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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 22-1002, related to the Niugini Aviation Services Limited PAC 750XL aircraft, P2-BWC, landing accident which occurred on 26 January 2022, at the Tekin Airstrip, Sandaun Province.

Mr. Namani explained, *"The accident involving P2-BWC occurred eight days after another accident on 18 January 2022, involving the same Operator, aircraft type (PAC 750XL), and at the same airstrip. The AIC is also investigating that accident and the preliminary report was released on 17 February 2022. While both accidents are being investigated separately, the AIC is in the process of establishing circumstances and contributing factors common to both accidents to ensure all safety lessons to help improve aviation safety are learned"*.

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.

Mr. Namani stated, *"At this stage, the AIC has established that, similar to the P2-BWE accident on 18 February, P2-BWC aircraft's left main landing gear collapsed following touchdown at Tekin. The investigation has also found that P2-BWC's left wing tip struck the outer edge of the extended right flap of P2-BWE wreckage sitting on the eastern edge of the airstrip"*.

The AIC has also issued Safety Recommendations to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG for a review of the Operator's air operations and organization and in addition to the recommendation released on Thursday, 17 February regarding the prohibition of fixed wing operations into Tekin. The airstrip and Operator are the two most significant aspects common to the two accidents. It is therefore important that swift action is taken to mitigate risks which may be associated their operations before these risks are fully understood.

A Safety Recommendation was also sent today to the Sandaun Provincial Government to cause the re-evaluation of the Tekin Airstrip.

Mr. Namani placed emphasis on the fact that the risks associated with rural airstrips have increased significantly and will continue to increase while the data available about most airstrips is outdated. He said, *"Our provincial governments with rural airstrips in their respective provinces should take note that most of the accidents that the AIC is notified about and investigate, occur at rural airstrips. Their diminishing safety standards has almost always been a contributing*

factor in most investigations. Appropriate action is needed to ensure our rural communities safely, by air, receive the service they need”.

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority has also pledged to take appropriate steps for the safety of our aviation system.

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.

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