



GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

MEDIA RELEASE

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PREMIER OF NIUE REFLECTS ON THE ENDURING LEGACIES OF TWO GREAT MEN, FORMER HONORABLE SPEAKER OF THE NIUE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND FORMER LONG-SERVING MEMBER OF THE NIUE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Alofi, Niue – 22 November 2023 – The nation mourns the passing of two remarkable individuals who have left their mark on the public service and political landscape of Niue – Honorable Johnny Tofo Funaki NPSM, Former Speaker of the Niue Legislative Assembly and Mr Jack Willie Lipittoa, QSM, NDSC – Former Member of the Niue Legislative Assembly for the Village of Namukulu. On behalf of the government and people of Niue, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Hon. Funaki’s wife Mrs. Fakahulahettoa Funaki, NPSM, his children and family as well as Mr Lipittoa’s children and family during this time of profound loss.

Hon. Johnny Tofo Funaki commenced his career in public service in 1953 at the Resident Commissioner's Office, working in various departments such as Education, Health, Justice, and the Treasury. Notably, he served as Public Defender for a decade and held key positions, including Secretary of Justice and Land Titling Manager. He was appointed as a Commissioner of the Niue High Court in 1991 and later became the Hon. Speaker of the 9th Niue Legislative Assembly in 1996. He was awarded the Niue Public Service Award in 2020 during the 46th Constitution celebration for his unwavering dedication over 36 years in serving the Government and people of Niue.

Mr Jack Willie Lipittoa, QSM, dedicated almost 36 years of service as a Member of the Niue Assembly who contributed significantly to the progress and development of Niue. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Award during the 47th Constitution celebration in 2021 and was known as Uncle Jack to the community. Mr Lipittoa began his service as a woodwork instructor and has been a pillar for the village of Namukulu and the Ekalesia Kerisiano Niue faith. His previous recognition includes the Queen’s Service Medal in 1999.

The Premier of Niue, Hon. Dalton Tagelagi acknowledges the immense contributions of both men. Both pillars of our community leave behind a legacy of commitment and pride for Niue. Their dedication to the public service has left a lasting impact on the progress of our nation serving as an enduring inspiration for current and future leaders.

“May we honor their memory by weaving a future defined by the same unwavering dedication to the prosperity and unity of our cherished Niue,” said Premier Tagelagi. “Monuina e fenoga kehe Kautu he Atua, Lilifu Hon. Johnny Tofo Funaki mo e Lilifu Ekepule Mr Jack Willie Lipittoa, QSM.”

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