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CS confirms K9m gun deal

THESE are the weapons which Aimo and his group will inspect in Brisbane next week.

The MAUL (pictured top) is a lightweight, modular, 12-gauge, five-shot semi-automatic shotgun for both military and law enforcement users.

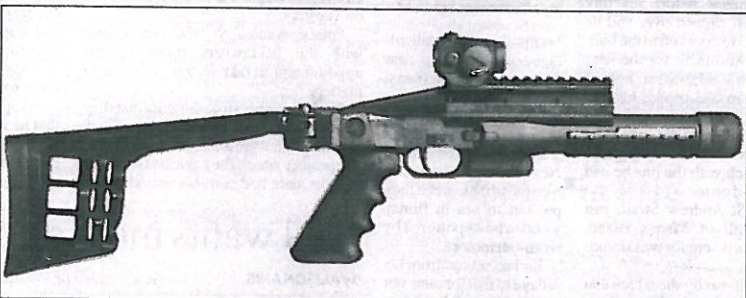
It has been designed to deliver shotgun capabilities for non-lethal and lethal munitions.

The weapon will be offered with a range of less lethal munitions such as blunt impact, electro-muscular incapacitation, frangible nose chemical and marker munitions, together with lethal munitions including buckshot.

When mounted to an assault rifle, the weapon provides a real force multiplier. The combined weapon offers the warfighter a choice of 5.56mm and 12-gauge lethal munitions, available in a single lightweight weapon system.

It provides for a second lethal barrel for use when mounted as a module on a combat rifle. This capability allows a soldier to remain active and lethal in a firefight. It is simply a matter of instantly switching to MAUL and continuing on in the firefight.

Guns for sale ...



Jails to buy 1,500 semi-automatic weapons, 50,000 rounds from Aust

By ISAAC NICHOLAS

CORRECTIONAL Services Minister Tony Aimo has confirmed overseas media reports that the Correctional Services will buy non-lethal weapons worth more than K9 million for its jails from Australian defence technology company Metal Storm Ltd.

The Brisbane-based company announced separately on its website that the Correctional Services planned to have about 1,500 of these weapons in service starting next year.

Aimo said CS had placed orders worth US\$3.364 million (K9.1 million) but no payments had been made as arrangements were being done on a government-to-government level.

The minister, reinstated CS commissioner Richard Sikani and deputy commissioner operations Henry Wavik will travel to Brisbane next week to check on the weapons.

Metal Storm said this week it would supply 500 weapons and 50,000 rounds of ammunition in a deal signed with Aimo.

The semi-automatic weapons would be used with non-lethal ammunition and would be deployed to CS officers in charge of security at jails throughout the country, providing non-lethal response capabilities that could be lifted to immediate lethal response if necessary.

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NATION

CS minister: Sikani's reinstatement lawful

CS strikes gun deal

By ISAAC NICHOLAS

THE reinstatement of Correctional Services Commissioner Richard Sikani to the top post is lawful and in line with all public service rules and regulations, minister Tony Aimo said yesterday.

He told reporters that all internal and external investigations had cleared Sikani of any wrongdoing into the escape of serial bank robber William Kapris and 11 others from the Bomana prison early this year.

Based on these findings, the minister said cabinet saw fit to give the CS top administrative post back to Sikani.

"Sikani was not personally involved or responsible for aiding and abetting the escape of Kapris and 11 other hardcore prisoners from the Bomana maximum security unit on Jan 12," Aimo said.

He said the jail commander of the corrective institution was responsible for the day-to-day administration and management of the prison, including the maximum unit.

"It is clearly spelt out in



CS Commissioner Sikani stressing a point to reporters yesterday with Minister Aimo listening attentively.

his duty statement," he added.

He said two prison warders, Abiang Kera and John Weka, had been charged with the offence with their cases now before court.

"My department, through the commissioner, has in place security procedures and protocols, standing orders and operational orders in the management of the

maximum security unit.

"The underlying rules and command must be observed and managed by the jail commanders and all their officers at CS institutions throughout the country.

"It is not the task of the commissioner, or even the minister, to stand at the Bomana maximum security unit gate or the CS gate to check every client visiting

prisoners," Aimo said.

"Security protocols of all security units must be strictly executed in all our correctional institutions."

The minister said an internal investigation into the escape of Kapris and 11 others did not, in any way, implicate the commissioner.

"Having considered all these facts, I, as minister for CS, seeking advice from Public Service Minister Peter O'Neill and the chief secretary to government, Manusupe Zurenuoc, sought cabinet's approval to reinstate Sikani as CS commissioner."

The approval was granted on Aug 27.

Aimo urged the commissioner to ensure command and control mechanisms were put in place to get the department up and running.

Sikani's first task would be to implement the prison industry authority concept, a vehicle aimed at driving the rehabilitation of rundown institutions and the rural lock-up programme that had grinded to a halt in January. Sikani promised to do his best.

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"PNG is delighted to be able to source weapons at the leading edge of shot-gun technology and we hope in due course to have about 1,500 of these weapons in service," Aimo said.

He said he expected ratification of the urgent purchase through the usual government protocols shortly and the first 50 weapons to be delivered by next February.

Aimo said CS would be getting non-lethal weapons while the police and defence would be beefing up their firepower with lethal weapons.

He said orders had been placed and were going through the normal procurement process.

"If things go well, Correctional Services will be the first to get non-lethal weapons that is aimed at injuring rather than killing of escapees.

"We do not want to kill prison escapees, the message we want to get across is for escapees to go back and serve their jail term, and we (CS) will rehabili-

tate you into the communi-

ty as a reformed person."

Aimo said that CS saw the capacity of the weapon to deliver a rapid and escalating response as exactly what was necessary for security in PNG jails.

Metal Storm CEO Dr Lee Finniear said the production contract was a watershed for the company after many years of research, development and testing.

He said that an additional advantage for the CS was that weapons that were lost or stolen could not be used with conventional illegally obtained ammunition.

"Illegal arms possession is a big problem in PNG and the government are determined to tackle the issue on a variety of fronts.

"By purchasing Metal Storm weapons, the PNG Correctional Services is contributing to government arms control by ensuring that, if stolen, its new weapons cannot be used effectively by criminals," Finniear said.

Tolai castaway rescued off Manus

ALONE, desperate and helpless Benedict Jor sits on his upturned boat as a rescue ship draws near to rescue him after he drifted for three weeks.

The 20-year-old castaway from East New Britain had survived at first on coconuts and bananas before his tiny craft flipped over and he had to crawl on to the hull.

And there for the next two weeks he sat, hoping for rescue, turning his face to the occasional rain squall for water and eating raw fish he had managed to catch with the line he had held on to.

St Andrew Strait, just south of Manus island, was where Jor was stranded.

It was by sheer luck that he was spotted by an Australian container ship as he drifted in the St Andrew Strait off Papua New Guinea, north of the Australian continent.

The Mail Online reported yesterday that the crew of the ship *Wangaratta*, travelling from China to Melbourne, hauled him on board, where he burst into tears of relief.

"Thank you, thank you, I thought I was going to die," he said in his broken English.

PNG officials have now sent a cheerful message to



Jor ... shedding tears of joy after he was rescued

his family in his small village of Nonga, near Rabaul, who had feared the worst as the weeks went by without any sign of him.

Fishermen from Papua New Guinea frequently run into trouble when they put out to sea in flimsy wooden boats powered by worn-out motors.

Jor had set out from his village to fish for tuna, but a change in wind and currents swept his boat out to sea and after several days drifting the craft flipped over in choppy seas.

"Several boats passed by but they did not see me," Jor told his rescuers. Jor was treated in the ship's hospital for hypothermia, dehydration and shock and it is now planned that the vessel will take him from Melbourne to Sydney, where he will pass through immigration and where consular officials will arrange for him to be flown home.

No more stop-work: Landowners

LANDOWNERS from the Southern Highlands have vowed to work closely with the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on LNG Matters Francis Potape, ExxonMobil and the government to deliver the project.

They declared on Tuesday that there would be no more stop-work or threats on the multi-billion-kina liquefied natural gas (LNG) project.

The landowners gave the assurance to Potape, Governor Anderson Agiru and ExxonMobil country manager Peter Graham during a trip to the project sites on Tuesday.

Potape wanted to talk face-to-face with the landowners following his appointment to take charge of all LNG matters.

The landowners told the team that they had forced the stop-work because of lack of government presence on the ground at the project sites. They were also angry that the state had continuously delayed

paying their business development grants.

The landowners are confident that with Potape responsible for all LNG matters, all outstanding matters will be resolved.

The minister is from the area and knows the landowner groups well.

The prime minister had directed him to put together a government team to be deployed at the project sites. The team will comprise officers from the offices of the prime minister, chief secretary, valuer-general, lands, commerce and industry, labour and employment, petroleum and energy, police and other relevant government agencies.

Their task will be to deal with all landowner issues on the ground.

Potape also assured the landowners that he would work with Commerce and Industry Minister Gabriel Kapris to ensure their business grants were fast-tracked and paid out this week.

UN wants more effort on MDGs

By ALISON ANIS

THE campaign to accelerate the millennium development goals (MDGs) in PNG must be led by the poor, marginalised and people missing out on basic health, education, clean water, sanitation and other privileges, director for United Nations millennium campaign for Asia-Pacific Minar Pimple has said.

"MDGs are all about those who are under-privileged and are coming out of poverty.

"The focus on MDGs for the next five to 10

years must be localised and centred on this group of people," Pimple said.

He said from observations, much work to speed up the MDG process had been centred on the national level with little or nothing done at the local level where 80% of the people live.

"It is now time for the people who are left behind to stand up and remind the national leaders to fulfil their promises to improve lives and meet the needs of all citizens for a better, safer and healthier world by

achieving the millennium goals that are in line with their national targets," Pimple said.

The UN Asia-Pacific director was in the country last week to launch this year's "stand up and take action" campaign on the development goals before the MDG review summit in New York from Sept 20-22.

He called on the PNG government to critically analyse the needs of its people and work towards achieving most of the goals, adding: "PNG is lagging behind."

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