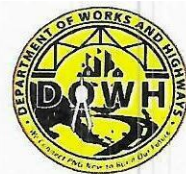




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Date: 3rd June 2025
File: MR – MoU Signing

MEDIA RELEASE

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Between the Department of Works and Highways (DoWH) and the Department of Lands and Physical Planning (DLPP)

By Gibson Holemba | Secretary for Works & Highways
Venue: Grand Papua Hotel | Markham Conference Room
Time: 12:00pm – 1:30pm
Date: Tuesday 3rd June 2025

Distinguished Guest, partners, colleagues, participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My Fellow Secretary Mr Benjamin Samson from the Department of Lands and Physical Planning (DLPP) with your staff, I welcome you all to this important occasion of the MoU signing between our two agencies of Government.

A special thank you to the facilitators of the MoU, from Department of Works & Highways (DoWH) Environmental and Social Safeguard Branch led by Assistant Secretary Mr. Kenneth Yamu which have put together this MoU that we are signing today.

The official signing of this MoU marks a significant milestone in inter-agency collaboration and is a step forward in addressing the delays and challenges often encountered in road project implementation due to land acquisition issues. It reflects a shared commitment to effective governance, accountability, and sustainable development.

The MoU is grounded in Papua New Guinea's legal instruments including, but not limited to, the Constitution, the Land Act 1996, the Physical Planning Act 1989, and other related statutes that govern land use, ownership, and development.

Infrastructure development, particularly in the road sector, remains a key enabler of economic growth and social development in PNG. A major constraint to timely and efficient implementation of road infrastructure projects has been the complex process of land acquisition, especially involving customary landownership.

Recognizing this, DoWH and DLPP have agreed to establish a formal framework of collaboration to streamline processes associated with land acquisition, compensation, and compliance.

"We Connect PNG Now to Build Our Future"



As we sign this MoU today, it marks a foundational step to in ensuring that development of critical road infrastructure is not hampered by land acquisition delays and unnecessary fraudulent land compensation payments which has become an industry of its own, causing the state to lose millions of kina in the past years.

The understanding signed today will strengthen the governance process at the inter-agency level to resolve delays and prevent bogus land acquisition payments to paper customary landowners whose intent is to defraud the state. The outcome of the MoU is to enhance coordination between DoWH and DLPP to ensuring there is more efficiency, accountability, transparency and improved stakeholders' confidence in Government led road development project initiatives.

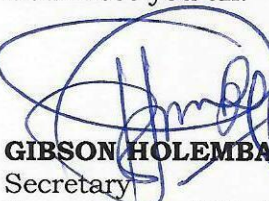
The Scope of the MoU, outlines a shared responsibilities at the inter-agency level in relation to;

- Land acquisition processes, including both voluntary and compulsory mechanisms.
- Valuation and compensation in accordance with legal requirements and approved schedules.
- Surveying, mapping, and documentation of land transactions.
- Stakeholder engagement with customary landowners.
- Compliance with the legal and regulatory framework governing land matters in Papua New Guinea.

Finally, the key provisions of the MoU from the DLPP point of view, the responsibilities are to lead land acquisition, stakeholder consultation, compensation assessments, documentation, and legal compliance. Whilst DoWH responsibilities are to provide technical specifications, budget allocations for land acquisition, and ensure alignment of road design with acquired land. Whereas the Joint responsibilities at agency level is to coordinate planning, dispute resolution, data sharing, and periodic reviews of progress.

Thank you all for your attendance today.

God Bless you all.


GIBSON HOLEMBA, FIEPNG, REG, ENG
Secretary
Department of Works & Highways

