

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:**  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** RE: PNG NRL - Senate Estimates [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]  
**Date:** Friday, 20 January 2023 11:23:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[image008.png](#)

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Thank you for sharing, this looks good.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Kind Regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

| A/g Senior Adviser

Population Health, Primary Care and Sport | Health and Aged Care Branch  
 Intergovernmental Relations and Reform Division | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

e: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Gunnawal Country, One National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 | PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600



The Department acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and emerging Elders and Traditional Custodians of Country, and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday 18 January 2023 2:14 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** PNG NRL - Senate Estimates [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

We're preparing our Senate Estimates briefing and would be keen for your thoughts on the below lines concerning the PNG NRL issue. I'd also appreciate your team's advice as to whether the department has ever provided briefing for the PM to meet with the NRL – our team provided briefing for the PMO on 15 September for the purpose of team selection for the PM's XIII game, but not on any other occasion.

*Will the Government use taxpayer funds to set up a PNG NRL team?*

- Rugby league is of huge importance to PNG and many other Pacific island countries.
- In recognition of their shared passion for the sport, Prime Minister Albanese and Prime

Minister Marape watched the Prime Minister's XIII match together [25 September 2022].

- Australia is committed to supporting PNG with its ambitions and Minister Conroy has been in regular contact with PNG's bid team and the NRL on a pathway forward.
- Ultimately the decision on adding a PNG team rests with the NRL and will be based on commercial factors.
- *[Refer to DFAT for Minister Conroy meeting dates.]*

*Has the Prime Minister spoken to the NRL in support of PNG's bid?*

- The Prime Minister stated on 11 January: 'I'm very keen to see a rugby league team participate in the NRL that would be based in Papua New Guinea and involve our Pacific Island friends. That's something that we've had discussions about, and I've discussed with the National Rugby League'.
- The Department has not provided briefing to the Prime Minister for his discussions with the NRL about PNG's proposed bid.
- *If pressed on dates* – the Department is not aware of dates on which the Prime Minister has met with representatives of the NRL to discuss this issue.

If you could come back to me by 12pm Friday that would be very helpful ☺

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii) Adviser

Melanesia | Pacific | International Division  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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**A BOND BETWEEN EQUALS**

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
**PORT MORESBY**

**THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023**

\*\*\* *CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY* \*\*\*

Mr Speaker

Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Members,  
Friends.

*Gudpela monin olgeta*  
[Good morning to you all]

Thank you for your warm and generous welcome.

I am delighted to be the first Australian Prime Minister to visit Papua New Guinea since 2018.

And I am deeply, deeply honoured to be the first foreign Head of Government to address your Parliament.

And what a magnificent Parliament this is.

A building rich with the art and culture and tradition of Papua New Guinea's proud history and identity.

And a chamber alive with optimism for the future of this nation and the progress of your people.

Australia and Papua New Guinea are the closest of neighbours, we are the greatest of friends.

For thousands of years, Torres Strait Islanders and the Indigenous traders of PNG shared

culture and kinship, exchanging goods and ideas.

That thread runs unbroken through to today: to our modern trade links, our evolving business and investment ties, our migrants and expats, our expanding fields of cultural and educational exchange - even our shared passion for Rugby League.

We are friends. We are mates.

We are partners. We are equals.

We are neighbours who stand with each other and help each other in times of need.

Australians will never forget the heroism and humanity of the brave souls who – eight decades ago - came from all over this country to serve and fight alongside our soldiers in defence of this land and in defence of Australia's freedom too.

Or in recent times, the 100 members of Kumul Force deployed in Operation Bushfire Assist, to help Australia in the devastating Black Summer of 2019-20.

PNG was one of the very first countries to offer Australia assistance – and Kumul Force was the biggest international contingent deployed.

And on behalf of all Australians, I simply say: thank you. *Tenk yu tru.*

\*\*\*

Honourable Members

Over there on the table, I can see the ceremonial mace.

A gift from the Parliament and the people of Australia, to the first Papua New Guinea House of Assembly in 1964.

A crowned symbol of authority that dates back centuries, to the mother of parliaments in Westminster.

And yet – entwined with the gold leaf and silver plate – at the core of your mace, is something unique.

A polished stone ball, representing the head of a traditional club.

There is a profound truth bound up in that.

Australia gave your first Assembly a symbol of our support and respect and affection.

A demonstration of the precious value we place on our countries' deep and lasting friendship.

And a token of gratitude for the extraordinary service your people gave to ours, in the darkest days of the Second World War.

But the true weight, the real power and the great strength at the heart of that democratic symbol – comes from Papua New Guinea.

It comes from you: your people, your culture, your courage, your talent and intellect and ambition.

That was the truth at the core of the movement to independence, now nearly half a century ago.

Because independence was not Australia's gift to give, it was the people of Papua New Guinea's right to assert, it was your opportunity to seize.

In this land of extraordinary contrasts and variety in landscapes and traditions and languages, people united around a deep faith in democracy and a powerful commitment to family and community and care for their neighbours.

Independence was – as my great predecessor Gough Whitlam said on that day of celebration in 1975 – 'an idea whose time had come'.

And it arrived not as a contested act of revolution but rather as a considered statement of national maturity, of national unity - and also a national ambition for PNG to serve as a leader in this region.

As Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare said, at the first South Pacific Forum that PNG attended as a member state:

*“We are not here to rock the boat, but to add another - in order that our voyage to that glorious destination may be reached”*

Nearly half a century later, we are still on that voyage, together.

And yes, there have been rough seas and tough times.

But our friendship has held true.

And, now, on the horizon, a world of opportunity awaits us.

Because Australia and Papua New Guinea are bound not just by a shared past and a shared border but by a common determination to shape our own futures.

To seize the opportunities of this moment, in this region.

This can be a decisive decade for peace, prosperity, unity and security in the Indo-Pacific.

As two big Pacific Ocean states, Australia and PNG must work as equals with our fellow Pacific states to build a stronger, safer, more secure region.

All of us have a part to play in realising that vision.

And tied in with that, all of us who serve as parliamentarians have a unique opportunity and a particular responsibility to defend the democracy in which we serve.

And we fulfil that duty best by demonstrating the value of this place and the ideals it is built on.

By proving that the system we belong to has the power to change people's lives for the better.

This begins with ensuring that every girl and boy has the right to grow up happy and safe and with the opportunity to get a great education.

The government I lead is committed to strengthening Australia's education partnership with PNG.

Working with you on the important priorities you've identified: including the early years and vocational education and training.

And making sure that equality for women and girls goes far beyond the opportunity to attend school.

We know every nation can do better and do more to achieve this – from greater economic empowerment, to preventing domestic and family violence, to achieving equality in representation.

I am proud to lead the first Australian government in 122 years where the majority of members are women.

And I want to congratulate the two new women members elected to this place – you are representatives and you are trail blazers and I hope you inspire a new generation of women and girls to serve their country and their democracy.

Equality for women is fair, it is right and it is powerful economic reform.

It boosts productivity, participation and drives growth, because it means drawing on the talent and initiative and enterprise of the whole population, not just half of it.

Friends

Education is a mighty weapon against disadvantage and equality is a powerful lever for economic growth.

But recent years have provided the world with a vivid reminder that healthy economies depend – above all - on healthy people.

Australia will continue to provide support to PNG's health priorities, including in infectious diseases, such as TB, HIV, child and maternal health and malaria.

And we are proud that the Australian-funded Angau Hospital was completed last year in Lae.

This new facility will serve an area that is home to over one million people and make a major contribution to boosting access to health care in PNG.

\*\*\*\*

Prime Minister Marape

As you know, it was a Pangu Government and an Australian Labor Government that worked together to usher-in a new era for Papua New Guinea, half a century ago.

In 2023 I want our two governments to work together to unlock a new generation of prosperity for your nation.

To boost our two-way trade in everything from coffee and cocoa to fisheries and tourism.

And to bolster the significant direct investment made by the Australian private sector in PNG, which already stands at \$24 billion.

More than we invest in India, Indonesia or Malaysia.

I understand PNG is eager to expand your exports of more processed goods and varied agricultural products and I see these as areas where the Australian business community can play a key role.

Our government also stands ready to assist PNG to improve your bio-security regime to enable your farmers and producers to access international markets.

And as the world looks to a more sustainable model for growth, PNG has a tremendous opportunity to expand your Green Economy.

I know a number of Australian companies are keen to explore what can be done in this area, including in hydro and hydrogen production, for example.

Together, I am confident we can ensure that the rich natural resources of Papua New



Guinea are made to deliver good jobs, lasting investment and sustainable development for your nation.

But our friendship is deeper than trade – and our partnership and co-operation and engagement should reach beyond it.

Infrastructure is a longstanding policy passion of mine and I am proud that Australia is working with PNG to deliver an ambitious program of nation-building projects.

Upgrading ports, to create jobs and clear-away bottlenecks, as well as opening the door for developing export industries.

Building and maintaining a better road network, to make it easier for farmers to get their product to market and to ensure communities have more reliable access to good services.

And here, on the threshold of the biggest markets and the fastest-growing economies in the world, digital and communications infrastructure is every bit as vital as roads and ports.

This is why Australia built the Coral Sea Cable and is helping to build a productive and competitive telecommunications market for PNG.

It's important and right that the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific has a strong pipeline of projects here in PNG – and I look forward to following their progress and celebrating their completion.

Friends

In the years ahead, Australia and Papua New Guinea have a chance to honour our shared history of service in the cause of peace – by adding to it.

Deepening our defence ties and enhancing our national security co-operation and achieving a swift conclusion to negotiations on a Bilateral Security Treaty.

A treaty that will underpin our work together to address PNG's priority needs including law and order challenges, strengthening the justice system and rule of law.

A treaty based on deep trust.

And a treaty that builds on the family-first approach to regional security.

An example to others and an investment in the future of our partnership.

In this same spirit of regionalism, we are expanding opportunities for PNG citizens to travel and work in Australia through the Working Holiday Visa, the Pacific Engagement Visa and - in particular - the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Scheme.

Australian farmers and producers benefit from the expertise and industry of your people.

Just as importantly, the people of PNG earn good wages and develop new skills that they can use to support their families, educate their children and invest in opportunities that will deliver further prosperity for themselves and PNG.

And – Prime Minister Marape – my government backs your ambition to significantly increase the number of PNG workers who take part in this program in Australia and contribute to the future prosperity of both our nations.

Honourable Members

All of you appreciate that our region is on the frontline of the global fight against climate change.

Our Pacific neighbours are counting on PNG and Australia to support international co-operation, to show leadership and to take action.

There is not a moment to waste.

It is up to our generation to protect the precious and unique natural environment of our rainforests, reefs and coasts.

To build – and plan – our infrastructure so our communities are more resilient and better prepared for natural disasters.

It is the responsibility of our generation to ensure our farmers and producers do not suffer irreversible damage to their land and livelihoods.

And it is the great opportunity of our generation to grasp the transformative economic benefits of clean energy technology.

All of which is why I'm very pleased PNG will be joining the Indo-Pacific Carbon Offsets Scheme.

Friends

When Prime Minister Marape and I watched the State of Origin together in Suva last year, he said there are only three days your country stops.

Game 1, Game 2 and Game 3.

That's something I think a lot of Australians can relate to.

And it was great to see so many people getting off the Air Niugini flights in Brisbane to support the talent of the Kumuls and the Orchids in the Prime Minister's XIII matches.

And today I affirm my view that I want to see a PNG-based, Pacific Islander team compete in the National Rugby League competition.

Whether it is rugby league, or cricket with the Barras and the Lewas, or the work being done here by the AFL, sport is such a genuine and powerful way of building strong and lasting ties between our peoples, at a code and club and community and family level.

And the same is true for education and art and cultural exchange.

My government will continue to support programs that deepen understanding and strengthen connections between Australians and the people of Papua New Guinea.

Because at the heart of our two nations' friendship is that sense of respect and connection between equals.

\*\*\*\*

Honourable Members

Tomorrow, I will travel to Wewak to pay my respects at the resting place of Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare.

Before I left for this visit I was shown a photo taken in 1974 at an event in Sydney.

The Grand Chief holding onto part of a two-pronged spear which he's just broken across his knee, into two pieces.

One was given to Gough Whitlam, the other to the great Motuan leader, Oala Oala Rarua of Pari village.

This gesture was a symbol of peace – but also the signifier of a pact, a promise.

A new path of friendship, mateship and common accord.

A bond between equals.

I am proud to say today that Australia is determined to continue to honour that promise.

We stand with you.

We hold true.

Our two nations are bound together – now let us build together.

A future of peace, prosperity and opportunity for all.

*Tenk yu tru olgeta, lukim yu bihain.*

[Thank you very much, everyone, see you again]

**ENDS**

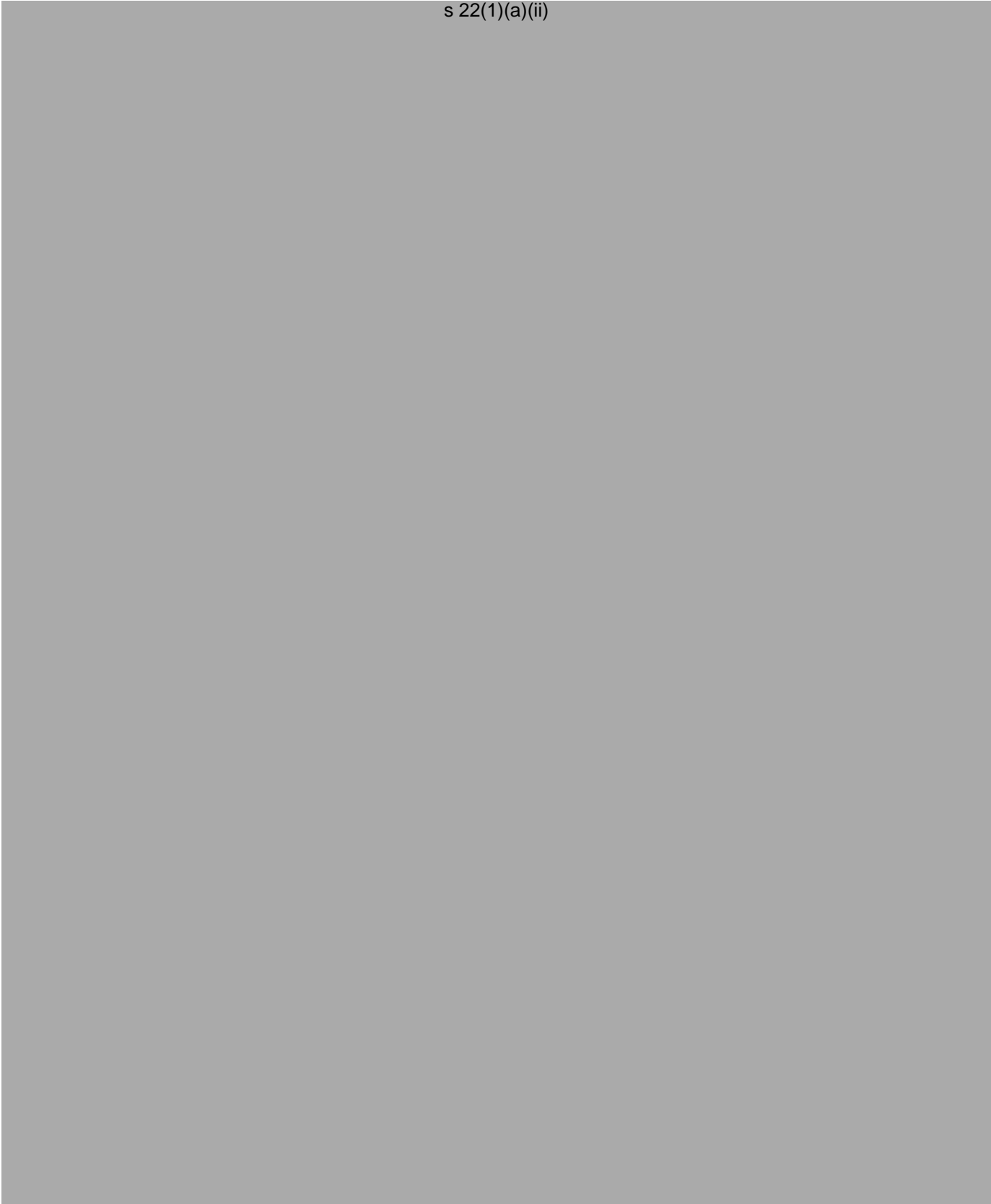
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**Media Contact:**

Prime Minister's Office: s 47E(d) | s 47E(d)

# KEY MESSAGES

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

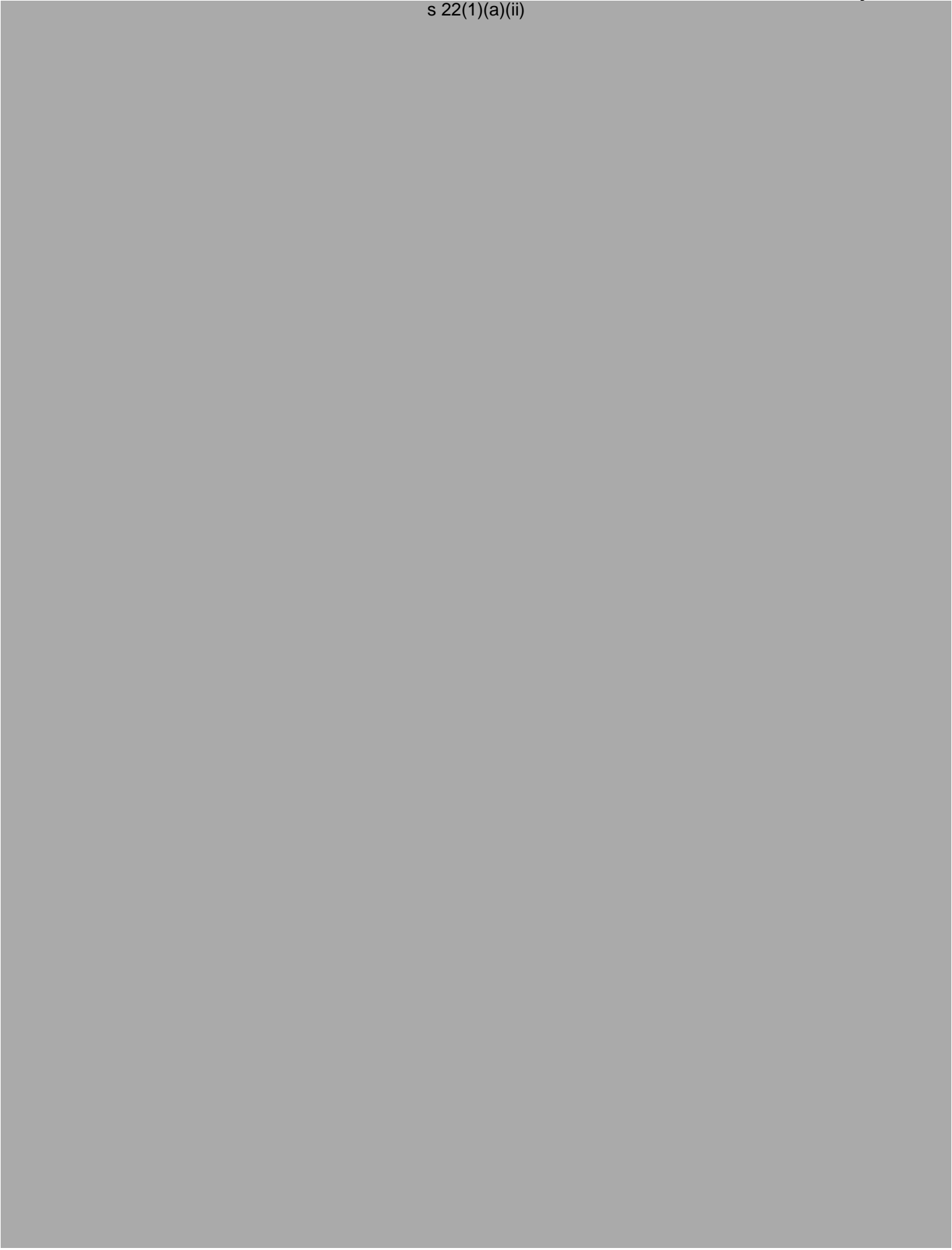


- One of our greatest shared passions is for sport. We support PNG's ambition to join Australia's National **Rugby League** and will discuss cooperation to develop PNG's rugby league talent pathways [*after announcement: will commence reciprocal schoolboys and schoolgirls rugby league tours this year*].

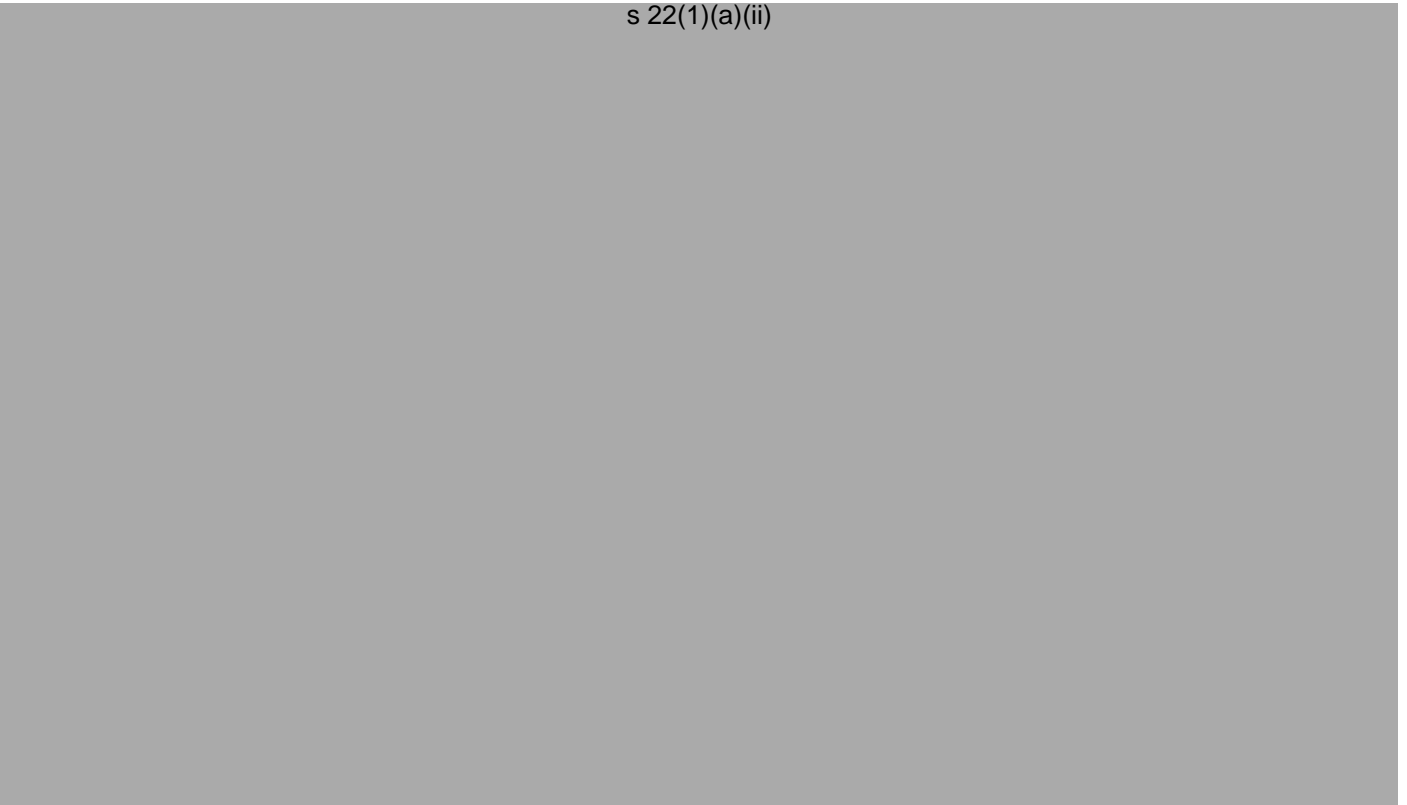
# MEDIA MESSAGES

As at 9 January

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



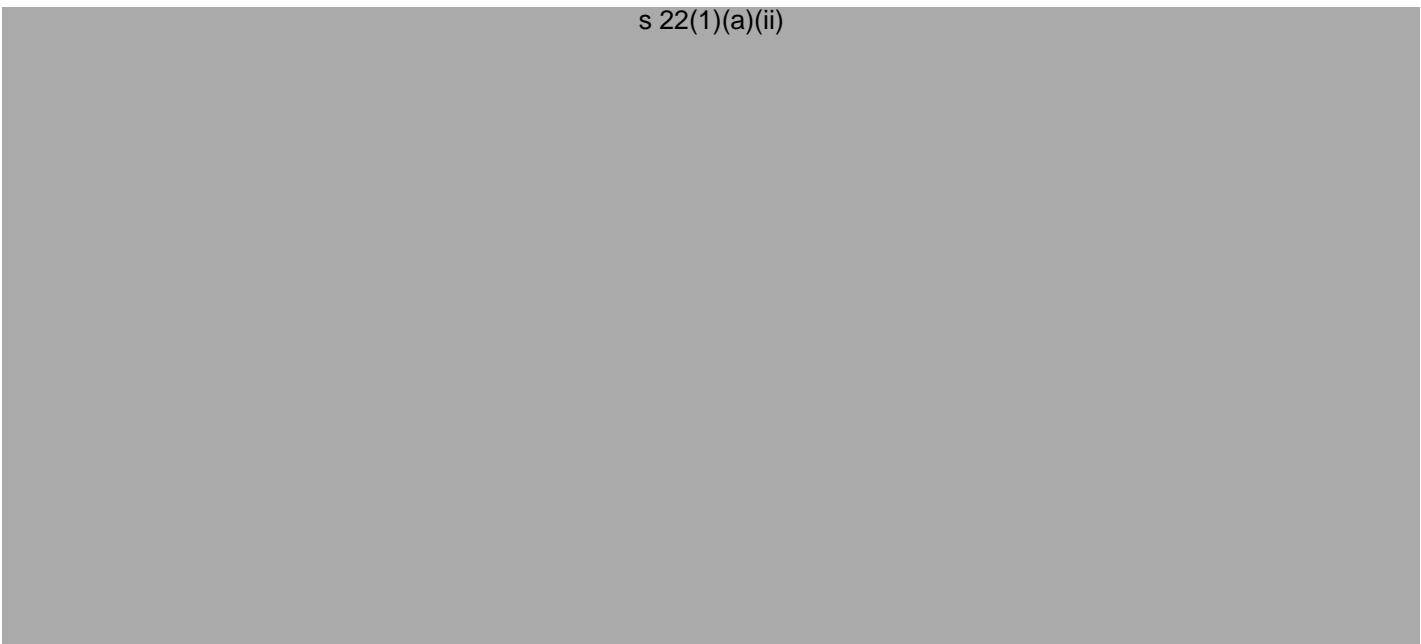
s 22(1)(a)(ii)



### **Australia-PNG People-to-People links**

- NRL is one of the great shared passions of both our countries
  - I am pleased to announce Australia will work with the NRL to establish a program of Schoolboys and Schoolgirls rugby league tours. This will strengthen PNG rugby league talent development pathways, leading to a strong talent pool for professional teams to draw from
  - the rugby league tours will take place in PNG and Australia from this year and will connect young Australians and young Papua New Guineans, while also supporting a key foundation of PNG's NRL bid.

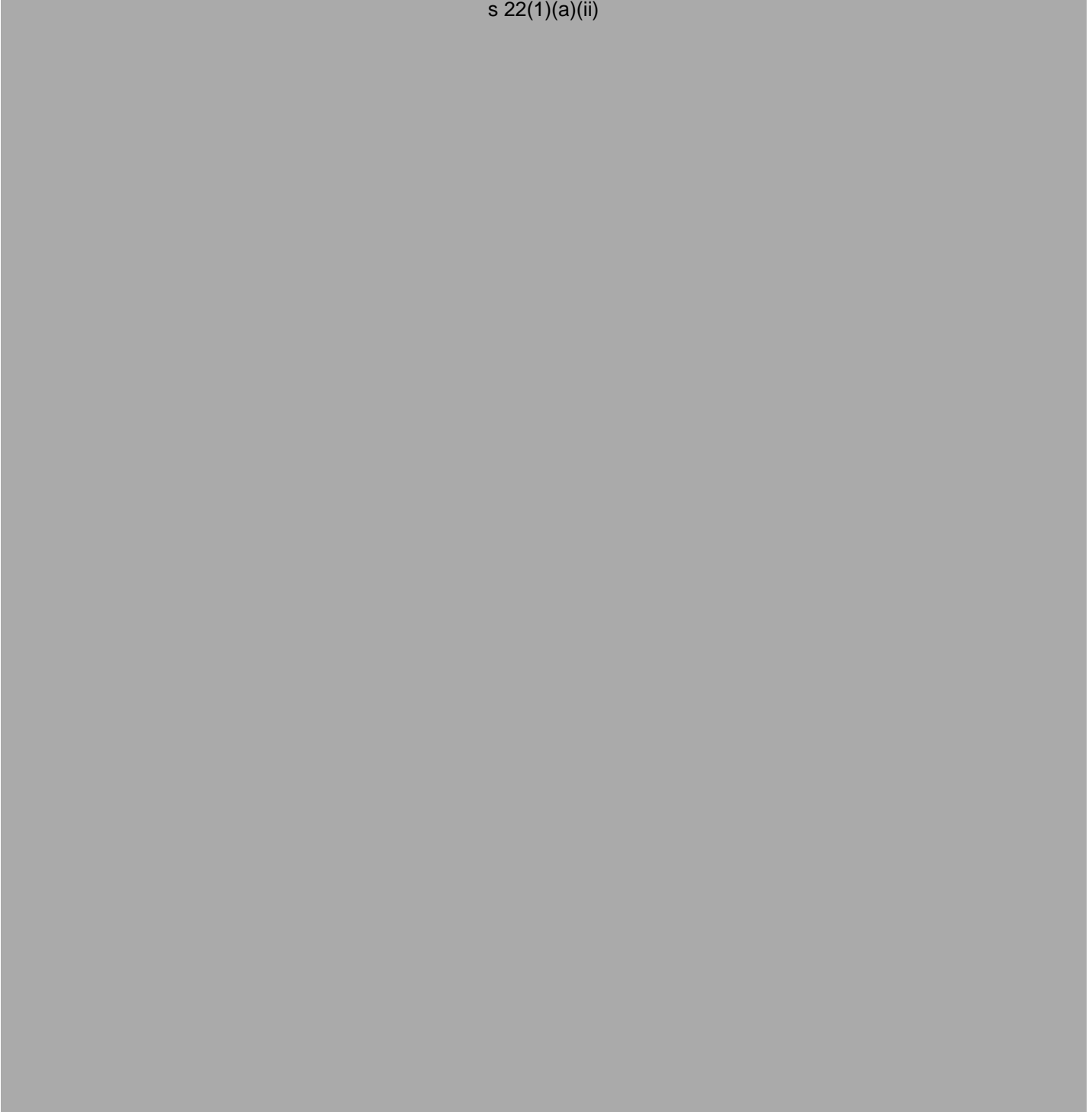
s 22(1)(a)(ii)



***If raised*** – *Will the Government use taxpayer funds to set up a PNG NRL team?*

- Rugby league is of huge importance to PNG
  - Prime Minister Marape and I attended the Prime Minister's XIII match to celebrate this shared passion [25 September].
- We are committed to supporting PNG with its ambitions and Minister Conroy has been in regular contact with PNG's bid team and the NRL on a pathway forward.
- Ultimately the decision on adding a PNG team rests with the NRL and will be based on commercial factors.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)





s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 1 November 2022 2:50 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s 22(1)(a)  
**Subject:** NRL material - MIDP brief [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

**OFFICIAL: Sensitive**

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Hope you're both going well and haven't had an exceptionally busy week. Quick question – we understand MIDP is currently in PNG for talks with counterparts, and we'd be curious as to whether your team provided any messaging to MIDP concerning PNG's bid for an NRL team.

Given high levels of interest in the PMO concerning this aspect of the relationship, we would really appreciate visibility of any NRL briefing that formed part of the pack.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser

Melanesia | Pacific | International Division

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

p. s 22(1)(a)(ii) m s 22(1)(a)(ii)

e. s 22(1)(a)(ii) w. [www.pmc.gov.au](http://www.pmc.gov.au)

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Fri, 14 Oct

Document 9



'Now is the time': Richard Marles has met NRL to push for Papua New Guin...

On visit to Port Moresby, defence minister says 'it would be so meaningful' for PNG to become National Rugby Lea...

www.theguardian.com

s 22( ) a ( )

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/oct/14/now-is-the-time-richard-marles-has-met-nrl-to-push-for-papua-new-guinea-team>

s 2( )  
a) i)

8:50 pm

Sat, 15 Oct

Max Willis

Wonder what the nrl thinks of all this

MW

9:42 am



Message





**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 24 August 2022 3:54 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 s 47E(d)  
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** DFAT submission: PNG bid for a NRL team - seeking comment [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

**OFFICIAL: Sensitive**

Dear colleagues.

As you may be aware, PNG is proposing to submit a bid for a NRL team for the next expansion of the competition in 2028. s 33(b)

We expect this to be an ongoing conversation, noting substantive discussions with the PNG Bid Board have yet to occur. To inform Ministers, we have undertaken some initial analysis to inform the attached submission.

I'd be grateful for your views on issues of relevance and impact to you, and other considerations we should seek to incorporate in this initial advice.

My contact details below should you wish to discuss.

Many thanks in advance.

s  
 22(1)  
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director | Pacific Partnerships Section  
 Polynesia and Partnerships Branch | Polynesia, Micronesia and Development Division  
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
**P** s 22(1)(a)(ii) | **M** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
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© Kim Hill, *Among Women* (2011)

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all First Nations peoples, their cultures and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 August 2022 7:22 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s 22(1)(a)(ii); s 47E(d)  
**Subject:** RE: DFAT submission: PNG bid for a NRL team - seeking comment by COB Friday [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]  
**Attachments:** 220824 PNG NRL bid - sub for comment.docx; s 33(b)

Hi s  
 22(1)

I am comfortable with the proposed approach of noting it is a decision for the NRL; s 33(a)(iii)

I note that sport can support diplomacy and the previous government released the [Sports Diplomacy 2030](#).  
 s 47C, s 47E(d)

s 22(1)(a) do you have any input from a social cohesion perspective?

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Senior Adviser | Population Health, Primary Care and Sport  
 m. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 August 2022 11:28 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** Baker, Sam; s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** FW: DFAT submission: PNG bid for a NRL team - seeking comment by COB Friday [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

Hi sports colleagues

s 47E(d)

s 47C, s 47E(d)

Please give myself or my colleague s call if you have any questions. If you can get us your team's input by COB Friday, we're happy to go back to DFAT on your behalf. Please let us know if there's any other areas of PM&C who you think ought to be looped in on these discussions.

Kind regards

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Adviser  
 Melanesia | Pacific | International Division  
 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
 p s 22(1)(a)(ii)



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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 August 2022 11:25 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s 22(1)(a)  
**Subject:** s 33(b) Papua New Guinea NRL Bid  
[SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

**PROTECTED//CABINET**

Hi s  
22(1)

s 47C , s 47D

The only other thing that might be worth adding to the email is that the Cairns City Council Mayor has also had on and off discussions (according to him) with PNG Government officials about a joint PNG (POM) and Cairns side, which would greatly improve the chances of a PNG NRL bid. Any future bid from Cairns would be strengthened by further upgrades to Barlow park for 2032 olympics, high performance facilities, strong recruitment systems and talent base (including strong PNG, Pacific and Indigenous diaspora).

[Papua New Guinea NRL bid draws support from Cairns mayor, who wants a combined team - ABC News](#)

[Barlow Park to light up Cairns' visitor economy - Ministerial Media Statements](#)

Best

s 22(1)(a)

s 47C , s 47E(d)



e. s 22(1)(a)(ii) | w. [www.pmc.gov.au](http://www.pmc.gov.au)

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**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Sent:** Friday, 5 August 2022 12:52 PM

**To:** s 22(1)(a) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Cc:** (ii) s 22(1)(a)(ii) Willis, Max s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Subject:** RE: PNG NRL briefing [SEC=PROTECTED]

**PROTECTED**

Hi s 22(1)

Responses from us to your questions below (and thanks for the call yesterday s 22(1) – happy to chat further if needed).

s 47E(d)

- **What do we understand as exact ambition of the PNG NRL bid team?**

s 47E(d) the PNGRFL have assemble a Bid Board consisting of prominent businessman and sports administrators, chaired by Mr Wapu Sonk, Managing Director of Kumul Petroleum Holdings. Other members include Mr Albert Veratau (CEO PNG Sport Foundation), Mr Stanley Hondina (CEO PNGRFL), Mr Stan Joyce (prominent businessman, former head of SP Brewery and Chair PNG Hunters) and Ian Tarutia (PNG Chamber of Commerce president, CEO Nasfund). The Board is being supported by Mr Andrew Hill, former CEO to the Canterbury Bulldogs.

- **year of entry?**

The inclusion of new franchises into the NRL are generally aligned with new broadcast deals. The Dolphins will enter the NRL in 2023 and the next broadcast deal will not come into effect until the 2028 season. While the PNG Government has targeted the 2025 season in public statements,

s 47G(1)(b)

- **Location?**

If the new bid was for a solely PNG team it is likely they would be based out of Port Moresby – but these details will need to be worked through as part of their bid.

s 47C

s 47G(1)(b)



To: [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Cc: [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: RE: DFAT QTB - PNG NRL issue [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Cheers

s  
22(

From: [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Sent: Monday, 18 July 2022 4:33 PM

To: [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Cc: [REDACTED] s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: DFAT QTB - PNG NRL issue [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi PM&C colleagues.

Undoubtedly you'll have seen the ABC [reporting](#) of yesterday on the PNG NRL bid and related issues. As we preparing for the next sitting period, we've crafted QTB text to respond to this issue.

Can you please let me know if you're comfortable with the content below, noting the second part reflects comments made by the PM?

#### ISSUES

#### PAPUA NEW GUINEA BID FOR A TEAM IN AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE

Recent media coverage reports interest from PNG in bidding for a team to enter Australia's NRL competition.

#### If Asked: is the Government supportive of PNG's bid to enter a team into the NRL?

The Australian Government recognises the importance of rugby league to the Papua New Guinea (PNG) community. We understand a PNG team in Australia's National Rugby League (NRL) competition would likely be well received in PNG.

Any decision on the viability of a PNG bid rests with the NRL.

s 47C , s 47D

The Prime Minister has acknowledged the importance of rugby league for Pacific countries, noting the need to look at a team eventually in the NRL for PNG, and possibly also from the Pacific.

The Australian Government continues to build the high-performance capacity of PNG rugby league.

Many thanks,

s  
22(1

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director | Pacific Partnerships Section  
Pacific Bilateral and Development Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Phone + s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
Mobile + s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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*I acknowledge the first nation people of Australia and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I express my gratitude and honour their spiritual connection to the land.*

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