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Solomon Islands, Vanuatu welcome new air link

Hundreds gathered earlier this week in Sanma Province, in northern Vanuatu, to join Prime Minister Ham Lini and members of his cabinet to welcome the inaugural flight of the newly-leased Solomon Airlines aircraft.

The inaugural Solomon Airlines flight from Brisbane to Honiara and Santos, Vanuatu was met with cheers from the crowd of spectators as it touched down at Pekoa Airport. Speaking during the welcome ceremony, which was held in front of the new Pekoa Airport, Vanuatu's Finance Minister Willie Jimmie told the delegation from Solomon Islands that the new air service will strengthen the ties between the two neighbouring Melanesian countries. Minister Jimmie congratulated the Solomon Islands government for its bold step in opening up the new international air link. For his part, Vanuatu Prime Minister Ham Lini thanked the authorities of both countries who had been involved in making the new service



possible. Traditional dancers and several string bands joined the crowds in welcoming the delegation from Solomon Islands led by Finance Minister Gordon Darcy Lilo. Around 48 people from Solomon Islands including ministers, permanent secretaries, public servants, private sector representatives and financial institutions were present to witness the inaugural flight.

(Source: eTurbo News 16/11/2006)

Vanuatu PM opens PROFIT in the PACIFIC

The Prime Minister of Vanuatu opened the PROFIT in the PACIFIC forum on Wednesday, 29 November. It is a testament to the significance and importance placed on the event. Some 36 projects seeking partnership opportunities attended PROFIT in the PACIFIC to conduct their own 20-minute Business-to-Business sessions over the two-day event. The main conference programme opened with important comments from leaders of the South Pacific, headed by Mr Greg Urwin, the Secretary General of the South Pacific Forum. This was followed by a high-powered session on possible options for improved aviation access to and through the region. Visit www.profitpacific.com for more information. (Source: News@PATA 14/11/2006)



Vanuatu 2007 Calendar of Events online

The Vanuatu Tourism Office has recently uploaded year 2007 Calendar of Events. If you're a regular visitor to Vanuatu, or are planning a visit in 2007, you will find the Calendar of Events on the official site www.vanuatutourism.com

(Source: The Tribal Drum 06/12/06)



South Pacific Tourism leads delegation to China International Travel Mart

The South Pacific was well represented at Asia's largest travel mart, CITM in Shanghai November 16-19. Delegates from Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Cook Islands, Niue, and Tahiti helped raise profile and build networks at the event. CITM was conveniently timed just one week after Air New Zealand's inaugural non-stop Shanghai-Auckland flight. South Pacific delegates met with Air New Zealand and Qantas China managers, as well as Chinese officials, to further understand how to develop this market. South Pacific Tourism demonstrated its new Chinese language portal to travel agents who were enthusiastic about the resource. Chinese language colour flyers



were produced for each destination in the South Pacific and distributed to agents at the event.

(Source: SPTO update)

Kiwis are martyrs when it comes to taking holidays

Kiwis are renowned in the world over for their diligence and work ethic but recent research conducted on behalf of Air New Zealand suggests that we don't take enough holidays and feel guilty when we do.

According to psychologist John Aiken our overall well being will suffer if we don't do something to change our behavior. Aiken has been working with Air New Zealand's leisure holiday business now rebranded as Air New Zealand Holidays to warn New Zealanders about the dangers of not taking time out. Air New Zealand Holidays is designed to provide customers with totally flexible and integrated leisure holidays online, over the phone and at a retail stores, meeting the holiday needs of customers on price, convenience, range and expertise. Research findings reinforced that Kiwis need to be excited and inspired to travel more as they tend to be martyrs when taking time off. "New Zealanders can have a tendency to compare themselves

with others and feel bad about taking time off," says Aiken. "This can result in them overloading themselves with jobs, chores, responsibilities and commitments that to them must come before anything else. "Deciding to take a holiday is the first step, but choosing the right experience and activity to ensure you get the most out of it are just as important." Based on a sample representing 2.7 million New Zealand adults, each person makes an average of 5.1 domestic trips of more than 200km from their home via flights and/or car travel per year but only 1.3 of these trips are likely to include a holiday component. Overall, the average person spends just under 20 nights away from home per year (including time spent travelling for work). The research also revealed most New Zealanders take between two and four weeks holiday per year and spend a significant proportion of that time at home. "Our research suggests that New Zealanders are reluctant to take time off or leave home when they do, many citing higher priorities in life," says Norm Thompson Air New Zealand Holidays General Manager. (Source: *Air New Zealand Public Affairs 20/11/2006*)

Sixty years serving world tourism - UNWTO

Tourism has become a "major economic, social and cultural phenomenon", said UNWTO Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli, on the occasion of the inauguration of the exhibition "1946-2006: Sixty Years of an Organization Serving World Tourism" at UNWTO headquarters in Madrid. Tourism has transformed itself and represents today one of the most dynamic economic sectors. Over the last three decades alone, international tourist arrivals increased five-fold to 806 million in 2005, and tourism expenditures totalled US\$ 682 billion. Tourism demand continues to exceed expectations and proves resilience to adverse external factors. Thanks to the conversion, in October 2003, into an agency of the first rank within the United Nations system, the UNWTO now enjoys recognition at the highest level as well as increased visibility. "Tourism is now considered by the international community on an equal footing with other major activities of human society, ranging from industry and agriculture, to education, health

and labour, among others", Francesco Frangialli said. The outgoing UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, stated in a special message on the opening of the exhibition, that "tourism can play a major role in helping people lift themselves out of poverty. It can thus make a significant contribution to global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals". Mr Annan underscored the importance of tourism within the global UN agenda. "That is why the transformation of the World Tourism Organization into a specialized UN agency was so important, and I am delighted that it occurred during my tenure as UN Secretary-General", he added. UNWTO has the central and decisive role in the UN system in promoting responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism for all. Tourism can stimulate economic growth and job creation, as well as the protection of the environment and of cultural legacy, and promote peace, prosperity and the respect for human rights. (Source: *UNWTO News Releases 13/12/2006*)



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