



Friday 01 May 2020

For Immediate Release

MEDIA STATEMENT

Papua New Guinea and Bougainville remains at Stage 2: Containment Level of the COVID-19. The Bougainville Health Response Team remains vigilant in tracking the global trend of the virus and to ensure that the preventive measures are strongly emphasized across Bougainville.

The Office of the Controller is aware of public concerns being raised especially those related to the resumption of classes for educational institutions and also on the re-opening of the Buka Airport.

On matters of education and resumption of classes in Bougainville, the Controller has confirmed that he met with the Education Department acting Secretary, Mary Remi, today.

The Controller has been informed that the Education Department has had meetings with the head teachers, teachers and district education officers to ensure that all schools in Bougainville make arrangements for preventive health measures to be established before classes resume.

It is anticipated that classes in Bougainville are to resume on May 11th after the Controller issues the new orders for schools.

The Controller has called on all parents to talk to their children and advise them to listen to their teachers and follow the new requirements that will be put in place.

The Controller also gave a public call to Bougainvilleans wishing to travel in by plane to Bougainville. He said that the only airport that will be taking in domestic flights is the Buka Airport in North Bougainville.

He explained that the Quarantine Facility is currently being developed at the Youth Center, Hahela Catholic Mission in Buka and should be complete by mid-next week.

This is the facility that will take incoming passengers to the region, where they will be separated or quarantined for a period of 14 days. The Controller will issue further instructions on passenger flights upon advice from the Health Team that the quarantine facility is ready.

The Controller reported that under the State of Emergency, there have been increases in breaches recorded across North, Central and South Bougainville related to Emergency Order No. 19 (overloading of PMVs).

A public appeal is being made again to all vehicle owners and drivers to comply with the restrictions on the number of passengers they are allowed to carry.

The general public is also urged to observe social distancing at all times.

CALLS TO ACTION

Share the correct information amongst your families and communities, and if you want more information, see your local community health worker, or call the Bougainville Health Response Team Hotline number 74460830.

And finally, remember to practice the Five Preventive Measures at all times:

- Maintaining social distance (a minimum of 1.5 meters)
- Frequently washing hands using clean running water and soap, or alcohol-based hand rub
- When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue — throw away used tissue immediately and wash hands
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough
- If you have fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, stay at home (self-isolate) to protect others and call the Bougainville Health Response Team Hotline Number 74460830.

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