



PRESS RELEASE 67/2021

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**** For Immediate Release ****

New HF Radios to improve communications after disaster



Caption: *From left: Acting Deputy Secretary for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Ms. Arieta Dimuri, Commissioner Northern Division (CND) Mr. Uraia Rainima, New Zealand High Commission's First Secretary Ms. Christine Conway with Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu and Director National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) Ms. Vasiti Soko in front of the newly refurbished CND warehouse at Vatunibale in Labasa.*

LABASA – Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu opened the Commissioner Northern Division's refurbished warehouse at Vatunibale in Labasa today.

The refurbishment was completed through funding support from the New Zealand Government's Aid Programme following the devastations left behind by Tropical Cyclone Yasa in December 2020.

Speaking during the opening of the refurbished building, Minister Seruiratu conveyed Government's appreciation to the New Zealand Government for "stepping in and assisting us with this upgrade".

"The newly refurbish warehouse will enable the Ministry to safely store nonfood items that are being prepositioned as part of our disaster preparedness. The prepositioning of such items is to assist in the timely distribution by the Divisional teams to affected families in the aftermath of a disaster," Hon. Seruiratu said.

"The Ministry is prepositioning assets this week to fill up this warehouse, and similarly the Ministry has been prepositioning assets for the Western Division and Rotuma. These movement of key assets would help us achieve our 100% readiness level for the current cyclone season."

In addressing guests at the opening ceremony, First Secretary at the New Zealand High Commission in Fiji Ms. Christine Conway said the assistance rendered by the NZ Government included repair works to the warehouse to enable prepositioning and disaster response and the rebuilding of a staff facility. She said the facility would provide a space for staff to eat, meet, support each other, and also look after their welfare during times of emergencies.



Caption: ***Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu cuts the ribbon to officially open the newly refurbished Commissioner Northern Division (CND) warehouse at Vatunibale in Labasa today.***

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The Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management is responsible for implementing development strategies that bring Fijians living in rural and maritime regions the same level of access to essential services and economic opportunities as anywhere else in the country. We coordinate and implement the Fijian Government's rural and maritime development initiatives with a mission to empower Fiji's rural sector. We also spearhead disaster risk reduction initiatives at national

and sub-national level including disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. We have offices for each of Fiji's 14 provinces including Rotuma, leading the Fijian Government's rural development and disaster risk management operations.

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