



Australian High Commission, Nauru

Australia to provide AUD 4.5 million to support Nauru's COVID-19 response and economic recovery

MEDIA RELEASE

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic represents a major common challenge for the governments of Australia, Nauru and the region. The Australian Government is committed to working with the Government of Nauru to address the health and economic impacts of this pandemic.

Australia has moved quickly to reorient development partnerships in the Pacific to bring forward funding for critical health services, and to help Pacific partners mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic.

As part of this effort, Australia will provide AUD 4.5 million to assist the Government of Nauru manage the emerging health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. We are working to deploy this support quickly to meet Nauru's most immediate needs.

In a joint statement on 1 April, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marise Payne, and Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Alex Hawke, said "As the world's economies, large and small, grapple with a pandemic that does not recognise national borders, co-operation will be critical... We have never faced a challenge of the scale of COVID-19, but we will combat it together as a Pacific family."

The welfare of Pacific workers and students in Australia is a priority for the Australian Government, as countries close their borders to try to keep infection rates as low as possible. Changes in visa arrangements will allow Pacific workers who are unable to return home to stay and work in Australia for up to another 12 months, and students who have completed their studies, but are unable to return home, to extend their visas.

Australia is also working to maintain an essential services and humanitarian corridor to the Pacific to enable the movement of essential personnel and supplies, including medical equipment and food.

Australia is committed to ensuring that Pacific Islanders can return home and is facilitating transit through Australia en route to Pacific destinations. Australia is also undertaking screening measures at Australian airports for outbound flights to the Pacific, which will reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for Pacific island countries.

There has never been a more important time for Australia to stand with our Pacific family as we face the COVID-19 pandemic together.