



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIA BACKS IMPROVED SHIPPING ACCESS FOR REMOTE MAKIRA COMMUNITIES

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Australia is supporting cocoa and copra farmers on the Weather Coast of Makira in a new partnership with local shipping operator Franjti Shipping Ltd.

The partners will co-invest in upgrades to MV Florence, a cargo vessel, and introduce a consistent monthly shipping schedule.

Shipping services on the Weather Coast have been limited and irregular, leading to loss of income for farmers when cocoa and copra crops cannot be transported on time.

The vessel upgrades include a crane installation which will improve cargo handling in areas without ports infrastructure, reducing additional expenses on fuel consumption and safety risks. This will mean farmers can better plan their production and reduce post-harvest losses and boost production and incomes.

Australian High Commissioner Jeff Roach said the partnership reflects Australia's commitment to practical solutions that support rural livelihoods.

"We know cocoa and copra are an important source of income for many families across Solomon Islands. This is why we are supporting reliable shipping to help Solomon Islanders transport their products, increase incomes and increase the country's exports."

Managing Director of Franjti Shipping Ltd, Joy Isihanua Ririmae, said the partnership will help expand services to underserved communities.

"We have seen the potential for farmers along the Weather Coast, but consistent shipping has always been a challenge. This partnership allows us to provide a more reliable service, giving farmers the confidence to increase production and connect to markets."

The initiative is delivered under the Solomon Islands-Australia Partnership, which sees Australia working with local businesses to address key market constraints and create economic opportunities for Solomon Islanders.

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Photo 1:



Caption 1: Australian High Commission First Secretary Economic, William Rowell, (right) with Joy Isihanua Ririmae and Alick Isihanua of Franjti Shipping Ltd standing in front of the newly installed crane on MV Florence. This is part of the Solomon Islands -Australia Partnership with Franjti Shipping Ltd to improve market access for cocoa and copra farmers in the Weather Coast of Makira through reliable shipping services.

Photo 2:



Caption 2: The vessel upgrades include a crane installation which will improve cargo handling in areas without ports infrastructure, reducing additional expenses on fuel consumption and safety risks.

Photo 3:



Caption 3: Australian High Commission First Secretary Economic, William Rowell testing the crane.

Photo 4:



Caption 4: William Rowell of the Australian High Commission and Alick Isihanua of Franjti Shipping Ltd put the crane through its paces.

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