

Embassy of Japan
Tonga

PRESS RELEASE

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July 23, 2024

**Commissioning of Japan's NPGA Project, Provision of the
new Tugboat "Fanga 'i Lifuka" for the Kingdom of Tonga**

On 23 July 2024, His Majesty the King of Tonga, King Tupou VI commissioned the newest tugboat for his country funded by the Government of Japan, during a commissioning ceremony attended by His Excellency, Mr. INAGAKI Hisao, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tonga.

The new tugboat was honored with the name "Fanga 'i Lifuka."

Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, Acting Prime Minister was present in the ceremony, along with Cabinet Ministers, Head of Diplomatic Missions, Dr. Sione Ngongo Kioa and Board Members of the Transport Sector, Reverend 'Alifeleti 'Atiola, Secretary of the Free Wesleyan Church, Dr. Fotu Fisi'iahi and Government Chief Executive Officers, Ports Authority Tonga Staff and many guests.

The provision of the new tugboat "Fanga 'i Lifuka" through Japan's Non-Project Grant Aid Assistance, was formalized in 2021. H.E. Mr. INAGAKI highlighted in his address that "Maritime transport is vital for the Island countries like Tonga and Japan. Tonga relies heavily on maritime transport for its trade in goods and services, importing approximately 98% of all goods using maritime transport."

"In light of this reality, it is imperative for Tonga to improve its maritime transport capabilities in order to further the Kingdom's economic prosperity. Today's assistance is the provision of a tugboat for the Ministry of Public Enterprises and Ports Authority Tonga. It is worth 1 billion Japanese Yen, which is equivalent to 15million Tongan Pa'anga."

"This is the largest amount of funding Japan has provided to date for an NPGA project, demonstrating the importance Japan attaches to increasing Tonga's maritime capacity," stated Ambassador INAGAKI.

Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, Tonga's Acting Prime Minister in the address from the Government of Tonga acknowledged Japan's assistance of the new tugboat. "It will play a crucial role in enhancing safety and efficiency of operation of the ports of Nuku'alofa, and boost maritime infrastructure and contribute to the growth of Tonga's economy," said Hon. Vaipulu

"Fanga 'i Lifuka" is a 4500-horsepower tugboat, with 37.2 meters in length, and is the second tugboat provided by the Government of Japan to Tonga. The first tugboat "Hifofua" was provided in 1994.

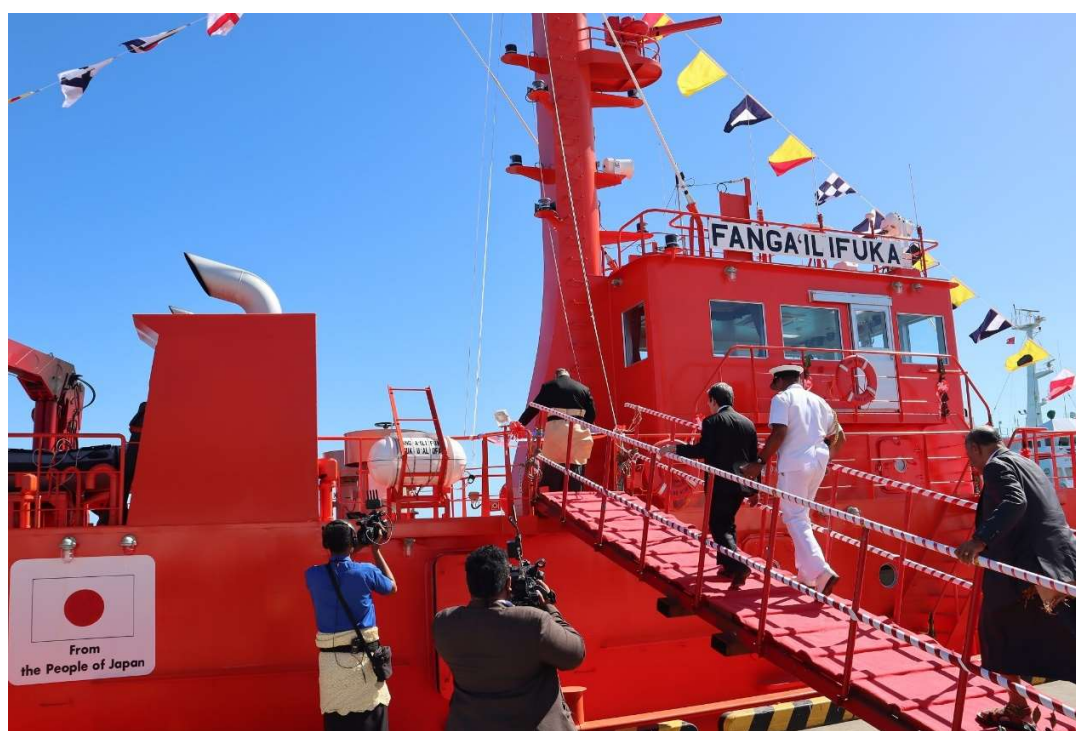
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Attached: Photos

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His Majesty King Tupou VI welcomed by His Excellency Mr. INAGAKI Hisao for the commissioning of Japan's NPGA provision of the new tugboat "Fanga 'i Lifuka," on Tuesday 23 July 2024, in Nuku'alofa



His Majesty King Tupou VI commissioning the new tugboat.

*For further enquires please contact the Embassy of Japan in Tonga.
Level 5, National Reserve Bank of Tonga Building / Telephone: 22-221*



Commissioning tour and inspection lead by Captain Hakaumotu Fakapelea



His Excellency Mr. INAGAKI Hisao, addressed the commissioning ceremony for Japan's NPGA of a new tugboat for the Kingdom of Tonga.

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The new tugboat Captain and crew with His Excellency Mr. INAGAKI Hisao



Japanese engineers of the new tugboat arrived Nuku'alofa for the commissioning ceremony.

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