

## FIFTH DAY

Tuesday 21 March 2023

## DRAFT HANSARD

**Subject:**

**Page No:**

<b>QUESTIONS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
100 Per cent of Inland tax .....	1
Safety for the Air Transport.....	3
<i>Supplementary Question</i> -Certification of rural airstrips in Morobe Province.....	8
Establishment and Operations of ICAC.....	9
 <b>SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS –</b>	
<b>EXTENSION OF QUESTION TIME.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Housing - Review Eviction Process .....	13
Air Niugini – Spike in Airfares.....	16
Highlands Highway Rehabilitation Program.....	18
 <b>AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA - REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL – PART VI, 2021,</b>	
<b>PAPER – MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER .....</b>	<b>22</b>
 <b>CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY AUTHORITY – ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2020 AND 2021 –</b>	
<b>PAPERS AND STATEMENT –PAPER NOTED.....</b>	<b>22</b>
 <b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>	<b>36</b>

## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

### CORRECTIONS TO DAILY HANSARD

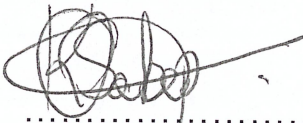
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**KENNETH SEBEPMIN**

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter



## **FIFTH DAY**

**Tuesday 21 March 2023**

The Deputy Speaker (**Mr Koni Iguan**) took the Chair at 10.00 a.m.

There being no quorum present, Mr Deputy Speaker stated that he would resume the Chair after the ringing of the Bells.

Sitting suspended.

The Deputy Speaker again took the Chair at 10.50 a.m. and invited the Member for Talasea, **Honourable Freddie Reu Kumai** to say Prayers:

I pray for wisdom and understanding upon all our leaders during this session of Parliament. We pray for the guardian angels of heaven and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit to give us knowledge and wisdom to make good decisions for the sake of our people and this country.

Heavenly Father, send forth your Holy Spirit to each and every one of us to be wise, to be transparent, to be accountable to this House and to our Constitution and to the people of this nation, Amen.

## **QUESTIONS**

### **100 Per cent of Inland tax**

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to ask my question. My question will be directed to the Minister for Treasury. Is he present in the Chamber? Thank you

Mr Deputy Speaker and the Minister for Treasury, Morobe Province is a very difficult country, tough mountains to cross and tough mountains to build roads, and heavy seas to cross.

We are finding difficulties to bring road to Kabwum and Finschhafen, Sirisiri to Menyamya, Werewere to Garaina, and along the coast of Salamaua to the border of Morobe and Oro province. It has been very difficult to build roads in these places. Morobe is a big country, a country within the country of Papua New Guinea. That's why I am asking, I will be

short but the question is very important. We're delivering almost K3 billion in DST to this country. Our people in the Morobe Province are suffering everywhere.

I fought the war against the Government and I won it and we're sitting on 60 and 40. But that is not sufficient because it has not been fully implemented.

Now today I ask that you give us 100 per cent on the inland tax. You can keep the important levy tax, company tax, income tax, those taxes you can keep them because we're a nation that is why I have to be considerate. But give us 100 per cent inland tax which is almost about K1 billion, I can take care of everything.

**02/05**

All the substantial problems of Morobe Province accumulate because the Government is withholding that tax grant meant for the province. If this happens, you can kiss Morobe goodbye because we will have substantial funding enough to sustain the province.

(1) Can the Minister work with the IRC and ensure that we get the 100 per cent of inland tax?

**Mr IAN LING-STUCKEY** – Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the good Governor for his very simple and short question in regards to the goods and service taxes and in particular, the inland tax where he is requesting whether the National Government may consider giving Morobe Province 100 percent of that amount.

Mr Deputy Speaker, GST including inland tax make up a very important part of our Government revenue plan for this year.

Just by way of back ground purpose, for this year we are projecting into receiving around K14.9 billion of which GST will be around K3.2 billion.

Mr Deputy Speaker, inland tax, GST including all the other seven streams of tax are all part of the Governments revenue plan and whist the National Government. The Government would like to give more GST back the provinces and will get to review the 60-40 percent break-up

Mr Deputy Speaker, unfortunately, the revenue we collect from all provinces are put into a general basket and from there the Government allocates to important areas of the core services expenditure like health, education and the law and justice sector and of course our capital Budget. It is all about getting the right balance.

As much as I would like to be a populist-Minister and say to you now that we would be happy to consider that, it places me under great pressure in terms of raising revenue.



Mr Deputy Speaker, what I can do, is to have you and your team to sit down with us at the Treasury Department and explore other ways in which you can raise internal revenue in which you can benefit greatly. If you did attend one of our provincial government Budget Sessions you would have heard me encourage you and everyone to embark on the labour mobility program, that program is advanced now very quickly and that is one area where emphasis on governors to participate. I will look forward to our meeting to help you raise more funds for Morobe Province.

**03/05**

### **Safety for the Air Transport**

**Mr PATRICK BASA** – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister for Civil Aviation and Transport, I would also like the Ministers for State Enterprise and the Treasurer to take note.

I have noticed a growing number of incidents and accidents involving third airlines in recent months, especially in our rural areas. Also, Air Niugini disrupted flights in and out of Port Moresby when the Government could not resolve the Forex issue.

Mr Deputy Speaker and leaders, I wish to remind you all that our capital city is connected to other towns and cities in our country. The air plane crashes in Western Highlands and Western Province highlight the fact that air transport connection is the only link to many remote communities in our country like my electorate in Kabwum.

Mr Deputy Speaker, a few years ago Air Niugini announced plans to link up more airstrips or airfields and introduce a smaller twin propeller fleet under Link PNG level. The planes started to land in smaller airstrips like Wapenamanda, Kundiawa, Tufi, and Losuia to the delight of our people but sadly these air transport services beyond provincial towns and into strategic airstrips were seized.

So, in the meantime, all we hear about under this Government is Connect PNG by roads which gives little detail about other modes of transportation which are air and sea.

My series of questions are as follows:

(1) In relation to the safety of the flying public using the rural airstrips system, can the Minister explain what he is doing about the frequent incidents involving light air crafts?

(2) How much money has been allocated by the Government in 2023 Appropriation to support the system to assure the safety of our people who are using airstrips and light air crafts?



(3) Mr Minister, for the Department of Works the Prime Minister talked about the Connect PNG Program, can the Minister explain how the aviation transport sector features in the current Government's Connect PNG Program?

(4) Can the Minister provide real figures detailing costings for the program from relevant policy documents and how it is captured in the 2023 Appropriation?

(5) When is the Minister planning to present a ministerial statement detailing how exactly are you planning to connect PNG through the air transport services?

(6) Is the Minister aware of the status of the Air Niugini Link PNG Program? Do you have any plans to revive, improve or expand that service targeting our rural communities?

(7) In relation to Rural Airstrips Agencies, can the Minister tell us his plans for RAA to ensure that the authority or agency works for the benefit of our rural communities that depend on airstrips and light air crafts?

(8) How much money has been allocated to this sector agency including RAA, CASA, and AIC because there are officers in these agencies who are operating without no money at all?

(9) What is happening with the Cadet Funding Program earmarked for identified airstrips in our country?

(10) Can the Minister, assure my people of Kabwum and other districts in remote areas in Morobe, that we are not forgotten in the Cadet Funding and other funding programs as well?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**04/05**

**Mr WALTER SCHNAUBELT** – You can put that in writing and forward it to me because there are series of questions and I need to answer them with specific answers as you want. I am happy to respond and I will do my best to answer most of them.

In relation to providing answers, some preliminary background information on some of the questions you've asked specifically in relation to the safety of aircraft, most of the companies operating the aircrafts are responsible to meet those requirements under the permit or license to operate.

The role of CASA is to try to manage and to make sure that they meet compliance and that is what it is doing, but if the companies find that they have some financial problems, some companies could be short cutting in trying to continuing the scheduled flights in the remote areas. I am not saying that this particular company is doing that, but how I see the incident that occurred in recent time, they explained in case the company has come through some struggles

because we have some FX issues, maybe not bringing parts on time to maintain the aircrafts and other stuffs like that. So, maybe through making shortcuts like that has caused the incident that we've seen in the media.

In relation to these incidents, I would like to also state that there's a current investigation on foot. I am happy to give you an update on actually what the cause is, whether it is a company pilot or a mechanical error so that we can be aware and understand.

In relation to the airstrips, yes I support you. We need to open our airstrips, especially the rural airstrips throughout country. We need to focus on the airstrips and try to look at it whether to let it remain close or open it again and put to operation. Most of these airstrips have been neglected over time and this is why we are going back. Maybe, about 10 years ago, the National Government has signed an agreement with one of the third level airline companies to operate Rural Airstrip Agency (RAA) to take charge and responsible of all the rural airstrips because rural airstrips fall under RAA and they do not fall under the National Airport Corporation (NAC). The NAC is responsible for the national airports and it's terminals as categorised under the CASA where big planes can land. The CASA certifies those aircrafts that carries more than 20 passengers and they are eligible to land on the airport. Those aircrafts that carry less than 20 passengers will land at airstrips provided that the airstrips meet the requirements for the sizes of the aircrafts. So the aircrafts that carries more than 20 passengers is referred to as Small Tail Dash-8 that can actually operate on the rural airstrips but provided that it is certified and signed off by the CASA.

For the airline company that wishes to operate in the rural airstrips, the decision is up to them and the management provided that the CASA gives them certification to land on those airstrips. So, the process is like that.

In relation to Connect PNG program, as the Minister responsible for Transport and Civil Aviation, it is this Marape-Rosso Government's focus. The Connect PNG is not only by road. We are looking into transport sector on the land as well as the sea. However, towards the end of last term, there has been some special decisions have made for the sea; we have helped 2 districts, namely North Bougainville and Talasea to counterpart to purchase some ships to bring services into their districts. About K5 million each as counter funding has been released already and is awaiting for the district and the provincial government to put their counterpart in to those vessels that they feel will serve their needs, in terms of passenger and cargo.



05/05

So, this is the Marape/Rosso Government's intention to go down and try to support the Connect PNG by sea. I am also in discussion to review four ferries with the capacity of 140 passengers with little space for cargo as well. The configuration which we will have to make is maybe reduce the 140 passengers' space to only 70 so we can utilize the remaining space for cargo so that the vessel can at least carry some cargo as well in case it has to. The space would cater for our farmers' produce to the markets in a safe environment.

We are still trying to identify the location of these ferries but I stress in these processes that we need to give the operations of these ferries to existing operators who are already operating some shipping companies. There is no point for the government to take charge of these responsibilities and run the ferries by itself.

The government is the Legislator, not the manager of the operations of the ferries. So this is something I need to clarify here; that are looking at existing shipping companies to try and support us when the ferries arrives. We will consult and get everyone's input in terms of where we will put those ferries as a pilot project.

So, this compliments now the Connect PNG Program where you have the roads, the ferries for the sea and rural airports or airstrips for air transport.

May I also make it clear that, I am the Transport and Civil Aviation Minister therefore I do not have any jurisdiction over Air Niugini. The delays and aircraft issues, etc., are their problems to deal with. These issues fall under my colleague minister for SOE; that is his department and I will not comment on those areas.

In relation to my Ministerial Statement as you asked; it's actually here with me. Only waiting for the date when I will be given the floor to present it and update the House on the financial audit that took place. It is a requirement by the Minister responsible to come here and present to the House the financial position of 2020 and 2021 in relation to CASA and operations under Transport and Civil Aviation. The statement has been approved by the appropriate authority and is already here with me, ready to be presented.

In relation to Link PNG, once again, it's a question to be directed to the Minister for SOE who can enlighten you a little bit more on what is the Business Plan for this Link PNG Concept that Air Niugini undertook some time back where they also bought aircrafts to serve these airstrips under that program.

In relation to Rural Airstrip Agencies, what is it doing? We have close to 200 airstrips that we have identified within the country. Some are operating while others are not. So, we are going through the process now to identify these airstrip and airports. We've put in the necessary



budget component to support but there is an arrangement that's in place right now that if district members or governors wish to have their rural airstrips up and running, then you will have to sign a MOA with the Rural Airstrip Agency and provide counterpart funding to support you in order to maintain, resurrect or open up your airstrips.

**06/05**

This arrangement is in place and I encourage you all to explore and contact RRA and enquire on the process on how you can get support to open up your airstrips.

In terms of RRA funding, there has been some constraints in getting the necessary funding to support rural airstrips and this is something that we are trying to manage at this point. If we had 20 Members approach us and wanted assistance to re-open or maintain their airstrips as soon as possible, it will be difficult as we need to sort out funding issues to get the support mechanism happening. From our end the RRA has engineers and competent staff available to assist you but obviously funding plays an important part.

For the Civil Aviation Development Investment Program, some of the projects are still on foot and nearing completion. Once those projects, especially terminals or airports are completed, I will inform the House and we will be made aware of which ones I am referring to today. On the issue of how many airstrips, airport terminals constructed so far under the CADIP1 that have been open. majority of these have been opened and we only have two left and I am pretty sure one is Nadzab and the other I need to find out and let you all know.

In relation to CADIP2, we are making progress and I thank ADB and the Marape-Rosso Government for their continued support in this project. I also thank the former Minister Honourable Don Polye, who began this initiative and we have followed through under this government. This is a good example of a government that inherited a policy on CADIP projects and continued to support it. We have seen the importance of these in our rural areas and therefore are continuing to support it without criticizing the issue.

CADIP 2 has been signed and it must be understood that the funding for this is greater than CADIP1 and some airstrips have already been earmarked including Kiunga, Central Bougainville, Arawa and Wewak. In relation to Rural airstrips, we requested for funding for four rural airstrips also under the ADB arrangements. For those four airstrips, we are yet to identify them but the agreement for funding has already been signed and we are just following the process through and will make the announcement on which airstrips have been identified.

The initial project will begin for the four airstrips will be pilot project funded by support ADB. If this project works well. As we already have 200 rural airstrips sitting out there, some are in operation and some are not. Most of these airstrips need funding to get them going again.

This is probably in reference to his last question, but I wish to ask through the Chair if the Member could have his questions in writing to me then I will be happy to give a detailed response to the Member.

**07/05**

### **Supplementary Question**

#### **Certification of Rural Airstrips in Morobe Province**

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** – My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation, and it is in regards to the airstrips in Morobe Province. Morobe has 30 airstrips compared to any other province in PNG; of that 30 airstrips, 20 are abandoned.

When I was in Government, I made sure that planes travel to those airstrips. I am looking for inspectors to inspect the airstrips that are now abandoned. I have told the people living close to these airstrips to clean and get them ready.

My question is:

(1) Can the Minister provide me an inspector immediately?

I do not need money or planes, I need an inspector to inspect the airstrips and certify that it can be operational. Thank you.

**Mr WALTER SCHNAUBELT** – Thank you, Honourable Governor for his question. He is one of the proactive and determined Governors to bring development into Morobe Province. I recognize you, your enthusiasm and your knowledge to bring in these kinds of development.

Honourable Governor, in response to your question, I have already replied to some parts of your question in the first part of my series of answers to the Honourable Member. I can provide more guidance if you require of me.

You said you do not need funding but technical support. I will encourage you to go and consult Rural Airstrip Association (RAA). I am happy to provide their contact details for you after this session and am also willing to bring you to their office.

Honourable Governor, all you will need is an understanding and an agreement signed with RAA. They will then facilitate through you, a schedule for engineers to come down to your respective airstrips, according to your selection and nomination.



I am happy to provide approval and facilitate for them to assist your rural airstrips in Morobe Province to be up and running. Thank you.

### **Establishment and Operations of ICAC**

**Mr JOHN KAUPA** – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for the interest of this nation, my questions are directed to the Honourable Prime Minister. We are currently in the 11th Parliament session and yet people are still talking about corruption. Corruption is at all levels in our society.

**08/05**

What is the meaning of corruption? Corruption is dishonesty, fraudulent dealing and typical involvement in bribery. There are many more definitions for corruption in this country at all levels. With the former Prime Minister, they said he was corrupt and with the current Prime Minister in this 11th Parliament, they say the same.

Therefore, there is corruption in all levels in our society, from the institutions, government departments, and corporate bodies and even in our houses.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister for the good of the nation and for everyone to know what this government is doing.

(1) With so much question of corruption in our country, what is the government doing on the Independent Commission Against Corruption and when is ICAC going to be established?

(2) Can the Prime Minister explain to the nation, whether the role and power of Ombudsman Commission will be diluted once ICAC is in function?

Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker.

**Mr JAMES MARAPE** – Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker. I am pleased to see you sitting on that seat. I want to respond to the question from the Honourable Member for Port Moresby North-East through you. He asked about the establishment and operations of the Independent Commission Against Corruption. His second question was about the role and power of the Ombudsman Commission, whether it will be diluted or maintained? I think these are two very important questions for the benefit of our people.

As the Government, we stand to fight the issues of corruption in this country. Corruption in its simplest definition is the act of us breaching the country's law, whether the law is to do with money or the appointment process, or any existing law in the country. I want to assure



this Parliament and the country that since we took the office in 2019, that was one of our resolution. In fact, in my maiden address to the Parliament on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019, not only myself, but all the leaders who were with me during that time talked about ensuring that the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act* be passed and the *Whistle-blowers Act* be passed, and making sure that the institution is established to combat corruption.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I would like to report to you and to the country through Parliament that the Independent Commission Against Corruption has been established by this Parliament.

I want to also appreciate all Members of the Parliament on both sides. The vision for setting up ICAC is not a new idea, it was there since the third or the second Parliament. In the 1980s the late Sir Anthony Siaguru amongst others talked about setting up this institution to fight corruption. But since the 80s up till 2019, there were no major moves made to establish such an organization. I would like to also recognize the previous O'Neill Government, they started some work but the matter did not reach the Parliament, it stopped short. Despite giving notices, the version that they carried out in 2014 and 2015 fell short of reaching the Parliament and for Parliament to setup the laws.

**09/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, I want to inform the country that the Organic Law on the Independent Commission Against Corruption has been passed by this Parliament in the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament and today we are working on this law to be operationalised.

I also want to report further that on the fight against corruption which we brought ICAC Law to be passed and also a sister law for a smooth flow of work has also been passed, which is the *Whistle Blowers Act*. This law will protect whoever reports the corruption in the country and their immediate boss must not terminate them from work or punish them if they happen to report corrupt practices.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I also want to inform the country that all Members of Parliament on both sides were not scared to pass this law which we amended on *Proceeds of Crime Act* in the last Parliament. That law was amended and there was an incision made for the undisclosed wealth provision to be included in the main law of the *Proceeds of Crime Act* to be recognised; whether you are a member of Parliament, minister of State, prime minister or public servant, we all live within the space of our income.

For instances, if you have ten cars that don't match your salary than ICAC, IRC or even police have all the right to come and investigate and must know the sources of having all these assets. These laws have been passed by the Members of Parliament.



Mr Assistant Speaker, I also want to inform this Parliament and the country that, don't think that all Members of Parliament on both sides are not sensitive to the issue of corruption in the country. If the leaders at this point in time were not sensitive on the issue of corruption, then the Government of Marape-Basil and later Marape-Rosso won't get that support to pass all these critical laws to stabilise the work to protect our country against this sickness of corruption. And so, leaders from last and this term are continuing in this work for it to bear fruit.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I also want to inform Parliament and the country that the process of selecting the Commissioner and the two Deputy Commissioners has been completed. We followed the concerns raised by the leaders and many commentators in our country that we must not select Papua New Guineans to take lead in this area of Independent Commission Against Corruption.

But an independent process has been taken to select the Commissioner and the two Deputy Commissioners. Which the Executive Government under my leadership doesn't have any input in this process. We appointed Transparency International to supervise this process so that the work of ICAC must start at a clean path right from day one. And so, Transparency International under the Chairmanship of Mr Peter Aitsi, supervises the process in appointing the Commissioner and the two Deputy Commissioners.

The only input that I recommended was with respect to the other Papua new Guineans that applied who must be given a fair go, but where possible, if foreigners go through the selection process and ranked first, then select them because they won't have any inter-connections within the country to run this very important office to fight corruption. So that from day one, they can commence their work as far as fighting corruption is concern.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I want to inform Parliament that two Australians and a New Zealander, all are very experienced persons; I think a former police prosecutors and a judge were appointed. I can't recall exactly their background but very competent applicants.

**10/05**

They have come through the due process that Transparency International has supervised. And the final appointment recommendations were made by the committee which includes the Chief Justice, the Opposition Leader and the Prime Minister. So, there was a qualified committee to appoint the ICAC Commissioners.

And we've already appointed the Commissioner and the two Assistant Commissioners; their letters of offer were sent to them and they all have accepted it. We are in the process to

ensure that the ICAC will be fully operational with funding set aside we are fully committed to the ICAC operations.

On the issue regarding Ombudsman Commission, I want to make it clear that the ICAC will not assume the role of Ombudsman Commission. The Ombudsman Commission's role is to look after people who are under the leadership code.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I want to say that as we setup ICAC and it becomes fully functional, we will also look holistically into reviewing and clarifying the role of Ombudsman Commission so that it can work publicly, especially for people who report to Ombudsman in response to the leadership roles.

There's an issue of double jeopardy. So, we will look into fixing that and leaders can have a clear path without bringing them into double jeopardy situation, where they exposed to two or three different offices that are running prosecution. So, there will be one clear part where leaders go through to respond to any issues pertaining to corruption that may arise in the future.

So, Ombudsman's role will not be diluted but clarified, augmented and amended for those areas where sometimes both organizations are handling the same task, and instead of progressing a matter they become stalled and held back. So, I want to inform the country that we have setup the ICAC and it's running. We've amended the relevant laws to assist ICAC's operation.

As soon as the Commissioner's take office, the organization will be functioning and moving forward. I hope before 16 September this year, the institution will be fully established. Let me encourage our society out there that not all leaders in here are corrupt, do not accuse them on Facebook.

If you have evidence file it before ICAC, Ombudsman and police. Put your evidence through Police, Ombudsman and later to ICAC. Facebook is not a police station nor is it the Ombudsman's Commission Office or ICAC. These body of leaders here in the tenth Parliament and this Parliament are conscious to the duty of the nation and both sides have responded, we passed ICAC already.

This Government stands ready to fund ICAC to go into operation and it is all our collective responsibility to report on corruption and the due process will be setup. And if someone is found to have acted improperly and engaged in corruption, the laws that we are setting up will catchup with him or her and hopefully they receive the penalties.

So, I am assuring the country that ICAC is being setup by these generations of leaders, and it's not James Marape only but all the leaders supporting it. We have established ICAC and we are ready for its operation this year. The commissioners have been appointed through



the independent oversight of Transparency International and we are ready to support this organization to prosecute and arrest corruption in our country.

Thank you, very much.

## **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS – EXTENSION OF QUESTION TIME**

Motion (by **Sir Puka Temu**) agreed to –

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the time for questions this day being extended by 20 minutes.

**11/05**

### **Housing - Review Eviction Process**

**Sir PUKA TEMU** – Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker. My questions goes to the Honourable Minister for Housing, if he is present in the House.

Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker, this morning as I was driving to Parliament, I bought one of the dailies, the *Post-Courier*. And on page five of the *Post-Courier* I saw a family with little children and their luggage outside the home they have been living in for 46 years. The reason reported in today's *Post-Courier* was that the new tenants went out to seek a Court Order to give another citizen who has been living there for 46 years a 24-hour notice with police support to evict this family and nowhere to go, and I believe they are still there.

Assistant Speaker, the reason why I am asking this question is because I have personally experienced this with two of my Abau citizens who have gone through the same process. Therefore, I have three questions to ask the honourable Minister for Housing.

(1) Can the honourable Minister for Housing review the process of eviction of our citizens in such situations? This family was living in this property for 46 years. He claims that he has no outstanding rental arrears and that he received the 24-hour notice from the Court and so he was moved illegally and another citizen moved in.

I believe the Housing Minister will have to bring some humanity into the eviction processes in this regard. And I strongly recommend to the Honourable House this process be never repeated to another citizen in this country. I ask the Minister to review the eviction processes and if it would have been proper for example, if the NHC would have informed the residing tenant that we have a new tenant and we are informing you that the house has changed

hands. Wouldn't it have been proper to do that rather than the new tenant goes to Court, brings the police and the 24-hour notice to evict another citizen of the country. I understand Mr Assistant Speaker, that they are still outside the House waiting for what to do.

This tenant went to Court because he doesn't have a title, the Court never listened to him. I personally feel Mr Assistant Speaker, that this is not fair, that is why I am asking the question.

(2) Given my experience from my citizens from Abau who went through the same process, can the Minister undertake an investigation on whether this new tenant went through the proper legal process.

**12/05**

Can the Minister guarantee and make a commitment that the investigation take place? From experience, this has been going on for too long. Ordinary citizens who have been living there have been unnecessarily removed because someone with money goes and bulldozes simple living laws. One of my experiences was that one ordinary citizen was removed and the Minister for Housing moved into that property. Those are the experiences. I am not saying that the current Minister for Housing has done that, but I am expressing an experience and we must all avoid these circumstances. We cannot use our privileged power to suppress another citizen who has no power at all. So, again, can the Minister make an undertaking to investigate whether this new tenant gained the title through proper legal means?

(3) Can the Minister also intervene to address this issue and give some certainty to that tenant that has been living there for 46 years?

It will require going to the court to put a stay order and allow the process by undertaking an investigation and get the families to go back to the residential home. These are the types of things that give assurance that the Government works. That our people need comfort and can trust the government of the day, and we are the government of the day. And so Minister, please, if you can do that, I am sure the family that has been shut out by a Court of law will have some relief, and hopefully, a more humane process can be undertaken and give relief to both parties and everyone is on a win-win situation.

**Mr KOBBO BOMAREO** – Mr Assistant Speaker, I thank the Member for Abau for his very important questions today. It is an honour today for me too as a new Minister to receive my first question from a very senior Member of Parliament.

I also take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to the Marape/Rosso Government for the appointment to this ministry. I also take this time to thank the Prime Minister where my



people and electorate gathered and forged their undivided support to contribute to pay the Prime Minister's nomination fee to win the elections and become the Prime Minister.

Let me go back to the questions. Yes, it is public knowledge that the Housing Ministry or department is riddled with a lot of problems. Most of these problems have accumulated over many years, and I have inherited all these problems and it is not easy to correct these issues.

As soon as I was appointed, I had my first meeting with the administration and instructed them to table all records relating to the status of NHC Houses throughout the country. Some of the people currently occupying those houses are fourth and fifth generation families.

Many properties are now before the Courts and others have been put up for sale erroneously.

My department is in the process of establishing this report so that we can all appreciate fully and understand the nature of this circumstances. Solving of these problems cannot happen overnight and it will take time and patience as we go along.

But I agree with the senior member, Member for Abau, that it is the duty of this Government to protect and serve its people and also provide affordable accommodation. It is the duty of the department to protect those tenants who have been residents of NHC properties.

**13/05**

Yesterday, there was also an eviction up in Jiwaka and I received a text message so I called up the police there and advised them to stop the eviction.

So, Member, before you asked your question, I have already instructed my lawyers to stop the eviction and then later I will go myself and see them.

To answer your question on the review of the process of eviction, the National Housing Commission has a process on who to evict identify if a tenant is not complying after being issued several notices and whether they are in breach of the notice. In this instant, I will have to find out and report back to you and this House. I believe that I gave an instruction in my maiden speech to stop evictions until we know the situations of the property.

You also asked about investigation, this is part of the Eviction Process of the National Housing Commission, as I mentioned earlier.

On the question of how to assist the families, I think I am assisting by advising against any eviction to stop and I will look into this matter to resolve it.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to use this opportunity to say that the Marape-Rosso Government, has been looking into how well it can support and cater for citizens at all classes from the cleaner to the manager to provide affordable accommodation.

I believe that this Government has supported my ministry and soon I will present a statement on how best we can accommodate the employed and unemployed who can be able to pay rentals because at the end of the day we want to see that everyone owns a house. We move around during the day but at night everyone goes back to their homes and it is also a right under the Human Rights to have a house, water and food.

So the Government has not forgotten they will still go ahead and ensure that our citizens have reasonable and affordable houses.

I thank the Member for Abau for his questions and I will get back to him in detail as soon as I find answers on the incidents that occurred and the one in Jiwaka.

Mr Assistant Speaker, there are some National Housing Commission officers who don't comply with Department's procedures and processes. I would also want to tell this House that in January, I removed five general managers for insubordination of instructions from the ministry office. We must adhere to the laws.

The National Housing Commission is corrupted, the ministers and managing directors of the past have corrupted the department so now we are trying to transform it. The officers of the Department know that under my leadership, that if you do not comply with the laws I will get rid of you. In the department I have mixed representation from all the regions of PNG not just one region of employees dominating the department.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

### **Air Niugini – Spike in Airfares**

**Mr JAMES DONALD** - Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for recognising the people of North-Fly. It doesn't mean that the Assistant Speaker is from Western province and he has giving me the opportunity to speak.

My question is directed to the Minister for State Enterprise regarding some issues that we are facing daily with Air Niugini.

There is a five per cent fee that Air Niugini charges for cash payments on airfares but if paying through EFTPOS you won't be charged extra. I want to know why they are doing this because not everyone has a bank card.

**14/05**

Think of those simple village people who carry cash in their hands. So, how could we be genuine in our service to the general public in that sense?

However, my two questions to the Minister are as follows:



(1) Can there be some undertaking by the Minister assuring that this style of practice would not happen again?

I am struggling to pay for the airfares. The ticket fare for Air Niugini from Port Moresby to Kiunga is K1, 800 for one way. It has increased by 40 to 50 per cent over the last one year. Normally, the airfares that we used to pay is around K700 to K800, and I am wondering what is really happening. I have tried to compare Air Niugini with other airline companies, for instance PNG Air charged around K800 to K900 and that is reasonable but for Air Niugini, it has gone that high so why is that? Is there anything wrong?

(2) Can an assessments be done and report to the House and tell us why Air Niugini has increased the airfares? Not only Kiunga sector but all sectors across the country. Please, I an undertaking to resolve this because if Air Niugini is our pride, where is their fairness to the citizens of this country?

Thank you.

**Mr WILLIAM DUMA** – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for North Fly for these very important questions.

Firstly, in relation to the cash handling fee, if our society were a law abiding society and our people respected the rule of law, it would be easy for all of us.

Air Niugini is forced to transfer, whatever it costs and whatever it takes, the passengers' cash payments. It is forced to engage security companies to move that cash. There is a cost of operating in a country like ours where the chances of Air Niugini sales office, just like any other businesses, being robbed is very high. So, unfortunately, these are costs that all of us need to pay and that reflects a society that we live in now.

So there is an extra cost that Air Niugini charges by collecting cash handling fees from our travelling public so people are now being encouraged not to carry cash but to try and use bank cards.

That also means getting things like our NID and everything else sorted out in this country.

Unfortunately, we have to bear the cost of doing business in this country. It is happening everywhere and Air Niugini is not the only one. Even the banks and others are charging cash handling fees.

In relation to the increase of airfares that are being charged by Air Niugini, yes, I agree. There's a problem there and I must admit before the Parliament that those inclusions were never approved by the Board of Air Niugini, never came before me as the Minister responsible and

for that reason together with other reasons, those people who were behind these acts were terminated. It is not for me to tell this Parliament or the public all the reasons why people have to go as they also have rights to defend themselves. So these are the least I can tell you. This is the only reason why Cabinet has to make a decision to let go of the CEO and we are looking at that aspect.

The Air Niugini's intention is to provide fares that are affordable for our people. It is not a company that is led by people who are blind. So, I must tell the Parliament that this is one of the reason why change has to be made to the senior executives of Air Niugini. There were two gentlemen who had to be asked to leave. So Air Niugini Board is now being asked to review the level of rates that are being imposed on our traveling public and we expect to be able to introduce a rate that is affordable for people.

Thank you

**15/05**

### **Highlands Highway Rehabilitation Program**

**Mr WILLIAM HAGAHUNO** – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister for Works and Highways.

Actually, this is a lead up from an earlier question that I posed to the minister early this year.

The question I asked was about the delay in completion of the rehabilitation of the Highlands Highway, the ADB funded project and the quality of the workmanship that was carried out. In the course of his answers, he informed the House, that the ADB, the financier selects the contractor and they also do the project management. That leads me to conclude that our Works Department is a spectator or a bystander in the whole process.

Now my questions stem from there. The concerns are that the roads are the property of the sovereign nation of Papua New Guinea and the state through the Department of Works performs our oversight functions or project managing and making sure there is quality and standard in the way the contractors carry out the work.

My concern and is also concern in this House, given the fact that the Government is spending a large chunk of the national budget on road works – is whether the work that is being carried out by the contractors is worth the money that we are spending. I have personal knowledge of the fact that the sealing of the Highlands Highway was carried out by a company called Dillingham Corporation. It started in the late 70s and was completed around the early



80s. For the next 40 years the workmanship that was put there withstood the test of times and now we are getting in new contractors to now do the rehabilitation.

But seeing the way the work has been carried out, every week they seal part of the road. They have to take them out again and seal them. That is the kind of workmanship we are getting under the current arrangements.

My questions are:

(1) Is it by design that the conditions of the loan arrangement state that we should leave the selection of contractors as well as the project supervision and management of those contracts to ADB, or is it by default on our part that we have been ignorant of the important fact of project management ensuring quality of the work that is done? So, we have ended up in this situation where works managers and engineers are pushed to the side and are bystanders now in the whole arrangement.

So that's the first question whether it's a condition of the loan, it's a design or whether it is by default or by our own ignorance and the loan negotiating team.

(2) If it is a condition of the loan, can the state negotiating team in future on projects such as this negotiate properly so that the state, who is the owner of the project that is for the benefit of our people, properly supervise, manage and oversee there is quality in the way work is delivered so that it lasts like what Dillingham Corporation did way back which lasted for 30-40 years without maintenance.

(3) Considering that it is costing our nation, our country and the people more than K3billion, the people have to dig deeper into their pockets to repay this loan, can your department carry out an audit of the whole Highway Rehabilitation Project as soon as it is completed?

This is so that this nation and the people are informed that we have got value for money for the kind of work the contractor has produced, and so that we have a guarantee that it's going to last the next 30 or 40 years, even if we do not come up with enough money to continue to maintain it. I do not want to see another road rehabilitation project as soon as a contractor packs up and leaves where the road falls into shambles and this government and the people go scrambling around for more money to repair the road again.

(4) When will the weighing station that was constructed at 10 Mile in Lae be used?

(5) Does the Works Department have any plans to put up weighing stations in all of the highways in the provinces to determine whether the allowable weight is being carried by vehicles so that there are no further damages done to roads; considering that we always have to scrape around to find money to maintain and rehabilitate roads?

16/05

When is it ever going to come into use? And does the Works Department have any plans to put up weighing stations in all of the highways in the provinces and that will determine whether the allowable weight is being carried by vehicles so that there are no further damages done to roads considering that we always have to scrape around to find money to maintain and rehabilitate roads.

**Mr SOLAN MIRISIM** – Thank you Mr Assistant Speaker. And I would like to thank the Member for Kainantu for his question. I believe this is his second time to raise this question and in response I would say that three weeks ago I was able to visit the Highlands highway, the journey began in Mendi and was completed in Lae Morobe province and I witnessed first hand the road conditions of the highland's highway. ADB has given us a loan to maintain this highway and work has begun in Lae in Bugandi. The four-lane work has begun and will be completed at Nadzab, from the Nadzab road turn over will continue and end at Kagamuga in Mt Hagen.

There are three contracts currently on this part of the road; there is one from Nadzab turn over to where it ends in Henganofi, the other from where the Member for Kainantu raised the question on. Before I continue, I want to assure the Member for Kainantu and the people of Eastern highlands province and also about 5-6 provinces on the western side of the highland's highway. That in two years the road conditions along the Highland's Highway will come to high standard. The travelling hours will be reduced.

The ADB has its loan conditions as well as conditions on awarding of contracts. They award the contracts to the contractor and the Department of Works only places managers to work with alongside the contractors because under the connect PNG Law we have a set up and the head office is based in Goroka. This is where we have the structure where all the contracted are working with our ADB awarded contractors who report back to the government, ensuring there is quality work and contractors are not sitting idle and meeting the standards set out by ADB so, this is a brief to your first question.

I would like to assure the House and the people of this country that Works department does not compromise, we put managers to work with the ADB contracts to ensure work monitoring and report back to the government. You will note that the work is in progress and the road conditions will gradually be better. From the Nadzab road turn over which will finish in Henganofi bridge is about 207km and so it has been cut into three sections. That is from Nadzab



to Waterise and starting from Watarise up to Kassam Pass and all the way to Kainantu, the road will be completed soon. The third phase is from Kainantu to Henganofi Bridge. I have talked to the contractor to get more machines and men so that the work must be completed.

**17/05**

I want to assure the Member for Kainantu and the people of Eastern Highlands, that the road will be delivered after October. This section of the road will be completed so that people can travel.

In response to your second question about audits, we are currently working on it. We will have professionals to go and conduct audits on every road in the Connect-PNG Program when the contractors have completed them. We want value for money. This government is serious about making sure that work must be done according to the money given. Audit teams are already in place and will be starting to conduct audits on the roads from the monies given by donors and the Connect-PNG Program.

The Department of Works have a plan in place to have weighing stations. Fees collected from the weighing stations will be used to maintain the roads and bridges. The weighing stations are in progress now to review for implementation.

While waiting for the government to give us money, we will also have money coming in. These monies will be used to do emergency works; for instance, landslips do occur in some bridges and roads anytime. We can be able to repair them because we do have money from these projects. These are plans in place and we are working on it.

Let me assure the Member, his people in Eastern Highlands and the people of Papua New Guinea that the Connect-PNG Program is real and it will be delivered. I want to let the Member know that his road will be completed and soon he will not need to ask questions anymore. This is also to inform other leaders and members from the Highlands Region and PNG as well.

Thank you.

**Mr ASSISTANT SPEAKER** – Honourable Members, question time have lapsed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA - REPORT OF THE  
AUDITOR-GENERAL – PART VI, 2021, PAPER –  
MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

The following Paper was presented pursuant to statute:

*Auditor-General Report, Part VI - relating to the accounts of public authorities and statutory bodies and government-owned companies for the year 2021.*

**Mr RICHARD MASERE** (Popondetta) – I move –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper and that the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts.

Motion so agreed to.

Paper Referred.

**CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY AUTHORITY – ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2020  
AND 2021 –PAPERS AND STATEMENT –PAPER NOTED**

**Mr WALTER SCHNAUBELT** (Namatanai–Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation)  
– I present the following papers pursuant to statute:

*Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Annual Reports for the years, 2020 and 2021.*

I ask leave of the Parliament to make a statement in connection with the Report.

Leave granted.

**18/05**

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to present in this Honourable House, my statement on the performance of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Papua New Guinea in 2021 and 2020.



Mr Assistant Speaker, I am pleased to present to Parliament, the 2021 CASA Annual Report which is the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Authority since its establishment in 2010 and the Report includes the statement of the activities of the Authority during the year and the annual financial statements of the Authority prepared under the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended).

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG was unable to present its 2020 Annual Report to Parliament in 2021, therefore, I am presenting it to Parliament along with the 2021 CASA Annual Report. The 2020 Annual Report is the 11<sup>th</sup> Report of CASA since its establishment.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the operation of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Papua New Guinea has again met the expectations of the Government, the aviation industry and the public, in ensuring that safety and security is maintained and enhanced within an increasingly complex and challenging environment.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG did not have a Board in 2021, due to circumstances beyond the control of its management. The appointment and swearing in of the new Board of Directors were recently completed. In 2020, a six-member Board, provided governance oversight over CASA PNG. The then Board of Directors' involvement in CASA PNG in 2020, shaped and influenced the strategic direction for CASA PNG, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2020 2022.

Mr Assistant Speaker, it is important that we have an effective and efficient aviation safety and security regulator, because a safe aviation environment contributes towards social and economic development of Papua New Guinea and raises PNG's profile at the international level.

Mr Assistant Speaker, building organization capability to meet the expectation of the aviation industry and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), continued to be CASA PNG's challenges and I commend the CASA staff for continuing to perform exceptionally well. The various programmes, objectives and targets being pursued under the ICAO 'No Country Left Behind' initiative to assist States in capacity building also assisted CASA PNG in 2021 and 2020.

**19/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), set out regional expectation priorities and targets for States to meet the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Effective Implementation (EI) range of scores, in which the smaller Island States of the Pacific saw a compelling need for

improvement and CASA PNG is actively engaged in forging stronger regional cooperation, partnerships and engagement in this area.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the direction and objectives for aviation safety and security in PNG, follows the regional expectation and supports CASA's vision to be respected as an industry regulator and as a partner in regional and international civil aviation and its mission to promote compliance and achieve safety and security outcomes in PNG through positive and productive engagement with its stakeholders.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA is a growing organisation facing a number of challenges in the aviation environment which is evolutionary. Its strategic direction sets a clear pathway in addressing the challenges and to facilitate change in a gradual, staged approach, allowing CASA to absorb and benefit from these changes, assessing the risk before making the decision to proceed with others.

Mr Assistant Speaker, aviation safety regulation is a global operation, across borders, not isolated to one country. The aviation challenges faced by PNG differ to those in other countries and it is particularly beneficial for PNG to maintain its presence at the ICAO forums to collaborate with other States on common aviation related issues.

Mr Assistant Speaker, recent estimates suggest that demand for air transport will increase by an average of 4.3 per cent per annum over the next 20 years. This growth is likely to pose many challenges for PNG.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the rapid growth of the remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS) and drones industry, has resulted in significant and multiple challenges for PNG, to deliver our mandate and meet the needs and expectations of the industry. CASA has identified key areas of concern and has reviewed and developed its operating rules that are being implemented. CASA is continuing with its efforts to address the remotely piloted aircraft system (R-PAS) oversight and surveillance, including capacity building of its inspectors and is improving PNG's R-PAS regulations to ensure alignment with ICAO standards and recommended practices (SARPs).

Mr Assistant Speaker, today, cyber threats are of growing concern to civil aviation and CASA PNG is required to refocus its efforts for a proactive and aligned collective response.

Mr Assistant Speaker, from CASA's perspective, new technologies and changes to the aviation environment, have a significant impact on resources required to support technical training for inspectors, development of new CASA policies and procedures, stakeholder consultation and communications, and legislation development and implementation.



**20/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, when safety and security incidents and serious incidents are reported, the most serious incidents in aircraft accidents are investigated by the PNG Accident Investigation Commission, to determine the root-cause factors that have contributed to the incident, with the aim of preventing future occurrences.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG also uses these reports, to conduct trend analysis to build a picture of how prevalent certain types of incidents are in different type of aviation operations. This helps CASA to design policies, propose new safety standards and oversight strategies to improve aviation safety and security.

Mr Assistant Speaker, from a safety perspective, significant changes increase the risks and CASA was able to mitigate these risks through regulatory interventions, increase surveillance and imposition of conditions and implementation of a risk-based approach in auditing.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA's Corporate Plan Key Objectives, sets the strategic direction and either relies on or would benefit from regional and international engagement with neighboring aviation regulators, to collaborate and adopt best practices that would assist PNG in addressing the challenges and risks.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG's long-term objective is the implementation of a robust civil aviation safety and security system, that will become integral to the civil aviation systems of the future. CASA continues to assess the growth in the civil aviation sector, domestically and globally, to identify emerging challenges and risks. The strategies on addressing the challenges and mitigating the emerging risks, are set in its Corporate Plan to ensure that it achieves its long-term objective.

Mr Assistant Speaker, for benchmarking purposes and as an ongoing performance indicator for investment, in 2021 PNG had an ICAO Effective Implementation score of 60.7 per cent for safety oversight, against a global average of 67.5 per cent. The scores are based on an assessment of our responses to the eight critical elements of aviation safety, that addresses the standards that set out in the Annexes to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation.

Mr Assistant Speaker, Papua New Guinea maintained its aviation safety International Civil Aviation Organization Effective Implementation target, above the Global Aviation Safety Plan and the Asia Pacific Regional target of 60.1 per cent, and work is continuing on the deficient areas to improve further, as PNG focus on the Beijing Declaration — a commitment made by the Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Ministers in Beijing, to progressively enhance safety

oversight capability to achieve a Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme EI score, higher or equal to the global average by 2022.

**21/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG continues to focus efforts towards improving the ICAO EI scores for both aviation safety and security. This includes achievements of full implementation of the State Safety Programme and Safety Management System, to facilitate the pro-active management of safety risks.

Mr Assistant Speaker, Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) indicates that a State Is not providing sufficient safety oversight, to ensure the effective implementation of applicable ICAO Standards. SSCs may be issued in the area of operations, air navigation services, aerodromes, airworthiness or licensing. I am pleased to report that PNG has no significant safety concerns.

Mr Assistant Speaker, In the area of certification of International Aerodromes, ICAO has considered that PNG has satisfactorily promulgated regulations detailing the requirements for the certification of aerodromes, including establishing a process for the certification of aerodromes.

Mr Assistant Speaker, PNG has not been assessed by the Federate Aviation Administration (FAA), through their International Aviation Safety Audit (IASA) programme. This is a long-term strategy that CASA will now be embarking on with the airlines.

Mr Assistant Speaker, PNG has no operational restrictions with regard to European airspace and PNG has only one airline (Air Niugini) certified through the International Air Transport Association Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) programme.

Mr Assistant Speaker, In the area of State Safety (SSP) Implementation, PNG is at level three at 95.2 per cent above the target and moving towards level four. Our overall SSP foundation is currently at 91.19 per cent. The full implementation of SSP is now part of CASA's strategy, following the attainment of over 60% Effective Implementation score.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the implementation of Performance-Based Navigation (PBN) is presently the global aviation community's highest air navigation priority, The PBN concept offers significant benefits including improved safety through more straight-in instrument approaches with vertical guidance, increased airspace capacity, increased airport accessibility, more efficient operations, reduced infrastructure costs and reduced environmental impact. PNG's international airports have two (2) instrument runways which



have two (2) PBN approaches that result in our PBN implementation ICAO rating at 100 per cent.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA continued in 2021 with its data-driven, risk-based approach, to proactively monitor emerging safety trends within each certificated organization in PNG. The monitoring of trends, enabled CASA to allocate its limited human resources to focus on high-risk areas and measure the effectiveness of its safety certification audit and surveillance program.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the results of CASA's trend analysis of aviation safety and security data, enables CASA to engage with the industry by communicating "issues of concern" directly to each air operator and/or take the appropriate enforcement action, to prevent incidents or accidents from happening.

**22/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, through trend analysis and risk-based approach auditing; CASA was able to monitor any 'build up' of latent unsafe conditions within each organization in a timely manner.

Mr Assistant Speaker, statistics for the last seven years indicated a slight fluctuation in the number of serious incidents and bird-strikes, however, the trend analysis shows a steady trend during that period,

Mr Assistant Speaker, the number of serious incidents reported to CASA by the industry, decreased from 108 in 2020 to 98 in 2021.

Mr Assistant Speaker, significant achievements have also been achieved by the Authority, demonstrated by the completion of the audit of the Financial Statements of CASA for year ended 31st December 2021 and year ended 31st December 2020, and the results of the audits from the Auditor-General forwarded to my Office, advising me of the results of his inspection.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA regulates aviation participants within PNG, with a very modern set of legislative framework that meets international best practices in aviation safety. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has rated Papua New Guinea as having one of the best piece of Primary Aviation Safety legislation (the Act) in place.

Mr Assistant Speaker, reviews of subordinate aviation safety rules set, that are linked to support the primary legislation, were also conducted and completed in 2021 and 2020 respectively, following consultation with the aviation industry and stakeholders.

Mr Assistant Speaker, PNG is a strong advocate for the Pacific region on aviation safety and security matters. We continue to play a significant leading role among the smaller Pacific island states, through the Regional Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO); a regional body established by the Pacific Islands Forum leaders, to ensure aviation safety and security oversight is effective in order to meet the international obligations required of us, under the ICAO Convention on International Civil Aviation.

Mr Assistant Speaker, as a member of PASO, it is particularly beneficial for PNG to maintain its presence at PASO meetings, to collaborate with other smaller Pacific island states on common aviation-related issues and challenges.

Mr Assistant Speaker, PNG's leadership supports our platform to be a partner in regional and international civil aviation and further demonstrates our credibility in this very highly technical and specialized field, commensurate with the extensive aviation infrastructures we have in PNG.

**23/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA has safety-related functions aimed at encouraging the aviation industry to maintain and enhance high standards of safety, through compliance with the appropriate rules and the development and evolution of a safety culture. CASA undertakes these functions. Through accurate and timely aviation safety advice; comprehensive safety education and training programs; and fostering awareness within the industry and the community, on the fundamental importance of aviation safety.

Mr Assistant Speaker, as CASA's stakeholders and clients are individuals or groups who are affected by a CASA activity, CASA has a large and diverse number of stakeholders, clients, and safety partners. Its approach to stakeholder engagement sits within a key objective of its Corporate Plan and is guided by its vision, mission, and values.

Mr Assistant Speaker, as part of its strategies to engage with stakeholders CASA successfully hosted the 2021 Annual High-Level Aviation Safety and Security Conference virtually, with action items tracked. The theme of the Conference: "Adapting & Digital Sustaining PNG Aviation amidst the Pandemic", enabled the participants to discuss fundamentals that were a pillar for adaptation and sustainability in the aviation sector during any given pandemic. It was important that policymakers, regulators, and the aviation industry collaborate together, to ensure appropriate policies and legislative framework is established for the industry in PNG. A total of 125 participants took part in the Conference with a good representation from international organizations, including the PNG Department of PM & NEC,



the Department of Transport, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Civil Aviation Minister's Office.

Mr Assistant Speaker, in the area of aviation security oversight, CASA has increased the allocation of resources to its Aviation Security Branch, to ensure effort is put into addressing the protocol questions and the three Significant Security Concerns (SSECs), in the areas of Airport Operations, Passenger and Baggage, Security and Cargo, which were identified by a Combined Assistance Technical Mission in 2019. Monthly progress reports are being sent to ICAO, providing updates on the implementation of PNG's Corrective Action Plan.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the 2021 Recurrent Budget appropriation of K15.2 million was a decrease of 3.5 per cent from the 2020 appropriation of K15.8 million, CASA PNG continued to face inconsistencies in the grant disbursement in 2021 and 2020.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA implemented measures to counteract this reduction, as well as, the inconsistencies of the grant disbursement, to ensure that funding did not erode further to a point where, it would seriously impact aviation safety and security oversight responsibilities and has vigorously pursued its outstanding debts.

Mr Assistant Speaker, in terms of staff liabilities, there were no outstanding staff liabilities, apart from the payments made to staff exiting the organization through resignation, medical condition, or contract expiration, in 2021 and 2020. Provisions are maintained for accrued gratuities, annual leave, and long service leave.

**24/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG's organisation structure and approved positions remained at 104 positions. This has remained for the last three years and while CASA is continually seeking from the government for more positions, it has been very difficult to obtain approval.

Mr Assistant Speaker, CASA PNG's management is committed to ensuring that the organisation is appropriately staffed with qualified and experienced personnel, capable of successfully undertaking the wide variety of required regulatory task, but they are being hampered by the limited number of positions which are not allowing the organisation to grow together with growth in the industry.

Mr Assistant Speaker, it is important that the functions of CASA are recognised and supported to ensure growth commensurate with industry growth and that it can attract and retain qualified, experienced and skilled staff to ensure that the organization is credible and respected when it interacts with the industry.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the increase in organisation's position to permit increase in staff number, is therefore critical in light of a significant increase in the volume and scope of aviation activities including improvements in technology in PNG.

Mr Assistant Speaker, the functions of CASA PNG and its strategic direction are consistent with the Government's development agenda and is aligned with and support the achievement of the government goals for aviation safety and security. It includes consistency with PNG's Vision 2050 and the Transport Sector goal for "a well-integrated, competitive, safe, affordable, financially and environmentally sustainable transport system that efficiently serves the economy and society of Papua New Guinea".

Mr Assistant Speaker, finally, for this Government, the safety and security of the travelling public is the most important priority. The public expects us, the Government to be responsible in ensuring that aeroplanes are safe to fly, the airports are safe to operate into and the associated aeronautical infrastructure are modernized and meets international standards.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I commend the 2021 and 2020 Annual Reports provided by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Papua New Guinea and ask the Government to lend its support to this very important safety agency.

Thank you.

**Mr LUTHER WENGE** (Morobe) – I move –

That Parliament take note of the paper.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to make few debates in relation to the Report of Civil Aviation and Safety Authority in our country, Papua New Guinea.

**25/05**

Mr Assistant Speaker, I rise to contribute to the debate on the Civil Aviation Safety Authority report presented by the Minister for Civil Aviation, which extends to the world its operations because Papua New Guinea is not alone; we are a member of the international community.

Mr Minister and Mr Assistant Speaker, I'd like to thank the Minister for providing succinctly the situation in relation to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and secondly, comprehensively providing the report that this parliament should know and should disseminate to the rest of the country.



As I said, Mr Assistant Speaker, we are not alone, Papua New Guinea is not alone, Papua New Guinea is a member of the international community, especially in the manner in which we operate, particularly in relation to aerodrome safety or safety of aerodrome operators, safety of pilots flying from PNG and to the international community, and the safety of the travelling public flying to and from PNG and to the international community, as well as monitoring criminal acts which we call cyber-crime from coming into this country and into the operations or mechanical operations of aircraft and other apparatus and machines that we have and how it affects them.

I thank the Minister for providing this to parliament, especially in relation to the Government's commitment to provide money to train people who are working in specialised areas that I have mentioned, to make sure that they are competent and experienced in making sure that the operations they're required to perform are provided in the best possible way so that safety is guaranteed to the users of the aircraft and anything that is relevant.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I'm also happy with the Office of Auditor-General, the constitutional established office that audit books of government operations in this country. They have done the audits to make sure that there is compliance by CASA. And I'm happy to know that CASA has complied with the utility of the money that is provided and also any other apparatus that is relevant to the operation of the aircraft, et cetera have been audited.

And I'm' happy to know from the Minister that there is no misuse of money in the operations. And, Mr Minister, Mr Assistant Speaker, that is what this country needs to know.

Mr Assistant Speaker, there is no question, our record is good and I fully concur with the Minister's presentation that we are in order. We are in order as to all those machineries, apparatus, aerodrome and the pilots and all those people who are trying to make sure that operation of all those things are in order. I'm happy to know that there's not much problem in this country.

**26/05**

Not many accidents occurred in relation to Air Niugini. There is probably only one in Madang but it was from a technical fault, there were no casualties. The plane was damaged but all the passengers were safe. Furthermore, one of the aircrafts sank into the water in one of the Micronesian countries and again there were no serious casualties and everyone including the pilot were safe.

Mr Minister, you are reporting on the competency of the people who are working there and their compliance. The compliance of the rules by those people working there is excellent.

They ensure that the aircraft is running well and that it reaches its destination safely. The passengers are well taken care for, including international passengers and lands at international destinations without difficulties, this very good news.

I am happy to note that none of our pilots have made any mistakes while flying internationally, as they are well trained and are able to manage the aircraft and they are able to manage the topography of the countries they are travelling to and from. They manage to maneuver the plane against the wind and other airborne conditions that aircrafts face. I want to say our pilots have a good record and there is no question about that as we already gained the respect of the international community. We heard about the Malaysian plane that crashed, probably it was interfered by cyber-attack that caused it to crash where no body survived. We here of air crashes in Turkey, Russia and even in well advanced countries. And they have a record of their planes crashing.

Mr Assistant Speaker, with this record of only two minor crashes and no casualties we have a very good record. In line with Nadzab that is gearing up to be an international terminal, I take this time to thank this government and the others who were instrumental in making this project possible, as well as grants from the Japanese Government to assist in upgrading Nadzab to international status.

With this confidence when we sanctioned the Nadzab International Airport we should fly direct to some of the countries that will allow our national aircraft carrier Air Niugini and that will help us build the economy of our country. We will need direct flights to China, Japan, Philippines and to Australia and the rest of the Pacific nations.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I am sure when the Nadzab International Airport is inaugurated the I am sure you will endorse those flights and surely, I will be requesting those international connections to and from Nadzab. Therefore, on that basis we should fly direct from Nadzab to other international destinations and we do not have to enroute to Jacksons International Airport.

**27/05**

When people ask you where you are travelling from, you will say directly from Kandep. The people from Sepik, Bougainville and the Highlands regions too can travel directly from where they are instead of transiting through Port Moresby.

The Minister has assured us through his report that our planes are safe, as well as the people operating the aircrafts. People are complying with the Civil Aviation laws in PNG as well as the international laws.



We have the respect and trust from our country and also from the international community that our planes are safe. The stewards and stewardess will make sure that we fly safely. We have a track record since independence. Since Air Niugini started operations in the country, they have experienced only two crash.

Thank you, Mr Minister, for assuring the country that our safety is guaranteed when we fly with our airlines. We have to set standards on our safety when travelling by road, sea and in the air. Investors coming in will be guaranteed and will be confident to do business with us.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker, for allowing me to speak. I want to commend the Minister and his staff for the report, and also to offer my support to him.

**Mr DOUGLAS TOMURIESA** (Kiriwina-Goodenough) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. I also want to commend the Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation for a well-presented report. I am sure that the people of Papua New Guinea are happy, as well as the travelling public.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I will try to make my debate short. On page five of the report, it shows very high ratings from the travelling public. We are slowly moving from three up to four. This report gives comfort to the travelling public, as well as the leaders present here too.

Many a times, we express negativity towards the operators of our airlines. At this juncture, I want to commend CASA for doing a great job with its continuous endeavours to make certain that as an organization involved with the airline industry, performs at the highest level.

**28/05**

I wish to commend CASA, with its limited funding it continues to perform at the International Level Standard set by the airline industry and continues to perform at that level.

As a traveller of this airline, today's report gives me assurance that I have an eye watching the industry and that is CASA. CASA continues to perform its duties and for this House to report for the rest of Papua New Guinea to hear, is very encouraging. It gives the traveling public comfort and confidence that one of the safest mode of travel would be the airline industry.

There are many times we hear about boats sinking and cars crashing which becomes like a monthly occurrence but in the airline industry there are very minimal accidents. CASA is performing their mandated responsibility as a regulator in the airline industry. And now it

presents us with a challenge of the performance of Air Niugini, Airlines PNG and other third-level airline operators.

I would like to commend CASA, that with the very limited funding as we know from the budgets but it continues to perform and today gives us that confidence and endeavour as a House to support this industry.

I would like to also take this opportunity to commend the management of CASA with this report that was presented today. We heard the Prime Minister talk about corruption where ICAC and the Police were involved but here we have an organization that does not owe anybody any money. This is the type of reports we want to hear from organizations because now it gives other organizations the challenge to be like CASA. How many organizations can come out with positive reports like this?

Today's report gives us a time that we can ponder upon and discuss that a government organization is performing well. There is nothing negative that I can say here but I would like to contribute in saying that now CASA gives the challenge to Air Niugini, Airlines PNG and other third-level airlines to rise to the occasion to meet the challenges that CASA has outlined in the report.

Finally, before I sit, let me once again congratulate CASA for this report and I would also want to thank the Minister, and the previous ministers for a job well done.

Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker.

**Mr SAM BASIL JNR** (Bulolo) – Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker for allowing me to speak on my first debate as the new Member for Bulolo.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I am a commercial holder and I feel that I have to speak on this report. I would like to thank the Minister for Civil Aviation and CASA PNG.

**29/05**

I commend the report and I will make a few remarks which I know will add value to the report presented by the Minister in relation to CASA PNG.

The reason being that CASA must have teeth when in operation and the general public must follow its rules and guidelines by taking lead in safety of the aviation industry. It's no good hearing about service providers ignoring the rules and guidelines of CASA.

In relation to that I will elaborate on the aviation documents which doesn't concerns the pilots only but includes the security firms engaged inside and outside of the precincts of the airport. And that brings back to fit and proper persons which covers everyone from operators,



pilots and the security guards manning the gates. They all must be protected under the fit and proper guidelines to carry out their duties. If they are not properly guided by the rules then disruptions of operations can happen such as security firms disrupting the flights.

I am glad that the Minister has presented a good report regarding CASA which we all agreed on. But at the same time CASA must be a leader in aviation industry, especially in security and safety which means sticking to that name by enforcing it.

The other point is on third-level airline operators; I personally think that most of them are not properly operated therefore I recommend CASA to monitor them closely because most of them operate on visual flight rules (VFR) so they must have all the necessary documents in place.

The other thing I have noticed missing is we don't have aeronautical information publication (AIP). It must be current because the aerodrome normally guides the pilots to stick within the spot to land, park and where to refill. All these important information is provided by this aerodrome and it's called the 'bible' of the pilots.

Not all pilots train in one particular school to become pilots, they get their training in different countries to get their licenses. Therefore, CASA must take lead in standardizing all the aviation laws under the guidance of IKO so everybody will follow this standard instead of operating individually.

That's all I want to contribute and I commend the report. I also thank the hardworking officers of CASA for bringing safety to PNG and the international flights.

Thank you.

Motion (by **Mr Keith Iduhu**) – put

That the question be now put.

Motion – That the Parliament take note of the paper – agreed to.

Paper noted.

## ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Rainbo Paita**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.15 p.m.