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From left: Mr. Atunaisa Nayago (FRA Chairman), Hon. Ro Filipe Tuisawau (Minister for Public Works, Transport, and Meteorological Services), Mr. Jonathan Kenna (Head of AIFFP), and Ms. Clair McNamara (Australia's Acting High Commissioner to Fiji).

A NEW VISION FOR FIJI'S ROAD NETWORK

The Honorable Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services, and Transport, Ro Filipe Tuisawau, launched the inaugural Fiji Roads Authority Strategic Plan 2024/25–2028/29 on 28th August, 2024, at the Novotel Convention Centre. This landmark initiative, supported by the Australian Government, is set to transform the management, development, and maintenance of Fiji's road network, ensuring a more strategic, efficient, and inclusive approach to infrastructure.

The Honourable Minister Ro Filipe Tuisawau, while launching the strategic plan, emphasized that the FRA will lead with a clear vision, setting actionable goals and milestones to enhance the quality and efficiency of Fiji's road systems. The implementation framework will ensure that the FRA operates with precision and accountability, aligning with national development goals and addressing the needs of communities across the nation. To ensure efficient delivery of its functions, the FRA will prioritize the restoration and modernization of technical systems. Upgrading these systems is vital for maintaining the integrity of road infrastructure, improving project management, and streamlining operations. The FRA's commitment to technological advancement will support a more resilient and responsive road network, equipped to meet the demands

of Fiji's growing population, the economy, and the impacts of climate change. The vision for the FRA extends to transforming it into a high-performing road institution. The focus will be on fostering excellence, efficiency, and innovation in all aspects of road management. The FRA will implement best practices, enhance operational processes, and promote a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that Fiji's roads are safe, durable, and capable of supporting economic growth.

Support for the development of the FRA's strategic plan was provided through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP). This forms part of Australia's broader investment in Fiji's transport infrastructure sector. The AIFFP has invested FJD111 million in Fiji's transport infrastructure, enhancing road and bridge resilience across Viti Levu. The financing has already resurfaced 1.5 million square meters of road and restored eight of nine planned critical bridges, improving land transport connectivity across Viti Levu. These investments have prioritized supporting local employment. All road resurfacing contracts financed through AIFFP projects with FRA are held by locally registered contractors, and more than 1,000 local jobs are expected to have been created as a result.

“Supporting Fiji's nation-building priorities through quality, sustainable, and transformative infrastructure development is a key priority under our Vuvale Partnership,” said Ms. McNamara.

“Australia is proud to partner with the Fiji Roads Authority to help improve land transport connectivity across Viti Levu and further develop institutional capacity,” said Mr. Kenna. In addition to financing physical infrastructure and supporting delivery of the Strategic Plan, Australia's investment is also providing institutional support to FRA to improve OH&S practices and develop a training module for the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment in the workplace.

“ A key focus for the FRA is to build and enhance the core technical expertise required to fulfill its mandate. Under the guidance of the FRA, specialized training programs and skill development initiatives will be launched to cultivate a highly skilled workforce capable of managing complex road projects and maintaining critical infrastructure. The aim is to develop a team that is both knowledgeable and adept at leveraging the latest technologies and practices in road construction and maintenance, said the Honourable Minister. ”

FRA NATIONAL BUDGET 2024-25

 **\$354.8M**

 **\$8.0M**

Re-established the Public Works Department with increased funding.

 **\$5.0M**

The maintenance and upgrade of rural roads

The Ministry of Public Works has been allocated a sum of \$721.4 million, including funding for the Water Authority and the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA).

The FRA is provided \$354.8 million for the ongoing construction and maintenance of roads, upgrading and replacement of bridges and jetties, and the upgrading of rural roads.

The FRA is also undertaking a major national study on urban traffic, particularly traffic between Nadi and Lautoka, Lami, Suva, and Nausori corridors, in conjunction with our development partners.

The Ministry has been allocated a sum of \$5 million for the maintenance and upgrade of rural roads.

The government has also re-established the Public Works Department with increased funding of \$8 million. PWD will be gradually expanded over the years and will focus on rural roads and public buildings.



Recently, the Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services, and Transport, Hon. Tuisawau, visited the island to get a firsthand look at the construction progress.

He was accompanied by the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) team, who updated him on the project's status and the challenges they were facing. Minister Tuisawau acknowledged the significance of the road, describing it as a much-needed improvement long overdue.

"I've just traveled the new road from Vunisei to Vacalea and observed that there's still work to be done," he noted. "Some areas need to be graveled, and crossings need to be constructed. This project is crucial, and we need to expedite the remaining work to benefit our people."

The road will bring much-needed relief to local schools and communities. Institutions such as Vunisei District School, Bulou Dolele Memorial School, Yavitu Youth Center, and Naceva District School, which currently rely on costly boat trips of \$200 each way, will finally enjoy easier access.

The Vunisei to Vacalea Access Road project involves constructing approximately 32 kilometers of unsealed road within the districts of Naceva and Nakasaleka. The roadworks include a 7.8-kilometer design-and-build section from Vunisei Village Junction to Vukavu Village Junction, which features nine low-level crossings, and a pilot cut section of 24.2 km of road alignment from Vukavu Junction to Vacalea Village.

NEW VUNISEI TO VACALEA ROAD TO ENHANCE ACCESS FOR NACEVA AND NAKASALEKA DISTRICTS IN KADAVU



More than 2,000 villagers are set to benefit from the new Vunisei to Vacalea Road, which is rapidly taking shape. Once completed, this road will not only improve access to the villages

of Dravuwalu, Yavitu, Soso, Joma, Niudua, Nacomoto, Kadavu Koro, Namajiu, Vacaleya, Lavidi, and Vunisei, but will also help save the \$400 that residents currently spend on boat fees.



NAKORO - NAVITILEVU ACCESS ROAD

The 4.2km Nakoro-Navitilevu Road in Navosa has been upgraded from a rough, unpaved track to an unsealed road meeting Fiji Roads Authority standards. This significant improvement includes a 21-meter bridge and a 62-meter crossing. This project has brought great excitement to the local villages, as it eliminates the need to cross the river on foot or horseback, especially during rainy seasons.



VAGADRA NASOVATAVA RURAL ROAD PROJECT

The newly constructed 13km Vagadra-Nasovatava Road, extending from Vagadra Road to Nasovatava Village, has significantly enhanced connectivity in the Nadroga/Navosa province. This vital infrastructure improvement has facilitated easier access to schools, essential social services, and neighboring villages, fostering stronger social and communal bonds. Moreover, it has substantially reduced travel time and costs to the main economic centers of Viti Levu, including Sigatoka, Nadi, Lautoka, Ba, and Suva.



IMPROVED WAIRIKI CROSSING

The old Wairiki Crossing on Navakuru Road in Labasa faced frequent flooding due to blocked and undersized pipe culverts. This caused significant inconvenience for the public, especially students, as it made the crossing impassable for buses and other vehicles during rainy periods. To address this issue, a new crossing is currently under construction. It features larger culverts and a higher deck, designed to handle increased water flow, ensuring safer access during floods. People in Navakuru, Nakoroutari in Labasa, are pleased with the progress of the new crossing.



MAJOR UPGRADE FOR RATU DOVI ROAD

Road work is nearing completion on Ratu Dovi Road, which stretches 910 meters from the Nokonoko roundabout to the Kinoya junction. This vital road serves the community by linking a supermarket, service station, school, industrial area, and residential neighborhoods. The recent asphalt concrete mill and fill process is nearly complete, ensuring a smoother and safer ride for all road users.

NEW BUS SHELTER

A new bus shelter has been constructed at Vesivesi Road, Kinoya, to provide shelter for all passengers, including students and the general public. These will provide protection from all weather, such as rain, wind, sun, and extreme temperatures, ensuring that people waiting for the bus remain comfortable and safe. Please help us keep it clean and free from graffiti and vandalism.

LABASA HOSPITAL ROAD UPGRADE

The Labasa Hospital and its staff quarters are undergoing major road improvements. This is part of a project by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Fiji Roads Authority to make the area safer and more accessible for patients and staff. The work includes fixing broken footpaths, sealing off roads, and improving parking areas. These upgrades will significantly enhance the infrastructure and accessibility of the hospital complex.



OLD TAMAVUA-I-WAI BRIDGE DEMOLITION IN PROGRESS

The demolition of the old Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge is currently underway. Minister for Public Works, Transport, and Meteorological Services, Hon. Ro

Filipe, said the demolition, which has been outsourced, is anticipated to take around three to five months to complete. Once the demolition is finalized, the



government plans to engage in further discussions with the Japanese government about constructing a new bridge. “The discussions will continue with the Japanese government regarding the new bridge, which they have already agreed to. We are just waiting to finalize the documentation, which will happen soon. Looking ahead, we envision a four-lane bridge extending from Walu Bay all the way to Wailekutu or Veisari.”

Earlier this year, the cabinet approved the revised grant agreement with the Government of Japan, facilitated through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), for the Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge reconstruction project. The Japanese government, through JICA, is providing support for this project via a two-phase grant approach.

Phase I focused on an in-depth evaluation of the site with relevant engineering and construction information to ensure that the bridge will serve communities and businesses as a resilient national infrastructure against natural disasters.

Phase 2 will ensure progression and financial resourcing for the completion of the bridge construction as part of ongoing bilateral cooperation between Fiji and Japan.

FRA ENHANCES LAND TRANSPORT AUTHORITY FLEET WITH NEW VEHICLE DONATION

The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) proudly announces the official handover of a vehicle to the Land Transport Authority (LTA) as part of an ongoing effort to bolster the capabilities and efficiency of the LTA’s fleet. The donation marks a significant step in enhancing the LTA’s ability to execute its critical deliverables and maintain high standards in transport management across Fiji.

The handover ceremony took place at the LTA headquarters, where senior officials from both organizations were present. The vehicle, will be utilized by the LTA to improve its operational efficiency, support regulatory activities, and enhance service delivery to the public.

FRA Executive Chair, Atunaisa Nayago, expressed his enthusiasm about the donation: “We are delighted to support the Land Transport Authority with this vehicle. This donation reflects our commitment to strengthening the collaborative efforts between our agencies and ensuring that the LTA has the necessary tools to effectively carry out its responsibilities. By



enhancing their fleet, we are contributing to better road safety, more efficient transport management, and overall improved service for the Fijian people.”

LTA Board Chairman Inosi Kuridrani said the vehicle would play a pivotal role in the LTA’s ongoing efforts to enhance road safety awareness and outreach across the nation. With road safety being a top priority for the LTA, Mr. Kuridrani said every life saved through improved awareness, education, and enforcement was considered a significant success. “The new vehicle will serve as a crucial tool in this mission, enabling LTA teams to

extend their reach to more communities and deliver impactful road safety messages that resonate with drivers, passengers, and pedestrians alike,” he said.

“ “The handover of this vehicle symbolizes the strength of our partnership with the Fiji Roads Authority and our collective commitment to making Fiji’s roads safer for everyone. Road safety is not just the responsibility of one organization; it is a shared duty, and together, we can achieve greater results,” said Mr. Kuridrani. ”

The vehicle will be deployed immediately to support various LTA initiatives, including road safety inspections, regulatory compliance checks, and public service outreach. The FRA’s support underscores its dedication to fostering a robust and efficient transport system in Fiji, ensuring that both organizations are well-equipped to meet the challenges of the evolving transport landscape.

FIJI ROADS AUTHORITY CALLS FOR PUBLIC COOPERATION AMIDST STREET LIGHT DAMAGE AND CABLE THEFT



The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) is alarmed by recent incidents of vandalism and theft involving street lights and garden light cables along Queen Elizabeth Drive. During a recent inspection, FRA noted several street lights were damaged and vital garden light cables were stolen, significantly affecting public safety. These acts of vandalism and theft are

not only illegal but also dangerous. Damaged street lights and missing cables compromise the safety of both road users and pedestrians, increasing the risk of accidents and injuries.

The FRA emphasizes that such unlawful actions may lead to legal proceedings against those responsible. The FRA urges all members of the public to exercise civic pride and respect for public property. Damaging or stealing road infrastructure and assets is detrimental to community safety and undermines the efforts to maintain a secure and well-lit environment for everyone.

FRA appeals to the community to assist in safeguarding our infrastructure. We must work together to ensure our roads remain safe and functional. Protecting public property is a shared responsibility that impacts the well-being of all.

The FRA appreciates the public's cooperation in preserving the safety and integrity of our road infrastructure.



FRA TECHNICAL STAFF ENHANCE SKILLS AT THINKPROJECT WORKSHOP

About 20 FRA technical staff participated in a hands-on ThinkProject Asset and Works Management Workshop. The session focused on asset management basics, network inspection role transitions, ThinkProject's asset management features, and a detailed overview of the integrated work process. Participants also explored the importance of data collection for FRA's asset management and learned how ThinkProject's Asset and Works Management System collects and uses data within the current maintenance process.



SAFETY FIRST: PUBLIC URGED TO AVOID OBSTRUCTIONS



The FRA is actively addressing concerns regarding overgrown vegetation and household waste on road reserves. We urge the public to avoid planting crops or storing personal items in these areas to prevent damage during maintenance activities. Our contractors regularly clear overgrown

weeds and debris to ensure road reserves remain obstruction-free.

Planting along road reserves can hinder visibility, increasing the risk of accidents, especially in rural areas with sharp corners or in urban settings where pedestrians may be obscured from view.

To streamline public works, we offer a "Corridor Access Request" process for individuals undertaking projects like driveway construction or water connections. This free service ensures that these works meet safety and quality standards without conflicting with planned road upgrades.

We are working closely with town councils to ensure that developers and residents whose activities encroach beyond their private boundaries are complying with the relevant acts and bylaws to protect road assets and ensure that public safety is not compromised.

TEMPORARY WEIGHT EXEMPTION APPROVAL RIGID VEHICLE

The Fiji Roads Authority and Land Transport Authority of Fiji held key discussions about vehicle weight limits. The main objective was to enhance road safety and infrastructure protection through regulated vehicle weight limits.

Some of the key goals include:

- Ensuring the road network infrastructure is protected.
- Improving road safety and transport efficiency through the implementation of size and weight regulations.
- To assist haulage operators in carting weights that comply with the road design standards.
- Discussion on the temporary weight exemption approval for rigid vehicles to LTA.



CONSTRUCTION SITE VISIT ENHANCES FNU STUDENTS' PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

About 29 students from the Fiji National University (FNU) visited the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) construction sites to gain hands-on knowledge about the construction of pavement structures, including both asphalt and concrete pavements.

FNU School of Building and Civil Engineering Instructor Samuela Loaloa stated the students aimed to observe ongoing projects involving retaining structures and bridges and to understand the regular maintenance of asphalt pavements.

"We began by observing the demolition of the old Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge, a project managed by China Railway Group. Following this, we visited the maintenance work on the asphalt pavement at Ratu Dovi Road, also undertaken by China Railway Group. Due to a local shortage of bitumen, the project faced delays, but it provided crucial insights into the complexities of pavement maintenance.

Next, Mr. Loaloa said they explored the ongoing construction of the Waidalice Bridge, managed by Higgins Construction Ltd.

"We saw the process of driving piles into the riverbed and the plan to attach girders to these piles. This visit was particularly valuable for understanding the intricacies of bridge construction."

Throughout the trip, the students were reminded of several important practices: Adhering to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) during field trips. Following Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) rules discussed during orientation. Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times on construction sites. Engaging with site engineers to ask questions about construction methods and techniques. Exploring cost-benefit analyses and the economic aspects of the projects.

Following the field trip, the students will submit group reports, which will account for 5% of their coursework.

Mr. Loaloa expressed his gratitude to FRA for accommodating their visit and for making this educational experience both insightful and productive.

"We are optimistic about future collaborations, including opportunities for industrial training and potential employment for interested students," he added.

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC STUDENTS EXPLORE LAND ACQUISITION IN NADI

Students from the University of the South Pacific (USP) recently embarked on an insightful field trip to Nadi, where they learned about the intricacies of land acquisition procedures for road projects in Fiji. Organized by the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), the trip offered a firsthand look at how land is acquired for road widening and new construction. The students learned about the current procedures involved in land acquisition and gained insights into how FRA valuers assess potential sites. They discovered that valuers consider various factors when determining compensation for affected landowners, including market value, property usage, and the project's impact on the community. A key point of discussion was the legal framework guiding these assessments. Students found that FRA valuers primarily rely on the Crown Acquisition Act, alongside other relevant laws, ensuring fair and just compensation practices. The highlight of the trip was a real-life case study on compulsory land acquisition, which illustrated the complexities and



challenges involved. This hands-on experience not only enriched the students' understanding of land valuation but also highlighted the importance of balancing development needs with the rights of landowners. USP Valuation Program External Course Coordinator, Mr. Paula D. Raqekai, said it was a valuable learning experience that deepened the

students' appreciation for the processes behind infrastructure development in Fiji. "We thank the FRA for organizing this enlightening experience. This has allowed the students to engage with real-world scenarios and understand the significant impact these projects have on local communities," added Mr. Raqekai.