



Work and election officers must maintain neutrality

It's high time in Papua New Guinea. Working for the public service in 2022 means to remain vigilant to the pandemic, exercising care and neutrality during the National General Election and keeping the business of government moving forward.

The writs for the National Election has been issued and voting would commence soon in the coming days. During this time, the public service is exposed to unwarranted claims, special favours and intended candidates seeking confidential information from public office holders to discredit their opponent. It is high time for public servants to skip duties and find opportunities during the campaign periods.

The experiences of the past must be lessons for us to maintain neutrality, practice leadership and uphold the Public Service General Orders and the Public Service Management Act during this election time and focus on keeping the business of government moving forward.

During this time, we will witness constant movements and large gatherings that may possibly be a receipt for coronavirus. We assume the pandemic is dormant and I am hoping that we must practice safe hygiene, wearing of masks and social distancing this period.

Despite all that, I am pleased to announce that ICA will continue to maintain service delivery to our people and our clients this election period. Our passport office at Koitachi House and the Work Permit and Visa lodgement service area at the Central Government Office (CGO) including the Provincial and Regional Posts will continue normal operations. We may consider options for office operations in selected hotspot provinces on a case by case basis.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the new Minister for Immigration and Border Security Hon. Bryan Kramer, MP. Minister Kramer will have oversight in this Ministry until the return of the writs. Furthermore, I congratulate the outgoing former Minister Hon. Westly Nukundi Nukundj, MP for his leadership over the last three years.

I wish both Ministers the best in the elections.

Stanis Hulahu
Chief Migration Officer



Spot Check Ops

K5.4 million in total fees collected

The Chief Migration Officer, Stanis Hulahu has commended efforts made by all participating members of the Joint Spot Check Operations team that carry out compliance operations in selected provinces early this year and assured them that similar operations would resume after the elections.

"The joint spot check team has done extremely well in the first quarter and I am pleased with the level of cooperation and team work demonstrated by participating agencies including police, Labour department and other agencies who teamed up with ICA Compliance, Enforcement and Work Permit Officers on these operations," Mr Hulahu said.

The CMO reported that Immigration has spent slightly over K700,000 in direct funding to meet expenditure costs of the Spot Checks operations in seven provinces

and in return the team has raised over K5.4 million in total for penalty charges, fines and infringement notices issued to non-compliant non-citizens and companies.

The Spot Check operations were carried out in New Ireland, Central, Nation's Capital, Morobe, Madang and East and West Sepik provinces in the first quarter of 2022.

Mr Hulahu said the team has uncovered a significant number of the non-compliant foreign companies and individuals especially in the retail and logging industries who knowingly or unintentionally continue to breach the Migration Act and the Foreign Employment Act and as a result have to pay hefty fines and penalties.

Mr Hulahu assured the members of the Joint Agency Task Force that Spot Check activities would resume after the election.

Two US citizen deported for illegal entry

A couple from the United States (USA) who illegally entered Papua New Guinea and engaged in alluvial mining activity with locals from the eastern coast of Central Bougainville were deported, the Chief Migration Officer, Stanis Hulahu announced early this month.

Bradley and Christine Noffsinger, US citizens, were arrested by police and immigration officials in Central Bougainville and flown out to the US state of Los Angeles on the 12th of June.

"The couple entered the country through an unauthorized port of entry without legal entry permits," the Chief Migration Officer said.

"In September 2020, they loaded their small boat with undocumented alluvial mining equipment and sailed into South Bougainville through the Tonolei harbour where they were apprehended and charged for unlawful entry. The equipment were forfeited to the State"

"ICA has a duty of care and has provided hotel accommodation to the couple during the Covid-19 period and the closure of international borders. We have given them the option to voluntarily return but after all means were exhausted we have now deported them," Mr Hulahu said.



Chinese fugitive removed

The Chief Migration Officer has announced the removal of a 45 year old men of Chinese origin from Port Moresby to stand trial in China for allegedly operating a 'pyramid money scheme'.

Sun Peng, the primary suspect who allegedly conned almost 24,000 people in Shandong province in China to subscribe to his illegal money scheme that Chinese police claimed have raised approximately K129.5 million in total for his own use.

Police in Shandong province reported that Sun Peng escaped arrest and prosecution and fled to the Republic of Zimbabwe. The Chinese Authorities then uploaded his identity on the international police (Interpol) database with a red notice.

The Chief Migration Officer said the suspect then managed to change his name to Donald Song last year and obtained a Vanuatu passport for himself and his Chinese origin wife. He used his

new passport to travel to the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, Dominican Republic and the United States of America (USA) without detection.

Early this year, the suspect applied for a Papua New Guinea Visa without disclosing his criminal records. He entered the country on 28 March 2022 with his Chinese origin wife and his business partner who is a USA citizen. His wife also holds a Vanuatu passport.

Mr Hulahau said ICA received request from Interpol China through the Lyon Interpol in France to assist with tracking the suspect as he was assumed to be travelling into PNG. The Immigration Compliance and Enforcement officers with assistance from police and other intelligence organizations apprehended the suspect with his wife and business partner at the Jacksons International Airport as they about to depart. They were detained at the Bomana Immigration Centre (BIC). The suspect confessed his real identity as Sun Peng and admitted to be fully aware of his red notice on Interpol. CMO Hulahau said the suspect was escorted by immigration officers to Singapore where he will be handed over to Interpol police. The suspect will face criminal charges in Shandong, China and if found guilty he can face a maximum jail time of 15 years for the crime of organizing and leading pyramid selling activities. Mr Hulahau said PNG has no extradition treaty with the People's Republic of China and repatriating him to his country of origin where the crime was committed is legally not possible. He remind foreign criminals to think twice as PNG is a member of the international police and ICA has access to the Interpol database that makes security at points of entry and departure resilient.



ICA and NGCB staff after the signing ceremony. Below: CMO Mr Hulahau and IPA Managing Director Mr Clarence Hoot exchange the signed MOU.

ICA signs MOU on cooperation and information sharing with IPA and NGCB.

We are excited to conclude two Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the same day in the month of April with two important State Agency, the Investment Promotion Authority (IPA) and the National Gaming Control Board (NGCB).

The MOU would strengthen the existing relationship ICA has with the two agencies respectively and would provide a pathway for information sharing and cooperation on matters of mutual interests.

CMO Mr Hulahau said the IPA and NGCB are critical partners that immigration would need their assistance on information regarding company ownership and registration, joint compliance and enforcement activities and many other areas that ICA needs information on including applications for citizenship.

Chief Executive Officer of NGCB Ms Imelda Agon said the MOU with ICA is the first of its kind for her organization and they are happy to

step into such partnership as they look forward to expand the Gaming Industry in the country with the introduction of new games that soon will be available.

Mr Clarence Hoot, Managing Director of IPA said "we recognize the importance of the relationship and wish to strengthen the relationship further through the provision of timely, effective and efficient exchange of information."



CAC Board commence meeting

The long awaited Citizenship Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting has finally commenced on the 29th of April in Port Moresby after the successful appointment and swearing-in of the CAC Board Members.

The Board Members are Francis Maneke-Talasea MP (Chairman), William Nakin – North Bougainville MP (Deputy Chairman), Dr. Eric Kwa - Secretary for the Department of Justice and Attorney General and Mr. Stanis Hulahau - Chief Migration Officer, as members of the CAC.

The Board members were sworn-in on 08 April 2022 at the Government House in Konedobu. The ceremony paves way for the board to commence its first meeting to deliberate on citizenship applications that were pending for a long time.

CMO Mr Hulahau is pleased with the establishment of the new CAC board and is hoping that the board would make at least three sittings before the election drops in and the appointments would be nullified.

Mr Hulahau said serving on the Citizenship Advisory Committee (CAC) is a great way to be of service to the Papua New Guinea community through independent and fair judgement on all citizenship applications.



The CAC Board members.

Over 250 Work Permit applications cancelled

The Work Permit branch has reported cancellation of over 250 Work Permit applications between January and March this year while integrating comfortably into the ICA operational space.

The Chief Migration Officer has commended efforts made by the 32 officers from the Work Permit branch who worked tirelessly to accommodate changes made during the transition period and to facilitate the large volume of applications in the first quarter of the year.

Statistics shows a total of 257 Work Permit applications were cancelled between January

and March this year for a number of reasons including inaccurate information and non-compliance.

During the same period, a total of 2,217 successful applications were issued with work permits. These permits covers new, short term, bridging and renewals.

Mr Hulahau said work permit alone has generated K23,770,800 in the first quarter.

"These statistics shows the commitment and dedication from the staff and I'm optimistic that we can have good results by end of the year," said the CMO.



Mr Taunakekei is sworn-in as a Board member.

ICSA Advisory Board

The Chairman of the Immigration and Citizenship Services Authority (ICSA) Advisory Board Dr. Eric Kwa has officially welcomed the inclusion of the Acting Secretary for the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations (DLIR) Mr. George Taunakekei as a member of the board.

Mr Taunakekei was sworn-in as a member of the ICSA Advisory Board on Monday 25 April 2022 during the first quarter Board meeting held at the Loloata private Island resort.

The inclusion of the DLIR Acting Secretary into the ICSA Advisory Board is conforming to the amendments under the Immigration and Citizenship Services Act 2010 and the Employment of Non-Citizens Act 2007 that requires the appointment of DLIR Secretary to become a board member.

The ICSA Advisory Board meets quarterly and deliberate on the operational, policy and legal advice to the Chief Migration Officer and the Minister for Immigration and Border Security.

The current ICSA Advisory Board Members are Dr. Eric Kwa, Secretary for the Department of Justice and Attorney General (Chairman), Mr. Elias Wohengu, Secretary for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Deputy Chairman), Mr. Stanis Hulahau, Chief Migration Officer, Mr. David Manning, Police Commissioner, Mr. Tess Wingi – Deputy Secretary, Department of PM and NEC*, Mr Ian Tarutia – representing Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Thomas Nori and Dr. James Gissua – Minister's nominee and Rev. Mwaosa Tutumla.

Nine receive dual citizenship



Nine (9) long-time residents of Papua New Guinea have pledged their loyalty to be a part citizen of PNG by attaining a dual citizenship recognition by the government.

The nine new dual citizenship holders officially received their certificates during a small ceremony held at the Airways Hotel in Port Moresby on Tuesday 29 March 2022. The new dual citizenship holders are Sir Luciano Cragnolini OL, Mark Stuart Gibbons, Joseph Tauvasa Butler, Anthony Jonathan Oli, Darren Gideon Oli, Debbie Roberta Oli, Owen Russell Abel, Rodney Thomas Mack and Anna Simpson.

New Mt Hagen office opens

The people of Western Highlands, Jiwaka, Enga and other Highlands provinces can access migration services at the new Highlands Regional Office located at the centre of Mt Hagen town.

The new office space is situated inside Unit 2, Building D Tininga and opens every working days.

The new office was opened early this year and aims at providing migration services to the citizens and non-citizens in the Highlands region.

The previous location at Kagamuga airport was not ideal for clients and ICA management

has decided to bring it to the centre of the town for ease of access.

Citizens and non-citizens can lodge and collect passport applications, lodge complaints on compliance matters and other services including visa, citizenship and work permit.

Mr Hulahau said ICA is looking at expanding and centralising its services to other parts of the country.

The Highlands Regional Office is part of the expansion program that saw a office also opening up in Buin, South Bougainville, to service people in that region including traditional border crossers that travels to and from the Shortland Islands of Solomon Islands.



Above: ICA staff at the Expo 2020 venue. Right: Some of the publications on Immigration and Entry permit given to visitors.

Expo 2020, Dubai

PNG explore the Gulf market for the first time

From Pacific to the Gulf, the Papua New Guinea Government is on a marketing drive at the World Exposition 2020 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) to showcase its diverse and rich natural resources and promote the country as a tourism and investment destination.

PNG Expo 2020 Secretary General and Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium and the European Union, Joshua Kalinoe, said the UAE is relatively a new market and the government is supportive to explore opportunities in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

"This is the first time the government is exploring opportunities in the UAE and the Gulf in this manner and we are proud to represent the government in marketing and negotiating market access and investment opportunities," Ambassador Kalinoe said.

Ambassador Kalinoe said despite being new in the Gulf region, the Expo Secretariat and the participating agencies have made significant progress in many areas particularly in trade, tourism and creating market access for PNG made products.

PNG Coffee, Queen Emma chocolates, Vanilla powder and Pure Water are some of the products that immediately caught the attention of distributors in the UAE.

The government through the Expo Secretariat has delivered 21 Letter of Intent (LoI) to selected distributors and investors in the UAE to further discussion on trade and investment.

Ambassador Kalinoe said this is the first time PNG has participated in a global mega event as a collaborative "whole of government approach" where every agencies "speak about PNG rather than individual agencies."

The Government has spent K3.5 million to participate in this expo while the UAE government subsidise part of the cost, the Secretariat said.

Two ICA officers teamed up with staff from 10 other government departments and private companies to promote the government's agendas at Expo 2020.

The Expo team has hosted five investment forums and roundtable discussions and have received positive feedback from prospective investors and businesses.



Mr. Eheyupe Erinuc (left) gives a immigration entry booklet to a visitor at the PNG Pavilion in Dubai, UAE.



During the Expo, ICA has proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the UAE Government on visa waiver and visa on arrival arrangement.

The proposal seeks to establish understanding with the UAE government for passport holders of both countries to get visa on arrival at the main international airports and to make entry and departure convenient.

The MOU is pending further discuss and ICA is working closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to conclude this arrangement.



Post Expo: Dubai based businessman impressed with PNG's hospitality

Two Dubai based resident businessman who visited Papua New Guinea as tourists in April this year taught they would meet 'violence' but instead they were convinced by Papua New Guinea's kind gesture and hospitality and promised to return as investors later in the year.

Ruslan Tarpan from Russia and his best friend Ramil Shaidullin from Ukraine were businessman residing in Dubai.

They visited the PNG Expo Pavilion in Dubai and were convinced to visit the country. In April, they arrived at Jacksons International Airport and were on a 10 day visit around the country.

They chartered an aeroplane that took them to several places including Mt Hagen, Ambua Lodge in Tari, Karawari in East Sepik and Kokopo in East New Britain.

"The people are very friendly, the nature is so beautiful and the food is great. Everything is good except the internet," Ramil described his experiences in the first few days in Ambua.

Ruslan and Shaidullin are the first visitors who arrived as tourist after the expo. A week later, company representatives from a Gold refinery in Dubai arrived to explore investment opportunities in the country. This week another group of investors in the gold refinery business also submitted their visa applications to come in.

The UAE has a population of nearly 10 million people. Around 80 percent of the population holds a residency permit while the local citizens or the Emiratis balance up the percentage. Indians, Pakistanis and Filipinos are the top three nationalities that resides and work in the UAE.



▲ Dubai resident Ramil Shaidullin and traditional performers from Hela province. Picture supplied.

The Chief Migration Officer Mr Hulahau said many people in the Middle East, the Gulf, Central Asia and Africa have zero knowledge about Papua New Guinea and the Expo 2020 in Dubai provides a platform for these people to learn about the diversity we have in the country.

Entry statistics shows only seven UAE passport holders visited Papua New Guinea in the last 5 years.

"Our challenge now in immigration is how we can capture arrivals from Dubai and UAE who

are not citizens but residents," Mr Hulahau said. "We may have many residents of Dubai visiting us but they would travel with passports from their own country. For instance, a Philipino who resides in Dubai would visit us but we'll capture his arrival as a national from Philipines and not the UAE."

Mr Hulahau said it is encouraging to see tourists and investors from the Gulf region showing interests and are visiting PNG.



▲ Members of the Senior Executive Team and staff from the Provincial and Border Post who attended the Borders meeting in Port Moresby early this year.



Senior Migration Office Lynette Kani speaks with the traditional border crossers from the Shortland Islands who arrive on Kangu beach, South Bougainville, AROB.

Low food supplies force Solomon Islanders to cross border

Low supplies of food and basic necessities has forced many Solomon Islanders to cross the sea border into Papua New Guinea to sell their produce and return with food supplies despite the restrictions imposed by both governments, the Immigration Office in Buin, South Bougainville has reported.

"They are arriving in large numbers on different days but all the arrivals are reportedly here to sell their produce including fish and buy food supplies to take back to the island," Ms Lynette Kani from the Buin ICA Office said.

Ms Kani said the arrivals are Traditional Border Crossers (TBC) from the Shortland Islands of Solomon Islands. The Shortland Islands are about 15 minutes boat ride from Kangu beach in Buin.

The first group arrived at Kangu beach on 12 May on-board 10 dinghies followed by a second batch on the 17 of the same month.

"It's really challenging for us the law enforcement agencies to persuade TBC holders to follow the pandemic advice and the restrictions imposed by the governments," Ms Kani said.

"We have established that the push factor for them illegally crossing the border is because food has become scarce and the price of store goods have increased significantly."

The law enforcement agencies in Buin have been working tirelessly to advocate and conduct awareness on the pandemic and the laws and penalties that would be imposed on people who breach the Pandemic Act.

ICA established its office in Buin at the end of last year and is actively managing the migration services in South Bougainville.

CMO commends National Airports Corporation for redevelopment of the Vanimo Airport.



The Chief Migration Office has commended the National Airports Corporation and its partners for considering Vanimo Airport in their redevelopment plan saying ICA would fairly benefit from the new working environment and the amenities provided.

Mr Hulahu was pleased to be part of the official delegates to the official opening of the new terminal building. "The new terminal has changed the face of Vanimo airport and the town and I am sure my officers will be relieved to work in a new environment," the CMO said.

"Vanimo airport is the gateway where we facilitate for arrivals and departures through Wutung who access flights to Port Moresby or other destinations in the country. It's a strategic port and we commend NAC for giving a facelift to this State facility.

2022 National General Election

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The Institutional Partnership Program (IPP)

know our new IPP advisors

ICA welcomes three new Institutional Partnerships Program (IPP) Advisors, Senior Advisor Mr Michael Kingma, and Assistant Advisors Mr Sinisha Belinic and Ms Belinda Soutter.

The IPP Advisors will work within broader Australian aid program objectives to assist ICA to build capacity and support the achievement of key priority activities. Mr Kingma, Mr Belinic and Ms Soutter each bring their own unique levels of experience in migration, border security and corporate services, and will share their technical skills, knowledge, and mutual awareness of corresponding operating environments and conditions. The IPP has a strong focus on strengthening policy, strategy and capacity development in organisational functions, including administration, leadership and management support.

The IPP program has been reformed, and has moved away from individual advisors working to specific areas and roles, to a more fluid and dynamic structure that complements ICA's new organisational framework. This means that Advisors will have the opportunity to move between Divisions, establish collaborative relationships, focus on areas of interest and expertise, and importantly, contribute to existing and emerging priorities across all ICA Divisions.

Mr Kingma, Mr Belinic and Ms Soutter have all worked with PNG ICA previously on different projects, and they are extremely excited to be working with ICA again in this long term opportunity.



The IPP Advisors who recently joins ICA Mr Sinisha Belinic (left), Ms Belinda Soutter (centre) and Mr Michael Kingma (right).

ICA enjoys stronger institutional working relationship with the Australian Home Affairs Department on specific areas of mutual interests. The IPP which was previously know as the 'Strongim Gavman Program' is a joint partnership between the Government of PNG and Australia that exists over the last 10 years.

Please find time to meet and say hi to our new IPP advisors.

PNG-Australia Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) meets



Members of the ICA Senior Management Team, the IPP Advisors and representatives from the Australian Department of Home Affairs who meets in Port Moresby on the 29th of June 2022 for the PNG-Australia Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) meeting. The two agencies discusses matters of mutual interests and collaboration on technical and capacity building. PNG ICA works closely with the Home Affairs Department and is pleased to host this year's conference in PNG after the pandemic.



Staff completes GESI Sensitisation workshop

Since its launch in 2013, Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) has become a crucial part of the Public Service and ICA is taking steps to educate staff members on the new policy and its importance in workforce management.

Over 75 percent of staff have attended GESI sensitisation workshops that were conducted with the support from the National GESI Desk from the Department of Personnel Management. The workshops aims to educate staff about GESI and same time get their opinions that would form the basis of developing an internal GESI Policy.

The photo on the left shows staff members doing a presentation at one of the workshops held in Port Moresby in April this year.

ICA to enforce strict measures on renewal of work permits

The Immigration and Citizenship Authority (the Authority) is instituting control measures to ensure compliance to PNG laws governing employment of non-citizens in the country. We will focus on managing the issuance of new work permits and ensure that any request for renewal of existing work permit is subject to strict compliance to the conditions of the contract of employment and laws and regulations governing employment of non-citizens in the country.

Background

In 2021, Parliament passed the amendment to the Employment of Non-citizens Act 2007 which necessitated the transfer of the work permits function from the Department of Labour and Industrial Relations to the PNG Immigration and Citizenship Authority. The work permit system has been in operation under the Authority since December 2021.

In the last six months, the Authority has identified various governance and compliance issues that require immediate action. While measures are being implemented to improve management of the work permit system within, the Authority is simultaneously reaching out to employers of non-citizen workers to ensure compliance to the conditions of their work permits.

Renewal of Work Permit Applications

In the process of screening and assessing renewal work permit applications, it has come to our attention that there are some non-citizen employees who are renewing their work permits multiple times. This means they have been employed in the same position for more than 3 years on a long term contract.

The constant and multiple renewals has become a concern for the Authority in terms of the training and up-skilling of nationals who are supposed to understudy and be able to perform on those positions held by the non-citizens. As per the condition set on work permit under Section 15 of the Employment of Non-citizens (Amendment) Act 2021, every non-citizens must train their national counterparts.

Consequently, as of the date of this Notice, employers of non-citizen workers applying for renewal of their work permit must provide the following documents:

1. A letter from the employer justifying why they are applying for renewal of the particular position.
2. A detail Training Report on the company and the non-citizen. The training report must identify the training provided to its national employees, the skills acquired, skills gap, the dates of trainings, the facilitators or the

institute providing training and the list of nationals undergoing training. The training Report must be signed and dated with company stamp by the company Human Resources Managers or by the Managing Director where there are no HR department within the organisation. The training report must be accompanied by the Succession Plan. Employer/non-citizen must identify the successor to the position.

3. The company or organisation's organisational structure.

Employer must identify the number of non-citizens and nationals on the positions.

The Authority understands that within certain industries that involves technical roles, it may take a longer period to train a national to be able to be competent and to replace non-citizen. The employer is encourage to seek the advice of the Authority in such cases.

It is paramount that all stakeholders adhere to this changes and the new requirements that are put in place. The Authority will work closely with all parties to ensure these changes are implemented smoothly.

2022

Newsletter



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