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Paradise is the complimentary in-flight magazine of Air Niugini, Papua New Guinea's international airline. The magazine is published by Business Advantage International.

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To find out how to be seen in the magazine, contact our Head of Sales and Partnerships Robbie Milne @ rm@businessadvantageinternational.com



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COVER PHOTO: West New Britain's colourful Oil Palm Festival was celebrated over three days. See our story on page 18. Photo taken by Tiana Reimann.



Message from the Chairman

Welcome aboard



Papua New Guinea is a land of extraordinary contrast, richness and promise. From mist-covered mountain forests to the great Sepik River, from island escapes near Port Moresby to remote communities connected by air, our country continues to offer stories that inspire, unite and remind us of what makes PNG unique and unforgettable.

In this edition, we celebrate some of the people, places and partnerships that shape our national identity.

We reflect on the conservation of the iconic tree kangaroo in the YUS Conservation Area, where community leadership is helping protect one of our most treasured species while preserving fragile forest ecosystems for future generations.

We journey to the Sepik, where culture remains alive in ceremony, music, carving and community life, and where the rhythm of the river continues to sustain one of the world's great living cultural landscapes, while along the Motuan coastline, the Eda Davara Marine Sanctuary initiative is demonstrating how youth leadership, community engagement, mangrove restoration and environmental education can work together to protect marine ecosystems and create lasting social and eco-tourism benefits.

We also highlight the vibrant Oil Palm Festival of Arts and Culture in West New Britain, a powerful expression of unity, pride and sustainable livelihoods; the historical legacy of Bulolo, where aviation helped transform a remote goldfield into one of the world's busiest air freight hubs and laid foundations for lasting industrial growth; as well as the simple pleasure of discovering destinations close to Port Moresby, including Loloata, that showcase the natural beauty and diversity within easy reach of our capital.

This issue also honours the enduring connection between PNG and some of the world's great storytellers and service organisations.

Sir David Attenborough's work helped introduce our unique wildlife and cultures to global audiences, while Mission Aviation Fellowship's 75 years of service stands as a testament to the importance of aviation in reaching and supporting remote communities across our country.

In sport, the momentum behind the PNG Chiefs reflects our growing confidence on the regional stage and the power of sport to inspire national pride.

In business and development, we recognise the contribution of organisations helping to drive growth, strengthen skills and expand opportunity across PNG.

At Air Niugini, we are equally focused on the future. Our fleet modernisation program continues to progress, with the Airbus A220 already marking a new chapter in comfort, efficiency and service. As we strengthen our operations through our Higher Altitudes program, invest in training and prepare for future growth, our commitment remains clear: to deliver a safer, more reliable and proudly Papua New Guinean travel experience.

Thank you for flying with Air Niugini. To our valued passengers from PNG and from around the world, we are proud to connect people, places and stories, and we hope this edition leaves you with a deeper appreciation of the beauty, resilience and opportunity that define our nation.

Karl Yalo
Chairman, Air Niugini Board





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DEPARTURE LOUNGE

NEWS, BRIEFINGS, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

PARADISE Q&A

NADIA LOW

This PNG-born actress stars in two films due to be released next year. Currently on a performance tour in the US, she speaks to *Mary Tao* about her journey into the creative worlds of dance, theatre and film.

Q: You've just finished your first feature film in a lead role. How did it go?

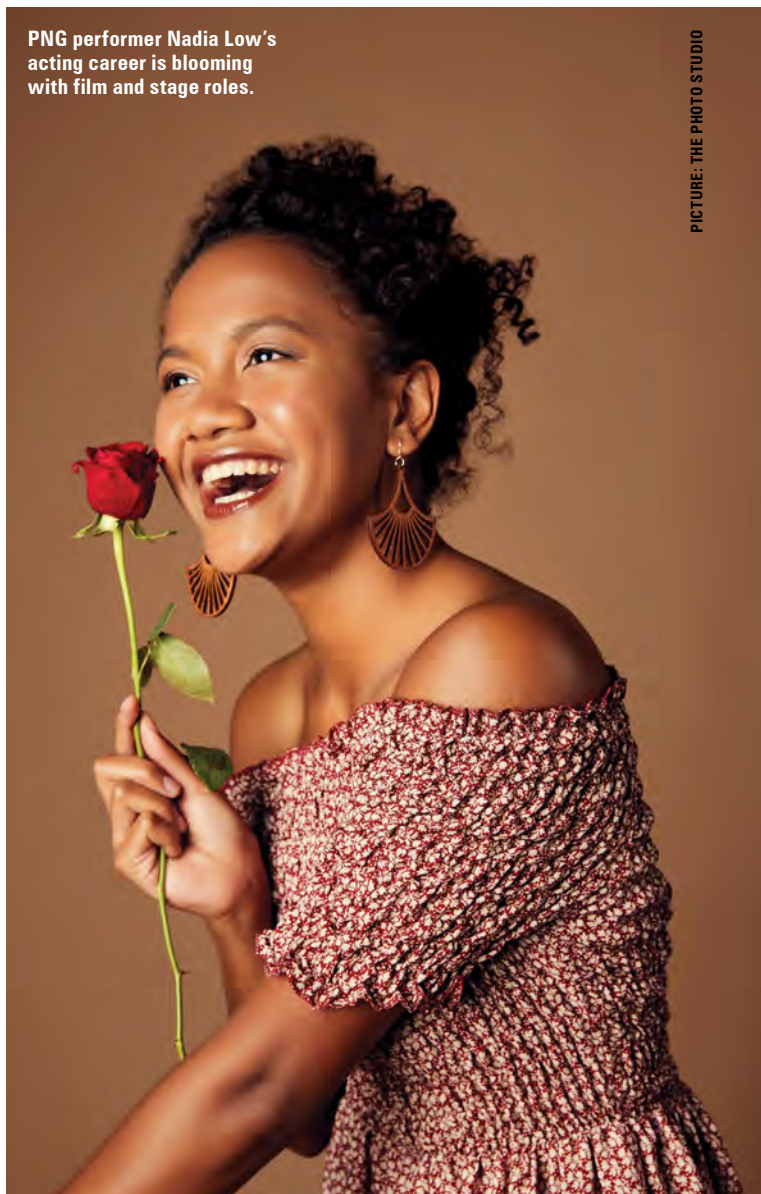
A: Yes, it wrapped up recently and they (the filmmakers) are looking to do a festival run and cinema release next year. It's the most challenging acting role I've had so far. *The Cat* is a thriller directed by Natalie Simonov. I play the lead role of Annalise, a troubled orphan who runs

into a reclusive man who could potentially be the family she so desperately needs. But this man has an obsessive dependency on a toy cat that he believes is alive. It's up to the audience to decide whether or not it is alive.

Q: You've recently worked on the stage too.

A: My stage debut was last July (2025) in the *Stanford Marriage Experiment* at

PNG performer Nadia Low's acting career is blooming with film and stage roles.



PICTURE: THE PHOTO STUDIO



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Brisbane's La Boite Theatre. The (lead) character I played was queer. I'm not queer, so it was a great challenge for me to get into character. It was also my first experience with intimacy and intimacy coordination. Being able to affect audiences was the main takeaway for me. Even when the audience is not making a sound you can feel their energy and that's honestly the juice – the fruit of my labour. Straight after that, I did my first musical, *Disenchanted! The Musical*.

Q: What's next?

A: Right now, I'm part of the cast of *Bluey's Big Play* (a theatrical adaptation of the children's animated series *Bluey*). We're touring the US and it has been a life-changing experience. I've learned a lot about discipline, consistency and performing at that level. I'm also looking forward to the release of a short film called *NightWaves* later this year. Adam Harmer wrote and directed the film. I play the lead character, Casey.

Q: Along with acting, you sing and dance. Where did you learn these creative skills?

A: Having all three is incredibly valuable for the industry I'm in, so I've always wanted to build on that. Whenever I'm not

PICTURE: DAVID GUEST



“
You don't have
to be perfect.
Just do it.
Action beats
perfection
every time.
”

acting, I'm working on dance or I'm working on my voice. That doesn't necessarily mean singing, it also means developing my voice for theatre and screen. For singing I'm largely self-taught and learn through performance experience. I think the easiest style for me is musical Broadway. I like to hold notes, and my voice is clear and bright.

My dance training became more focused when I joined the UQ Street Groove performance crew in 2023 (in Brisbane). This experience taught me dedication, musicality and how to connect

with an audience through movement.

Q: Where are you from and where did you grow up?

I'm based in Brisbane now, but I grew up in Port Moresby. My cultural identity lies across many places. My dad comes from East New Britain, New Ireland and Yule Island. My mum comes from Misima and Panapompom islands in Milne Bay. We also have Chinese and Filipino roots in the ancestry. I moved to Cairns in 2016, where I completed high school. I then moved to Brisbane in 2020 for university.

That's where I graduated from Queensland University of Technology with a dual degree – a Bachelor of Business (Marketing) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Film, Screen and New Media).

Q: It seems like an unusual combination to study business and fine arts.

A: It makes sense to do both together. After I did the degree, I could see that there are so many transferrable skills you can use for both film and business. To be in film, you must be business-minded. You have to be able to make connections and market your own films.

Q: Why acting?

A: I've just had the soul calling to be a storyteller and be a performer. I think a lot of acting is just paying attention to people and observing life in its most raw and vulnerable states.

Q: What advice do you have for other Papua New Guineans wanting to pursue a creative career?

A: You don't have to be perfect. Just do it. Action beats perfection every time. Dare to fail, dare to be different and dare to ask those 'silly' questions. Cancel that voice in your head that says, 'I am not good enough'. ■

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A story of faith, compassion and survival for baby twin



Captain Jurgen Ruh and Janet Sios welcome back baby Sawong at Jacksons International Airport.

There were tears, quiet smiles and relief at Jacksons International Airport in Port Moresby in June when baby Sawong Kevin Mitian – one half of Papua New Guinea’s conjoined twins born last October – returned home after surgery and six months of specialist medical care in Australia.

Sawong is living proof of resilience, compassion, and the extraordinary power of determination shown by those who refused to give up on his life when many feared he was too fragile to save.

Born on October 9 at Braun Memorial Hospital in Finschhafen, Morobe Province, through a caesarean operation, Sawong and his twin brother, Tom, entered the world joined together – a rare and complex condition that placed them in immediate danger.

Within 48 hours, Manolos Aviation helicopter pilot Captain Jurgen Ruh launched a life-saving mission, flying into Finschhafen to evacuate the twins to Angau Memorial Hospital in Lae. This critical response was carried through his humanitarian work under the Mountain Area Medical Airlift Foundation.

Four days later, he undertook another critical journey – a 90-minute flight to Port Moresby General Hospital – where specialists assessed the twins. For weeks, uncertainty loomed before it was concluded that there was little more that could be done locally.

But Captain Ruh refused to accept that outcome.

In the weeks that followed, he tirelessly reached out to hospitals across the world, including in Germany, India and Australia, determined to secure a chance for the twins.

His persistence paid off when the Australian government and specialist medical teams agreed to intervene. Australian medical professionals travelled to Port Moresby to assess the twins, paving the way for their transfer to The Children’s Hospital at Westmead in Sydney for life-saving surgery to separate them.

While the operation saved Sawong’s life, Tom died shortly after surgery.

“The journey to bring the twins to Australia wasn’t easy ... there were so many man-made hiccups along the way,” says Captain Ruh. “I was called many names, told I was immature, that I was giving false hope to the parents.

“Having one of the twins returning alive is proof that none of this was done in vain. When I took the twins from Angau hospital to our helicopter to medivac them to Port Moresby, baby Sawong’s eyes were fixed on mine without blinking. It was as if he was saying, ‘I just want to live.’”

Among those at the airport to greet Sawong on his return to PNG was Janet Sios and her team from Paradise Private Hospital, who had cared for the twins for three weeks in Port Moresby prior to their transfer overseas.

“

Baby Sawong’s eyes were fixed on mine without blinking. It was as if he was saying, ‘I just want to live.’

”

In an extraordinary act of compassion and corporate responsibility, Paradise Private Hospital provided full medical care, accommodation and support services free of charge during that period – a contribution that would normally amount to tens of thousands of kina given the level of specialised care required.

During their journey home, the family continued to experience unexpected



PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY AIR NIUGINI



Baby Sawong with mother Fetima Mitian (far left); the baby on board an Air Niugini flight with parents Fetima and Kevin Mitian, and airline pursers Alice Frank and Kila Leka (left).

moments of kindness. At Brisbane Airport, baby Sawong and his parents crossed paths with veteran Lae businessman and senior statesman Sir Bob Sinclair, who happened to be on the same return Air Niugini flight. Touched by the child's story, Sir Bob made a generous commitment to personally fund baby Sawong's education from primary school through to the completion of university.

The family's return journey was eased through the support of Air Niugini, which

flew them at no cost and upgraded them to business class.

Air Niugini Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne acknowledged the collective effort behind the story.

"Where Air Niugini is able to assist, we are more than happy to do so as part of our community service effort. Over the years, we've supported countless medical cases and will continue to do so. But the real heroes in this story are Captain Ruh, Mrs Sios, the medical teams here in PNG and in Sydney,

as well as the Australian government and its partners for the medivac and care provided to baby Sawong," he said.

Both parents, Kevin and Fetima, were overwhelmed by the support shown throughout their journey. Speaking through emotions, Fetima said: "*Displa sapot em bikpla tumas, mipla painim hard lo toktok.*" (English translation: "The support we received from everyone is overwhelming, we just don't have the words for it.") ■

— ILLAN KAPRANGI

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Singing star's PNG tour puts spotlight on UNICEF work

International singing star Ronan Keating and wife Storm marked a full-circle moment when they travelled to Papua New Guinea earlier this year as UNICEF's newest Australian Goodwill Ambassadors.

Their tour of remote communities to both learn about and raise awareness of UNICEF's programs improving life for thousands of children also fulfilled the couple's long-held goal to give back to the country where Storm was born.

Until the age of eight, Storm grew up in the village of Wau where her family worked in mining. There, an idyllic childhood lived "free and wild" swimming in rivers and playing with local children left her with some of her fondest memories and a lifelong sense of PNG as home. After marrying Ronan in 2015 Storm and he visited for the first time, Storm's passion and love for the country rubbing off on her famous husband.

“

The communities have welcomed us with such warmth.

”

Now the Keatings are thrilled to be doing their part to bring awareness to the important work done by UNICEF across Storm's childhood home – aided, of course, by Ronan's huge global profile.



Ronan and Storm Keating during their PNG visit.

Shooting to stardom as the lead singer of 1990s Irish pop group Boyzone, Ronan continued his success with a string of massive solo hits. He met Storm, a television producer and model, while a judge on the Australian series of the TV talent show *X Factor*.

"It's been amazing to see the progress UNICEF and partners have made in such a short space of time across healthcare, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and education facilities," Ronan says.

"The communities have welcomed us with such warmth, I feel so grateful to have had this experience."

UNICEF – responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide – has delivered life-changing aid across PNG for over five decades.

UNICEF's work in PNG has transformed communities with a raft of services, providing everything from safe water and sanitation to early childhood education, healthcare, maternity care, nutrition, immunisation, child protection programs, parenting support and more.

While growing up in PNG was a joyous experience for Storm, she was always aware

this was not the case for many other children and long felt a responsibility to give back. Becoming a UNICEF ambassador alongside her husband to help raise awareness of the support needed for the charity's work is now something they are dedicated to for the long term.

"Seeing the work UNICEF and partners are doing on the ground is inspiring," Storm says. "From healthcare services to education centres, it's clear these programs are creating opportunities for children and their families in PNG."

On their recent tour, thrilled locals greeted the pair everywhere they went, stops including an early childhood education centre at Hobu village, a parenting program in Timini village and a UNICEF-backed health centre in the Nawaeb District of the Morobe Province providing such services as midwifery and newborn care. "They received an amazing reception," says a UNICEF spokesperson.

To see the Keatings' tour in PNG visit: <https://www.facebook.com/UNICEFAustralia/videos/in-papua-new-guinea-unicef-is-working-to-give-every-child-the-best-possible-star/1496824685344699> ■

– BRONWEN GORA





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PNG boxer rising in world rankings

The New Zealand boxing scene is buzzing with excitement over Papua New Guinea-born fighter Sheilla Yama. Since winning her first professional fight in 2024, she has fought six more fights and remains undefeated (at the time of writing).

One of Yama's latest wins was on May 2 when she defeated Chinese fighter Haini Mulataiali, earning the IBF International Super Lightweight Championship (she weighs 63.5 kilograms) and a ranking as the world No. 5

according to BoxRec (boxrec.com), a widely recognised online database for boxing.

Known for her quick footwork and being evasive in the ring, Yama credits her success to her Christian faith and her support system, which includes Team George Boxing, her coach, George Cairo, and her main sponsor, Dasey Roofing.

"Nothing beats hard work and having the right people around you," she says.

At the time of writing, Yama was preparing for her next big



PICTURES: BX-9



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Sheilla Yama in the ring against Chinese boxer Haini Mulataiaili (above); and all smiles after her win (left).

“

I always knew I would do well in the pros because of my fighting style. I wanted get into the pro game as soon as possible after the Olympic trials in 2024.

”

fight, scheduled for August 8 in Auckland, as the undercard for a showdown between David Nyika and Floyd Masson.

Before her success as a Kiwi fighter, Yama had already made a name for herself in Port Moresby

on the amateur boxing circuit almost a decade ago.

“I always knew I would do well in the pros because of my fighting style. In amateur boxing there’s a lot of rules around certain movements that kind of restricted how I moved so I

wanted to get into the pro game as soon as possible after the Olympic trials in 2024,” she says.

Although she didn’t go on to compete in the Olympics, Yama won gold for PNG at the 2023 Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands.

It’s not all about the boxing ring for Yama. A registered nurse by profession, she also works as a healthcare assistant in Hamilton.

“Working in the hospital reminds me of who I am outside of fighting and keeps me connected to real people and real life,” she says. “I was in healthcare before I became a boxer so that passion for caring for people and giving back has always been part of who I am.” ■

— MARY TAO





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Marine group gets to work on Motuan coastline

A dynamic group of young professional volunteers is helping to create a marine sanctuary along the Hiri coastline in Central Province and is carrying out vital research on the country's coastal ecosystems.

Eda Davara Marine Sanctuary is an initiative of KataLite Consultancy and was founded three years ago by biologist Dikatauna Kwa. *Eda Davara* translates to 'our sea' in Motu.

There are two flagship programs being carried out by the group.

The first is the community mangrove nursery project, with the aim to restore mangrove forests that have been depleted at the Kohua Marine Sanctuary in Barakau, and to connect women in the area with agencies

who want to buy mangrove plant seedlings.

"We have observed that individuals from other sections of Barakau are now approaching us to facilitate mangrove workshops and coral restoration sessions with them. This demonstrates that they recognise the value of our work, share in our vision, and are eager to replicate these efforts within their own areas," says project manager Alena Gebai.

The second is the EcoExplorers program, launched just last year. The group carried out awareness sessions across four schools in Tubusereia, Barakau, Gaire and Gabagaba villages.

"Looking ahead, we plan to expand the (school) program," says Gebai.



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY EDA DAVARA MARINE SANCTUARY

Community members collecting mangrove seedlings for the Eda Davara Marine Sanctuary.

To support Eda Davara's work or to sign up for its Kohua beach tour, an ecotourism program held on the last Saturday of each month, see facebook.com/kataliteconsultancy. ■

– MARY TAO



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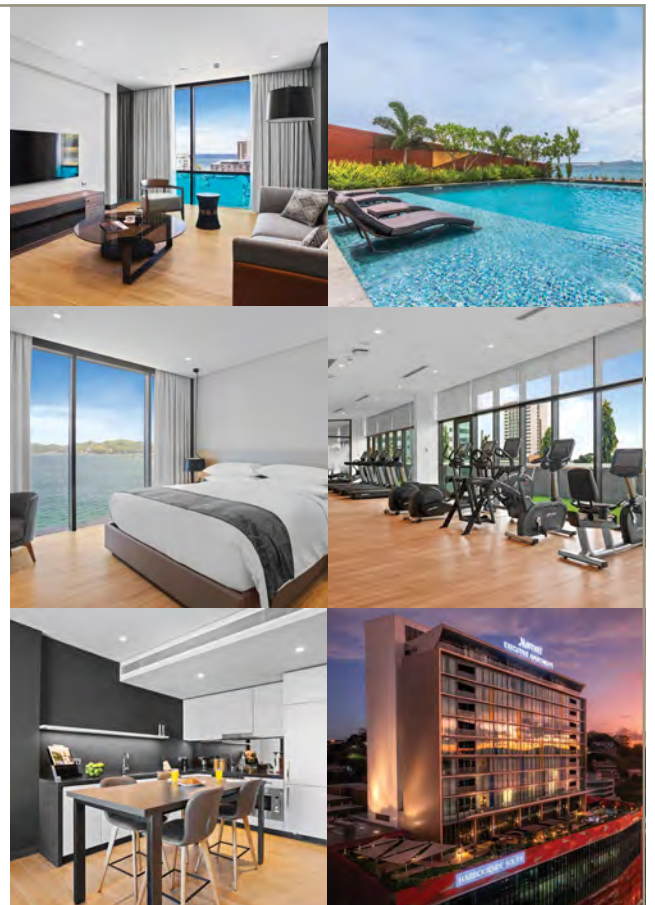
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Colourful West New Britain festival

The second annual Oil Palm Festival of Arts & Culture was celebrated over three days in June.

An estimated 1000 visitors flocked to the Sir John Maneke stadium at Hoskins Station, about a 40-minute drive from Kimbe, to attend the festival, which had the theme 'Celebrating Oil Palm, Culture & Sustainable Livelihood.'

West New Britain is famous for its vast oil palm plantations, which cover about 90,000 hectares across the province. Generations of families have relied on oil palm as a source of income, and since the 1960s companies like New Britain Palm Oil and Hargy Oil Palms Limited have relied on local support for oil palm to be grown on their land.

The show was put together to celebrate this important relationship and the many different cultures that are alive in the province.

It brings together both Highlands and Islands cultures, due to the diverse communities involved in the oil palm industry. This blend is what makes the festival truly special.

David Mundawi of the West New Britain Provincial Administration, and the ex-officio director of the event, said the show includes traditional dances from all over Papua New Guinea, mask dances from different tribes of the host province, as well as contemporary string bands.

If you would like to attend next year's festival, scheduled for June, contact Kimbe Expedition Tours. Apart from organised tours to the festival, the tour company has a special package that includes Air Niugini flights, accommodation, as well as activities such as snorkelling and dolphin-watching. Liamo Reef Resort will also be conducting tours. ■

— MARY TAO



PICTURES: TIANA REIMANN



Traditional dancers and performers from all over PNG attend the Oil Palm Festival at Hoskins Station near Kimbe.



Attenborough and his PNG connection

Tributes from world leaders, scientists and millions of viewers have poured in from around the globe since British naturalist and broadcaster Sir David Attenborough celebrated his 100th birthday on May 8.

Whether it's cuddling gorillas in Rwanda or encountering birds of paradise in Papua New Guinea, the king of nature documentaries has spent more than seven decades presenting the wildlife wonders of life on Earth.

From the dense rainforests of the mainland to the remote islands of the Bismarck Archipelago, PNG has provided some of the most memorable sequences in his documentaries.

Looking back on his renowned career, Attenborough listed the documentaries described as his "passion projects".

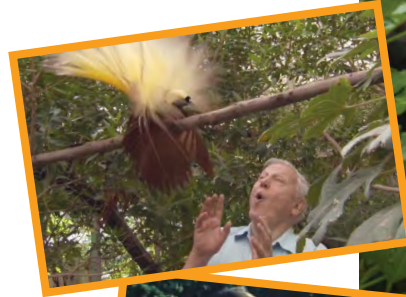
“

PNG has provided some of the most memorable sequences in his documentaries.

”

Top of the list is a remarkable encounter, in the "uncharted jungle" of East Sepik Province with members of the "uncontacted Biimi tribe".

Broadcast by the BBC in 1971, *Blank on the Map* shows



Attenborough with Australian patrol officer Laurie Bragge meeting the friendly group.

A childhood fascination with the bird of paradise attracted Attenborough to PNG in 1957, his first visit, to shoot an episode called *Quest for the Paradise Birds*.

During this landmark expedition, his crew filmed in the Wahgi River area and captured early, historic footage of the region's people and Highlands' wildlife. The footage was later used in an acclaimed documentary called *Attenborough in Paradise*.

Attenborough is largely credited for introducing international audiences to a species found nowhere else on Earth. His video shows the bird of paradise and its elaborate courtship displays. Viewers see the male clearing forest stages, performing intricate dances and displaying dazzling plumage to attract mates. These sequences brought international attention



David Attenborough at home in England (this picture); screenshots from his documentaries filmed in PNG (inset).

to the birds and highlighted the importance of conserving their rainforest habitats.

The unpredictable behaviour of Attenborough's subjects also became a popular attraction to viewers. While Attenborough was attempting to deliver his lines in one filming, he was upstaged when the bird repeatedly interrupted him with loud squawks and hopped excitedly on the branch. The blooper resulted in multiple failed takes, while Attenborough simply smiled and waited for his enthusiastic co-star to finish its display.

Born in 1926 in Isleworth, west London, Attenborough showed

an early interest in fossils, insects and wildlife. He studied Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge and served in the Royal Navy, before joining the BBC in the early 1950s.

At first, he was stuck behind a desk, when a director blocked the recruit from appearing on camera, because his "teeth are too big". Attenborough was relegated to producing until 1954, until the scheduled presenter for *Zoo Quest* got sick. Attenborough took over and became a familiar face in the pioneering TV series that took viewers to remote parts of the world. ■

— RICHARD ANDREWS



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BIG PICTURE

TAKEN BY MARK HAIHUIE

In one of the remotest parts of PNG, two families travel along the Fly River as the sun goes down in Obo village, about 30 kilometres from the Indonesian border in Western Province. There are no major roads, so the jungle-lined river provides the main 'highway' for villagers. The closest town is Kiunga, 160 kilometres away, by two days of river travel or a flight in a small aircraft from a rural air strip when possible. The photographer was in the region with the PNG Sustainable Development Program, which delivers programs in health education and agriculture. He says the dugout canoes are motorised with what the locals call 'Rambo' engines.





If you have a photo of Papua New Guinea that you'd like published in Paradise, email your submission to paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com. Photos should be at least 1.5mb and 300dpi.





Locals gather on the water's edge to greet Sepik visitors (main); fruit and vegetation are woven into dance costumes (above); a Sepik River local (right); an elder adorned in bird of paradise plumes, cockatoo feathers and shells for a ceremonial performance (opposite page).





Fiona Harper journeys to PNG's longest river where spirit houses have stood for centuries, crocodile festivals are celebrated and village drums welcome visitors.

The heat rises from the riverbanks, dense and wet, before the village comes into view. Then the sound of drums. A low, rhythmic pulse rolling across the water ahead of dugout canoes slung low in the current.

Under a palm-thatched shelter, women have gathered close, voices locked in harmonies passed down through generations, learned the same way most things are on the Sepik: on the river, by watching, by taking part. Children in headdresses of feather and shell watch us visitors with a frank, assessing gaze.

It's a *sing-sing*. Dance, movement and colour, assembled around daily life that was here long before visitors with cameras showed up.

The Sepik runs nearly 1100 kilometres through East and West Sepik provinces. Its communities have held to the carving, the body decoration, the ceremonial life with dogged persistence for eons. The spirit houses still stand on stilts above the water. The crocodile initiations still happen. Most visitors arrive by small expedition ship or overland group tours. The river sets the pace for all. ➤





A *sing-sing* performance (top); a shift in tempo with locals playing guitar (top right); the 1100-kilometre Sepik River widens into lakes and lagoons (right); an elegant egret over the river (above right); a spirit mask (above left).







A house raised on stilts next to the Sepik River (above); women in vibrant clothing bring colour and song to a *sing-sing* (right); a Sepik man, a child with clay and charcoal face paint and children paddling a dugout canoe (opposite page).



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A large photograph of a sunset over the ocean, with a silhouette of a person standing on a beach in the foreground.

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GETTING TO THE SEPIK FROM PORT MORESBY

Rocky Road Travel runs the Sepik River Festival Tour from Port Moresby, flying to Wewak with Air Niugini then travelling by motorised canoe to Ambunti for the annual Sepik Crocodile and Arts Festival. rockyroadtravel.com

Young Pioneer Tours runs a Sepik River Crocodile Festival itinerary departing Port Moresby. youngpioneertours.com

PNG Value Tours offers year-round packages including a five-day Sepik River tour combining river travel with cultural village visits. pngvaluetours.com

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WEEKEND WONDERS

Eight short getaways from Port Moresby

A short break can mean a lazy spa day in the capital, a mountain walk through cool forest, a waterfall experience or a quick flight to reef, surf and culture.

Kate Webster reports.

PICTURE: DAVID KIRKLAND, PNGTPA



Diving at Milne Bay is a short flight and boat ride away from Port Moresby.



1 ISLAND TIME AT LOLOATA

Not every escape needs a boarding pass or a long road journey. For an easy Port Moresby reset, book a night at Loloata Island Resort.

A short boat ride from the mainland delivers one of Port Moresby's easiest island escapes. The resort feels far enough away to qualify as a proper break,

yet close enough for a day visit, overnight stay or weekend retreat. Days can be as active or as idle as you like: snorkel over coral, dive local sites, kayak, swim, book a day spa treatment or settle into a lounge and let the sea breeze do the work. The resort's proximity to the capital makes it ideal for couples, families or business travellers adding a little blue water to a city stay. By sunset, with Port Moresby somewhere across the

water, the island mood has well and truly taken over.

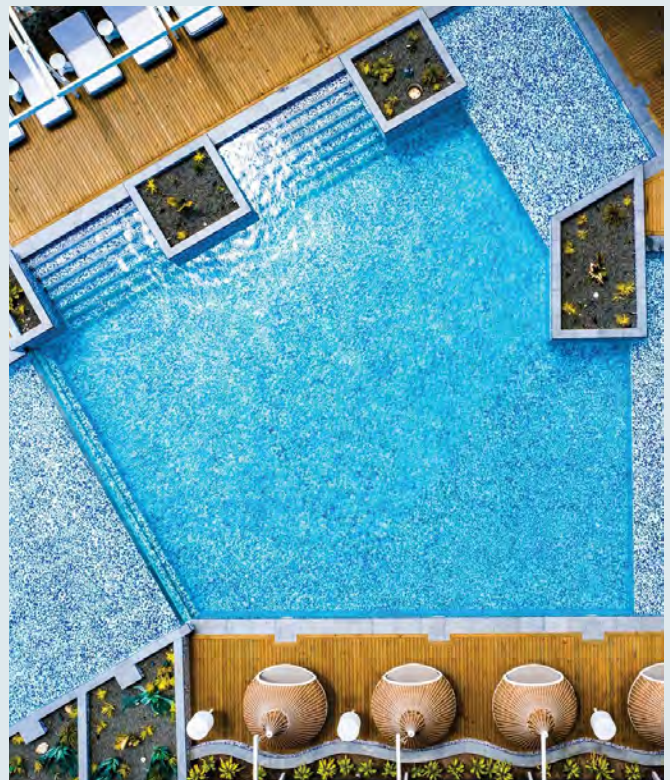
HOW TO GET THERE Drive to Tahira Terminus, then take the resort ferry across Bootless Bay to Loloata Island.

HOW MUCH? Nightly rate starts from PGK685, day passes from PGK60.

SEE loloataislandresort.com



Blue water and sun lounges at Loloata Island Resort.



2 WALK IN THE COOL OF VARIRATA

When the coast feels hot and busy, the Sogeri Plateau offers cooler air and wide views. Varirata National Park is a rewarding day trip from Port Moresby, with forest trails, picnic spots and lookouts that open towards the coastline and the Owen Stanley Range.

Go early, take a guide if you are not familiar with the tracks, and keep watch for birds moving through the canopy. A Varirata break is less about ticking off distance and more about changing your rhythm.

In a single day, you can swap traffic for rainforest, hear the bush come alive around you and return to the city with muddy shoes, clear lungs and a fresh appreciation for how quickly Papua New Guinea's landscapes shift.

HOW TO GET THERE Drive from Port Moresby along Sogeri Road to Varirata National Park, usually just under an hour depending on traffic and conditions.

HOW MUCH? Guided day tours are commonly priced from about PGK310 to PGK445 a person; self-drive visitors should allow for entry fees, vehicle hire and fuel.

SEE amazingportmoresby.com/tour/varirata-national-park ➤



PICTURE: KATE WEBSTER

Varirata National Park provides a welcome escape from the city.



PICTURE: DAVID KIRKLAND, PNGTPA



Rouna Falls, an easy half-day trip from Port Moresby.

3 WATERFALLS AT ROUNA

For a half-day adventure from Port Moresby, Rouna Falls brings drama without demanding a full expedition. The falls sit near Sogeri and can be paired with a wider day out through the hills, taking in viewpoints, village stops or a picnic along the way.

The road journey is part of the appeal, climbing away from the city into greener country where the air cools and the pace relaxes. At the falls, the sound of water takes over. It is a simple, elemental escape: stand back, feel the spray, take the photo, then linger a little longer. For travellers short on time, Rouna is a reminder that wilderness does not always require a long itinerary.

HOW TO GET THERE Drive from Port Moresby towards Sogeri and stop at the Rouna Falls lookout.

HOW MUCH? Entry or local viewing fees may be modest, but a private car and driver or day tour can range from about PGK355 to PGK535, or more for a guided itinerary.

SEE em.com.pg

4 A COUNTRY WEEKEND AT KOITAKI

Koitaki Country Club has long been one of those places Port Moresby residents talk about when they need 'something different'. East of the capital, it offers a relaxed country-style break with open grounds, riverside picnics, walks, horse riding, a clubhouse and pool.

Pack a picnic, organise access ahead of time and make a day of it, or stretch the

outing into a slower overnight escape nearby. The appeal is in the simplicity: mountain air, green space, good company and a sense of leaving the city behind without travelling too far.

HOW TO GET THERE Drive from Port Moresby along Sogeri Road to Koitaki Country Club, about one hour from the city.

HOW MUCH? Facilities are available to members and guests, with day-use or activity fees payable direct to the club; contact ahead for current rates.

SEE koitakicc.com.pg



The Koitaki Country Club, about an hour from the city.

5 A KOKODA TASTER

You do not need to walk the full Kokoda Trail to feel the pull of its history. From Port Moresby, a day trip towards Owers' Corner offers a meaningful taste of the landscape where one of PNG's most famous journeys begins or ends.

With a licensed local guide, walkers can explore a manageable section, hear stories of wartime endurance and stand at viewpoints that look towards the rugged country beyond. This is not a casual stroll; even a short

Kokoda-style walk can be humid, steep and muddy, so good shoes, water and respect for conditions matter.

As a short break, it is both physical and reflective, offering a glimpse of the trail's emotional weight without commitment to the full 96-kilometre trek.

HOW TO GET THERE Drive from Port Moresby to Owers' Corner, the southern end of the Kokoda Trail, then walk a short, guided section of the trail.

HOW MUCH? Private Kokoda day-hike experiences start from about PGK1555 per person, depending on inclusions and group size.

SEE em.com.pg



The start of the Kokoda Trail at Owers' Corner.



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY KOITAKI

PICTURE: KATE WEBSTER



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6 GO FISHING FROM THE CAPITAL

For travellers who prefer their weekend with salt spray and a rod in hand, Port Moresby is a strong launching point for a fishing escape. Local operators offer harbour cruises, blue-water trips, reef fishing and longer charters targeting species such as tuna, marlin, giant trevally and black bass.

A half-day outing can be enough for a taste, while keen anglers can plan an overnight or multi-day charter for a deeper adventure. ➤

HOW TO GET THERE Join a charter from Port Moresby Harbour.

HOW MUCH? Prices vary widely by vessel, duration and group size; contact local charter operators for a tailored quote.

SEE sportfishingpng.net

Local operators offer fishing charters and trips.



PICTURE: DAVID KIRKLAND, PNGTFA



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7 DIVE INTO MILNE BAY

If you can stretch a short break into a long weekend, Tawali Leisure and Dive Resort in Milne Bay is one of PNG's classic dive escapes.

Fly from Port Moresby to Alotau, then continue by road and boat to a resort set above clear, protected water. The journey adds to the sense of arrival, and the reward is access to reefs, wrecks, muck diving and marine life that have helped make Milne Bay famous among divers.

Non-divers can enjoy the setting, village visits and snorkelling.

HOW TO GET THERE Fly from Port Moresby to Gurney (Alotau) Airport with Air Niugini, then transfer via road and boat to Tawali Resort (takes about two hours).

HOW MUCH? A three-night, four-dive package including all meals, round-trip airport transfers and marine park fees starts from PGK5800 a person, twin share.

SEE tawali.com ➤



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY TAWALI

The Tawali resort at Milne Bay.



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8 SURF THE VANIMO FRONTIER

For surfers, PNG still carries the thrill of discovery, and Vanimo is one of its most evocative names. From Port Moresby, a surf break here takes more planning than a simple overnighter, but the payoff is uncrowded waves, tropical coastline and the rare feeling of paddling out somewhere still well beyond the mainstream.

Vanimo Surf Lodge puts travellers close to a variety of breaks suitable for different abilities, with local surf knowledge helping visitors make the most of conditions. It is best treated as a long weekend or short surf mission rather than a rushed dash.

Between sessions, the mood is easy: eat, rest and relax, go fishing or take a waterfall tour.

HOW TO GET THERE Fly from Port Moresby to Vanimo with Air Niugini, then transfer to Vanimo Surf Lodge.

HOW MUCH? Accommodation packages are listed from about PGK810 a person per day, usually including meals and shared beachfront accommodation.

SEE vanimosurflodge.com ■



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY VANIMO SURF LODGE

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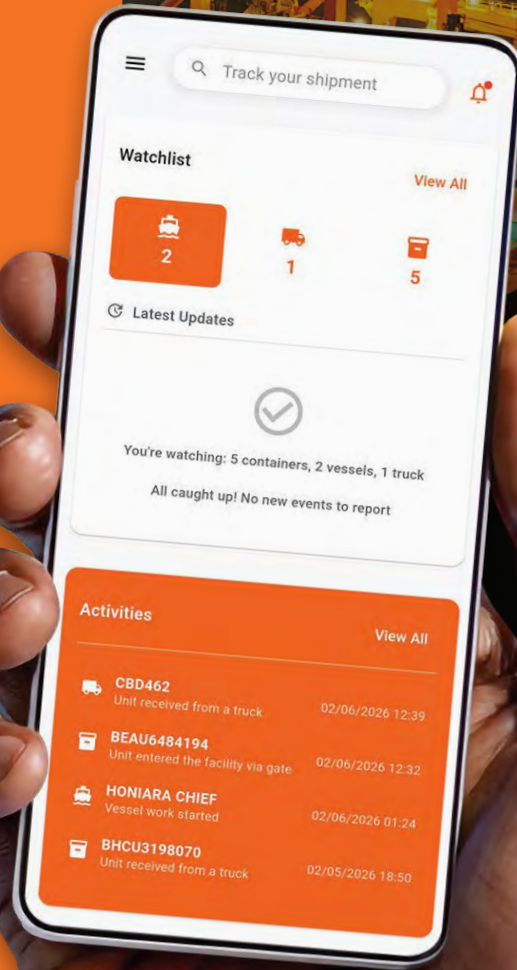
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HIGHER CALLING



Alan Milne, the newly appointed CEO of Air Niugini, speaks with *Paradise* publishing director *Andrew Wilkins* about the future of the airline, including plans for new routes, more new planes, fuel costs and the high service standards he expects.

PICTURE: BAI

Air Niugini CEO Alan Milne says Air Niugini is a “family”.

“

We haven't raised our domestic pricing at all at the moment; we have put some additional pricing on international flights, but not much.

”

Q: You're back in the job after a period away. What are some of the first things you have done since returning?

A: It's great to be back with my Air Niugini family; I have missed it. (During the uncertainty of COVID-19, Milne moved on as circumstances changed). To have the opportunity to come back has just been fantastic. So, what I have jumped straight back into are the re-fleet programs. The A220s have arrived, now we need to look at the other end of the fleet – the wide-body replacement and the turbo props. What are we going to do there? The focus is very much on the fleet and very much on the stabilisation of the operation.

Q: You have also re-introduced an internal program, Higher Altitudes. Can you take us through that and tell us what it is about?

A: Yes, Higher Altitudes is a program we introduced last time around, and it was very much embraced by Air Niugini people. It's not just a transformation program; it's about a rebuild of Air Niugini. It's stabilisation of the operation, as I mentioned, and it's about the service offering underlined by that safety and compliance datum. We have to have that right (safety and compliance), or we don't have anything. It's a relaunch of the program, the team wanted to call it Higher Altitudes again and I'm happy with that because it was a



“

Japan is a great opportunity for us.
It is a sector we used to fly,
and we are looking forward to getting back.

”

program we all loved last time and it's great to get it rolled out again.

Q: What are the current market conditions for the airline industry?

A: Perhaps unusually, with the fuel price change, people are still travelling. We haven't raised our domestic pricing at all at the moment; we have put some additional pricing on international flights, but not much. So, volumes are the same and we are getting just as many people travelling.

Q: Obviously jet fuel is more expensive than you would like, but how is the supply?

A: We've had a good supply on shore. The suppliers already had stock, so you're right it's not a volumetry issue, it's just a pricing issue. Due to the Marape government's support and subsidies we have been able to keep the price at standard in PNG, however the international-sourced fuel has doubled in price, so it's a big impact.

Q: That's not stopping the airline looking at new opportunities. I know that (at the time of writing) you are about to launch a new route to Japan. What's driving that decision and what are the other routes you are looking at?

A: An airline network is never set in concrete. We're always looking for opportunities, but also, if a route is not performing, we are asking what can we do to improve that? Japan is a great opportunity for us. It is a sector we used to fly, and we are looking forward to getting back. Our forward

sales are good, we've got great engagement with the Japanese government, and they are really keen for us to establish that (the Japan route). With the new LNG project coming on line, that's also going to help connectivity between PNG and Japan. You're right, we are always looking at new opportunities and especially now for our new aircraft, the A220-300. It's a fuel-efficient aircraft, comfortable for our customers and of course super reliable.

Q: There is a lot of excitement building for the entry of the PNG Chiefs into Australia's National Rugby League in 2028. What sort of opportunities does that present to the airline?

A: It's a wonderful opportunity, not just for Air Niugini, but PNG as well. A lot of the interaction I've had so far with external parties is that they are saying "we may come to PNG to watch a game of footy." And I thought, that's what it is, it's an excuse for Australians to come to PNG that they might not have had before. We are working very closely with the Chiefs about the opportunities for Air Niugini and Chiefs; not just bringing people into PNG but taking Papua New Guineans out to Australia to watch their home team play.

Q: It seems we are getting close to a final investment decision on the Papua LNG project. How are you positioning the airline to respond?

A: The resources sector is very important to Air Niugini, and any major project like

this is obviously an opportunity for us. We are preparing now, assuming that the final investment decision will be made this year. The advantage Air Niugini has, of course, is that our 767 wide-bodied aircraft have the belly space to carry enormous amounts of freight. We believe we are in a great position to support the project, especially during the start-up phases when there are large freight quantities and large personnel numbers as well.

Q: One of the big changes with the new fleet is that almost everyone in the airline has to learn the manuals for the new aircraft, and that goes from the pilots right through to the ground staff. That commitment to training must be extraordinary, given the standards you have to meet. Can you give us some insight into that training?

A: It's an enormous task, as you say. It takes at least two years from the decision to change to a new aircraft type to make sure the organisation is ready to accept that aeroplane.

It's a lot of work that reaches every corner of the organisation. It's not just teaching the pilots how to fly the new aeroplane. A lot of it is the new technology that these aircraft introduce, and the operational efficiencies and benefits that they bring with them. We need to bring the organisation along on that journey as well, so we can benefit from those new technologies.

We have done well with the A220s, but now we have to think about what's next. What are the next fleets? We need to be making those decisions now to have those in service by 2028/29.

Q: Air Niugini has a corporate plan pending (at the time of writing). Can you give us a taste of where the airline is looking to move?

A: It's a reasonably aggressive plan from a growth perspective, but it's also about stabilisation and making sure we can fly the schedule we sell safely and reliably, and to the service standard our customers expect. Air Niugini is the national carrier, and we want every Papua New Guinean to be proud of that bird of paradise on the tail. ➤



Q: What are some of the qualities you want to instil in the culture of Air Niugini?

A: I think it builds on what I learnt last time around. Air Niugini is a family, and we deliver the outcome as a family. Every person that works for Air Niugini has exactly the same responsibility to deliver that outcome. I've seen that culture and I think it's my and the senior leadership team's duty to make sure we enable our people to deliver that. My management style is very much to support the experts we have within the business for them to deliver what they know best. I've been in the industry for 44 years, but I'm more of an enabler; I'm not running the airline down in the nuts and bolts. We have wonderful people to do that and I'm here to support them. ■

**ALAN MILNE
AT A GLANCE**

- Appointed Air Niugini CEO on February 16, 2026
- Previously Air Niugini CEO, 2018–2020
- 36 years at Qantas, including senior positions such as 747 Fleet Manager, Head of Engineering and Head of Maintenance Control Centre
- CEO Skytrans Airlines, Australia, 2020–2025
- Licensed aircraft engineer
- Qualified pilot



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY AIR NIUGINI

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PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY CROWN HOTEL

The Crown Hotel pool.

A CROWN JEWEL IN THE PORT MORESBY HOTEL SCENE

The Crown Hotel has been undergoing a major modernisation while remaining sympathetic to its historical roots. *Robert Upe reports.*

Port Moresby's iconic Crown Hotel has been quietly undergoing a multi-million-kina rejuvenation since late 2023.

The hotel has been part of the Port Moresby landscape since 1975, opening in the Papua New Guinean capital in the same year that the nation gained independence.

It originally started as a Travelodge and then transitioned to the Park Royal and Crowne Plaza before being rebranded as the Crown Hotel in November 2018 with a local owner.

The rejuvenation to modernise the hotel has been carefully managed. "It's a phased rollout that is being done in stages to ensure zero disruption to our guests," says General Manager Shankar Ghosal.

All the hotel's 151 rooms and suites are being refreshed as part of the continuing renovation, with new contemporary colours, floor tiles, furniture, updated bathroom fixtures and in-room smart technology.

The lobby areas are being transformed with contemporary lighting fixtures, and the GM says returning guests will immediately notice a much brighter, more open and sophisticated environment.

"Our new design incorporates curated local PNG artwork, traditional motifs and cultural elements that give the property an authentic sense of place you won't find in cookie-cutter international chains," Ghosal says.





The Crown's modernised lobby with curated PNG artwork and cultural elements.



The hotel's Rapala restaurant.



An executive room at the Crown Hotel.

Stylish breakout seating areas (perfect for casual business meetings or relaxing) have been established on the first floor of the nine-storey property, conference spaces are being modernised, dining venues are being updated, and a new poolside microbrewery bar and grill is underway, scheduled for completion next year.

"Our food and beverage outlets are receiving significant updates," the GM says.

"While retaining the sophisticated charm of our premier fine dining Rapala restaurant and our popular bars, we are introducing refreshed decor, updated seating arrangements and modernised kitchen infrastructure to support our revamped menus."

In addition, the hotel is in the final stages of renewing its food safety management systems to the highest global certifications and is investing heavily in staff training courses in hospitality, guest relations and banquet delivery.

The hotel's 24/7 security surveillance system has been upgraded, and security access points have been enhanced.

Ghosal says the project balances the hotel's deep historical roots in PNG with the contemporary expectations of today's premium traveller.

He notes that business conditions in Port Moresby's hospitality sector are highly competitive. "As PNG continues to position

“

Our new design incorporates curated local PNG artwork, traditional motifs and cultural elements.

”

itself as a major regional hub for business, resource development and international forums, there is a consistent demand for high-tier corporate accommodation and secure, professional event spaces.

"The market rewards properties that proactively innovate, invest in their local workforce and maintain world-class standards – which is exactly what we are achieving here at the Crown Hotel."

The hotel has won several awards, including PNG's Leading Business Hotel at the World Travel Awards, International Travel Awards and Luxe Global Awards.

It's located on a prime hilltop location in Hunter Street – close to major government offices, banking hubs and APEC Haus – and has sweeping views of Ela Beach. ■

Crown Hotel, rooms from PGK450 a night, see crownhotel.com.pg.



A GUIDE TO SINGAPORE FOR CORPORATE TRAVELLERS

Paul Chai reports on how to get the most out of Singapore on a business trip.

PICTURE: SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD



Tepee huts on the rooftop of the Hyatt's Andaz Singapore.



A pool at the METT hotel, which is set in the historic grounds of Fort Canning Park.



Singapore has long been the centre of business in Asia, built on a reputation of being 'Asia without the hassle' in a conscious effort to attract regional headquarters of global brands with its clean and efficient island reputation.

Not only are the big brands there, but thousands of business travellers visit the city annually.

Once the offices are closed for the day, there are many places to go on this compact island nation, from vendors selling Michelin-recommended street food to one of the best zoological gardens in the world. Singapore knows how to play as hard as it works.

THE COMMUTE

Changi International Airport is located on the eastern point of the island, but it is easily accessible, as is everything in the petite city-state.

Getting into the central parts of Singapore from Changi is easy. The MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) train system is the cheapest option

– around S\$2/PGK6.7 – with the station located between terminals two and three. The journey takes about 40 minutes.

Taxis take about 30 minutes and cost S\$25/PGK84 to S\$40/PGK135, depending on peak hour and other surcharges. Ride-sharing apps like Uber are also available.

A hotel shuttle bus costs S\$10/PGK34 per adult, departing regularly from 7am to 7pm. Bus 36 runs directly to the city (Raffles Boulevard, Orchard Road) costing the same as the MRT but taking longer, up to an hour.

CHECK-IN

At The Singapore EDITION (editionhotels.com), one of hotelier Ian Schrager's design-heavy stays, you have Orchard Road right outside your door. Rooms are calmingly white with oak-plank floors, and the pale theme is carried throughout. The food is the stand-out with signature restaurant FYSH helmed by acclaimed Australian chef Josh Niland, best known for his head-to-tail fish philosophy and dishes such as his yellowfin tuna ➤

PICTURE: SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD



Violet Oon's National Kitchen.



cheeseburger. The Punch Room is a dark and brooding space serving boozy punches and pink-lit Lobby Bar is a quiet place for a drink.

For easy access to the happening neighbourhoods of Kampong Glam, Little India and Bras Basah, Hyatt's Andaz Singapore (hyatt.com) has stylish rooms by designer Andre Fu. Mr Stork, perched on level 39, is the al fresco rooftop bar that attracts people from all over the island thanks to the 360-degree city views; 10 teepee huts, inspired by stork nests, are hidden in the tropical surrounds. The cocktail menu is grouped by personality archetypes, from the adventurous to the creative.

Local brand Quincy (quincy-hotels.com) is a boutique adults-only hotel that feels secluded in this busy city but is close to Orchard Road. Rooms feature bay windows with city views, smart, functional design and a complimentary in-room mini-bar. The hotel offers daily buffet breakfast and has an infinity pool with city views; it's a bit of a local secret that feels more private members' club than hotel.

A mix of old and new, Hotel Indigo Katong (ihg.com) is built on the grounds of the former Joo Chiat Police Station (constructed in 1928) and is in the heart of Singapore's home of laksa, Katong. The 131 rooms seek to celebrate the historic Peranakan home, with art murals depicting life in the *kampungs* (villages) of yesteryear. Reception features a collage of Peranakan ceramics and water jars, and a rooftop infinity pool has views over Katong's low-rise, heritage-protected skyline. Baba Chews serves modern Singaporean dishes alongside Western classics, specialty coffee and cocktails.

RESTAURANTS

Breakfast: For a simple local breakfast, it is impossible to go past the local chain Ya Kun Kaya Toast (yakun.com). Kaya toast is Singapore's quirky breakfast staple where toast is made into a crispy sandwich with *kaya* (pandan jam) and chunks of ice-cold butter; this is served with a pair of runny boiled eggs seasoned with soy sauce and white pepper for dipping. It is a must when visiting the Lion City.

Lunch: Violet Oon is Singapore's Peranakan cooking ambassador and her three



Burnt Ends (this picture); chef Josh Niland from FYSH (above right); the Maxwell Food Centre (right).

PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY BURNT ENDS



PICTURE: ALAN BENSON



PICTURE: DANNY SANTOS

restaurants at ION Orchard, Dempsey Hill and National Gallery Singapore (violetoon.com) are the best places to experience this mashup of Chinese, Malay and British colonial cuisines. Entering the restaurants feels like stepping into a historic setting with a regal palette of black, gold and emerald green, accented by Peranakan tiles and family memorabilia. Signature dishes include *ayam buah keluak* (chicken with local nuts), and the *nasi ulam*, a fragrant herb rice salad prepared tableside.

Networking dinner: Located in storied Dempsey Hill barracks, Burnt Ends has been a part of Singapore's dining scene since Australian chef Dave Pynt opened it in 2013. The open-concept kitchen is built around great produce cooked by fire. Classics like the pulled-pork sanger remain on the menu alongside hand-carved smoked meats. With one Michelin star since 2018, and ranked in Asia's 50 best, it can be tricky to get a seat.

Solo dinner: No trip to Singapore is complete without eating at a hawker centre. Opened in 1935, Maxwell Food Centre is one of Singapore's most well-known landmarks; try *tian tian* Hainanese chicken rice, one of the best places to have what might be the national dish of Singapore. Chinatown Complex houses over 250 stalls, including

Hawker Chan, the first hawker stall ever awarded a Michelin star. Tiong Bahru Market is among the best centres in the city.

DRINKS

The over-the-top decor of Atlas bar encourages delusions of grandeur. This theatrical bar has soaring ceilings, rivers of gold and an iconic gin tower that holds over 1300 bottles.

Home to the Singapore Sling, first mixed in 1915 by Hainanese bartender Ngiam Tong Boon, Raffles Hotel's Long Bar is touristy but also fun. Get yourself the famous gin-based cocktail with the pinkish hue and throw the peanut shells on the floor; this act feels a little subversive in one of the world's cleanest cities. The bar's decor is inspired by Malayan plantation life of the 1920s with fans overhead that once would have been connected to a bicycle out back with someone pedalling.

For more of a local vibe try the Singapore Polo Club. Founded in 1886, it is one of the oldest sporting and social clubs in Singapore. The bar and outdoor terrace overlook the lush green polo ground and it is one of the few places in the city that give you a sense of space; you can also grab a bite to eat at The Paddock Bistro and, on match days, Taittinger champagne flows from the Chukka Bar. ➤



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WORKSPACE

An Asia-wide chain of co-working spaces, The Great Room (thegreatroom.co) offers modern spaces across four Singapore locations, with the One George Street office particularly prized for its spacious rooms, high ceilings and vibrant community; but the great locations in Ngee Ann City, Raffles Arcade and Centennial tower are also popular. Day passes start from S\$70/PGK238, with hot desks, lounge access and premium coffee included.

Well known around the world, WeWork (wework.com) has about 14 locations across Singapore. WeWork's 9 Battery Road office is one of the most sought-after spaces in the city, offering wellness rooms, outdoor space, event facilities and a lively community atmosphere. Day passes range from S\$60/PGK204 to S\$75/PGK255 depending on the location. Crane (wearecrane.com) is a great co-working space for creatives. Crane



Drinks are poured at the Atlas bar.

puts a premium on connection and offers activities like murder mystery nights and communal banquets to break down office barriers. It also offers regular wellness programs, alongside bookable meeting rooms, communal tables and cosy corners. Subscription is S\$88/PGK299 per month.

One of Singapore's newest hotels, METT Singapore is also positioning itself

as a social and lifestyle destination. The property is home to multiple dining venues led by award-winning Italian chef Daniele Sperindio, it has a pool club, padel courts and expansive wellness facilities. Set within the lush, historic grounds of Fort Canning Park, METT Singapore blends elegant colonial architecture with contemporary interiors, creating a resort-style vibe, minutes from Orchard Road and Singapore's cultural precinct. With just 84 rooms and suites, the hotel offers an intimate, design-led stay (metthotelsandresorts.com/Singapore).

ON THE RUN

One of the most scenic places to hit is the shoreline around Marina Bay. The waterfront paths around Marina Bay are beautiful, and the Helix Bridge and lush greenery of Gardens by the Bay make this one of the world's great city runs. More remote and wild, including cheeky packs of marauding macaques, is MacRitchie Reservoir with tree-covered ➤

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PICTURE: SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD



In the treetops over MacRitchie Reservoir.

trails and a popular 10-kilometre loop around the reservoir. East Coast Park is a multi-use coastal path that runs along the Singapore Strait; it is a more local vibe out east, but you can also join in with an organised Parkrun (parkrun.com.au) most Saturdays, and there are more around the island too. ■



Air Niugini flies from Port Moresby to Singapore four times a week. See airniugini.com.pg.

THE CONCIERGE SAYS

“

Singapore is constantly evolving, which means there is always something new to explore, experience or discover. That sense of change and variety is what I love most.

Marina Bay is an excellent choice for unwinding in the city. Its central location makes it easy to visit; travellers can relax with a beer by the bay at Marina Bay Shoppes while enjoying the Spectra light show.

Maxwell is my go-to spot to escape the bustle of the city, just 10 minutes from the financial district. It is rich in culture, with Chinatown, the Sri Mariamman Temple and the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple all within walking distance. The area also offers a great selection of restaurants and bars, making it a perfect mix of heritage and lifestyle.

”

JEFF KEK, GUEST SERVICES MANAGER, MANDARIN ORIENTAL SINGAPORE

FROM SEPIK WETLANDS TO THE WORLD'S FINEST LEATHER

Sustainable crocodile farming in Papua New Guinea is creating livelihoods, protecting wildlife, and producing some of the world's most sought-after luxury materials.

Papua New Guinea's wetlands are home to two iconic species, the saltwater and freshwater crocodile, long embedded in the cultural identity of river communities.

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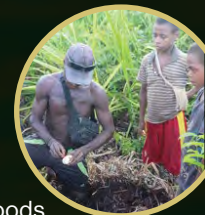
Following early overharvesting in the mid-20th century, a regulated system was introduced, bringing together government, communities, and industry. At the centre of this transformation is Mainland Holdings Ltd, which established its crocodile farm in Lae in 1980.

Today, Mainland Holdings operates under globally recognised conservation frameworks, working closely with CEPA and international bodies to ensure ethical, sustainable practices.

Through its model:

- Rural communities supply eggs, live crocodiles, and skins
- Families earn reliable income supporting education and livelihoods
- Wetland ecosystems are actively protected
- More than 230,000 eggs have been safely collected and incubated through community programs, demonstrating the scale and success of this partnership.

This is conservation not as theory, but as a working economic system.



For further enquiries contact:

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MY TOWN

SEBASTIAN ANG,
Singaporean
food and beverage
entrepreneur.

Q: Tell me about your business.

A: I run a hospitality group in Singapore, with concepts like AMACHA, Mama Diam, Lou Shang and Synthesis. Each concept explores a different aspect of local culture, but the common thread is storytelling through everyday experiences. With AMACHA, we're reimagining traditional herbal tea in a way that feels approachable to a younger audience. It's inspired by something many of us grew up with: a grandmother brewing TCM tea at home – but presented in a modern, lifestyle format.

Q: What do you love about Singapore?

A: What I love most about Singapore is how layered it is. On the surface, it's efficient and modern, but beneath that, there's a lot of quiet culture and history in the everyday. You see it in small things. A *kopi* order at a hawker centre, the mix of cultures influencing our food, or even how traditions get passed down at home. It's not always loud or obvious, but it's there if you pay attention. That contrast between modernity and heritage is what makes Singapore unique, and it's something I try to express through my businesses.

Q: Where is your favourite hawker market?

A: I'd say Maxwell Food Centre. It's right in the heart of Chinatown, so you get a mix of locals and visitors, and it really reflects

what Singapore is about. Different cultures, different dishes, all in one place.

Q: Where is a great place for a working coffee?

A: I like places that are calm but still have a bit of character. Chye Seng Huat Hardware is one I go back to. It has a good balance. Proper coffee, enough space to sit and think, but also an energy that keeps you focused.

Q: How about a spot for casual networking drinks?

A: I'd say Mama Diam (I'm slightly biased). It's designed to feel informal and nostalgic. Guests enter through a small provision shop and step into a hidden bar, which creates a discovery and breaks usual expectations. ■

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HOTEL REVIEW: THE EVE HOTEL, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Tel +61 2 9096 1100, 8 Baptist Street, Redfern, theevehotel.com.au

WHO STAYS? Trendsetters, business people and international visitors; the EVE's friendly vibe makes it popular with solo travellers.

HOW BIG? 102 rooms, seven suites

COST From PGK1715 a night.

CHECK IN 2pm

CHECK OUT 11am

HIGHLIGHTS The hotel's arty aesthetic and design, which hits you as you step into the light-filled lobby full of retro-style furniture, its opulent rooftop pool and its superb Mexican restaurant, Lottie.

WHAT'S NEARBY The EVE is above the new Wunderlich Lane precinct, a former industrial site with 25 bars, boutiques and dining options. It's a five-minute stroll from Crown Street, with its many international restaurants, and a short bus ride from central Sydney attractions.

Wi-Fi in rooms:

TV:

Air conditioning in room:

Swimming pool:

Room service:

Free airport transfers:

Business centre:

Breakfast included in standard charge:



PICTURES: GEORG ROSKE

LOCATION

The EVE hotel is in Redfern, at the edge of one of Sydney's hippest inner-city neighbourhoods, Surry Hills. Buses run from outside to Circular Quay (20 minutes) and Central Station (15 minutes).

THE PLACE

Opened in February 2025, the EVE has already won several awards and wows guests with its innovative design, striking rooftop pool, excellent onsite food and drink options and engaging staff. The eye-catching open lobby area, adorned with retro-style banquettes and armchairs, and work by Sydney artist Louise Olsen, introduces the EVE's industrial chic design and a vaulted light-filled corridor leads to its luxurious guest rooms. Abundant greenery gives the EVE the feel of an urban garden and its heated 20-metre rooftop pool has views over Sydney, music audible underwater, and poolside cocktail bar and cabanas.

ROOMS

The stylish rooms range from standard courtyard rooms to sunset suites. All rooms

have outdoor areas, free Wi-Fi, and in-room dining available 7am to 10pm. Rooms feel warm, spacious and feature plenty of green in furnishings and ensuite bathrooms.

FOOD AND DRINK

Adjacent to the hotel's Baptist Street entrance, Bar Julius is a European-style lobby bar serving breakfast, an all-day menu and cocktails, making it easy to settle into, morning, noon or night. The EVE's top-floor restaurant, Lottie, is a contemporary Mexican and mezcaleria that's both intimate and social.

Flavour-packed dishes include a zingy tuna tostada entree and mains like pork jowl and Sinoloa-style chicken, served with house-made tortillas, made for sharing.

WHAT GUESTS LIKE

"Lovely new hotel, friendly helpful staff, great vibes, slick decor, good bar, beautiful pool." – Expedia

"Hotel was beautifully designed, fit out and amenities were luxe, staff were extremely friendly." – Booking.com



HOTEL REVIEW: HIGHLANDER, MOUNT HAGEN, PNG

Tel +675 7999 9104, Hagen Drive, Waghi Parade, Mount Hagen, coralseahotels.com.pg/highlander-hotel

WHO STAYS? Mix of corporates and international and local tourists.

HOW BIG? 88 rooms, from the standard self-contained deluxe king rooms to twin-share rooms and executive queen rooms. For longer stays, there are options for one-bedroom and two-bedroom fully serviced apartments.

COST From PGK650 a night for standard deluxe king rooms to PGK1147 for fully serviced two-bedroom apartments, which offer sizeable work areas and private balconies.

CHECK IN 2pm

CHECK OUT 10am

HIGHLIGHTS A favourite gathering spot for locals and visitors, the Sportsman's Bar offers a relaxed atmosphere to unwind. A stand-out feature is the swimming pool set within landscaped gardens.

Wi-Fi in rooms:	✓
TV:	✓
Room service:	✓
Swimming pool:	✓
Free airport transfers:	✓
Gym:	✓
Business centre:	✗
Hotel arranges tours:	✓
Breakfast included in standard charge:	✗



PICTURES: NORMAN KETAN

LOCATION

The Highlander Hotel is about 10 minutes' drive from Kagamuga Airport. It is just off the Highlands Highway, making it easily accessible. Key landmarks, such as the Mount Hagen market and government offices, are within walking or short driving distance.

THE PLACE

The Highlander Hotel is surrounded by landscaped tropical gardens and set slightly away from the busiest parts of town; it offers modern accommodation, fine dining and versatile meeting spaces. In addition, it is a relatively quiet part of town while still being centrally located for business and administrative activities. Guests can expect a safe and comfortable environment with 24-hour security and ample parking.

ROOMS

Whether you're travelling for work or a holiday, the hotel rooms and serviced apartments offer a modern, comfortable and convenient

place to stay in the welcoming, cool Highlands atmosphere. It's also a great choice for events and can cater for up to 200 guests for meetings, conferences and weddings, with flexible spaces.

FOOD AND DRINK

There's a seafood night every Thursday and a steak night every Friday in the Palmuri Restaurant. The a la carte menu has everything from roast chicken to steaks, burgers, sandwiches, stir-fries, curries and pizzas. The local recommendation is the Mount Wilhem trout with a wine or local beer. Additional venues include the Niu Ming Bar and the Sportsman's Bar.

WHAT GUESTS LIKE

"A very pleasant place to stay, especially for a business trip. The staff were welcoming and always ready to help, and the atmosphere was calm and relaxing after a busy day. The room was clean, comfortable, and well maintained."
– TripAdvisor



TIME TRAVELLER

Inspecting PNG combat troops, Vanuatu, August 1980

PNG's Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan, wearing a white safari suit, inspects Kumul Force combat troops from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF). They were sent to Luganville, on Vanuatu's Santo Island, to help quell rebel unrest after Vanuatu gained independence from Britain and France. Vanuatu, known as the New Hebrides before independence, had requested the PNGDF's assistance to deal with the rebels. Behind Sir Julius is Brigadier-General Tony Huai, who led Kumul Force. Next to Sir Julius is PNGDF Commander Carl Malpo, and behind him is Father Walter Lini, an Anglican priest who was Vanuatu's inaugural prime minister. The conflict was the first time the PNGDF had been sent overseas.

If you have a photo that may be suitable for Time Traveller, email paradise@businessadvantageinternational.com.



PICTURE: POST-COURIER

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HELP FROM ABOVE

Mission Aviation Fellowship has been flying in PNG for 75 years, delivering help where needed with medical supplies, emergency evacuations and more. *Richard Andrews* reports.

Crowds gather next to a grassy airstrip for the arrival of a Mission Aviation Fellowship flight in Tumolbil near the Indonesian border in West Sepik.





Edwin Hartwig at Asaroka in 1951 and his Auster Autocar aircraft.



PICTURE: BRIDGET INGRAM

Tropical cyclones, lifesaving flights, coffee runs, steep mountain airstrips and intractable dogs. Just another day in the office for Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF).

In 2026, the Christian organisation looks back on 75 years of bringing “help, hope and healing” to more than 600 isolated communities across Papua New Guinea.

On May 7, 1951, Edwin ‘Harry’ Hartwig took off in an Auster Autocar on MAF’s first operational flight in the country. A former captain of a B-24 Liberator in World War 2, Hartwig dreamed of devoting his “God given aviation skills to serve people in need”.

Tragically he died about four months later, when his plane crashed in the notorious Asaroka Gap, during a return flight from the Eastern Highlands to Madang.

Today, MAF remains committed to fulfilling Hartwig’s dream with a fleet of 11 Cessna Caravan aircraft. “Serving people in need” ranges from the transport of health workers, medical supplies and education essentials to shipments of village products and provision of ambulance services. Medivac emergencies can vary from farming accidents and difficult

pregnancies to snake bites and run-ins with wild pigs.

MAF humanitarian missions have also included responses to the Aitape tsunami disaster on PNG’s north coast in 1998. The same year, MAF provided relief to communities suffering severe drought, frosts and famine in both PNG and West Papua.

When Cyclone Maila flooded Bougainville last April, MAF supported the delivery of emergency aid and aerial surveys, to assess the extent of damage across the island.

“Floodings in rivers washed away and buried food gardens beside rivers. These gardens are what most people have, and what they survive on,” says Reverend Abraham Toroi, Bishop Emeritus of the United Church in Bougainville.

“MAF came and flew relief, food and supplies to the central places like Kieta. From there, it was distributed to various communities or atolls.”

With a population of more than 10 million scattered across an area larger than Germany, access to transport is often a major challenge in PNG. Many people in rural areas face a walk of up to a week to reach a hospital, medical outpost, or even a road. ➤



PICTURE: TAJ S JESPERSEN

An all-PNG crew: Pilot Joseph Tua (left) at the controls of a float plane with Titus Oake, water operations assistant.



PICTURE: SIOBHAIN COLE



PICTURE: AQUILA MATIT



PICTURE: MATHIAS GLASS

Earthquake relief at Walagu in 2019 (this picture); a warm greeting for MAF from locals at Yakona in 2023 (above left); MAF personnel Nancy Ikate, Dom Sant and Lydia Yomba at Mount Hagen (above).



“

Flying float planes is a special skill. Obstacles include driftwood and sandbars. Joseph (a MAF pilot) has also joked about running into crocodiles.

”

MAF supports cash crop livelihoods in areas such as the Karimui-Nomane district of Simbu Province, where sacks of products, such as cacao and coffee beans, are delivered to markets.

“Money from cacao has paid for all my children’s education and helps cover their daily needs,” says award-winning farmer Norman Mondo.

Similarly, Mopa Paleah, who runs a co-op of vanilla farmers, says he couldn’t afford to pay school fees for his four children without MAF’s aerial services.

“If there’s a patient about to die, people lift up the phone and they call MAF,” he says. “And no matter where the aeroplane is, MAF just comes, picks up the patient and returns.”

However, the ability to ‘lift up the phone’ and call for help is not a luxury all places share.

Between 2000 and 4000 people on the remote Carteret Islands have lacked telephone or radio communication for decades. The tiny atoll lies 100 kilometres from the coast of Bougainville, reached only by small, open boats.

A MAF team, including IT Manager Karlos Sarunic, installed extensive solar lighting and a long-range radio system in the Islands’ health centre, enabling immediate contact with the outside world.

“Boats go missing all the time,” he says.

“If you have an engine that breaks down out there, there is no coastguard. There is no tracking, no phone signal. Nothing.”

“Our staff are the stars of MAF,” says Dom Sant, PNG Country Director. “We’re focused on developing the PNG team, which already consists of 80 per cent nationals.

“Through MAF they get training as pilots, aviation engineers, quality safety inspectors and other skills that will enable them to get a career in industry and train others.”

Local MAF pilots include Joseph Tua, who was trained in float plane operations to provide health, education and trade services to remote communities living on the network of Lake Murray waterways in Western Province.

Originally from Ialibu in the Southern Highlands, Captain Tua symbolically ➤

PICTURE: ANNELIE EDSMYR



PICTURE: AQUILA MATIT



PICTURE: TERRY FAHEY



A MAF float plane at Lake Murray (this picture); MAF on the ground at Pyarulama (above left); some of the MAF’s team celebrating the 75th anniversary (left).



PICTURES: SVEIN-ROBERT SOLBERG



combined his pilot's uniform with traditional face painting at King Charles' ceremonial dedication of an amphibious Cessna Caravan.

"Flying float planes is a special skill," says Sant. "Obstacles include driftwood and sandbars. Joseph has also joked about running into crocodiles."

Whether or not that's true, Sant agrees that every day with MAF is an adventure.

"We have more than 200 airstrips that rarely look like the 1600-metre sealed runways that I knew in England," says the former Rolls-Royce aero-engine fitter.

"Our airstrips are often 300-metre grassy slopes and may be frequented by volleyball players, as well as pigs or other animals. MAF pilots will fly over the airfield first as a good warning for people to get out of the way."

MAF reaching out to locals across PNG.

However, pilots occasionally have to abort a landing "because a dog sat in the middle of the runway and refused to move," he adds.

Sant, his wife, Sequoia, and their three children, Abigail, Emma and Isaac, moved to Mount Hagen in 2022. "By joining MAF, we hope to continue showing Christ's love to these isolated communities," he says.

"On Good Friday, a woman named Meri from Wanakipa in Hela Province fell off a rock and broke her arm. The bone was sticking out, and it was two days' walk over rough terrain for help. We were able to get her to hospital in 35 minutes. That's what makes it all worthwhile.

"The people who choose to serve MAF certainly don't do it for the money. We believe there is a God who loves us and we want to serve him – I can see how he is steering me to this role. He is building something beautiful." ■



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WARBIRDS FLOCK TO THEIR FOREVER HOME

PICTURES: AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE (MAIN) & JESSICA GRAY, AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE



Chief curator Dr Gregory Babilis with the Tin Goose at the Aviation Heritage Centre in Port Moresby (this picture); the Douglas A-20 Havoc bomber being shipped from Australia to PNG on the ADV *Reliant* (top).



Belinda Jackson reports on Port Moresby's new Aviation Heritage Centre and the mammoth effort to bring a World War 2 bomber back to PNG.

It lay hidden in the jungle in Madang Province for three decades, and spent another decade in Australian workshops, but a Douglas A-20 Havoc bomber aircraft finally has its new forever home, in Port Moresby.

Nicknamed Hell'n Pelican II by its last pilot, the bomber is the highlight of the new Aviation Heritage Centre at the PNG National Museum and Art Gallery (NMAG).

The centre is a collaboration between NMAG, the Royal Australian Air Force and Papua New Guinea's Defence Force to conserve, preserve, store and display aviation artefacts found in PNG.

According to Dr Gregory Babilis, chief curator of the museum's Modern History department, the Hell'n Pelican II is the most significant of the seven aircraft on display at the centre, in a purpose-built hangar at NMAG in Waigani.

"It's the first aircraft the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) restored and sent back to us under a Memorandum of Agreement, so it's an important sign that Australia and PNG value this relationship," he says of the bomber, which returned to PNG last year.

It's been a long journey for Hell'n Pelican II to reach its permanent home; the US Air Force aircraft was built by the Douglas ➤

“There are about 1000 aircraft from World War 2 left in PNG – we're still finding them.”



PICTURE: JOHN BUCKLE, ADF



Aircraft Company in Long Beach, California before it entered service on the Pacific front during World War 2.

On April 16, 1944, the bomber was serving with the 388th Bomber Squadron in PNG when it was snared in bad weather and running low on fuel. Separated from their group, its pilot captain 2nd Lieutenant Charles Davidson, along with gunner Sergeant John McKenna, forced a crash landing near the village of Amaimon, west of Madang. Both pilot and gunner survived the crash, trekking for 15 days to safety.

The aircraft would spend the next 40 years enveloped by the jungle. It is one of 70 planes lost on the day, dubbed Black Sunday for the largest weather-related loss in aviation history, according to US military historian Michael Claringbould, who discovered the aircraft in 1976.

In 1984, the plucky Hell'n Pelican II was recovered from the jungle, in remarkably good condition, by the Australian Navy and Air Force using a Chinook helicopter.

Transported to Australia on a war ship, it would move between Australian RAAF air bases at Richmond and Wagga in New South Wales, and at RAAF Amberley, outside Brisbane, undergoing a 10-year restoration. Eventually, it was handed back to PNG in 1996 on the 25th anniversary of the country's independence, remaining in Australia on display at the RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre.

Hell'n Pelican II has outlived its crew – McKenna was killed in PNG in 1944 and remains missing in action, while gunner Davidson died in 2011, aged 90. Incredibly, the pilot visited Australia to see the restored aircraft once again at the 1996 handover ceremony at the RAAF Amberley. The aircraft was physically repatriated back to PNG in June 2025 on board Australia's ADV *Reliant*, ahead of the centre's opening and the 50th anniversary celebrations.

It's stories such as these that make the NMAG a drawcard not just for aviation aficionados, but also those interested in the country's role in the conflict that enveloped the entire globe.

It also tells a story of PNG's evolution.

"It was really aviation that opened up the country," says Dr Babilis. "The people in the Highlands saw aircraft before they saw vehicles.

"Planes were the only viable means of transportation to move around the territories; they were and still are very important for connecting PNG."

However, the grey bomber, with its shark's teeth and white heart insignia, is not Dr Babilis' favourite display.

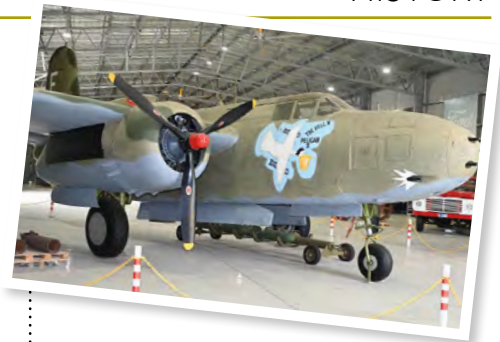
It was the "interesting, convoluted story" of the Ford Trimotor that piqued his interest. Just one of 199 dual-passenger aircraft built by the Ford Motor Company between 1925 and 1933, their corrugated aluminium frames saw the planes nicknamed the Tin Goose.

Originally bought by the British Earl of Lovelace to fly through East Africa, the trimotor on display was sold to Guinea Airways in 1935 and commandeered into the RAAF in early 1942. Despite its apparent fragility, it served as an air ambulance along the Kokoda Trail until it was bogged at Lake Myola later that year, where it would remain for the next 37 years. In 1979, it was recovered and, piece by piece, moved to the former NMAG Modern History Museum in Gordons to be restored to its current state.

"It's quite fragile; we were apprehensive about moving it with cranes, and (careful) not to bend it in the midsection, which is no longer properly supported by its old frame," says Dr Babilis of the delicate operation to move the



PICTURE: LAUREN PUGSLEY, ADF



The Douglas A-20 Havoc bomber on the road in Townsville, Australia (left); in place at the Aviation Heritage Centre in PNG (above); PNG and Australian defence force chiefs at the opening of the centre (below).

PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE

Tin Goose and other aircraft from Gordons to the sheltered haven of the new aviation centre.

"(At Gordons), they were exposed to the elements, so with deterioration and erosion, the aircraft, especially the corrugated roofing-iron plane, have just been rusting away," says Dr Babilis.

The collection also includes an American fighter, a Bell P-39 Airacobra, pitted against the Japanese Mitsubishi A6M Zero for low-altitude attacks, and an Australian-built training aircraft, the CAC Wirraway, which was conscripted into military service in World War 2, and is next in line to be restored.

The centre also remembers US aviatrix Amelia Earhart, presumed lost at sea in 1937 – she and her navigator, Fred Noonan, were last seen departing from Lae airport in their Lockheed Electra 10E Special in her bid to become the first woman to circumnavigate the globe. Both Earhart and Noonan, and their plane, remain missing.

Aside from the aircraft, the centre also houses a restored Ford F600, which was PNG's first fire engine, and PNG's first state vehicle, a stately Daimler Sovereign Saloon, used by Sir Michael Somare from 1975 to 1980.

The Aviation Heritage Centre is the brainchild of former NMAG Director Dr Andrew Moutu and decorated RAAF Airman Steve Fielder (retired). "The aircraft were always on display outdoors on the lawn at the old museum in Gordons, so they had this idea of creating a space that would house all the aircraft indoors.

"We got the RAAF interested and, once funding was approved, the groundworks began in 2024," says Dr Babilis, who has worked with US, Japanese and Australian governments to find their war dead still listed as missing in PNG. ➤



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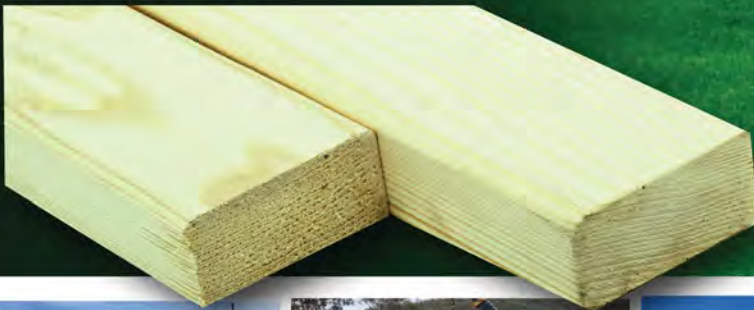
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The key, he says, are such aircraft.

"There are about 1000 aircraft from World War 2 alone left in PNG – we're still finding them. It's comparatively easier to trace aircraft that might have been shot down or landed in PNG than human remains, so we look for the crash to find the missing airmen.

"We've found aircraft under 40 metres of sea, on the top of mountains, in the forest – all kinds of inaccessible places," he says. Key to their work are the reports of found aircraft from villages across the country.

"Everything from World War 2 is the property of the state," he says, so the work is vital to stop foreign aircraft connoisseurs from finding and taking the aircraft. "And many, like the Boston Bomber and the Wirraway, are not in production anymore."

The aviation centre's modern history collection includes approximately 2500 objects, from bombs to bullets, Kawasaki

engines and Japanese torpedos as well as the aircraft.

"The Aviation Heritage Centre and the World War 2-era Douglas A-20 Havoc Bomber stand as a permanent reminder of an enduring defence relationship between Australia and PNG, forged through shared tenacity and sacrifice during World War 2," said the Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Stephen Chappell, on opening the centre in late 2025.

"It's good to have all the aircraft indoors now," says Dr Babilis. "We're grateful and thankful for the RAAF for supporting us with this building to help us tell the story and the importance of aviation in this country." ■

The Aviation Heritage Centre is open Monday to Saturday, 9am to 3pm, admission free.



PICTURES: LAUREN PUGSLEY, ADF



Traditional dancers, defence force chiefs and dignitaries at the opening of the Aviation Heritage Centre (above).

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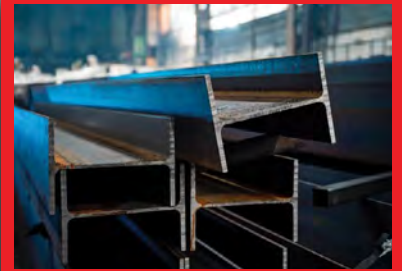
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PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY NRL

Jarome Luai was the first player to sign on with the Chiefs.

The PNG Chiefs are attracting champion players and top-calibre officials ahead of their entry into the NRL in 2028. On these pages, *Michael Philip* introduces some of the early signings.

The PNG Chiefs are set to join Australia's National Rugby League (NRL) in 2028 as the league's 19th team, but they've already been kicking goals with a number of key appointments announced in recent months, including coaches, players and officials.

The inaugural head coach, Willie Peters, fresh from major success with the Hull Kingston Rovers in the UK, signed on with the Papua New Guinean team in late March.

Luke Burt, who had a decorated 14-year playing career with the Paramatta Eels before transitioning into coaching, was shortly afterwards announced as one of the Chiefs' assistant coaches.

The first player signings came in April and included Jarome Luai, followed by Alex

Johnston. Luai, a Samoan, is a four-time NRL premiership-winning five-eighth who has represented NSW in State of Origin. Johnston, a Papua New Guinean, is a South Sydney Rabbitohs player who is the game's most prolific try scorer.

Prior to this, Lorna McPherson was announced as the team's Chief Executive Officer, and Michael Chammas was appointed General Manager of Football. It's reported Chammas was handpicked by NRL Chairman Peter V'landys for the GM role of the new PNG team.

Chiefs CEO McPherson, who comes with 16 years of corporate leadership experience in PNG, says the momentum building within the club is translating into elite recruitment outcomes.



“

We promised to build a team that the people of PNG can be proud of and one that can compete with the best from day one.

”

“This is exactly what we promised – to build a team that the people of PNG can be proud of and one that can compete with the best from day one.”

The Prime Minister, James Marape, meanwhile has pledged to drive national sponsorship and supporter networks to ensure the team’s sustainability.

Looking ahead, the PM highlighted the importance of strong player development pathways linking the PNG Hunters, schools, domestic competitions and Pacific talent pools.

“We want a strong core of Papua New Guinean players, supported by the best talent available,” he said. “With the coach now secured, it is all systems go as we move towards assembling our team for 2028.”



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY PNG CHIEFS

12 QUESTIONS FOR

WILLIE PETERS

THE COACH

AT A GLANCE:

WILLIE PETERS

CURRENT: Coach of Hull Kingston Rovers in England

BORN: Sydney, Australia

AGE: 47

Q: Why did you decide to take the job of inaugural coach of the PNG Chiefs?

A: Because this is bigger than football. The opportunity to help build a brand-new club for Papua New Guinea and the Pacific is something very special. Rugby league means so much to the people in the region. I believe the PNG Chiefs can become a club that represents pride, family, culture and opportunity for an entire nation.

Q: What type of coach are you?

A: I’m big on team culture and relationships. I believe success starts with trust, discipline and everyone working together. I like my teams to play tough, disciplined football, but I also want players to enjoy what they’re doing and play with confidence.

Q: People say you’re very good at rebuilding teams. What’s your approach?

A: For me, it starts with culture. You’ve got to create an environment

where players care about each other and want to work hard for the club and supporters.

Once you build that foundation, then you can focus on improving performances on the field.

Q: What has been your biggest coaching success so far?

A: My biggest success so far has been coaching Hull Kingston Rovers (in England’s Super League, the top tier of British rugby league). We managed to turn the club into one of the best teams in the competition and won some major trophies together.

Q: What honours have you won as a coach?

A: We won the 2025 Super League grand final, the 2025 Challenge Cup and the League Leaders’ Shield. One of the proudest moments was winning the 2026 World Club Challenge against the Brisbane Broncos. Winning all those titles in such a short time was very special for the club and everyone involved. ➤



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY PNG CHIEFS



Chiefs coach Willie Peters.

“
The opportunity to help build a brand-new club for Papua New Guinea and the Pacific is something very special.
”

Q: Before coaching, were you a rugby league player yourself?

A: Yes, I was. I played as a halfback during my professional career. I was lucky enough to play for a few clubs in both Australia and England. I started my first-grade career with the South Sydney Rabbitohs in 1997. I also played for the St George Illawarra Dragons in Australia. In England, I played for Wigan Warriors, Widnes Vikings and Gateshead Thunder.

Q: How long did your playing career last?

A: Unfortunately, my career was cut short because of injury. I retired from professional rugby league at 25 years old. It was tough at the time, but it also opened the door for me to move into coaching.

Q: How did your coaching journey begin?

A: I started working my way through different assistant coaching roles in the NRL. I spent time learning at clubs

like the Manly Warringah Sea Eagles, South Sydney Rabbitohs and Newcastle Knights. I also worked alongside some very experienced coaches, including legendary NRL player and coach Wayne Bennett, which helped me grow a lot as a coach and leader.

Q: How confident are you in taking on this coaching role?

A: I'm very confident but also realistic. This is a challenge. Building a new club isn't easy. But my experience – especially winning major trophies and building culture at Hull KR – has prepared me for this. Confidence for me comes from preparation, people and clarity of vision. If we get those right, results will follow.

Q: What can you say about the love PNG has for rugby league?

A: It's unmatched. You hear people say rugby league is the number one sport in PNG – but until you experience it, you don't fully understand. It's part of daily

life. It brings communities together. That passion is powerful. As a coach, you want players to care deeply about what they represent, and in PNG that comes naturally. It's something we can build our identity around.

Q: Are you looking forward to relocating to Port Moresby?

A: Absolutely. It's something my family and I have spoken about, and we're excited. This is a unique life experience, not just a coaching role. Moving to Port Moresby gives us a chance to immerse ourselves in a different culture and be part of something meaningful.

Q: What message would you like to give PNG rugby league fans?

A: I'd just say thank you for the support already. I know how passionate PNG is about rugby league and I can promise the club will work extremely hard to represent the country with pride when we enter the NRL in 2028. ■





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PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY NRL

**AT A GLANCE:****JAROME LUAI**

CURRENT: Co-captain of
Wests Tigers
BORN: Sydney, Australia
AGE: 29

“

Securing his signature is a big step forward for our club and for rugby league in Papua New Guinea.

”

THE PLAYERS**NRL STARS COMMIT TO CHIEFS**

Jarome Luai is PNG Chiefs player 001. Luai, a NSW State of Origin representative and Samoan international, signed with the club in late April.

PNG Chiefs General Manager of Football Michael Chammas said at the time: “Jarome is a world-class player and a proven winner. Securing his signature is a big step forward for our club and for rugby league in Papua New Guinea.”

Luai’s contract is for 2028 and 2029, with an option to extend it to 2030. He beat Kumul international and the NRL’s all-time try scorer Alex Johnston to become the first player to sign up.

Johnston, a 250-game veteran who broke Ken Irvine’s longstanding NRL try-scoring record earlier this season with his 213th four-pointers for the South Sydney Rabbitohs, has signed a one-year deal with the Chiefs.

Johnston has represented PNG 12 times at international level.

Chiefs officials say that Luai’s arrival will shape both the playing squad and the identity of the team.

Luai says his decision to join the PNG Chiefs “was not driven by money but by a bigger purpose to change lives.”

His current team, the Wests Tigers, have confirmed that Luai has activated a clause in his contract, keeping the representative five-eighth at the club next year before his move to the Chiefs.

Chammas says of Luai’s signing: “We said we would attract the best players in the competition, and we’ve done that. It is a proud moment for us.”

He says Luai’s presence goes beyond performance on the field. “He embodies the style, passion and competitiveness we want our team to represent.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Jarome and his family to the Chiefs. We also wish him and the Wests Tigers all the best in the next

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Jarome Luai with Chiefs GM of Football Michael Chammas and CEO Lorna McPherson.

18 months and hope he finishes there with another premiership ring."

Chiefs officials believe Luai's cultural background and leadership will help define the club's long-term identity.

Off the field, the Chiefs say his influence will be even more important, with rugby league seen as a unifying force in PNG.

Officials highlighted that Luai's values – family, humility, pride and community – reflect the foundation the Chiefs want to build.

The club also described itself as not just representing PNG, but the wider Pacific region.

"The PNG Chiefs will stand for something bigger than a single country. We are also the team of the Pacific," the club has stated.

Chiefs CEO Lorna McPherson says Luai's signing sends a strong message about the club's ambition.

"Signing a player of Jarome's experience and quality shows we are serious about building this club."



Alex Johnston taking time out to do fan photos at the airport on a recent visit to Port Moresby.

She revealed that Jarome's recent visit to PNG with his family played a key role in strengthening the relationship.

"Having Jarome and his family in PNG showed his commitment and passion for the game and belief in what we're building," she said.

Of Johnston, she said: "Alex is a record holder, we've seen what he can achieve, and everyone knows that he is a proven performer, but just as importantly he's a great person who represents the values of our club. Alex has been a tremendous ambassador for the game and the perfect ambassador for PNG, so bringing Alex home to the Chiefs feels right."

"We now have players 001 and 002 locked in, and we're only getting started. There's real belief and excitement building around what we're creating." ■



AT A GLANCE:

ALEX JOHNSTON

CURRENT: South Sydney Rabbitohs winger. International

BORN: Sydney, Australia

AGE: 31

“

We now have players 001 and 002 locked in, and we're only getting started.

”

PICTURES: MICHAEL PHILIP, SUPPLIED BY NRL & PNG CHIEFS



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THE ASSISTANT COACH EELS LEGEND TO HEAD GOAL- KICKING PROGRAM

AT A GLANCE:

LUKE BURT

CURRENT: Head coach of Burleigh Bears in the Queensland Cup

BORN: Newcastle, Australia

AGE: 44



Parramatta Eels legend Luke Burt has been appointed as an assistant coach with the Chiefs.

The club has confirmed that Burt will officially join the Chiefs in November 2027, bringing with him extensive NRL experience as both a player and coach.

Burt had an illustrious 14-season career with the Parramatta Eels, becoming the club's all-time leading try-scorer with 124 tries from 264 appearances. He featured in the Eels' grand final sides in 2001 and 2009 and earned a reputation as one of the competition's most reliable goal kickers.

Alongside his assistant coaching duties, Burt will oversee the Chiefs' goal-kicking program.

Since retiring from playing, Burt has built an impressive coaching resume. He worked with the Gold Coast Titans, serving as interim head coach in 2019 before joining

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the Burleigh Bears in 2020. Appointed head coach in 2023, Burt guided the Bears to a minor premiership and grand final appearance in his first season, then secured a premiership title the following year.

Burt and his partner, Madelin, recently visited Papua New Guinea and were impressed by the country and the club's vision.

"Luke and Madelin loved their time in PNG and are excited about the opportunity to help build something special with the Chiefs alongside Willie Peters," General Manager of Football Michael Chammas said.

"He had an exceptional career as a player, but what excites us most is what he has achieved as a coach," Chammas said. "He has shown he can develop players and build a winning culture through his success at the Burleigh Bears." ■



Luke Burt in his playing days.

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PICTURE: MICHAEL PHILIP



Rhyse Martin on the burst in a PNG game.



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THE FOOTBALL OPERATIONS MANAGER

KUMULS HERO RETURNS HOME TO JOIN CHIEFS

AT A GLANCE:

RHYSE MARTIN

CURRENT: Kumuls legend playing for Hull Kingston Rovers until end of season when he will retire to join the Chiefs

BORN: Cairns, Australia
AGE: 33

Kumuls star Rhys Martin has been named as the new Football Operation Manager for the PNG Chiefs.

Martin, who has family ties to Hula in Central Province through his father, is regarded as one of Papua New Guinea's greatest modern rugby league players. After years of success in Australia and England, he will now take on a key leadership role.

The former Kumuls captain made his Test debut for PNG in 2014 and went on to become one of the country's most respected international players. He played 18 Tests for PNG and remains the Kumuls' all-time leading point scorer.

Martin also enjoyed a successful professional career overseas. After making his NRL debut for the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs in 2018, he moved to England where he became one of the Super League's top performers with Leeds Rhinos and Hull Kingston Rovers.

During his time with Leeds, Martin set a world record for the most consecutive goals kicked, landing 41 straight conversions.

Over the past two seasons, Martin worked closely with newly appointed PNG Chiefs head coach Willie Peters at Hull. Their strong working relationship is expected to play a major role in shaping the new club's football culture.

The PNG Chiefs said Martin's role will focus on football operations, player welfare, and helping players and families settle into life in PNG before the club's first NRL season.

The club also believes his experience, education and leadership qualities make him the ideal person to help guide the next generation of PNG rugby league talent.

He will relocate to Port Moresby with his wife Vanessa and their two children ahead of the club's full operational launch in October 2027. ■

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Tree kangaroo habitat in the YUS Conservation Area.

PICTURES: RYAN HAWK & SUPPLIED BY TKCP





Dr Lisa Dabek, founder and director of the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (left); a tree kangaroo ranger (middle); the tree kangaroos that have become Dr Dabek's passion (right and below).

It's been 30 years since US biologist Dr Lisa Dabek arrived in PNG. She had a dream to protect the endangered Matschie's tree kangaroo. Little did she know that this dream would become one of PNG's most successful conservation stories, as told by *Marisa Howden*.



It's hard not to fall in love with tree kangaroos, or *kapuls* as they are known in Tok Pisin. They're small marsupials with long fluffy tails and cute little faces. Like koalas are to Australia, *kapuls* have become a national animal of Papua New Guinea, along with the bird of paradise.

"Tree kangaroos are little known animals that are incredibly special. There is so much more to learn about them," says Dr Lisa Dabek, Woodland Park Zoo senior conservation scientist, founder and director of the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP). "They are the flagship for cloud forest conservation and very important culturally to many communities in PNG."

They are kangaroos in all respects, but have adapted to life in the trees, living only on the island of New Guinea and in Queensland, Australia. When Dr Dabek arrived in PNG in 1996 after she wrote her PhD on the reproductive biology and behaviour of Matschie's tree kangaroos, it was thought that only 2500 of the species remained in the wild across their range. Today, thanks to the TKCP, it's believed that healthy populations are thriving in the forests of the YUS Conservation Area in Kabwum, Morobe Province.

Named for the Yopno, Uruwa and Som rivers that run through the area, the YUS Conservation Area protects more than 130,000 hectares of forest and 50 villages against deforestation and overhunting. The area is part of PNG's Huon Peninsula, stretching from the coral reefs of the Bismarck Sea up to 4000-metre peaks of the Saruwaged Mountain Range between Morobe and Madang provinces. ➤



Establishing the protected area aims to protect the rich biodiversity of PNG's forests. With vast tracts of pristine forest containing unparalleled biodiversity, PNG is one of three major designated Tropical Wilderness Areas left on Earth. The country is home to about 20,000 plant species, more than 700 bird species and more than 230 mammal species, many of which are only found on the island of New Guinea.

Unlike parts of the world in which deforestation has taken a heavy toll, about 70 per cent of PNG rainforests remain intact. Specifically, PNG's Huon Peninsula is home to more endemic bird and mammal species (including the Matschie's tree kangaroo) than any other like-sized area in mainland New Guinea.

"Matschie's tree kangaroos are an umbrella species, which means that protecting them also safeguards a myriad of other species that share their habitat, including the emperor



A village in the YUS Conservation Area.

bird of paradise, eastern long-beaked echidna, dwarf cassowary and New Guinea pademelon," says Dr Dabek.

The communities of YUS, made up of more than 15,000 indigenous landowners who speak seven languages, have come together to create the first nationally recognised community-managed conservation area in PNG's history.

Gazetted in 2009, the YUS Conservation Area is a leading example of what community-led conservation can achieve. "When we started, we knew we wanted to work with the YUS communities to conserve the tree kangaroos and also address community needs. What that would look like was a mystery – we just stayed the course and persevered. TKCP grew organically as we reached each milestone for conservation. That TKCP has become a fully locally run NGO in PNG with a great reputation and a model protected area program is a testament to the incredible team members, a majority from YUS, we have had over the years," says Dr Dabek.

TKCP implements a multi-faceted program that includes community livelihoods, health, research, conservation, education, governance and reforestation.

TKCP supports the government's ongoing rural health programs through its ➤



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Community members in the YUS Conservation Area (above and opposite).

'One Health' program by adopting a holistic approach that incorporates the health of the people, wildlife and environment. This approach establishes and improves systems for health care, ensures health clinics throughout YUS have proper equipment and aims to give communities access to clean water, balanced nutrition and food security.

Another key program TKCP manages is the export of YUS coffee. "People in YUS rely mostly on subsistence farming and hunting. Coffee offers a rare source of cash income, which families use to pay school fees, cover health costs, improve their homes, establish savings and invest in their businesses. The Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program's YUS Conservation Coffee program improves local livelihoods while providing incentives for conservation," says Dr Dabek.

TKCP connects local farmers with international coffee-roasting companies

that buy the speciality-grade beans direct at a premium price. To date, the program has generated over PGK1.25 million for coffee-producing families in YUS. Each year, between 20,000 and 30,000 kilograms of coffee are produced by the YUS Conservation Coffee Cooperative.

Today, TKCP is pursuing community-led protection of more forests across the 16,000-square-kilometre Huon Peninsula eco-region, though the NGO has had its fair share of challenges along the way.

"The remoteness of YUS is both a very positive aspect of protecting the natural environment and the forests and yet access and transportation have continually been a challenge. Getting staff in and out of YUS and transporting the coffee out of YUS is definitely challenging," she says.

Dr Dabek believes that working in conservation is getting easier globally due to

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new and advanced technology, but changing political systems that influence funding can be a challenge. "TKCP has been extremely fortunate that we have been able to get solid funding from international governments, foundations, zoos and private donors who have believed in our work."

TKCP is partially funded through an endowment fund that was set up through the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle. International grants and donations also help with specific projects like solar lighting and health, but more assistance is needed in funding the NGO's operational expenses.

"For the first time, TKCP will be partnering with select private businesses who want to mitigate climate change by sponsoring our work," says Dr Dabek. "We employ nearly 50 nationals in both our head office in Lae and throughout the YUS Conservation Area, and corporate support will help us to offset the costs of running our operations."

As Dr Dabek reflects on TKCP's 30 years of conservation, she encourages all Papua New Guineans to take charge to lead their own conservation initiatives to better protect their environment.

"The world can learn that, with support, local indigenous communities can lead conservation efforts and achieve great things. The YUS landowners took a risk and created the very first conservation area in PNG that is now a model for other areas of PNG. Hopefully, this will inspire other groups as well.

"My goal is for everyone in the world to know what a tree kangaroo is and why they need to be conserved. Lemurs, red pandas and other animals have gotten a lot of attention, and the time is right for tree kangaroos," Dr Dabek says. ■



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Chefs Julz Henao (blue shirt) and Aaron Fa'Aoso (red shirt) with Betty Henao in the miniseries (above); a promotional poster for *Kin and Kai* (right); filming at Port Moresby's National Football Stadium (far right); Aaron Fa'Aoso (below).



COAST TO COAST

A chef, an actor, two countries and a whole lot of food – a delicious miniseries explores the links between PNG and Australia, writes *Belinda Jackson*.

It's a warm morning in Barakau village, southeast of Port Moresby, and two men are piling mountains of fresh-cut vegetables and butterflied chicken onto banana leaves.

PNG celebrity chef Julz Henao has worked in top restaurants around the world, he runs the Locker Room Cafe at Santos National Football Stadium in Port Moresby, and he even cooked for the late Pope Francis.

On this morning in the garden, he's joined by Aaron Fa'Aoso, a Torres Strait Islander actor and producer. Like Julz, Aaron is no stranger to cooking on camera. As the producer and host of the *Strait to the Plate* food documentary series, he's journeyed through Torres Strait communities to uncover and share the food, culture and language traditions of his home.

Regardless of their expertise, they're being closely monitored as they build the *mumu*, a fragrant parcel of fresh chicken, taro, yellow bananas, fresh, handmade coconut milk, pitpit greens and herbs that will be slow-cooked in an earth oven (*mumu*).

Julz' mother, Betty Henao, supervises the *mumu*'s construction, stepping in to envelope and seal the food in warmed banana leaves. Under her expert eye, hot river rocks and ashes are piled over the parcel, and another layer of banana leaves seals the deal.

"I wouldn't be allowed to do this part; there's a strategy to the banana leaves," admits Julz to the rolling camera recording all the action.

Together, Julz and Aaron are filming *Kin and Kai*, a miniseries produced by Aaron's production company, Lonestar Entertainment Company, for the Australian High Commission's *Yumi Stap Wantaim* ('We Stand Together') campaign, which celebrates the cultural bonds that tie PNG and Australia after 50 years of PNG's independence.





They're cooking *kaikai* (food), sharing family stories and ancestral recipes from their homelands in two countries, which are separated by the narrowest stretch of water, the Torres Strait.

Through the five episodes of *Kin and Kai*, the two men find they have a lot in common, including cooking in earth ovens – *mumus* here in this part of PNG, *amai* or *kupmari* in the Torres Strait; even further afield, *hangi* in New Zealand and *lovo* in Fiji.

"Because Aaron is from Thursday Island, it was an easy match," says Julz. "I and PNG share lots of similarities and culture, and even some words in the local dialect. And geographically, it's just across the water. There's a lot of trade going back and forth, the people look the same, so I think, holistically, it's just worked.

"The connections between the Torres Strait and PNG stretch back over 65,000 years," adds Aaron. "These historical, familial and cultural connections have woven a fabric that still binds us together today. *Kin and Kai* is a chance to listen, to learn and to walk together through our shared past, as we walk side by side into the next 50 years."

The backdrops to their cooking and chatting include Chapman's Farm in Tahira, just outside Port Moresby; Pyramid Point's surf club, where Julz collects sea urchins for his dishes; and the National Football Stadium,

where rugby league is played – "the church that binds PNG and Australia," says Aaron.

In his own commercial kitchens at the stadium, Julz prepares a delicate dish of flash-fried tuna, fresh prawns he caught when out on his *kanu* earlier that morning, and the highlight, smoked sea urchin.

"They're so fresh, you can still smell the sea after they're poached in banana leaves and finished on the fire," he says.

The main course is the same dish Julz cooked for Pope Francis: rib eye beef from Lae, served with taro, sweet potato and *minmin* bananas, which the duo enjoys on a table set with white cloths on the grass in the centre of the national stadium.

Through the miniseries, they help school children thread healthy fruit skewers with Mary Sawa of the Buk Bilong Pikinini program, a charity that promotes literacy and early childhood education in PNG.

“

You can't talk about cooking in PNG without talking about fire.

”

And there's also a serious side, when the duo meets Dame Carol Kidu, for a decade the only female member in PNG's parliament and the wife of the first indigenous Chief Justice of PNG, Buri Kidu. Together, they discuss the relationship between PNG and Australia, and the symbolism of the 50th anniversary of independence.

"Many Papua New Guineans were not too keen about moving to independence," recalls Australia-born Dame Carol, "but I was always of the opinion that it's better to make our own mistakes than have other people, who don't understand the culture, make those mistakes for us."

It's a sentiment that resonates with Julz. "We're talking about food and the relationship between PNG and Australia after 50 years of independence (from being an Australian colony), and it's pretty hard not to talk about the politics that comes with that."

When asked for his favourite filming destination, Julz goes for the simplest option.

"Cooking over fire is one of those therapeutic things," he says. "Everyone enjoys a barbecue. So, the best part of the whole filming process, for me, was on our second shoot, at the scenic lookout at Chapman's Farm. We just made a little fire and cooked a chicken coconut stew from East New Britain, and the view was awesome. We didn't have a table, so we backed the truck up and prepped on the tray."

"You can't talk about cooking in PNG without talking about fire."

But the garden where they prepare the *mumu* is also a very special place for Julz – it's his parents' home.

"In the first episode, I took Aaron and the crew to my family's home in Barakau village, southeast of Port Moresby, where we cooked the *mumu*, but first, we made *bariva*, a dish of sago, coconut and banana," says Julz.

"*Bariva* is very special, it's a traditional welcome food," explains his dad, Loani Ravu Henao, as he shows Aaron their family photos from PNG's first independence day in 1975.

"Food feeds the body and the memory," observes Aaron, as he enjoys the dish, similar to his own Torres Strait cuisine.

"There were a few moments when the food we were cooking was so similar to what Aaron's grown up with," says Julz, and there's been common ground even on language, when Aaron's picked up on Tok Pisin conversations with the crew while filming.

"We all face the same sort of challenges, in terms of modernisation of Australia and PNG; from our cultural roots and how we're evolving," says Julz. "But Australia and PNG are a lot closer than a lot of people tend to think. We share a lot." ■

To watch the miniseries, see yumistapwantaim.com/kin-and-kai.



WINE GURU

Q: How do I order wine in a restaurant?

A: For those new to wine, being handed a weighty wine menu in a restaurant and asked to pick something for everyone can be a stressful affair. One of the most common feelings is: 'I don't know what I'm doing,' but the good news is, neither do many of your fellow diners.

Think about the wines you enjoy drinking, rather than worry what wine will be 'right'. There are probably a mix of dishes, and no wine will fit all tastes and orders. Do you like lighter wines or heavier? Reds or whites? If the restaurant has a sommelier this can be a helpful start so they can help you find the right bottle for your table.

A good sommelier is not scary or judgmental, they should just offer some suggestions based on what you tell them you like, and don't be afraid to give them a budget; you are not here to impress them, you are here to have a good time.

Which brings us to price. For as long as we have had wine lists, a vast majority of diners have ordered the second-cheapest bottle

of wine to not look too cheap. Restaurants are all too aware of this trick, so they will often put a bottle there that has a high profit margin – so you are not getting good value. Describe what you like, but be willing to try new things; a good sommelier grows your wine knowledge, they do not make fun of how little you know.

When the wine comes and you are poured a small taste, keep it simple: smell the wine, take a small sip. You are not being asked for a critique, just to check that the wine is not corked or off in some way. This is the only reason to send a wine back, not because it is not to your taste.

Ordering wine at a restaurant is a chance to explore new wines and learn more; you just need to be honest and open about what you know and what you want to spend.

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AKURA DINING BAR & LOUNGE PORT MORESBY REVIEW

Akura Dining & Lounge Bar is certainly cute. It has pride of place at the far end of the Harbourside Precinct (in the venue originally occupied by the Italian restaurant Sogno), perhaps Papua New Guinea's most stylish lifestyle hangout. The venue on the opposite side, Alibi Bar & Grill (reviewed in our October 2024 edition), is owned by the same group.

Akura is a play on *sakura*, the Japanese word for the cherry blossom that provides the centrepiece of the venue's elegant overwater terrace. Offering a wonderful vista of the harbour, it is one of Port Moresby's go-to spots on Friday and Saturday evenings, when it is open until after midnight.

On weekday lunchtimes, on the other hand, it caters to the corporate crowd from the nearby Harbourside office buildings. It's therefore no surprise the menu is large and eclectic, including the range of cocktails and wines. Signature dishes include a prawn cocktail bursting with large local prawns and wafu seafood buccatini (pasta), with pizza, steak and noodles also featuring.



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IN A PHRASE

A crowd pleaser.

Many dishes have some neat touches, without being too experimental, such as the frozen pineapple dessert: fresh pineapple, pineapple sorbet, ice cream and fresh mint. I opted for the lemongrass rice with chicken, which arrived swiftly in a hearty serve and hit the spot. At PGK50, it also seemed great value considering the location and professional service. ■

PICTURE: BAI



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To further develop commercial farmers, Trukai launched a paid internship program in 2023 in partnership with Erap Farm in Morobe Province.

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Light up

A torch is always one of the best items to pack, although finding one small enough for travelling yet bright enough to help in all situations can be challenging. The Rodman ED08 flashlight solves the quandary. Coin-sized and encased in super tough titanium, it's one of the smallest available, yet emits five levels of light from a bright 350 lumens through to a warm five lumens. A fold-out hook makes it handy for hanging from a tree branch or balancing on the bedside table of your hotel. So small it can be popped in your pocket, the Rodman ED08 is rainproof, lockable (so it won't turn on by mistake), weighs about 90 grams and comes in either a blue, yellow or black casing. PGK344; rodman.hk



Tough stuff

Protecting your feet while walking around shells, rocks and corals is easy with a pair of Reefwalker Shoes from Kathmandu. These stretchy slip-ons are made with quick-drying neoprene material and fitted with durable rubber soles tough enough for beach, estuary or reef walking. Breathable and designed with mesh to quickly drain away water, they help protect your feet from anything on the seabed. PGK93; kathmandu.com.au



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The Paperslate Pro is designed for those who still love the feel of pen on paper but enjoy all the conveniences offered by a digital device. Aimed at bridging the gap between analogue and digital notetaking, this AI-powered E-Ink tablet digitises notes using a stylus with such refined pressure sensitivity it perfectly mimics the feel of writing on paper. Handwritten notes can be transformed into digital, editable text in seconds, including sketched diagrams and tables. PGK2174.89; paperslate.io



First aid

Designed by paramedics and aimed at anyone heading outdoors, the Slimline First Aid Kit from Survival is brimming with serious, essential first aid items packed into a casing small enough to slip into a backpack or jacket. Lightweight and just four centimetres thick, the compact kit fits in gloveboxes, backpacks and day bags, and contains emergency gear including dressings, a bandage, splint, and paramedic-designed response tools. Water-resistant and made from fabric that easily wipes clean. PGK388; survivalfirstaidkits.net.au

Sew right

This pocket-sized sewing kit features a comprehensive collection of essential items for mending clothes when you're on the go. The Merchant & Mills for Purl Soho Rapid Repair Kit comes housed in a small metal tin containing a high-quality black thread and white thread bobbin, sewing needles safely packed inside a glass tube, sturdy metal mini-scissors, straight pins, three different safety pins, two white shirt buttons and a paper tape measure. Choose from a silver or gold tin. PGK108; purlsoho.com



Sun safe

Wearing a top like the Hightide Short Sleeve Swim Shirt from Coolibar allows you to have fun in the sun for as long as you like without worrying about sunburn. Made from advanced swim fabric, which blocks 98 per cent of UVA and UVB rays, it is also resistant to the ravages of chlorine and saltwater. Featuring a comfy four-way stretch, the shirt is silky smooth and functional, with gripper elastic on the back hem and flatlock seams to prevent chafing, making it ideal for swimming, paddleboarding, surfing, or simply lounging poolside. PGK431; coolibar.com





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BIOGRAPHY

Errol Flynn***The True Story of Australia's Hollywood Icon*****By Patricia A. O'Brien (Allen & Unwin)**

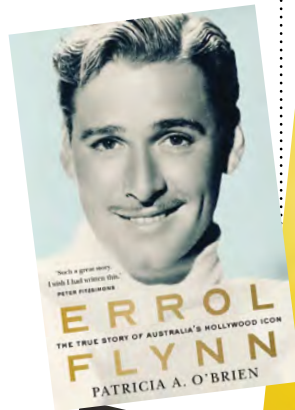
In this account of larger-than-life actor Errol Flynn, the author provides an entertaining and comprehensive portrait that includes Flynn's childhood in Hobart, Tasmania, his days as a schoolboy in England, his adventures in New Guinea, his Hollywood fame and his sudden passing at age 50 from a heart attack.

Handsome and charismatic, Flynn was one of the first great screen idols in Hollywood, playing lead roles in blockbuster movies such as 1938's *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.

Flynn travelled to New Guinea several times, initially in 1927, before his Hollywood fame. He worked for the colonial administrators, joined the gold rush, became involved in the copra industry and embraced a life of drinking and womanising.

There are historic photos that show Flynn on board a boat sailing from Sydney to Port Moresby, in an Australian government service uniform in Rabaul in 1927 and standing midstream in a river at a copra plantation.

Much has previously been written and reported about Flynn's adventures in New Guinea, but O'Brien cautions that most is embellished and polished. Her account is warts and all.



MEMOIR

A Different Kind of Power**By Jacinda Ardern (Penguin)****Available as an audiobook**

The former Prime Minister of New Zealand, elected to the country's top job in 2017 at the tender age of 37, provides a frank and personal account of her rise and fall.

The end came in 2023, when she resigned her position, saying she "no longer had enough in the tank" to continue in the job.

Ardern guided NZ through incredible challenges — including the global pandemic, the Christchurch mosque attacks, and a deadly volcanic eruption — but kept her cool throughout until she says she just couldn't go on.

The constant theme running through Ardern's book is to lead with empathy and kindness.

SOCIAL/CULTURAL HISTORY

The Shortest History of Innovation**By Andrew Leigh (Black Inc)**

Australian politician Andrew Leigh has written this fascinating book that chronicles the story of human breakthroughs, from nails and wheelbarrows to alphabets, tin cans and artificial intelligence.

Innovation shapes almost every corner of our lives, yet we rarely pause to notice it, Leigh says.

He shows that three forces drive innovation: tinkering, teams and trade. He examines hotbeds of creativity, the forces that suppress them, and the surprising ways ideas travel across borders and disciplines.

The book is a follow-up to his 2024 international bestseller *The Shortest History of Economics*, which examines the economic forces behind war and how capitalism emerged, among other things.

Before being elected in 2010, Leigh was a professor of economics at the Australian National University.



FICTION

Two Islands**By Ian Kemish (UQP)****Available as an audiobook**

This book by the former Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea is a thriller set in the rugged landscape of an isolated Scottish island.

A desperate young man, Nico, arrives on the island running for his life from those who want him silenced for what he has seen in the Balkan Wars.

The close-knit community treats him with suspicion, and a war crimes investigator soon arrives, determined to secure her key witness.

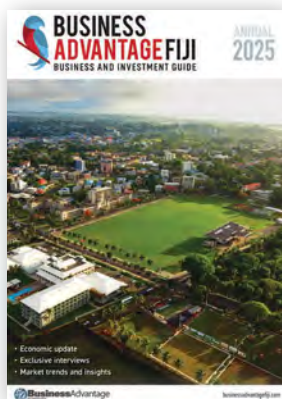
This is the first fiction from Kemish, who previously wrote *The Consul* (2022) about foreign affairs drawn from his time as a diplomat. *Two Islands* draws on his diplomatic work in the Balkans, and his family links to Scotland. ■



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Nation building (from top): a Junkers aircraft involved in the development of Bulolo; PNG Forest Products bridge building; TE PNG techs at work; an early plywood mill.



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Air Niugini's latest Airbus A220-300 aircraft (this picture); a Fokker F27 Friendship (below right); Air Niugini tail logos (below left).

“

Initially inheriting DC3 and Fokker 27 aircraft from Australian airlines Ansett and TAA, Air Niugini entered the jet age with its first Boeing B707 in 1975.

”

WINGS OVER PNG

Air Niugini has been connecting the country for more than 50 years.

Founded in 1973, two years ahead of Papua New Guinea's independence, Air Niugini has now been serving the air travel needs of Papua New Guineans at home and abroad for over 50 years. Its bird of paradise logo is arguably the country's most recognised brand.

The state-owned airline is widely considered the Peoples' Airline, providing vital connections across all the country's provinces and regions in a country where flying is often the only travel option.

Initially inheriting DC3 and Fokker 27 aircraft from Australian airlines Ansett and TAA, Air Niugini entered the jet age with its first Boeing B707 in 1975, with which it launched international services.

Flying conditions in PNG are widely considered some of the most challenging in the world and the airline's flight and ground crews have developed a strong reputation over the years,



with several Air Niugini-trained pilots moving on to distinguished international careers in aviation.

The airline has also pioneered the recruitment and training of female pilots, with its first flight with an all-female crew flying from Port Moresby to Tabubil in May 2015.

Today, Air Niugini provides international flights across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. This includes regular direct flights to Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, Brisbane, Sydney, Cairns, Port Vila in Vanuatu, Honiara in Solomon Islands and Nadi in Fiji. In July this year, the airline added Japan to its schedule, with the commencement of regular flights to Narita.

It also provides connections beyond these ports through an extensive network of codeshare partners, allowing its customers to travel the world on a single ticket. At the same time, the airline's freight and charter services facilitate vital economic activity for businesses large and small.



Air Niugini pioneered the introduction of loyalty programs in PNG and, today, its Destinations program enables thousands of frequent travellers to obtain extensive discounts and other benefits from a wide range of trusted partners, including retailers and service providers.

Recently, with the support of PNG's government, the airline has embarked on a major program to modernise its fleet of aircraft. The first of three new Airbus A220-300 aircraft arrived in Port Moresby during PNG's 50th birthday celebrations in September 2025, and more new aircraft are scheduled for 2027 and beyond.

The new aircraft are already enabling Air Niugini not only to provide more flexible, reliable and fuel-efficient services across its domestic and international routes but, most importantly, a higher quality of service in the air. ■





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75 YEARS BUSINESS IN PNG

TE PNG has transformed from a simple trading operation into a diversified company providing vital technical and communications services.

Established in Port Moresby in 1955, TE PNG has grown alongside Papua New Guinea for more than seven decades. What started as a small trading operation has evolved into a diversified business supporting some of the country's most important sectors through

communications, IT systems, electronic and security solutions, electrical and hardware supply, professional audio and broadcast, and hospitality equipment.

Over time, the company has moved beyond simple product distribution to become a service-led business focused on technical advice, installation, maintenance and long-term support. In a country where operating conditions can be complex, remote and unpredictable, that local capability has become one of TE PNG's most important contributions.

TE PNG's strength lies in its ability to bring together global technology and local experience. The company has built longstanding relationships with leading international manufacturers, while ensuring that customers are supported by people on the ground who understand PNG's environment, logistics and practical realities. This has allowed TE PNG to support a wide range of industries, including energy, resources, government, commercial



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY TE PNG

TE PNG has trained a generation of local technicians.

operations, hospitality, marine and community infrastructure.

Equally important has been the company's investment in people. TE PNG has trained and developed generations of local technicians, helping to raise technical standards across the industry. Many have gone on to work in major mining, government and energy projects, creating a wider skills network that continues to benefit the country. ■

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EFTPOS ROLL-OUT ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC

BSP's wave of payment innovation is bringing more people into the formal economy.

PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY BSP



Across the South Pacific, moments of everyday life are changing – a street food vendor is accepting his first cashless payment, a small business is growing beyond its village, a family is buying goods with greater ease and confidence.

At the heart of these moments is Bank South Pacific (BSP), which is rolling out 10,000 plus upgraded EFTPOS devices across the South Pacific.

Already underway in Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands – with Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Fiji to follow by the end of the year – this transformation is bringing modern, secure payment solutions closer to the people and businesses who need them most.

BSP Group CEO Mark Robinson (at right) and other executives with portable EFTPOS machines.

BSP Group CEO Mark Robinson says: "At BSP, every transaction is more than a payment – it's a step forward in empowering people, strengthening businesses, and connecting communities across the South Pacific."

BSP's upgraded EFTPOS technology places customer safety at its core, incorporating enhanced security features to protect merchants and cardholders. Whether it's a quick tap for groceries or a business transaction, customers can pay with confidence.

By expanding EFTPOS availability, particularly in underserved and rural areas, BSP says it is bringing more people into the formal economy – enabling participation, creating opportunity and fostering financial independence.

In PNG, customers are now able to make EFTPOS payments using their Wantok Wallet simply by dialling in. A one-time password is generated to a customer's mobile phone to confirm payment and complete the transaction. ■

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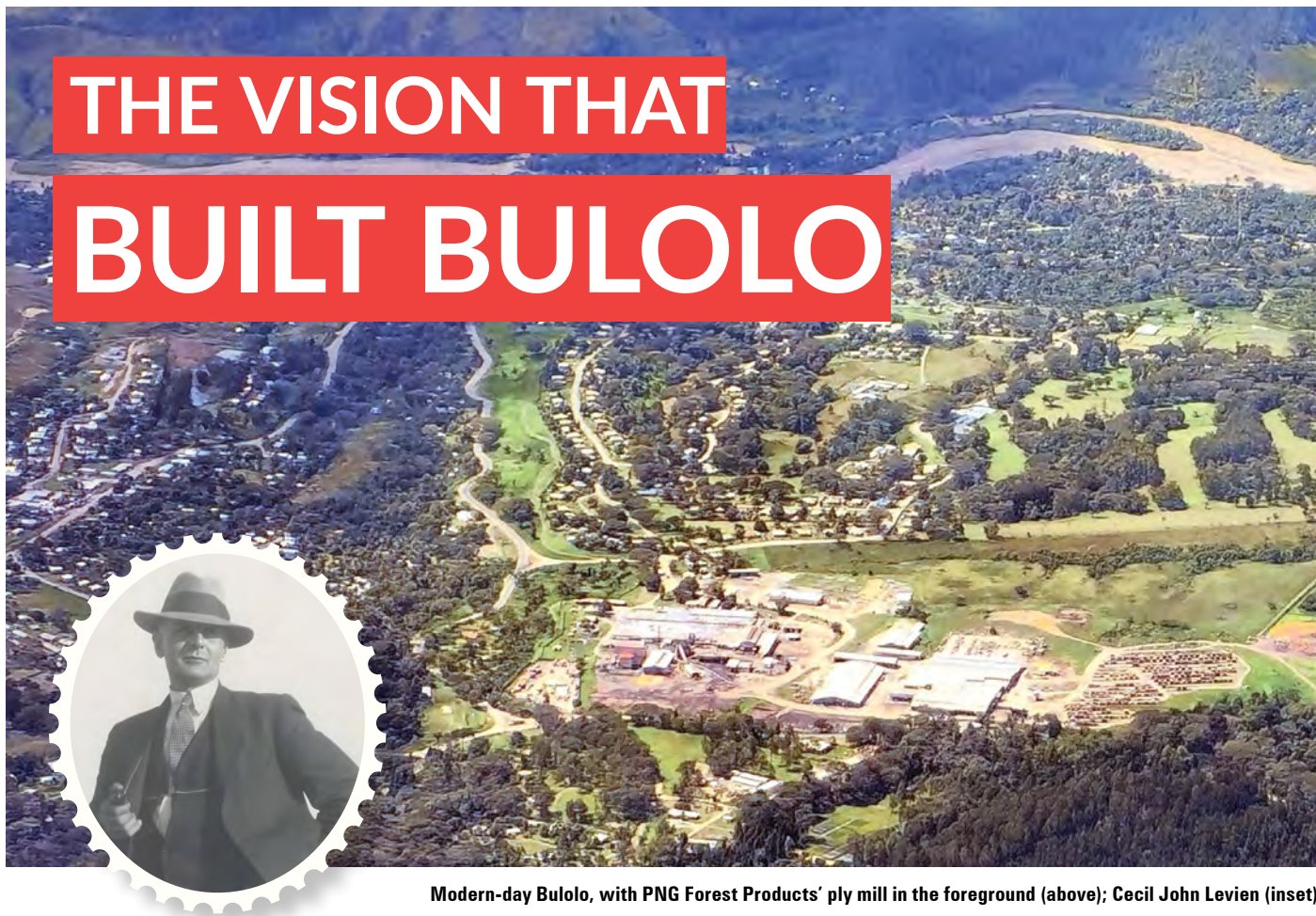
From our early beginnings to becoming a trusted professional services firm with a strong local presence, KPMG PNG has continually evolved to meet the changing needs of our clients and communities. Our journey has been defined by innovation, integrity, and a commitment to excellence – building lasting relationships and delivering meaningful impact across industries.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on driving growth, embracing digital transformation, and empowering our people to lead with purpose. Together, we are shaping the future, strengthening trust, unlocking opportunities, and creating sustainable value for generations to come.



THE VISION THAT BUILT BULOLO

PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY PNG FOREST PRODUCTS



Modern-day Bulolo, with PNG Forest Products' ply mill in the foreground (above); Cecil John Levien (inset).

Marcus Brouggy traces the growth of Bulolo, a gold town that turned into a green town thanks to the vision of one man.

Few towns in Papua New Guinea can claim to have changed the course of aviation history, pioneered large-scale gold dredging, launched a forest industry and helped create one of the country's most successful manufacturing companies.

Bulolo did all those things.

Nestled deep in the mountains of Morobe Province, Bulolo today is well known as the

home of PNG Forest Products. The story of how that came to be began almost a century ago with one remarkable individual whose vision was so ambitious that many considered it impossible.

His name was Cecil John Levien.

In the mid-1920s, New Guinea remained one of the world's last great frontiers. Beyond the small coastal settlements lay rugged mountain ranges, dense rainforest and isolated river valleys.

Hidden within those mountains were rich alluvial gold deposits that had begun attracting prospectors and adventurers. Most saw gold. Levien saw something bigger.

A former district officer, entrepreneur and relentless optimist, Levien was not the sort of man who accepted conventional limitations. Those who knew him often remarked on his ability to see opportunities where others saw obstacles.

While many prospectors viewed New Guinea's interior simply as a source of gold, Levien imagined a thriving industrial centre powered by hydroelectricity, connected by aviation, supported by forestry and capable of sustaining permanent communities.

It was an extraordinary vision for the 1920s, particularly in a region that remained largely inaccessible and poorly mapped.

Most remarkably of all, Levien believed aviation was the key to it all.

Today that might seem obvious; in 1925 it was revolutionary. Aircraft were still regarded as fragile machines suited to mail runs and adventurous passengers.

But turning his ambitious vision into reality required more than imagination. It required capital.

In 1926, Levien joined forces with Australian accountant Charles Wells to establish Guinea Gold. While the company was formed to acquire



and develop mining leases in the Bulolo region, Levien viewed it as more than a mining venture.

Guinea Gold became the vehicle through which he pursued his broader vision for the region. It provided the financial backing needed to acquire leases, establish infrastructure and begin solving the challenge of access.

The man who would help turn Levien's vision into reality could hardly have been more different. Ernest 'Pard' Mustar was practical where Levien was visionary.

A veteran of Gallipoli and World War 1, Mustar had earned a reputation as one of Australia's most skilled and resourceful pilots.

In 1927, preparations began for an air service linking the coast with the emerging goldfields. Airstrips were established at Lae and Wau. Aircraft arrived in crates and were assembled on site. Pilots prepared to fly through some of the most challenging terrain anywhere in the world.

Weather forecasting was virtually non-existent. Maps were limited and mountain cloud frequently obscured landmarks. Turbulence, rain and sudden weather changes created constant hazards.

Despite the challenges, the flights succeeded. Their impact was immediate. Aircraft could transport people, supplies and equipment in hours rather than weeks.

What began as a bold experiment quickly proved that aviation offered the only practical means of opening the goldfields. The success of these early operations led to the formation of Guinea Airways, the country's first airline. Working closely with Guinea Gold, the airline became a critical part of Levien's development strategy. As mining activity expanded, so too did demand for transport services, creating a partnership that accelerated development throughout the region.

Levien's goal was the development of the vast alluvial gold deposits that lay beneath the Bulolo Valley. Prospecting had confirmed the richness of the deposits, but exploiting them required mining on an unprecedented scale. The answer lay in dredging.

International investment was secured and Bulolo Gold Dredging Limited (BGD) was established. The company would eventually become one of the most successful gold-dredging operations in the world.

There was only one problem. The machinery required to build the dredges weighed thousands of tonnes. Boilers, generators, steel structures, pumps, hydroelectric equipment and dredge components all had to be transported into a valley that remained isolated from the coast.

The solution arrived from Germany in the form of the Junkers aircraft. The rugged Junkers dramatically increased freight capacity and demonstrated the potential of large-scale air transport.

Massive machinery components were flown from Lae to Bulolo piece by piece. One tumbler shaft weighing 3.5 tonnes established a world record for the heaviest single load ever transported by aircraft. Cars were flown in, horses were flown in, entire communities were effectively flown in.



The first car to arrive in Bulolo, in 1931, being loaded onto an aircraft in Lae.

By the early 1930s, New Guinea was hosting what many regarded as the greatest air freight operation in the world. Lae became one of the busiest cargo airports on earth. Bulolo itself ranked second among the world's busiest air freight destinations.

BGD was now able to construct hydroelectric facilities, workshops, engineering plants, sawmills and supporting infrastructure. Bulolo was rapidly becoming much more than a mining camp. A permanent township emerged to support the growing workforce and their families.

Housing spread across the valley. Hospitals were established. Schools were built, recreation halls appeared; swimming pools, tennis courts, bowling greens and a golf course followed. A cinema brought the latest films to one of the most remote communities in the South Pacific.

The outbreak of World War 2 brought dramatic change. In January 1942, Japanese aircraft attacked Bulolo. The Junkers aircraft were destroyed and, as Japanese forces advanced, Bulolo was evacuated.

Much of the infrastructure was sabotaged to prevent it falling into enemy hands.

Following the war, BGD embarked on an enormous reconstruction program. By 1948, six of the company's eight dredges were once again operating and Bulolo had risen from the ashes.

Even as gold production continued, another industry was taking shape. The forests surrounding Bulolo contained valuable stands of klinkii and hoop pine. Forestry experts recognised that the region possessed ideal conditions for a sustainable plantation industry. Importantly, they understood that long-term success required reforestation.

Nurseries were established, seedlings were planted and plantation programs expanded. In many ways, this represented a return to Levien's original thinking. Decades earlier he had recognised the importance of timber alongside mining. Now, as the economics of gold gradually changed, forestry was emerging as Bulolo's next great opportunity.

BGD began diversifying. In 1952, BGD partnered with the Australian government to establish Commonwealth New Guinea Timbers.

A state-of-the-art plywood mill was constructed in Bulolo. At the time, it was the largest plywood mill in the Southern Hemisphere.

Over the following decades, plantation forests matured and manufacturing expanded. New technologies were introduced. New products were developed. The company evolved, adapted and grew. Eventually, it became PNG Forest Products.

Today PNG Forest Products is one of PNG's largest and most successful manufacturers.

Its operations encompass plantation forestry, hydroelectric power generation, timber processing and engineered wood products. Its products are used in homes, bridges, schools, hospitals and infrastructure projects throughout PNG and beyond.

More than 1500 Papua New Guineans are employed across its operations. ■



PICTURE: SUPPLIED BY WESTPAC PNG



Westpac PNG's Sister City Program has delivered books to school children.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Westpac PNG embraces 'green' finance for the years ahead.

In Papua New Guinea, progress is increasingly shaped by the way institutions choose to invest, not just for growth today, but for resilience in the years ahead.

As the country develops, green finance is becoming more important, helping direct capital towards projects that can support long-term economic strength while also responding to environmental and social pressures.

For Westpac PNG, that means doing more than maintaining a presence. It means helping customers, industries and communities respond

to change in practical ways and supporting more sustainable business models.

That shift is becoming more visible across the Pacific through the growing focus on green finance (funding for projects with positive environmental outcomes). At the 2026 Green Finance Summit in PNG, leaders from banking, government and business explored how capital can be used to build more sustainable portfolios.

With this in mind, Westpac PNG is supporting a more forward-looking approach to banking, one that strengthens portfolio quality, helps

customers transition and creates long-term value. In PNG, that includes backing more resilient sectors and assets, supporting better stewardship of natural and community resources, and opening sustainable investment pathways.

Progress is also shaped by investment in people. The 2026 Westpac Outstanding Women Awards shine a light on women who are helping shape businesses, communities and the wider economy.

That same spirit of connection can be seen in Westpac PNG's Sister City Program, which links 14 branches in PNG with 14 branches in Australia.

What started as a connection between sister branches quickly grew into a broader community effort, with donated books and school supplies sent from Australia to PNG. From supporting students at Kil Primary School in Madang to delivering goods to a children's hospital ward in Lae and outreach at the correctional facility in Kavieng, the program shows how practical, partnership-led support can make a difference.

Together, these examples point to something bigger. Whether through green finance, leadership recognition or community partnership, long-term progress in PNG depends on a shared willingness to invest in resilience, build capability and create opportunities that last. ■

A COMMITMENT TO CLIENTS AND COMMUNITY

KPMG is set to celebrate 60 years of service in PNG.

KPMG PNG will mark a milestone in September when the company celebrates 60 years of serving organisations across Papua New Guinea with audit, tax and business advisory services.

Pieter Steyn, Managing Partner KPMG PNG says: "Celebrating 60 years in PNG reflects the deep relationships we have built across this remarkable country. We are proud of the positive role we have played – and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead."

Since opening September 23, 1966, KPMG PNG has grown significantly in capability and

scale. Today, the company employs more than 170 professional people and operates two offices in Port Moresby and a new project site in Lae.

Steyn says KPMG PNG is committed to its clients and community, as seen with Project Yumi and with its collaboration with Kumul Minerals Holdings.

For the second year running, KPMG PNG has partnered with Project Yumi, a grassroots initiative focused on boosting education in PNG. As part of the project, the company has provided the TaraChris Phonics Early Learning

Centre in Goroka with desks, chairs, books, and learning materials.

KPMG PNG and KPMG Australia are working together to help Kumul Minerals Holdings (KMHL) take big strides towards sustainability. The state-owned PNG mining company plays a key role in managing the country's mineral wealth. In 2025, KMHL asked KPMG to help develop a sustainability strategy and related sustainability policies to protect people's rights and the environment, and to manage mining waste safely. ■



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PNG's very own Chinatown taking shape



ARTWORK SUPPLIED BY BAOSSEN INTERNATIONAL HOLDINGS LIMITED

***Lemach Lavari* reports on the massive Chinatown development that is taking place in Port Moresby, with the first phase due to open in December.**

Port Moresby is a city in transformation. Across the capital, new roads, commercial precincts and urban developments are reshaping the skyline and redefining how the city presents itself to the world. At the centre of this transformation stands one of Papua New Guinea's most ambitious developments to date – the Baosen Chinatown project at Five Mile.

Rising prominently along the intersection of Boroko Drive and Hubert Murray

Highway, opposite the Five Mile service station, Baosen Chinatown will be more than a shopping complex. It will be a master-planned urban precinct designed to combine commerce, lifestyle, hospitality and residential living within a single destination.

Developers describe it as a "city within a city," a vision that reflects both the scale of the project and its long-term significance for Port Moresby.

According to the developer, Baosen International Holdings Limited, the precinct

PICTURES: NORMAN KETAN



Baosen's Marketing Director Ben Wang Huan (far left); Chinatown under construction at Five Mile (left).

will ultimately contribute towards Port Moresby's modern outlook.

"Our aim is to provide international modern city lifestyle experiences to residents and visitors of Port Moresby, whether it be in retail brands, food or entertainment," Baosen's Marketing Director, Ben Wang Huan, says.

"The project is called Chinatown but the approach is global and aimed at building an internationally friendly community and not just Chinese as many would wrongly assume."

Located within Port Moresby's Five Mile corridor, Baosen Chinatown is expected to become one of the most significant private-sector property developments undertaken in the Pacific region in recent years.

At about 270,000 square metres, the development is expected to become one of the largest commercial centres in PNG.

The project's location, about five minutes from Jacksons International Airport and close to major commercial centres, positions it as a strategic gateway for business travellers and tourists.

The first phase, due to open in December, establishes the development's commercial core with a 90,000-square-metre retail complex comprising 396 strata-titled commercial units. The precinct will feature supermarkets, specialty retail outlets, restaurants, entertainment facilities and extensive parking.

The second phase, with an expected opening in 2027, will deliver 12 residential towers containing more than 800 fully

furnished apartments. Offering two- to four-bedroom units, the development will include lifestyle amenities such as swimming pools, gymnasiums, landscaped recreational areas and 24-hour security.

The final phase, with an expected opening in 2028, will expand the precinct into a major corporate and tourism destination through the construction of a five-star hotel, office towers, conference facilities and a dedicated business centre. This phase is designed to attract international visitors, investors and corporate tenants.

For visitors, Baosen Chinatown promises an experience unlike anything available in Port Moresby. Visitors will be able to explore a diverse range of retail outlets, enjoy international and Asian-inspired cuisine, and experience a lively environment that, the developers say, is designed for families, professionals and travellers alike. Entertainment facilities such as a cinema, children's recreation areas and lifestyle amenities are expected to further strengthen its appeal.

"We welcome business owners; there are great opportunities to do business here. For families we're introducing a new lifestyle aligned to global urban standards," Huan says.

Beyond tourism, the project represents a significant statement of confidence in PNG's economic future. The development is being positioned as a major investment hub, with hundreds of commercial spaces available for businesses and entrepreneurs.

Importantly, the developers say, Baosen Chinatown reflects the evolving multicultural

identity of modern Port Moresby. The project seeks to create a space where cultures meet, businesses connect and communities engage. Developers have emphasised cultural integration and community-building as part of the precinct's broader vision, highlighting the longstanding contribution of the Chinese community to commercial growth while fostering new partnerships and opportunities for Papua New Guineans.

The Governor of Port Moresby, Powes Parkop, supports the project, viewing it as a massive economic investment that will create jobs, and elevate the city's status into a modern, global commercial and cultural hub.

The development arrives at a time when the city is increasingly embracing large-scale urban planning and modern city-building initiatives, including the arrival of several five-star hotels.

The developers say: "For tourists, it offers a fresh reason to explore Port Moresby. For investors, it signals confidence and opportunity. For residents, it represents a glimpse into a more modern urban future." ■

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**BUSINESS
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INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The winners of PNG's major awards for innovation were announced at a business breakfast at the Hilton Hotel in Port Moresby in June.

The Innovation PNG 2026 Awards have been won by a digital strata title platform, a poultry feed solution powered by fly larvae and a system that helps school teachers focus on their students.

The awards were judged by a panel chaired by the Chief Edge Officer at Deloitte's Centre for the Edge in Australia, Peter Williams. This year marked the fourth time the Innovation PNG Awards have been run, with a record number of entries across three categories.

"The range of innovations covered by the entries was nothing short of breathtaking, covering many different economic activities; from agribusiness, food production, education, recycling and energy, to telecommunications, logistics, manufacturing, information technology and more," Williams said.

"The digital economy is an important opportunity for PNG's future and many entries focused on using PNG's improved internet connectivity to launch their new ideas, including those making use of artificial intelligence. We also



PICTURES: LENNOX MATAINAH



THE WINNERS

CORPORATE INNOVATION

NiuPay Limited

SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

Valana Poultry BSF Integrated Agro Farm

YOUNG INNOVATORS

Anthony Tutmulai

noted this year an increase in the number of projects that had an environmental or sustainable element to them."

The award for corporate innovation (sponsored by Vodafone PNG) was awarded to NiuPay Limited for its digital strata title platform, which was launched in March with the issuing of PNG's first-ever digital strata title.

The issuing of land titles by the Department of Lands has traditionally involved time-consuming, manual processes. The passing of the *Strata Title Act 2022* and *Strata Title (Management) Act*

2022 therefore represented an opportunity for someone to develop a digital solution – which NiuPay ultimately succeeded in doing.

One company received a special commendation from the judges: the Coffee Industry Corporation for its Green Gold Card (GGC) initiative, which aims to become a 'national digital backbone' for farmer identification, traceability and market transparency across PNG's coffee industry.

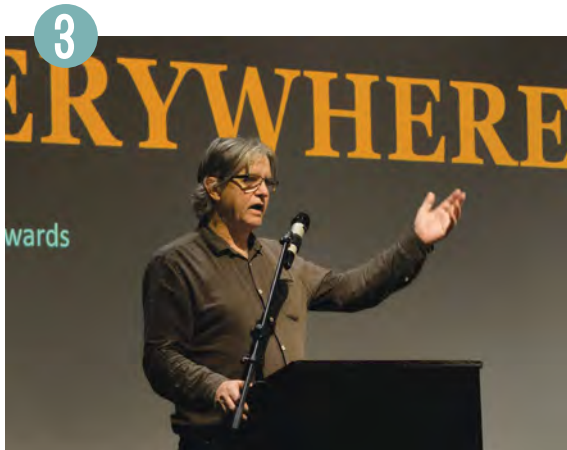
The award for small business (sponsored by Kina Bank) was awarded to Valana Poultry BSF Integrated Agro Farm, a small poultry farm in Central Province,

which has deployed a smarter, more affordable and sustainable way of producing poultry feed, using the proven powers of the black soldier fly.

Prior to this project, poultry feed accounted for some 70 per cent of the farm's costs.

In July 2025, Valana started feeding organic food waste to black soldier fly larvae (maggots), which consumed the waste and were then used as a feed supplement. By using the fly larvae, the Valana farm has been able to cut its feed costs in half. As a bonus, the poultry grow faster, are healthier and – it is claimed – taste better too.





“

The range of innovations covered by the entries was nothing short of breathtaking.

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Two small businesses received special commendations from the judges: Port Moresby's Homes Purse Clean Energy for creating an alternative fuel sourced from local waste; and Jiwaka Province's Gotronical Engineering for Kastom PNG, a website that helps preserve and promote PNG's cultural heritage.

The award for young innovator (sponsored by Moni Plus) was won by Anthony Tutmulai of the National Capital District for devising a student management system that helps teachers spend less time on administration and more on teaching.

The judges gave a special commendation to Debbiealishia Kuamba of Goroka for her Areca Fluffy Pulp Project: using betel nut fibres to address a major challenge for PNG women – the production of affordable sanitary products. ■

Launched in 2019, the Innovation PNG Awards reward and encourage innovation – creative problem-solving using new ideas – across PNG. Innovation PNG is co-hosted by the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Business Advantage International.

1 2 The Innovation PNG 2026 Awards were announced at a special breakfast at the Hilton Hotel, attended by PNG business leaders and innovators.

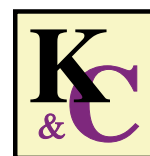
3 Chairman of the judging panel, Peter Williams, said the range of entries for the awards was “breathtaking”.

4 Anthony Tutmulai receives his young innovator award.

5 Jamie Solien Lalana accepts the small business award on behalf of Valana Poultry.

6 James Inglis accepts the award for corporate innovation on behalf of NiuPay.

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Women take the lead in beauty industry

Mary Tao reports on the growth of the beauty industry in PNG.

Two local businesswomen, Sarah Artango and Tina Manamb, have created beauty products that have become the top options for thousands of Papua New Guinean shoppers.

Artango is the founder of Pearl Body Scrub, a popular range of facial and body scrubs made from natural ingredients like lemon, coffee beans and papaya. Her scrubs have gained a reputation for clearing problem skin.

Artango discovered she had hypoallergenic skin at the age of 14 and had to make her own skin care to heal the hives that formed from her reactions.

"I wanted to create natural skincare products that genuinely worked for me after struggling with skin reactions. Over time,



Kumul Organics oil (left); Madang participants in an oil-making workshop by Kumul Organics (far left).

PICTURES: TINA MANAMB

that personal journey grew into a passion, and eventually that passion became the foundation of Pearl Body Scrub."

"At that time there were very few locally made skincare products available. Most products on the market were imported. So, I wanted to create something that was affordable, effective and made with

ingredients that would help women and men feel confident in their own skin.

"I also have a passion for helping people, so when customers began sharing their stories on how their skin improved, it motivated me to continue to develop the brand."

Manamb, the managing director of Kumul Organics, also has passion for helping people.

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She currently engages 60 coconut growers in Gulf and Central provinces, who supply the virgin coconut oil she uses to make her infused skin and hair oils. Manamb has also previously worked with producers in Madang.

"Growing up in PNG, coconuts have always been part of our daily lives. I saw the value of coconuts not only as food, but also as a natural source of healing and beauty," she says.

"I wanted to create products that were natural, affordable and beneficial for our people while also creating income opportunities for rural coconut farmers. That passion inspired me to start producing virgin coconut oil and later expand into infused beauty and wellness products."

Manamb's oils are infused with carrot, turmeric, ginger, lemongrass and her favourite *noni*.

"I have been producing it (*noni*-infused coconut oil) for almost three years, and I love it because of its traditional healing benefits

“
The growth of women's
businesses in the beauty
industry demonstrates
that we have the talent
and the capability to
create products to meet
the local needs.
”

for skin and hair care. It combines the natural nourishment of virgin coconut oil with the powerful herbal qualities of *noni* root, which many people in PNG value for wellness and natural treatment."

Pearl Body Scrub and Kumul Organics are just two brands in PNG's expanding beauty

market. However, obtaining ISO certification has been difficult to do as the country does not have the facilities to carry out testing specifically for cosmetic products, an issue that Artango has previously raised with authorities.

"The growth of women's businesses in the beauty industry demonstrates that we have the talent and the capability to create products to meet the local needs. But there is a lot of things we can do in the beauty industry, because it's still quite young in this country," she says.

"It is inspiring to see women supporting women, building confidence, creating employment and contributing to the economy. I believe women-led businesses can transform communities and become powerful examples for the younger generation", says Manamb.

The Pearl Body Scrub range and Kumul Organics oils can be found at City Pharmacy Limited outlets. ■



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NBC adopts digital future

Lemach Lavari reports on the PGK254.5 million project that is connecting the national broadcaster with the next generation of Papua New Guineans.

For more than half a century, the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) has been the voice of Papua New Guinea.

Long before mobile phones, social media and streaming platforms became part of everyday life, NBC's radio services connected remote villages, islands and towns across one of the world's most geographically challenging nations. Through analogue midwave and shortwave broadcasting, the national broadcaster informed, educated and united generations of Papua New Guineans, helping shape the country during its formative years.

Today, NBC stands at another defining moment in its history.

In 2024, NBC officially commissioned phase one of its analogue-to-digital (A2D) migration project, marking a major milestone in PNG's transition to digital broadcasting. Estimated to cost PGK254.5 million, the project represents one of the most significant investments in broadcasting infrastructure since independence.

“

Digital is cost-effective and progressive. It gives us the opportunity to reach more people.

”

For NBC Managing Director Kora Nou, the transformation is about much more than technology.

“To see where we want to take NBC into the future, we must first look back at the journey this iconic institution has taken,” he says. “NBC helped develop and shape PNG during its formative years, and the country has a lot to thank NBC for, where we are today.”



The NBC's headquarters in Port Moresby (above); NBC Managing Director Kora Nou (right).

Phase one has delivered digital television infrastructure in 10 provinces, including the National Capital District, establishing the foundation for a modern national television network. The rollout included the construction of a state-of-the-art digital television head-end facility, production and master control systems, a custom-built outside broadcasting van and the development of NBC's digital platforms, including a redesigned website.

Importantly, the project also ushered in a new era of accessibility through the launch of NBC internet radio. For the first time, Papua New Guineans with internet access can listen to NBC's public broadcasting services from virtually anywhere in the country. Whether in Port Moresby, a provincial centre or a remote location with internet connectivity, audiences can now access news, current affairs, educational programming and entertainment through smartphones, computers and other connected devices.

Together, these developments are transforming the way NBC creates, delivers and shares content with audiences across the country.

According to Nou, the NBC faced a critical choice: continue maintaining increasingly expensive analogue systems or embrace modern technology that can deliver services more efficiently.

Digital broadcasting offers significant advantages. It improves picture and sound



PICTURE: NORMAN KETAN

quality, expands content delivery capabilities and enables NBC to reach more people through a more sustainable and efficient platform. Most importantly, it ensures NBC remains relevant in an era of rapidly evolving media, communications and information technologies.

“The need for digital is to keep in tune with changes in technology and trends in broadcasting, media and communications,” Nou explains. “Digital is cost-effective and progressive. It gives us the opportunity to reach more people.”

Yet while the technology is changing, NBC's purpose remains unchanged.

“Technology can change the way we do business, but our intentions and core function remain the same,” says Nou. “Information must reach our people so that they can be empowered to make informed decisions about how they can improve their lives.”

With phase one complete, attention now turns to phase two for which the PNG government has approved funding. The next stage will extend digital television infrastructure into the remaining 12 provinces. ■



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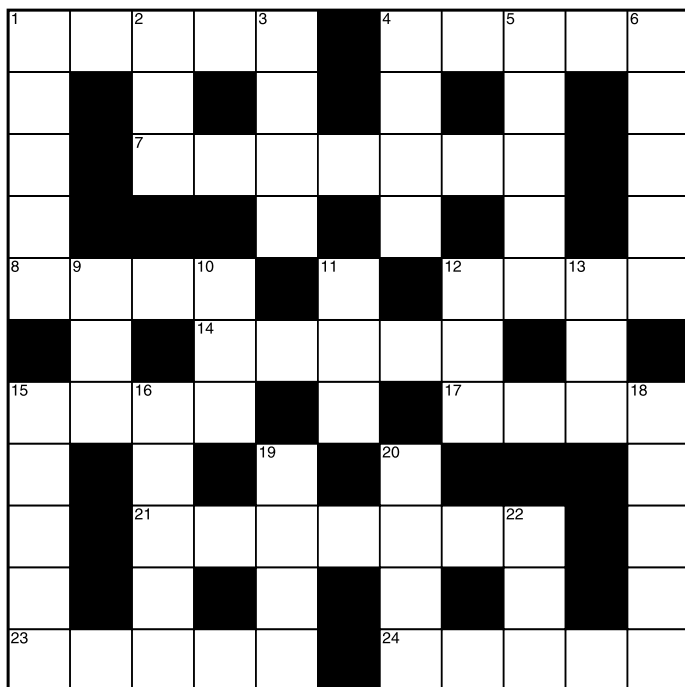
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DoubleTake

Tackle either set of these clues – you can even mix and match them, because the solutions are the same for both sets.



CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

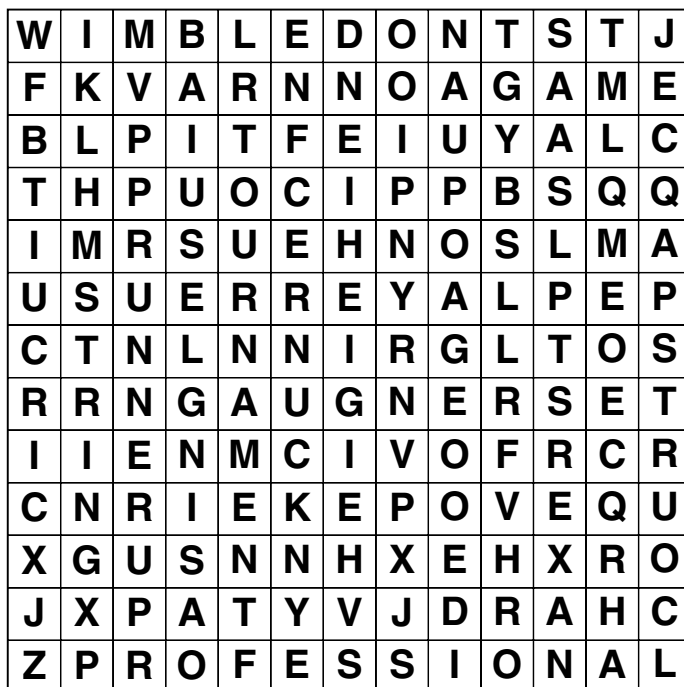
1. Climb to musical heights? (5)
4. Strange that members of parliament stand for them! (5)
7. Part of electric jug that won't break down? (7)
8. Sound reflected in male choir (4)
12. Cockney harms weapons (4)
14. Made a record and celebrated (5)
15. Part of Mr Hackman's DNA? (4)
17. Study Middle Eastern depression (4)
21. Writing that finishes with a rip (7)
23. Kathy mentioned some herb (5)
24. Vote in the lecturer (5)

DOWN

1. Spoke of source for gravy (5)
2. Stage of life portrayed in tragedy (3)
3. Looks at potato buds (4)
4. Originate from small talk? Excuse me! (4)
5. He pretends to work (5)
6. Ranked players are the pits! (5)
9. Prompt learner left clue (3)
10. It begins odd sequence (3)
11. Devoured eight, apparently (3)
12. Make extra inclusion involving Dad (3)
13. Dog's best friend is in demand (3)
15. Huge American soldier with picnic pest (5)
16. Sneeze idly even when requiring assistance (5)
18. Tendency to take directions from transit (5)

Wordsearch

Find all the words listed hidden in the grid of letters. They can be found in straight lines up, down, forwards, backwards or even diagonally.



19. Light meal, sometimes after frost? (4)
20. What Superman wore to South Africa's town (4)
22. Tool kept hidden in shoes (3)

STRAIGHT CLUES

ACROSS

1. Clean (fish) (5)
4. Stools or benches (5)
7. Heating coil (7)
8. Radio code for E (4)
12. Upper limbs (4)
14. Noticed (5)
15. Dancer, ... Kelly (4)
17. Car bump mark (4)
21. Tombstone inscription (7)
23. Aromatic leaf seasoning (5)
24. Choose (5)

DOWN

1. Flavoured topping (5)
2. Grow older (3)
3. Sight organs (4)
4. Plant stalk (4)
5. Stage performer (5)
6. Fruit stones (5)
9. Snooker stick (3)
10. ... and only (3)
11. Had food (3)
12. Count up (3)
13. ... the barricades! (3)
15. *Jack and The Beanstalk* ogre (5)
16. Poor (5)
18. Distinguishing feature (5)
19. Insect sting (4)
20. Promontory (4)
22. Weeding implement (3)



The Paradise Quiz

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE REGION?

- Who are the PNG Hunters?
- In which mountain range is the country's highest peak, Mount Wilhelm?
- PNG's first national park is just outside Port Moresby. What's it called?
- Which PNG airport uses the code of AYVN?
- What did Fiji's Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka receive from PNG when he visited earlier this year?
- The Pacific Ocean is the world's largest. How much of the Earth's surface does it cover: (a) a third (b) half (c) a quarter?
- What did the Kon-Tiki expedition achieve in 1947?
- What are the two colours on the Indonesian flag?
- Micronesia does not have an army, so who would defend it in a conflict?
- Who commanded PT109, which was sunk in the Solomon Islands during World War 2?
- What will happen in Singapore on the night of October 11: (a) a fireworks display to celebrate 100 years of independence (b) a Formula One grand prix race (c) a total eclipse of the Moon?
- Who is Christopher Luxon: (a) NZ's prime minister (b) Australia's high commissioner to PNG (c) a Hong Kong shopping centre tycoon?
- Where would you most likely be if you are eating a dessert of *vudi vakasoso*: (a) Tonga (b) Fiji (c) Honolulu?
- Matthew Wale was elected as prime minister of which Pacific nation in May?
- Can you identify this ancient ruined city (pictured)?



Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Rating: ★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆

				4				5
3		7	9			8		
						2	9	3
		2	7		1		3	9
5		3		9		1		7
9	7		4		6	5		
7	3	9						
		6			3	9		1
2				8				

For solutions to the quiz and puzzles, see next page.



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E	C	H	O		A		A	R	M	S
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W	I	M	B	L	E	D	O	N	T	S	T	J
F	K	V	A	R	N	N	O	A	G	A	M	E
B	L	P	I	T	F	E	I	U	A	L	C	
T	H	P	U	O	C	I	P	B	S	Q	Q	
I	M	R	S	U	E	H	N	O	S	L	M	A
U	S	U	E	R	R	E	Y	A	L	P	E	P
C	T	N	L	N	N	I	R	G	L	T	O	S
R	R	N	G	A	U	G	N	E	R	S	E	T
I	I	E	N	M	C	I	V	O	F	R	C	R
C	N	R	I	E	K	E	P	O	V	E	Q	U
X	G	U	S	N	N	H	X	E	H	X	R	O
J	X	P	A	T	Y	V	J	D	R	A	H	C
Z	P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L

6	9	8	3	4	2	7	1	5
3	2	7	9	1	5	8	4	6
1	5	4	8	6	7	2	9	3
8	6	2	7	5	1	4	3	9
5	4	3	2	9	8	1	6	7
9	7	1	4	3	6	5	8	2
7	3	9	1	2	4	6	5	8
4	8	6	5	7	3	9	2	1
2	1	5	6	8	9	3	7	4

The Paradise Quiz

1. PNG's rugby league team in the Queensland Cup competition. 2. Bismarck Range. 3. Varirata National Park. 4. Vanimo. 5. One of PNG's highest national honours, the Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu, in recognition of his leadership in strengthening regional ties in the Pacific. 6. A third. 7. A crossing of the Pacific Ocean on a raft, from South America to the Polynesian islands. 8. Red and white. 9. The US, which has a formal agreement with Micronesia to provide defence in exchange for military access to the island nation. 10. The future US President John F. Kennedy. 11. A Formula One grand prix race. 12. NZ's prime minister. 13. Fiji. 14. Solomon Islands. 15. Nan Madol in Pohnpei, Micronesia.



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PAPUA NEW GUINEA VISITOR GUIDE

Out and about

A quick guide to Papua New Guinea, from catching a taxi to making a phone call.



PICTURE: DAVID KIRKLAND

Port Moresby from the air ... the capital city has a population of 756,754 according to the National Statistical Office's 2024 Census.

CLIMATE

Except for the Highlands, Papua New Guinea has a warm tropical climate. The wet season in Port Moresby is from December to April.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internet: Web access in Port Moresby has improved immensely in recent years. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available at hotels and at Jacksons International Airport.

Phone: International phone roaming is possible in PNG, but it can be costly. A cheaper option is to buy a local SIM card and pre-

paid credit (including data packs for smartphones). Major mobile networks are Digicel, Telikom PNG and Vodafone. Mobile data is available in cities and towns but may not be available in rural areas.

ELECTRICITY

The current in PNG is 240V AC 50Hz, using Australian-style plugs.

ARRIVING AND GETTING AROUND

Arrival card: PNG launched the PNG Digital Arrival Card (PNG DAC) on October 1. It has replaced the traditional paper-based

passenger card for all travellers entering the country. The PNG DAC can be completed online at pngdac.ica.gov.pg up to three days before travel.

Airport transfers: For arrival/ departure in Port Moresby, hotels provide a complimentary transfer.

Car hire: Major companies include Hertz Car Rental (+675 325 4999/+675 7235 2442) with a self-drive rate of PGK270–485 a day. With a driver it is PGK612–868. Avis Car Rental (+675 324 9400) day rate is PGK315–435 with a PGK4600 bond. With a driver it's an additional PGK15

per hour. WB Transport Systems (+675 341 3541) day rate is PGK300–1500. With the poor state of roads, especially in Lae, 4WDs/SUVs are recommended.

Domestic flights: Travelling within PNG often means taking an internal flight (for instance, you cannot drive between Port Moresby and Lae). Air Niugini offers passengers the chance to book (and, for some flights, also to check-in) online, but make sure you print out a copy of your receipt to show at check-in. Aircraft and helicopter charters are available for travel to remote locations.

Taxis: Recommended firms are City Loop (+675 7715 9338) and Comfort (+675 7615 5663); Expedient Limited (+675 7232 9990) provides shuttle services. ODESH (+675 7981 8832/+675 7408 6270) is Port Moresby's first taxi and chauffeur on-demand booking service. See odesh.net or download the app.

HEALTH

Serious medical conditions can be treated in Port Moresby at the Pacific International Hospital, Paradise Private Hospital and Port Moresby General Hospital, which have emergency services. Some conditions may require treatment outside the country. Travellers should ensure they have adequate health cover. The cost of medical evacuation can be high. Visitors should also note that malaria is prevalent in PNG and there have been cases of measles and tuberculosis.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

For St John Ambulance phone 111 or 7111 1234. St John provides a 24-hour ambulance service in Port Moresby.



MONEY

PNG's currency is the kina (PGK). Banks and ATMs are located around Port Moresby, Lae and almost all urban centres.

SHOPPING

BNBM Home Centre: Located at Gordons, sells everything from building materials to homeware and tech items. See facebook.com/BNBMPNG.

Brian Bell Home Centre: Sells a wide range of white and brown goods as well as sportswear and manchester. There are outlets at Boroko and Gordons with a smaller shop at Vision City. See facebook.com/brianbellgroup.

Foodworld: Has two outlets – Waterfront and Gordons. Considered the best grocery shops by many. The Waterfront outlet has a home centre, salon, eye care, clothing and tech shops. There is a Popi's cafe at both locations.

Rangeview Plaza: Opposite Vision City, the plaza has a big grocery shop, clothing stores and a salon. The spacious dining area upstairs has multiple food vendors and a playground. There are stalls outside where local artisans sell their crafts, paintings and toana wear. See facebook.com/RangeviewPlaza.

Stop & Shop: It has outlets all over the city, but recommended locations are at Harbour City and Waigani Central (also home to Jack's of PNG, Prouds and Hardware Haus). Small businesses are set up in the car park selling *meri* blouses as well as local art and crafts. An outlet has opened at 8 Mile. See cpl.com.pg.

Unity Mall & Supermarket: This complex at the Steamships compound in Waigani has small

businesses selling PNG-designed outfits, crafts and accessories. You can also find a pharmacy and several hair stations. The eateries offer local cuisine, snacks and coffee. The supermarket sells fresh local vegetables sourced from all over the country. See unitygroup.com.pg.

Vision City: Centrally located in Waigani, the mall has everything from groceries to clothing stores, pharmacies, salons and even a carwash service. The only cinema (Paradise Cinema) in the country is on level 2. You can also find a night club (The Cosmopolitan). Take your pick from the many restaurants and food vendors at the Food Junction. See visioncitypng.com.

MARKETS

Banana Market: Located within the secure Adventure Park premises at 14 Mile, 30 minutes outside the city. Despite its name, you can find a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables sourced from the gardens of surrounding communities. Open 7am–5.30pm.

Boroko Market: Next to Santos Stadium, this popular market has a great range of local produce. There is limited parking but there is a general understanding to park along the side street with caution. Open 7.30am–5pm.

Ela Beach Craft Market: At the IEA TAFE campus opposite the beach. Held on the last Saturday of each month. Support artisans from nearby Motuan villages and small businesses that sell paintings, *bilums*, as well as woven baskets, mats and *tapa* (tree bark) cloth sourced from rural parts of the country. Organised by the Ela Murray International School. Tel. +675 302 3800. Open 7.30am–midday.

Gordons Market: Next to the Gordons police station, it's the biggest market in Port Moresby with two levels. Well organised, you can find everything from various greens, root crops and seasonal fruit. There is ample parking and security. Open 7am–6.30pm.

Holiday Inn Craft Market: Held on the third Saturday of each month in Cassowary Park. Paintings, wooden carvings and pandanus mats are just a few of the items on sale. Proceeds from the vendor fees (PGK20) and the craft market's sausage sizzle go to charity. Open 8am–1pm. See facebook.com/holidayinnandsuitesportmoresby.

Koki Fish Market: Built over the sea, this fish market is the biggest one-stop shop for seafood. Fish like tuna and red emperor caught by local villagers can be cleaned and cut for you. Open 6am–6pm.

Moresby Arts Theatre Craft Market: Located at Waigani (next to Parliament House) find local art, carvings, pottery and jewellery. Enjoy the barbecue, live music and movies for kids. Some craft days have cultural dances and performance art shows. Held on the first Saturday of each month. Entry PGK2. Open 8am–1pm.

PAU Sunday Market: Pacific Adventist University, 30 minutes outside the city, has a market every Sunday, starting at 5am. There's produce from the school's farm, including cucumber, watermelon and corn, as well as cooked food from the Pacific.

POM City Markets: If you're after traditional crafts as well as a whole range of novelty products from small business owners, they regularly set up at the Vision City

amphitheatre, National Museum & Art Gallery and Food Republic PNG carpark. They also host the Harbourside Night Markets at the Harbourside Precinct, which includes live music and food. See facebook.com/pomcitymarkets for upcoming dates. Tel. +675 7007 3046.

Some of these locations (as well as all food markets in general) are known for crime so it isn't recommended that you go alone, or without your own security.

HOTELS

PORT MORESBY

Airways Hotel: Airways is within a large, secure compound next to Jacksons International Airport. An inspiring setting, luxurious rooms, excellent service and very good food options. See airways.com.pg. Tel. +675 324 5200.

Citi Boutique Hotel: The Citi Boutique Hotel is a three-star property in Boroko. It has 60 deluxe queen and twin rooms, a business centre, cable TV and free Wi-Fi. There's also a day spa and beauty salon, restaurant, bar, karaoke room, and a rooftop terrace. The hotel provides free airport transfers. See facebook.com/citiboutiquehotel. Tel. +675 300 1300.

Citi Serviced Apartments and Motel: There are two Citi Serviced Apartments and Motel properties, one block located at East Boroko and the other at Manu. They are set in safe and secure grounds. The apartments are fully kitted out. They include cable TV, free Wi-Fi, washing machines, dryers, fridges, fans and air conditioning. Housekeeping is also provided. See facebook.com/citiboutiquehotel. Tel. +675 300 1300. ➤



Crown Hotel: Upmarket rooms and suites in the heart of the CBD. Decent gym, business centre, undercover parking, thriving cafe and Mediterranean restaurant. See crownhotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 309 3329.

Ela Beach Hotel and Apartments: On the fringe of the CBD, this constantly expanding hotel/apartment complex is part of the Coral Sea Hotels group. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 321 2100.

Gateway Hotel: Conveniently located just minutes from Jacksons International Airport, the hotel has a range of dining options, conference facilities, modern gym and two swimming pools. Free airport shuttles are available for guests. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 327 8100.

Grand Papua: This premium hotel is now part of the Raddison group and features 156 suite rooms (short and long stay), an executive floor, gym and conference facilities. The separate restaurant and bar areas are popular for business meetings. Centrally located. See coralseahotels.com.pg/grand-papua-hotel. Tel. +675 304 0000.

Hilton Port Moresby: The capital city's newest luxury hotel



The Lamana Hotel in Waigani.

opened in late 2018 and is in the government district 10 minutes from the airport. There are five restaurants, an executive lounge, six meeting rooms, a convention centre, swimming pool and fitness centre. All rooms in the 15-storey hotel include floor-to-ceiling windows. The accommodation includes standard rooms, executive rooms and suites. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Holiday Inn & Suites: Located in Waigani, the large grounds include a walking track in a tropical garden setting, outdoor restaurant and bar area, business centre and gym. Includes three-star Holiday Inn Express hotel. See ihg.com. Tel. +675 303 2000.

Lamana Hotel: In Waigani, the hotel has 24-hour free airport transfers, free in-room Wi-Fi, a conference centre, restaurants, and the famous Gold Club. See lamanahotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 323 2333.

Loloata Island Resort: This island resort, 40 minutes from Port Moresby, opened in late 2019. There are 68 rooms (including some overwater suites and villas), a day spa and two restaurants. Day passes are available for visitors who aren't staying overnight, and shuttles are provided from Port Moresby. The island is perfect for swimming, snorkelling, diving, walking or just lounging beside the pool. See loloataislandresort.com. Tel. +675 7108 8000.

Sanctuary Hotel Resort & Spa: The hotel is an oasis in the city, located 10 minutes from the airport in North Waigani. There is a lot of greenery in the hotel grounds and a large aviary, which includes the bird of paradise. The hotel, close to government offices, has a business centre, a day spa, swimming pool and a restaurant with a traditional PNG menu with a contemporary edge. It also has rooms and facilities with ramps for people with disabilities. Tel. +675 303 7400.

Shady Rest Hotel: Located at Three Mile, seven minutes from the airport, this affordable hotel has 74 rooms, including newly built executive rooms, conference facilities, a day spa and salon, a small gaming lounge, a tapas lounge, the Indian-inspired Cellar Restaurant and Mr Mike's Pizza Company. See shadyrest.com.pg. Tel. +675 323 0000.

Stanley Hotel and Suites: One of Port Moresby's newest hotels, this is a luxurious 429-room property in Waigani, close to government offices and embassies. It has 95 long-stay apartments, gym, pool, cafe, restaurants and an executive lounge. Connected to Vision City Mega Mall. See thestanleypng.com. Tel. +675 302 8888.



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LAE

Crossroads Hotel: A 45-room facility at Nine Mile. The hotel has a Japanese-themed teppanyaki restaurant with Asian/Western fusion menus, full bar service, a well-equipped gym, Wi-Fi and complimentary transfers to both Lae City and the airport. Tel. +675 475 1124.

Hotel Morobe: A centrally located boutique with 38 elegantly decorated rooms. See hotelmorobe.com. Tel. +675 4790 100.

Huon Gulf Hotel & Apartments: Has comfortable rooms, conference rooms and a pool, located in the industrial part of town. The restaurant offers Italian cuisine and there are two bars. See coralseahotels.com.pg/huon-gulf-hotel-apartments. Tel. +675 7999 0100.

Lae City Hotel: Located in the main Top Town area, this hotel has 24-hour concierge, gym and an excellent cafe and restaurant with Western and Asian cuisine. See laecityhotel.com. Tel. +675 472 0138.

Lae International Hotel: The city's premier hotel has a range of rooms, including deluxe executive suites, full bar service, conference

and banquet halls, a gym and pool. See laeinterhotel.com. Tel. +675 472 2000.

Lae Travellers Inn: An affordable option, offering clean and comfortable rooms. There is a car rental service on the inn's premises and their restaurant offers curry takeaway. See laetravellersinn.com. Tel. +675 479 0411.

EATING & DRINKING

PORT MORESBY

Airways Hotel: Port Moresby's ritziest hotel has several places to eat. If you're after fine dining, Bacchus is the place to go. For something more casual, go poolside to Deli KC or 7C's past reception. The Vue Restaurant has a buffet each morning, lunch and evening. The Filipino-themed buffet is a winner. There is also an a la carte menu and stunning views. The tandoori dishes come highly recommended. If you're after a drink, have cocktails and beers at the Balus Bar. For an exclusive experience, head to the Havanaba Bar to enjoy a cigar with your pick of top-shelf wines and spirits. See airways.com.pg. Tel. +675 324 5200 and +675 7373 2600.

Akura: An elegant dining and lounge bar at Harbourside that is a

popular spot for after-work drinks. Try their beef vermicelli salad or pop in for Taco Tuesday. Tel. +675 7320 7777. See instagram.com/akurapng.

Alibi Bar & Grill: At the Harbourside precinct, open for lunch and dinner daily. There's a kid's playground if you're making it a family day. Fridays and Saturdays bring in a big night crowd and the bar stays open until late. Try their platters: the Surf & Turf, Meat Lovers and the Fisherman's Basket with a view of the harbour. See facebook.com/alibipng. Tel. +675 7320 7777.

Ang's Restaurant: No-frills Chinese hidden away in an industrial block opposite Brian Bell's Gordons Plaza shopping centre. Roast duck is the signature dish. Tel. +675 323 0863.

Asia Aromas: Offering Chinese and Thai food by the water at Harbourside, this eatery has consistently good reviews on social media. Outdoor seating is available. A good spot for sunset drinks. Tel. +675 321 4780.

Aviat Port Moresby Club: The club is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Home-style meals include stir-fries, toasted sandwiches, salt-and-pepper prawns and a pizza menu. This is

a great spot to sit at lunchtime under the shady mango trees, or in the air-conditioned bar. See facebook.com/Aviat-Club.

Baker Boy: Quality burgers and fried chicken are the order of the day at this popular outlet operated by the same people behind the highly successful Duffy cafes. Baker Boy has locations in Waigani and Gordons; dine in or takeaway, or order through delivery partners. Open 9am to 9pm daily. Tel. +675 7727 1123, see bakerboypng.com.

Crown Hotel: For fine dining, choose Rapala Restaurant, its menu a mix of Western and Middle Eastern dishes. It's open 6pm to 10pm. All-day dining is available at The Cafe, opens at 6am. Every Saturday night, the hotel hosts an International Street Food Festival, featuring popular dishes from around the world. See crownhotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 309 3000.

Crowne Plaza Residences: The Port Terrace Restaurant & Bar has views of Fairfax Harbour, and all-day dining. It's open 6.30am to 10pm. Try a power juice for breakfast, chicken parmy for lunch or chilli lobster for dinner. The extensive menu also includes burgers and steaks, as well ►



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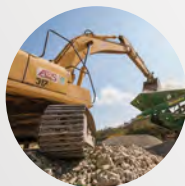
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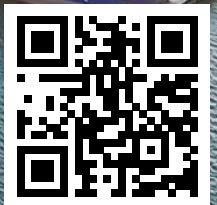


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as share plates. Great spot to watch the sunset with a beverage, with wine, beer, spirits and cocktails on offer. See portrestaurant.com.pg. Tel. +675 308 3100.

Cuppa Cafe: Has a rustic setting with great breakfast options, pasta dishes, burgers and salads. The snack bucket – a large bowl of fried chicken, onion rings, prawns, battered fish, spring rolls and chips – is perfect for sharing. Try their coffee or a range of healthy smoothie combos. Tel. +675 302 8666.

Daikoku: The extensive Japanese menu has teppanyaki, donburi bowls and a large range of sushi. 'All-You-Can-Eat' grilled skewers available every Thursday night. You can find them at Stop & Shop

Harbour City (first floor) and the Harbourside Precinct. See daikokupng.com. Tel. +675 7375 3130.

Duffy Cafe: Known for excellent coffee and homemade cafe-style food and bakery items, Duffy has three locations: at Harbourside, Gordons and Jacksons International Airport. You can order your breakfast ahead of time for those busy work mornings. You can also find their bread on sale at Waterfront Foodworld. See duffypng.com. Tel. +675 325 8528.

Dynasty at Vision City: This may be the biggest restaurant in Port Moresby. Its size, its chandeliers and its gold decor make it a favourite for balls, dinners and parties. The menu is

huge, too, with pages of Asian dishes. The crispy lemon chicken is a favourite. See facebook.com/100064086213057. Tel. +675 302 8538.

Edge by the Sea: The Edge cafe has alfresco dining with a wonderful marina outlook from the ground floor at the Edge Apartments in Harbour City. Eggs benedict, burrito bowls, pork burgers and grilled snapper are among the breakfast and lunch menu favourites. Try their Turkish lahmacun. There's a mist water system in the alfresco area that can reduce the ambient air temperature by up to 10 degrees, perfect for those blistering-hot days. See facebook.com/edgebythesea/. Tel. +675 7995 5263.

Ela Beach Hotel: Drop in to Salt Restaurant for casual all-day dining, including curry, burgers and wok dishes, or pizza at Enzo's. The Beachside Bakery has a great range of sweet treats and coffee that you can enjoy in outdoor seating. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 7998 6510.

Fusion Bistro: A fusion of flavours from China, Thailand and Vietnam. Located in ENB Haus, Harbour City. Takeaway available. Tel. +675 7196 6666.

Gateway Hotel: The hotel's dining options include the Wild Orchard for breakfast and dinner buffet daily, Jackson's Gaming-Restaurant-Bar, which has a rooftop bar with views of the airport, as well as claims to the best lamb rack in town, ➤




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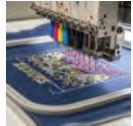
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Sizzler's Family Restaurant for value dining (PGK60 buffet), while Enzo's Express does quick lunches, coffee and pizza. Deli Cafe serves excellent milkshakes and the hotel's own range of bread and pastries. See coralseahotels.com.pg. Tel. +675 7999 0200.

Grand Papua Hotel: The elegant Grand Brasserie has an a la carte menu of modern European cuisine, as well as buffet options – Asian on Tuesday and seafood on Friday. The Grand Cafe, on Douglas Street, has barista-made Goroka coffee, fruit juices, freshly made salads and sandwiches. The Grand Bar – with stylish marble, high ceilings, timber floors and window shutters – has a light menu and is a popular place to wind down after work. See coralseahotels.com.pg/grand-papua-hotel. Tel. +675 7999 0000.

com.pg/grand-papua-hotel. Tel. +675 7999 0000.

Hilton Port Moresby: The hotel has five eating areas including Mumu, which is named after the traditional earthen oven of PNG, and serves traditionally inspired dishes. There's also a top-floor lounge bar called Summit, cafe-style dining in Copper on the lobby level, all-day dining and a breakfast buffet at Feast, including a Southeast Asian buffet every Wednesday night, and quick bites, such as sandwiches and coffee, at Halo in the convention centre foyer. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Hilton Residences: The Host Deli, Bistro & Bar on level two has a relaxed modern vibe with

ample seating options. The Super Bowl (roasted cauliflower, falafel, poached egg, chickpeas with hummus, labneh and haloumi) comes highly recommended. If you're on the go, the delicatessen bar offers fresh fruit, pastries, sandwiches and desserts. Opens at 6.30am and stays open till late for drinks. See hiltonportmoresby.hilton.com. Tel. +675 7501 8000.

Holiday Inn & Suites: The Kopi Haus Restaurant has breakfast from 6am, lunch and dinner. It has a la carte as well as a buffet, with the cuisine including PNG flavours. Expect themed buffets (such as barbecue and flavours of Asia) from Wednesday to Friday. The poolside Gekko Bar opens at midday and includes a big screen for sports telecasts

and tasty bites to go with a range of wines, cocktails and local and international beers. See ihg.com. Tel. +675 303 2000.

Hosi Ramen: As the name suggests, this Japanese restaurant at Vision City specialises in ramen (noodles served in broth with meat and vegetables). A party of up to 15 people can opt for a hotpot session. Tel. +675 302 8555.

Jeanz Cafe: A family-friendly cafe with ample seating that proudly serves PNG Arabica coffee. Located in Gordons Plaza, it has a great range of salads, pastries and sandwiches. See gordonsplaza.com.

Kofi "N" Kai: A cafe located in BNB Home Centre with ►

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ample lounge seating. Try the ham and cheese croissant or indulge in dessert options like Oreo cheesecake, carrot cake or the almond and pecan tart. Tel. +675 775 74399.

Korean Garden: An affordable menu at Vision City that includes a do-it-yourself barbecue, as well as traditional favourites such as kimchi and gimbap. See facebook.com/koreangardenpng. Tel. +675 302 8534.

Lamana Hotel: Choose from options including Spices Restaurant (Indian), the Italian Restaurant, Cafe Palazzo and PNG's biggest nightclub, The Gold Club. The 360 Bar has great night views, and exclusive birthday fireworks can be organised. See lamanahotel.com.pg. Tel. +675 7373 0600.

Loloata Island Resort: The private island has two restaurants. Bootless Bay is spacious with high ceilings and an open-plan style that provides a panoramic view of the sea. They serve a highly recommended breakfast and lunch buffet. The vibe at night makes it the perfect spot for a dinner date. The Beach Club upstairs is a great spot for special events like corporate dinners, birthdays and weddings. See loloataislandresort.com. Tel. +675 7108 8000.

Lucky Lucky: Informal but classy Thai cuisine at the Nambawan Super Plaza. Town and harbour views, alfresco dining. Go-to dishes include pad Thai noodles and the charcoal-grilled pepper beef sirloin. Tel. +675 7995 5264.

Mojo Social: This casual Mediterranean-inspired bar and restaurant is on the ground floor of PWC Haus at Harbour City. Tapas-style dishes, risotto and

pizza are among the offerings. Try the new Mexican dishes during a regular Taco Tuesday. See mojofood.co. Tel. +675 7995 5264.

Pentagon Entertainment: On the former Laguna Hotel premises. Guests can enjoy indoor and outdoor seating. There is also a family-friendly pool area. Try some of the signature dishes like biryani stuffed roasted chicken, crispy pork sisig, and salmon in an orange glaze. Tel. +675 325 1068.

PGO!: PNG's first online delivery service. Their vendors include Burrito Central (Port Moresby's first Mexican takeaway), Port Terrace, The Dirty Kitchen, Abus na Kumu (translates to 'meat and greens'), Fusion, Kopibin, Mr Mike's Pizza, The Cellar, Juice Bar and Marcus Kitchenette and Catering and many more. See phipax.com.

Port Terrace: Fast becoming a popular lunch and dinner spot, the restaurant and bar is in the Crowne Plaza Residences. There are grilled dishes, share plates like a seafood or sticky pork ribs platter, and homemade pasta dishes. There's a new cocktail to try every month. See portrestaurant.com.pg. Tel. +675 308 3100.

Red Rock Bar: Located at Dogura, 6 Mile (along Magi Highway). Be prepared for an uphill drive to the bar but it's worthwhile for the spectacular sunset. Try the Red Rock burger or sizzling lamb and pork with a table in the outdoor area. Tel. +675 8214 7357.

Royal Papua Yacht Club: Relaxed, spacious and open to non-members. Comfort food,

draught beer and an open-plan bar area showing sport on large screens. There is a themed cocktail night each Thursday. See rpyc.com.pg. Tel. +675 321 1700.

Seoul House: This restaurant specialises in Korean, Thai and Chinese cuisine, cooked on a hotplate in front of you. The dishes include a seafood platter of coral trout, mussels and shrimp, and Singapore-style chilli crab. Seoul House is tucked away in a garden oasis compound in Five Mile. The owners also have a cafe at the Jacksons International Airport, Hotspot. Try the black forest cake and croissant sandwich while waiting for your flight. Tel. +675 7823 3075.

Shady Rest Hotel: The Indian dishes at the hotel's Cellar Restaurant draw high praise from reviewers on TripAdvisor. The restaurant also prides itself in its steaks. Mr Mike's Pizza Company is a takeaway located at the hotel and has classic pizzas, such as Hawaiian and margarita, as well as gourmet pizzas such as the Mediterranean, which is packed with feta, olives, mushrooms and more. Bakeology Cafe & Bakery offers alfresco dining surrounded by lush greenery. Enjoy a range of sandwiches, salads, pastries, desserts and freshly baked bread. See shadyrest.com.pg. Tel. +675 323 0000.

Stanley Hotel and Suites: This Waigani hotel has several restaurant choices. On the 19th floor, the Silver Leaf offers intimate fine dining with stunning night views. The Executive Lounge (for guests staying on the 14th to 18th floors) offers breakfast, all-day snacks and cocktail canapes. A walk up the stairs

from the lounge takes you to the Mezz Bar, which offers premium spirits. There is also a smoking deck. The chic tapas-style Monsoon Lounge is on the ground floor. Green Haus restaurant has all-day dining, including buffet dinners with live cooking stations. Choose your own combo at the new juice station available at breakfast and lunch. The serene Rainforest Cafe, close to the check-in area, has coffee, desserts and pastries. See thestanleypng.com.

Tandoor on the Harbour: Come here for a curry with great bay views. The butter chicken with garlic nan is classic. See facebook.com/tandoorontheharbour. Tel. +675 3201 910.

Tasty Bites: This cosy traditional Indian restaurant is tucked away in the town centre in Hunter Street near Crowne Plaza (ANG Haus). A great spot for quick and affordable meals. Try the vegetable noodles with chicken strips or the pizza menu. Deliveries available. Tel. +675 321 2222.

Tribes Coffee Club: This cafe has two locations: Oasis building in the Steamships compound, Waigani, and Lawes Road, Ela Beach. All-day dining available. The seafood platter with crab, shrimps and the catch of the day is a dinner favourite. Tel. +675 321 0455.

Tuna Bay Resort: Located in Taurama, just five minutes from Manu. Enjoy battered fish and chips, char-grilled rump steak and boneless chicken that comes with a side of garden salad and chips. There is indoor and outdoor dining, with bay views. Tel. +675 7920 8777. ■



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A220-300 makes first overseas flights



Touchdown in Cairns (above); Cairns Airport's David Nye, Queensland's Assistant Tourism Minister Bree James and Air Niugini CEO Alan Milne at a media conference in Cairns (above right); Air Niugini pilots on the Sydney flight Joachim Ortlauf and Timothy Narara (above middle); touchdown in Sydney (right).



Air Niugini marked two milestones in its fleet modernisation program in late March when the airline's new Airbus A220-300 aircraft flew its first scheduled international flight from Port Moresby to Cairns, Australia, on March 27 and Port Moresby to Sydney on March 29.

Before the Cairns flight, the new aircraft had been deployed exclusively on PNG's domestic network on services including Lae, Kavieng, Manus, Gurney, Rabaul and Port Moresby.

The A220-300 features a seat capacity of 138 passengers in a comfortable two-class configuration and is designed to deliver an enhanced onboard experience with wider seats, larger windows and a quieter cabin, along with complimentary onboard Wi-Fi.

The Port Moresby to Cairns flights take about 90 minutes, providing a convenient connection between PNG and Far North Queensland.

Air Niugini Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne says the introduction of the A220-300 on international services is an important step for the airline as it continues to modernise its fleet and enhance the passenger experience.

"The Airbus A220-300 is a modern, fuel-efficient aircraft that offers greater comfort, reliability and operational efficiency. Deploying this aircraft on our international routes strengthens Air Niugini's capability to

connect Papua New Guinea with key regional destinations while providing a world-class travel experience for our passengers."

He says Cairns was a natural choice for the aircraft's first international service given the strong historical, economic and tourism links between PNG and Far North Queensland.

“The introduction of the A220-300 on international services is an important step for the airline.”

The flight also celebrated the longstanding aviation relationship between PNG and Far North Queensland. Air Niugini was the first international airline to operate into Cairns Airport, commencing services in September 1975.

"Cairns has always been an important gateway for PNG, supporting strong business, tourism and family connections between our two regions," the CEO says.

Air Niugini currently operates nine flights per week between Port Moresby and Cairns, including three same-day return services and six overnight services, making the route one of the airline's most important international connections.

Chief Executive Officer of Cairns Airport, Richard Barker, welcomed the new aircraft on the route.

"Cairns Airport is proud to welcome Air Niugini's new Airbus A220-300 on its first international service. The introduction of this modern aircraft will inject close to 65,000 seats into the Cairns market each year."

With the arrival of the Airbus A220-300 into the fleet, Air Niugini has increased its Sydney services to three weekly flights, operating every Sunday, Thursday and Friday from Port Moresby.

Sydney Airport CEO, Scott Charlton, said: "Today marks an exciting new chapter for Air Niugini at Sydney Airport. The introduction of the modern Airbus A220-300 on this route not only enhances comfort for passengers but also reflects a shared commitment to efficiency and sustainable growth. We're proud to support Air Niugini as it expands its presence in Sydney." ■





Governor for East Sepik Province Allan Bird, Air Niugini CEO Alan Milne and Air Niugini Board Director Dame Monica Salter at the ribbon cutting for the new Wewak office.

NEW AIR NIUGINI OFFICE IN WEWAK

Air Niugini has opened its new sales office in Wewak's newly constructed Tangmow Plaza. The plaza is a state-of-the-art facility that has quickly become a prominent landmark in the heart of the town.

The new Air Niugini office is spacious and equipped with modern amenities, furniture and technology. It features comfortable customer service areas and is centrally located.

“

This new office is a significant addition to Wewak and will serve as a catalyst for economic growth.

”

Wewak, the provincial capital of East Sepik, serves as a vital gateway to both cultural heritage and economic opportunity. The region is recognised for its rich and vibrant traditions and a robust agricultural sector, particularly the production of premium vanilla.

The establishment of the new office is expected to strengthen support for local producers and entrepreneurs by enhancing access to air travel for passengers and cargo.

“The opening of our new sales office in Wewak demonstrates Air Niugini's commitment to enhancing access and convenience for our customers,” says Air Niugini Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne. “We are excited to be part of this community and to support its growth through improved connectivity and services.”

Since relocating to the new premises, sales have increased by up to 50 per cent compared to the same period last year.

“Wewak is a busy port served by two daily flights – one direct midday service and another in the afternoon that connects Vanimo – so this new sales office will help meet strong travel demand,” the CEO says.

The sales office opens from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, and from 8am to midday on Saturdays.

The Governor for East Sepik, Allan Bird, who officiated at the launch, welcomed the development. “Thank you Air Niugini for listening and acting on the people's concerns,” he said. “This new office is a significant addition to Wewak and will serve as a catalyst for economic growth in our province.” ■

Excellence program revived

Air Niugini has relaunched its Higher Altitudes program, an initiative designed to align all areas of the airline's operations and ensure a unified approach to service excellence, operational reliability and financial sustainability.

The program was relaunched by Air Niugini's Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne, who first launched it seven years ago.

The program is focused on several areas, including fostering a customer-first attitude, encouraging collaboration between management, staff and unions, as well as streamlining processes to minimise disruptions.

“This program is not just about cost savings; it is about building a stronger, more resilient Air Niugini. By working hand in hand with our employees and unions, we are creating a culture of unity and accountability that will carry us into the future,” the CEO says. ■

Engineers complete training

Air Niugini's first group of Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (LAMEs) earmarked to support the airline's expanding fleet, including the advanced Airbus A220 aircraft, have finished their training.

The engineers, pictured with Air Niugini Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne, underwent an intensive program, including theoretical coursework and practical hands-on experience, at international facilities in Singapore and Canada.

Practical modules included engine runs, systems troubleshooting and aircraft maintenance procedures. ■





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Your seat belt must be securely fastened during take off and landing or whenever the seat belt sign is on. When the seat belt sign is off you may move about the cabin as necessary. However while seated, keep your seat belt fastened securely in case of unexpected turbulence.

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Cellular telephones, TV receivers or radio controlled devices are not to be used at any time on board an aircraft. Electronic devices such as portable computers, compact discs or cassette players and video games can be used only when the seat belt sign is switched off.

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The cabin crew will also be pleased to assist in preparing your baby's food and bottle. Baby food and diapers are also available. Please do not hesitate to ask our friendly cabin crew.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

ENTERTAINMENT

A selection of movies and music including classical, modern, country and local are available on international services.

PILLOWS AND BLANKETS

On International flights, pillows and blankets are available on request from our cabin crew.

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Our in-flight* meals have been specially prepared for your enjoyment. If you require a vegetarian meal or you are on a special diet, child or baby food, please inform us when making your reservation.

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B767-300 – BOEING

- Length: 59.94m
- Wing Span: 47.57m
- Range: 8100km
- Cruising Speed: 857kph
- Power Plant: 2 x PW4000
- Normal Altitude: 11000 – 12000m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 188
- Business Class: 28
- Economy Class: 160
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 02



B737-800 – BOEING

- Length: 39.5m
- Wing Span: 35.7m
- Range: 5000-5500km
- Cruising Speed: 810-850kph
- Power Plant: 2 x CFM56-7B27E
- Normal Altitude: 11300m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 154-162
- Business Class: 12-16
- Economy Class: 128-150
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 03



A220-300 – AIRBUS

- Length: 38.69m
- Wing Span: 34.98m
- Range: 6700km
- Cruising Speed: 115-245 KIAS
- Power Plant: PW1524G-3
- Normal Altitude: 41,000 FT (Ceiling)
- Standard Seating Capacity: 138
- Business Class: 08
- Economy Class: 130
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 03



F100 – FOKKER

- Length: 35.53m
- Wing Span: 22.08m
- Range: 3000km
- Cruising Speed: 780kph
- Power Plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650-15 turbo engines
- Normal Altitude: 11000m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 101
- Business Class: 8
- Economy Class: 93
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 04



F70 – FOKKER

- Length: 30.91m
- Wing Span: 28.08m
- Range: 3410km
- Cruising Speed: 743kph
- Power Plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650-15 turbo engines
- Normal Altitude: 11000m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 73
- Business Class: 8
- Economy Class: 65
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 03



DCH8-Q400 – BOMBARDIER

- Length: 32.8m
- Wing Span: 28.4m
- Range: 3000km
- Cruising Speed: 670kph
- Power Plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW150A
- Normal Altitude: 7600ft
- Standard Seating Capacity: 76
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 04



DHC8-315 – BOMBARDIER

- Length: 25.7m
- Wing Span: 27.4m
- Range: 1700km
- Cruising Speed: 510kph
- Power Plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW123E
- Normal Altitude: 6100m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 50
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 05



DHC8-202 – BOMBARDIER

- Length: 22.25m
- Wing Span: 25.89m
- Range: 1800km
- Cruising Speed: 550kph
- Power Plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney 123D
- Normal Altitude: 7600m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 36
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 02



FALCON 900EX – DASSAULT

- Length: 20.21m
- Wing Span: 19.33m
- Range: 4500km
- Cruising Speed: 650kph
- Power Plant: 3 x Honeywell TFE731
- Normal Altitude: 7600m
- Standard Seating Capacity: 12
- Number of Aircrafts in Fleet: 01



Your health inflight

At Air Niugini we care about your comfort and safety. We have included the following information about your health in-flight that we hope you will find helpful and useful.

When you are flying you can be seated and be inactive for long periods of time. The environment can be low in humidity and pressurised up to an altitude of 2240 metres above sea level. Unlike other forms of transportation, air travel allows for rapid movement across many time zones, causing a disruption to the body's "biological clock". Although these unique factors do not pose a health or safety threat to most passengers, there are guidelines you can follow that will improve your comfort level, during and after a flight. We hope the following recommendations will help you have a more pleasant flight today and in the future.

Blood Circulation / Muscle Relaxation

When you're sitting upright in a stationary position for a long period of time, several things can happen.

The central blood vessels in your legs can be compressed, making it more difficult for the blood to get back to your heart.

The long inactivity of your body muscles in this position can result in muscle tension, back aches or a feeling of excessive fatigue during, or even after, your flight.

A stationary position inhibits the normal body mechanism for returning fluid to your heart, and gravity can cause the fluid to collect in your feet. This results in swollen feet after a long flight.

Studies have concluded that prolonged immobility may be a risk factor in the formation of clots in the legs (DVT - deep vein thrombosis). Particular medication and medical conditions may increase the risk of formation of clots if associated with prolonged immobility.

Medical research indicates that factors which may give you an increased risk of blood clots in the legs include:

- Former or current malignant disease
- Blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
- Personal or family history of DVT

- Immobilisation for a day or more
- Increasing age above 40 years
- Pregnancy
- Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
- Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
- Dehydration
- Heart failure
- Trauma
- Varicose veins
- Obesity
- Tobacco smoking

Recommendations

- If you fall into any of these categories or you have any concern about your health and flying, Air Niugini recommends you seek medical advice before travelling.
- Follow our in-flight exercises programme.

Jetlag

The main cause of jetlag is travelling to different time zones without giving the body a chance to adjust to new night-day cycles. In general, the more time zones you cross during your flight, the more your biological clock is disturbed.

The common symptoms are sleeplessness, tiredness, loss of appetite or appetite at odd hours.

Recommendations

- Get a good night's rest before your flight.
- Arrive at your destination a day or two early, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at a destination less than 48 hours. Also try to eat and sleep according to your home time.



- Change your watch to the local time if your stay is longer than 48 hours, and try to eat and sleep in accordance with the local time.
- On longer stays, try to prepare in advance, adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.
- Try some light exercise - go for a brisk walk, or do some reading if you can't sleep after arrival at your destination. It generally takes the body's biological clock approximately one day to adjust per time zone crossed.
- Fly direct to minimise flight time. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.

Cabin Humidity / Dehydration

Humidity levels of less than 25 percent are common in the cabin. This is due to the extremely low humidity levels of outside air supplied to the cabin. The low humidity can cause drying of the nose, throat, eyes and it can irritate contact lens wearers.

Recommendations

- Drink water or juices frequently during the flight
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks acts as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.
- Remove contact lenses and wear glasses if your eyes are irritated.
- Use a skin moisturiser to refresh the skin.

Eating and Drinking

Proper eating and drinking will enhance your comfort both during and after your flight.

Recommendations

- Avoid overeating just prior to and during the flight. It is difficult to digest too much food when the body is inactive.
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks acts as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.

Cabin Pressurisation

It is necessary to pressurise the outside air drawn into the cabin to a sufficient density for your comfort and health.

Cabins are pressurised to a maximum cabin altitude of 2440 metres. It is the same air pressure as if you were at an elevation of 2440 metres above sea level. The cabin pressure and normal rates of change in cabin pressure during climb and descent do not pose a problem for most passengers. However, if you suffer from upper respiratory or sinus infections, obstructive pulmonary diseases, anaemias or certain cardiovascular conditions, you could experience discomfort. Children and infants might experience some discomfort because of pressure change during climb and descent.

If you are suffering from nasal congestion or allergies, use nasal sprays, decongestants and antihistamines 30 minutes prior to descent to help open up your ear and sinus passages. If you have a cold or flu or hay fever your sinuses could be impaired. Swollen membranes in your nose could block your eustachian tubes-the tiny channels between your middle ear chamber. This can cause discomfort during changes in cabin pressure, particularly during descent.

Recommendations

- If you have a pre-existing medical condition that warrants supplemental oxygen, you can order from us. Please give at least seven days notice before travelling.
- To "clear" your ears try swallowing and/or yawning. These actions help open your eustachian tubes, equalizing pressure between your ear chamber and your throat.
- When flying with an infant, feed or give your baby a dummy during descent. Sucking and swallowing will help infants equalize the pressure in their ears.

Motion Sickness

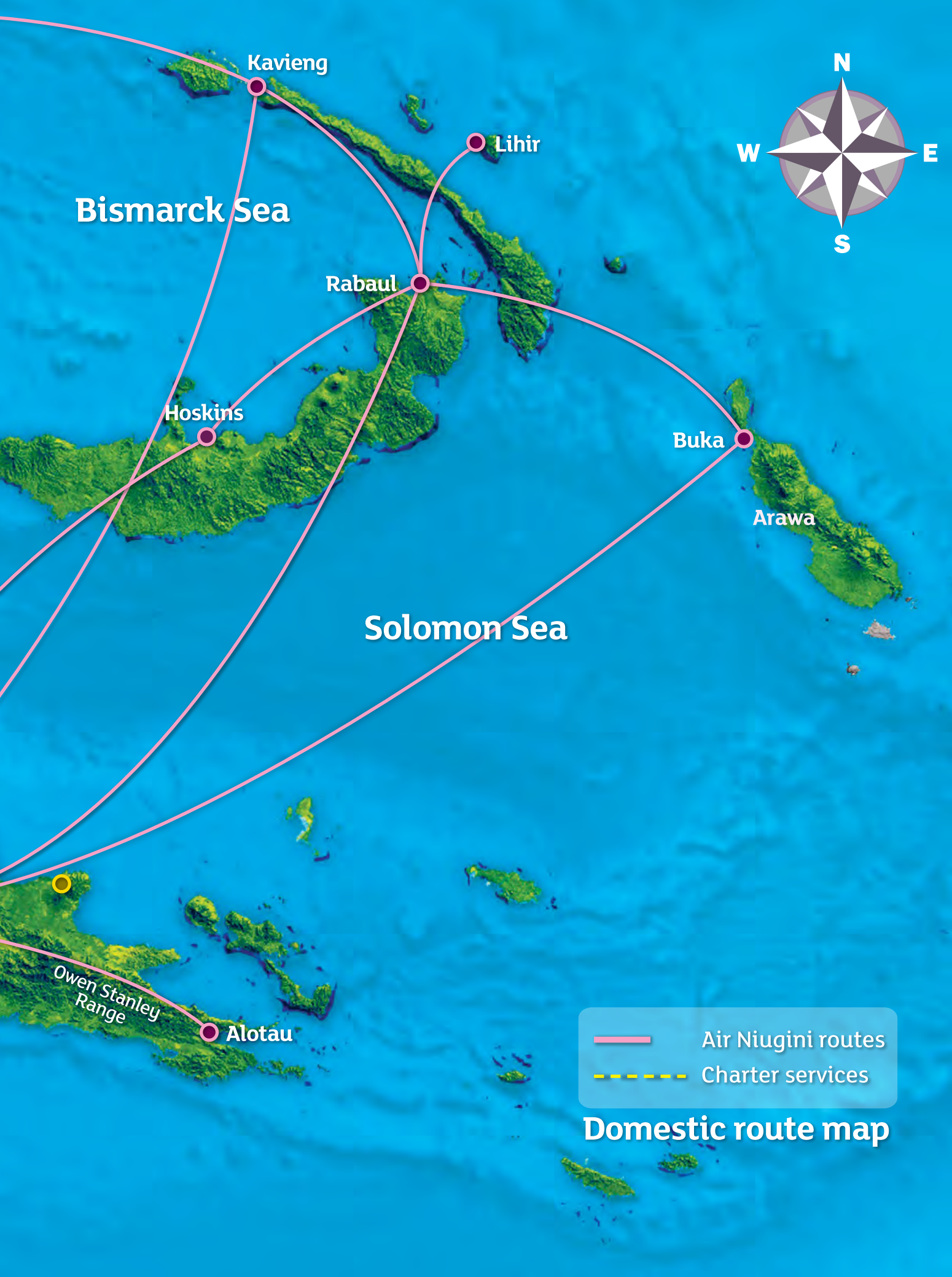
This ailment is caused by a conflict between the body's sense of vision and its sense of equilibrium. Air turbulence increases its likelihood because it can cause movement of the fluid in the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear. If you have good visual cues (keeping your eyes fixed on non-moving object), motion sickness is less likely to occur.

Recommendations

- When weather is clear and you can see the ground, sea or horizon, you are less susceptible to motion sickness.
- You can buy over the counter medications but we recommend that you consult your doctor about the appropriate medications.



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Domestic route map



Tokyo (partially visible)

Hong Kong

Manila

Singapore

Cairns

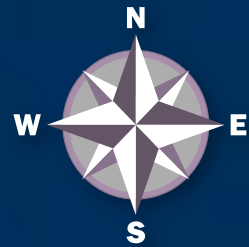
Indian Ocean



Air India

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Narita)



INTERNATIONAL ROUTE MAP

Pacific Ocean

**Port
Moresby**

Honiara

Nadi
Port Vila

Brisbane

Sydney

Niugini

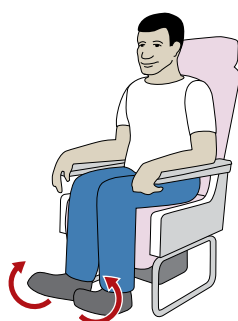
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Your wellbeing



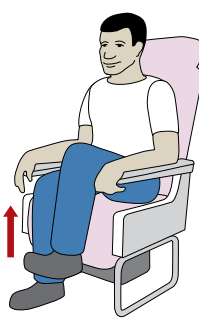
These exercises are designed to encourage a safe way to enjoy movement and stretch certain muscle groups that can become stiff as a result of long periods of sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's circulation and massaging the muscles. We recommend you do these exercises for three or

four minutes every hour and occasionally get out of your seat and walk down the aisles if conditions allow. Each exercise should be done with minimal disturbance to other passengers. None of the following should be performed if they cause pain or cannot be done with ease.



ANKLE CIRCLES

Lift feet off the floor. Draw a circle with toes, simultaneously moving one foot clockwise and the other foot counter clockwise. Reverse circles. Do each direction for 15 seconds. Repeat if desired.



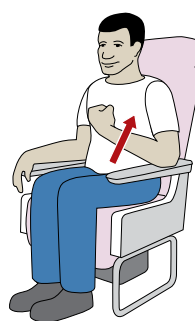
KNEE LIFTS

Lift leg with knee bent while contracting your thigh muscle. Alternate legs. Repeat 20-30 times for each leg.



SHOULDER ROLL

Hunch shoulders forward, then upward, then backward, then downward using a gentle circular motion.



ARM CURL

Start with arms held high at 90° angle - elbows down, hands out in front. Raise hands up to chest and back down alternating arms. Do these exercises in 30 second intervals.



KNEE TO CHEST

Bend forward slightly. Clasp hands around left knee and hug it to your chest. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Keeping hands around knee, slowly let it down. Alternate legs. Repeat 10 times.



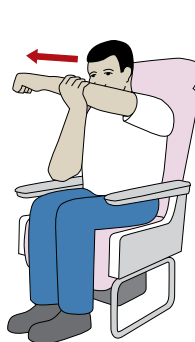
FORWARD FLEX

With both feet on the floor and stomach held in slowly, bend forward to walk your hands down the front of your legs towards your ankles. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and slowly sit back up.



OVERHEAD STRETCH

Raise both arms straight up and over your head. With one hand grasp the wrist of the opposite hand and gently pull to one side. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.



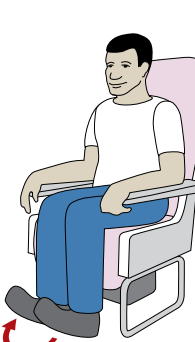
SHOULDER STRETCH

Reach right hand over left shoulder. Place left hand behind right elbow and gently press elbow towards shoulder. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.



NECK ROLL

With shoulders relaxed, drop ear to shoulder and gently roll neck forward and to the other side, holding each position about 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

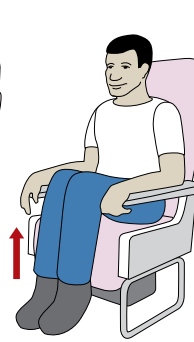


FOOT PUMPS

Foot motion is in three stages.
1. Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upwards as high as you can.



2. Put both feet flat on the floor.



3. Lift heels high, keeping balls of feet on floor. Continue these three stages with continuous motion in 30 second intervals.

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Celebrating 10 Years

of Biodiversity Partnership in the PNG LNG Project

Dendrobium cuthbertsonii
a high elevation orchid
in Hides, Hela Province

On World Biodiversity Day, we're proud to celebrate a decade of biodiversity partnership through the PNG LNG Project.

Over the past ten years, ExxonMobil PNG has implemented one of Papua New Guinea's most comprehensive Biodiversity Conservation and Monitoring programs. Delivered through long-term partnerships with government agencies, conservation NGOs, universities, research institutions, and local communities, the program has made a significant contribution to biodiversity science, conservation outcomes, and National Protected Area objectives

Through this work, we've expanded knowledge of priority species and ecosystems within the PNG LNG Upstream Project Area – including the discovery and documentation of species.

The program identified over 20 new species and provided new data to the International Union of Conservation Network (IUCN) regarding PNG's mammal and bird populations.

The program also represents one of the country's most sustained conservation-focused community engagement and capacity-building efforts, directly supporting the Government's vision to protect habitats, species, and Papua New Guinea's unique environmental and cultural heritage.

In 2023 – 11 conservation deeds were signed by 100 clans in the lower Kikori area – the largest ever such initiative in PNG – demonstrating a strong, collaborative approach that integrates science and community participation with regulatory efforts.

To learn more, visit pnglng.com to explore a decade of social and environmental reports, along with biodiversity monitoring study publications that showcase this incredible work.



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