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MEDIA RELEASE

Chief Commissioner Namani's Term Comes to an End

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Mr. Hubert Namani, LLB, today announced the end of his five-year tenure with the Commission, his term officially ended on 7th March 2022.

Mr Namani stated that ***"The AIC has undergone significant transformation over the last 5 years under my lead and watch as Chief Commissioner to be a world recognized ICAO compliant independent aircraft accident investigation organization in the region whereby it is now able to demonstrate, to the global community, high levels of competence in aircraft accident investigation with the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and compliance to international standards and best practice on a consistent basis."***

My vision and drive for world recognition was realized in June 2019 when the AIC was recognized for its high standards of safety investigation and capability, and received its membership to the prestigious International Transportation Safety Association (ITSA); where it is one of only 18 countries out of the 193 ICAO Contracting States."

"Further recognition has come in the form of the AIC being invited to host the Ninth Asia Pacific Accident Investigation Group Meeting in 2021 and did successfully host the 2021 Asia Pacific (APAC) Regional Aviation Safety Meeting and Workshop via virtual means. Through the AIC's initiative, most Pacific Island States also attended the event for the first time and members of the international accident investigation organizations have acknowledged the success of the event."

I am therefore happy to leave AIC on a high note in a much better position than how I found it, and will not be seeking reappointment."

Mr. Namani explained ***"ICAO has recognized that the capabilities of the PNG AIC for conducting independent no-blame accident and serious incident investigation have significantly improved over the last 3 years, and that was clearly demonstrated in the two 2018 major accident investigations conducted for Pacific States under full delegation to the PNG AIC; the Boeing 737 at Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the ATR 72-500 at Port Vila, Republic of Vanuatu."***

Our fully fledged national team of investigators have been mentored to very high standards with professionalism, sound ethics and integrity in them and I am very confident in their capability going forward."

I must acknowledge and thank the current Board in Deputy Chief Commissioner Aria Bouraga and Commissioner Andui Koralayo and our CEO, Mr Dean Kuri, for working closely with me to deliver AIC to this level.

I also acknowledge the work of Alan Stray, our former Investigation Manager now retired and in Canberra, Australia, who supported me in the beginning to lead the transformation at the front."

The remaining Commissioners and the CEO, Mr. Dean Kuri have expressed gratitude for the current state of the AIC, attributing this achievement to the leadership of Mr Namani.

Under Mr Namani's leadership the AIC became a member of the International Transportation Safety Association (ITSA) in 2018, a highly prestigious international society consisting of investigation organizations from highly developed countries.

In his tenure, Mr. Namani also oversaw the investigation of several international investigations delegated by other Pacific Island Nations to PNG. *"To see other Nations, entrust their aviation safety investigation obligations and responsibilities to the AIC is a testament to the high capability levels we have in the AIC"*, Mr. Namani said.

The AIC has investigated all accident and serious incidents required under its mandate and in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (ICAO) standards. Mr Namani added that, ***"it is challenging being an investigation authority where our integrity is tested, however, I can safely say the AIC has been unphased and has continued to effectively deliver on its mandate to investigate without fear or favor, consistently meeting international best practice standards."***

Mr Namani also made mentioned that the board priorities also included capacity building of PNG citizens in the agency as investigators, enhancement of technological resources for improved effectiveness as investigators and a whole chunk of time allocated to developing an agile corporate culture that was aligned to world best practice standards. Mr Namani mentioned that there was no substitute for a well-trained, fully engaged and adequately resourced workforce.

"Our electronics and flight recorder laboratory capability has become recognized for its ground-breaking and pioneering digital flight data recovery analysis work that has provided a much better dimensioned to our reports. Other countries around the world have since, considered forgoing conventional practices and adopting or following the new systems deployed by the AIC", Mr. Namani said.

Mr Namani said he was proud of the highly qualified and trained PNG investigators that have bloomed during his tenure. The capability and capacity of the AIC has advanced beyond the international best practice level and the AIC has become a beacon of integrity and professionalism in the PNG public service.

The improvement to the agency's financial management practices through the introduction of an integrated (ERP) system has resulted in an unqualified audit report for 2020 audit, and those practices will continue to be maintained.

"As I end this term, I am proud to have made a significant contribution to nation building through the improvement of aviation safety standards both for Papua New Guineans and the international travelling public through the work of the AIC."