

TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2008

The Deputy Speaker, Hon Kengava took the Chair at 9.50 a.m.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Ministers for Planning & Aid Coordination, Environment & Conservation and the Member for Ngella.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

BILLS

Bills – First Reading

The Constitution (Amendment) (No.1) Bill 2008

The Companies Bill 2008

The Companies (Insolvency and Receivership) Bill 2008

Bills – Second Reading

The Civil Aviation Bill 2008

Hon LONAMEI: Mr Speaker, I move that the Civil Aviation Bill 2008 be now read the second time. Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Civil Aviation Bill 2008 be now read the second time.

Mr Speaker, this Bill has been long in gestation but its passage will finally see Solomon Islands introduce a modern, robust and flexible Civil Aviation legislation that will serve us well for the foreseeable future.

Mr Speaker, in 2006 an International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) safety audit team found 104 areas of deficiency covering a multitude of problems within our current civil aviation system. In 2007 an ICAO security audit team found similar problems with our aviation security system. The majority of these deficiencies were based on a lack of adequate legislation.

Mr Speaker, our response was to draft a new legislation based on that being put in place by the majority of Pacific Island Forum Nations. This legislation will align us with our neighbors but, more importantly, it will remove about 80% of the deficiencies identified by the safety and security audit teams.

Mr Speaker, in essence, this Bill will establish a civil aviation authority, separating regulatory requirements from service provision with a Director of Civil Aviation empowered to act independently to ensure the civil aviation system remains safe and secure for the traveling public.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides the legal authority to enforce the rules based system under which civil aviation operates. It places responsibility to operate safely upon the operators within the civil aviation system rather than impose rigid, sometimes inappropriate, restrictions upon the operator. Mr Speaker, this Bill will make it easier for safe operators to do business within the civil aviation system, while making it very difficult for unsafe “cowboy” operators to flaunt the rules.

Mr Speaker, this Bill has a much wider scope than our current legislation. It wraps into the legislation provisions security as well as safety. It includes provisions to protect the traveling public with its ‘international carriage by air’ section. It makes and enhances Solomon Islands participation in ICAO through laying the base for adoption of a range of protocols to the Chicago Convention to which we currently do not recognize. Perhaps most importantly of all, Mr Speaker, is our adoption of a ‘rules’ based system.

We, along with our neighbors, are adopting a system based on the New Zealand rules system. This means we will have a modern, wide ranging, flexible system that is constantly updated, replacing our current inadequate system, which is essentially frozen in time and for the most part totally inappropriate for our environment.

Mr Speaker, this Bill has been refined over the past two years to the stage where it is ready for passage. It is a bill that will serve us well into the foreseeable future in the very technical field that modern civil aviation is developing into. With its passage, we will be able to take our place among the nations that have embraced civil aviation as a developmental tool able to build business and tourist travel in a safe and secure manner.

Mr Speaker, colleagues, I urge this Parliament to pass this Bill into law to allow civil aviation make its mark in a modern and vibrant environment.

Mr Speaker, to allow Members time to study the report of the Bills and Legislation Committee, which I believe will be tabled at the commencement of tomorrow’s sitting, and to allow time for the Attorney General’s Office to prepare amendments for corrections that have been identified in this Bill, I now move that the debate on this Bill be adjourned until the next sitting day.

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members the Honorable Minister has moved that the debate be now adjourn. Unless any Member wishes to comment briefly on this motion, I will put it to the question.

AG: Mr Speaker, with your indulgence may I inform the House that in their possession they should have two copies of the Bill which has just been read. There’s a big one which was tabled at the first reading, the A4 size and I think some of you may have received the A5 size, a smaller one. The A4 size was the one that was tabled and certified by the Speaker. We were hoping that at the second reading we would be able to bring the A5 size without any errors. It has been identified however that there are

errors in the A5 size, and so I ask Honorable Members to go back to the A4 size which has been distributed at the first reading, and rely on the A4 size Bill.

Of course, there are some errors there too but this would be corrected tomorrow when a list containing the errors would be circulated. So as not to confuse you please, use the bigger size document that was distributed at the first reading. Thank you Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: If there is no one else to comment Honorable Members I will now put the question. The question is that the debate be now adjourned until the sitting day.

Debate on the Bill adjourned

Mr Speaker: Before I call on the Honorable Prime Minister to move the motion of adjournment, I wish to announce that an official photograph will be taken of all Members in this chamber after Parliament adjourns this morning.

All members are requested to return to the chamber at 11.30am. I would therefore ask all 48 members to be present for this photograph. This will be on display on Parliament Open Day on the 6th of December 2008 and will become part of the official records of the House. Thank you.

Hon. Sikua: Mr Speaker, I move that Parliament do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at 10.20 am