



## Lae Chamber of Commerce Inc. Weekly News Update

24 January 2014

VOLUME: 03 - 14

### LAE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INC.

Room 5, the  
Professionals Building,  
5<sup>th</sup> Street  
P O Box 265, Lae 411  
Morobe Province  
Papua New Guinea

Tel: (675) 472 2340  
Fax: (675) 472 6038

E-mail:

[president@lcci.org.pg](mailto:president@lcci.org.pg)  
[info@lcci.org.pg](mailto:info@lcci.org.pg)

Website:

[www.lcci.org.pg](http://www.lcci.org.pg)

The website is main-  
tained by Kuakawa  
Business Solutions on  
[support@kuakawa.biz](mailto:support@kuakawa.biz).

### Index

In this Issue

#### From the Presidents Desk

Roads

. Lae-Nadzab Highway  
. Lae Roads

Business Advantage News

*Thank you*

### FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

#### ROADS

## Highland Highway Maintenance Works Between Lae and Nadzab

The following letter from Shorncliffe explains that they will no longer be responsible for maintenance on the Lae to Nadzab section of the Highlands Highway from the end of January.



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Date: January 18, 2014

Our Ref: HHRMP-01-18-2014/LCCI

President  
Lae Chamber of Commerce Incorporated  
PO Box 265  
Lae, Morobe Province

Attention: Mr. Alan McLay O L

**SUBJECT: Routine Maintenance of Highland Highway Section Between Lae Main Wharf and Nadzab Airport Turn Off**

Shorncliffe has been informed by the Department of Works that the 45Km section of Highland Highway between Lae Main Wharf and Nadzab Airport Turn Off will be removed from our routine maintenance contract in anticipation of the Highland Highway expansion project. Shorncliffe will therefore no longer be responsible for the Highland Highway maintenance work in the mentioned section after February 2014.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact the Department of Works.

For your information only.

Yours Faithfully,

Alfred Yau  
Chief Executive Officer

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Objectives  
of the LCCI

- To promote the business interests of the private sector;
- To further the economic development in Lae;
- To ensure the provision of services and utilities essential to such development;
- To provide a representative body for business people, which government can consult;
- To promote support or oppose legislation; or take any other measures to improve the business community;
- To provide a forum for discussion of private sector goals;
- To pool the strengths of business people so that together, they can accomplish tasks that each one alone cannot achieve;
- To promote the economic viability of the area, so those current businesses will grow and new ones will be developed locally;
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## LAE NADZAB ROAD (Cont)

I discussed by e-mail this withdrawal of Shorncliffe with Bruce Warner the Project Engineer with High Impact Project Office, who assured me that this arrangement should work well as the Lae Nadzab Road contractors, China Railway International are responsible under the construction contract to keep the existing road open and operating at all times during the reconstruction and upgrade to 4 lanes. There will be times where the road has to be partly closed and a reduced traffic flow but all such requirements will be subject to a traffic management plan after the Engineers approval.

## LAE ROADS

Contract on Bumbu Road from the Kwila Road junction to the Bumbu Bridge. Works Department have advised that FTM Construction has managed to reach the Bumbu Barrack gate and is proposing to continue to the Kamkumung bridge. This will mean that the road across the bridge will be closed to traffic. FTM submitted their Traffic Management Plan which has been given the green light by DoW – see the plan on the following page.

The DoW Provincial Works Manager said that – “I know this will make some hindrance to business but I assure you that full focus will be given to complete that section and have access restored ASAP.

“The actual closure date will be made known, when the contractor advises. Currently we have given them the okay to allow them to proceed and they will advise the exact closing date/day.

“As required, concrete works will take over 28 days to cure once the last slab is poured e.g. if completed by 30th January, then road will be closed until 28th February 2014. The contractor has been asked to maintain potholes along the section of Butibum road to allow smooth flow of traffic. In regards to the awareness to locals along the Butibum road, the PWM, his team and the contractor should talk to the Ward member for awareness to be carried out.

“For the Cassowary and Markham Road closure, Shorncliffe has proceeded to work on these two sections, and have closed off the respective sections. However Shorncliffe has been informed to do up the by-pass behind the stadium to allow traffic through.

“For your information, Sandpiper Road is anticipated to be opened tomorrow (today) after completion of line marking.

“Please inform your members of the situation and we sincerely apologise in advance for inconvenience and request your cooperation until FTM is out of Bumbu Road.”

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## LUNCHEON

The Lae Chamber of Commerce will host a Lunch for members and guests, with the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Julie Bishop MP, as our Guest Speaker.

This is the first visit to PNG by Ms. Bishop since her Ministerial appointment and she is keen to see Lae because of the importance the City holds in the bilateral relationship, including Australia's commitment to Angau Hospital and the recent deployment of Australian Federal Police.

This Luncheon will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014. You will be notified about the venue and cost as soon as arrangements are made.

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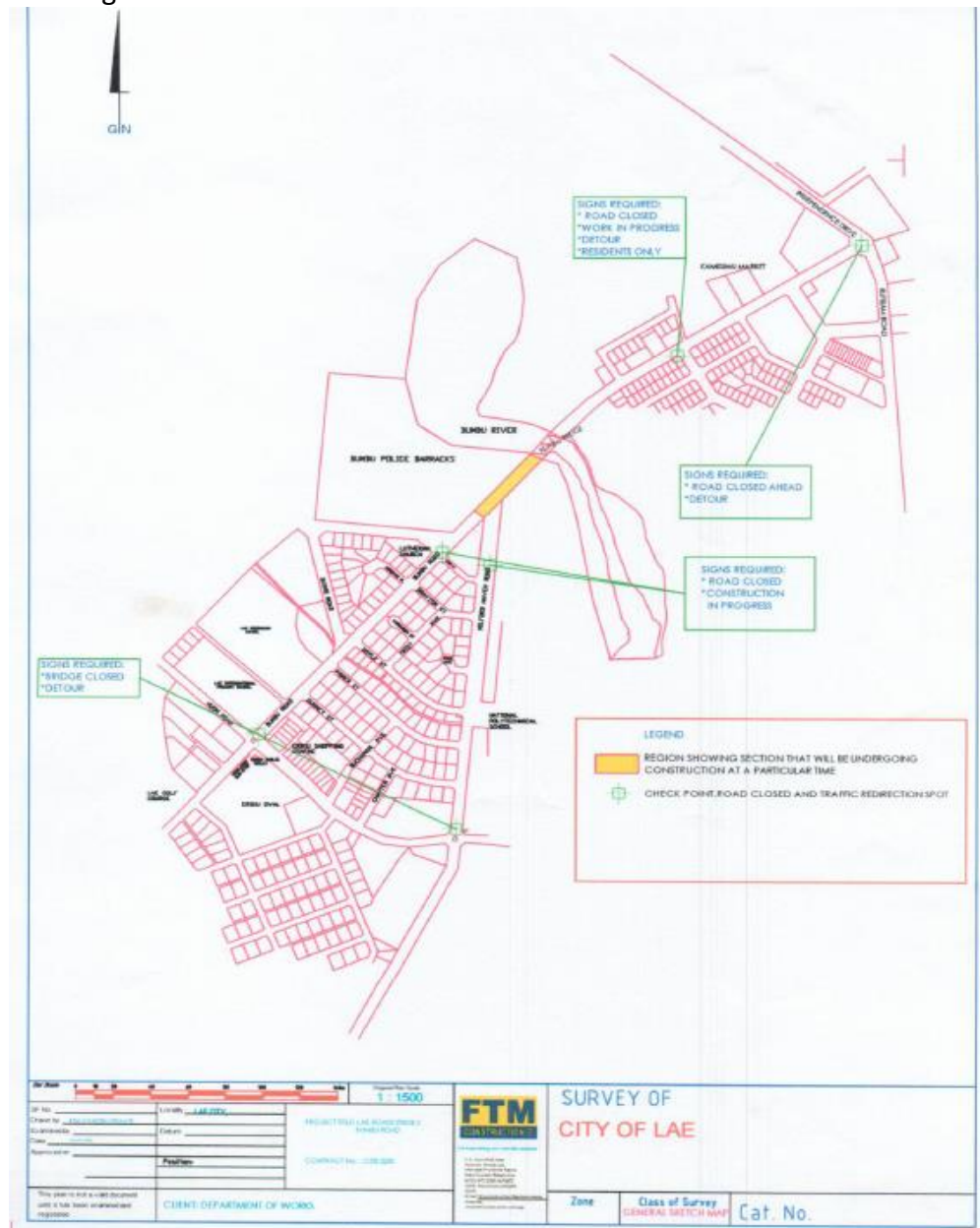
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## LAE ROADS – CLOSURE OF KAMKUMUNG BRIDGE (Cont)

The following is the Traffic Management plan for the closure of the Bumbu Bridge at Kamkumung:








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- The success of the 6<sup>th</sup> PNG Games in Lae from 16- 29<sup>th</sup> November 2014 will very much depend on how we the stakeholders and the community in Lae and Morobe Province interact and cooperate.
- Your partnership in association with the Host Organising Committee is vital and needed to successfully stage the 2014 PNG Games.
- Your contribution, effort and commitment will not go astray.
- You are part of Lae: Let's make it happen for Lae and Morobe Province.

### OFFICIAL ADDRESS AND CONTACT

Chairman, Host Organising Committee,  
PNG Games 2014,  
C/- P O Box 1991, LAE  
411  
Morobe Province.

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## LAE ROADS – CLOSURE OF KAMKUMUNG BRIDGE (Cont)

The Lae Chamber of Commerce expressed their concern over timing for the closure of the Kamkumung bridge for several reasons:

- All traffic will be diverted down Butibum Road. The LCCI carried out an inspection of this road and observed that it is currently riddled with potholes with even larger stretches of the road have been eroded away. The sudden increase in traffic including some very heavy trucks will cause immediate untold damage to the road surface. DoW has instructed the contractors to repair the Butibum Road but as the road was not built to have these volumes and weights of traffic in the first place, the road will be in a shambles very quickly.
- No awareness has been made with the Butibum people or the Ahi LLG of how the traffic will be diverted through their village. The last time the traffic was forced to use the road through the Village, there was a person run over by a truck, which resulted in the closure of the road. Therefore proper restrictions need to be made – including speeding limits, limiting truck access to the daylight hours etc. The Butibum people have to agree to all the arrangements and add any restrictions of their own before the road is open to all traffic as planned.
- If the Kamkumung Bridge is closed at this time, then there will be severe access problems to Lae Business and Industrial centres. Voco Point is closed at the moment with a very precarious access along Airways Avenue and there are works going on at Chinatown. The opening of Sandpiper Road will add some relief, but during the coming month, the closure of the Kamkumung Bridge will cause severe traffic congestion and delays for all road users.

I am aware DoW are trying to allow the contractors access to the project sites as soon as possible so as to avoid costly contract variations, but it is the contractors responsibility to ensure that there is reasonable access to the traffic. If all these closures are proceeded with, then there will be a severe disruption to traffic, or even a complete halt. It is estimated that 6,500 to 7,000 vehicles travel over the Bumbu Bridge at Kamkumung each day, which all will be diverted through Butibum Village in their effort to get to one side of the city to the other. This will place the existing roads under massive stress and will impair the movement of traffic enormously. We will advise of the actual closure date of the bridge when it is made available and any other notices as they come to hand.

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**Business Advantage article of the week!**

courtesy of [www.businessadvantagepng.com](http://www.businessadvantagepng.com)

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[Business Advantage](http://Business Advantage)

**New Made in PNG 2014 Edition Coming Soon**

Business Advantage International is proud to announce the third edition of **Made in PNG**, a publication dedicated to Papua New Guinea's productive sectors: manufacturing, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. It will be published in January 2014 in partnership with the Manufacturers Council of PNG.

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## Business Advantage PNG

YOUR GATEWAY TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE REGION

## What's on the agenda for Papua New Guinea business in 2014?

15 Jan 2014 by [Business Advantage](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

The coming year looks promising for Papua New Guinea business, with the giant PNG LNG project due to commence gas exports, and further investments looking likely. Meanwhile, eyes are on the O'Neill Government to see how it can improve the operating environment for business. *Business Advantage PNG* looks ahead to consider what 2014 may bring.

### Mining and petroleum

After a five-year development phase, the ExxonMobil-led PNG LNG plant prepares to export its first shipment in the second half of 2014. A second LNG project may be on the way, after InterOil teamed up with Total SA to explore its Elk-Antelope fields. The national government expects a third, smaller project, the Stanley gas project, to commence by year's end.

Meanwhile, after a tough year for the mining sector, which has been forced to cut back on exploration and reduce operating costs in the face of lower commodity prices, all eyes will be on the O'Neill Government, which has been drafting revised Mining Act.

What mines may emerge to replace the tiring Ok Tedi mine? Is the worst over or are there more cuts to come? Some may see the announcement that the Morobe Mining Joint Venture is moving ahead with a feasibility study for the Wafi-Golpu gold, copper and silver project as a promising sign, but another project in the pipeline, the Nautilus Minerals Solwara 1 undersea mining project, is still in abeyance pending negotiations with the government.

In Bougainville, the President of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, Dr John Momis, says the push to revive the Panguna copper mine will slow, as landowners cannot agree on the proposed Bougainville Mining Act.

### Agriculture

Prices continue to be volatile for several of PNG's agricultural exports, with palm oil prices—now PNG's largest commodity export—likely to remain low for the time being. Global copra prices began rising in late 2013 and are expected to trend upwards in 2014, but PNG's cocoa industry is struggling to deal with the impact of the devastating cocoa pod borer. Coffee bean production is also declining.

Although 80% of the population relies on agriculture for their income, crumbling roads and infrastructure means farmers struggle to get their products to market, prompting calls for the government to boost support.

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## Business Advantage Story of the week (Cont)

Agriculture Minister Tommy Tomscoll **has announced** the Cocoa Board will receive K3.5 million to set up a subsidiary company by March and develop a business plan. He **said** the plan includes partnering with six districts to plant 4.8 million cocoa trees by the end of the year. Cocoa futures **are trading** at about US\$ 2,700 per tonne and are expected to rise further due to a global shortage of about 160,000 tonnes in the 2013/2014 season.

### State-owned assets

*This should be the year when we learn the government's detailed plans for a **Sovereign Wealth Fund** and the re-organisation of state-owned assets.*

*The government plans a **restructuring** of its interests in oil, gas and mining resources into two separate mining and petroleum companies, Kumul Petroleum Holdings and Kumul Mining Holdings. All other state-owned enterprises are to be **absorbed** into a third company, Kumul Corporations Holdings.*

### Infrastructure

Substandard roads, power blackouts, irregular water supplies, flight delays and rudimentary health services continue to hamper the country's development. But infrastructure can be the next key investment area, according to **Kina Asset Management's Syd Yates**. There are already promising developments in electricity, where **independent power producers** are augmenting PNG Power's own power generation. Meanwhile, fast broadband internet is on its way, with the fibreoptic cables being laid to create PNG's **National Transmission Network**.

To address the lag of investment in infrastructure, the government has **gone into deficit** and also intends to **develop** four economic hubs in the towns of Port Moresby (finance), Lae (manufacturing), Mount Hagen (agriculture) and Kokopo (tourism).

Business will also be hoping for greater competition in telecommunications, with a **recapitalised Bemobile** now up and running and **prices set to drop**.

We can expect more roadworks in 2014, with Department of Works Secretary David Werh **announcing** his department will be focusing on regional roads development this year, saying K1.5 billion is needed each year for maintenance, but dealing with the backlog requires another K3 billion.

Port Moresby's infrastructure will continue getting a refresh ahead of the **2015 Pacific Games**, while Lae businesses will be looking forward to end of 2014, when the much-needed **Lae port expansion** is predicted to be complete. They'll also be looking for progress with the **new highway to Nadzab Airport**.

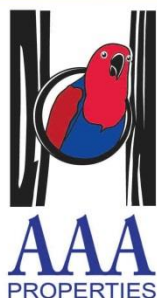
### Manufacturing and fisheries

Retail and manufacturing **reported** a 20-30 per cent drop in revenues in 2013, as the kina weakened and commodity prices fell. Despite that, manufacturers are planning to expand, particularly in **fisheries**.

Employers are expecting to hear this year the results of the newly-appointed Minimum Wages Board, which is reviewing the last minimum wage determination of K2.29 (A\$1.03) per hour, made in 2008.

### Forestry

The Prime Minister has **promised** to set up a Task Force to deal with the Special Agricultural Business Leases (SABL) system, after a special commission found that only four of the 42 leases they examined had obtained landowner consent. The drive for sustainability continues to gain momentum, with the EU now banning illegally-produced timber, which is thought to have constituted about **one-third of exports**.



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## **FIRE DESTROYS BRIAN BELL HOME CENTRE**

Last night a fire gutted this prime shopping location in Lae. Our deep sorrow is extended to the Proprietors, Management, and to the staff for losing so much in this fire. The people of Lae will be losers as well.

For the second time in three weeks we congratulate the Firemen for being quickly on the scene and the Police for containing the crowd, who as ever were on hand to take any opportunity they could from this mishap.

Our article last week on the shortfalls of the Fire Department in Lae is gaining some traction, as we have a Cairns based member trying to get assistance in the form of a fire truck and equipment from Australian sources. We have had discussions with the local Fire Chief and will take the matter up with the Superintendent of Fire Services.

The regular power outages and fluctuations are putting enormous stress on the electrical wiring, switchboards and fittings especially in the older buildings.

This may be the root cause of the recent fires.

## **Support for Papua New Guinea government reforms, but also 'unease'**

18 Sep 2013 by [Business Advantage](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

**While its aims of encouraging small and indigenous business are universally supported, the Papua New Guinea Government's recent dealings with investors have created a 'feeling of unease' in some business circles.**

'I appreciate that a stable political environment does not guarantee good government,' Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister Peter O'Neill admitted to delegates of the [2013 Papua New Guinea Advantage investment summit](#) last week.

'But it lays the right foundations for good government—sound fiscal management, pro-investment and pro-development policies, the delivery of basic community services, and providing the infrastructure our people need, and our industries and businesses need.'

Few in the room would have disagreed that PNG's impressive economic growth over the past decade has been supported not only by political stability (the events of 2011–2012 aside), but also by a stable legislative environment surrounding investment, resources development and taxation.

While the O'Neill Government has taken steps through legislation to ensure that political stability is maintained, it has also initiated a number of reviews of important existing laws—notably, PNG's Mining Act and its resources tax regime.

### **A feeling of unease**

While such occasional reviews are the normal business of government, the impending reviews are taking place against a background of a series of government dealings with investors, which have served to create what one senior mining industry source this week called 'a feeling of unease' among some in the business community.

These dealings include:

- The [confirmation](#) by Richard Maru, Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry, that he personally intervened to alter the Security Commission of PNG's Takeover Code and [prevent](#) Kulim Malaysia acquiring a majority stake in New Britain Palm Oil Limited (Kulim's appeal to PNG National Court was subsequently rebuffed);
- The prolonged arbitration (finally [completed last week](#)) between Nautilus Minerals and the State over the Solwara I undersea mining project;
- The Government's intention to acquire the shares in Ok Tedi Mining Ltd owned by majority shareholder, Papua New Guinea Sustainable Development Program, [without compensation](#);
- The announcement in July by Mining Minister Byron Chan that the government was [considering ownership](#) of the Xstrata-run Frieda River gold mine;
- The [confirmation](#) last week that the government would legislate to implement the 21 points of the Madang Declaration and Communiqué on small business, which would include introducing a list of business activities reserved solely for Papua New Guineans, and a foreign investment review board.
- Against such a background, investors at last week's 2013 Papua New Guinea Advantage summit might have been forgiven for being unsure how to react to Public Enterprises Minister Ben Micah's announcement that he was working on a blueprint for 'a new partnership' between the public and private sector.

### **Broad support for SMEs**

PNG's business community is unquestionably supportive of the PNG Government's attempt to develop more locally-owned businesses, especially in the small-to-medium (SME) space.

'We totally agree that the solid base of PNG's economy has to be built on SMEs that are in the hands of Papua New Guineans,' says David Conn, Chief Executive Officer of the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

However, Conn expresses a hope that there will be more consultation with industry before government policies are finalised, indicating there has not been sufficient debate so far.

'Chambers of Commerce are potentially some of the biggest allies for the government in SME development,' he observes.

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## The 39<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL GAME FISHING TITLES WILL BE HELD IN LAE IN 2014

The Lae Game Fishing Club is set to host the 39<sup>th</sup> National Titles in 2014 from 11<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> April. We only get the chance to showcase the rich fishing grounds here in the Morobe Province once every 4 years. It is expected that over 400 anglers and guests will attend from all over PNG and internationally.

The LGFC is calling on local and national business houses to help by providing sponsorship support to make this the biggest and best National Titles that PNG has ever seen!

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## Business Advantage- Papua New Guinea government reforms (Cont)

While he feels that improving small business's access to finance is a positive move, the President of the Lae Chamber of Commerce Alan McLay told *Business Advantage PNG* that policies such as a reserved list and mandatory 51% PNG ownership of business had been tried in the 1990s under the National Investment Development Agency (the predecessor of the Investment Promotion Authority) and 'didn't really work'.

He said he was looking forward to Commerce Minister Maru's forthcoming address to his members on the government's new policies.

As Douveri Henao, Executive Director of PNG Business Council, suggested in a [recent TV interview](#), the implementation of SME policy will need to be underpinned by significant research.

### Addressing necessities

Not only is the development of an SME sector economically necessary; it is also politically so. As the PNG economy has grown, creating an emergent middle class, so too has the need to deliver tangible benefits to ordinary Papua New Guineans, most of whom survive on subsistence livelihoods and have understandable expectations that life will improve.

The O'Neill Government has aimed many of its policies not only at alleviating the costs of living for ordinary Papua New Guineans—by making school education free, for instance—but also on tangible development, such as infrastructure. The decision to deliver more of the national budget at sub-provincial district level could also be seen as a means of ensuring money is spent where local communities can see it.

### Building the pie

The next step is to ensure that Papua New Guineans participate fully in the future development of the private sector.

The country's national long-term blueprint—Vision 2050—aspires to have 70% of business in local hands by the middle of the century.

While some in the business sector are happy to take a 'wait and see' approach to the government's flagged initiatives, there remains a hope that its goals can be achieved by growing the size of the private sector pie, rather than re-distributing ownership of what exists today.

**HUON CLUB INC.**

**AUSTRALIAN Day Function**  
**26th JANUARY, 2014**

**COME JOIN US IN CELEBRATION OF AUSTRALIA DAY**

- ❖ **THEME: "A DAY AT THE CRICKET"**
- ❖ **STARTS: 11 A.M TILL LATE**
- ❖ **MEMBERS K20 (AT THE DOOR)**
- ❖ **NON MEMBERS K40**
- ❖ **BEST DRESSED PRIZES**
- ❖ **AUSSIE BEERS**
- ❖ **DELICIOUS FOOD**
- ❖ **MUSIC**





## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Australian Visa Medical Requirements

We wish to advise that Lae International Hospital (LIH) is now a fully accredited hospital approved by the Australian Government Immigration and Border Protection authorities, to carry out all medical requirements in connection with all visa applications for Australia.

For any further information, please contact Reception at the hospital.

Telephone: 472 7133

Email: [reception@lih.com.pg](mailto:reception@lih.com.pg)



### WALINDI RESORT SPECIAL 20% OFF ACCOMMODATION

Walindi Plantation Resort would like to offer all LCCI Members  
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\*Conditions apply\* \*Two night minimum stay\* \*Applies to new bookings only\*

#### MESSAGE FROM NIUGINI ELECTRICAL

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\* Offer valid until 31st October 2013