this financial year alone.

The President says he would rather see people abide by the laws and rules governing vehicle registration by getting their vehicles tested for roadworthiness and put on the national register.

Ministerial Statements

NPF

President Aingimea presented the first statement on Nauru Police Force and congratulated the three NPF officers who have been selected to be part of Nauru's first United Nations police deployment team to South Sudan and Cyprus.

Expected to depart in July, the team will be led by Contingent Commander Superintendent Imram Scotty, and Sergeant Drusky Dabadauw and Senior Constable Jacaranda Akibwib.

The officers were part of a team of six who underwent pre-deployment training in Ankara, Turkey earlier this year. Selection of the three was based on this training and one female was required to satisfy the UN quota.

Two, 12 metre police patrol boats donated by the Republic of China (Taiwan) are expected to arrive in June.

The boats will be operated by the new Nauru Police Force Maritime Unit and officers will undergo maritime readiness training programs.

News of the recent hacking of NPF emails is under investigation with the support of the Australian Federal Police's cybercrime operations team. President Aingimea will provide further updates in due time.

Audited Financial Reports 2018-19

Minister for Finance Martin Hunt tabled the government's audited annual financials for the fiscal year 2018-19, which highlights a few "adverse observations, particularly with certain lapses, errors, and disobedience to statutory requirements," and recommendations for the government to implement a strategy to improve and strengthen the reporting process by stakeholders.

The report was referred to the Public Accounts Committee for further examining and reporting back to parliament.

Health

Health Minister Isabella Dageago says one of the major activities of the Ministry of Health this year is operationalising the Wellness Centres focused on delivering quality primary health care.

The minister also announced the \$920,000 donation by Taiwan to strengthen and improve access to the general public for primary health care services, and thanked the Government of Japan for

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Parliament May-June sitting

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the donation of an ambulance through its Grassroots Grants Assistance Program (GGP).

A team of eye specialists is expected to arrive mid-June to attend to cataract and trichiasis cases. The last eye team visit was in 2018, and as such the cases load for cataracts has accumulated over the years.

In marking 100 years of the International Day of the Midwife, the minister noted that Nauru averages 350 births a year.

Nurses account for 37 per cent of Nauru's health workforce and a number of other visiting specialist teams are scheduled in the coming months including a team from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in June for dialysis patients.

Screening activities for the various health conditions are ongoing in the community including administering the HPV vaccine in May to girls aged 11 to 15 years which attained 28 per cent in the first week.

The first cohort of patients to India since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic departed on 19 May, taking the total number of current overseas medical referrals to 66 patients and 61 family escorts.

Minister Dageago offered her condolences to the families of Francisco Debao who passed away in Taiwan while on medical treatment and Ms Melita Derog who served on the Nauru Health Practitioners Board since 2020.

NRC

Minister for Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation Reagan Aliklik says 400m2 remains for land clearing of portion 230 in Meneñ for the Higher Ground Initiative (HGI). This is of the total 9.8 hectares earmarked for the project.

Rock and aggregate production and supply for land backfill, port, and seawall projects are ongoing.

NRC and the departments of Commerce, Industry and Environment, and Infrastructure are working to continuing the seawall project and adaptation and mitigation measures to address the adverse effects of climate change around the coastal area.

NFMRA

Minister for Nauru fisheries, Wawani Dowiyogo says the Pacific Community's (SPC) master fisherman is expected to visit at the end of June to conduct the giant squid exploratory fishing and training for local fishers on midwater fishing techniques.

The community-based fisheries management is setting up to work with the community and training to set up marine managed areas; while the National Coastal Fisheries Management plan and regulations are being developed.

The improper use of fish aggregating devices (FAD) resulting in the loss of all but one FAD is "unfortunate" and an awareness campaign was launched to improve public awareness on the importance of FADs.

Minister Dowiyogo reported that his recent trip to meet with a fishing company who manages vessels under the Nauru flag was a "great opportunity to discuss current operations and future plans."

The company is interested in having two additional purse seine vessels join their existing fleet under the Nauru registry; while NFMRA also plans to establish a long line fleet of around 15 vessels to utilise Nauru as its base.



Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen opens the four day parliament sitting on 26 May

People Living with Disability

The Able-Disable Centre is undertaking a progressive development educational program for its students in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to participate in mainstream learning.

Minister for PWD Isabella Dageago says the program is made up of four levels. Level one looks at personal hygiene and etiquette; while level two addresses differentiated learning which is tailoring students to meet their individual interests, needs and strengths.

Level three of the program focuses on the hearing impaired; while level four students are taught to identify numbers, the alphabet and colours differences.

On the margins of the 2022 Independence Day celebrations the new signage for the office hosting the department of PWD was unveiled in Meneñ by landowners.

The office, named Starfonte House, is in memory of three children afflicted with a severe growth disability. Sisters Starisa and Starcella Engar and cousin Dalfonte Bop have passed on but remembered by many.

Minister Dageago says the land which Starfonte House is built, was granted to the department free of charge for the next 75 years, by landowners as a tribute to the three children.

The minister also thanked the Taiwan Embassy for its generous donation in April of a container load of assistive devices for the able-disable community; and congratulated participants of the 50-meter wheelchair race in May.

RONPHOS

Ronphos has exported approximately 107,630 metric tonnes of phosphate to buyers in Australia, South Korea and the Philippines in the last four months.

Minister for Ronphos Reagan Aliklik says this takes the total export to 271,000 metric tonnes in 10 shipments this financial year, exceeding the budgeted total by 20,000 metric tonnes.

The state-owned enterprise (SOE) paid landowners their land and permanent installation rentals for the March 2022 quarter and royalties for the same period totalling \$1.5 million.

Internal Affairs

Minister Dageago says the department has commenced implementing COVID-19 safety measures to prepare and equip staff with the knowledge of the steps of the COVID response plan.

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Parliament May-June sitting

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The minister acknowledged the exceptional work of the team that represented Nauru at the 2020 Dubai Expo and their innovative ideas bringing Nauru to the fore at this world event.

The department's life skills program commenced on 9 May with the goal of providing opportunities for the youth who otherwise would have limited access to resources to enhance their skills set and understanding.

The six-month program will also support the youth in securing work placement and furthering their education.

Family day was also celebrated on 15 May and Aroeni day celebrations planned for 15 August.

WASDA

Minister Dageago went on to update the House on recent activities of the Department of Women and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) and the successful running of the 2nd national women's summit in April.

The minister says the summit attracted over 200 participants to discuss the three thematic topics of women and health; education and training of women; and violence against women.

A memorandum of understanding was signed with Nauru Police sealing a partnership and collaboration in the fight to end domestic violence. A domestic violence desk is also set up at police headquarters staffed by WASDA.

The department will be hard at work with workshops on the core policies on women, as well as completion of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child state report and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) state report.

COVID-19 Taskforce

Minister Dageago then presented the report by the COVID-19 Taskforce reiterating that while Nauru has lost its COVID-free status, the Taskforce has managed to capture and contain any infection in incoming passengers in hotel quarantine.

As at 26 May, the minister says Nauru is ranked the highest vaccinated Pacific Island country to date with 108 per cent of adolescents, 12-17 years, receiving their first dose and 95 per cent for the second dose. This calculates to 72 per cent coverage of the national population from 12 years and older.

Double-dosed adults have reached 99 per cent coverage and those fully vaccinated with the booster shot is 86 per cent, as at 26 May.

The Ministry of Health is expecting the arrival in early June, of



Ninety five percent of children aged 12-17 years are fully vaccinated with two doses

the Australian government-funded paediatric Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years. The roll out of the 6,600 doses is expected very soon after arrival.

Minister Dageago says by vaccinating this group Nauru's total population coverage would increase to over the minimum 80 per cent coverage.

A waste management unit has been installed and will process hospital waste including from the COVID Acute Care Unit. The waste will be shredded and sterilised for safe use in land fill.

The unit is funded by the Indian government and approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Nauru will soon upgrade its emergency communications system with the installation of a digital VHF communications system. While the proposal was made before the pandemic, the landscape has shifted the base focus and alterations to the initial request now cater for needs of agencies directly involved in the emergency planning for the pandemic.

Education

The teacher deficit at the start of the academic year forced the closure of classroom teaching for the first six weeks for Years 3, 4, and 5 as the pandemic and border closures restricted travel for international teachers.

Deputy Minister for Education Richard-Hyde Menke said student learning continued with learning packages and face-to-face consultations and complimentary hotline supported by Digicel was also made available for students and parents.

DM Menke says on the global spectrum, the six week cessation of classroom learning is placed at the milder end and the department continues to work towards preparing a suitable response for similar contexts.

For this academic year the number of teachers with bachelors' degrees has doubled and the teacher-student ratio decreased, while the student attendance rate increased by 17 per cent in the last two years.

A key performance indicator was achieved when 100 per cent internet connectivity for the schools was achieved. This is a timely step to students' learning recovery and for broader strategies towards digital literacy.

Students on scholarship to Queensland, Australia were able to travel to Australia to commence at the start of the second term. The delay was owed to a requirement to fully vaccinate against COVID-19.

Of the 45 students, 15 are fully funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs through the Pacific Senior Secondary Scholarship scheme.

Telecommunications

The submarine optical fibre cable system, the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) system connecting Tarawa, Nauru, Kosrae and Pohnpei, and onto Guam lost its original seven-year timeframe to challenges encountered including the bidding process.

Deputy Minister for Telecommunications Pyon Deiye said eventually Australia's agreement to look at the construction of the EMC, as part of its Pacific regional funding arrangement gave the project "another life".

The U.S and Japan are also supportive of Australia and so under the new funding arrangement, the project is expected to be

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complete no later than 2025.

As a condition of the former funding banks, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, a corporation be established for the construction and operation of the submarine cable. This was to ensure that accessibility of the cable was made available to all people and charges expected to be far less than what Nauruans are paying today.

The Nauru Fibre Cable Corporation, established in 2017, will be contracting on behalf of Nauru.

Bills summary

The four days of parliament sitting heard several ministerial statements and 15 bills proposing amendments to existing legislation including Constitution amendments for the right to run for elections and the budget.

Parliamentary Pension (Amendment) Bill 2022

President Lionel Aingimea tabled the bill proposing to amend the criterion for former Members of Parliament to qualify for pension.

The entitlements which a former MP is paid their pension were having served three terms prior to 8 September 2008 or served a total of nine years or more from 9 September 2008.

A third category is proposed for MPs who were not able to complete three terms of parliament prior to 8 September 2008. This amendment provides that a member must serve a cumulative period of eight years.

The bill also provides that a former MP who resides overseas is entitled to receive their parliamentary pension.

However, the President clarifies that a former MP who denounces their Nauruan citizenship is disqualified from receiving the pension.

Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 2022

The bill is limited to the arrest and detention of a suspect whilst the investigation is undertaken by the police; whereas the Bail Act 2018 established guidelines for the court's ability to grant or deny bail.

The bill requires that the prosecution applies to the resident magistrate, the judge or any other judicial officer if the period of detention is to be extended.

The prosecution must apply for a notice of motion and an affidavit outlining the reasons for extension. Failing to file an application, the person being detained or arrested should be released.

If the prosecution makes an application to the court for an extension and is denied, the person should also be released from custody.

This bill will prevent the arrest or detention of a person without probable cause and without effective legal recourse.

Bail (Amendment) Bill 2022

The amendment deals with the definition of an accused person, which is a person who has been charged with an offence and the right of bail of a child offender which is a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Nauru Post

Deputy Minister for Nauru Post Richard-Hyde Menke highlighted the various activities of Nauru Post in recent months with the aim of enhancing services and product choices for the community.

Activities include staff awards to celebrate its 4th anniversary, introduction of new products, procurement of three Toyota Land Cruisers in February, and donation of three electric bikes from Switzerland Post for postal deliveries.

The June Parliament sitting was spread across four days including the tabling of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2021-22, the 2022-23 budget and bills •

Children's rights



A child who offends needs certain protections which is provided for under the Child Welfare and Protection Act 2016, however they may still be required to be remanded in custody and separate from adult offenders.

The amendment gives the power to the Cabinet to gazette any other place where a child offender can be remanded in custody, to ensure the child's interests are protected.

The amendment is drafted to ensure that Nauru also meets its obligations under the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2022

The time required to resign from an office of profit to contest a general election is reduced from three months to 60 days, before parliament is dissolved, thus reducing the period of time a person is without employment.

The new Section 59 (2A) now reads: 'A holder of an office of profit in the service of Nauru as prescribed under subsection (1), shall resign from his or her office 60 days before the dissolution of the full term of Parliament under Article 41(7) of the Constitution.'

A holder of an office of profit including employees of the Nauru Public Service, Nauru Police Force, parliamentary services, and all state-owned-enterprise.

It is noted that a person who holds an office of profit does not include the offices of president, speakers, deputy speaker, ministers, deputy ministers, and members of parliament.

They are not required to resign as their offices are established under the Constitution or other written laws which is directly linked to the term of parliament.

A candidate who is a holder of an office of profit, who was unsuccessful in the elections is allowed to return to work not earlier than 30 days from the first sitting of the Parliament.

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Just like the term required of a person to resign to contest an election, the President says reducing these time requirements is an “issue of livelihood for people and there should not be unnecessary strain in place for that.”

The voting time is also extended and polls will open from 7.00am instead of 9.00am.



Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2021

The four changes proposed are: Strengthening of the minimum qualification required for judges; Structure of the Nauru Court of Appeal; Composition of the Public Service Appeals Board; and Composition of the Police Service Board.

The first amendment is the minimum qualification requirement for appointment of a chief justice, judge or justice of appeal. This is increased from five to ten years.

In presenting the Bill, President Aingimea said when the Constitution was written, there was limitation on the availability of experienced lawyers qualified to be appointed as judges and the minimum qualification was fixed at five years, remained for over 50 years.

“With age and experience comes wisdom. Increasing the minimum qualification experience of a judge from five years to ten certainly allows legally qualified person with moral and legal wisdom to be appointed to look after our people,” President Aingimea said.

The second amendment is replacing the chief justice as the president of the Court of Appeal and to appoint a separate president of the Court of Appeal.

As it were the chief justice was also the president of the Court of Appeals, thus would be the one to review cases in the Supreme Court which he/she had already made a decision in the Appeals Court.

The President explains for that reason, it is important that each hierarchy of the court system must be independent in reviewing each other’s decisions in the exercise of appellate jurisdiction.

The third and four amendments are also replacing the chief justice as the chairman of the Police Service Board and the Public Service Appeals Board. The decisions of these boards are ultimately subject to judicial review – headed by the chief justice.

Technically, the chief justice will be reviewing his/her own decisions made as the chairman of boards.

Parliamentary Services (Amendment) Bill 2022

The Bill amends section 49 of the Act to be aligned with the new period of resignation required before elections.

The new resignation period for employees of the Office of Parliamentary Services is reduced from 90 to 60 days before the dissolution of the full term of parliament under Article 41(7) of the Constitution.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2022

Parliament passes Constitutional amendment that membership of Parliament be reserved for Nauruans born on or before 30 January 1968 and their descendants. This means they are eligible to contest the general elections and hold parliamentary seats.

Naturalised citizens or persons who have gained Nauruan citizenship after 30 January 1968 are not eligible.

The Bill focuses on four new criteria disqualifying a person from running for parliamentary office.

“Apart from the right to contest an election, all other rights that are enjoyed by every Nauruan will be enjoyed by you,” President Aingimea said in his speech presenting the Bill.

A two-thirds majority of votes in parliament is required to pass the Bill.

A Nauruan citizen is allowed to be elected as a Member of Parliament as long as he or she is able to find heritage to one of those people who became citizens under Article 71 of the Constitution.

Customs (Amendment) Bill 2022

The amendment is to repeal Schedule 2 of the Act to be consistent with amendments proposed by the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Bill 2022, and other amendments are consequential for appropriate reference to Schedule 2 of the Customs Tariff Act 2014.

Schedule 2 outlines the Customs Valuation of Goods for Tariff.

Customs Tariff (Amendment) Bill 2022

The principal amendment is to transfer Schedule 2 from the Customs Act 2014 into the Customs Tariff Act 2014. Other amendments are only consequential for appropriate references to the titles of the CT from Customs Act 2014 to Customs Tariff Act 2014.

Nauru Court of Appeal (Amendment) Bill 2022

The Bill dealt with a number of matters largely resulting from the amendment to Article 57 of the Constitution.

The first change is replacing the chief justice as the president of the Court of Appeal, and follows all other changes required to transition the functions, powers and jurisdiction not only of the justices of appeal by the administrative responsibilities to the president of the Court of Appeal.

The registrar of courts is now answerable to the president of the Court of Appeal in respect to appeals matters, rather than the chief justice.

The rule-making powers will also transition as well as some practices and procedural amendments, including the right of the Republic of the Director of Public Prosecutions top appeal certain matters from the Supreme Court to the Court of Appeal.

The president of the Nauru Court of Appeal is vested with the

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Reduction of fuel price

In a proactive move at last week's Cabinet meeting, the Cabinet reduced the import duty of petrol and diesel to assist the increasing cost of goods burden to the citizens of Nauru.



Fuel prices alleviated at bowser stations to lessen the consumer burden

The conflict in Ukraine with boycotts of Russian fuel supply continues to negatively affect the global oil and gas supply. This is resulting in higher prices in Nauru not only for fuel directly but all goods due to pressure on shipping and production costs. OPEC members decided to increase output (2 June) for July-August however constraints in global refining capacity are likely driving current prices.

Without this action the prices would have increased at the bowser for petrol by 14 cents a litre and diesel by 17 cents a litre.

The duty was reduced by 20 cents a litre and the dutiable prices will reduce accordingly which will result in a decrease in prices from the current supply shipment by petrol of six cents and diesel by three cents per litre.

Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, and Fiji have all taken this path to reduce the economic pressure on their consumer price index and directly assist their citizens in this conflict induced inflationary period.

In Nauru, ongoing support will continue to the critical service SOE's with the current community service obligation (CSO) subsidies in place. The Government of Nauru through the Department for Finance will continue to monitor this issue •



Bills summary

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function and power to issue practice directions for the court.

The Court of Appeal is expected to sit later in June or early July and virtual sittings of the Court are provided for in law, thus making it possible for the Court to convene at any time.

Public Service (Amendment) Bill 2022

The primary reason for the amendment to the Act is to conform with the changes which have been made to the Constitution which includes that the chief justice is no longer the chairperson of the Public Service Appeals Board.

Secondly, public servants who must go on extended medical leave are now entitled to apply for leave with partial or full pay for up to 12 months to cover for living and subsistence expenses.

The minister responsible may grant the 12 months medical leave in place of the chief secretary and the minister also has the discretion to authorise payment of partial or full pay to an employee.

As previously proposed in other bills, a public servant wishing to contest an election, will now be required to resign 60 days before the dissolution of the Parliament on the completion of its full term under Article 41(7) of the Constitution and should they be unsuccessful, may re-apply for a position in the Public Service not earlier than 30 days from the first sitting of the Parliament.

The Bill also introduces a new provision in response to employees being unable to return to duties at the end of their approved leave due to travel restrictions owing to the current pandemic.

“The bill gives power to the minister for public service to approve employees who are not able to return due to no fault of theirs, to provide services to the Republic from wherever they are,” President Aingimea said.

The minister is authorised to set the terms and conditions of the engagement including to ensure equitable compensation for the employee and the government.

The employee will only be paid a portion of his or her salary to sustain themselves during their engagement and when they return to Nauru, they will be paid the balance of their salary. It is anticipated that this will encourage the employee to return.

It is important to note that government is able to retain workers and where the retention is not possible the position must become vacant immediately and advertised.

Nauru Police Force (Amendment) Bill 2022

The first proposed change is to the NPF board's chairmanship, replacing the chief justice as chair to an individual qualified to serve as a Supreme Court judge.

The other members include one elected by the members of the NPF, the chief secretary who is a permanent member under Article 69(2)(a) of the Constitution, and the other elected by the Cabinet.

Since the chair is now appointed by Cabinet, President Aingimea says there is no need for five members.

The Constitution provides that there shall be no less than three members of the board.

The second amendment is a better definition of the term police officer to mean all police officers from the commissioner to reserves.

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Bills summary

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The third amendment is for a new section to provide that any police officer who intends to contest in any election, must resign and also able to apply for re-employment in the NPF.

Supreme Court (Amendment) Bill 2022

As a result of the amendments made to the Constitution, consequently there are changes to be made to the qualification requirements for the chief justice and judges of the Supreme Court from five to ten years.

This change ensures consistency between the Supreme Court Act 2018 and the Constitution.

Procedural amendments are also made to enhance the flexibility as well as the efficiency of the process and procedure for the courts. For instance, to include a timeframe for filing a leave to appeal application.

This is intended to avoid late applications for leave to appeal which has the ultimate effect of delaying the expeditious disposal of cases.

The Bill also allows the Supreme Court to extend the time period for filing an appeal or application for leave to appeal by any person or the director of public prosecutions •

Acts of Parliament can be accessed at: http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_ipms/

First medical waste shredder installed

The Ministry of Health installs 'first in the Pacific' medical waste management system at the RON hospital, 30 May.

Funded by the government of India and approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the \$500,000 machine was installed by Technical Support Michael Patrick of the Belgium-based waste management company, Ecosteryl.

Mr Patrick says this is the first waste management unit of its kind to be installed in the Pacific and two Nauruans are currently being trained to maintain and manage the machine in the long term.

This particular model is known as an Ecosteryl 75 due to its capacity to process 75 kilograms of infectious medical waste per hour.

The waste is shredded and passed through a microwave sterilisation process then recycled where possible or safely disposed of as landfill.

Ecosteryl is connected remotely to the unit from the company headquarters in Belgium, thus providing further technical guidance for the maintenance crew in Nauru as well as determine and resolve maintenance problems with the unit.

The set-up of the unit is timely coinciding with the operations of the new COVID Acute Care Unit. Nauru has recorded 13 positive COVID-19 cases since 1 April 2022 and were all quarantined at the ACU. All but one case have recovered when this edition went to print •



Medical waste management system, Ecosteryl 75, located on the grounds of the RON hospital

Ten munitions discovered

Ten unexploded ordnance were discovered by army personnel from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in the week ending 8 June.



Australian High Commissioner Dr Helen Cheney and Deputy Minister Asterio Appi were debriefed on the munitions assessment done by ADF Army Corporal Beau Kahler (2nd) and Sergeant Brett Hitchins (3rd) before their departure from Nauru, 9 June

Sergeant Brett Hitchins and Corporal Beau Kahler of the ADF military unit 20th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron, 6th Engineer Support Regiment, conducted an assessment of some old WWII ordnance discovered around the island.

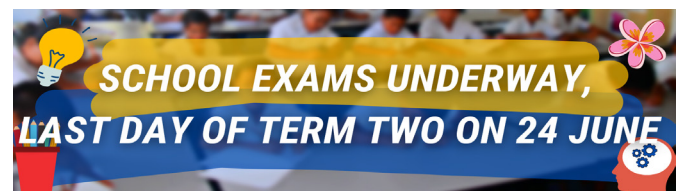
Sergeant Hitchins says the munitions were found around the surrounding areas of the airstrip and still pose a significant danger to everyone which can be catastrophic.

"We strongly recommend people don't touch it [munitions] but definitely don't move anything."

Sergeant Hitchins and Corporal Kahler have identified a location to detonate the items which will be done later in the year.

"There's a fair bit of work to achieve that [detonation] safely. That's obviously one of our main concern. If we do anything that puts anyone in danger then we've failed to do our job correctly," Sergeant Hitchins said.

The public is reminded not to touch or move an unexploded ordnance (bombs or guns). You are urged to call the police on 110 for safe removal •



Nauru welcomes 17 citizens

Seventeen new Nauruan citizens were awarded their citizenship certificates by President Lionel Aingimea, 25 May.

The ceremony took place in the Cabinet room, presided over by the Acting Chief Justice Mohammed Shafuallah Khan. Secretary



Newly awarded citizens pose in front of the government office after receiving their citizenship certificates

for Justicte Jay Udit explained the roles and responsibilities of being a citizen before the certificates were conferred.

“Every citizen is obliged to respect, uphold and defend the nation’s sovereignty. It is our duty to uphold the national ideals and concepts of patriotism, national unity and cooperation,” Secretary Udit said.

The new citizens pledge “under God” their “loyalty to Nauru and its people, whose democratic beliefs I share, whose rights and liberties I respect, and whose laws I will uphold and obey.”

The new citizens are: Mele Diringa, Aabi Aboo Timeon, Teiniku Dekuro, Aloysius Dekuro, Taratoba Tiare Redfern, Namasu Brianster, Tinai Aingimea Adimim, Tauea Tiro Aingimea, Roneel Ritesh Narayan, Tamaika Kivin Siu, Fred John Kabolo, Zixiong Su, Mark Scarlett, Toa Tataua, Jason Raymond Wharton, Tekeniri Brianster, and Ganilau Khio Hoponoa.

Representatives for Mr Wharton and Mr Scarlett received their certificates on their behalf.

The granting of citizenship is done throughout the year but the ceremony to award certificates is held on or around Constitution day on 17 May •

First OMR to India since pandemic

A total of 37 patients and escorts are in India for cardiac-related treatments, the first cohort since travel was restricted due to COVID-19.

The group departed Nauru on 19 May, via Brisbane and Singapore, accompanied by Director for Training and Development Vania Scotty as their medical escort.

Secretary for Health Chanda Garabwan says the patients were immediately admitted to the Fortis Hospital upon arrival in India.

Ms Garabwan says India has always received Nauruan patients for many years but due to the rise of COVID-19 cases in India, patients were referred to other countries for medical treatment as a precaution.

However, recent overseas medical referrals (OMR) to Taiwan gradually overwhelmed the health system with the number of Nauruan patients being treated in Taiwan. This prompted the need to look elsewhere to support the OMR scheme by distributing patients to other hospitals.

Ms Garabwan says India’s COVID-19 landscape has stabilised in recent times and as a result opened up an alternative OMR destination.

Travelling as the medical escort, Ms Scotty will use the opportunity to strengthen collaboration with India health and further discuss projects that will benefit the people of Nauru including the use of telemedicine •

Miss EHC is Miss Nauru 2022

Miss Eigigu Holdings Corporation Alexandra Melody Pitcher wins the coveted Miss Nauru crown.

The three-day pageant held at the Centennial Hall from 9 to 11 June set the stage for seven young ladies to contest the title in nine categories including a pre-pageant interview and on-stage interview.

Miss Ronphos Vivanka Temaki, Miss Nauru Tourism Shakira Hartman, and Miss Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation Divana Tom, took the first to third runner-up titles respectively.

Miss Alexandra Pitcher will go on to represent Nauru regionally at the Miss Pacific Islands beauty pageant •



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Republic of Nauru

Office contact:

Government Information Office
Government Offices
Yaren District, Republic of Nauru

Em: gio.nauru@gmail.com

Tel: +674 557-3009/3133 ext. 307

www.naurugov.nr