

The cover features a scenic background of a paved road winding through a lush, green, hilly landscape under a clear sky. In the top left corner, the LTA logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized orange and grey circular emblem above the letters 'LTA' in a bold, sans-serif font, with the tagline 'Steering Fiji Safely' in a smaller font below it. The main title 'Safety Lane' is written in a large, flowing, orange script font. Below it, the word 'NEWSLETTER' is in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. To the right of 'Safety Lane', the word 'Monthly' is written in a smaller, orange script font. At the bottom right, the text 'MARCH - APRIL 2024 ISSUE' is written in a white sans-serif font.

Safety Lane

Monthly NEWSLETTER

MARCH - APRIL 2024 ISSUE

LTA
Steering Fiji Safely



Karavi weighbridge station *a beacon of progress*

THE Land Transport Authority's newly-commissioned Karavi Weighbridge Station in Ba is a beacon of progress and a testament to our commitment to compliance, safety, and sustainability in the transportation sector, says Minister for Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport, Honourable Ro Filipe Tuisawau.

Officiating the commissioning of the Karavi Weighbridge on 1 March 2024, Honourable Tuisawau said the impact of the Weighbridge Station extended far beyond its physical structure and represented a significant step forward in ensuring the safety and well-being of all citizens.

"By enforcing weight regulations, we are reducing the risk of accidents caused by overloaded vehicles, thereby safeguarding the lives of our people. This not only brings peace of mind to families but also strengthens the fabric of our communities," Honourable Tuisawau said.

"The economic benefits of the Weighbridge Station are substantial. By curbing overloading, we are saving taxpayer money that would have otherwise been spent on road and bridge maintenance."

In the long term, he added, these savings could be redirected towards other critical areas, such as

healthcare, education, and infrastructure development, fostering economic growth and prosperity.

He said the Weighbridge Station also promoted fair competition among businesses.

"By ensuring that all operators abide by the same weight regulations, we are creating a level playing field where businesses can thrive based on merit, innovation, and efficiency.

"This not only benefits the business community but also translates into better products and services for consumers," the Honourable Minister highlighted.

■ *Continued P2-3*

SAFETY LANE - Your bi-monthly window into the Land Transport Authority's initiatives. Stay informed about our latest road safety campaigns, evolving standards, and transformative developments. Join us in fostering safer roads for all.



LTA authorised vehicle inspector Emi Caginiwai with LTA Acting CEO Irimaia Rokosawa. Image: LTA

Emi breaks barriers

In the world of heavy diesel and machinery, where the clang of metal and the hum of engines dominate, Emi Caginiwai stands out not just for her expertise as a heavy automotive mechanic and engineer but for breaking through barriers that once seemed insurmountable.

At 46 years of age, she has etched her name in history as a Land Transport Authority authorised inspector with Auto Experts in Vatuwaqa, marking a milestone not only in her career but in the broader landscape of gender representation in this field. Ms Caginiwai recently received her authorisation permit from LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer, Irimaia Rokosawa, who commended her for her hard work and perseverance in a male-dominated field.

Mr Rokosawa said the permit granted her the authority to inspect motor vehicles in strict accordance with the stringent regulations outlined in Section 55(1)(b) of the Land Transport Act and Regulation 114 and 115 of the Land Transport (Vehicle Registration & Construction) Regulations 2000.

"We congratulate Ms Caginiwai for taking on the mantle as an authorised LTA vehicle inspector and encourage more women to do the same."

This is something the Authority is working towards in terms of promoting gender equality and advocating for equal opportunities for women in the transport industry," the Acting CEO shared.

"We would also like to see more women in the public service vehicle space. This is a key focus for the Authority, which is to encourage and promote a gender-balanced working environment in the PSV industry."

"We recently carried out public consultations on this proposal and received positive feedback from the public."

"There are women taxidrivers and others who have LM licences but we are urging more women to join the bus industry, and acquiring Class 5."



LTA Board of Directors with Honourable Minister for Transport Ro Filipe Tuisawau (third from left). Image: LTA



Honourable Minister for Transport Ro Filipe Tuisawau is given a tour of the Karavi Weighbridge Station. Image: LTA



Veiqaraqarav Vakavanua ceremonies at the official commissioning of the Karavi Weighbridge Station in Ba on 1 March 2024. Image: LTA



■ From P1

The weighbridge station's operation in the area will create room for further development opportunities, providing employment to local residents and stimulating economic activity in the surrounding area. This will not only improve the standard of living for those in the community but also contribute to the overall economic development of the region.

"In essence, the Weighbridge Station is not just a checkpoint; it is a gateway to a safer, more prosperous future for all Fijians. It embodies our commitment to building a sustainable economy, ensuring the safety of our roads, and enhancing the quality of life for our citizens," Honourable Tuisawau said.

LTA Board Chairman Inosi Kuridrani echoed similar sentiments, saying the commissioning of Karavi marked a milestone in their drive towards excellence in land transport services in Fiji.

He expressed their appreciation to the Government for providing capital funding for the completion of the weighbridge station and other important projects.

"The Karavi Weighbridge Station represents a major advancement in our efforts to ensure road safety and protect our infrastructure. Overloaded vehicles pose a serious risk to road safety and cause extensive damage to our roads and bridges."

"By giving us a means of efficiently enforcing weight regulations, the Karavi Weighbridge Station will play a crucial role in preventing accidents and preserving our infrastructure for future generations," he said.

"The weighbridge station will benefit the LTA's operations in several ways. It will enhance our ability to monitor and regulate the weight of vehicles, allowing us to enforce compliance with greater efficiency."

"This, in turn, will strengthen our role as a regulator and ensure that all operators adhere to the

same standards, promoting fair competition and a level playing field for businesses."

As an organisation, Mr Kuridrani noted that LTA was committed to aligning their operations with the national goals and targets set by the Government.

He said the Authority recognised the importance of projects such as the Karavi Weighbridge Station in achieving these goals.

"We will continue to work tirelessly to contribute to the development of our nation's infrastructure and economy through efficient land transport systems," Mr Kuridrani assured.

The LTA Board Chairman also acknowledged the contribution Fiji Roads Authority, contractors, consultants and other stakeholders who were instrumental in the success of the Karavi Weighbridge Station project.

He also commended the Authority's management and staff for their tireless efforts and commitment to excellence.



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Public Consultations: Key policies focus on road safety, women empowerment



National Fiji Driving School Association President Deo Narayan shares his views at the LTA public consultation in Labasa. **Image: LTA**



LTA Acting General Manager Technical and Operations Makitalena Drova elaborates on the proposal to promote gender balanced working environment in the PSV industry. **Image: LTA**



LTA staff and stakeholders during the Central-Eastern Division public consultation in Suva on March 6. **Image: LTA**

THE Land Transport Authority (LTA) initiated three comprehensive national public consultations, starting in the Northern Division on March 4, Western Division on March 5 at the Lautoka Girit Centre and Central Eastern Division on March 6 at the Suva Civic Centre.

The vital proposals focused on enhancing road safety and empowerment of women in the transport sector. The public consultations were crucial engagements that aimed to gather valuable insights and feedback on three proposed measures that aligned with the Authority's commitment to road safety and creating a gender-balanced working environment in the public service vehicle (PSV) industry.

The three proposals under consideration include (i) Minimum Qualification Requirement (MQR) for Driving Instructors Permit (DIP), (ii) Promoting Gender-Balanced Working Environment in the PSV Industry and (iii) Mandatory Drug Test for New and Renewal of Driver Licence.

In terms of the MQR for driving instructors permit, LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer Iri-

maia Rokosawa said the Authority recognised the pivotal role of driving instructors in shaping responsible and skilled drivers.

To enhance the quality of driver education, the LTA proposes the introduction of a minimum qualification requirement for obtaining a Driving Instructors Permit. This measure seeks to upskill potential and existing driving instructors, ensuring they employ effective teaching strategies to provide the best learning experiences for their learner drivers.

"In an effort to foster gender equality and empowerment, the LTA is also proposing measures to create a more inclusive and safe working environment within the PSV industry. This proposal to promoting gender-balanced working environment in the PSV industry aims to break gender stereotypes and encourage women to actively participate in the transportation sector, contributing to a diverse and dynamic workforce," Mr Rokosawa said.

For the proposed mandatory drug test for new and renewal of driver licence, the Authority recognised the detrimental impact of sub-

stance abuse on road safety. The LTA proposes the implementation of mandatory drug testing for both new and renewal applications for driver licences.

This measure is designed to minimise accidents and injuries caused by drivers operating under the influence of prohibited substances, thereby safeguarding the well-being of all road users.

"The three proposals align with the functions of the LTA as outlined in Section 8 of the Land Transport Act 1998 and its subsidiary legislations. The primary objective is to enhance road safety across the country, fostering a culture of responsible driving and reducing the incidence of accidents caused by human factors," the Acting CEO shared.

The public consultation process is a vital step in ensuring that the proposed measures reflect the perspectives and concerns of the community. It provides an opportunity for all stakeholders, including driving instructors, PSV operators, drivers, and the general public, to contribute their insights and recommendations.

MOU fosters economic empowerment for landowners

THE signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs marks a significant step towards fostering economic empowerment among landowners and promoting strategic collaboration in information sharing.

The MOU, signed by LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer Irimaia Rokosawa and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs Permanent Secretary Pita Tagicakirewa at LTA Headquarters in Valelevu on 19 March 2024, reflects a joint commitment to advance inclusive development and lays the groundwork for mutual sharing of crucial information that will facilitate access to development opportunities and bolster the economic participation of Fijian communities and landowners.

One of the central aspects of the MOU was the pledge to work together towards their shared objective of enhancing the economic



Ministry of iTaukei Affairs Permanent Secretary Pita Tagicakirewa (fourth from left) and LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer Irimaia Rokosawa hold the signed MOU at LTA Headquarters in Valelevu as senior staff members from LTA and the Ministry look on. **Image: LTA**

status of landowners.

Through collaborative information exchange, the LTA seeks to bridge gaps and create synergies that will contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. This cooperative endeavour is in alignment with the goals outlined in the Fijian Government's Development Action Plan(s).

Through the MOU, the LTA will enable Fijian communities and landowners to capitalise on opportunities for economic advancement by facilitating awareness on the requirements and access to permits and licenses for income-generating activities, particularly in village boundaries and rural areas.

This not only creates avenues for

economic empowerment but also contributes to the overall prosperity and well-being of Fijian communities.

The partnership aligns with the Fijian Government's steadfast commitment to increasing accessibility to public transportation in remote and rural regions.



LTA Road Safety Education Manager Watilala Fonu (left) during the launch of LTA-Fiji Police Force joint enforcement operations for Fiji Finals. **Image: LTA**

LTA, stakeholders address safety concerns at Fiji Finals 2024

IN light of recent concerns regarding unruly behaviour during major school sporting events, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) issued a stern warning to drivers, student passengers, and school supporters that it will not tolerate any behaviour that compromises public safety or violates traffic laws.

Recent incidents have highlighted the dangers posed by unruly passenger and driver behaviours, such as students dangerously waving school flags outside the parameters of moving buses.

Such actions not only endanger the lives of those involved but also pose a serious risk to other road

users and pedestrians. Recognising the need for immediate action, the Authority convened several crucial meetings with stakeholders from the Ministry of Education, Fiji Police Force, Fiji Bus Operators Association and Coca-Cola EuroPacific Partners at LTA headquarters in Valelevu in April to address these concerns and ensure the safety of all Fijians.

The meeting focused on strategies to enhance safety measures during major secondary school sporting events, including the zone athletics meet and the highly anticipated Fiji Finals from May 2-4, 2024, in Suva.



LTA road safety education officers visited various secondary schools to promote road safety compliance ahead of major sporting events. **Image LTA**

LTA intensifies road safety awareness

THE Land Transport Authority (LTA) intensified efforts in April to promote road safety education among secondary school students in anticipation of major sporting events, including the Zone Athletics Meet and the highly anticipated Coca-Cola Games (Fiji Finals) from May 2-4, 2024, in Suva.

As part of this initiative, the LTA's road safety education team conducted awareness drives in secondary schools across the country.

LTA Road Safety Education Manager Watilala Fonu said road safety education teams were currently engaged in school education and awareness campaigns in major divisions, focusing on bus safety and proper passenger etiquette while traveling in cars and public service vehicles, especially buses.

With the support of the Fiji Police Force, Ms Fonu said the road safety education teams aimed to reinforce the importance of adhering to road safety measures during these sig-

nificant sporting events in the school calendar.

"The team has identified several secondary schools that have been consistently in the spotlight for disregarding road safety rules and engaging in risky behaviours as passengers at these major sporting events," Ms Fonu said.

"These behaviours include waving school flags from cars and buses, unruly conduct of students, vandalism, and playing loud music in buses. Such behaviours pose serious risks to the safety of all road users and have the potential to cause accidents."

The LTA and Fiji Police maintain their commitment to addressing inappropriate passenger behaviour during these major events to ensure the safety of drivers, passengers, and pedestrians alike.

Additionally, from 27 March to 4 April, the LTA embarked on a joint Easter Awareness Operation with police and conducted 17 school



Students of Namena Primary School with road safety information materials during a school visit by LTA road safety education officers. **Image LTA**



LTA Road Safety Education teams also distributed school patrol items during road safety outreach and awareness visitations. **Image LTA**



RSE community outreach at Tagaqe Village, Western Division. **Image LTA**

education and awareness impacting 2566 students, 23 driver roadside awareness impacting 4,354 drivers, 23 passenger roadside awareness impacting 15,875 passengers, 14 pedestrian roadside awareness impact-

ing 1,558 pedestrians, 3 *Tikina* meetings impacting 350 villagers and 34 community outreach awareness impacting 11,364 people. A total of 114 awareness activities were carried out with an impact of 24,703.

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LTA, Fiji Motorsports Association collaborate to curb illegal drag racing



LTA road safety officers conducted awareness on the responsible driving habits at the Fiji Motorsports Association's Meet & Greet event on April 25 in Suva. **Images: LTA**

THE Land Transport Authority of Fiji (LTA) expressed grave concern over recent videos circulating on social media in April depicting illegal car racing activities on public roads.

These reckless and dangerous behaviours not only violate the law but also pose a significant threat to the safety and lives of all road users in Fiji, as speeding remains the top cause of road fatalities in the country.

The Authority vehemently condemns such irresponsible driving practices, which endanger not only the lives of the participants but also innocent bystanders and other road users.

LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer Irimaia Rokosawa said illegal car racing on public roads was a blatant disregard for the law and a serious threat to public safety.

He said the Authority's enforcement team was cracking down on this activity through several combined operations with the Fiji Police Force, especially along Queen Elizabeth Drive in Nasese and other hot spot areas where these activities have been reported.

"The authority urges those involved in such activities to immediately cease their reckless driving behaviour. This activity is not only illegal but also com-

pletely unacceptable. Every driver has a responsibility to adhere to traffic laws and regulations, and engaging in illegal racing jeopardizes the safety of everyone on the road," Mr Rokosawa said.

Fiji Motorsports Association president Raizal Haniff has also called on those engaged in this dangerous recreational activity to refrain from endangering the lives of road users.

"We see a lot of cars racing on our roads. We strongly urge these drivers to refrain from engaging in this activity on public roads as this may cause accidents.

"Our request to those drivers is to be patient as the association is exploring options to provide a race track so that these activities can be carried out in a safe space," Mr Haniff said.

Members of the public can report instances of illegal car racing or reckless driving by texting the registration number of the alleged vehicles to 582 or emailing complaints@lta.com.fj and help@lta.com.fj. Details should also include time and location of the incident. These proactive actions can play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of Fijian road users and preventing potential accidents caused by reckless driving.

Easter joint operations bolster road safety efforts

THE Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the Fiji Police Force's Easter Weekend operations aimed at bolstering road safety have revealed significant compliance issues. During the operation period from 18 March to 2 April 2024, a total of 1,427 traffic offences were recorded, highlighting the necessity for stricter adherence to traffic regulations.

Specific infractions included 42 notices issued for e-ticketing omnibus passengers paying cash, 40 for omnibus drivers accepting cash, 12 for overloading, and 49 for private vehicles operating illegally as public transport. These violations point to persistent challenges in maintaining road safety and regulatory compliance.

Furthermore, an additional 3,441 speeding offences were noted, alongside 320 violations captured by redlight speed cameras. These figures underscore the ongoing risks associated with reckless driving behaviors and the critical need for continuous enforcement of traffic laws to ensure public safety.

The LTA's message is clear: road safety is a collective responsibility. By fostering a culture of compliance and mutual respect among all road users, the risks of accidents and violations can be mitigated. The efforts of the LTA and Fiji Police highlight the ongoing need for vigilance and enforcement to protect all individuals on the road.



Joint enforcement operations between the LTA and Fiji Police

Force aim to ensure compliance and adherence of road safety

regulations and standards. **Images: LTA**



Pictorial

LTA family clean up and fun day fosters civic pride

SATURDAY in the Sun! The 2024 LTA Central Eastern Division family clean up and fun day at Valelevu HQ on 13 April stood as a cornerstone of the Authority's corporate social responsibility endeavors.

The event underscored LTA's firm belief in cultivating civic pride and advocating for the importance of maintaining clean and tidy surroundings.

It was heartening to see individuals from all walks of life come together for the betterment of the environment.

Appreciation was also extended to FMF Foods Fiji and Coca-Cola Europacific Partners for the donations in kind and support towards the clean-up campaign as well as encouraging environmental stewardship.

LTA Board of Directors, management and staff in the Central Eastern Division took time out on 13 April to participate in the family clean up and fun day in Valelevu, Nasinu. **Images: LTA**



2024 Easter Thanksgiving Service

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