

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australia

Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure

Federated States of Micronesia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Japan

Ministry of Information Communications and Transport

Republic of Kiribati

Department of Communications

Republic of Nauru

Department of State and US Agency for International Development

United States of America

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

WORK TO START ON EAST MICRONESIA CABLE FOLLOWING CONTRACT SIGNING

6 June 2023,

Work to manufacture and lay the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) is officially underway. The EMC Management Committee members have signed the undersea cable contract with NEC Corporation following a competitive tender.

The undersea cable contract is a key component of the totally estimated AUD135 million EMC project, funded by Australia, Japan and the United States. The project will deliver an undersea cable connecting the state of Kosrae in the Federated State of Micronesia, Tarawa in Kiribati, and Nauru to the existing HANTRU-1 cable landing point located in Pohnpei, FSM.

Next steps involve final survey and design of the route and manufacturing of the cable, which will be no wider than a garden hose. Once built, the cable will be laid across the ocean floor and connected to landing infrastructure that will also be constructed in each country.

Today's milestone is being marked by the launch of the East Micronesia Cable website (<https://www.eastmicronesiacable.com/>), which provides information in English, Gilbertese, Kosraean and Nauruan about the project.

Senior representatives from the six countries reaffirmed their commitment to the EMC :

Quotes attributable to Mr Jamie Isbister, Infrastructure Coordinator, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia:

“Australia is proud to support critical infrastructure development in the Pacific and the provision of secure, resilient telecommunications assets. The signing of the marine cable contract marks an important step in a transformational project that will deliver economic and social benefits through improved opportunities for digital trade and e-services for these Pacific Island countries.”

Quotes attributable to Mr Glenn S. Harris, Acting Secretary, Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure, FSM:

“Kosrae is the only state in FSM that remains without a submarine cable connection. The project will support equal access to digital connectivity across all of FSM and greatly enhance the ability of all states to access information and essential services.”

“We are also honoured to provide a digital gateway for our brothers and sisters in Nauru and Kiribati so that we are better connected to each other and to the rest of the world. We thank and look forward to continued collaboration with all project partners.”

Quotes attributable to Mr Endo Kazuya, Director General, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan:

“Once connected, the EMC will deliver faster, higher quality and more reliable and secure communications to Kosrae (FSM), Kiribati and Nauru, connecting more than 100,000 people across the three Pacific countries. ”

“We are pleased to be part of this practical partnership, working with friends and delivering positive benefits for communities across the Pacific,” Mr ENDO Kazuya, Director-General, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan said.

Quotes attributable to Mr Mitateti Mote, Secretary of Ministry of Information Communications and Transport, Kiribati:

“We are pleased to recognise this occasion, and what it means for our country and region, alongside neighbours and friends to the Pacific.”

Quotes attributable to Mr Jay Udit, Secretary of Justice and Border Control and Chief Executive Officer Nauru Fibre Cable Corporation, Nauru:

“The impact of this project will be far reaching – benefiting individuals and communities as well as businesses and services across Nauru. ”

“We are thankful for the support of Australia, Japan and the United States,”

Quotes attributable to Mr Matthew Murray, Senior Official in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State:

“Secure and resilient digital connectivity has never been more important. The United States is delighted to be part of this project bringing our region closer together.”

Quotes attributable to Ms Betty Chung, Deputy Mission Director for the Pacific Islands, USAID, United States:

“This project highlights our shared interests and commitment to positive outcomes for Pacific countries, communities, and individuals. ”

For more information about the East Micronesia Cable, visit
<https://www.eastmicronesiacable.com/> or
<https://www.aiffp.gov.au/investments/investment-list/east-micronesia-cable>