

# AVIATION SAFETY BULLETIN

Safe Skies, Secure Fiji



**From Village Dreams to the Flight Deck**

**International Womens Day Features**



ISO 9001:2015 Certified

An official publication of the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji





From Village Dreams to the Flight Deck



Women in Aviation Give to Gain Walk



Air Traffic Control Trainee's Permit



First female Drone Pilot

Cover Page: Captain Tuisue's photographs refined and generated by Gemini AI

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## Message from CAAF's Chief Executive

It is my pleasure to present the first edition of the Aviation Safety Bulletin for 2026, as we continue our shared commitment to advancing aviation safety, security, and resilience in Fiji and across the Pacific.

This edition reflects the breadth of work underway across our aviation system, highlighting not only technical and regulatory developments, but also the people, partnerships, and purpose that underpin safe skies. From emerging risks such as GNSS interference and the growing importance of information assurance in air navigation systems, to the continued strengthening of our oversight frameworks, this Bulletin reinforces a central truth; aviation safety is a shared responsibility.

As a small island State, Fiji relies heavily on safe, secure, and efficient air connectivity, for tourism, trade, and national development. This makes our role as regulator both critical and clear; to uphold international standards, ensure effective oversight, and enable a safe operating environment in which the aviation sector can thrive.

Equally important is the human story behind our system. This issue celebrates the remarkable journey of Captain Matereti Tuisue, whose legacy spans decades of service, from pioneering leadership in the cockpit to strengthening safety oversight within CAAF. His story is a powerful reminder that excellence in aviation is built not only on technical competence, but on leadership, integrity, and a commitment to mentoring the next generation. We salute you, Captain Matereti, and wish you fair winds and smooth skies in your retirement.

We also recognise the growing role of women in aviation across Fiji, as reflected in our International Women's Day features. While progress is evident, we must continue to foster inclusive pathways, build capacity, and ensure that opportunity is accessible at all levels of the industry.

Looking ahead, the aviation landscape continues to evolve rapidly, driven by digital transformation, emerging technologies, and new operational risks. CAAF remains focused on strengthening our regulatory framework, enhancing our oversight capability, and working closely with industry and regional partners to ensure we remain aligned with global best practices.

I encourage all stakeholders to engage actively with this Bulletin, not only as a source of information, but as a platform for continuous learning, reflection, and improvement.

Together, we will continue to uphold our commitment to Safe Skies, Secure Fiji.

Vinaka saka vakalevu,

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

# From Village Dreams to the Flight Deck

**The remarkable Journey of Captain Matereti Tuisue**  
**A life of Flight, Leadership and Legacy**

**For more than half a century, Captain Matereti Tuisue has helped shape the story of aviation in Fiji – from the early era of propeller aircraft to the modern age of digital flight decks.**

Long before he ever stepped into a cockpit—before the roar of engines and the discipline of training—there was simply a boy in a village, looking up.

For Captain Matereti Tuisue, aviation was never just a profession. It was a calling—one that began with a dream and unfolded into a journey spanning more than half a century. Along the way, he would not only shape his own destiny but help define the story of aviation in Fiji.

## WHERE THE DREAM BEGAN

Every journey begins somewhere. For Captain Tuisue, it began not in an airport or flight school – but in a small village in Fiji where a young boy often dreamed of flying.

Even before he ever stood near an aircraft, he would imagine himself soaring high above trees, buildings and playing fields, looking down at the world from the sky. It was a vision that felt both distant and deeply real.

At the time, he had never even been near an aircraft.



*Where the dream first took flight.*



Curious about the strange dream, he shared it with his mother. A devoted Christian, she opened her Bible and read a passage and offered an interpretation that would shape his future. She told him that one day he would become either a ship's captain or an aeroplane captain.

From that moment on, the dream of aviation quietly began taking shape.

There was no aviation background in his family. His father had served in the Fiji Military Forces before becoming a teacher, while his mother devoted herself to caring for their home and family. Yet, with faith, determination, and a growing fascination with the skies, the young dreamer quietly set his course towards what once seemed impossible.

Somewhere along the way, without fanfare or certainty, the sky had already begun calling his name.

## LEARNING TO FLY

While awaiting confirmation of his government scholarship, Captain Tuisue took a decisive step towards his dream by privately enrolling at the Fiji Flying Club at Nausori Airport in 1969—his first true immersion into the world of aviation.

His inaugural training flight was aboard a Victa 115, with only his instructor beside him.

The moment left a lasting impression.

Sitting at the controls, feeling the aircraft respond to his every movement, he discovered a sense of freedom unlike anything he had ever known. In that single hour, the dream that had once lived only in his imagination became something real, something within reach.

It confirmed what he had already felt deep within: he was meant to fly.

Soon after, his dedication paid off when he secured a government scholarship to train in the United Kingdom at Oxford Air Training School (OATS). Over the course of approximately 15 months, he completed his training and earned a UK Commercial Pilot Licence with an Instrument Rating—marking the official beginning of his professional aviation career.



*Capt Tuisue's 1<sup>st</sup> Training Flight on Victa 115, 1969*

### **A CAREER THAT LIFTED FIJI TO THE WORLD**

Captain Tuisue's professional journey began on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1972, when he joined Air Pacific (now Fiji Airways) as a First Officer on the DC-3.

At the time, aviation in Fiji was still developing, the journey was not easy. The industry was largely dominated by expatriate pilots and for young Fijians like him, the path forward demanded resilience, discipline, and an unwavering commitment to learning.

Through dedication and perseverance, he steadily rose through the ranks—each step bringing him closer to a defining moment in both his career and the nation's aviation history.

That moment came on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1985, when he became the first local Captain to command the Boeing 747 Jumbo Jet on a flight from Sydney to Nadi – marking a historic milestone not only for his career, but Fiji's aviation industry.



*Air Pacific DC-3, 1972*

Over the years, he witnessed—and was part of—remarkable transformations in the industry, including:

- The transition from propeller-driven aircraft to jet operations.
- The introduction of wide-body aircraft such as the DC-10 and Boeing 747.
- The evolution from analogue instruments to advanced digital glass cockpits.

His flying career also took him across key international routes, including landmark Boeing 747 services to Tokyo and Los Angeles. Each journey carried a deeper meaning.

He recalls the honour of representing Fiji internationally, particularly when dignitaries and members of the Fijian community gathered at airports around the world to welcome arriving flights.

Each flight carried not just passengers — but the pride of a nation.

### **LEADERSHIP IN THE COCKPIT**

Rising to one of the most demanding roles in aviation, Captain Tuisue eventually assumed the position of Chief Pilot—a responsibility that called for far more than technical expertise.

For him, leadership was never defined by authority alone, but by humility, accountability, and the ability to build trust within the cockpit. He believed that the mark of a great Captain lay in leading by example—demonstrating competence, remaining composed under pressure, and fostering an environment where every crew member felt confident to speak up, especially when safety was at stake.

His leadership extended beyond daily operations, shaping the future of aviation in Fiji. Under his guidance, the airline achieved significant milestones, including the recruitment of its first group of female pilots—many of whom have since risen to become Captains. He also played a pivotal role in advancing the localisation of the pilot workforce, helping bring Fiji closer to a fully national cadre of pilots—an accomplishment he regards with deep pride.

Throughout his career, his influence reached far beyond the flight deck. His dedication to excellence, safety, and national development left a lasting legacy within the aviation industry.

### SOME OF THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Among the first generation of local pilots to command widebody aircraft for Air Pacific
- One of the first Fijian Captains to operate the Boeing 747 Jumbo Jet
- Commanded milestone international routes, including flights to Tokyo and Los Angeles
- Served as Chief Pilot, overseeing operational standards and pilot performance
- Played a key role in localising Fiji's pilot workforce, reducing reliance on expatriates
- Recruited and mentored the first group of female pilots, many of whom later became Captains
- Received the Lifetime Achievement Award (2018) at the ANZ Fiji Excellence in Tourism Awards
- Awarded the Fiji 50th Anniversary of Independence Commemorative Medal (2020)
- Selected to undertake international aircraft test flights, including missions supporting national leadership

These achievements reflect not only professional distinction, but a lifelong commitment to aviation safety, leadership, and the development of Fiji's aviation industry.

**“His work helped reinforce the idea that aviation safety is a shared responsibility across the entire industry.”**

### A NEW CHAPTER: SERVING FIJI'S AVIATION SAFETY BEYOND THE COCKPIT

After concluding his flying career, Captain Tuisue was not ready to leave aviation behind.

Instead, he chose to give back to the industry – the aviation community - that had shaped his life.

In October 2013, he joined the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF) as a Senior Flight Operations Inspector – International, serving the organisation for more than twelve years until his retirement came than he might have wished due to his health considerations and called his retirement on 04<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

Transitioning from airline operations to aviation regulator required a different mindset. Instead of operating aircraft, he now focused on oversight, policy, and regulatory compliance.

His goal was clear – to help strengthen safety while building a more collaborative relationship between regulator and the aviation industry.

During his tenure, he worked to shift perceptions of the regulator from being overly punitive to becoming a supportive partner in maintaining safety standards.

His work helped reinforce the idea that aviation safety is a shared responsibility across the entire industry.



*Captain Tuisue pictured with another Captain alongside the Air Pacific Boeing 747, showcasing leadership and operational excellence.*

## THE MAN BEYOND THE UNIFORM

Captain Tuisue's influence extends beyond the cockpit and regulatory offices.

Behind the decorated career stood a man deeply grounded in faith and family.

He often reflected that his journey would not have been possible without the unwavering support of his wife and loved ones. Their sacrifices, patience, and encouragement formed the backbone of his success.

His legacy extends not only through his own achievements, but through his family. His son, Captain Etika Tuisue, now serves as Chief Pilot and Flight Operations Officer for Fiji Airways—continuing the journey his father began.

In a powerful full-circle moment, decades after Captain Tuisue once tested aircraft for national leadership, he stood watching his son command the next generation of aircraft into Fiji—a moment of pride, reflection, and legacy intertwined.



Mr & Mrs Tuisue with their grandchild



Captain Pictured with his son Captain Etika Tuisue (Chief Pilot and flight Operations Officer with Fiji Airways)



Captain pictured with Previous Air Safety Department Administrative Assistant, Louis Rigamoto & Current Air Safety Department Administrative Assistant, Meghna Rajan

He sees aviation not merely as a career, but as a guiding force—one that shaped in him humility, resilience, discipline, and a profound respect for teamwork. The sky, in all its vastness, became both his proving ground and his place of constant learning.

Above all, he speaks with gratitude—for the privilege of flight, for the people who shared the journey, and for the opportunity to be part of something far greater than himself.

**“He speaks with gratitude—for the privilege of flight, for the people who shared the journey...”**



Captain pictured in Fiji Airways Simulator on a check.

## A LEGACY THAT SOARS BEYOND TIME

Looking back, Captain Tuisue described his aviation journey with two simple words: “amazing” and “blessed”.

Across the decades, he has witnessed aviation evolve in remarkable ways than when he first began flying in the early 1970s. It’s a testament to the collective effort of pilots, engineers, regulators, and aviation professionals around the world. Aircraft have become more advanced, training more refined, and safety standards stronger than ever before.

Yet, despite all the technological advancements, he believes one thing remained unchanged: the human element.

Discipline, humility, sound judgment, and teamwork continue to form the foundation of safe aviation. In an era defined by rapid technological progress, it is these enduring human qualities—judgment, discipline, and character—that ultimately define true excellence.

## MESSAGE TO YOUNG AVIATORS

Captain Matereti Tuisue’s message to aspiring pilots both practical and inspiring:

“If you want to become a pilot, you must be committed and prepared to work hard. Aviation demands discipline,

education, and professionalism. Focus on your studies STEM, particularly mathematics, physics and English. Maintain your health and your integrity. Your reputation in aviation matters.”

His message to young pilots that great aviators never stop learning.

“Technology will continue to evolve but never forget the fundamentals of flying. Those basics may one day save your life.”

## THE SKY REMEMBERS

Long after the engines fall silent and the logbooks are closed, some journeys never truly end.

Captain Matereti Tuisue’s legacy is written not only in-flight hours or milestones, but in the quiet confidence of every pilot who follows, in the safety of every journey undertaken, and in the enduring spirit of aviation in Fiji.

The boy who once dreamed of flying above village fields did more than reach the skies - he helped shape them.

And in doing so, he ensured his legacy would forever soar. ✈️

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\*\*Reference: This story is based on an interview with Captain Matereti Tuisue/Roshni Deo, following his retirement, reflecting on his remarkable aviation journey.





# Strengthening Aviation Safety

*Through Air Navigation  
Services Information  
Assurance (ANSIA)*

## Introduction

In today's digitally driven aviation environment, the dependability, integrity, and security of information exchanged across Air Navigation Services (ANS) systems are critical determinants of aviation safety. As global and regional air navigation systems evolve toward digital, interconnected, and data-centric operations, the risks associated with cyber threats, information tampering, and identity compromise have grown substantially.

Recognizing these challenges, the Asia Pacific (APAC) region has taken a decisive, collaborative step through the establishment of the ANS Information Assurance Task Force (ANSIA TF) under the ICAO APAC framework. Convened for the first time from 28–30 January 2026 in Bangkok, the Task Force brings together experts from 12 States and multiple international organizations to support the secure, interoperable implementation of a regional Trust Framework for ANS Information Assurance.

This article highlights the importance of Information Assurance (IA) within ANS, key insights from the ANSIA TF/1 meeting, and implications for Fiji and the wider Pacific aviation ecosystem.

## Why Information Assurance Matters in Air Navigation Services

Information Assurance ensures that the information used by ANS systems is authentic, protected, accurate, and available. Within the aviation context, IA underpins critical services such as:

- Aeronautical information exchange
- Surveillance data flows
- Digital communications (including SWIM-enabled environments)
- Air traffic management systems
- Digital certificates and identity validation across operational systems

Without a robust IA framework, even the most advanced CNS/ATM systems are vulnerable to manipulation, data corruption, or unauthorized access—issues that can directly threaten aviation safety.

As ANS systems transition from isolated infrastructures to integrated digital ecosystems, the need for trust, verification, and cross-border interoperability becomes more pressing. This is why ICAO and APAC have prioritized developing a common Trust Framework, ensuring States adopt consistent, secure approaches to identity management, information security, and digital certificate validation.

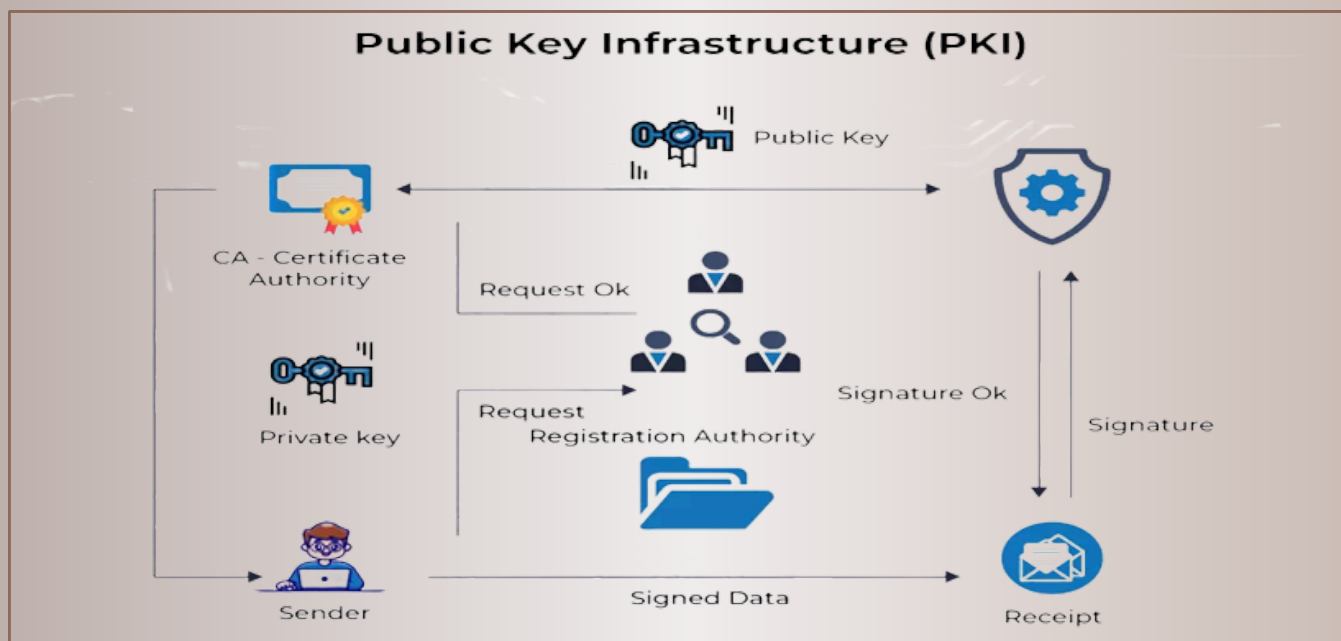
## Establishment of the ANS Information Assurance Task Force

The ANSIA TF was formed following decisions adopted by the CNS Subgroup (CNS SG/29) and later endorsed by APANPIRG/36. The Task Force's primary objective is to support secure, interoperable implementation of ANS information assurance across the APAC region.

During the inaugural meeting, attended by 44 participants, the Task Force:

- Adopted its Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Identified the need for regional coordination to implement Trust Framework Instances (TFIs)
- Recognized Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) as the foundational technology for digital trust
- Discussed challenges and needs for alignment with national Certificate Policies (CP) and Information Security Management Systems (ISMS)
- Agreed to establish structured work packages to guide future implementation

For Fiji and other Pacific States, participation in this Task Force is essential to ensure our ANS systems integrate smoothly with regional and global digital aviation initiatives.



The ICAO Trust Framework involves three key components:

1. ACCP – Aviation Common Certificate Policy  
Defines PKI policies, requirements, and procedures for certificate authorities—essential for identity assurance and secure information exchange.
2. MAIS – Manual on Aviation Information Security  
Provides guidance on implementing information security management aligned with aviation safety requirements.
3. MTF – Manual on Trust Framework (forthcoming in 2026)

Will guide States on establishing, managing, and participating in TFIs.

The ANSIA TF emphasized that every organization intending to join a TFI must have:

- A Certificate Policy (CP) mapped to ACCP
- An Information Security Management System (ISMS) mapped to MAIS

This alignment ensures that each participating in ANSP meets a minimum level of security and operational readiness before exchanging sensitive operational data.

### Challenges Identified During ANSIA TF/1

Several implementation challenges were raised during the meeting, including:

1. Variability in National CP and ISMS Standards  
Many States have national policies not specifically aligned with aviation-focused standards, creating gaps when mapped against ACCP and MAIS.
2. Need for Cross-State Governance Mechanisms  
Handling sensitive information (such as CP/ISMS documentation) requires proper protocols, possibly including secure ICAO portals or nondisclosure arrangements.
3. Technical and Operational Complexity  
Implementing regional or global PKI interoperability involves governance, technical standards, and cross-certification challenges.
4. Interoperability Across Multiple Trust Models  
States differ in their PKI maturity levels. ANSIA TF discussed three models—centralized CA, decentralized CAs, and a federated bridge CA.

The federated bridge CA emerged as the most practical model for APAC, balancing interoperability with national sovereignty.

### Regional Work Programme and Fiji's Role

To progress this work, ANSIA TF agreed to divide its activities into three regional work packages:

- Scoping the regional Trust Framework
- Developing PKI and governance arrangements
- Selecting use cases of regional operational importance

Fiji volunteered in all three areas, demonstrating strong commitment towards regional cybersecurity harmonization. Quarterly online meetings through 2026 will support the development of a mature Statement of Work (SOW) for each package, culminating in progress reports at the next ANSIA TF/2 meeting in January 2027.

### Importance of ANS Information Assurance for Fiji and the Pacific

For small but strategically important aviation regions like Fiji, robust information assurance is not just a regulatory requirement—it is an operational necessity. Our participation ensures:

- Secure digital exchange of aeronautical data with regional partners
- Protection against cyber threats targeting CNS/ATM systems
- Readiness for SWIM-based digital information sharing
- Compliance with emerging ICAO global frameworks
- Enhanced resilience of Fiji's aviation infrastructure
- Strengthened confidence among stakeholders, airlines, and the travelling public

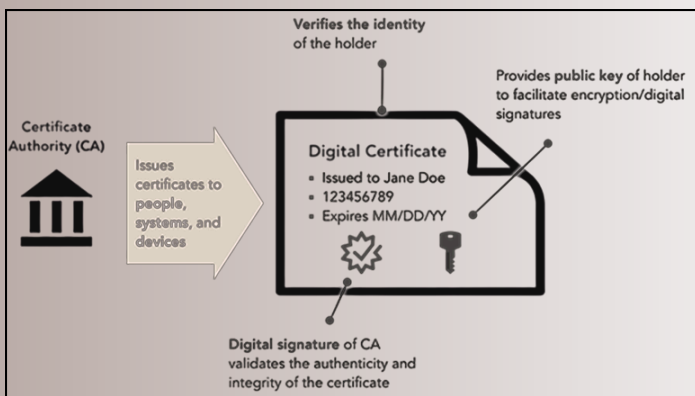
Implementing CP/ISMS alignment with ACCP and MAIS is an essential next step for Fiji. As ANSIA TF work progresses, CAAF will continue to coordinate with regional partners to ensure our ANS Information Assurance capabilities evolve in line with international best practices.

### Conclusion

The establishment of ANSIA TF represents a major milestone for information assurance in the APAC region. The work undertaken at ANSIA TF/1 illustrates a unified commitment to ensuring that digital aviation systems remain secure, trusted, and interoperable.

For Fiji, active participation in this initiative enhances our ability to safeguard aviation safety and positions us well for the rapidly transforming digital aviation ecosystem.

As the aviation sector becomes more digitized, the importance of information assurance cannot be overstated: it is the backbone of safe, reliable, and resilient Air Navigation Services. CAAF remains committed to supporting this regional effort and strengthening Fiji's role in advancing aviation safety and cybersecurity standards. ✈️



MARCH 8

# INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY FEATURES

*give to gain*



# Women in Aviation Fiji Give to Gain Walk



Participants for the Give to Gain Walk. Image Credit: Air Terminal Services Facebook Page

Globally, the aviation sector reports of women underrepresented, and the Pacific Region reflects the same. To align with achieving sustainable development goals in gender equality and empowering all women and girl, workplaces are progressing to adopt a gender equality, disability, and social inclusion approach.

Despite the progress, there remains barriers for women to fully thrive in the aviation sector. Women remain significantly under-represented in mid-level aviation roles, creating a “missing middle” where they are more visible in entry-level or senior positions than in the technical and managerial roles that form the industry’s backbone. This gap is linked to limited access to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) pathways and a global trend of women exiting the sector at the middle-management stage. These patterns underscore the urgent need for stronger retention, career development, and leadership support. Importantly, leadership in one context does not automatically translate into broader influence or shifts in workplace norms, highlighting the need for sustained, systemic change.

The theme for this year’s International Women’s Day, “Give to Gain, resonates with this shift in women slowly entering the aviation workplaces stepping into fields that are predominately occupied by men and as leaders. It also reminds us of the urgent need to create gender inclusive workplaces through Gender Equality Policies that support all diverse women in aviation, child-care facilities, professional development and career growth opportunities and safeguarding.

It also calls for balancing the scale by focusing on rights, equity and measures to close the gender gaps in aviation. For Fiji, this theme reminds the aviation industry to progress equity measures in line with the national commitments to women’s economic empowerment through WEE NAP 2025-2030, Fiji’s National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against All Women and Girls and the National Gender Policy.



Participants for the Give to Gain Walk. Image Credit: Air Terminal Services Facebook Page

In Fiji approximately 36% of women are employed in the aviation industry which comprises of Air Terminal Services, Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF) Fiji Airports Limited and Fiji Airways. In 2024, Fiji Airports initiated a collaborative network for women in aviation bring together all the key aviation stakeholders and launched the Fiji Women in Aviation Network. Officiating at the launch Fiji Airports Board Director Emele Duituraga said “the industry-led initiative would bring women together to create synergies and boost collaboration within the aviation sector. This year the Network activities are revitalized through agency based International Women’s Day commemorations, promotion of women in aviation profiles and inter-agency Women in Aviation Walk. The Inter-agency activities is supported by the Australia- Pacific Partnership for Aviation (P4A), an Australian Government Initiative partnering with Pacific countries for a safer, more resilient, and sustainable aviation sector, improving people to people links and supporting economic growth.



Participants for the Give to Gain Walk. Image Credit: Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji Facebook Page

Air Terminal Services Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Alan Suchin said “Women make up more than 30 percent of the total workforce for ATS and whether it be in the Passenger Services, Cargo and Ramp, Catering, Cabin Cleaning, Technical or Support, the women of ATS lead by example every day. Their contributions strengthen our organization and inspire the next generation of women in Fiji to pursue opportunities in aviation and other traditionally male-dominated industries.”

Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji’s Executive Manager Standards and Compliance Sereima Bolanavatu said, “May we one day reach a point where we no longer have to celebrate “the first woman,” but simply recognize her as one of many in our industry”

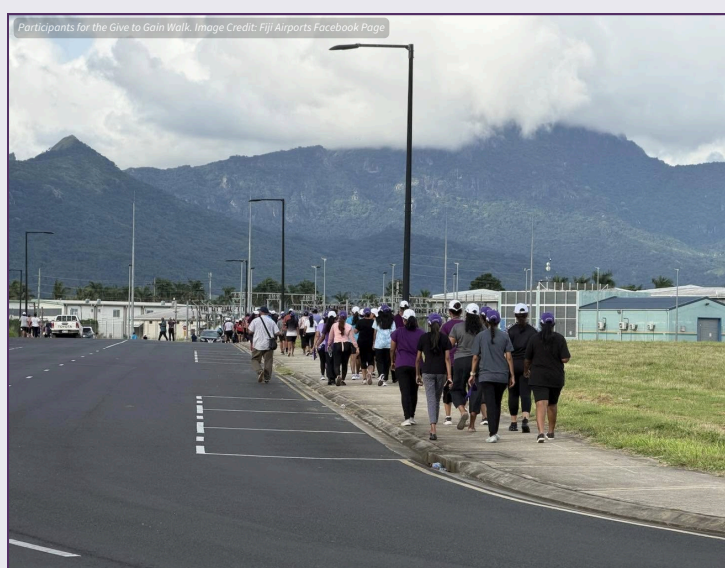
This event is the first of many as the Women in Aviation Fiji network. Fiji Airports is working with P4A to formally establish the Fiji in Aviation Network.

**“May we one day reach a point where we no longer have to celebrate “the first woman,” but simply recognize her as one of many in our industry”**

The Women in Aviation Walk brings together women representing all parts of the industry to increase their visibility and foster meaningful mentorship relationships that will empower and support women in achieving their aviation career goals across all segments of the aviation industry.

Fiji Airports Senior Financial Account Sangana Mishra said, “A key pillar of this network is mentorship. By connecting aspiring professionals with experienced aviation leaders, the network seeks to guide, encourage, and empower women as they navigate their aviation careers-whether in engineering, flight operations, air traffic management, aviation security, rescue and fire services, or other specialized areas of the industry”.

Fiji Airways Chief People’s Officer Anana Morris said, “Systemic barriers require systemic solutions with deliberate action, and a commitment to evolve our policies and practices. It is the collective responsibility of every aviation professional, every organization and every leader. The evolution of our industry depends on it”. ✈️



# ELIZABETH BROWN

## *First female appointed as Fiji Airports' Controller Aviation Academy*

A local woman who aspired to become a doctor but took a different career path upon completing high school, to become an air traffic controller, has been appointed as Fiji Airport's first female Controller Aviation Academy (FAAA).

Elizabeth Melba Brown's appointment came at a critical time, marking three decades of her air traffic control career, and at a time when Fiji Airports is working towards fulfilling its strategic vision of becoming the World-Class Aviation Hub for the Blue Pacific.

Her journey in aviation began in 1996, when she joined as an Air Traffic Control Assistant, and by 2000, she had earned her first Air Traffic Control licence as an Aerodrome Controller, later expanding her expertise with Approach Control and Area/Oceanic ratings.

A week into her appointment, the seasoned controller has already mapped out plans to enhance and improve infrastructure and training processes, particularly simulation capability and learning environments, to support effective, modern training delivery at the academy facility, located on Delana Road within the Fiji Airports compound.

Ms Elizabeth was promoted to Air Traffic Management Coordinator in 2015 and has been serving as Acting Controller of the Fiji Airports Aviation Academy since May 2024.

Elizabeth now manages the very academy and familiar territory that shaped her aspirations to become an air traffic controller.

As an Air Traffic Controller, she is one of the quiet achievers at Fiji Airports who is responsible for the management and the safe and efficient flow of thousands of aircraft daily within the Nadi Flight Information Region airspace.

In her current role as Controller, Elizabeth oversees the planning and delivery of ICAO-accredited Air Traffic Control training programmes, manages instructors and resources, and ensures full regulatory compliance with the aviation regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF).

She is proud knowing that the training delivered at the academy directly impacts aviation safety, as every officer trained contributes to protecting lives and maintaining safe skies.

Professionally, this appointment marks an important milestone following many years of experience in air traffic management," Ms Elizabeth said.

"It provides an opportunity to contribute at a strategic level to aviation safety, workforce development, and capacity building.

"On a personal level, the appointment is deeply meaningful. The Aviation Academy has been central to my career journey, and being entrusted with this role is both an honour and a responsibility."

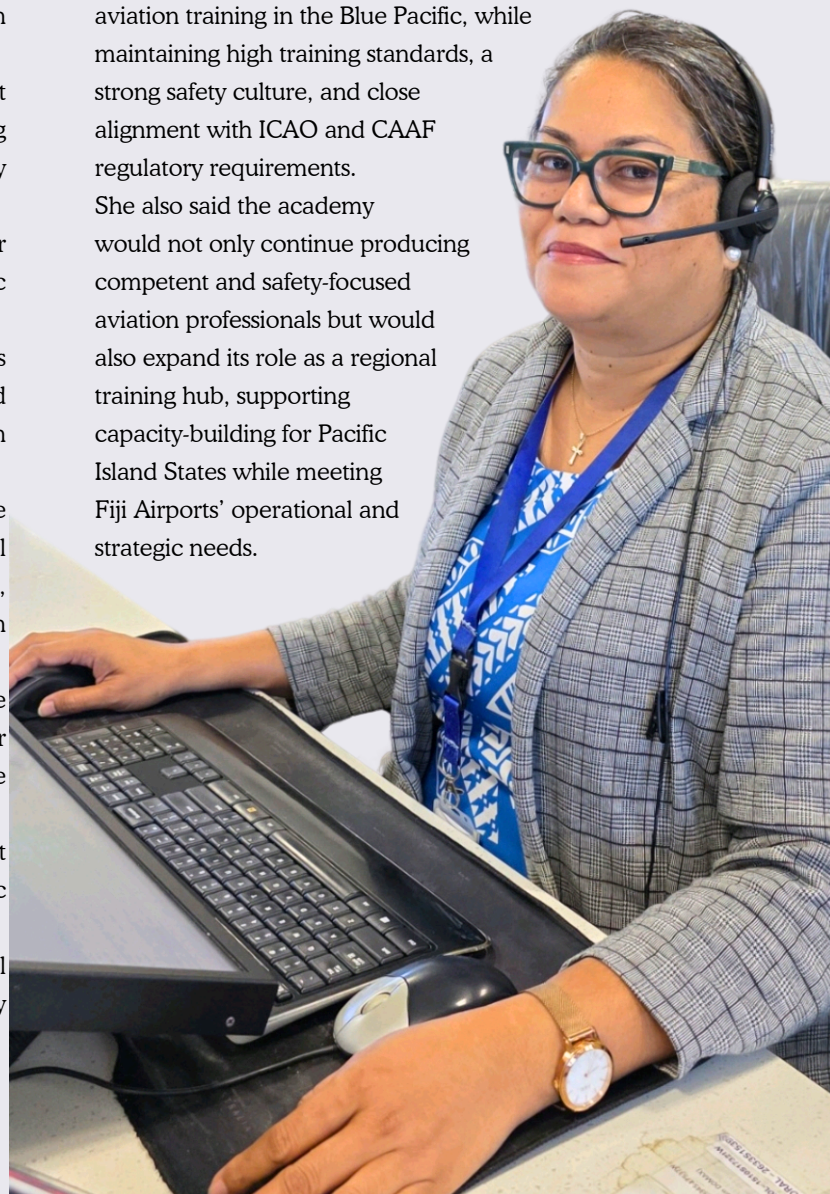
Fiji Airports Chief Executive Mesake Nawari said Elizabeth Brown's appointment as the first woman Controller of the Fiji Airports Aviation Academy is a proud and defining milestone for Fiji Airports.

"This latest appointment reflects our commitment to excellence, inclusive leadership, and the advancement of women in aviation." Mr Nawari said.

"It also reinforces our strategic vision to build a world-class academy that strengthens safety and capability across the Blue Pacific," Mr Nawari said.

Following her appointment, Ms Elizabeth shared that her vision aligns with Fiji Airports' strategic direction: working closely with the Manager Fiji Airports Aviation Academy (FAAA) to establish the FAAA as a Centre of Excellence for aviation training in the Blue Pacific, while maintaining high training standards, a strong safety culture, and close alignment with ICAO and CAAF regulatory requirements.

She also said the academy would not only continue producing competent and safety-focused aviation professionals but would also expand its role as a regional training hub, supporting capacity-building for Pacific Island States while meeting Fiji Airports' operational and strategic needs.



Originally from Nukubalavu, Savusavu, with maternal links to Waisomo, Tavuki in Kadavu, Elizabeth says her appointment is both a professional milestone and a deeply personal achievement.

“I am equally motivated by seeing people grow — trainees building confidence, instructors developing professionally, and the academy continuing to evolve.

“That sense of purpose makes the responsibility both meaningful and rewarding.

In her first year as Controller, Ms Elizabeth hopes to strengthen regulatory compliance and accreditation of ATC courses, enhance training governance, ensure all training programs and systems remain fully aligned with ICAO standards, CAAF requirements and the Higher Education Commission Fiji’s expectations.

She also believed that instructor development, ensuring instructors are adequately supported, proper documentation, quality assurance processes, assessment standards, and record-keeping are critical to raising academic standards at the academy.

“Training standards and safety culture go hand in hand and can be strengthened by encouraging open reporting, just culture, and continuous improvement, where trainees and instructors feel supported to speak up and learn from lessons identified.

“We will also continue to maintain strong engagement with operations, CAAF, and other stakeholders so training remains operationally relevant and safety driven.

“I hope my appointment demonstrates that aviation is a field where women can lead, influence, and thrive. Within the Air Traffic Management (ATM) Department, we already

**“I hope my  
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Elizabeth Melba Brown, has been appointed the first female controller for the Fiji Airports Aviation Academy (FAAA).

have strong female professionals such as Ms Kalesi Cagi, Ms Alini Ravitu, and Ms Kalusi Raloka, to name a few, whose contributions continue to strengthen our teams and operations.”

Ms Elizabeth says aviation careers are demanding but are also highly rewarding, and leadership roles are achievable through dedication, competence, and resilience.

“I hope to encourage young women to pursue careers in aviation with confidence and to see leadership as a realistic and attainable goal.”

“I will also continue to work closely with the team to review and update training programs to reflect emerging technology and evolving ICAO standards.

“It’s also vital that we invest in instructor upskilling to ensure trainers remain current and competent with new systems and methodologies.

“All in all, we will continue to maintain strong regional and international partnerships to remain informed of best practices and global trends.” ✈️

#### **About Fiji Airports**

Fiji Airports is a State-Owned Enterprise that manages 15 public aerodromes throughout Fiji, including two international airports in Nadi and Nausori. It also provides air traffic management in the Nadi Flight Information Region (FIR), which covers approximately six million square kilometres of the South Pacific airspace.

This article was written by Fiji Airports

# MEGHNA RAJAN

*First female Drone Pilot for the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji*



What started as quiet curiosity turned into a journey of growth, discipline, and belief. Guided by mentorship and a changing world, this story reminds us—you don't need to have it all figured out to begin. Sometimes, all it takes is the courage to rise.

### 1. What initially inspired you to pursue your drone pilot's license?

If you had asked me three years ago, I would have smiled and said that drone piloting was never meant for me. But working at CAAF changed the rhythm of my days. I watched drones rise across the world, lifting industries, reshaping skies, and expanding what small nations like ours could dream into. And in that global movement, I felt a quiet pull, a whisper asking: if the world is soaring forward, why shouldn't I learn to rise with it?

Part of that inspiration came from my Drones Inspector, Captain Marshal — the steady force behind my courage. His guidance wasn't loud; it moved like a soft tide, pushing me gently into places I didn't yet believe I belonged. His trust arrived before my confidence did, and that alone became a powerful wind beneath my wings.

So, what inspired me? A changing world, a mentor who believed, and a growing desire to evolve. In the end, pursuing my drone pilot's license became less about flying — and more about learning to lift myself, too.

### 2. Can you share a bit about the training process, what it involved, how long it took, and what aspects you found most challenging?

The training was a steady unfolding of new skills and new understandings. It stretched across months of theory sessions, practical exercises, and learning the discipline that keeps our airspace safe. I had to absorb regulations, master the controls, and learn to stay calm and deliberate in every action.

Some parts challenged me more than others. The procedures were precise, the expectations high, and there were moments when the drone felt more confident than I did. But every lesson taught me something valuable: patience, focus, and the importance of trusting myself even when the task felt bigger than me.

What stayed with me most wasn't the difficulty, but the growth. Each small victory, each steady take-off, each smooth landing — reminded me that I was capable of more than I believed when I first started.

### 3. Were there any technical skills or prior knowledge required before you began the training?

Before I began the training, I didn't come in with any special technical skills — just curiosity, willingness, and the courage to begin. Everything I needed to know was something I learned along the way. The training didn't ask for perfection; it simply asked for openness. And with each new lesson, the pieces slowly fell into place.

What mattered most wasn't prior knowledge — it was showing up, staying teachable, and letting the process shape me. In many ways, it proved that you don't need to be ready to start; you just need to be willing.

### 4. What was the examination or assessment component like, and how did you prepare for it?

The assessment brought together everything I had been working on — the theory, the practical skills, and the ability to stay calm under pressure. I prepared after work and on weekends, practicing until each movement felt steady. My supervisors supported my learning, but I learned quickly that success doesn't only rely on support at work. Having a partner who believes in you at home matters just as much, and his encouragement carried me through the long nights.

On the day of the test, my assessor, Salmedra, brought a calm steadiness that helped my nerves settle. In the end, it wasn't just about passing — it was about trusting the work I had put in and the people who helped me get there.

## So, what inspired me? A changing world, a mentor who believed, and a growing desire to evolve

### 5. How did it feel when you officially received your drone pilot's license?

Receiving my drone pilot's license felt like exhaling after holding my breath for far too long. It was a quiet but powerful moment — the kind that settles into you slowly. I remember looking at it and feeling a mix of disbelief, pride, and gratitude. Not just for the achievement itself, but for everything it took to reach that point: the doubts I had to silence, the lessons that humbled me, and the people who lifted me when I couldn't lift myself.

It felt like standing at the edge of a new beginning, holding proof that growth is possible when you trust the process. And in that moment, I realised I hadn't just earned a license — I had earned a new version of myself.

### 6. As the first female drone pilot in CAAF, what does this achievement mean to you personally and professionally?

To be honest, it never occurred to me to think about gender at all. I didn't step into this journey imagining I would become "the first female" anything. When I was told I was the first female drone pilot in CAAF, it didn't feel like a statement about gender — it simply felt like I had written my name into one of CAAF's milestones, into the pages that record our "firsts."

CAAF isn't new to women making history. We grow here watching women lead, innovate, and redefine what's possible. Strength, excellence, and ambition from women are not rare moments here — they're woven into our daily landscape. In many ways, we have normalised the power of women, and I'm grateful to be a small part of that legacy.

So, for me, this achievement isn't about being the first female — it's about contributing to the story of CAAF, adding one more chapter to a place where women have always done wonders.

### 7. Have you faced any unique challenges as a woman entering the drone operations space?

Honestly, no — I didn't face the challenges people often expect women to encounter in technical spaces. Long before I earned my license, I was surrounded by support. Captain Marshal guided me with a steadiness that left no room for doubt, and nothing about entering drone operations ever felt like a battle — it felt like an invitation.

And the truth is, I did not stand here alone. I may be the first licensed female drone pilot in CAAF, but I am not the first woman to shape this space. **Lisi Atalifo** has carried the operational side of drone oversight for years — working beside Captain Marshal, managing approvals, and holding the processes together long before my journey began. She may not be on the practical flying side, but she has been the backbone of the operational one. In many ways, she cleared the path before I ever stepped onto it, quietly proving that women have always belonged here.

Even now, most drone applications and queries come from men — and when they realise a woman is on the other end of the conversation, there's always a subtle shift. Not discomfort, not hesitation, but a spark of surprise that melts into respect. A moment of "Wow... a woman," in the best, most affirming way.

So no, I didn't face unique challenges. What I met was encouragement — the kind that doesn't just welcome you into the room but makes space for you to stand tall and lead confidently within it.



### 8. What type of drone operations are you currently involved in as part of your role?

I sit at the front line of drone oversight. I review and authorise operations, guide operators, and ensure that every flight—recreational or commercial—meets CAAF regulations and respects our airspace.

In practice, that means evaluating applications, setting safe operating conditions, responding to queries, and educating operators so they fly with confidence and compliance. It's part safety, part stewardship: I help prevent risk before it takes off, and turn rules into real-world practice that protects people, property, and the sky we share.

In a world where drones are rising fast, my role ensures that safety rises with them.

### 9. How do you see drone technology contributing to CAAF's work in the future?

I see drone technology becoming one of the most important pillars of CAAF's future. Drones are no longer just tools for capturing footage — they are evolving into vital instruments for research, safety, environmental protection, surveillance, and national planning. They allow us to see farther, respond faster, and make decisions with a clarity that traditional methods could never achieve.

Even now, I'm involved in projects that show just how transformative they can be. One example is the Bat Monitoring and Dispersal Exercise led by Ground Safety. With the help of drones, we can observe the environment from above, monitor patterns, gather data, and plan solutions with precision and foresight. What used to take hours on foot can now be understood in minutes, safely and efficiently.

For CAAF, this is the direction the future is heading — smarter oversight, deeper insight, and safer skies powered by technology that keeps evolving. Drones give us the ability to protect our airspace while also supporting research, environmental management, and operational innovation.

Drones are changing the world, and CAAF has the responsibility — and the opportunity — to shape how they change Fiji.

### 10. What advice would you give to other women interested in aviation or drone piloting?

To every woman who feels even the faintest spark toward aviation or drone piloting — follow it.

You don't need perfect confidence or a flawless plan; you only need the courage to begin. Skill can be taught. Knowledge can be learned.

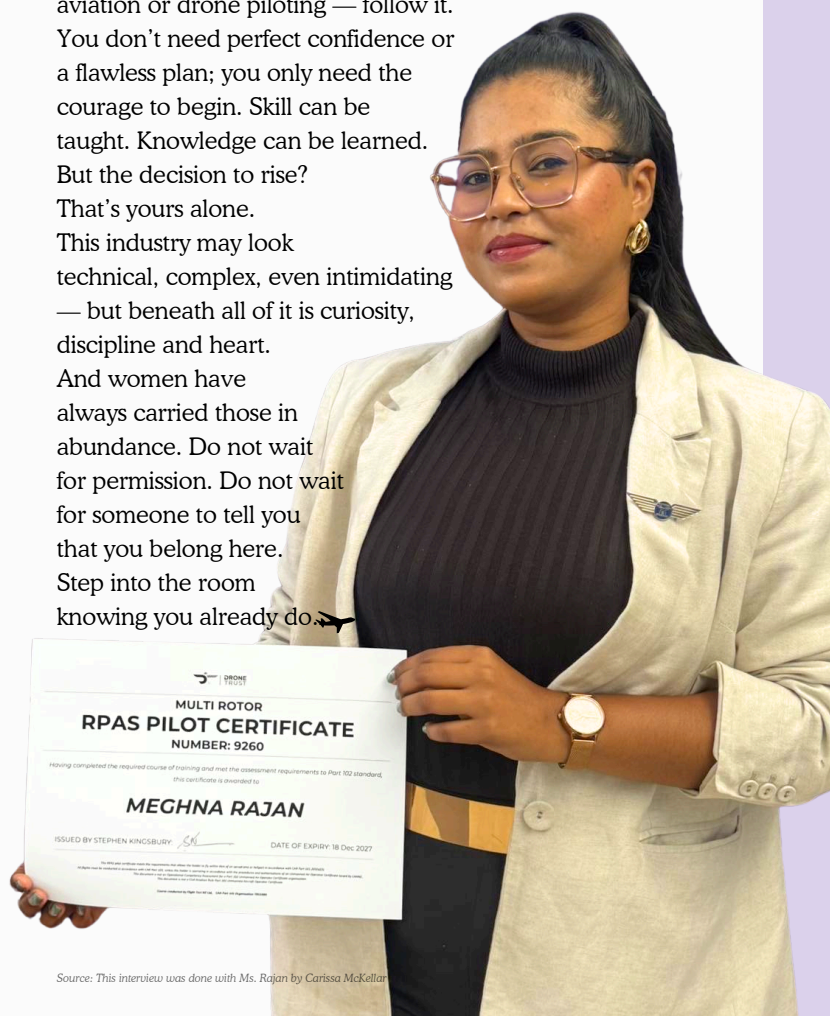
But the decision to rise?

That's yours alone.

This industry may look technical, complex, even intimidating — but beneath all of it is curiosity, discipline and heart.

And women have always carried those in abundance. Do not wait for permission. Do not wait for someone to tell you that you belong here.

Step into the room knowing you already do.



# We Want to Hear from You!

## **FCAIR** ***Fiji Confidential Aviation Incident Report***

The Fiji Confidential Aviation Incident Reporting (FCAIR) form is a voluntary, non-punitive tool that allows anyone in the aviation community to confidentially report safety concerns or incidents to help improve aviation safety and security in Fiji.

FCAIR forms are available for download from the CAAF website ([www.caaf.org.fj](http://www.caaf.org.fj)) or from the Enquiries counter at CAAF HQ. Completed forms are to be emailed to [fcair@caaf.org.fj](mailto:fcair@caaf.org.fj).

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Fiji Confidential Aviation Incident Reporting**  
Forms Available on Website:

[www.caaf.org.fj](http://www.caaf.org.fj)

or front desk CAAF HQ

## ***Take Our Survey***

CAAF is keen to hear from you regarding our levels of service.

If you believe you have constructive ideas on how we can improve our services or would like to report instances where we have failed to meet your expectations.

Please send your feedback to CAAF, preferably using the QA 108 form that can be accessed from our website.

This can be sent to CAAF via email or dropping it in the feedback box in the foyer of CAAF HQ; or email to:

[info@caaf.org.fj](mailto:info@caaf.org.fj)



**HELP US IMPROVE!**  
TELL US WHAT YOU THINK:

**Safe Skies, Secure Fiji**

# AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINEE'S PERMIT

## APPLICABILITY

This chapter prescribes minimum requirements governing –

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

(a) To be eligible for an air traffic control trainee's permit a person shall –

- (1) Be at least 18 years of age, fit and proper person; and
- (2) Hold a current Class 3 medical certificate issued under SD-Medical Standards, Tests and Certification; and
- (3) have at least 5 hours experience on the flight deck of an aircraft in controlled air space; and
- (4) Have satisfactorily completed a training course relevant to the duties of an air traffic controller, in the following subject areas:

- i. Air law: Rules and regulations; and
- ii. Air traffic control equipment: Principles, use, and limitations of equipment used in air traffic control; and
- iii. General aircraft knowledge: Principles of flight; principles of operation and functioning of aircraft, power-plants and systems; aircraft performances; and
- iv. Human factors: Human performance and limitations, with emphasis on cognitive maps, the role of imagery in their work, fatigue, workload stressors in ATC operations, equipment and workspace design, and key issues in human communication; and
- v. Meteorology: Aeronautical meteorology; use and appreciation of meteorological documentation and information; origin and characteristics of weather phenomena affecting flight operations and safety; altimetry; and
- vi. Navigation: Principles of air navigation; principle, limitation and accuracy of navigation systems and visual aids;
- vii. Operational procedures: Air traffic control, communication, radiotelephony and phraseology procedures (routine, non-routine and emergency) and use of the relevant aeronautical documentation; safety practices associated with flight; and
- viii. Language proficiency: Minimum pre-operational level 4 as described in Appendix D herein.



(b) The training required to be completed by paragraph (a)(4) shall be conducted by –

- (1) The holder of an air traffic service provider certificate issued under ANR 145A, where the certificate authorises the holder to conduct that training; or
- (2) An aviation training institution certified by the Authority under ANR 145B where the certificate authorises the holder to conduct that training.

## Experience

The applicant shall have the following experience evidence of:

- Flight Deck Experience (05 hours)
- Language Proficiency – Level 4
- On the Job Training records
- Examinations results

## TRAINING

The applicant must satisfactorily completed training course relevant to the duties of an ATC in the following subject areas:

- I. Airlaw
- II. Air traffic control equipment
- III. General aircraft knowledge
- IV. Human factors
- V. Meteorology
- VI. Navigation
- VII. Operational procedures
- VIII. Language proficiency

## PRIVILEGES AND LIMITATIONS

An air traffic control trainee's permit authorises the holder to perform air traffic control duties, while under the direct supervision of the holder of a current air traffic control licence endorsed with an air traffic service instructor competency certificate, for the purpose of obtaining practical experience in air traffic control duties to –

- (1) Qualify for the issue of an air traffic controller's licence, rating, or validation; or
- (2) Regain currency of an air traffic controller's licence, rating, or validation. ✈️



# GNSS Interference

## Navigating the Surge in Jamming and Spoofing

### The 2026 Safety Priority

As we enter 2026, the aviation industry faces a sharp escalation in Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) interference. While GPS/GNSS has been the backbone of modern navigation for decades, data from late 2024 and early 2025 indicates that interference events—specifically jamming and spoofing—have increased by more than 200% compared to previous years.

In the Pacific region, bodies such as the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have issued heightened alerts. These interference events often "bleed over" from conflict zones and maritime electronic activity into commercial aviation corridors, affecting flight deck automation, timing systems, and critical safety nets like the Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System (EGPWS).

### Understanding the Threat: Jamming vs. Spoofing.

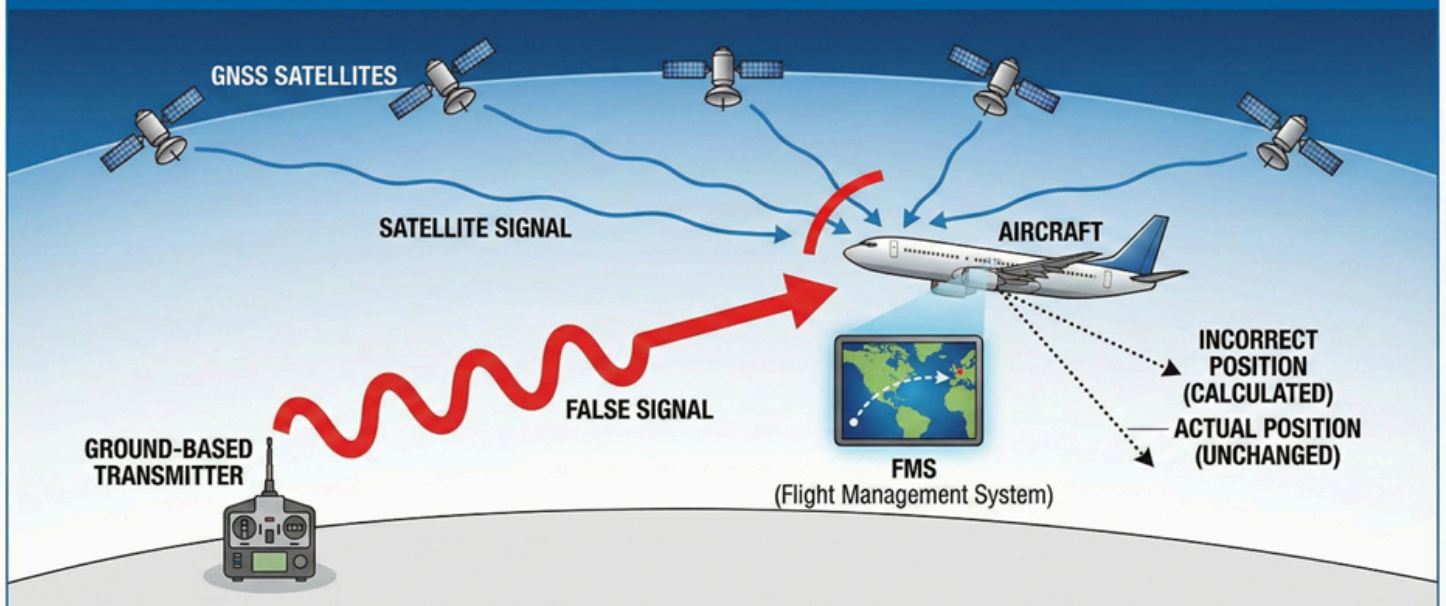
**Jamming (Signal Denial)** Jamming involves the use of a powerful radio frequency signal to "drown out" the relatively weak signals from GNSS satellites. The result is typically a total loss of GPS/GNSS positioning.

- Operational Impact: Loss of RNAV/RNP capability, triggering "GPS PRIMARY LOST" messages and requiring a reversion to conventional navigation (VOR/DME/ADF).

**Spoofing (Signal Deception)** Spoofing is a more sophisticated and dangerous threat. It involves transmitting a fake GNSS signal that appears legitimate but provides false coordinates or time.

- Operational Impact: Aircraft systems may calculate an incorrect position while the actual position remains unchanged. This can cause map "drift" or, more critically, trigger erroneous terrain warnings or flight control inputs.

**Figure 1: The Anatomy of GNSS Spoofing**



**Figure 1: The Anatomy of GNSS Spoofing**

A ground-based transmitter sends a false signal that overrides the satellite signal, causing the aircraft's Flight Management System (FMS) to calculate an incorrect position, while the actual position remains unchanged.



Figure 2: Transitioning to Conventional Navigation. A cockpit view showing the "GPS PRIMARY LOST" alert. (Note: Graphical representation for illustrative purposes only.)

### High-Priority Risks for Flight Operations

- 1) **Erroneous Safety Net Alerts:** Because systems like EGPWS/TAWS rely on GNSS to determine position relative to a terrain database, spoofing can lead to false "Terrain Pull-Up" warnings. In the mountainous islands of the Pacific, this is a critical risk where terrain clearance is often verified by GNSS during Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC).
- 2) **Increased Flight Deck Workload:** Interference often occurs during critical phases of flight, such as arrival and approach. The sudden transition to raw data navigation (VOR/DME/ILS) significantly increases cognitive load during high-precision manoeuvres.
- 3) **Surveillance and Timing Vulnerabilities:** GNSS provides the "master clock" for aircraft systems. The 2025 ICAO APAC Radio Navigation Symposium highlighted that interference could compromise ADS-B surveillance and timing synchronisation. Operators are encouraged to explore resilient timing sources, such as independent oscillators, to mitigate these risks.

### Recommendations for Safety Managers and Aircrew

To mitigate these risks, operators should incorporate the following into their Safety Management Systems (SMS):

**Proactive Regional Reporting:** Crews must report all GNSS anomalies immediately to Nadi Oceanic Control or via the Fiji Confidential Aviation Incident Report (FCAIR). Standardised radiotelephony (RT) phraseology should be used to ensure clear communication with ATC.

2) **Reversionary Training:** Simulator sessions should prioritise "transition to raw data" scenarios during high-workload approaches into airports like Nadi, Port Vila, or Nausori.

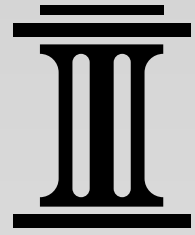
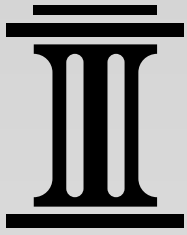
- 3) **Infrastructure Resilience:** In line with ICAO Recommendation 2.2/2, operators should maintain proficiency in conventional navigation. Future transitions may involve "Enhanced DME" (eDME) to provide a more robust terrestrial backup.
- 4) **Verification Procedures:** Encourage "cross-checking" GNSS positions against VOR/DME. Be wary of sudden jumps in calculated position or "Unable RNP" messages.
- 5) **EGPWS Awareness:** Pilots must prioritise "Pull Up" warnings even if spoofing is suspected, unless terrain clearance is definitively verified by visual reference or alternative instruments.

The resilience of our navigation infrastructure is being tested. As we move through 2026, the industry must shift from viewing GNSS interference as a distant anomaly to treating it as a standard operational hazard. Maintaining proficiency in non-satellite-based navigation is no longer a "legacy skill"—it is a modern safety requirement for ensuring "Safe Skies, Secure Fiji." ✈️

#### Sources:

- 1) ICAO APAC Radio Navigation Symposium (April 2025): Recommendations for GNSS RFI Mitigation.
- 2) IATA Safety Report (October 2024): Rising GNSS Interference Trends.

# AIR CARGO SECURITY



## PILLARS OF THE SECURE SUPPLY CHAIN

Air cargo plays a vital role in global trade and transportation, encompassing goods carried on passenger aircraft or on a dedicated all-cargo aircraft.

Ensuring the security of this cargo hinges on the six (6) key components of the secure supply chain:

1. Facility Security, Personnel Security,
2. Training,
3. Screening,
4. Chain of Custody,
5. Oversight, and
6. Compliance.

Each component provides essential guidelines for effectively safeguarding air cargo operations. A robust and secure supply chain is crucial. It cultivates a culture of shared responsibility among all stakeholders, guaranteeing the secure transfer of consignments.

By implementing comprehensive security measures, we can effectively protect against unauthorized access and potential threats. A well-protected air cargo environment not only enhances safety but also fosters confidence in our ability to operate securely at all times.

Similar to passengers and their baggage being subject to thorough screening, air cargo must also undergo thorough screening to maintain the sterile conditions of aircraft.

More importantly, this screening is essential to ensure that cargo is free from improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and improvised incendiary devices (IIDs) that could pose serious security risks. Consequently, from the moment of screening until the aircraft departs, air cargo is safeguarded against unauthorized interference, reinforcing the integrity of our entire air transport system. ✈️



# The Civil Aviation Bill 2026: Strengthening Fiji's Aviation Framework

## 1.0 ICAO Coordinate Validation Mission (ICVM) Audit

Following the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) ICVM Audit conducted between August and September 2019, it was identified that Fiji's civil aviation legislative framework both primary and secondary require consolidation and modernisation to achieve full alignment with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

The ICVM audit highlighted deficiencies in the Legislation (LEG) and Accident and Incident Investigation (AIG) areas, particularly the need for clearer legal mandates, delegation of authority, and updated rule-making powers. A modernised legislative framework is therefore essential to strengthen Fiji's aviation safety oversight system, enhance compliance with ICAO's Critical Elements 1 and 2, and ensure uniformity, efficiency, and international credibility in civil aviation governance.

## 2.0 The Civil Aviation Bill 2026

In response, the Civil Aviation Bill 2026 (Bill) has been developed to address the ICVM audit findings and unresolved protocol questions identified during the ICVM Audit. The Bill consolidates the three existing civil aviation Acts .i.e. the Civil Aviation Act 1976, the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji Act 1979, and the Civil Reform Act 1999, into a single, comprehensive and contemporary Act. The Bill will repeal and replace these Acts in their entirety, establish a clear legislative hierarchy and give full effect to Fiji's obligations under the Chicago Convention.

In drafting the Bill, comparative analysis was undertaken with the civil aviation laws of Singapore, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Relevant and appropriate provisions from these jurisdictions have been incorporated and tailored to fit Fiji's legal and operational context.

At its core, the Bill seeks to strengthen the regulatory powers and functions of the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF), enabling it to more effectively oversee aviation safety, security, and compliance. It introduces clearer governance structures, enhanced enforcement mechanisms, and more comprehensive provisions to support a risk-based and proactive approach to regulation.

## 3.0 Public Consultation

In line with its commitment to transparency and inclusive stakeholder engagement, a series of public consultations were conducted across Suva, Nadi, Labasa, and Savusavu from 8 December 2025 to 12 December 2025. These sessions provided industry participants, government agencies, and members of the public with a valuable opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the public consultations of the Bill. The period for written submissions and comments on the Bill remained open until 31 January 2026.

The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (The Ministry), together with CAAF, sincerely expresses its appreciation to all who attended the public consultations and those who took the time to submit written comments. Your active participation, thoughtful feedback, and constructive contributions have been instrumental in fostering robust discussions. The insights received reflect a strong collective commitment to strengthening the aviation sector and ensuring the legislation is both practical and forward-looking.

This inclusive and consultative approach helps ensure that the final legislation is balanced, well-informed, and reflective of the diverse needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

## 4.0 Status

The Ministry is currently reviewing all submissions and feedback received during the consultation period and is working to incorporate relevant amendments to the Bill where appropriate.

## 5.0 Next Steps

The Ministry will provide further updates to the public on the next steps and the way forward in due course.





*We would love your feedback  
on how we can improve!*

