



Friday 28th July 2023

Advance Notice: Choiseul Bay Airfield Closure

Key dates

- The Choiseul Bay airfield will be closed for operations from **28/08/2023¹**.
- It is intended for the runway to be closed for a period of **6–8 weeks** to allow for the reconstruction and surfacing of the runway.
- The airfield will be reopened during **October**, weather permitting. A more accurate date will be provided as the work progresses.

Project background

Downer New Zealand, funded by the Governments of Solomon Islands (represented by the Ministry of Communication (MCA)), New Zealand, and Australia, are currently constructing two all-weather airfields in Solomon Islands. This work is completed under the Solomon Islands Provincial Airfields Upgrade (SI PAU) project, which will see enhanced infrastructure completed at Choiseul Bay and Seghe.

Progress to date has been good, with construction of the northern seawall complete, and the southern seawall nearing completion. In addition, pavement works have been finalised in the northern end of the runway, awaiting surfacing. Following the completion of the southern seawall, pavement construction will be finalised and surfacing activities will be completed.

The remainder of the works at Choiseul Bay require the Contractor to access the full runway, and this requires a full shutdown of the airfield. This will enable the safe and efficient shape correction, pavement construction and surfacing of approx. 500m of the existing runway.

Runway closure

The indicative date for the closure of Choiseul Bay airfield is Monday 28th August 2023. Please note this is a tentative date and is subject to weather and other delays. MCA and MFAT will continuously update Solomon Airlines as we near the date of closure.

¹ Please note this date may vary (be delayed) as work progresses towards this date.

We would like to work with Solomon Airlines and other relevant stakeholders to communicate the upcoming closure and seek to minimise disruption to passengers travelling to Taro. As a first step, we propose that MCA issues a press release in due course noting the closure. This would be advertised on the SIG ICT portal, newspaper, radio, news broadcast and social media, and could be more widely shared through other channels.

We trust this advance notice provides sufficient warning for Solomon Airlines to advise its passengers of the upcoming closure, and we look forward to working together to ensure minimal disruption during this important stage of the SI PAU project. We would be happy to discuss anything further we can do to this end (e.g., convening a meeting with relevant stakeholders to discuss the above in further detail).

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned should you have any questions.



Permanent Secretary, MCA
Moses Virivolomo



First Secretary, MFAT
Joe McCarter