

Two Governors, One State: Chuuk confronts leadership crisis

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 20, 2026

Weno, Chuuk — Chuuk State is facing a constitutional crisis, with two competing sets of leaders claiming the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor following a disputed swearing-in ceremony on April 16.

The dispute centers on a decision by Associate Justice Larry Wentworth, which addressed not the outcome of the gubernatorial election, but who had legal authority to act as members of the election commission at different points in time.

On April 16, members of the Chuuk State Election Commission — identified in that ruling as the legally constituted

commission after March 14, 2025 — issued a proclamation asserting that Mark Mailo and Joe Enlet are the duly elected Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and may be sworn into office.

That ruling, issued in Civil Action No. 034-2025, found that previously unconfirmed commissioners could act as de facto officials through March 14, 2025, but that authority did not extend beyond that date. The court’s decision effectively recognized the current commission as the lawful body thereafter, while making clear that the case was not an election contest and did not determine the outcome of the gubernatorial race.

Relying on that interpretation, the commission moved forward, asserting that the results of the April 8, 2025 Weno revote remain valid and that Mailo and Enlet are the certified winners.

The action was met with immediate pushback.

In a strongly worded public statement, the Chuuk State Office of the Attorney General said the swearing-in of Mailo and Enlet was “false, misleading, and without lawful effect,”

[Click here for continuation](#)



Chuuk Election Commissioner Andreas Victus administers an oath of office to Mark Mailo

Chuuk reels from Typhoon Sinlaku as recovery begins amid widespread damage

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 16, 2026

WENO, Chuuk — Typhoon Sinlaku left a trail of destruction across Chuuk State after battering the islands over the weekend of April 11–12, knocking out power island-wide on Weno, damaging critical infrastructure, and forcing both state and national emergency declarations.

The storm lingered over Chuuk Lagoon for several days, bringing sustained winds of up to 70 miles per hour and prolonged heavy rain that impacted communities across Weno and the outer islands, including Fananu, Polowat, Uman, and Onoun .

In the immediate aftermath, the Chuuk Public Utilities Corporation (CPUC) shut down the entire power grid as a safety precaution after sparking power lines and reports of transformers catching fire were observed in multiple locations . Officials later confirmed that nearly 100 percent of customers were left without electricity, with damage reported across all feeders and widespread destruction to poles and transmission lines.

The outage has had cascading effects across essential services. Water and sewer systems have been operating on limited or backup power, while the state hospital, airport, and other critical facilities have relied heavily on diesel generators. Authorities warned that fuel

[Click here for continuation](#)



Photo by IQM

Seabees deliver community impact, advancing U.S.-FSM partnership



By Embassy of the United States to the FSM

April 16, 2026

Pohnpei - The U.S. Navy Seabees successfully completed a pavement striping project at the Micronesian Legal Service Corporation this week, enhancing safety and visibility for staff and visitors.

Ambassador Johnson and the Defense Attaché Office joined the legal service team on site to formally recognize the Seabees' dedication and hard work. "On behalf of the United States, I extend my sincere appreciation to our Navy Seabees for their outstanding workmanship and spirit of service," said Ambassador Johnson.

"This project reflects the enduring partnership between our nations under the Compact of Free Association, and our shared commitment to strengthening communities and supporting access to justice across the Federated States of Micronesia."

Directing Attorney Benedict Robert also expressed the legal service team's heartfelt appreciation for the crew's professionalism and commitment to the project. The improved markings support the legal service office's mission of promoting equal access to justice throughout the FSM.

The Kaselehlie Press

Your Newspaper for Today and Tomorrow

P.O. Box 2222 Pohnpei, FM 96941
phone: (691) 320-6547
email: Kpress@mail.fm

Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS
WILL BE RELEASED ON:
May 6, 2026**

**Deadline for submission of articles or
advertisements for this issue is the end
of working hours on:
Monday, May 4, 2026**



**the Village
Travel**

**Serving the Islands and
abroad since 1980!**

Providing your domestic and
international flight arrangements

**Call us now
for your next trip**

**Tel: (691) 320-2777
921-2777**

Fax: (691) 320-5375

**email: villagetravel@mail.fm
Villagetravel2@gmail.com**

**P.O Box 339
Pohnpei, FM 96941**

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Court denies governor's request to block Legislature's land redesignation law

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 16, 2026

Pohnpei - The Pohnpei Supreme Court Trial Division has denied an application by the Governor of Pohnpei for a temporary restraining order (TRO) that sought to block a law passed by the 11th Pohnpei Legislature involving the redesignation of public land.

In an order dated March 30, 2026, Associate Justice Mayeleen JD Anson ruled that the Governor failed to demonstrate a likelihood of success on the merits of the case, a key requirement for granting a TRO.

The dispute centers on legislation amending an earlier law governing public trust land. The original designation set aside approximately 166,892 square meters for "high school" purposes. The Legislature later passed a bill allowing a portion—no more than 887 square meters—to be redesignated for use by the Office of the Pohnpei State Public Auditor.

The Governor vetoed the bill, arguing that the executive branch holds authority over the management and regulation of public lands. The Legislature subsequently overrode that veto, prompting the Governor to file suit and seek a TRO, preliminary

injunction, and permanent injunction to prevent the law from taking effect.

In its analysis, the Court rejected the Governor's arguments, finding that he did not cite specific constitutional provisions that the Legislature had allegedly violated. The Court also found no legal support for the claim that the executive branch has sole authority over public land use, noting that such matters are routinely governed by statute.

"The remedy is political, not judicial," the Court wrote, indicating that disagreements over policy decisions by the Legislature should be addressed through the political process rather

than the courts.

The Court further determined that the Governor had not shown that he would suffer irreparable harm if the law were allowed to take effect, nor that the public interest would be served by temporarily halting the legislation.

Based on those findings, the Court denied the request for a temporary restraining order.

The case is not yet concluded. The Court said it will schedule a hearing on the Legislature's motion to dismiss following the Easter holiday.

Pohnpei releases 2023 audit as most recent public financial report

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 19, 2026

Pohnpei Releases 2023 Audit Showing Modest Decline in Financial Position

Kolonia, Pohnpei—The State of Pohnpei recorded a slight decline in its overall financial position in fiscal year 2023, even as revenues increased and key funds posted gains, according to an independent audit released last week by the Office of the Governor.

The report, which covered the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023, was the most recent audit publicly available. It was not immediately clear whether audit reports for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 had been completed and submitted to the Governor's Office for release.

The audit, conducted by Burger, Comer & Associates, issued a qualified opinion on the State's governmental activities, while providing unmodified (clean) opinions on major funds and component units. The qualification stemmed from the State's failure to record a liability tied to a financial guarantee, the impact of which auditors said could not be determined.

Despite the qualification, auditors said the financial statements otherwise presented fairly the State's financial position in accordance with U.S. accounting standards.

Net position declined

The State's net position stood at \$80.3 million at the end of fiscal year 2023, a decrease of approximately \$943,647 from the previous year.

According to the report's Management Discussion and Analysis, the decline was driven primarily by a \$4 million increase in liabilities, which outpaced a \$3.1 million rise in total assets.

At the same time, overall government revenues increased to \$47.1 million, up \$1.8 million from the prior year, largely due to stronger Compact sector revenues and improved investment performance.

However, expenditures rose even faster, climbing by about \$2.5 million (5%) to nearly \$48 million, led by higher spending in general government, education, and health services.

Heavy reliance on grants

The audit showed that Pohnpei continued to rely heavily on external funding. Approximately 51 percent of revenues came from grants and contributions, while 43 percent came from taxes and the remainder from service charges and other sources.

Education remained the largest area of spending, accounting for 29 percent of total expenditures, followed by general

government (22 percent) and health services (21 percent).

Fund performance mixed

The State's major funds showed varied performance during the year.

The General Fund experienced a sharp reduction in its net change in fund balance, declining by 87 percent, largely due to rising service costs outpacing modest revenue growth.

In contrast, the Grants Assistance Fund saw a 173 percent increase, reflecting improved reimbursements from federal programs.

The Compact Trust Fund posted the strongest performance, growing by more than \$5 million (166 percent) due to favorable investment conditions.

Overall, governmental fund balances increased by approximately \$3.8 million, helped significantly by investment gains.

Audit notes and prior corrections

Auditors also noted that the State's 2022 financial statements had been restated to correct prior misstatements, though this did not affect the current year's audit opinion.

The report further outlined internal control and compliance reviews conducted under Government Auditing

Standards, though no opinion was issued on the effectiveness of internal controls.

Looking ahead

The State anticipated significant fiscal changes in the following year, including the start of funding under the newly amended Compact III agreement.

Officials expected increased revenues from fishing fees—estimated at \$7 million—and planned a 45 percent salary increase across government, according to the report.

Major sector allocations for fiscal year 2024 included more than \$8.3 million for education, \$6.8 million for health, and \$6.5 million for infrastructure, signaling a continued emphasis on core public services at that time.

While the audit reflected continued growth in revenues and strong performance in investment-related funds, it also pointed to rising costs and structural challenges, including reliance on external funding and increasing liabilities.

The mixed results suggested a government balancing improved income streams with growing expenditure pressures as it prepared for a transition to new Compact funding arrangements.

Vice President meets Yap leadership, emphasizes coordinated national efforts

FSM Information Services

April 18, 2026

Colonia, Yap — The Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), met with Yap State leadership on April 16, 2026, reaffirming strong national-state coordination while addressing ongoing response efforts and fuel stability.

At the outset, the Vice President expressed sincere concern and solidarity with all communities affected by Typhoon Sinlaku, particularly those in Chuuk. He noted that national response efforts are actively underway and being coordinated with state governments and partners. While Yap has not yet been directly engaged in response operations, discussions emphasized that the state will play an important role in coordinating assessments, particularly for its outer islands. He added that response efforts will extend as needed, including Yap's outer island communities.

The Vice President also conveyed regret for the delay in the planned visit to Yap's outer islands due to the typhoon. He emphasized that the Simina-Palik Administration remains fully committed to carrying out the visit and will continue coordinating closely with Yap State to ensure it proceeds at an appropriate and safe time.



Discussions also addressed fuel, with the Vice President confirming that, following a recent meeting with the FSM Petroleum Corporation (FSMPC), supply remains stable and that recent deliveries have been secured. He noted, however, that global market pressures are expected to affect the FSM in the coming months. While the nation has delayed implementing price increases, gradual and measured adjustments will be introduced to ensure the continued reliability of supply.

The Vice President and Yap leadership also discussed a range of other priorities, including infrastructure development, service delivery, transportation, and ongoing national and state initiatives. There was shared emphasis on the importance of continued coordination,

timely support, and practical solutions to address the needs of communities across Yap State.

The meeting was attended by Yap State Governor, the Honorable Francis Itimai and members of his cabinet; the Honorable Nicholas Figirlaarwon, Speaker of the Yap State Legislature; members of the Legislature; and Yap's representatives to the 24th FSM Congress, Senator Andy Choor and Senator Andrew R. Yatilman.

The Vice President reaffirmed that the Simina-Palik Administration will continue working closely with Yap State to address immediate concerns while advancing shared priorities, underscoring a steady and coordinated approach for the well-being of all FSM communities.



...Chuuk Governor

Continued from front page

and urged the public to disregard any claims that it was legally authorized.

The Attorney General emphasized that the court's ruling dealt only with the authority of election commission members and "did not decide the election outcome" or authorize any oath-taking ceremony.

"The Court did not... confer authority upon any person or body to administer or conduct such an oath-taking ceremony," the statement said, adding that any reliance on the decision for that purpose constitutes a misrepresentation of the court's order.

Meanwhile, the legal team for sitting Governor Alexander Narruhn and Lieutenant Governor Mekioshy William moved quickly to challenge the development in court.

On April 19, attorney Salomon Saimon filed an application for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction in the Chuuk State Supreme Court, seeking to halt the actions of Mailo, Enlet, and others involved in the swearing-in.

The filing argues that the April 16 ceremony has created "a constitutional crisis in Chuuk with two governors and two lieutenant governors," and asserts that there is "no legal authority" permitting such a swearing-in under existing law.

The motion asks the court to restore

the status quo that existed prior to April 16, warning that the competing claims to executive authority could lead to instability or confrontation if left unresolved.

In a separate petition for declaratory and injunctive relief, Narruhn and William argue that only a final determination by the appellate courts can resolve the election dispute and determine the rightful officeholders.

The petition also questions the legality of the oath itself, stating that no provision of the court's earlier ruling authorized the administration of such an oath or allowed Mailo and Enlet to assume office.

Court records show that summons have now been issued to Mark Mailo, Joe Enlet, and Election Commissioner

Andreas Victus, who administered the oaths of office, requiring them to respond to the petition.

A hearing on the request for injunctive relief is expected soon, with counsel indicating availability for proceedings in Chuuk later this week.

At the center of the dispute remains a narrow but consequential legal question: whether the court's recognition of the election commission's authority after March 14 extends to validating its subsequent actions, including the certification of election results and the swearing-in of new leadership.

Until the courts provide further clarity, Chuuk faces the reality of competing claims to its highest offices, with both legal and political uncertainty continuing to unfold.



Photo Chuuk Micronesia Red Cross Society



Photo Chuuk Micronesia Red Cross Society



Photo by Lee Arkie Perez



Photo PUC



Photo PUC



Photo by Lee Arkie Perez

...Chuuk Typhoon

Continued from front page

availability for the first several days after the storm remained uncertain, adding further strain to recovery efforts.

President Wesley Simina declared a national state of emergency on April 13, citing widespread damage, communications outages, and threats to public safety across Chuuk. The declaration noted that downed power and communication systems made it difficult to coordinate emergency response and deliver assistance to affected communities.

At the state level, Governor Alexander Narruhn assured residents that recovery efforts were underway, emphasizing that restoring essential services and assisting affected families remained top priorities. "We will work together to rebuild homes, restore infrastructure, and revive our economy," he said in a public message.

Initial assessments point to extensive damage to Chuuk's utility systems. According to CPUC's early report to the governor, full restoration of power



Photo by IOM



Photo Chuuk Micronesia Red Cross Society



Photo Chuuk Micronesia Red Cross Society

could take several weeks or longer, depending on weather conditions, available materials, and workforce capacity. Crews must first isolate damaged sections of the grid before any partial restoration can begin.

Efforts to restore electricity are already being supported by neighboring states. The Pohnpei Utilities Corporation dispatched four linemen to assist Chuuk crews in repairing damaged lines and restoring service as quickly as possible.

Fuel supply has emerged as another critical concern. Vital FSM Petroleum Corporation reported significant operational damage to its terminal and fuel facilities, disrupting aviation refueling, marine bunkering, and retail fuel deliveries. While no major spills were reported, the company said full restoration of operations could take up

to 14 days, with limited service expected to resume sooner.

During the recovery phase, available fuel is being prioritized for emergency services, power generation, and other essential needs.

Financial and commercial services have also been affected. Bank of Guam announced that its Chuuk branch is operating on reduced hours as systems gradually come back online.

Meanwhile, the Chuuk State government has taken steps to protect consumers during the emergency. The Office of the Attorney General announced a price freeze under state law, warning businesses against price gouging and pledging enforcement actions against violators.

Authorities are also working to assess the full scope of damage. The Disaster Coordination Office has called on residents to submit reports and photographs of damage to homes and property to assist with relief planning and resource allocation.

Relief supplies are beginning to arrive through coordinated international and national efforts. A shipment including tarpaulins, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, and blankets was scheduled to depart for Chuuk aboard a government vessel, supported by U.S. assistance and United Nations partners.

Despite the scale of destruction, officials say the focus is now firmly on recovery.

"Together, we will rebuild and restore our beautiful Chuuk," Governor Narruhn said.

Typhoon Sinlaku causes significant damage in Chuuk State, immediate response and recovery efforts underway

International Organization for Migration

April 22, 2026

Pohnpei, FSM – On April 10, 2026, Tropical Storm Sinlaku reached Chuuk State in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), creating strong storm surges and causing extensive damage to coastal infrastructure and communities along its path. By Saturday, April 11, Sinlaku had intensified into a typhoon while lingering over Chuuk, bringing strong winds and torrential rains that heavily impacted Weno and Chuuk's lagoon and outer islands. The storm continued to strengthen throughout Sunday, reaching wind speeds of up to 125 mph as Sinlaku moved northwest, developing into a Category 5 typhoon, and severely impacting Saipan and the Northern Mariana Islands, while also affecting parts of Guam.

In Chuuk State, assessment teams were quickly deployed to the Northwest Region, with additional teams being deployed to the Mortlocks and Chuuk Lagoon soon after to conduct Initial Damage Assessments and provide immediate assistance.

Supported by the United States Government, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is complimenting emergency response efforts by the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM), Chuuk State Disaster Coordinating Office, and other partners



to ensure assistance reaches the most affected communities.

DECCEM Acting Secretary, Cynthia Ehmes, said “The FSM Government is working closely with Chuuk State to provide food relief including rice, water, and canned foods to reach those impacted by Typhoon Sinlaku. We are pleased to be joined by our partners, including the US Government and IOM, to support these efforts.” She further expressed gratitude for the collaborative relief efforts provided by partners including Red Cross and UNICEF.

U.S. Ambassador Jennifer Johnson reaffirmed the United States' support, stating, “We stand with the FSM during this time of crisis. We are dedicated to addressing urgent humanitarian needs and assisting with long-term recovery to ensure aid reaches the hardest-hit communities.”

Relief efforts are already underway. Three generators and fuel have been delivered to Weno in the immediate aftermath of the impact to support and restore power to the Emergency Operation Center and local radio station, while boats, skiffs, and barges supported by the U.S. Government are on standby to transport assessment teams across Chuuk Lagoon. Nearly 600 water jerry cans, along with water and food supplies supported by Chuuk State, have also been shipped from Weno to the Northwest.

Preliminary findings reveal severe damage to staple crops such as banana, breadfruit, coconut, and taro, as well as damage to homes and public facilities indicating urgent needs for safe shelter, food, essential household

items, clean water, sanitation, and access to healthcare.

Despite the extensive damage, communities across Chuuk State have shown great resilience in the face of adversity, supporting each other and assisting relief activities by mobilizing community boats and helping to unload supplies on their islands.

As an active member of the Emergency Response Taskforce, IOM continues to work with state, national and international partners to assess needs and coordinate relief efforts, ensuring a timely and effective response.

“We are seeing significant needs as assessments are progressing, particularly as families cope with damage to homes, livelihoods, and food sources,” said IOM Chief of Mission Ewa Naqvi. “IOM remains committed to working alongside the FSM Government, to deliver immediate response efforts while also helping communities recover and build resilience for the future.”

IOM calls on partners across the public and private sectors, as well as the international community, to mobilize support to meet essential needs, while also strengthening preparedness and early action to better protect vulnerable communities from future climate-related shocks.



U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA partner to restore tsunami warning capability on remote FSM atoll during 29-day Operation Rematau patrol period

by Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia / Sector Guam

April 5, 2026

SANTA RITA, Guam— The crew of the USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) returned to Guam on March 29, closing out a 29-day patrol period that restored a critical tsunami early warning station on a remote Pacific atoll, delivered humanitarian supplies to two island communities, and enforced fisheries laws across more than 4,000 nautical miles.

The patrol under Operation Rematau covered U.S. waters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

"The Coast Guard's credibility in this part of the Pacific is built one port call, one boarding, one supply delivery at a time. This patrol, from the fisheries enforcement work in FSM's EEZ to getting that NOAA technician to Kapingamarangi, is exactly how we honor the commitments the United States made to the people in this region. I'm proud of how this team delivered on that responsibility," said Lt. Ray Cerrato, commanding officer of USCGC Oliver Henry.

The mission's most consequential stop came at Kapingamarangi Atoll, one

of FSM's most isolated communities. The Oliver Henry crew transported a University of Hawai'i Sea Level Center technician to the atoll to upgrade a regional weather monitoring station, the first such upgrade in 12 years. Supported by the U.S. Embassy in the FSM and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the mission restored the station's capacity to support tsunami early-warning monitoring across the Western Pacific.

The station's importance came into sharp focus days after Oliver Henry returned to Guam. On April 2, a magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck in the Molucca Sea, prompting the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center to issue a threat forecast for coastal communities across the Western Pacific, including Guam, the CNMI, Palau, and Yap. The Kapingamarangi gauge was online and transmitting when the event occurred, ready to contribute observed sea level data to the warning center's analysis.

The earthquake's distance meant tsunami generation was minimal and not detectable at the Kapingamarangi station, but the network it supports held. The PTWC team confirmed the station is one of a small number of sensors covering that stretch of the Western Pacific and that its restoration directly maintains the readiness network the warning center depends on.

The crew conducted three fisheries enforcement boardings of foreign-flagged vessels, two Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission inspections on the high seas, and one enhanced bilateral boarding of a vessel under the FSM's jurisdiction in their EEZ, directly advancing accountability under local and international laws in a region where illegal fishing is estimated to cost Pacific nations billions annually.

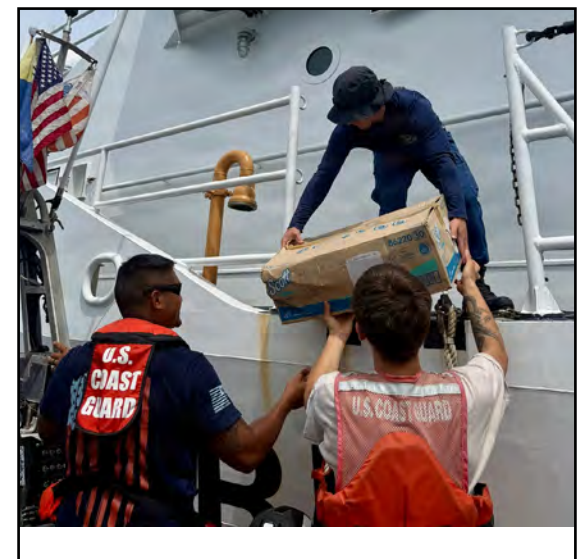
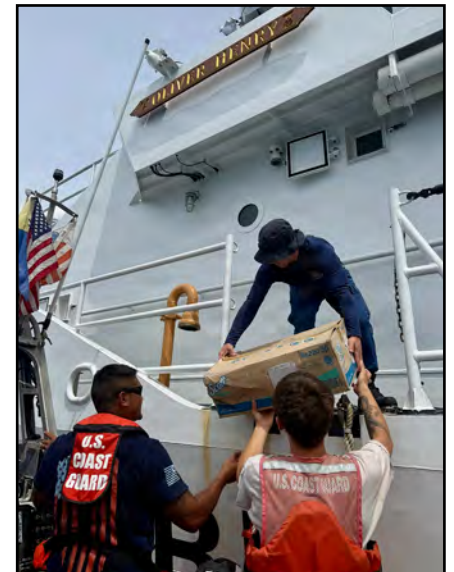
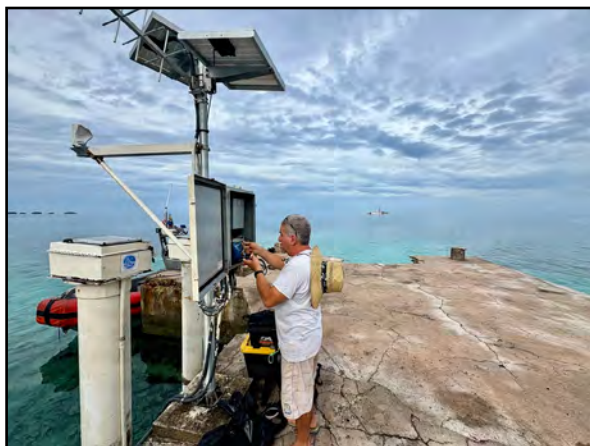
At Kutu and Kapingamarangi, the crew delivered 3,000 pounds of humanitarian supplies to residents with limited access to outside goods. The crew also provided high-quality imagery documenting the condition of a cargo vessel that grounded on the reef outside of Kutu Island in the Mortlock Islands in 1998 and has been deteriorating since, supporting local government response efforts.

The patrol expanded the Coast Guard's operational reach for future missions. The crew charted previously unrecorded reefs within Greenwich Pass at Kapingamarangi, establishing a navigable route into the atoll's lagoon for future operations. The Oliver Henry crew also transported Marine Safety Unit Saipan personnel to Tinian and Rota for inspections of port facilities, streamlining logistics, and ensuring the safe flow of goods throughout the CNMI.

During the 395 operational hours

underway, the crew improved readiness by qualifying members in roles ranging from underway officer of the deck to engineering officer of the watch while also honoring nautical traditions with one member earning their permanent cutterman designation and six shellback designations during the patrol's equatorial crossing. They also completed nearly two dozen engineering, navigation, and seamanship training drills, and confirmed the cutter's weapons systems remain fully mission-capable during a live-fire exercise.

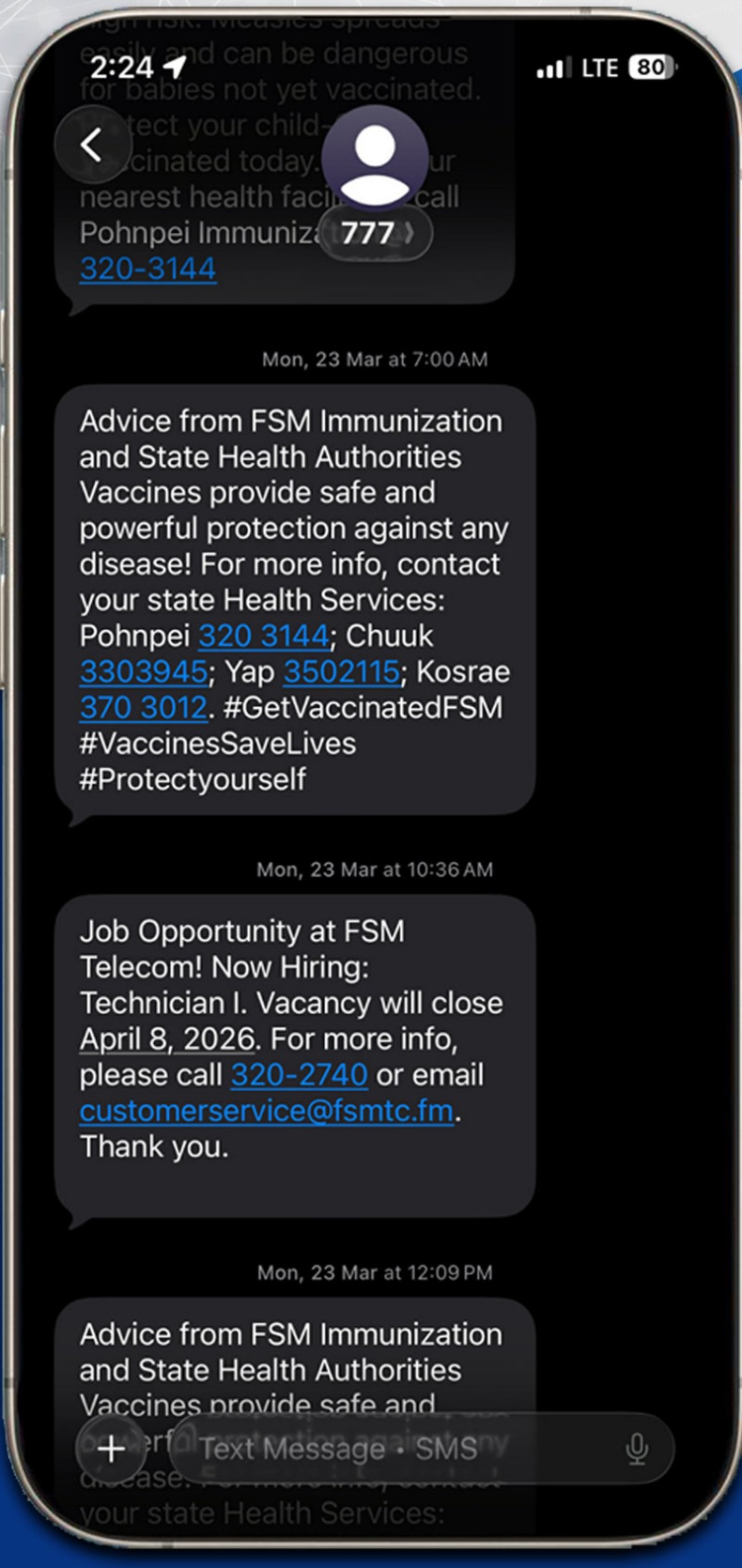
Operation Rematau is the U.S. Coast Guard's sustained operational presence across the Freely Associated States of the Pacific, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The operation reflects U.S. commitments under the Compacts of Free Association and advances a secure, open, and prosperous Pacific.



FSM Telecommunications Corporation
Kaselehlie Street, P.O. Box 1210, Pohnpei FM 96941
p: 691-320-2740 | e: customerservice@fsmtc.fm



FSMTC SMS BROADCAST



Reach your
FSM Customers
regardless of
their location
with a **SMS
Broadcast.**

**FAST &
RELIABLE**

Australia promotes scholarships to Pohnpei students ahead of April 30 deadline

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 16, 2026

Pohnpei - The Embassy of Australia to the Federated States of Micronesia conducted a series of information sessions in Pohnpei to encourage students and prospective applicants to apply for the 2026 Australia Awards Scholarships.

The sessions were held at the College of Micronesia-FSM National Campus in Palikir and the Career and Technical Education Center in Kolonia, where participants received guidance ahead of the April 30, 2026 application deadline at 3:00 p.m.

During the sessions, attendees were provided with key information on eligibility requirements, priority fields of study, and the application process. Guidance was also offered on how to prepare strong applications for the highly competitive scholarship program.

Australia’s Ambassador to the FSM, Jenny Grant, emphasized that the

scholarships are designed to support more than academic achievement.

“Australia Awards are about more than gaining a qualification — they are about developing leaders who will return home with the skills, knowledge, and networks to contribute to the future development of their countries,” she said.

The embassy expressed appreciation to students and community members who attended the sessions and showed strong interest in the program, describing the scholarships as a life-changing opportunity for those selected.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to complete and submit their applications before the deadline through the embassy’s official website.

The Australia Awards Scholarships program supports students from the Federated States of Micronesia and across the Pacific to pursue higher education in Australia, with the aim of building capacity and leadership for national development.



MiCare Board fully constituted with the swearing-in of the national government and Pohnpei state representatives.

FSM Information Services

April 15, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — His Excellency President Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), administered the Oath of Office to the newly nominated and confirmed

members of the MiCare Board of Directors, Dr. Marcelle Gallen representing the State of Pohnpei and Dr. Mayleen Ekiek, representing the National Government.

Dr. Gallen and Dr. Ekiek formally took their oaths of office, affirming their commitment to uphold the Constitution and laws of the Federated States of Micronesia and to faithfully discharge their duties as members of the MiCare Board.

With their appointments, the MiCare Board is now complete, ensuring full and equitable representation from all four states and the National Government. Their inclusion will further strengthen the Board’s capacity to guide policy direction, enhance governance, and support ongoing efforts to improve the delivery, accessibility, and sustainability of health care services under MiCare.

During the ceremony, both Dr. Gallen and Dr. Ekiek delivered remarks expressing their commitment to serve with integrity and to contribute their professional expertise toward improving health outcomes for the people of the Federated States of Micronesia.

The Simina-Palik Administration extends its appreciation to the 24th FSM Congress for confirming the nominees and reaffirms the importance of



continued cooperation among the branches of government in promoting good governance. The Administration also looks forward to the leadership and service of Dr. Gallen and Dr. Ekiek as they join their fellow members in strengthening the nation’s health system for the benefit of all citizens.



College of Micronesia-FSM

Yap | Chuuk | Pohnpei | Kosrae

Follow us online:



COM-FSM FACULTY COMPLETE INTENSIVE STEP-UP TRAINING

Five faculty members from the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) are bringing cutting-edge scientific expertise back to their classrooms after successfully completing the Short-Term Research Experience Program to Unlock Potential (STEP-UP) training.

The intensive four-day program, which ran from March 17–20, 2026, represents a significant leap forward in the college's mission to modernize science education across its campuses.

By prioritizing the mastery of the scientific method, educators are refining the core processes of hypothesis testing and data analysis to ensure academic rigor. This effort is bolstered by technological integration, as faculty utilize specialized laboratory equipment provided through the University of Hawaii's STEP-UP Program. Ultimately, these advancements feed into a more dynamic curriculum design, allowing instructors to develop hands-on activities that successfully translate complex scientific theories into tangible, practical experiments for their students.

By bridging the gap between textbook theory and laboratory practice, the STEP-UP program ensures that COM-FSM students have access to a more rigorous, modern scientific education.

The University of Hawaii partnership provides not only the training but also the physical tools necessary to conduct high-level research right here in the FSM.



Photo Courtesy: STEP-UP Program

As these five educators return to their respective labs, the ripple effect of this training is expected to foster a new generation of local scientists, equipped with the skills to compete on a global stage.

National Campus

P.O. Box 159
Kolonia Pohnpei, FM 96941
Phone: (691)320-2480
Fax: (691)320-2479
E-Mail: national@comfsm.fm

Chuuk Campus

P.O. Box 879
Chuuk, FM 96942
Phone: (691)330-2689
Fax: (691)330-2740
E-Mail: chuuk@comfsm.fm

FSM-FMI

P.O. Box 1056
Colonia Yap, FM 96943
Phone: (691)350-5244
Fax: (691)350-5245
E-Mail: fmi@comfsm.fm

Kosrae Campus

P.O. Box 37
Tofol Kosrae, FM 96944
Phone: (691)370-3191
Fax: (691)370-3193
E-Mail: kosrae@comfsm.fm

CTEC Campus

P.O. Box 614
Kolonia Pohnpei, FM 96941
Phone: (691)320-3795
Fax: (691)320-3799
E-Mail: pohnpei@comfsm.fm

Yap Campus

P.O. Box 286
Colonia Yap, FM 96943
Phone: (691)350-2296/5149
Fax: (691)350-5150
E-Mail: yap@comfsm.fm



FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
DEVELOPMENT BANK
Corporate Office
P.O. Box M
POHNPEI, FSM 96941

LAND FOR SALE– POHNPEI

FSM Development Bank offers the following parcel of land described below for sale to all qualified buyers:

Pohnpei State

Parcel No. 068-D-06, Mesihsou, Madolenihmw Municipality, 3,932 square meters ±, as shown in Plat Map No. 068-D-00 dated March 6, 1986.

- FSM Development Bank will consider all offers for purchase of the parcel.
- The deadline for submission of offers will be April 30, 2026 at 4 pm Pohnpei time. All offers must contain the total offer amount, proposed payment schedule and contact information. Offers may be hand delivered to any FSM Development Bank office or emailed to: noras@fsmdb.fm
- Title to the parcel will be conveyed through a deed of conveyance issued by the FSM Development Bank. The purchaser must be qualified to hold ownership title to land in the Federated States of Micronesia and provide proof of qualification.
- The parcel and any improvements thereon will be sold “as-is” with no guarantees or warranties as to its condition.
- The minimum offer amount is \$ 7,900.00.
- FSM Development Bank reserves its right to reject any and all offers made for the parcels, for any reason whatsoever.

For more information, please contact: Nora E. Sigrah, General Counsel at email: noras@fsmdb.fm

IOM and Australia launch project to strengthen disaster preparedness in FSM schools

International Organization for Migration

April 21, 2026

Kolonia – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Embassy of Australia have launched a project to strengthen disaster preparedness in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) school system, marking a collaborative commitment to building resilience through education.

The 18-month initiative signed last month focuses on two main areas: strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) education programs and fortifying existing Emergency Evacuation Shelters in FSM.

In close coordination with the FSM Department of Education, the project will support the integration of disaster risk management into learning modules for primary school-age children. Planned to be piloted in Pohnpei State, the initiative will develop evidence-based frameworks and build the capacities of trainers and instructors to incorporate DRR and CCA into the curricula.

The project will also coordinate with the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management to fortify at least one Emergency Evacuation Shelter to ensure it meets minimum safety and protection standards. Planned upgrades may include typhoon shutters, water catchment systems, reinforced doors and windows, a generator, and accessibility features such as disability-inclusive design and ramps to guarantee safe and equitable access for all community members.

FSM faces increasing vulnerability to sudden disasters such as typhoons and king tides, as well as slow-onset hazards that threaten agriculture, infrastructure and livelihoods. By working through school systems and strengthening community infrastructure, the project aims to help communities and first responders better prepare for and respond to disasters.

Australian Ambassador to the FSM,



Jenny Grant noted Australia is proud to partner with IOM in supporting the FSM to strengthen disaster preparedness through education and safer community infrastructure. “This project will help ensure that children, educators, and communities are better equipped to prepare for, withstand, and recover from disasters. This initiative reflects Australia’s commitment to supporting a more resilient and climate ready FSM,” she said.

IOM North Pacific Chief of Mission Ewa Naqvi welcomed the initiative and thanked Australia for its support. “We’re excited to embark on this partnership with Australia and strengthen our ongoing work in disaster management and community resilience to climate shocks,” she said.

“By working with school systems, we hope to support the long-term integration of disaster preparedness into learning materials while ensuring the pilot evacuation shelter can serve as a model for future fortification efforts aimed at keeping communities safe,” she added.

This initiative aligns with FSM’s Strategic Development Plan 2024–2043, which prioritizes climate-resilient infrastructure and improved climate change awareness and education programmes. Furthermore, the project directly supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development efforts to build safer communities and enhance resilience to climate and disaster risks.



FFA
PACIFIC ISLANDS
FORUM FISHERIES
AGENCY

Manager Treaty Administration

Location: Honiara

- **Do you have a background in International Relations or Political Science?**
- **Provide strategic policy direction for the valuable US Tuna Treaty and help ensure a sustainable future for Pacific nations**
- **Excellent salary negotiable from US\$82,867.00 (with Base salary and allowances)!**

About the Organisation

The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is an intergovernmental organisation formed in 1979 that works to strengthen national capacity and regional solidarity so Pacific nations can manage, control, and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future.

Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, FFA's 17-member nations are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

FFA was established to help countries sustainably manage the fishery resources within their 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). FFA is an advisory body providing expertise, technical assistance and other support to its members who make sovereign decisions about their tuna resources and participate in regional decision making on tuna management through bodies such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

Since 1979, FFA has facilitated regional cooperation so that all Pacific countries benefit from the sustainable use of tuna - an important industry for many people's livelihoods in the Pacific.

About the Opportunity

FFA is now looking for a full-time **Treaty Administration Manager** to join their team in Honiara, in the Solomon Islands on a three-year fixed term contract, with possibility for renewal pending performance appraisals.

Reporting to the Director Fisheries Management, the successful applicant will primarily be **responsible for managing and supervising the FFA's Treaty Administration Unit**.

More specifically, they will be **taking a lead role in developing the policies and procedures relevant to the US Tuna Treaty** - a Multilateral Treaty on Fisheries between the Government of the United States of America and Certain Pacific Island Countries.

Some of the key responsibilities will include (but will not be limited to):

- Provide strategic and technical policy advice to FFA Member countries on issues pertaining to the management and implementation of the Treaty administered by the FFA Secretariat
- Supporting the management, disbursement and monitoring of Project funds under the US Treaty;
- Managing the financial and administrative matters relevant to the operation and functioning of the US Treaty;
- Assuming leadership of the preparation of working papers for the Annual Consultation and other meetings of the Parties to the US Treaty; and
- Maintaining strategic partnerships with top diplomatic and industry officials relevant to the US Treaty.

About You

To be successful in this high-profile role, you **must have a Master's Degree or higher in International Relations or equivalent qualifications in Political Science with extensive experience managing a complex treaty or similar agreement within a multicultural setting**, preferably between individual states and/or international organisations.

Importantly, you will have a **strong technical understanding of the US Tuna Treaty** and an ability to negotiate close strategic partnerships with Senior Government and Industry officials, ideally in the Fisheries Industry.

Your high-level communication and report writing skills and understanding of cultural intricacies in the region will help you to effectively manage the Treaty Administration Unit and foster strong and productive interpersonal relationships with direct reports, senior management, and member nations at a broader international level.

At an operational and process-driven level, your demonstrated ability to plan, manage and lead appropriate Treaty resources and service related reforms in line with ethical work standards, capability planning and professional development services in order to meet set objectives and targets will go a long way to ensuring your success.

With a background in policy development, you will be comfortable undertaking appropriate policy review of the US Treaty and its financial and administrative matters, providing strategic and timely advice to Member States and US officials as required.

Most importantly, FFA is looking for a dedicated professional able to navigate the complex international frameworks that the FFA operates within, who is able to manage complex and competing demands and operate within the confines of tight deadlines.

About the Benefits

On offer for the successful candidate is a **salary commencing from US\$82,867.00** (with Base salary and basic allowances), **tax free for citizens of most countries and negotiable** depending on proven experience and qualifications.

You will also have **superannuation paid at 7.5% into either a nominated fund or as an additional cash supplement**. FFA reimburses all reasonable **medical, dental, and optical expenses for yourself and dependants**. Insurance coverage is also provided for **personal accident, life, medical & repatriation**.

Education for dependent children will be **reimbursed at 75% of tuition fees** (Conditions apply). If your dependent child is educated overseas, paid school travel may be available for you or your child to visit each other once a year.

Accommodation assistance is also available.

Additionally, **relocation expenses will be paid**, with an establishment grant paid on arrival in Honiara. **Annual airfares back to the country of repatriation will be provided**, and a **repatriation allowance of 2 weeks' base salary on return to home-base at the end of the contract**. There is also a **retention incentive of 21% of your base salary** which will be paid on the completion of your three contracts.

On top of all this, you will have access to **6 weeks of annual leave** each year, giving you plenty of time to explore this stunning part of the world!

How to apply:

Candidates wishing to apply must submit the following documents via the recruitment email at recruitment@ffa.int

1. Cover Letter
2. Completed Application Form and
3. Curriculum Vitae

Applications close 10.30pm Solomon Islands Time, Friday, 24th April 2026

U.S. Coast Guard advises awareness of communication outages following Typhoon Sinlaku

By Chief Petty Officer Corinne Zilnicki
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia /
Sector Guam

April 15, 2026

SANTA RITA, Guam — The U.S. Coast Guard advises mariners of outages in VHF radio communications coverage in the vicinity of Guam, Rota, Saipan and surrounding areas in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Wednesday.

Mariners should anticipate reduced reception and transmission capabilities that may potentially impact distress and safety communications.

Remote fixed facility tower outages have impacted coverage around Guam, Rota, and Saipan, extending from coastal areas to 20 nautical miles offshore. Joint Rescue Coordination Center Honolulu watchstanders issued a safety marine information broadcast and SafetyNET broadcast informing mariners of outages.

Safety Recommendations:

Stay off the water. Dangerous, life-threatening sea conditions are expected to last until the end of the week.

Monitor VHF-FM channel 16 and other available channels closely.

Use alternative communication methods where possible, such as satellite phones, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons, or other distress-signaling devices.

In case of emergency, attempt to contact the U.S. Coast Guard via any available means, or relay through nearby vessels or shore stations.

“The Coast Guard remains committed to protecting the safety of life at sea,” said Coast Guard Cmdr. Patton Epperson, incident commander, Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. “We are coordinating closely with our agency partners to reduce risks associated with these outages.”

Mariners are encouraged to stay informed through Local Notices to Mariners, NAVTEX broadcasts, or by contacting the Joint Rescue Coordination Center Honolulu at 1-800-331-6176.

The Free bi-weekly publication
KASELEHLIE PRESS

Are you looking to advertise with the Kaselehlie Press?

We have over 20 years of experience serving the FSM, with readers around the globe. Let us serve you!

Contact us today at kpress@mail.fm

Isla Nesia
ISLAND GLOW

Special Offer for Yap Isla Nesia Customers

Spring Sale

MOQ: 1 case only

Call FSMPC Yap Terminal at 350-2276 for more information.

Offer valid until 5/15 or while supplies last.

Big GT's landed at WCPFC-CFC tournament but top prize is for a dogtooth tuna

April 18, 2026

Pohnpei – On yet another bright and sunny day, the Pohnpei Fishing Club held the annual Western and Central Pacific and Caroline Fisheries Corporation sponsored trolling tournament. \$2500 in cash was awarded to top anglers for their catches with the heaviest fish being 51.8 pounds, a dogtooth tuna caught by Kevin Sehpen for the \$700 top prize.

of good-sized grand trevallies and the second heaviest fish of the tournament certain was no exception. That GT was 37 pounds caught by Oneal Optaia for the second-place prize of \$500.

The remaining biggest fish prizes were both for yellow fin tuna caught by Calany Torres who won \$400 for third place and \$300 for fourth place with her catches. She landed 32-pound and 31-pound yellowfin for those prizes.

\$150 prizes were also awarded for the biggest fish of listed species that were not big enough to qualify for the biggest fish prizes. KR Spencer took the top prize for a yellowfin tuna of 29.8 pounds. Oneal Optaia won yet another prize for her 12-pound skipjack tuna. Burton Eliam had the biggest barracuda at 26.6 pounds.

The top lady angler was Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant who landed a marvelous 24-pound giant trevally for

a cash prize of \$100. She says she will be donating her prize money to Chuuk Typhoon relief.

The top junior angler was Kimo JR with an 18.6-pound yellowfin winning a prize of \$50 for that category.

Look for announcements of an upcoming casting and jigging tournament that will take place next month.

Anglers landed a surprising number



TRADE MARK CAUTIONARY NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **Foshan Haitian Flavouring & Food Co., Ltd.** of No. 16, Wen Sha Road Foshan City, Guangdong Province, China, is the sole owner and proprietor in Micronesia, and elsewhere of the trade mark below:



which is used in International classes upon or in connection with the following goods:

Class 29: Edible oils; Edible fats; Sesame oil; Sunflower oil for food; colza oil for food; corn oil for food; Olive oil for food; Vegetables, preserved; fermented bean curd; Marinated pickles; preserved peppers; Tomato paste; Prepared soups; Dried turnip; Soups; Frozen convenience dishes; Fruit, preserved; Snacks, mainly of fruits or vegetables; sesame seed paste; Peanut butter; Processed seafood; Food products made of fish; pre-packaged dinners consisting primarily of meat; Meat; processed eggs; Eggs; Marinated eggs; Meat, tinned; Vegetables, tinned; Nuts, prepared; Beancurd sticks; milk; Butter; Dried edible mushrooms; Seaweed extracts for food; gelatine; Processed areca; sausage casings, natural or artificial; roasted fish; boiled fish with Sichuan pickles; prepared meals consisting primarily of fish; Pork stomach stewed chicken; soymilk.

Class 30: Condiments; Oyster sauce; soya bean paste [condiment]; chicken essence powder [condiments]; Monosodium glutamate; Ketchup[sauce]; Chow-chow[condiment]; hot pot seasonings; Spices; chiyou [seasoned soy sauce]; douchi [fermented black soybeans]; Seasoning sauces; Seasonings; Sauces[condiments]; Meat gravies; Relish[condiment]; Soya sauce; Vinegar; Cooking salt; Rice; Wheat flour; meat tenderizers for household purposes; Cereal preparations; sugar; Castor sugar; Brown sugar; crystallized rock sugar; Cubic sugar; Starch for food; Thickening agents for cooking foodstuffs; Noodles; Instant noodles; Noodle-based prepared meals; Asian noodles; Instant rice; Pre-packaged lunches consisting primarily of rice, and also including meat, fish or vegetables; Prepared meals consisting primarily of rice; yeast; Cereal-based snack food; rice-based snack food; food flavorings, other than essential oils; bee glue; Pastries; Tea-based beverages; candies; coffee flavourings; tea; Gluten prepared as foodstuff; Preparations for stiffening whipped cream; Edible ices, cooking wine; soybean; cooking wine.

Class 31: Fodder; Animal foodstuffs; Pulses, fresh; Grains [cereals]; edible sesame, unprocessed; edible linseed, unprocessed; Live animals; Vegetables, fresh; Fruit, fresh; Plant seeds; Malt for brewing and distilling; Betel nuts, fresh; Trees; Flowers, natural; litter for animals; Soya beans, unprocessed.

Class 32: Mineral water [beverages]; Non-alcoholic fruit juice beverages; rice-based beverages, other than milk substitutes; Fruit nectars, non-alcoholic; Soy beverages; Plant-based beverages; soft drinks; Beer; Non-alcoholic preparations for making beverages; Non-alcoholic beverages; Waters [beverages].

Class 33: Rice alcohol; Yellow rice wine; Fruit extracts, alcoholic; Alcoholic beverages, except beer; Alcoholic beverages containing fruit; Sake; Wine; Alcoholic preparations for making beverages; Baijiu [Chinese distilled alcoholic beverage]; Spirits [beverages]; cooking wine.

Additional details: The Chinese characters in the trademark A may be transliterated as HAI TIAN and translated into English as sea; sky. The Chinese characters HAI TIAN as a created combination conveys no special meaning.

Foshan Haitian Flavouring & Food Co., Ltd. claims all rights in respect to the above trade mark and will take all necessary legal steps against any person, firm or corporation counterfeiting, imitating, violating or otherwise infringing its rights in **Micronesia**.

MUNRO LEYS

Lawyers & Notaries Public, Pacific House, Butt Street, PO Box 149, Suva, Fiji
Email: trademarks@munroleyslaw.com.fj
www.munroleyslaw.com

MUNRO LEYS



Ratu Sukuna Road, Nasese, Suva, Fiji
T: (679) 331 2600 | info@forumsec.org
www.forumsec.org

Opportunity at the Forum Secretariat

The Pacific Islands Forum

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is an Employer of Choice in the region, aiming to recruit and employ staff based on merit and organisational needs. The Secretariat's employment selection upholds its values and commitment to Forum membership, gender balance and building a diverse and inclusive organisation. The PIFS is committed to achieving gender balance and being fully representative of our member countries*. The Secretariat's workforce is currently over 50% female, with representatives from 15 of the 18 Forum member countries.

The Opportunity – Trade Policy Officer

Applications are invited to fill this vacant international position to be based at the Secretariat in Suva. The position reports to the Trade Team Leader in providing support in the broader regional trade and investment focusing on strengthened support for effective implementation of trade policy and trade agreements, enhanced Aid for Trade support and other trade and integration initiatives. The key responsibilities are summarised as:

- Coordinate and organise meetings, workshops and training seminars including preparation of meeting and workshop papers and materials.
- Provide services and technical advice, either directly or through consultants, development partners or other counterparts.
- Monitor and report on mandates from Forum Trade Ministers, including Pacific ACP (PACP) related meetings at the Ministerial and Leaders levels; and
- Develop and deliver work programs and budgets and prepare periodic reports according to requirements.

Applicants should have a university degree (bachelor's degree or equivalent) in economics, finance, or international trade, with at least five (5) years' of relevant and direct work experience dealing with trade and economic research and policy issues in Pacific Island Countries or a similar environment

Candidates with direct experience in trade negotiations, the implementation of trade policy and agreements, trade mainstreaming, Aid for Trade, and regional trade development and integration—gained in a national, regional, or international environment—would be highly desirable.

The Package

The position carries a competitive and attractive remuneration and benefits package including allowances for housing and education; and medical, accident and life insurance coverage. This position is based on Band 9 of the PIFS salary scale. The starting salary for the position is **SDR 29,181** per annum, which is equivalent to **FJD 90,624** based on 1 March 2026 foreign exchange rate.

How to apply

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through the PIFS website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the position description and full remuneration details are available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees.

To be eligible for the position, applicants must be nationals of Forum member countries. The Forum Secretariat is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The deadline for applications is **5 May 2026, 5pm (Fiji Time)**.

*Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Opinion Editorial

Use your voice to support our young athletes

Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club

There is a group of children in Kolonia who have been doing something remarkable, largely out of sight and without fanfare: they have been showing up, day after day, season after season, for six years. They train on the same dusty grounds, under the same humid sky, coached by the same dedicated men and women who believe that football/soccer can change lives in these islands.

They are the players of the Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club — PSAKC — and they have already travelled to Kosrae to compete, and drawn an International invitation from the Kiribati Islands Football Federation.

All they are missing is the chance to play in their own national Games. We need, they need, everybody's support. Now.

A formal proposal has been submitted to the FSM Games 2027 Organizing Committee by PSAKC requesting inclusion of a 7-a-side outdoor football tournament for boys and girls at the U14/U15 level. The four FSM states would participate, joined by youth teams from Guam, Kiribati, and the Northern Mariana Islands as invited guests. The proposal also calls for a dedicated U14/U15 age category — one that does not yet officially exist in the Games structure — and includes an inspired proposal for a Blind Football demonstration event as a Paralympic showcase.

It is a serious, thoughtful, and fully developed plan. It deserves serious, thoughtful, and fully committed support from every resident of these islands.

Why outdoor football, and why now?

The proposal makes a strong case for outdoor 7-a-side football over futsal — not only on developmental

grounds, but on simple logistical ones. Pohnpei already has three functioning outdoor grounds where football is actively played: the Track and Field facility, the Spanish Wall grounds, and the Daini Street ground. None require significant investment to host a tournament. The indoor gymnasium, freed from hosting futsal, becomes available for sports that have no outdoor alternative.

It is a rare proposal that simultaneously asks for more and costs less.

Beyond logistics, the case for outdoor football is a case for giving children the real thing. Football — the world's game — is an outdoor sport, played on grass and under sky, governed by space, physical endurance, and the full vocabulary of movement that the game demands.

PSAKC's players have trained outdoors from the very beginning. They have not been preparing for a compromise format. They have been preparing for football.

A structural injustice that must end

Perhaps the most urgent dimension of this proposal concerns age categories. Currently, there is no officially recognized U14/U15 category in the FSM Games structure. The practical consequence is brutal: children aged twelve or thirteen face a choice between not competing at all, or being entered into U18 brackets and placed in matches against players who may be seventeen or eighteen years old.

The proposal does not mince words on what this means. The physical gap between a twelve-year-old and a seventeen-year-old is not marginal — it is categorical. Height, mass, strength, speed: there is no equalizer.

Younger players in these brackets are systematically outmatched, pushed aside, benched in favor of older competitors, and left to accumulate losses that have nothing to do with their ability. They leave the sport.

The proposal calls this what it is: a form of structural harm — not born

of malice, but of indifference. A child who has trained faithfully for six years should not be penalized simply for being young. The creation of a dedicated U14/U15 category at the FSM Games 2027 would end this injustice and ensure that every young athlete competes against genuine peers.

Mixed teams, inclusive values

PSAKC also advocates explicitly for mixed-gender teams in this tournament. Football in Pohnpei has never been a sport for boys only, and there is no reason the national Games should treat it as one. Mixed teams enrich the competitive environment, reflect the values that PSAKC has upheld since its founding, and send a clear message to the community about who this sport belongs to.

A vision bigger than football

One of the most imaginative elements of the proposal is a Blind Football demonstration event — played with a rattling ball by players wearing blindfolds, an official Paralympic discipline recognized by FIFA and practiced in over thirty countries. In blind football, physical dominance means nothing. What matters is listening, communication, and trust.

PSAKC proposes staging this event indoors, with mixed U15 players, as a Paralympic showcase during the Games.

It would require almost nothing in terms of equipment — blindfolds and a rattle ball — and would likely produce one of the most memorable and discussed events of the entire Games program. It would introduce Paralympic sport to FSM youth in a hands-on way, build empathy for athletes with disabilities, and model a vision of sport that goes far beyond medal tables and competition results.

Guest invitations to Guam FA, KIFF, and NMI FA would complete the picture: transforming what could be a domestic tournament into a genuine regional youth football event with diplomatic and developmental value extending well beyond the field.

Public health, community, and the duty to act

The proposal situates all of this within a wider public health context that no one in FSM can afford to ignore. Non-communicable diseases — diabetes, hypertension, obesity — represent one of the most serious challenges facing this nation. Youth sport is among the most cost-effective interventions available, and the evidence for its social benefits — discipline, resilience, belonging — is beyond dispute.

PSAKC's players are not statistics. They are children who showed up. Every single day for six years, they showed up. They deserve a national stage. They deserve doors that open rather than barriers that exclude.

The FSM Games 2027 is one of those doors, and it is entirely within our collective power to make sure it opens.

What PSAKC is asking for

- 7-a-side outdoor football tournament (U14/U15) in the official games program
- All four FSM states participating: Pohnpei, Kosrae, Yap, Chuuk
- Formal invitations extended to Guam FA, KIFF, and NMI FA
- Mixed-gender teams permitted and encouraged
- Use of existing outdoor grounds (Track and Field, Spanish Wall, Daini Street) — no construction required
- Blind Football demonstration event (indoor, mixed U15)

Stand with our young athletes

The FSM Games 2027 Organizing Committee is currently planning the Games program. Your voice matters.

Contact your state representatives, community leaders, sport commission, and elected officials to express your support for including U14/U15 outdoor football — and for creating an age category that protects young athletes from being placed against older, physically superior competitors.

France expands Pacific engagement during first FSM visit by Permanent Secretary to the Pacific

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

April 16, 2026

Pohnpei, FSM — France is seeking a broader and more active role across the Pacific, offering new regional partnerships in climate resilience, security, education, and connectivity, according to H.E. Véronique Roger-Lacan, France’s Permanent Secretary to the Pacific, during her first official visit to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Roger-Lacan’s visit to Pohnpei is part of a regional tour that includes Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, marking France’s first high-level diplomatic outreach to Micronesia under a relatively new regional framework established in 2023.

Based in New Caledonia, Roger-Lacan leads a diplomatic team created following French President Emmanuel Macron’s visit to the Pacific. The team’s mandate is to strengthen regional integration and expand cooperation with Pacific Island nations in alignment with the Pacific Islands Forum’s 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

“This is a regional team supporting integration in the Pacific,” Roger-Lacan said in an interview. “We have come to Micronesia to offer programs and partnerships that support sovereignty, environmental protection, and regional cooperation.”

During her stop in Pohnpei, Roger-Lacan met with FSM Vice President Aren B. Palik and national officials, presenting a range of initiatives that Micronesian states may join voluntarily.

Focus on sovereignty, climate, and multilateralism

Roger-Lacan outlined France’s Indo-Pacific strategy as centered on three priorities: upholding a rules-based international order, supporting national sovereignty, and addressing climate and environmental challenges.

She emphasized that Pacific Island countries should not feel compelled to align with major powers.

“States in the Pacific should be able to follow their own path — friends to everyone, enemies to none,” she said.

France continues to frame climate change as a central issue in the region, regardless of shifting terminology.

“Whether you call it climate change or climate resilience, the reality is the same — countries need support to deal with these challenges,” she said, referencing recent storms across Micronesia.

Flagship programs offered to Micronesia

France’s outreach includes a series of “flagship” regional initiatives already underway across the Pacific, several of which are being introduced to Micronesian governments for possible participation.

Among the most significant is the KIWA Initiative, a €77 million climate adaptation fund supporting biodiversity protection and resilience projects across 17 Pacific Island states and territories, benefiting more than 220,000 people.

France is also advancing projects aimed at addressing coastal erosion, including the potential use of processed nickel slag from New Caledonia as a construction material to replace sand extraction from fragile lagoons.

Other key initiatives include:

- Development of greener, internationally certified Pacific airports
- Expansion of early warning systems for climate disasters under the CREWS program
- A regional humanitarian response network coordinated with Australia and New Zealand
- Maritime security cooperation to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- A proposed regional aviation network to improve island connectivity

France also supports fisheries surveillance across the Pacific, contributing vessels, aircraft, and funding to regional enforcement efforts and working closely with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency.

Cultural preservation and education initiatives

A major new initiative announced during the visit focuses on cultural preservation in the face of climate change and globalization.

Roger-Lacan described a regional audiovisual program that will fund projects to document and promote Pacific cultures, including language preservation, film production, and archiving.

The program, to be administered through the Pacific Community (SPC), is expected to launch a call for proposals later this year.

“We heard from Pacific leaders and communities that culture is at risk — not only from climate change, but also from outside influences,” she said. “This program allows local people to tell their own stories.”

France is also promoting a student mobility program linking Pacific universities with institutions in New Caledonia and French



Polynesia, along with new training opportunities in aviation, security, and technical fields.

Strengthening regional ties

Although France maintains three territories in the Pacific, Roger-Lacan stressed that its engagement extends beyond those jurisdictions.

France invests an estimated €5 billion annually in New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna, with spillover benefits for the wider region, including maritime protection and education opportunities.

“We want to strengthen the links between our territories and the rest of the Pacific,” she said.

She also noted France’s support for regional institutions and its participation as a dialogue partner of the Pacific Islands Forum, alongside countries such as the United States, Japan, and China.

A growing presence in Micronesia

The visit comes at a time when Micronesian nations are seeking greater visibility within regional discussions often dominated by Melanesian and Polynesian states.

Roger-Lacan acknowledged this dynamic and said France aims to ensure broader inclusion.

“We are very attached to the principle that every state has a voice,” she said.

With additional visits planned across the region, France’s latest outreach signals an effort to deepen engagement in Micronesia and position itself as a long-term partner in addressing the Pacific’s economic, environmental, and security challenges.

Pohnpei conservationists CSP and MERIP honoured with a visit from the French Ambassador

By *KIWA Initiative*
AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE
DEVELOPPEMENT
Regional Direction Pacific Ocean

April 17, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei - Leading conservation organisations in Pohnpei were visited last week from senior French and regional representatives, highlighting local efforts to support sustainable fisheries and coastal livelihoods. Her Excellency Véronique Roger-Lacan, French Ambassador to the Pacific, joined by Deputy Ambassador Guillaume Josso, visited the island to see firsthand how community-based initiatives are making an impact.

The delegation met with Marine Environment Research Institute of Pohnpei and Conservation Society of

Pohnpei to learn about their work with coastal communities under the MiCOAST project. The Conservation Society of Pohnpei was represented by Operations Manager Jasmine Mendiola, while MERIP was represented by Rickson Washington, Jayson Silbanuz, Tristan David, Sandarihna Silbanuz, Charlotte Suzuki, and Adarino Henry.

During the visit, the delegation travelled to Madolenihmw, where they heard directly from both organisations about their ongoing activities. They then toured the area and took a boat trip to Enterpoint to visit a local rabbitfish farm operated by Jessie and Maylane Santiago.

The rabbitfish farms supported by MERIP provide coastal households with an alternative source of income, helping to ease pressure on reef fisheries while strengthening local food security. The visit offered an opportunity for the delegation to see how locally led solutions are contributing to more sustainable and resilient coastal communities in Pohnpei.

The Kiwa MiCOAST project (short for “Micronesian Community-based Fisheries Management as a Nature-Based Solution for Coastal Resilience”) is a three-year initiative that aims at advancing



H.E. Véronique Roger-Lacan and Mr. Guillaume Josso inspecting the rabbitfish cages at one of the households supported by MERIP, under the MiCOAST project. Photo taken by Hannah Wheaton.

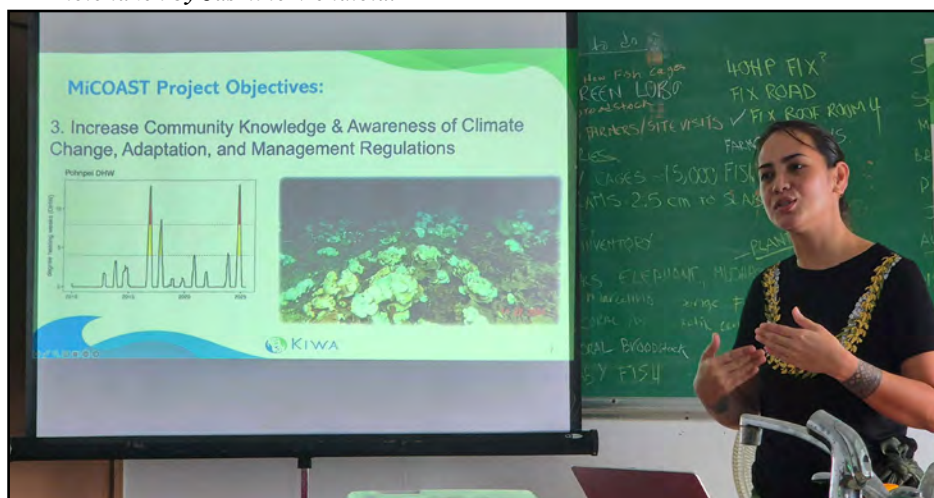
Community-Based Fisheries Management and Nature-based Solutions across a large portion of the Micronesia region, spanning the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap, and Palau. The Kiwa Initiative - Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Resilience aims to build the resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems, communities and economies to climate change through NbS by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. It is based on simplified access to funding for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation actions for local and national governments, civil society and regional organisations in Pacific Island States and Territories. The Initiative is funded by the European Union, French Development Agency (AFD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). It has established partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Oceania Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). For more information: www.kiwainitiative.org.



MERIP's Rickson Washington presents a clam to the French Ambassador Veronique Roger-Lacan on their trip to the MERIP farms in Madolenihmw. Photo taken by Jasmine Mendiola.



Jasmine Mendiola, from CSP and H.E. Véronique Roger-Lacan en route to visit the rabbitfish cages. Photo taken by Hannah Wheaton.



Conservation Society of Pohnpei Operations Director Jasmine Mendiola presenting on their MiCOAST work. Photo taken by Hannah Wheaton.



Rickson Washington, Charlotte Suzuki, Jayson Silbanuz, Sandarihna Silbanuz, Adarino Henry, Guillaume Josso, H.E. Véronique Roger-Lacan, Jasmine Mendiola (CSP), Hannah Wheaton and Tristan David outside the MERIP office. Photo taken by Sebastian Bador.

Joseph-Movick Administration welcomes regional aviation experts to 2026 Aerodrome Certification Workshop

Pohnpei Public Information

April 14, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph officially opened the 2026 Aerodrome Certification Workshop on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at the Kamorale Convention Center, emphasizing the critical role of aviation infrastructure in the resilience and connectivity of Pacific Island nations.

Joseph described the state's airports as more than mere infrastructure, calling them the "lifelines" of the nation.

"For us, a functional aerodrome is the heartbeat of our economic and social resilience," Governor Joseph stated. "Our progress is not just about rebuilding, but about finding smarter, more collaborative ways to serve our people."

Hosted by the Pohnpei Port Authority (PPA), the workshop brings together regional aviation stakeholders, technical experts, and federal partners under the theme, "Empowering the Pacific Islands Aviation Sector through Recovery, Innovation and Strategic Partnerships."

The Governor commended the Board and Management of the Pohnpei Port Authority for their ongoing efforts to enhance service and convenience for the traveling community. He also extended gratitude to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for its continued technical guidance and unwavering support of regional aviation standards.

In his welcoming remarks, Governor



Addressing the delegates, Governor Joseph highlighted the often-unseen dedication required to maintain safety and efficiency in airport operations. He encouraged participants to be bold and collaborative in addressing the upgrades and challenges that will define the future of Pacific aviation.

The 2026 Aerodrome Certification Workshop is a technical forum designed to ensure that regional airports comply with international safety and operational standards. Aerodrome certification is a requirement by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and, in many Pacific jurisdictions, involves alignment with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) protocols.

Beyond the technical sessions, the Governor invited visiting participants to experience Pohnpei's cultural heritage and natural landscape. "Experience our local hospitality and engage with our community—your presence here is a testament to the strength of our regional partnership," he added.

About the Aerodrome Certification Workshop



Joseph-Movick Administration hands over school buses to Department of Education

Pohnpei Public Information

April 13, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — Following the official receipt of three school buses from the FSM National Government last week, the Governor of Pohnpei State, Stevenson A. Joseph, formally turned over the vehicle keys to the Department of Education in a ceremony held today.

Curriculum and Training, Mr. Benjie Phillip, accepted the keys on behalf of the Director of the Department of Education, the Honorable Stanley Etse.

The acquisition of these three buses, provided by the FSM National Government through Pohnpei At-Large Senator Peter M. Christian of the FSM Congress, while attesting to the strong and enduring partnership between the National Government and Pohnpei State, represents a critical investment in the state's educational infrastructure. By expanding the current fleet, the Department of Education aims to improve transit reliability and ensure that students across the island have consistent access to their classrooms.

The Office of the Governor extends its appreciation to the FSM National Government for the initial donation and remains committed to working closely with the Department of Education

to maintain and utilize these assets for the public's benefit.



The turnover marks the final step in transitioning the newly donated fleet into active service for Pohnpei's students. Chief of Primary Education, Mr. Peter Ramirez, and Chief of

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph hosts PICS High School debate team for AI discussion

Pohnpei Public Information

April 17, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph received a courtesy visit from the Pohnpei Island Central School (PICS) Debate Team on April 15, 2026, at the Cabinet Conference Room. The meeting served as a preparatory session for the students ahead of the annual Law Day Debate scheduled for April 30, 2026.

The PICS team is slated to argue the negative position on the impacts and implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI). During the visit, student debaters engaged the Governor in a technical and ethical inquiry regarding the role of automated systems in governance and society.

Governor Joseph commended the team and their coach, Margarita Tecson, for their academic rigor. He specifically recognized the participating students: Princeton Ladore, Melson Ezekias, Grace Rodriguez, Mayson Paingai, Leshana Samuel, and Mermalova Johnny.

Addressing the students' topic, Governor Joseph characterized AI as a specialized tool designed to increase operational efficiency. However, he emphasized that the utility of the technology is inseparable from the responsibility of the user. He noted that ensuring data accuracy and maintaining human oversight are critical to preventing the spread of misinformation.

The dialogue further explored the socioeconomic implications of rapid AI adoption. Governor Joseph and the students discussed the risk of AI exacerbating existing inequalities and the subsequent need for robust policy frameworks. The Governor underscored that comprehensive education and legislative guidance are essential to ensure the technology serves the public interest effectively and ethically.

The PICS Debate Team concluded the visit by formally inviting Governor Joseph to attend the Law Day Debate on April 30.



Joseph-Movick Administration meets with Bank of Guam officials to discuss 28th Micronesian Islands Forum support

Pohnpei Public Information

April 16, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph recently hosted a consultative meeting with leadership from the Bank of Guam to discuss collaborative efforts for the upcoming 28th Micronesian Islands Forum (MIF). The meeting included Mr. Ryan Ditchen, Bank of Guam Pohnpei Branch Manager, and Mr. Asterio Takesy, Vice President for Governmental Affairs.

The discussions focused on the Bank's interest in supporting the regional summit, which Pohnpei State will host in July 2026. Governor Joseph provided the Bank officials with updated timelines, and Vice President Takesy shared historical reflections on the MIF's evolution, highlighting its significance as a platform for regional unity and policy coordination. Governor Joseph expressed his deep appreciation for the opportunity to discuss these historical perspectives with Mr. Takesy, noting that the Vice President is among the few remaining individuals who served during the foundational stages of the nation.

In a gesture of continued partnership, the Bank of Guam representatives offered to host a luncheon for the heads of state and delegates during the week-long event.

Governor Joseph welcomed the Bank's proactive engagement and long-standing presence in the community. The Office of the Governor will formally issue invitations and solicitation letters to the Bank of Guam and other corporate partners in the coming

days to finalize sponsorship details and logistical coordination.

The 28th MIF will bring together leaders from across Micronesia to address shared challenges in economic development, environmental stewardship, and regional security.



Governor Joseph celebrates PUC apprenticeship graduates, advocates for “homegrown” workforce

Pohnpei Public Information

April 10, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered the keynote address today at the graduation ceremony for the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) apprenticeship training program, honoring eight individuals who have attained professional status in construction electricity.

The ceremony celebrated the completion of a rigorous journey that included 8,000 hours of supervised on-the-job training. These graduates achieved a dual milestone: receiving their Certificate of Achievement in Construction Electricity from the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC), complemented by the prestigious Journeyman Certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL).

A Vision for Local Talent

During his address, Governor Joseph emphasized that the program serves as a cornerstone of the administration's commitment to building a self-

reliant State. He explained that the apprenticeship initiative aligns with the Skills and Employment for Micronesians (SEE) program, a joint effort between the Pohnpei Department of Education and the World Bank.

The Governor expressed his strong support for initiatives that encourage citizens to remain in Pohnpei and contribute to a homegrown, organic workforce. He noted that by training local talent to manage the State's infrastructure, Pohnpei is creating a sustainable system where the workforce is trained by, works for, and belongs to the community.

Collaborative Leadership

The event opened with a prayer by Mr. Taylor Sehpin, followed by opening remarks from PUC CEO Nixon Anson. Board Member Gardner Edgar provided a detailed overview of the Apprenticeship Program's history and structure, tracing its development from 2004, when the Governor's Office first entrusted COM-FSM with the program's administration.

Vice President for Instructional Affairs at COM-FSM, Delihna Ehmes, also

delivered remarks highlighting the academic partnership that provides the essential foundation for these technical achievements. Representing the graduating class, Mr. Jimmy Pelep spoke on behalf of his fellow students, offering reflections on their collective success, the quality of instruction received, and shared remembrances from their training, while providing words of encouragement to his peers and future apprentices.

Honoring Partnership

The Governor credited the leadership of the PUC Board of Directors for their dedication to technical excellence. In attendance were Board Members Cindy Ehmes, Tony John, Casiano Shoniber, and Hainrick Panuelo. Board Chairman Joseph Felix Jr. provided the closing remarks, urging the graduates to pursue continued professional growth.

Governor Joseph also recognized the



contributions of representatives from the U.S. Department of Labor—Abigail Allen, Erica Johnson, and Aaron Wall—for the technical oversight that ensures Pohnpeian tradespeople meet international standards through the USDOL Journeyman certification.

In his concluding remarks to the graduates, the Governor affirmed that by earning both their COM-FSM certificates and USDOL Journeyman credentials, they had met the highest professional expectations and established themselves as the experts the state relies upon for its future development.

Joseph-Movick Administration and PUC leadership discuss regional cooperation and infrastructure sustainability

Pohnpei Public Information

April 15, 2026

Pei Lapalap, Pohnpei — Governor Joseph received a formal briefing from Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) CEO Nixon Anson and Board Chairman Joseph Felix Jr. to review the utility's current operations, financial outlook, and response to regional needs.

During the update, CEO Anson reported on the recent deployment of four linemen to assist Chuuk State in the aftermath of Typhoon Sinlaku. He noted that the Guam Power Authority has requested similar assistance for future needs, specifically citing the high work performance of the Pohnpei team. Governor Joseph commended the utility for its professionalism and confirmed Pohnpei's readiness to support neighboring islands like Saipan and Guam if requested.

A significant portion of the briefing focused on mitigating the impact of anticipated high fuel costs driven by the conflict in Iran. To keep electricity rates at their current levels, PUC has initiated proactive measures, including a Board-approved line of credit. While the utility discussed the potential need for subsidies, Governor Joseph clarified his position that the National Government should prioritize subsidizing Vital (FSM Petro) to stabilize fuel prices nationwide. The Governor noted that keeping fuel costs at or below current levels would prevent the need for rate increases or direct subsidies to state utilities, though he maintains that local utility support remains a primary state responsibility if necessary.

The Governor also addressed a recent resolution regarding the proposed water bottling project. While supporting the



venture in principle, Governor Joseph informed PUC leadership that certain internal matters must be resolved before the administration can fully back the project's financial execution.

The meeting concluded with a shared

commitment to stabilizing PUC's financial and operational foundation, ensuring the utility is prepared to navigate upcoming economic shifts and maintain reliable service for the people of Pohnpei.

USP commits \$1 million in student support amid global crisis

University of the South Pacific

10 April 2026

Suva, Fiji - The University of the South Pacific (USP) has today announced a \$F1 million student hardship and bursary support package to protect students and their families from the rising cost pressures associated with the global fuel crisis.

The package, approved as part of USP's strategic preparedness response, doubles the University's current student hardship and bursary allocation from \$F495,000 to \$F1 million, funded through a prudent reallocation of existing savings, without compromising the quality of teaching and learning or essential student services.

As part of the expanded support, the University will also broaden access to hardship assistance, recognising that the impact of rising transport, food, and energy costs is now being felt well beyond the most financially vulnerable households.

The support is designed to help students facing increased costs brought about by the global crisis, ensuring that financial pressures do not force them to interrupt their studies.

USP's Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Interim Management Group, the Right Honourable Siosua 'Utoikamanu said the decision reflects the University's duty of care to students and its long-term strategic outlook.

"Our first priority is to ensure that no student is left behind because of circumstances beyond their control. Rising fuel and living costs are already being felt across our region, and this additional \$F1 million commitment sends a clear message that USP will act early and decisively to protect student continuity and success."

The University has also adopted a broader preparedness framework to strengthen operational resilience should global fuel conditions worsen, including flexible



learning continuity arrangements, hardship access pathways, and targeted support for vulnerable campuses. These measures will be activated progressively as conditions require, ensuring a calm and proportionate response.

The Pro-Chancellor said the package reflects USP's enduring responsibility to stand with the region and protect student success during periods of external uncertainty.

"Too often, our Pacific communities bear a disproportionate share of the consequences of global crises to which they have contributed least — whether through climate change or the economic shocks flowing from conflicts far beyond our region. Our responsibility as the University Serving the Pacific is to ensure that our students are not asked to carry that burden alone. This support is about ensuring our students can stay enrolled, stay engaged, and succeed."

Pacific political climate champions convene to elevate Pacific leadership ahead of key global climate engagements

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

April 9, 2026

Nadi, Fiji – The Pacific Political Climate Champions met today in Nadi, Fiji, in a hybrid meeting to consolidate regional leadership and strategic alignment ahead of a pivotal year for global climate diplomacy and action.

The meeting provided a critical platform for the Climate Champions to reflect on outcomes from COP30, held in Belém, Brazil last year and to reaffirm the Pacific's collective resolve to shape an ambitious and equitable global climate agenda heading into the 31st session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 31) to be held in Antalya, Türkiye in November.

The meeting also brought together technical advisors from Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). Together with the Climate Champions, discussions explored opportunities to maximise the Champions' influence, impact, and engagements throughout 2026, which include the COP 31 Pre-COP meetings

to be held in Fiji and Tuvalu ahead of the substantive COP31.

The Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Baron Divavesi Waqa emphasised the urgency of sustained political leadership, noting, "Our moral leadership on the issue of climate change, including through the work of our Climate Champions, is becoming more critical now than ever, especially as recent past and current global geopolitical dynamics are giving rise to a deviation of focus and commitment to address climate change."

Sefanaia Nawadra, Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) further stressed the importance of political advocacy as Pacific Islands continue to demonstrate leadership in the face of climate change adversity.

"Ultimately the Pacific voice is most powerful when our technical unity enables political impact. Pacific leaders continue to fill a global leadership gap on climate change bringing the moral authority that is strengthened when grounded in robust technical evidence



and collective regional strategy."

The meeting was led through the One CROP coordination mechanism supported by the Pacific Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Pacific Community (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), and the University of the South Pacific (USP)

Established in 2021, the Pacific Political Climate Champions initiative serves as one of the key vehicles for elevating Pacific priorities at the political level

within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process. It continues to play a vital role in ensuring that the unique vulnerabilities and priorities of Pacific Island countries remain central to global climate negotiations. The current cohort of Political Climate Champions will complete their two-year term following COP31.

As the international community prepares for the COP 31, the Pacific reaffirms its unwavering commitment to principled leadership, regional solidarity, and transformative climate action.

USP honours more than 60 high achievers at Medals and Prizes Ceremony

University of the South Pacific

April 15, 2026

Fiji - More than 60 outstanding students and graduates of The University of the South Pacific (USP) were recognised for academic excellence at the Medals and Prizes Ceremony yesterday in Suva, Fiji.

The prestigious ceremony celebrated recipients of gold medals, special prizes and certificates, recognising exceptional academic achievement across a range of disciplines and categories.

The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council and the Interim Management Group (IMG), the Right Honourable Siosua 'Utoikamanu, presented the medals and prizes alongside sponsors and Heads of Schools.

To qualify for these prestigious honours, students were required to meet stringent criteria, including attaining a cumulative grade point average of no less than 4.0 among other requirements, for School Gold Medals, special prizes and discipline awards.

The Pro-Chancellor acknowledged the high-achieving students, along with their families and friends.

"This evening, we recognise 63 awards presented to outstanding students from across our campuses, including 15 Gold Medalists who represent the highest level of academic distinction," Honourable

'Utoikamanu said.

He also highlighted the growth and strength of research at USP, reflected in the joint recipients of the PhD Thesis Award, describing it as a powerful reminder that the region continues to produce scholarship of the highest quality.

Among the evening's most prestigious honours was the Vice-Chancellor and President's All-Rounder Gold Medal for the female graduate with the best combined academic performance and record of service to the community. The award was presented to Busra Shaheenaz Sakib. Reflecting on her achievement, Sakib said her journey required determination and focus as she balanced her studies, internships and work responsibilities.

She credited her success to hard work, perseverance and the unwavering support of her mother, as well as the encouragement of her lecturers. She also made the most of opportunities such as internships and campus programmes, which helped shape her personal and professional growth.

Currently pursuing postgraduate studies while working, Sakib said she hopes to continue her education further in the future, possibly towards a master's degree.

Another notable award recipient was Maliumoeao Fa'asolo, who was recognised as the Most Outstanding Graduate with a major in Mathematics.

Fa'asolo described the award as a humbling and meaningful achievement, saying it reflected not only his hard work, but also the unwavering support of his family, mentor and friends throughout his academic journey.

"This recognition means a great deal to me. It reflects the support, sacrifices and encouragement of the people who have stood by me throughout my journey, especially my family, mentor and friends," he said.

He shared that his time at USP had been transformative, shaping him both academically and personally, and added that the award had inspired him to continue striving for excellence and making the most of future opportunities.

The selection of USP's Gold Medalists, prize winners, and certificate recipients is highly competitive. Graduates from the September 2025 ceremonies held at Laucala Campus and in Solomon Islands were eligible for consideration, in addition to those from the October 2025 ceremony in Tonga.

In addition, students graduating at the upcoming Laucala ceremonies on Thursday, 16 April and Friday, 17 April 2026 were included in the pool for the 2026 awards.

The Medals and Prizes Ceremony forms part of USP's wider graduation celebrations this week.

The University's graduation ceremonies will be held at the Vodafone Arena in Suva on Thursday, 16 April and Friday, 17 April 2026. Hundreds of students will officially graduate in the presence of their families, friends, staff and the wider USP community.



Building bridges through faith!

U.S. Embassy Kolonia Social Media Post

April 16

Kosrae - On April 14, our Public Affairs Officer Dennis Coster and U.S. Navy Chaplain Zachary Zumwalt hosted faith leaders in Kosrae for a dialogue on "Religious Engagement in Peacebuilding." Seven leaders from six churches joined along with two members of the U.S. Army Oceania Engagement Team to discuss shared community concerns and collaborative solutions.

The session also highlighted resources for veterans, including VA programs and the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. This Interfaith Dialogue seeks to foster mutual understanding and respect among different faith traditions; strengthen bonds within the broader FSM community; and identify practical, actionable steps that faith communities can take together.



USCGC Midgett rescues family missing for 7 days in Federated States of Micronesia

By Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia / Sector Guam

April 6, 2026

SANTA RITA, Guam — A family of three was returned to Chuuk State, part of the Federated States of Micronesia, following search and rescue operations conducted by the Legend-class cutter USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757) crew on April 6, 2026.

The Midgett crew located the missing family after receiving a report on Easter Sunday from authorities in the Federated States of Micronesia and the U.S. Embassy that the vessel was overdue.

“Our U.S. Coast Guard colleagues’ swift and courageous actions in this successful search and rescue mission not only reflect the highest standards of professionalism and humanity but also reinforce the deep and enduring partnership between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia,” said Jennifer Johnson, U.S. Ambassador to the

Federated States of Micronesia. “This mission exemplifies the spirit of cooperation and mutual support at the heart of the Compact of Free Association, underscoring how our close relations translate into real, life-saving outcomes for our people.”

At night, the crew of Midgett visually located the 23-foot single-outboard skiff carrying the missing family, two men and one woman, in the waters off the coast of Chuuk State. The family departed Fananu Island on March 30 for the short passage to Murillo Island, but never arrived due to a failure of their single outboard engine. At the height of search planning, the predicted search area exceeded 14,000 square nautical miles in rough seas with waves reaching 10 feet.

All three survivors were rescued and uninjured. They were then safely delivered to Weno in Chuuk State for further transport to Fananu Island.

“National Security Cutter crews spend most of their time executing maritime law enforcement missions,

often with our international partners,” said Capt. Brian Whisler, commanding officer of Midgett. “SAR cases like this one are not routine for our platform. Our bridge watchstanders spotted the small skiff in rough seas just after midnight, and that kind of situational awareness does not happen by accident. It is what this crew trains for, and I could not be prouder of how they performed.”

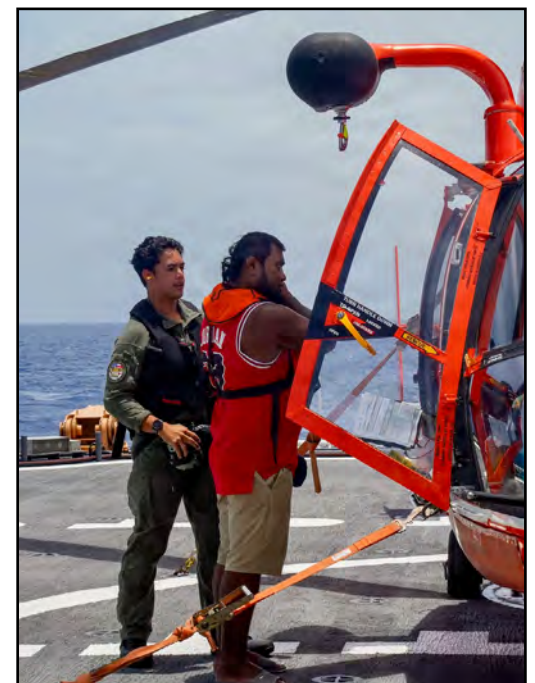
During the SAR operation, watchstanders from the U.S. Coast Guard Joint Rescue Sub-Center Guam at U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam developed the search patterns and coordinated with U.S. Coast Guard District Oceania and Air Station Barbers Point personnel to launch an HC-130 Hercules airplane and crew from Hawai’i to support the search and directed the launch of the USCGC Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143) crew from Guam. The Midgett crew, already conducting a Western Pacific patrol, diverted following a bilateral maritime law enforcement boarding with two embarked officers from the FSM in their exclusive economic

zone, approximately 200 nautical miles south of Fananu Island.

“This rescue reflects the strategic value of maintaining a capable surface presence across the region’s vast maritime expanse,” said Lt. Cmdr. Derek Wallin, the U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue mission coordinator. “Without the Midgett’s proximity, coordinating a search across more than 14,000 square nautical miles of open ocean would have required significantly more time and resources. Time the three missing people may not have had.”

Throughout its current Indo-Pacific region patrol, Midgett’s crew is scheduled to engage with regional partners and participate in joint operations to enhance maritime safety and security. While deployed to the region, Midgett is assigned to Destroyer Squadron 15, the Navy’s largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th Fleet’s principal surface force. DESRON 15 regularly assumes tactical control of surface units operating in the area.

U.S. 7th Fleet, the Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific.



FSM validates National Drought Preparedness and Response Plan

International Organization for Migration

April 21, 2026

Palikir, FSM – The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has taken a significant step toward strengthening its drought preparedness by organizing a workshop to review and validate its draft National Drought Preparedness and Response Plan (NDPRP) on 6 April 2026.

This initiative comes at a critical time, as Ifalik Island and Eauripil Islands of Yap State recently experienced extended dry spells, leading to disruptions in water supplies and necessitating emergency support for water provision. These challenges highlight the importance of comprehensive preparedness frameworks to protect communities and ensure resilience against future water shortages.

Earlier this month, the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEM), in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and with funding support from the Government of Japan, convened a validation workshop that brought together national and state emergency response personnel, development partners, and donors. Participants

reviewed key components of the draft plan and provided feedback to ensure it is practical and effective in responding to the country’s needs. Once finalized, the NDPRP will help strengthen preparedness and response capacities before, during, and after drought events.

The workshop gathered high-level representatives, including DECEM Acting Secretary Cynthia Ehmes, Japanese Ambassador to FSM Nobuo Kagomiya and his delegates, United States Deputy Chief of Mission Vincent Mut-Tracy and U.S. Officials, alongside officials from Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae Disaster Coordination Offices, the Pohnpei and Chuuk Weather Service Offices, and other key partners from across government, technical agencies and development partners.

In her opening remarks, Acting Secretary Ehmes underlined the far-reaching impacts of drought on island communities. “When drought affects our islands, it impacts every aspect of daily life. Building resilience is our key to survival,” she said.

She further highlighted the necessity of robust systems and coordination, noting, “One of the components to building resilience is strengthening our national and state-level systems so

that we are better prepared to manage climate-driven water risks through stronger coordination and policy frameworks such as the NDPRP.”

Ambassador Kagomiya echoed her sentiments, recalling the most recent drought which affected parts of the North Pacific, “It is still fresh in our minds that an emergency declaration regarding drought was issued in the FSM and RMI in 2024 due to El Nino phenomenon. This harsh experience once again made us keenly aware of the reality of climate change and its serious impact on the lives of people.”

“I strongly recognize that this workshop is essential for all of you to work together now to formulate a resilient response plan like the NDPRP,” he stated.

The validation process focused on several key priorities: clarifying roles and responsibilities across national, state, and community levels; ensuring proposed actions, timelines, and resource requirements are realistic, particularly for outer islands; identifying gaps and areas for improvement; and strengthening coordination among government, communities, and partners. Discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening the early warning systems to capture the

earliest signals of drought, improving early warning communication with outer island weather observers, enhancing integration of health and agriculture considerations into the NDPRP. Participants further refined state-level communication schemes to support more coordinated and timely responses.

The validation workshop follows extensive consultations from community to state and national levels including key disaster management focal persons in each of FSM’s four States, and international partners working in water security across the FSM.

Highlighting IOM’s role in the process, Chief of Mission Ewa Naqvi noted, “In supporting this drought plan, IOM has played an enabling and coordinating role to ensure the process is government- and community-led, as well as evidence-based. This has included close coordination with national and state counterparts, capturing lessons learned from previous droughts, and conducting consultations across Yap, Kosrae, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and the National Government to integrate both technical expertise and community perspectives.”

The next phase for the NDPRP involves integrating the valuable feedback received during the workshop, conducting further internal reviews, and seeking formal endorsement from both State Governments and the FSM National Government. The aim is to move swiftly towards adopting and operationalising the plan, supported by practical tools such as SOPs, checklists, and regular training and simulation exercises, ensuring the NDPRP is not only approved, but actively used in safeguarding communities.

