



10/2018
12 July 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION SAFETY RECOMMENDATION ACTIONED BY MINISTER FOR CIVIL AVIATION TO ESTABLISH RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRE

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission, Mr Hubert Namani today announced that the Minister for Civil Aviation, Hon. Alfred Manase, MP, on 9 July 2018 took decisive safety action to address aviation safety concerns raised by the AIC on 17 April 2018.

Mr. Namani said “the AIC issued a Safety Recommendation addressed to the Minister for Civil Aviation arising out of the AIC’s investigation into a fatal accident involving a Britten Norman Islander, that occurred in rugged mountainous terrain on the northern slopes of the Sarawaget Range in the Morobe Province on 23 December 2017”.

He said “the AIC’s initial investigation found there is no Search and Rescue Coordination structure or operations procedures in PNG in accordance with PNG’s obligations to meet the Standards and Recommended Practices of Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation”.

The AIC recommended that the Minister for Civil Aviation, in compliance with Sections 8A and 8B of the Civil Aviation Act, should ensure that a Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) is established, maintained, and operated, to co-ordinate and conduct aviation search and rescue operations.

Mr Namani said “on 11 July 2018, the Minister informed the AIC that on 9 July 2018 he issued a Minister’s Directive titled Search and Rescue for PNG Air Services Limited (PNGASL) to operate and maintain the PNG Search and Rescue Coordination Centre”.

Mr. Manase informed the AIC that he had also directed PNGASL to establish and perform the functions of the RCC on behalf of the State in accordance with ICAO Annex 12. It requires PNGASL to promulgate, without delay, operational Search and Rescue Policies and Procedures; ensure that the PNG RCC established under the Minister’s Directive is equipped and manned as a dedicated stand-alone unit that is independent of all other Air Traffic Services facilities in order that it cannot be rendered ineffective; and ensure that the RCC is staffed 24/7 by a dedicated team of trained and qualified personnel to coordinate and conduct aviation search and rescue operations in PNG.

Mr Namani said “in compliance with the Ministers directives in any future AIC investigations involving a requirement for Search and Rescue that the AIC will assess the effectiveness of the operation of the PNG Air Services Limited RCC and its compliance with ICAO Annex 12”.

A copy of the AIC recommendation is available on the AIC website: <http://www.aic.gov.pg>

Approved:

Hubert Namani
Chief Commissioner

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