



## **MINISTRY OF FISHERIES & MARINE RESOURCES**

### **OFFICE OF THE MINISTER**

---

07 November 2025

#### **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **PNG's Fisheries Sector Reinforces Commitment to Maritime Surveillance**

The National Fisheries Authority (NFA), under the leadership of the Ministry for Fisheries and Marine Resources, reaffirms its steadfast commitment to safeguarding Papua New Guinea's fisheries resources along the country's maritime borders. In light of recent public commentary regarding surveillance operations in Manus Province, it is necessary to provide accurate and factual clarification regarding the NFA's role and achievements in maritime security.

The recent media statement attributed to the Minister for Police concerning surveillance activities at the Lombrum Naval Base is factually incorrect and regrettably misinformed. Contrary to claims made, the National Fisheries Authority has not been absent from surveillance operations. In fact, NFA has consistently conducted and participated in multiple surveillance exercises under the Pacific Maritime Security Program (PSMP) and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) regional frameworks.

These joint efforts are strategic, multi-agency operations that integrate assets and personnel from the PNG Defence Force Maritime Element, Royal PNG Constabulary, NAQIA, Immigration and Citizenship Authority, and others. They are supported by infrastructure, funding, and operational guidance from our long-standing security partner, the Australian Government.

Papua New Guinea's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is among the largest in the Pacific and presents a significant challenge in terms of monitoring and enforcement. Our vast ocean domain is under constant threat from Illegal,

Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, which not only threatens our fisheries sustainability but also impacts national food security and economic sovereignty.

To address this challenge, the National Fisheries Authority has adopted a multi-layered and forward-looking strategy:

- Strengthened inter-agency coordination and joint operations with regional partners such as FFA, WCPFC, and the RPOA-IUU to share intelligence and coordinate enforcement.
- Investment in advanced surveillance capabilities, including satellite monitoring, electronic reporting systems, and real-time catch verification technology.
- Expansion of physical presence through two strategically located forward command surveillance bases:
  - Daru, Western Province, scheduled for completion by November 2025, and
  - Vanimo, West Sepik Province, expected in the third quarter of 2026

These command centres will house national and regional surveillance teams, including representatives from Indonesia and Australia. They are designed to act as permanent surveillance hubs to better respond to threats along our international borders.

To enhance our operational capacity, the NFA is also introducing four new dedicated fisheries patrol vessels, scheduled to arrive this month. These vessels, named for their deployment locations—Daru, Vanimo, and Port Moresby—represent a historic first: building Papua New Guinea's own national fisheries surveillance fleet, operated directly under the command of NFA's Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Unit.

These vessels will significantly improve our reach and responsiveness in patrolling the country's maritime territory, especially in IUU hotspots near the Indonesian and Australian borders.

Moreover, the NFA is chartering dedicated offshore patrol vessels for long-range patrols across the EEZ, while our investment in ICT reforms will introduce real-

time data transmission and catch reporting capabilities, ensuring compliance by both domestic and foreign-licensed vessels.

Our efforts are not limited to enforcement. Through community-based fisheries management, public awareness campaigns, and ongoing training for provincial officers, the NFA is empowering coastal communities to become stewards of their own marine resources.

I would like to emphasize that the NFA has been active, consistent, and successful in its surveillance responsibilities. Our records show a strong history of patrols, inspections, and prosecutions—not just regionally, but nationally. While no recent apprehensions have occurred in Manus, that reflects the strategic nature of our operations, which are intelligence-driven and focused on high-risk areas.

In closing, I urge all leaders and agencies to collaborate in good faith, guided by facts, not assumptions. The protection of Papua New Guinea's fisheries is a shared responsibility. The NFA stands ready to continue doing its part—vigorously and transparently.



**Hon. Jelta Wong, MP**

**Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources & Member for Gazelle Open**

