



## GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

Media Release

For Immediate Release

### NIUE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY TO GET UPGRADE

**Alofi, Niue – 22 March 2022** – The Government of Niue (GON) said that on Thursday, 10 March, the Minister of Infrastructure, Hon. Crossley Tatui, and Member Assisting the Minister, John Operator Tiakia, visited the Niue International Airport Upgrade Project.

The Minister was accompanied by the New Zealand High Commissioner Her Excellency Helen Tunnah and Downer Construction Manager Craig Smart.

Hon. Tatui says GON is delighted that the \$30m Project being coordinated by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade includes project manager GHD's design expertise with the construction undertaken by Downer NZ.

"The main features of the Niue Airport upgrade are a renewal of the asphalt surfacing of the runway, taxiway, and apron, which will future proof our critical infrastructure for many years to come. The existing surface is 27 years old and nearing the end of its service life. The work also includes upgrading the airfield lighting, improving the area in front of the fire station, and reshaping the grassed area at the Toi end of the runway,".

Minister Tatui also inspected the progress made by Downer's crew of local Niuean workers installing PVC ducts for airport lighting power cables and the other aspects of the overall Project.

Minister Tatui was briefed on the proposal to defer asphalt work to next year due to shipping delays and the general impact of COVID on the Project. High Commissioner Helen Tunnah explained how "the Project embodies the priority areas of Prosperity and Resilience that are in the Statement of Partnership between Niue and New Zealand signed in April 2019. It also contributes to Niue's vision for "A Prosperous Niue" or "*Niue ke Monuina*" as set out in the Niue National Strategic Plan 2016-2026".

Downer Construction Manager Craig Smart outlined the Project's overall importance with the airport being an important infrastructure asset that supports the economic and social linkages between Niue, New Zealand and the rest of the world.

The laying of ducts for airport lighting and the major task of producing aggregate at Tafalalo Quarry will continue this year and is expected to take until August 2022. Downer plans to recruit more local workers shortly to implement this year's work plan.

A special sailing of Matson's ship Imua (v112) is planned to bring the quarry equipment and explosives to Niue in April. This will enable the production of the aggregate required for the asphalt to commence at Tafalalo Quarry. The ship will also bring a laboratory for testing the aggregate and additional facilities for the Huihui Rd site.

Mr Smart expressed Downer's appreciation for the assistance given by the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Departments of Transport and Utilities, Civil & Quarry, Telecom Niue, Ports, and many other GON agencies and departments. He also remarked on the great Niuean hospitality he and his colleagues had experienced.

Mr Smart outlined some of the challenges the Project had experienced, the main ones being wet weather, the global impacts of COVID, obtaining spare parts for equipment repairs and world-wide shipping delays.

**ENDS**

**For more information, please contact:**

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**Note to Editors:**

Images of the Minister and officials inspecting the Niue International Airport upgrade are available on request