



Resolution 26-01

Ensuring the continued recovery, investment, and expansion of environmentally and financially sustainable air and maritime transportation in the Micronesian Region for economic and social needs and priorities, and the promotion of safe, secure, clean, resilient, and efficient transportation and increased connectivity between the Islands and Pacific Nations of Micronesia.

WHEREAS, climate change is a global challenge that requires an urgent collective response given the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) call to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050; and

WHEREAS, islands in the Pacific are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including natural disasters, and financially and environmentally sustainable air and maritime transportation are vital for the continued economic and social needs of the Micronesian Region and its people;

WHEREAS, the global aviation industry, as represented by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the Airports Council International (ACI), and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, which will contribute to reducing the estimated 2.5% of global carbon dioxide emissions and account for the aviation industry's 3.5% of all drivers of climate change from human activities; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the established commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 through the Pacific Islands Forum's (PIF's) *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* which sets out long-term approaches to regional collaboration within and amongst PIF nations and peoples committing to—among many other important actions; and

WHEREAS, *The Port Moresby Declaration* endorsed by Pacific Island Regional Aviation Ministers at the Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting in June 2021—as tasked by PIF leaders in 2019—reaffirmed the commitment to ensure safe, secure, reliable, sustainable, and cost-effective air services in line with the principles of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and the Small Islands Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway; and

WHEREAS, the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), an international organization providing quality aviation safety and security service prepared—and Pacific Aviation Ministers adopted and endorsed in principle on the basis that proposed amendments to the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety Security Treaty (PICASST) will be progressively accepted and ratified from 2022 onwards—the *Pacific Regional Aviation Strategy (PRAS)*, which is a living document that aims to promote a harmonized, collaborative, and connected Pacific aviation system that supports safe, secure, and sustainable aviation in all Pacific Island States; and



WHEREAS, since the COVID-19 pandemic, air transportation recovery continues to lag compared to other global sectors, limiting growth in air transport connectivity in Micronesia and the Pacific and further dampening member jurisdictions' efforts to expand air service links; and

WHEREAS, the strengthening of airports in and around the Pacific is vital to the continued economic development of the member jurisdictions and the greater Pacific; and

WHEREAS, Micronesian Island governments collectively face particularly unique challenges relative to aviation development, which may present challenges for regional coordination and collaboration efforts; and

WHEREAS, the need to expand member jurisdictions' infrastructure and workforce capacity to make expanded air service links possible will contribute to the overall goal of increased sustainable air transportation in the Pacific and infrastructure funding and expanded training opportunities are necessary to achieve these goals; and

WHEREAS, funding must be pursued by member jurisdictions through internal government and private sector investments or externally through regional, national, and/or international funding sources; and

WHEREAS, continued collaboration between Micronesian island government airports and the FAA has provided recurring and rotational aviation training workshops known as Aerodrome Certification Workshops (previously known as Pacific Aviation Directors Workshop), that are annually hosted by the administrations of different airports in Micronesia to provide training on aviation technical operations, safety, management, air traffic control, and other relevant topics to include individual airport operational updates to foster a shared learning environment on key aviation issues; and

WHEREAS, the most recent Aerodrome Certification Workshop was held on Guam in April 2023¹, hosted by the A.B. Won Pat International Airport Authority, Guam and had in attendance most of the Micronesia airport directors, civil aviation workers, and other subject matter experts; and

WHEREAS, joint air service development and marketing initiatives to strengthen route positioning such as joint airport and airport to airline collaboration is recommended and it is also important to continue to recognize the current air transportation services to and from the member jurisdictions already being provided by the regional airline, Nauru Airlines, in addition to United Airlines, and to understand and strategize for the expansion of such routes by existing and new airlines to increase air service transportation and recommendations in the aforementioned reports may provide strategies for such development; and

WHEREAS, to achieve the goal of increased air transportation services in Micronesia, there must be distinct but collaborative goals within and amongst each member; and



WHEREAS, Climate Change impacts maritime transport, include ports infrastructure and must be taken into account to establish a resilient maritime sector; and

WHEREAS, through the direction of island leaderships, identify resilient and sustainable seaport projects to be pursued in areas like, but not limited to the following:

- **Infrastructure:** address major infrastructure and service challenges at seaports and optimize the use of the existing seaport capacity;
- **Environmental Care:** addressing air pollution, dust, noise, and water pollution, re-use and recycling initiatives; protecting freshwater resources; targeted marine litter initiatives; addressing soil and sediment contamination and protecting habitats and enhancing biodiversity;
- **Health Safety and Security:** promote the health and safety culture of employees and seaport visitors as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic; innovation in security controls, inspections of cargoes and passengers, working in automated environments and implementation of cybersecurity measures; and
- **Digitalization:** implement digital technologies on data collaboration with stakeholders, improve processes and documentation flow, and enhance seaport call optimization; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Terminal Operators, Stevedoring and Shipping Companies of Micronesia (ATOSSCOM) is a vibrant organization whose goal is to increase operational efficiency in ports and harbors throughout Micronesia and that the enhanced collaboration and cooperation between member jurisdictions and ATOSSCOM may assist in identifying and developing measures to safeguard the environment and infrastructure from climate change, sea level rise, and carbon emission; and

WHEREAS, cabotage imposes significant air service restrictions and fluid connectivity within the Marianas and Micronesia Islands and deters attracting competitive air service from foreign and U.S. airlines; and

WHEREAS, member jurisdictions continue to rely on air and marine transport to connect their remote outer islands and provide support services to their tourism industries,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the MIF leadership commits to identify and implement strategies and interventions that support the goals of the global aviation industry and the PIF *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* as it relates to aspiring to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and that the MIF leadership tasks each relevant airport, seaport and maritime transport to explore mechanisms to implement measures to reduce carbon emissions in airports, seaports and maritime transportation systems; and



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MIF leadership commits to seeking to uphold aviation and maritime standards recognized by the ICAO—and specifically the U.S. FAA required within each member jurisdiction—and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), respectively and relevant civil aviation and maritime authorities toward ensuring a safe, secure, and clean transportation environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the goals, objectives, and priorities found in the *Pacific Regional Aviation Strategy* that are relevant to the member jurisdictions be considered and acted on where appropriate, to include regional cooperation and engagement that promotes collaboration across member jurisdictions that may involve multi/bilateral agreements, aviation capability development that creates opportunities for the peoples of the member jurisdictions through aviation, by increasing access to affordable, quality aviation-related education, training, and development, and aviation safety and security that ensures robust regional aviation safety and security oversight systems and practices that enable compliance with applicable international standards;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MIF leadership consider collaboration and participation in the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), with a membership of over 160 ports and 120 port-related businesses in 87 countries where in May 2017 developed a World Ports Sustainability Program (WPSP) with a primary objective of enhancing and coordinating future sustainability efforts by seaports worldwide and foster international cooperation with partners in the supply chain and the Association of Pacific Ports with an international membership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MIF leadership takes note of the urgent, critical, and unique needs and goals of the Micronesia region relative to aviation and maritime development put forward in this resolution, and further recommends member jurisdictions create a *Micronesian Aviation Taskforce* and a *Micronesian Maritime Taskforce* with goals and objectives that aim to promote aviation and maritime development; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MIF leadership commits to joint efforts in obtaining air service exemptions from relevant regulatory agency(ies), subject to the provisions of each individual compact agreements and any subsidiary agreements, to enable air carriers to obtain economies of scale and provide fluid air connectivity within the Marianas and Micronesian islands;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the MIF leadership tasks its Secretariat to disseminate this resolution to relevant MIF regional committees, government agencies, and partners that have the technical knowledge, financial, and other resources required to support transportation-related departments/ministries to plan and implement these critically needed actions and interventions, including facilitating intersectoral engagements and collaborations with transportation-adjacent sector partners and stakeholders, both domestically and regionally, to seek a more holistic and integrated approach to improving the investments and in expanding air and sea transportation services across the islands.



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