



# Nauru Bulletin

Issue 9-2022/243

7 October 2022

## Russ Kun elected president unopposed in 24th parliament

President-elect Russ Kun was sworn in to office along with Cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, Thursday 29 September.

Nominated unopposed at the inaugural sitting of the 24th Parliament on 28 September, President Kun named his cabinet line-up as well as the deputy ministers at the swearing in ceremony.

The first order of business at the first parliament sitting was the election of the speaker of parliament in which Marcus Stephen was re-elected and former president Lionel Aingimea as Deputy Speaker.

Martin Hunt retains his finance portfolio and minister assisting the president while three former deputy ministers were promoted to ministerial positions.

This is the fourth parliamentary elections Mr Kun has contested having first entered politics in the 2013 general elections and was duly elected placing third of the four positions in the Constituency of Ubenide. He was subsequently re-elected in his constituency



*His Excellency President Russ Joseph Kun.*

three more times in the general elections of 2016, 2019 and 2022.

Mr Kun served as the deputy minister for Finance, Nauru Ports, Tourism, and National Heritage and Museum, in the last administration under Lionel Aingimea.

As Members of Parliament (MP) can be elected multiple times to the presidency, there have been 41 changes of presidents since

1968. President Kun is the 16th member to be elected to the position.

General elections were held on Saturday 24 September, however early voting commenced earlier in the week on Monday 19 September. The tallying of votes commenced shortly after the polls closed at 6pm on 24 September.

Vote counting from 8,143 voters for the 77 candidates from eight constituencies concluded on the morning of Monday 26 September, returning all but two members to the new parliament.

Milton Dube from Aiwo was replaced by new member Delvin Thoma and Jesse Jeremiah replaced Tawaki Lyn-Wannan Kam in Menen.

President Kun named his cabinet line-up and deputy ministers on Thursday 29 September and the number of deputy ministers increased from five to seven. The first sitting of parliament with the new government was convened the following day •

### Statement by His Excellency the President, Hon. Russ Joseph Kun Swearing in Ceremony for Ministers and Deputy Ministers, 29 September

*Omo yoran ea kamie memak!*

*Today, we have just witnessed the swearing-in of your new Government – a government of the people and for the people.*

*We will therefore endeavour to reach out to all Nauruans to work with us in moving our nation forward. It is imperative that we do so as our future will continue to present us with challenges that must be addressed early on.*

*We will work more closely with our development partners including Australia, Taiwan, New Zealand, UK, the European Union, India, the United States, and others, to assist us in our development endeavors. I take this opportunity to thank these countries for the development assistance provided over the years, especially during the covid period.*

*Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to take this opportunity at this point in time to acknowledge the support and trust placed*

*on us by the Nauruan people - to lead for the next three years. I assure you that we will do our best to represent you and your interest for the greater good of our beloved Nauru.*

*To my constituency of Ubenide, mwa tubwa kor ouwak.*

*I would also like to thank our families and friends who have been unwavering in their support and who have been our bedrock strength.*

*I also take this opportunity to thank my fellow MPs for putting their trust in me to take the helm of steering our nation forward.*

*I thank former President Lionel Aingimea for the opportunity of working with him under his administration and for his wise counseling and leadership over the last three years.*

*Mwa tubwa kor ouwak •*

## Elected Members of Parliament in the 2022

### General elections, 24 September

Aiwo	-	Rennier Stanislaus GADABU
	-	Delvin Oneil THOMA
Anabar	-	Pyon DEIYE
	-	Maverick EOE
Anetan	-	Timothy John IKA
	-	Marcus STEPHEN
Boe	-	Asterio APPI
	-	Martin Porky HUNT
Buada	-	Jason Bingham AGIR
	-	Shadlog Armait BERNIKE
Menen	-	Lionel Rouwen AINGIMEA
	-	Richard-Hyde MENKE
	-	Jesse JEREMIAH
Ubenide	-	Russ Joseph KUN
	-	David Waiiau ADEANG
	-	Wawani Joe-Grant DOWIYOGO
	-	Reagan Winson ALIKLIK
Yaren	-	Charmaine Eraidinomo SCOTTY
	-	Isabella DAGEAGO

### Portfolios - deputy ministers

#### Hon. Asterio Appi, M.P

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade  
 Multicultural Affairs  
 Nauru Air Corporation  
 Eigigu Solutions Corporation  
 Nauru RPC Corporation

#### Hon. Maverick Eoe, M.P

Deputy Minister for Justice and Border Control  
 Cenpac Corporation

#### Hon. Isabella Dageago, M.P

Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs  
 Women and Social Development Affairs  
 People Living with Disabilities  
 Nauru Tourism Corporation

#### Hon. Jason Bingham Agir, M.P

Deputy Minister for Land Management  
 Nauru National Heritage & Museum  
 Eigigu Holding Corporation

#### Hon. Reagan Winson Aliklik, M.P

Deputy Minister for Information Communication & Technology

#### Hon. Jesse Jeremiah, M.P

Deputy Minister for National Emergency Services

#### Hon. Delvin Oneil Thoma, M.P

Deputy Minister for Ronphos

### Portfolios - ministers

#### His Excellency Russ Joseph Kun, M.P

President  
 Chairman of the Cabinet  
 Minister for Public Service  
 Foreign Affairs & Trade  
 Nauru Police Force  
 Nauru Emergency Services  
 Land Management  
 Multicultural Affairs  
 Justice & Border Control  
 Internal Affairs  
 Women and Social Development Affairs  
 People Living with Disabilities  
 and some State-Owned Enterprises

#### Hon. Martin Hunt, M.P

Minister Assisting the President  
 Minister for Finance and Sustainable Development  
 Transport  
 Eigigu Holding Corporation  
 Eigigu Procurement Limited

#### Hon. Wawani Dowiyogo, M.P

Minister for Fisheries  
 Nauru Utilities Corporation

#### Hon. Rennier Gadabu, M.P

Minister for Environmental Management and Agriculture  
 Climate Change and National Resilience  
 Infrastructure development  
 Ronphos

#### Hon. Timothy John Ika, M.P

Minister for Health  
 Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust

#### Hon. Richard-Hyde Menke, M.P

Minister for Education  
 Sports  
 Naoero Postal Services Corporation  
 Nauru Sports Development Inc.

#### Hon. Pyon Deiye, M.P

Minister for Media  
 Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation  
 Information, Communication & Technology (ICT)  
 Nauru Fibre Cable Corporation



*HE Russ Kun (centre) and cabinet ministers.*

## Parliament 25-26 August

The final sitting of the Twenty-third Parliament was held over two days, 25 and 26 August, with the government in caretaker mode until Election Day on 24 September.

A number of ministerial statements were delivered however of importance were the finance statement and the Supplementary Appropriation Bill #1, 2022-23 tabled by Minister Martin Hunt.

Minister Hunt said the supplementary Bill reflects updated revenue and expenditure estimates, and advised that an additional \$22.2 million revenue and \$22.1 million in expenditure was to be appropriated, leaving a small surplus of \$99,000.

In summary revenue is made up of \$16m from additional tax revenue; \$5.2m in additional revenue to reflect the extension of the Canstruct services contract for three months to September; and \$900,000 in new grants support the Government of Australia to reimburse past costs relating to our COVID-19 containment and economic related support measures.

Expenditure changes for this supplementary include:

- \$6.4m provided to the fiscal cash buffer;
- \$2.2m for the Nauru Trust Fund as prepayment of next year's contributions;
- \$3.1m cost of living pay adjustments backdated to 1 July 2022 for all government local workers, to mitigate increasing prices on the island as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- \$3m for the health department to cover additional overseas medical referrals fees and utilities;
- \$2.5m for the Department of Multicultural Affairs for RPC operations;
- \$900,000 for the Canberra high commission to invest in a new chancery, covering the first year's land lease and architectural design;
- \$900,000 for community service obligation to Nauru Airlines for its 2021-22 COVID staff redeployment package. The funding will reimburse salaries for local airline staff laid off during the pandemic;
- \$900,000 to cover a \$50 increase for the aged and disability fortnightly allowances, effective 1 July 2022 to mitigate cost of living expenses;
- \$800,000 for cross-government travel, given the changed COVID-19 situation on Nauru;
- \$400,000 to Nauru Maritime and Port Authority for rental of temporary dwellings for Red Zone residents;
- \$300,000 for Ronwan debt to settle balances available from the Bank of Nauru liquidation; which will complement the \$5.8m provided in the original budget, thus enable NPRT to settle five per cent of debt to account holders and balances of less than \$500;
- \$200,000 for the Department of Finance for additional consultancy services and office accessories;
- \$180,000 for transport to cover increased operating costs due to flight activity doubling;
- \$50,000 sports to support the Commonwealth Games team;
- \$42,000 for foreign affairs to maintain the interim



secretariat of the Micronesian Presidents' Summit (MPS);

- \$32,000 for CIE to fund increased various operational costs; and
- \$29,000 for the Department of Climate Change and Resilience for consultancy fees, staff training and renovations.

Finance Minister Hunt said Nauru's economy performed well in the past three years despite the highly uncertain environment during COVID-19.

"As a whole, Nauru's economy was relatively unscathed," the minister said adding it was a result of prudent economic management and sound financial policies.

The treasury division invested heavily in Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms that include, at the policy level, the push to maintain macroeconomic stability premised on targeted quality spending that are aligned to national priorities and setting realistic estimates of expected revenues and expenditures; prioritised investments in economic infrastructure; and efficiency and effectiveness in state-owned enterprise (SOE) operations.

Treasury also improved reporting and budgeting practices, and made improvements to financial management information systems, increasing security and reliability of whole-of-government financial information.

The minister says the ongoing challenge however, has been the monitoring and evaluation of SOEs. The establishment of the Public Enterprise Management unit to enforce the Public Enterprise Act and ensure SOEs are compliant in their financial reporting and engage in financial best practice.

Since the unit began operations, the minister says, six of the 11 SOEs have completed the code of conduct mandated under the Act.

As the executing agency for the government, the Planning and Aid Division (PAD) plays a key role in securing financing, monitoring progress, and addressing donor legal and reporting requirements, and ensures that projects align with Nauru's objectives and needs.

The focus of the past three years includes improving Nauru's critical infrastructure in the transport, ICT and energy sectors.

Data derived from a mini census in 2019 provided the department with critical information to design programs and evidence-based policies such as the smart housing and household water tank schemes.

*Cont pg 4...*

## Parliament 25-26 August

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Minister Hunt says since 2019 the Nauru Revenue Office rose from \$269.9 million to \$320.3 million at the end of June 2022.

Ninety per cent of revenue derives from refugee processing centre operations but due to uncertainties around the future of the RPC, tax revenue collections remain somewhat volatile and unpredictable.

“On present indications, it is estimated that \$50.85 million will be collected in financial year 2022-23,” the finance minister said adding it will be reviewed at the end of the second quarter of the current financial year.

The development of a compliance improvement strategy will focus on both non-resident business operators and the small business sector.

Minister Hunt adds that once passed in parliament the NRO plans to use the Consumer Protection Act to ensure Nauruan consumers receive fair and ethical treatment from businesses and traders and that goods and services are fit-for-purpose in terms of quality and price.

For the financial year 2021-22, Minister Hunt says customs services assessed a total of \$21 million in revenue.

The implementation of the web-based Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) World project which commenced in January is expected to simplify the process of reporting and clearance of air and sea freight consignment, enabling better reporting of statistical trade data.

The ASYCUDA World manifest control module for airline and shipping agencies will be officially launched before the end of October.

From 2019, through the recently established Social Welfare division a total of \$16 million assistance payments were injected into the economy to help Nauruans meet the rising cost of living.

This includes the \$50 back to school payment, and increased disability and aged pension allowances from \$250 to \$265 and for the 70+ age group a rise from \$300 to \$315 a fortnight – with further increases planned to ensure the vulnerable have the support they need.

The finance minister says the average annual pension and disability budget allocation for the last three years is around \$3.5 million.

The overseas funeral assistance is a new initiative aimed to support the return of deceased loved ones home from abroad.

In recognising the need to plan for the future the government introduced a ten-year Social Protection Strategy, laying the framework for a more robust and comprehensive social system on Nauru.

The social welfare division is tasked with implementing the strategy and to further develop and deliver targeted social welfare initiatives that meet Nauru’s unique challenges.

The Nauru Agency of the Bendigo Bank, a special project of the finance department, operates independently and continues to be self-supporting and covers all its costs.

Since establishment in 2015 the Agency has grown its portfolio to more than 13,500 accounts with balances totalling almost \$300 million.



More than 40 EFTPOS merchant terminals around the island handle approximately 10,000 payment transactions per month.

“More than 80 per cent of Nauru customers, young and old, now have and are using internet banking. Bendigo Bank is currently seeing about 220,000 of these online transactions from Nauru each month,” the minister said.

The Nauru Trust Fund was valued at \$240 million on 30 June 2022, with a three year average return on investment of 10.1 per cent.

The balance of \$240 million from \$111 million in 2019 is a 116 per cent increase and the minister says the fund is well on its way to achieving the goal of \$400 million by 2033, with the ongoing support of co-contributors Australia, the Republic of China (Taiwan), and New Zealand.

Since the establishment of the Nauru Superannuation Scheme in 2018, the fund continues to grow at a level of \$2.6 million per year and is currently valued at \$12.8 million.

While the scheme supports Nauruans in retirement it can also be accessed earlier for certain reasons. Employees can also make voluntary contributions which are accessible every two years.

Minister Hunt says unfortunately fuel prices are expected to continue to rise due to global supply issues caused by the invasion of Ukraine.

The Nauru Tank Farm is undergoing a long-term engineering upgrade process which includes the recertification of all storage tanks, thus enable more storage for fuel on-island and manage the risk of supply disruptions. A five-year master plan has been approved to fast track this work.

Fuel will continue to be discharged from fuel ships with the use of secondary floating hoses due to the June closure of the northern cantilever and delays in the port constructions.

### *Acts of Parliament tabled*

#### **Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances (Amendment) Bill 2022**

Clause 4 deletes and substitutes Schedule 1 of the Act. The proposed Schedule provides for an increase in the salaries of the offices listed in Schedule 1 by 10 per cent. The offices that are listed are, President, Speaker, Minister Assisting the President, Minister, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Minister and Member of Parliament.

The revised salaries range from \$110,000 and \$41,000.

*Cont pg 5...*

## Parliament 25-26 August

...from pg 4

In presenting the Bill, Mr Aingimea said global inflation and general increase in the cost of basic items were considered in reaching a decision on the increase, noting global fuel price impact on the provision of services by commercial operators.

“As a consequence, the Government has decided that the salaries and wages of all public servants including those in the State owned enterprises to be increased by 10 per cent.”

Salaries for public servants, state-owned enterprise and MPs are governed by their respective statutes and Mr Aingimea stated that “it is only fair that the increase in the salary of the public servants and other State owned enterprise is also considered for Members of Parliament and Ministers. They are also equally affected by the inflation.” •

## NZ, US election observers call on president

New Zealand’s High Commissioner to Nauru Richard Griffith and the US embassy’s political officer Jess Gonzalez paid courtesy calls on HE President Russ Kun following the swearing-in ceremony of Cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, 29 September.

Mr Griffith and Ms Gonzalez arrived ahead of the 24 September polling day as observers to the 2022 general elections. They departed Nauru shortly after their courtesy call •



*NZ High Commissioner Griffith pays courtesy call on President Kun.*

## Taiwan in virtual courtesy with president

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republic of China (Taiwan) Joseph Wu paid a virtual courtesy call on His Excellency President Russ Kun, 30 September, conveying his country’s continued support for Nauru.

“I pledge to you the Taiwan support and Taiwan’s cooperation with Nauru will continue to be there,” Minister Wu said and offered his congratulations on His Excellency’s assumption of the presidency.

President Kun thanked the Minister for Taiwan’s continuous support for Nauru and looks forward to strengthened bilateral and mutual cooperation •

## Deputy PM Marles pays courtesy visit

Australia’s Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles flew in to Nauru on private jet to pay a courtesy call on newly elected President Russ Kun and members of cabinet, 3 October.

Mr Marles was greeted on arrival by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Asterio Appi before proceeding to a closed meeting with President Kun, Finance Minister Martin Hunt and Mr Appi at the government office.

The Deputy PM congratulated the President and the new government on their recent victory in the general elections.



*Australia’s Deputy Prime Minister Marles arrived in Nauru to meet President Kun.*

President Kun thanked Australia for its “crucial and vital assistance and support of \$1.4 million towards Nauru’s efforts in keeping Nauru COVID-free for a period of two years,” and acknowledged Australia’s goal to engage the Pacific as its primary workforce in Australia by introducing the Pacific Engagement System.

President Kun also expressed the government’s appreciation for Australia’s support of \$40 million towards the airport runway resurfacing project; the continued support of the Nauru Trust Fund; and extended Nauru’s support to Australia in its bid to host the UNFCCC Conference of Parties.

Thereafter the delegation paid courtesy calls on Speaker of Parliament Marcus Stephen and Deputy Speaker Lionel Aingimea.

The Australian delegation were then taken on tours of the sports complex, the Nauru Port and the site of the Higher Ground Initiative, seeing first-hand the progress being made through the joint collaboration of Nauru’s development partners, including the Australian Government.

The delegation departed at noon the same day •



*Taiwan foreign minister pays courtesy call on President Kun.*

# New justices of the Court of Appeal

Justices Rangajeeva Wimalasena and Colin Kenway Makail swore their oath of office as the Justices of the Nauru Court of Appeal, 22 August.

The ceremony was presided over by then president Lionel Aingimea and witnessed by former Minister for Justice and Border Control Maverick Eoe, and Acting President of the Nauru Court of Appeal Dr Bandaranayake, and others.

Justices Wimalasena and Makail swear to be faithful and bear true allegiance to Nauru and will obey, observe, uphold and maintain the Constitution and defend the rule of law, the rights of the people and to do justice to all persons without fear, favour or prejudice •



*(L-R) Justice Colin Makail, Minister Eoe, Justice Dr Bandaranayake, and Justice Rangajeeva Wimalasena.*

## Court of Appeal opens

The full court of the Nauru Court of Appeal was opened on Monday 22 August, and expected to hear its first case in several years in the afternoon.

Several criminal and civil appeals were listed to be heard over the next fortnight with a further session of two weeks allocated to consider refugee appeals.

Acting President of the Court of Appeal Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake opened the session and was pleased that the court was able to streamline most of the matters pending before the Appeals Court.

“After several years today, the full bench will be sitting for the first time [since 2018] to commence its appellate work and we would be taking for hearing one of the criminal appeals,” Justice Bandaranayake said.

The Nauru Court of Appeal was established in 2018 but has not been able to convene due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Justice Bandaranayake acknowledges that executing and closing appeals cases will take time and delays in decisions are sometimes inevitable.

“But in my view, as judges, we must make every endeavour to ensure that judgements are delivered within a reasonable time, neither burying nor denying justice,” Justice Bandaranayake said.



*Justice Dr Bandaranayake officially opens the Nauru Court of Appeal.*

Secretary for Justice Jay Udit highlights the Constitution of Nauru was amended this year to strengthen the Court of Appeal with checks and balances in place to ensure justice is done.

President of the Nauru Law Society Barina Waqa Duburiya addressed issues of concern including that the Court of Appeal remains fully functioning and to ensure the rule of law is implemented without delay or interference; critical vacancies to be filled urgently, such as the role of the chief justice and resident magistrate; prioritisation of training and mentoring of legal staff; and to urgently address laws such as land reforms to conform with the current times •



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## Operation renders Nauru safe

The governments of Nauru and Australia worked together in Operation Render Safe to dispose of unexploded ordnance (UXO) found on Nauru. This was the continuation of the first Operation Render Safe mission undertaken in Nauru in 2020.

A total of ten UXOs were safely and successfully disposed of over two days at a secure site at Topside.

Eight UXOs were disposed of on Wednesday 17 August, three of which were described by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) as dangerous. Another two items which were disposed of the next day were considered significantly more dangerous.

ADF Sergeant Brett Hitchins says the items included eight American mark 36 and mark 28 anti-aircraft projectiles, a type 99 Japanese bomb, and an American bomb.

The operation was collaboration between the ADF (including one Royal Solomon Islander Police Force team member), Nauru Police Force (NPF) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to ensure the operation is carried out safely.

The NPF cordoned off the surrounding area for detonation on both days.

Australian aircrafts including helicopters surveying the area from above were present to ensure no-one enters the area while the operation was taking place.

Australian navy ship HMAS Canberra could be seen off the coast in Aiwo, while HMAS Warramunga was further offshore and not visible.

Fishermen were cautioned to stay clear of the ships radio communication with Nauru Port was made available for fishermen on VHF radio channels.

The public was advised of all the precautionary measures and the reasons for the presence of aircrafts and ships which is to support the operation due to the activity being dangerous for the personnel involved and to quickly respond to any calls for assistance by the team conducting the disposal.

Then president, Lionel Aingimea thanked the Royal Australian Navy for its efforts on Operation Render Safe.

Accompanied by Australian High Commissioner Dr Angela Cheney, President Aingimea embarked HMAS Canberra via Navy MH-60R Seahawk helicopter following an aerial tour of Nauru.



*President Aingimea and Australian High Commissioner Dr Cheney with navy personnel on board HMAS Canberra.*

On board, the guests visited key operational areas of the ship, including the role performed by 2 Enhanced Hospital, which had been on standby.

President Aingimea and Dr Cheney enjoyed lunch with the ship's command team before departing from the ship's deck on an Army riverine patrol craft from the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment.

Following the disposals of the ten UXOs, the ADF team provided training to the NPF on 23 August, to identify the different types of UXO and how best to handle or remove them from where they are discovered.

Operation Render Safe is the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) series of activities that aims to safely dispose of World War II-vintage explosive remnants of war from South Pacific island nations. Operations occur approximately annually, or in response to an urgent request from a Pacific Island nation.

Operation Render Safe is normally undertaken by Australian Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams and / or Royal Australian Navy Clearance Divers. These teams are supported by a range of ADF assets such as Hydrographic Survey Ships, Amphibious Landing craft, helicopters and other fixed winged aircraft.

The activities involve extensive community engagement preparation in the months leading up to a mission to educate local populations about safe explosive handling and disposal procedures.

The ADF assisted Nauru in 2020 as part of Operation Render Safe however was unable to undertake any in-country additional activities due to COVID-19 travel restrictions•

## NPF complete UNPOL training

The three-person Nauru Police Force contingent attending the UN Police peace keeping mission completed their weeklong induction and commenced their patrol community policing in South Sudan's capital, Juba, in August.

Superintendent Imran Scotty, Sergeant Drusky Dabadauw and Snr Constable Jacaranda Akibwib also underwent a revision of the pre-deployment training which they had done in Turkey in February before going into the field with colleagues from the host country.

Commissioner of Police Iven Notte is proud that Nauru's flag is now among the UN peace keeping nations, saying that although Nauru is small "we are participating to provide law and order to the country (South Sudan) in need of it."

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"We're providing services and it's a milestone for NPF and Nauru as a whole."

Nauru Police has provided security services in the region and now internationally which COP Notte says is offered to the "best of our ability."

He thanks the Nauru Government and the families of the team members for allowing their loved ones on this mission, and seeks God's blessings, guidance and protection for the officers.

COP Notte says the NPF sought the blessings and approval of the officers' next of kin as part of the selection and approval process for deployment •

## New ambulance for emergency services

Service provider Wilson Security donated an ambulance to the National Emergency Services (NES), 5 October, with a second expected in the future.

The handover at the fire station began with an opening prayer and dedication of the new ambulance by Pastor Owen Joram followed by remarks by Fire Chief Celso Dageago, the NES Acting Secretary Barassi Botelanga, and Deputy Minister for NES Jesse Jeremiah. An inspection of the new vehicle followed.



*Deputy Minister Jeremiah (far left) and NES staff*

Deputy Minister Jeremiah thanked Wilson Security for their support and donation and for providing training to 12 young NES officers as first responders at a scene, whom he says “at the end of this course will become qualified paramedics.” He also thanks the department of Multicultural Affairs for coordinating with NES to ensure the safe arrival of the ambulance.

Wilson Security has made a number of donations to the NES department however this is the first vehicle the company has donated with a second ambulance expected in the near future.

Mr Botelanga says the NES vision statement is a “safer more resilient Nauru” and their aim is for all national emergency services to work under one umbrella to reach those emergency calls as quickly as possible.

He clarifies however it does not mean that NES will take over the work of the hospital’s ambulance services instead NES will focus on road accidents, fire emergencies, emergency calls and help out the hospital ambulance service if needed •

## National census

The national census took place on the reference night of 30 October 2021 recording a total population of 11,748 in raw data.

The task is an undertaking of the Nauru Bureau of Statistics with support from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) who will provide an update of the actual population numbers after an editing process in September.

Census Coordinator Lindsay Thoma says the Government of Australia funded \$100,000 for the enumerators’ training, salaries, catering, business awareness, transportation, census equipment and communications needs.



*Enumerator conducting census home visit*

He adds that a total of 60 tablets were donated to the department. The tablets are customised for electronic census questions and data collection and are more efficient for the data entry process.

“The tablets are financially supported by Nauru government and Australian government. “

The SPC provided technical assistance that led the two weeks workshop training for the field enumerators and the use of the tablets.

The field work was scheduled for two to three weeks and 50 enumerators along with 10 supervisors that were recruited for the field work only.

Mr Thoma says the national census is taken every ten years for the purpose of gathering quality data about the people and its economy. This information will help the government and local authorities plan and fund services for the future such as education, doctors, surgeries, roads and more.

Mr Thoma is thankful to the local population of Nauru for their patience and cooperation during the team’s home visits •

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## Redzone houses handover

The Nauru Maritime Port Authority (NMPA) handed over new twin houses to siblings Jerichson Laeo and Kitana Gioura as part of the government-funded Red Zone relocation project in Buada, 18 August.

NMPA staff Eiminora Caleb welcomed the families and VIP guests to the ceremony explaining that the two houses are labelled 'twins' as they were built and completed simultaneously.

Then Minister for Fisheries Wawani Dowiyogo, on behalf of the Government and NMPA, cut the ribbon signifying the opening of the houses and presented the keys to new homeowners, who were thankful to move into their new permanent homes.

The Red Zone relocation project's goal is to relocate families that reside within and near the locality of the Nauru port where development works are currently taking place.

Families that are eligible for the relocation package are currently housed in temporary accommodation while their permanent homes are being built •



*Redzone residents Laeo and Gioura move into their new homes.*

## Nauru to host Micronesian games

The Micronesian Games Council (MGC) confirmed Nauru will host the 2026 Micronesian Games during a virtual meeting held Saturday, 23 July.

The MGC voted unanimously on the Nauru National Olympic Committee (NOC) Micronesian Games Association's (MGA) bid to host the Games. The bid is supported by the Nauru Government and will have four years to prepare for the quadrennial event.

Then President Aingimea was informed of the decision immediately after the meeting and was ecstatic with the decision and offered his full support.

He also commented that Micronesian countries ought to share the Games around within its membership and thanked the vision of the Micronesian Games Council members. Nauru looks forward to welcoming the athletes of Micronesia to her shores.

Then sports minister Maverick Eoe who was responsible for pushing for the bid to host the Games has big plans to build relevant and much-needed sporting infrastructure for the 2026 Games and more importantly, to leave a legacy for the future of the athletes to boost their training performances.

"It is really an exciting time for our athletes and the Government will ensure that the athletes are looked after. It is all about the athletes," Minister Eoe said.

Nauru plans to build a new athletics stadium, similar to the infrastructure being built in Majuro for the 2022 Micronesian Games. The confirmation of the hosting rights will help start

the process of building the structure.

The Nauru NOC President and current Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Marcus Stephen says Nauru is "very keen to host the next Micronesian Games."

"We will be discussing the sports to be hosted on the island along with other requirements of the Council.

"All competition facilities are within walking distance or a five to ten minute drive. We are all excited about what is ahead of us.

"There will be challenges but I am confident we can deliver Games that our athletes in Micronesia will remember," Mr Stephen said.

Mr Stephen expressed his appreciation to the Republic of the Marshall Islands as the host of the 2022 Games having "paved the way for our southern islands in the archipelago to seek the opportunity to host the Games."

Utilising school classrooms for accommodation for athletes and officials is a common option that smaller host countries apply.

Mr Stephen thanked the members of the MGC for their support as well as the MGC executives, President Aurelio Joab and Secretary-General Joey Miranda III for their assistance in fulfilling the obligations on their bid.

Donor partners have offered financial assistance with preparations including infrastructure plans •

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