



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER 2026



**JANUARY - MARCH
[ISSUE 1]**

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GROUNDBREAKING MARKS START OF REWA VUTIA ROAD DREDGING WORKS



On March 19th, the Minister for Public Works, Transport and Meteorological Services, Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau officiated the groundbreaking ceremony for the Rewa Vutia Road Dredging project at Nabalili, Loma ni Koro, in Rewa. The ceremony marks the beginning of a major infrastructure development set to improve connectivity and accessibility for communities along the corridor.

This initiative begins with dredging works, which will pave the way for the second phase of the project: the construction of a bridge, scheduled to commence in January 2027. The works will involve dredging approximately 500,000 cubic meters of material from designated river sections, with the dredged material to be stockpiled along the proposed Rewa Vutia Road alignment and bridge construction site. This phase is

expected to take approximately 6 to 9 months to complete. Speaking at the event, the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport, Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau, emphasized that the project represents a significant step towards improving connectivity and supporting development for communities in the Rewa corridor. With an

estimated total project cost of \$18.95 million, the initiative reflects the Government's continued commitment to improving infrastructure and enhancing the quality of life for all Fijians. The Rewa Vutia Road project stands as a significant step towards building a more accessible, resilient, and sustainable transport network for the communities it serves.

“ For many years, communities along this corridor have faced challenges in accessing markets, traveling to school, and managing everyday transportation. The project will progressively ease these challenges as works advance, paving the way for improved access and more reliable connectivity.

It represents the start of a significant infrastructure development for the people of Rewa, one that will greatly improve transportation, strengthen access, and enhance connectivity for 11 villages along this corridor.

- Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services, and Transport,
Honorable Ro Filipe Tuisawau ”



STRENGTHENING CONNECTIVITY: PROGRESS IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS FIJI'S EASTERN ISLANDS



In recent years, significant strides have been made to improve road infrastructure across Fiji's Eastern Islands, reinforcing the commitment to ensure that no community is left behind. Through targeted maintenance, upgrades, and new works, the Fiji Roads Authority has continued to prioritize accessibility, resilience, and connectivity across these maritime regions.

Across **Vanuabalavu**, approximately 95% of the 27.74 km road network has undergone periodic maintenance. Works have included grading, shaping, compaction, and improved drainage systems, significantly enhancing road durability and usability.

On **Moala Island**, the 39.94 km unsealed road network continues to receive annual maintenance. Key works such as pilot cuts along Delaimoala Road, drainage clearing, and carriageway improvements are ensuring safer and more

reliable access for communities.

For **Lakeba Island**, 80% of works have been completed on its 30.33 km network. In addition to routine maintenance, major upgrades include culvert replacements with rock-pitched headwalls, coastal protection for vulnerable sections, the replacement of the Levuka Foot Bridge, and improvements to the jetty causeway, including a new waiting shed.

Gau Island, with one of the largest networks at 68.98 km, has seen extensive work, including grading, drainage construction, culvert upgrades, and clearing for the main circular road. These efforts are strengthening connectivity around the island.

Similarly, **Koro Island's** 65.06 km road network is undergoing continuous improvements. Works include re-sheeting, culvert

upgrades, and institutional road maintenance, contributing to improved road quality and longevity.

On **Rotuma Island**, a major upgrade is underway with 35 km of roads being converted from sand to gravel. This transformation is significantly improving road stability and accessibility, particularly during adverse weather conditions.

For **Cicia Island**, over 50% of the 24.3 km network has been completed. Works include coastal protection using rip-rap, culvert replacements, and reinstatement of the jetty causeway damaged by Tropical Cyclone Rae, alongside routine maintenance.

Meanwhile, **Matuku Island** has focused on essential road rehabilitation works, including grading, vegetation clearing, and reshaping of road pavements to restore safe and functional access routes.

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH BETTER ROADS

The impact of these improvements extends far beyond infrastructure. Enhanced road conditions have significantly improved access to essential services, including health centers, schools, and markets.

Reliable road networks have enabled transport providers, including RSL services, to operate more efficiently, ensuring that students can travel safely to and from school.

For farmers, better roads mean easier and faster transportation of produce to markets, reducing spoilage and costs while opening opportunities for increased income.

Women, in particular, are experiencing notable socio-economic benefits. Improved accessibility has made it easier to participate in market activities, small businesses, and community engagements, contributing to greater financial independence and empowerment.

A COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

These developments clearly demonstrate that Fiji’s Eastern Islands continue to receive equal priority in national infrastructure development efforts.

FRA’s ongoing work reflects a strong commitment to ensuring that maritime communities benefit from improved connectivity, access, and opportunity.

As these upgrades continue, the Eastern Islands are becoming more connected, more resilient, and better positioned for sustainable socio-economic growth—paving the way for a more inclusive future for all.



INCREASED MOBILITY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

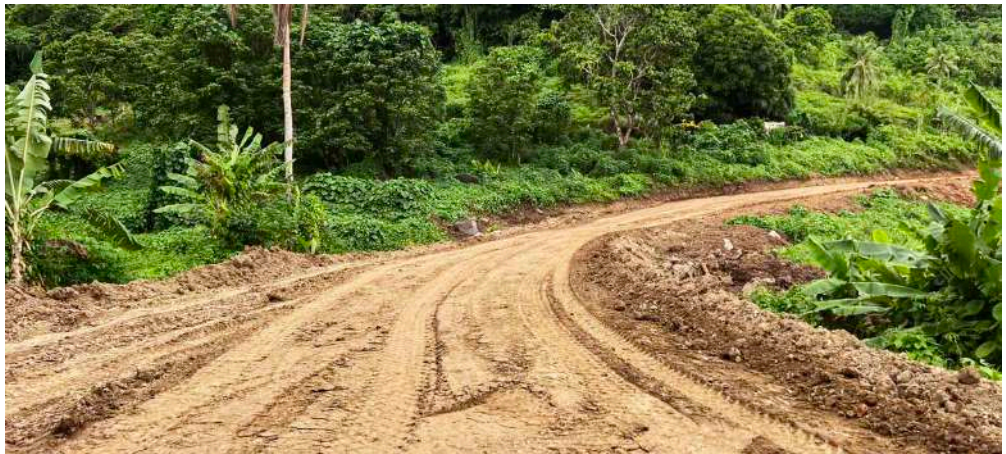
Based on recent FRA data, road upgrades across the Eastern Islands have led to a clear increase in vehicle usage, reflecting improved accessibility and confidence in the road network.

VEHICLE DISTRIBUTION ACROSS EASTERN ISLANDS

ISLAND	NO. OF VEHICLES	GOVT. VEHICLES	PRIVATE VEHICLES
Cicia	4	1	3
Gau	20	5	15
Kadavu	66	6	60
Koro	79	4	75
Lakeba	82	5	77
Moala	13	2	10
Rotuma	278	8	270
Vanuabalavu	27	4	23

This increase in vehicle numbers is a strong indicator of improved mobility and economic activity. Communities have reported reduced travel times and lower vehicle operating costs, making transportation more efficient and reliable.

Improved road conditions are also encouraging farmers to expand cultivation and gradually transition towards more commercial operations. This not only strengthens local economies but also enhances food security across the islands.





DRAIN CLEARING ALONE IS INEFFECTIVE WITHOUT ADDRESSING LITTERING

During the rainy season in Fiji, flooding on roads is a common occurrence. Heavy rainfall often leads to surface flooding, particularly in low-lying areas where water accumulates quickly. While rainfall is a natural factor, another significant contributor to road flooding is the blockage of drainage systems. Despite continuous efforts to maintain and clean these systems, the problem persists. One of the main reasons for this is littering.

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) regularly carries out drainage maintenance across the road network, including scheduled jetting works and routine drain clearing. These activities are conducted to ensure that drainage systems function properly, especially during periods of heavy rain. Teams are mobilized to remove debris, flush out sediment, and clear blockages that could prevent water from flowing freely.

However, despite these efforts, blocked drains remain a recurring issue. In many cases, when drains are opened and cleaned, large amounts of household rubbish are found inside. Items such as plastic bottles, plastic wrappers, food packaging, and other forms of waste are frequently retrieved during cleaning operations. These materials obstruct the flow of water through the drainage system, causing water to back up and overflow onto roads. Surface flooding on roads is not only inconvenient for motorists but also poses risks to road infrastructure and public safety. When

water accumulates on the road surface, it can weaken the road structure over time. Continuous exposure to standing water can lead to pavement deterioration, potholes, and other forms of damage that require costly repairs. Additionally, surface flooding can contribute to larger infrastructure issues. Blocked drains can lead to water flowing over road shoulders and embankments, increasing the risk of slips, overslips, and approach washouts at crossings. In severe cases, prolonged water flow in unintended areas can erode the surrounding ground, compromising the stability of roads and nearby structures.

Drainage systems are designed to carry storm water away from roads efficiently. However, their effectiveness depends largely on them remaining free of obstructions. When drains are blocked by rubbish, even moderate rainfall can quickly lead to flooding. This means that even with regular maintenance and jetting works carried out by FRA contractors, the problem will continue if waste disposal practices do not improve. The presence of household rubbish in drains highlights the importance of public cooperation. Littering may appear to be a small act, but its cumulative impact is significant. Waste that is thrown on streets, into gutters, or near drainage channels is often carried by rainwater directly into the drainage system. Once inside, these materials can accumulate and form blockages that prevent water from flowing as intended. Addressing

this issue requires a collective effort. While the FRA will continue to carry out its responsibility of maintaining and cleaning drainage systems, long-term improvement can only be achieved if the public also plays a role. Proper waste disposal, using designated bins, and avoiding littering near roads and drains can make a significant difference.

Community awareness and responsible behavior are key to reducing the amount of waste entering drainage systems. Simple actions such as keeping household waste secure, ensuring that rubbish is placed in proper bins, and participating in community clean-up initiatives can help prevent drains from becoming blocked. The reality is that clearing drains alone cannot solve the problem if littering continues. Maintenance efforts will always be necessary, but without a change in habits, the same blockages will continue to occur. Preventing waste from entering the drainage system in the first place is far more effective than repeatedly removing it after the damage has already been done.

As Fiji continues to experience periods of heavy rainfall, keeping drainage systems clear will remain essential for protecting road infrastructure and ensuring the safety of road users. By working together through responsible waste management and ongoing maintenance, it is possible to reduce flooding and maintain a safer, more reliable road network for everyone.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING FUTURES

International Women's Day is an important occasion to recognize the achievements, resilience, and contributions of women across all sectors of society. This year's theme, "Give to Gain," highlights a powerful message: when organizations and communities invest in women by creating opportunities, providing support, and encouraging participation, the benefits extend far beyond individuals to strengthen institutions, industries, and society as a whole. While infrastructure development has traditionally been seen as a male-dominated field, the presence and contributions of women across FRA demonstrate that the sector is evolving, with women increasingly playing important roles in shaping Fiji's road network and supporting national development. Currently, FRA has a total workforce of 209 staff, of which 46 are women, representing 22 percent of the organization. These women contribute across a range of departments and functions that are vital to the Authority's operations.

Among the female workforce, 13 women are in technical roles, accounting for 28 percent, while 33 women serve in support roles, representing 72 percent of the female staff. These figures illustrate both progress and opportunity. While women are actively contributing across the organization, there remains significant potential to increase female participation in technical and engineering roles. This is particularly important in sectors such as infrastructure, construction, and engineering, where women have historically been underrepresented. Within FRA, women are not only working behind desks but are also

increasingly visible in technical and field-based roles. Six female engineers currently serve within the Authority, contributing their expertise to road design, project management, infrastructure planning, and site supervision. Their work often takes them into challenging environments; on construction sites, along highways, and in communities where infrastructure improvements are being delivered. Their presence on the field sends a powerful message to young women and girls across Fiji: careers in engineering, infrastructure, and technical professions are not limited by gender.

These engineers are helping to break barriers and challenge long-standing perceptions about what women can achieve in traditionally male-dominated industries. As FRA continues to deliver and improve road infrastructure across the country, it recognizes that infrastructure development is fundamental to the growth of every community. Beyond connectivity, improved roads and access routes create real opportunities for people. For women in particular, better road infrastructure means safer and easier access to education, healthcare, markets, and employment, enabling them to participate more actively in economic and social life.

These developments not only benefit the population as a whole but also provide added value for women, who play a central role in nurturing families and supporting community well-being. Improved access allows women to better manage daily responsibilities, pursue economic opportunities, and contribute meaningfully to the development of their communities.

The theme "Give to Gain" reminds organizations that progress is achieved when intentional efforts are made to create space for women to grow and succeed. This includes investing in professional development, encouraging leadership opportunities, and fostering inclusive workplaces where women feel supported and valued. Encouraging more women to pursue careers in engineering and technical fields remains an important priority across the infrastructure sector. Creating visible role models, such as FRA's female engineers working on the ground, plays a key role in inspiring the next generation.

When young women see others successfully navigating these careers, they are more likely to envision themselves doing the same. Breaking barriers requires commitment not only from organizations but also from society as a whole. Families, schools, institutions, and employers all have a role to play in encouraging girls to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) pathways. As FRA continues its work to maintain and develop Fiji's road network, the contributions of its female workforce remain an integral part of the Authority's success. From engineers working on-site to staff supporting operations behind the scenes, women at FRA are helping to build the infrastructure that connects communities and supports economic growth. FRA also acknowledges and celebrates all women who continue to give to society; those who nurture families, build communities, and contribute to the growth and development of the nation. Their efforts remain vital in shaping a stronger and more inclusive future for all.



DAMAGED AND MISSING ROAD SIGNS: A GROWING CONCERN FOR FRA

Road infrastructure plays a vital role in ensuring safe and efficient travel for all road users. However, ongoing issues such as the vandalism and theft of road signs, along with unsafe driving practices, continue to undermine these efforts and place unnecessary strain on resources. The deliberate vandalism of road signs remains a serious concern.

Graffiti, defacing, and intentional damage reduce the visibility and clarity of important information, making it difficult for motorists to make informed decisions while driving. In some cases, critical warning and directional signs are rendered completely ineffective, increasing the risk of accidents; particularly in high-traffic areas, sharp bends, and near schools or pedestrian crossings.

Equally troubling is the theft and removal of road signage. Missing signs create confusion for drivers and pedestrians alike, especially in unfamiliar areas or at key intersections. The absence of essential signs; such as speed limits, stop signs, and hazard warnings can lead to dangerous situations, leaving road users without the guidance they rely on to navigate safely. The Fiji Roads Authority receives daily reports of missing signs, damaged signs caused by careless driving, and graffiti on roadside signage. These

recurring issues highlight the ongoing challenges faced in maintaining a safe and functional road network. Each report requires time, manpower, and resources to assess and address, often diverting attention from planned maintenance and development works.

Unsafe driving behaviors also contribute significantly to road damage. Speeding, overloading vehicles, and reckless driving place excessive stress on road surfaces and infrastructure. Incidents such as vehicles colliding with road signs, guardrails, and other assets not only result in immediate damage but also compromise the long-term durability of these structures.

The combined impact of vandalism, theft, and unsafe driving extends far beyond inconvenience. Damaged or missing road signs can lead to serious road accidents, as drivers may be unaware of hazards, changes in road conditions, or required actions at intersections. This increases the likelihood of collisions, injuries, and in severe cases, fatalities.

Additionally, the cost of repairing vandalized assets and rehabilitating damaged roads places a significant financial burden on FRA, diverting funds that could otherwise be used to improve and expand the road network.

Addressing these challenges requires a collective effort. Members of the public are encouraged to respect road infrastructure, report any missing or damaged signage, and avoid engaging in acts of vandalism. At the same time, all road users must practice responsible and safe driving to help preserve road assets.

To report any damaged signs or missing signs, please contact FRA at our toll-free number 5720 (available on weekdays from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) or email info@fijiroads.org. By working together, we can ensure a safer, more reliable, and sustainable road network for all.



A LOOK AT RECENT ROAD PROJECTS

Over the past few months, the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has progressed with a series of important road projects across the nation. These works include targeted maintenance, road resurfacing, and comprehensive upgrades designed to enhance transport infrastructure. By addressing both safety and accessibility, FRA continues to ensure that communities—whether urban or rural—have improved connectivity and reliable road networks. Through these initiatives, FRA focuses on strengthening road resilience, supporting smoother traffic flow, and facilitating access to essential services, all while boosting economic opportunities. Highlighted below are some of the key projects recently completed or currently underway:



On February 19, the Fiji Roads Authority completed and opened a temporary bypass at Semo Village along Queens Highway following a slip that affected the main road. The bypass allowed safe passage for motorists while repair works were undertaken. FRA thanks the Semo and Nalele communities for their support, including landowners who granted access for construction and villagers who assisted with traffic management. The Semo incident highlights the challenges of ageing road infrastructure, and FRA remains committed to upgrading and strengthening key structures across the network.



Coastal protection works covering 129 meters has been completed along the Holy Cross College frontage in Wairiki, Taveuni. The coastal works help reduce coastal erosion and the impact of strong wave action, providing added protection to the roadside and preventing further land loss along this vulnerable stretch.

By stabilizing the shoreline, the works also support safer road access for the community. FRA continues to strengthen vulnerable coastal road networks to reduce flooding and erosion risks and protect key road infrastructure.



Seal extension works along Noco Delta Road in Rewa has been completed to enhance road conditions and deliver safer, smoother travel for road users. Over 1.9 kilometers of the road is programmed to be sealed as works continue.

The improvements will strengthen access for communities along the corridor, supporting daily commuting for residents, providing safer travel for school students, and enabling farmers and vendors to reach markets and services with ease.



The Daku Tramline Bridge along Wainikoro Road in Nadogo and the Namoli No. 3 Tramline Bridge along Namoli Road, Batinikama in the Northern Division, had a successful completion of full deck replacement works, ensuring safer and improved access for commuters.



As part of the Rip and Remake and Maintenance Programmes, sealing works along Tovata Road has been successfully completed. A total of 711 meters of road has been sealed, improving accessibility and providing safer, smoother travel for residents and daily commuters.



Asphalt concrete surfacing works along Andrews Road in the Nadi CBD has been completed over a 300-metre section. These improvements will enhance road durability, improve driving conditions, and support smoother traffic flow.



Under the rip and remake maintenance programme road resurfacing works on three deteriorated access roads within the Lautoka Hospital area were successfully completed.

A total of 600 meters of road, including MacGregor Hostel Road, Lautoka Hospital Main Access Road and Lautoka Hospital Morgue road has been resealed.

These improvements enhance road access, improve traffic flow, and ensure safer and faster movement for emergency vehicles within the hospital grounds.



Under the Rip and Remake maintenance works, roadworks was carried out along Kings Road at Naria, Rakiraki. These works formed part of ongoing efforts to improve road conditions, enhance accessibility, and provide safer travel for residents and daily commuters using this important route. A total of 237 meters of road sealing was completed, with works continuing in the area.

As part of the Rip and Remake and Maintenance Programs, sealing works along Suva Grammar Road was successfully completed.

These road improvement works aim to enhance accessibility and provide safer, smoother travel for residents and daily commuters along this vital route. A total of 260 meters of sealing has been completed.

Nasau bridge 1 along Nasau Road in Nadi in the Western Division, had a successful completion of full deck replacement works, ensuring safer and improved access for commuters.



BUSINESS REVIEW WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

KPI REVIEW WORKSHOP STRENGTHENS PERFORMANCE ALIGNMENT

The Fiji Roads Authority management and staff convened a two-day Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Review Workshop from January 30 to 31. The workshop provided an important platform to reflect on organizational performance, assess progress against targets, and align key priorities moving forward.

Members of the Fiji Roads Authority Board, senior management, and staff participated in a two-day Business Review Workshop from February 19 to 20. The workshop centered on reviewing budget performance, assessing achievements to date, and refining priorities for the months ahead.

Discussions focused on reviewing existing KPIs, identifying gaps, and strengthening accountability across teams. The interactive sessions supported FRA's efforts to better align individual and divisional targets, ultimately enhancing service delivery to the public. The workshop also reinforced a shared commitment to continuous improvement and results-driven performance.

Constructive discussions highlighted key focus areas requiring attention before the upcoming financial year. The sessions provided clarity on strategic direction and ensured that teams remain aligned in delivering FRA's core objectives efficiently and effectively.

• BLESSED •
EASTER



The Fiji Roads Authority extends its warmest Easter greetings to all. May this season bring you joy, peace, and renewed hope. As you travel to celebrate with loved ones, we encourage everyone to remember the importance of responsibility and care on our roads. Let us all play our part in ensuring every journey is a safe one, allowing families and friends to connect and share in the spirit of this season.