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Air China comes to Port Vila Bauerfield Airport

In a first for Vanuatu, an Air China Boeing 767 aircraft touched down at Port Vila's Bauerfield Airport on the 28th March.

Carrying the Vice Premier of the Chinese State Council, Mr Zeng Peiyan, on a goodwill visit, the aircraft is the largest type yet to service the country. Access to the country is largely provided in narrow body Boeing 737 jets out of ports in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Noumea and the nearby Solomon Islands. According to Airports Vanuatu Limited CEO, Hendry Joewangeh, the airport design can accommodate widebody aircraft, but this is the first time that there has actually been widebody operations from Port Vila. He says there has been a general misconception with the tourism industry that high terrain around Bauerfield Airport precludes larger,

longer haul aircraft from landing and taking off at the country's premier airport. The Air China flight is a graphic demonstration of the capability of Bauerfield International Airport to accommodate wide body aircraft. The fact that it is an Asian airline is also significant he says. Airports Vanuatu Limited is continuing active dialogue with a number of operators regarding the possibility of widebody services operating from Asia to Port Vila, to provide more direct access to the growing number of visitors from Asia and Europe travelling via major Asian gateways.

(Source: Airports Vanuatu Limited)

SAMOA 2007 XIII South Pacific Games

The 2007 XIII (13th) South Pacific Games is the region's sports event of the year, commencing from 25th August – 8th September. Samoa will host 22 Island countries and territories in an unforgettable battle for South Pacific sporting supremacy.

Thirty-three sports will be played in world class indoor and outdoor facilities, 14 action packed days of full on competition as the Pacific's best athletes go head to head for games glory. Given the huge commitment and focus by Government and the Samoan community on preparations for the South Pacific Games, the Teuila Festival along with the Miss Teuila, which are annual events attracting visitors near and far have undergone slight changes for this year in support



of the games. For further information on the preparations and program of the SAMOA 2007 XIII South Pacific Games, visit www.samoa2007.ws

(Source: Samoa Tourism Authority)

Pacific Islands Air Service Agreement

The regional agreement amongst the island countries of the Pacific to open up their skies to each other's airlines is just one step short of coming into force. The Tongan Minister for Transportation Hon. Paul Karalus says Vanuatu has become the fifth signatory but six nations have to ratify the Pacific Islands Air Services Agreement (PIASA) to make it a reality. Paul Karalus says the five countries that have ratified the agreement are Cook Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. This agreement according to Karalus is a regional agreement that will provide for a multi-lateral basis for liberalising air services between the Forum Island Countries. He says PIASA's main objective is to establish a framework for the gradual integration of aviation services of the Forum members in a way that is fully supportive of sustainable development of the Forum island countries.

(Source: Tonga Now News 22/05/2007)

Australia's Tourism \$81 Billion Industry

Tourism is now an \$81 billion industry in Australia, an increase of \$4 billion according to the newly released ABS Tourism Satellite Account. The report also showed tourism exports have broken the \$20 billion mark for the first time, reaching \$20.5 billion in 2005-06, an increase of 4.6 percent. Employment in the tourism industry also grew by 5,900 jobs to 464,500 jobs, meaning tourism employs more than mining (130,000 jobs) and agriculture, forestry, and fishing (356,000 jobs).

(Source: Tourism Australia Newsletter 18/05/2007)

New Staff Uniform and Logo for Evergreen Tours in Vanuatu

2007 marks a year of change for Evergreen Tours from Vanuatu who have come out with a new logo and a new office staff uniform.

Grooming and presentation is top priority and Evergreen would like to keep up to the trend of looking smart and presentable to their guests while maintaining the 'island touch'. Evergreen also recently purchased a new 5 seater bus to add to their fleet. Evergreen is 100 percent locally owned and run by

indigenous staff. Proudly established for almost 8 years, running exclusive tours to the famous Mele Cascades Waterfall, one of Port Vila's popular attractions and also Islandreams Glass Bottom Kayaking Tour and EDGE Abseiling. Evergreen tours is now in the process of putting together our new tour booklet which features our exclusive tours and Efate's popular tours. Visit Evergreen on www.evergreen.com.vu

(Source: Evergreen Tours)

Ocean Swim Comes to the Solomon Islands

The inaugural Solomon Islands Ocean Swim will be held on Saturday 7th July 2007 in the clear waters off Babanga Island near Gizo in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands.

Gizo is the Provincial Capital and the centre of trade & tourism in the Western Province. It is also famous for its magnificent dive sites and surrounding island communities and villages steeped in the Tradition & Culture of the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands Ocean Swim will give swimmers the choice of either a 3Km or 1.5Km swim over a course set in the lagoon off Babanga Island, home of Fatboys and Sanbis Resort, just a few minutes by boat from Gizo Town. There will also be the option to join in on the 5.7Km PT 109 Swim two days later. The swim will follow the swim strokes of former President JF Kennedy as part of retracing his epic swim and trek to find help for his crew after his PT 109 Patrol Boat was rammed and sunk by the Japanese Destroyer, Amagiri in WWII.

The PT 109 Swim was the idea first organized in 2003 to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the sinking of JFK's patrol boat. The PT 109 Swim is now part of the programme for the Solomon Islands Ocean Swim. The other aim for the swim, is to raise funds to assist Gizo



Hospital and Gizo Community School in their rehabilitation. Solomon Airlines flies daily between Brisbane and Honiara with connecting flights on to Gizo.

For further information on the event contact info@pacificswims.com

For more flight details click www.flysolomons.com and for accommodation and general information about the Solomon Islands you can visit SIVB website on www.visitsolomons.com.sb or email SIVB on info@sivb.com.sb

(Source: Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau)



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