



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION HONIARA

MEDIA RELEASE

8 May 2020

Australia formally hands over newly built quarantine units at Henderson airport

Australian High Commissioner Dr Lachlan Strahan officially handed over two special-built pre-fabricated units to the Minister for Health and Medical Services, the Honourable Dickson Mua, at a ceremony at Henderson Airport today (8 May). The construction of the units is another concrete demonstration of Australia's ongoing commitment to boost Solomon Islands' COVID-19 preparedness and response effort.

The two units, built locally by Island Enterprises, and costing a total of SBD1.3 million, provide residential-style accommodation and each fits four people. As agreed by the Ministry of Communication and Aviation, the units have been located close to Henderson International Airport to be used by the Government for quarantine.

The site includes the option to expand, enabling surge quarantine capacity for up to 50 people in tent facilities if required. Power, water and sanitation facilities have been built to cater for this additional capacity.

Dr Strahan said the Australia High Commission and the Ministry of Health had worked together seamlessly to facilitate the installation of the units.

“A robust quarantine regime is a vital component of an effective public health response to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Australia is pleased to be delivering these units to assist the Health Ministry's COVID-19 prevention efforts. The units can be repurposed to meet another health requirement once the COVID-19 pandemic has passed,” he said.

The Honourable Mua said he wished to convey his sincerest appreciation to the Government and the people of Australia who continue to provide the necessary support and assistance to the Government and people of Solomon Islands.

“The Australian Government has been on the forefront together with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, assisting the Ministry on its consolidated National Preparedness and Response Plan. On the plan, one of its urgent priorities was to set up quarantine facilities for travellers entering the country,” he said.

“After almost three months of sheer hard work between MHMS and Island Enterprises, with funding support from the Government of Australia, we can now see the outcome of this project. On this note, I would again like to say thank you to everyone who played a key role in seeing this completion.”

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Australian High Commissioner Dr Lachlan Strahan and Minister for Health and Medical Services Hon. Dickson Mua cut the ribbon in front of Prefab quarantine unit at Henderson.



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Officials at the handover ceremony pose in front of a quarantine unit



PS Dr Pauline McNeil, Minister Hon. Dickson Mua and High Commissioner Dr Lachlan Strahan in a quarantine unit



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High Commissioner Dr Lachlan Strahan at the handover ceremony at Henderson



Father Selwyn Hou blesses the newly built quarantine facility



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