



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 17th October 2023

Repair Work at Mt Hagen airport runway is necessary to maintain safety

The National Airports Corporation would like to advise airline operators and the travelling public that the current aircraft pavement repair works being carried out on a section of the runway at Mount Hagen Airport are progressing on schedule.

The repair works were undertaken recently after we identified defects on a section of the runway. We anticipate that these works which commenced on the 02nd of October 2023, should take up to eight weeks to complete subject to prevailing weather conditions.

This maintenance and repair work has caused the temporary downgrade of flights into Mount Hagen from Fokker 100 aircraft to Q400 or similar aircraft. While we acknowledge the challenges these necessary repairs have posed to the travelling public, we want to emphasize that the safety of passengers and aircraft is our utmost priority.

The runway is a vital component of the airport infrastructure. Therefore, it is imperative that we carry out essential repair and maintenance as and when the need arises to maintain safe operations in and out of Mount Hagen airport and all of our other airports.

The volume of passengers to and from Mount Hagen Airport has tripled due to the closure of Mendi, Wapenamanda and Chimbu airports. This influx demonstrates Mount Hagen Airport's busy status and, therefore, the necessity for ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the airport infrastructure and facilities to maintain safe operations.

Meanwhile, as we work to address concerns relating to the Mendi Airport, we would like to inform you that Air Niugini services to Wapenamanda Airport have recommenced effective (Tuesday, 17th October) and we anticipate that this will help ease the volume of passengers moving in and out of Mount Hagen airport.

In the interim, we appeal to the travelling public for your patience and understanding during the crucial maintenance period.

Our focus is to ensure that safety is not compromised, even amidst political and commercial pressure. End//

Approved for release;

NAC Corporate Communications