



AL TAU

OFFICE

Opening



SPEECH BY NMSA BOARD CHAIRMAN MR PETER HUMPHREYS, CBE

I wish to acknowledge and thank the Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation, Hon. Walter Schnaubelt, MP, for giving his time to officiate in the official opening of the new Alotau NMSA office. I wish to welcome everyone this morning and convey our sincere appreciation for your presence at this short but important ceremony.

From the outset I wish to state that the broader vision and strategic plan for NMSA is to extend its services to the maritime regions in Papua New Guinea. We need to be visible in provinces and districts. And in the regions there are inland waterways that fall under the jurisdiction of the National Maritime Safety Authority.

Establishing offices in Alotau and other centers is not only for better services but also improving NMSA's presence in managing and in regulating safety in the shipping services in the provinces.

In this space, NMSA will be involved in closer communication and dialogue with the people/communities, the shipping industry and civil society at large.

May I also echo the challenging aspects of establishing these offices which are:

1. Asset Finding - suitable land to build especially on a secured state land;
2. Governance - Securing the approval of the provincial government, the land board and the building board;
3. Skilled Manpower - Having to resource these officers with highly skilled personnel, like the licenced and gazetted ship surveyors and ship inspectors in the regions.

4. Investment - NMSA has made progressive investments into securing land and building this new Alotau NMSA office, purchasing a rescue boat, and having technical and support staff in the offices;

5. Budget - The non-tax revenue application would certainly have a long-term effect on continuous improvement and operations of these assets sustainably as it warrants an affordable annual recurrent budget, unlike when I came to NMSA, the situation was not like what we have now.

We didn't have a capital budget; in 2014 a revision of the levies enabled NMSA to have a budget that enabled it to;

- Build offices in the maritime provinces
- Purchase the new search and rescue management system;
- Put in place automatic information systems which are located in the fifteen (15) sites;
- Maintain the operations of the coastal monitoring stations in jomard passage and tuam island;
- Improve the global maritime distress signal system that links with the coast radio network;
- Purchase of the vessel monitoring system;
- Purchase the tide gauges;



NMSA Board Chairman Peter Humphreys speaking during the opening.

- Install and operate navigational aids (light-houses);
- Purchase of the oil spill equipment;
- Establishment of small craft boards under the small craft act ; and
- Building the capacity of NMSA to be on par with other maritime jurisdictions and authorities.

These are some of the planned activities that we are seeing the results of unfolding and being realised in our time today.

Of course with a functional board, we have had to work hard with the management to maintain good corporate governance in the systems and processes that the Authority has established.

The board approves NMSA's annual budget and the work plan which is aligned to the corporate plan 2020-2024.

The plan to build NMSA's human resource is also based on the recently approved organisational structure.

The major focus now and it is appropriate that our minister is here with us to appreciate the actions taken on the review and update of national legislations and regulations

Which includes;

(I) Merchant Shipping (bill 2020)

Under this bill the following supporting draft regulations have been completed in the last two (2) years.

- Marine orders regulation
- Stcw convention regulation,
- Pilotage regulation (2020).
- Search and rescue (sar) regulation.
- Small vessels safety regulation, 2020) (for vessels of 10 - 20 meters).

NMSA has also identified important international conventions/treaties that require ratification and is preparing an NEC submission to bring to cabinet for further endorsement.

As a member state we need to step up our efforts and make things happen on the policy front and the administration so a lot more collaboration is needed.

The opening of the office sets a focal point of coordination needed in the Milne Bay Province for all our stakeholders to contribute towards improving the shipping industry in terms of safer movement of goods and services; safer movement of passengers and safer vessels and safer navigation.

KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT & CIVIL AVIATION, HONORABLE WALTER SCHNAUBELT, MP

As minister, I am really happy to see and to meet all our industry partners and leaders in the Milne Bay Provincial Administration and invited guests.

As minister, I am keen on any development in the maritime space, especially for our people living in the coastline of our country.

I have been kept abreast of happenings in the policy area, however there are things that I feel we need to concentrate our efforts on a lot more especially in our maritime provinces.

I wish to point out that Papua New Guinea became a member of the international maritime organisation (imo) in 1976.

It has also been signatory to the following International Maritime Safety Conventions which are;

- Safety of life at sea (solas) 1974;
- Load lines convention 1966;
- Tonnage convention 1969;
- Collisions prevention (colreg) 1972;
- Standards of training, certification and watch-keeping for seafarers (stcw), 1978; and
- Search and rescue (sar) 1979.

PNG's compliance with the above International Safety Conventions is primarily the responsibility of the NMSA, with oversight from the IMO. PNG will accede to future conventions as appropriate.

The previous governments' passing of legislation pertaining to the conventions as mentioned, reflects positively on the commitment of the PNG Government to ensure safety of maritime is administered and regulated as a member to the IMO.

Under the Marape-Rosso government, we want to continue to make headway in addressing issues in the maritime space both domestically and internationally with discussions at the IMO and APEC FORA.

The government's commitment to bring back the national shipping services to improve service delivery to our people is budgeted for under the medium term development plan.

The government through its Connect PNG program is committed to ensuring major infrastructure developments with substantial funding to maintain and build major ports, wharves, and jetties.

These commitments and others in the transport sector are very much in alignment with the overall government priority of leaving no one behind as embraced and emanates from the directive principles of our constitution and vision 2050, the Development Strategic Plan, Medium Term Development Plans (MTDP), sector plans, provincial and district plans.

The pandemic, as you know, had given huge challenges to the maritime transport industry and its partners and frontline workers for the past two to three years.

Your resilience and resolve has enabled Milne Bay Province to prosper.

Moving through these challenges, the maritime

industry still delivers on much-needed services in the outer islands in the province.

Milne Bay Province is alive with small vessels and ferries including banana boats on its waters.

It dawns on me to relate to appreciate the traditional boat builders with skills so unique to this province.

There are many boats that are built here and sold to Papua New Guineans, as we rely on maritime transport.

I especially appreciate an SME – the Saeya Boat Builders of Sariba Island in the Samarai- Mururua District for their business.

I wish to make mention as well on the work of Samarai plastics which is building fibreglass dinghies in partnership with Ela Motors.

We will emerge from this pandemic experience stronger than ever before and NMSA as the regulatory authority will ensure applicable laws and regulations are applied to improve the services and safety around maritime securities.

Look to the future and prepare for the challenges that loom ahead of us. Actions on climate change and zero GHG emissions seem to be hitting the headlines these days.

This is especially salient for all of us in the transport sector because it accounts for some 30% of emissions worldwide.

Our collective efforts therefore can have a significant impact in ensuring a sustainable PNG while contributing to global climate change action.

The government has been investing heavily in the capacity and reliability of our transport system network, to make it more convenient and inclusive.

Much of the work continues under an unrelenting wave of the effect of Covid and other factors.

The Government is committed through its programs in the sector as seen in its commitment in the transport infrastructure budget for the major ports development and connection to the national and corridor roads in the country through the Connect PNG program.

And not forgetting our development partners, it is with great appreciation that your efforts and funding are not wasted.

On behalf of the Marape-Rosso Government, I wish to state our utmost appreciation and thank you for your support always.

You are aware that without a good and reliable transport system, good roads, adequate shipping services, and reliable air services, and without proper regulation of these tiers of transport systems, the economy of the country will certainly be affected.

It is a fact that transport is the key to economic growth and prosperity.

Indeed, all of you, our industry partners, play a pivotal role in each of these strategies that I have outlined.

While the government can map out the vision and put in place enabling frameworks in consultation

with all stakeholders, ultimately it is your efforts that will drive the agenda and make our vision a reality!

Therefore, as the Minister I am committed to do so many things that the government of the day entrusted me to do in the sector, but I can only do so much, I need the support of those agencies in the Ministry, so together we can be able to deliver on some key government results areas.

At this juncture, I wish to commend the effort to connect the 15 maritime provinces. The opening of the Alotau office is second after the Rabaul office as they set in motion the opening of similar offices in other provincial field offices.

In closing I wish to congratulate the NMSA board Chairman, Mr. Peter Humphreys, CBE, and the Board Members, NMSA Management, GM/CEO Mr. Paul Unas and your team for today's occasion.

To the stakeholders here, your resilience and mettle of maritime transport system has been tested and proven during the pandemic the past two years.

And I am confident that together, we can build an even better, stronger and more sustainable maritime system in Milne Bay as a model province.

With that I wish you all very best in your work within your organisations as we journey together in keeping our people safe at sea, protecting our marine environment from pollution, our ships from danger and lighthouses from vandalism.



Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation Honourable Walter Schnaubelt



NATIONAL MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY



THE official opening of the Alotau Field Office on July 20, 2023.

