

PRESS RELEASE

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Handover of Three Buses to Tonga's Ministry of Internal Affairs through Japan's Non-Project Grant Aid

The Government of Japan through the Non-Project Grant Aid, NPGA, handed over three new buses to the Tonga's Ministry of Internal Affairs on Thursday, 30 August 2018. Hon. 'Akilisi Pohiva Prime Minister of Tonga was present at the handover ceremony along with His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tonga. HE Mr. Andrew Ford, Australian High Commissioner to Tonga was also present at the event, with Hon. Losaline Ma'asi and Presidents and Representatives from Sports Federations in Tonga.

His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii was grateful to handover the new buses in addition to sports equipment and volley balls handed over in March and April to the Ministry, supporting Tonga's aim to improve the general health of the public through exercise and sports.

“These buses are multilateral, and will help build Tonga's sport capacity by providing for the various commuting needs of sportspersons, taking them to trainings, tournaments, welcoming visiting teams, collecting and sending off competitor especially in anticipation of the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics and the Rugby World Cup of 2019. I am certain that NPGA will ensure Tonga's successful representation in Japan.”

He also reiterated very important points, such as “to use these buses in accordance with the purpose of the project, arrange regular maintenance to keep it in good conditions for as long as possible, and drive carefully and safely.” The overall total cost of the buses is valued over 17.5 million Japanese Yen or approximately 350,000 pa'anga.

Hon. Losaline Ma'asi thanked the people and the Government of Japan for their assistance which will make an immediate difference in the life of Tonga's athletes. The Hon. Prime Minister 'Akilisi Pohiva and HE Tetsuya Ishii enjoyed a round bus ride from Vuna Wharf to the Popua Park on one of the new buses, with guests accompanying them on the second and third bus.

Japan's NPGA was introduced as a form of commodity aid to promote economic and social development of recipient countries. Through NPGA, the people and the Government of Japan hope to contribute to Tonga's efforts to meet its Strategic Development Framework and the nation's steadfast collaboration for sustainable development.

END.

Attached; photos



The Hon. 'Akilisi Pohiva, Prime Minister of Tonga commissioned the first bus, funded under Japan's NPGA to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on Thursday, 30 August 2018.



The second bus was commissioned by H.E Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador of Japan to Tonga.



Hon. 'Akilisi Pohiva enjoyed the first bus ride with HE Tetsuya Ishii, with the driver Mr. 'Onetoto 'Anisi Acting CEO of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on Thursday, 31 August 2018.



The address by HE Tetsuya Ishii at the NPGA handover ceremony of the new buses.



The handover ceremony of the NPGA to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.



Distinguished Guest at the Popua Park during the bus ride for the NPGA assistance.