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[www.consort.com.pg](http://www.consort.com.pg)

## Media Release

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### **Papuan Coast Maiden Voyage:** Consort Express Lines invests in the Expansion of its Fleet and Reinforces Commitment to PNG's Development

Consort Express Lines (Consort) proudly announces the latest addition to its fleet – MV Papuan Coast. The vessel, formerly known as MV Dili Chief, has now been seamlessly integrated into Consort's liner operations following its deployment in Consort's network since November 2023.

The acquisition, completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 at a total cost of PGK25 million, marks an important milestone for Consort and represents a significant step forward for the company. The Papuan Coast is an 8000dwt multi-purpose vessel that is built to carry 318-TEU and can handle all types of containerized cargo, break bulk shipments, and project cargo. These are the largest vessels in the Consort fleet, which now numbers 20 vessels, and are the largest container vessels trading coastally in PNG.

"Our customers have spoken clearly. They want more choice of sailings between Lae and Port Moresby. The Papuan Coast will help deliver increased frequency and flexibility to make sure goods arrive on the shelves when needed." says Antony Riley, General Manager at Consort. He adds, "the Papuan Coast will play a pivotal role in meeting the growing demands of customers and further strengthening Consort's position as a leader in coastal shipping."

The Papuan Coast will join three other similar size vessels, Bougainville Coast, Gazelle Coast and Niugini Coast in Consort's liner network and will provide more capacity and better sailing frequency between Lae and Port Moresby as well as covering vital regions such as the North Coast, New Guinea Islands, and Bougainville. This will allow Consort to provide a weekly service offering on all the main trade lanes and improve its schedule reliability. Additionally, Consort will be operating a modern tug and 5000mt barge CEL 501 to provide a dedicated service between Lae and Kimbe for importers and exporters in these ports.

It is recognised that it has been a difficult period for our customers as supply chains normalise and an intense program of maintenance was undertaken across Consort's fleet after the disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Consort is committed to the investment required in supporting our customers' supply chains and ensure our schedule is marketing leading.

To achieve this, Consort has undertaken a PKG130 million investment program to renew its fleet, enhance its liner service offering and importantly to improve the reliability of its product to better serve its customers.



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This includes the PGK25 million acquisition of the Papuan Coast, a PGK87 million investment in additional tugs and barges that are now all operating in Consort's liner network and a PGK18 million capital expenditure on dry-docking and maintaining its core liner fleet.

"This is a significant investment in Consort's network and underscores our commitment to providing safer and more reliable services and improving our service proposition to our customers. These recent acquisitions position Consort with a high quality and versatile fleet that offers a comprehensive and integrated network of services reaching all PNG ports" says Vele Rupa, General Manager Corporate Affairs, Steamships Limited.

Consort continues to make strategic investments within the maritime sector, delivering unparalleled shipping services throughout PNG. The company's vision is to be their customers' partner of choice in providing innovative supply-chain solutions.

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## About Us

Consort extensively invests in its fleet and infrastructure to better service its customers with a complete and reliable shipping service. As one of the largest coastal and project charter shipping companies in Papua New Guinea, Consort provides greater capacity and more frequent services than any other operator. Consort is part of the Steamships Logistics Division, an intermodal logistics entity solely owned by Steamships Limited. To learn more about Consort: [www.consort.com.pg](http://www.consort.com.pg)