



Lae Chamber of Commerce Inc. Weekly News Update

04 April 2014

VOLUME: 13 - 14

LAE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INC.

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Unitech welcomes the
return of Vice Chancellor

Thank you

FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

NOTICE

PRIME MINISTER OPENS LAE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL FUNCTION CENTRE

The new Conference/Function Centre at the Lae International Hotel is being officially opened by Prime Minister O'Neill today. This magnificent centre has replaced the old "Haus Win" that held some enjoyable and memorable functions, which most of us remember (or forget). However there is nothing in PNG to beat the new centre.

Hosting the regular SCRUM luncheon at the same time as the Official Opening is a great way to baptise the new centre. The whole setting, with new tables, seats and cutlery gives an air of splendour.

If you are thinking of hosting an event you could not do better than the Lae International Hotel Conference Centre.

NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE MINISTER CANCELS PLANS TO VISIT LAE

We have just been advised by the New Zealand High Commission to Papua New Guinea, that the **NZ Foreign Affairs Minister Murray McCully** will not be visiting Lae as planned and advised in last weeks newsletter. The proposed trade delegation that is travelling with Mr McCully will also not be proceeding with their visit to Lae. We pass on the apologies of the NZ Hicom to the Lae Chamber of Commerce and its members.

PNG POWER STRIKE

PNG Power Limited workers went on strike on Wednesday this week after a week of accusations against the CEO and the Board acting Chairman that led to the CEO being suspended. Whatever the reason I find it difficult to understand the reason to strike, as we the customers are the ones who suffer. We pay for the power that PPL supply to us and whatever in fighting between management and board is no reason to penalise us.

Disgruntled employees leaked information on 12 MW of generators that are sitting idle at the Taraka Power station, unable to be used because the lease agreement hasn't been signed by the IPBC. These generators are owned by Aggreko Generator Rentals (PNG) Ltd, and are apparently old machines which may not be suitable for use at Lae. There are other rumours about generators from a Jewish and an American supplier being considered, which is additional to the contracted Power Station to be operated by Daewoo electrical company at Munum.

PPL must get their act in order. There is no doubt that they must fill the shortfall in power supply in Lae. They are the experts so they should get the best deal for Lae – not a lot of different small deals that may be uneconomical to run. We just want good quality 24 hour power in Lae.



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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;
- To provide business with a common voice.



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LAE ROAD WORKS

Mangola Street

The announcement in this newsletter last week that Shorncliffe were to start work on the section of Mangola Street from Marsina Street Junction to Bumbu Rd Junction on Saturday last week (29th March), provoked a very strong apprehension by most of the industries associated with the Lae Port activities, including the Lae Port Authority Management.

A meeting was organised at the Lae International Hotel on Wednesday 2nd April attended by Stevedoring, Logistics, Trucking & Manufacturing companies, PNG Ports and 2 DOW Engineers.

The first complaint aired was that the work on Mangola Street had started with no effective Notice given. The contractor, in the late notice in the LCCI Newsletter last Friday, declared that this work needed the end of Mangola Street to be closed. As Mangola is one of only two roads to the Lae Port, the closure left the only access by Milfordhaven Road. The congestion was obvious on Monday with trucks queuing up for hours to get into the Port.

The meeting declared that there had been insufficient time given to mitigate and minimise the impact of this closure. A minimum of 2 weeks' notice was needed for the affected parties to prepare and make alternate arrangements.

The meeting also declared that Milfordhaven Road had major congestion problems due to the road works, and there is a need to ensure that the intersections and Pot Holes are filled, graded and compacted on an ongoing basis to speed up traffic flow as much as possible. The DOW Engineers agreed and stated they would ensure that the contractor complied.

Shorncliffe will be completing all of Mangola Street to the market roundabout, which will be done by Dekanai.

This highlighted the difficulty with more than one contractor working in adjacent locations i.e. Dekanai closing off the top of Aircorps past Macdhui Street, effectively closing another alternate route to the Port.

The meeting also expressed severe concerns on the behaviour of the PMVs parking on the market roundabout which poses extreme danger! DOW Engineers will get police to continually clear this section!

The next stages of work on Mangola will impact Trukai and SVS so the meeting decided to request only 1 side of the road to be disrupted at a time, so that businesses are able to be accessed. This will also be an issue for BOC and Rabtrad further up the road later on.

The trucking companies considered running more freight at night to minimise the impact on Milfordhaven during the day. Also discussed was the size of the trucks moving to and from the Port – to limit the use B double truck trailers as their turning circles are too large and they rip up the roads. So even reverting to using single trucks was suggested but this would impact on transport businesses and costs for customers.

The DOW guys appreciated the meeting and the opportunity to talk to affected businesses and are happy to go to the contractors with the recommended requirements of minimum 2 weeks' notice of the future works by contractors, and the suggestion of only working 1 side of the road at a time.

They did however mention that these road works must all be completed by the years end for funding /payment requirements.

The meeting also mentioned PNG Games which will be held in Lae at the end of the year with the need for non-disrupted traffic flows. DOW agreed to work to ensuring this was achieved.

Comments were also made on future contracts and the need to have "consultation with affected parties" completed to discuss any Traffic Management Plans for new work.

The meeting ended with all parties in agreement to have regular meetings on the Lae road works.

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Business Advantage article of the week!

courtesy of www.businessadvantagepng.com

More stories are available on the Business Advantage Website.

[Business Advantage](#)



The latest- Made in PNG Magazine IS NOW AVAILABLE from the LCCI. Please arrange to collect this must read document.



Exclusive: the 2014 PNG 100 CEO Survey

2 Apr 2014 by [Business Advantage](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

Business Advantage PNG's exclusive annual survey of PNG's major companies indicates that the Papua New Guinea economy is undergoing a contraction, although there is still significant confidence in its future.

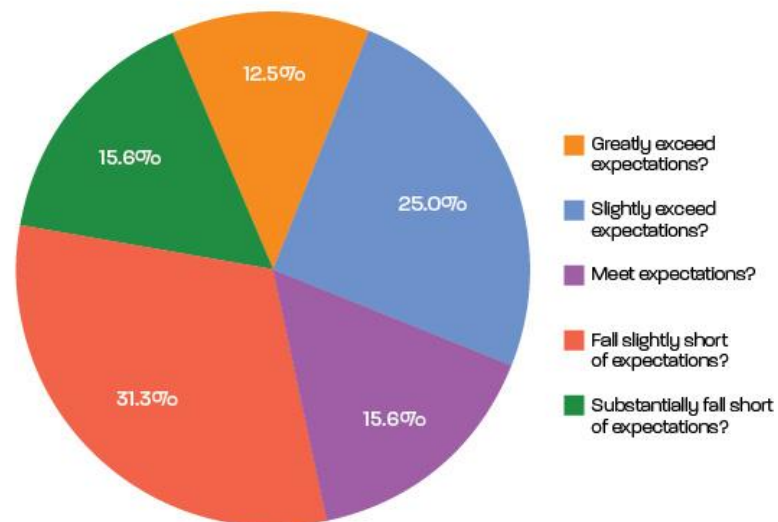


This is the third year in a row that Business Advantage International has run its exclusive survey of executives in PNG's largest companies—the PNG 100 CEO Survey.

Designed to gauge business confidence among PNG's largest businesses, the survey seeks to uncover their profit, investment and recruitment expectations for the coming year. It also encourages PNG's leading businesses to identify the key issues they are facing.

Profits below expectations

Looking back on your business's performance in 2013, did your profits



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The PNG Games will be held in Lae in 2014



The Host Organising Committee (HOC) humbly invites you to be part of Papua New Guinea's very own game, the PNG GAMES 2014.

- The success of the 6th PNG Games in Lae from 16- 29th 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 Organizing 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**
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Telephones:
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BUSINESS ADVANTAGE ARTICLE (Cont)

The survey clearly indicates that PNG's largest companies experienced a downturn during 2013, with almost half—46.9%—reporting profits below expectations (last year, only 15.2% reported such disappointment).

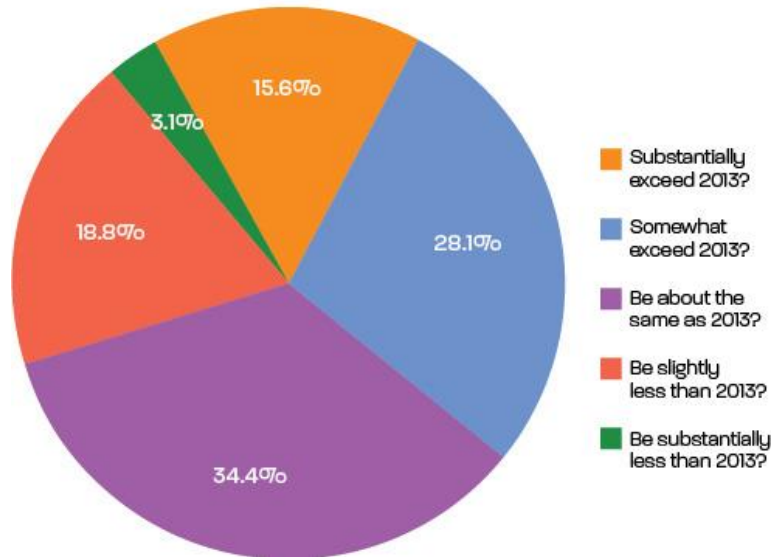
Notably, too, **last year** no respondents reported a 'substantial' drop in profits; in this year's survey, however, 15.6% did.

The picture was not unremittingly gloomy: 12.5% reported profits had substantially exceeded expectations, and a further 25% said profits in 2013 had been slightly above expectations.

2013 was the year when PNG lived up to its reputation as the land of the unexpected—just 15.6% of our respondents reported profits at expected levels, compared to 24.2% in our last survey.

Lower confidence

In 2014, do you anticipate that your profits will



In spite of the downturn, a decent proportion of business leaders were still bullish about the prospects for profits for 2014, with 43.7% expecting an improvement on those of 2013.

While this is around double the number of those who were expecting lower profits, suggesting an overall positive picture, it is down notably on last year's survey, when just over half (53%) of respondents said they were expecting better profits in the year ahead.

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11 April: Lae Game Fishing Titles

From the 11th of April sees the beginning of a week and a half of the Lae Game Fishing Titles taking place. This only happens once every four years, and the Lae Yacht Club turns into a hive of activity during this time – especially in the evening when the boats return with their catches! It is well worth it to head down to the Yachty to see all of the action.

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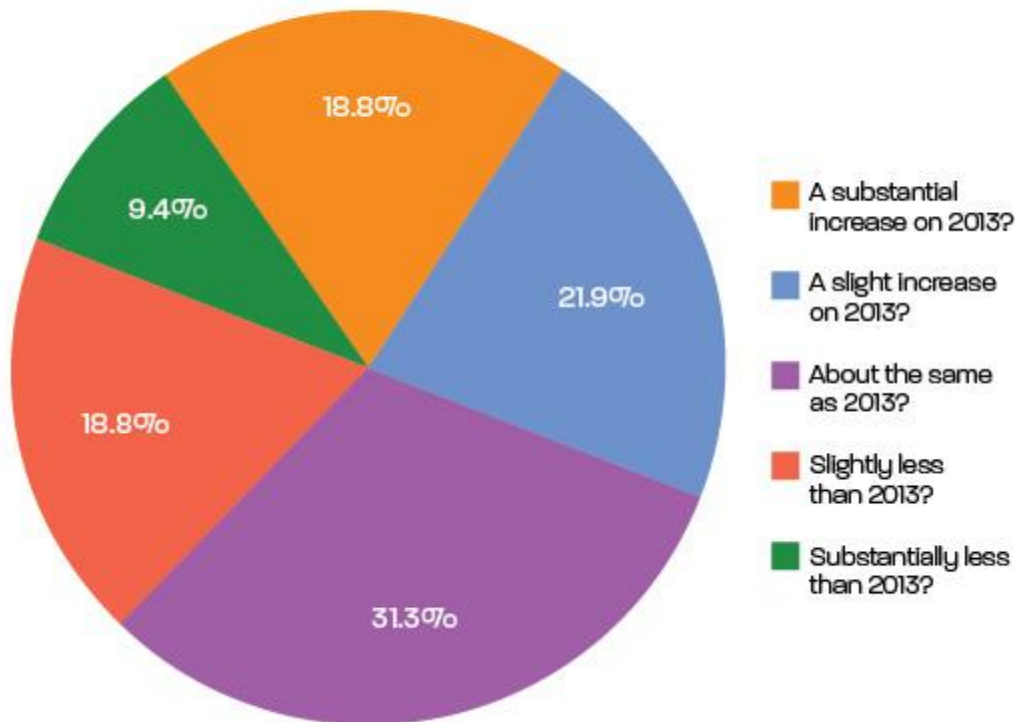
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BUSINESS ADVANTAGE ARTICLE (Cont)

'The number of CEOs planning to increase staffing levels has fallen to 31.3%, and almost as many—28.2%—are planning staff reductions in 2014'
Meanwhile, the number of CEOs expecting a drop in profits has doubled from last year's survey, up from 11.8% to 22.1%.

Investment and employment intentions

How much investment (e.g. in plant, equipment, land or other assets) are you planning in 2014?



The PNG 100 CEO Survey is designed to capture investment and employment intentions in PNG's largest companies over the coming year, and it is in these two areas where we see a marked difference between this and previous surveys.

Last year, almost 70% of respondents were planning to increase their investment in plant, equipment and other assets during 2013. One year later, that figure has fallen to just over 40%, with 28.2% of respondents planning to reduce their investment expenditure.

Nevertheless, the picture is not too harsh: almost a third of respondents intend to invest a similar amount in 2014 as they did in 2013.

Expect lay-offs



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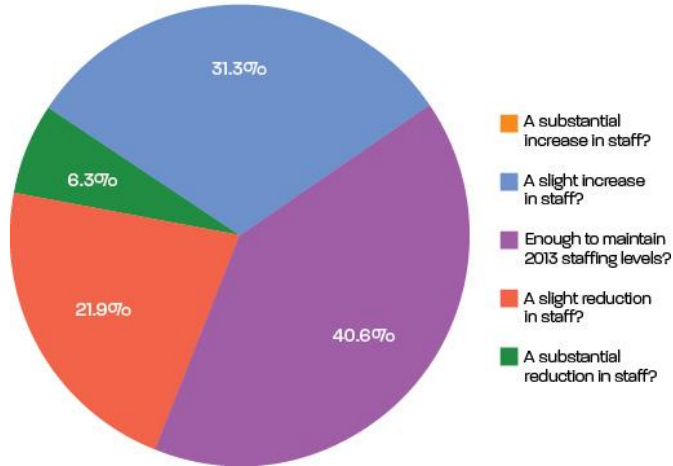
Check the LCCI for details of the special deal throughout March!!

CONTACTS TO PNG FIRE SERVICES LAE FIRE STATION

Phone numbers.
 4720252 - Acting Commander Alphonse Amia
 Emergency Numbers are still the ones in the directory which are:
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24 HOURS PNG POWER NUMBERS
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 3. 70306212

What level of recruitment are you planning in 2014?



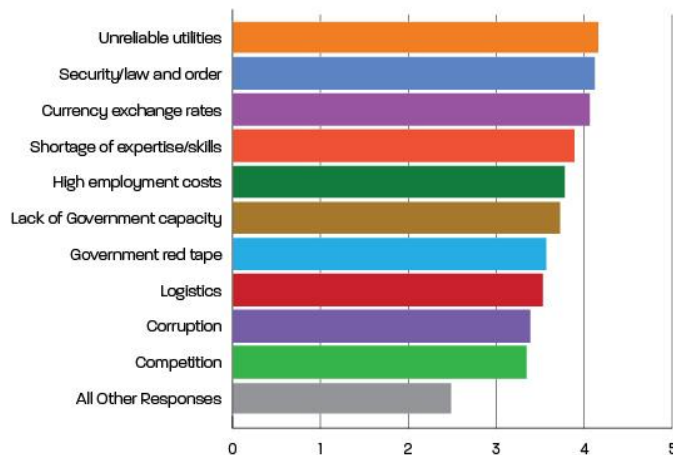
In *Business Advantage PNG's* last two surveys, the number of employers planning to reduce their workforce has been negligible—7.4% in 2012 and 5.8% in 2013. In addition, in both surveys around 50% of respondents said they were planning to increase their headcount over the coming year.

'There was one major new issue to appear on this year's list of concerns—currency exchange rates.'

This year, expect lay-offs: the number of CEOs planning to increase staffing levels has fallen to 31.3%, and almost as many—28.2%—are planning staff reductions in 2014, a five-fold increase in just one year.

Issues affecting business

What are the critical issues facing your business in 2014?



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BUSINESS ADVANTAGE ARTICLE (Cont)

The issues facing PNG's largest companies have changed little over the three years of our survey, although the top issue has changed each year. In 2012, at the peak of the LNG construction boom, it was the skills shortage. In 2013, it was security and law and order—a perennial, mission-critical concern for our respondents, and one that shows only marginal signs of improvement.

In this year's survey, the top concern was the unreliability of state-owned utility services, which place an immense cost burden on business. Our survey indicates PNG's largest businesses are still awaiting the benefits of the PNG Government's increased infrastructure investment.

There was one major new issue to appear on this year's list of concerns—currency exchange rates. PNG's currency, the kina, lost almost 14% of its value against the US dollar in the four months leading up to the commencement of our survey in November 2013. The high rating for this issue among CEOs indicates just what an impact that fall had on business.

The PNG 100 CEO Survey 2014 was conducted by Business Advantage International between late November 2013 and early February 2014. The survey included senior executives from a representative sample of Papua New Guinea's largest companies across all sectors of the economy

As a business owner, are you getting the information you need to manage your business effectively?



Your invitation to PwC's Private Clients Business Improvement Process

As you are well aware, managing a business is not easy. The rules are constantly changing and many businesses are not reaching their full potential as they struggle to meet the day to day challenges that confront them.

PwC Lae are holding a series of Business Improvement Process seminars aimed at helping private business owners manage their business effectively. PwC's Private Clients Business Improvement Process is designed to focus your team on the big picture, whilst employing the necessary controls to manage ongoing business performance.



To register your interest in attending a Business Improvement Seminar in Lae, please contact
Madlyne Lovai on phone 472 2644 email – madlyne.lovai@pg.pwc.com, or
Stephen Beach - stephen.beach@pg.pwc.com

Aspermont publishes the popular PNG Report Magazine as well as the PNG Industry News seen on this page. This article is published as an extract from PNGIndustryNews.net



The latest February/March edition of the PNG Report has just been received at the Lae Chamber office. You are invited to collect your free copy.



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The ABC's Sean Dorney

Pacific nations struggle with foreign tuna fishing.
Courtesy: ABC

BUSINESS ADVANTAGE ARTICLE (Cont)

Analysis: Pacific governments need to tighten regime for foreign tuna fleets

1 Apr 2014 by [Sean Dorney](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) agreed at its meeting in Honiara in March 2014 to set limits on tuna catches. Sean Dorney reports Pacific governments now need to address illegal fishing, an errant European Union, and the threat posed by subsidised foreign fishing fleets.

In 2008, the eight-member PNA introduced a Vessel Day Scheme (VDS), whereby purse seiner fishing fleets have to bid in something like an auction for fishing days. The eight signatories, including Papua New Guinea, collectively control 25–30% of the world's tuna supply and approximately 60% of the western and central Pacific tuna supply.

For the next three years, foreign purse seiner fleets will be limited to a total of 44,623 fishing days a year in Pacific waters, a cut of 7,827 days a year, or 15%.

The current minimum price of a fishing day for foreign fishing vessels is US\$6,000 and, according to the PNA, the VDS is now worth US\$240 million per year to member countries.

European Union refusal

However, the extent of foreign fishing fleets has seriously affected the ability of local Pacific fishing fleets to continue operating.

The problem is partly that the European Union has refused to sign up to PNA fishing limits, preferring instead to reach bilateral fishing arrangements with individual PNA members such as Kiribati and Solomon Islands.

Last December, the ousted Managing Director of the PNG National Fisheries Authority, Sylvester Pokajam, told the EU at the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting in Cairns that if they did not want to recognise PNA's Vessel Day Scheme, they should pack up and leave the Pacific.

Part of the blame for the demise of local Pacific fishing fleets can be traced to heavily subsidised Chinese fishing fleets.

Some PNA country members [say](#) the answer is to roll these bilateral fishing agreements with the EU into the VDS to promote consistency.

Subsidised fleets

Part of the blame for the demise of local Pacific fishing fleets can also be traced to heavily-subsidised Chinese fishing fleets.

Figures from the Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) show that last year there was a 125% increase in the size of China's South Pacific tuna fleet, which now counts 241 vessels, many of them newly-built using subsidies.

An FFA briefing paper [warned](#) that, without Pacific governments' intervention, 'the prospect for the survival of domestic non-Chinese-flagged vessels in the region would be extremely challenging.'

'A\$1.7 billion is lost through illegal and unregulated fishing activity in the Pacific.'

'Pacific Island governments have a responsibility to control tuna fishing in their waters, and should be giving preference to local fishing fleets instead of granting more licences to foreign fishing vessels,' according to one PNA official.

Illegal fishing

A major problem, too, is illegal fishing. Anthony Bergin, the Deputy Director of the Australian Security

UNITECH

We are delighted that the Unitech Vice Chancellor Albert Schram returned to the University yesterday after being refused entry into PNG for well over a year.

The students had closed the campus for nearly a month, demanding the return of Dr Schram. They had seen just what changes & developments he had made in the few short months he operated at the helm of the University in 2012, that he is the man to lift the standard of the institution.

As you are aware, the LCCI has been working with the Office of Higher Education, the UNITECH & National Polytech and some resources companies for over a year now, to make Lae the Centre of Excellence for Technical training in the country. The return of Dr Schram and the proper functioning of the University is an important step in furthering this move.

Our Industries are of course looking at the long term benefits of this scheme, with graduates more suitably trained for our needs.

Policy Institute, [estimates](#) that about A\$1.7 billion is lost through illegal and unregulated fishing activity in the Pacific.

Bergin has proposed that Australia aid could be put into the soon-to-be-revamped [Australian Pacific Patrol Boat Program](#), which supplies patrol boats to Pacific countries so they can patrol their territorial waters, so that it is not solely a Defence Department program.

The tuna catch from the Central and Western Pacific is now worth an estimated US\$7 billion a year. Although enforcement of the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) has already increased revenue to the islands more than three-fold, PNA chief executive Dr Aqorau says this is a fraction of what the industry is worth to PNA members.

'With greater cooperation among the Parties to make the VDS more effective, and reduce leakages from allowances being made to vessel operators through the manipulation of non-fishing days, revenues generated from sale of days can be trebled,' he said.

Sean Dorney is the ABC's Pacific Correspondent.



The Southport School has pleasure in inviting you to attend a

Lae TSS Function

hosted by Mr Tony Watt, McKinley Housemaster and Mr Conan Bland, Director of Cadets

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