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MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES PRELIMINARY REPORT ON A PAC 750XL AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Mr. Hubert Namani today announced the public release of the Preliminary Report, AIC 22-1001, related to the Niugini Aviation Services Limited PAC 750XL aircraft, P2-BWE, landing accident which occurred on 18 January 2022, at the Tekin airstrip, Sandaun Province.

Mr. Namani explained, *"it is the policy of the AIC to publicly release a preliminary investigation report for each accident being investigated 30 days from the occurrence date pursuant to requirements of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation"*.

At this stage, the AIC has established that the aircraft's left main landing gear collapsed following touchdown causing the left wing to drop and drag along the ground veering to the left and subsequently impacting a ditch adjacent to the strip.

The AIC is in the process of analysing and verifying information and evidence relevant to the investigation which include flight operation, aircraft landing gear systems, airworthiness and serviceability, performance, organisational aspects, airstrip conditions, weather etc. All relevant information will be published in the final investigation report.

As known to the public, there is another accident which occurred on 26 January 2022, involving the same Operator, aircraft type (PAC 750XL), and at the same airstrip. The AIC is also investigating that accident and a preliminary report will be released on 25 February 2022. While both accidents are being investigated separately, the AIC is also trying to understand the circumstances and contributing factors common to both accidents to ensure all safety lessons which can help improve aviation safety are learned.

The AIC has already issued a Recommendation to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA) to ensure fixed wing operations into Tekin Airstrip are prohibited until the airstrip is caused to be re-evaluated by the East Sepik (Sandaun) Provincial Government, to understand and mitigate significant risks to fixed wing operations into Tekin.

Mr Namani stated, *"most of the rural communities and villages, which make up the larger portion of our country's population, are only accessible by air, it is imperative that our government, particularly, the provincial governments ensure the airstrips being used are maintained at an acceptable minimum safety standard"*.

As per its legal mandate, all AIC investigations are conducted with the sole purpose of improving safety for the travelling public, with complete independence from other State

authorities, aviation service providers and stakeholders. AIC investigations do not apportion blame or liability to any person or organisation.

More information about this investigation can be found at www.aic.gov.pg