

AVAROA CABLE LIMITED & OPT GROUP JOINT MEDIA RELEASE:

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**MANATUA CABLE DELIVERS:
AVAROA CABLE PARTNERS
WITH FRENCH POLYNESIA'S OPT GROUP
FOR INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY**

- *first international connectivity on the Manatua cable -*
- *superhighway for Cook Islands to world's largest internet hub -*
- *high capacity direct connectivity to Los Angeles, USA –*
- *deal builds on Manatua partnership –*

RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS & TAHITI, FRENCH POLYNESIA, 23 SEPTEMBER 2020:

Avaroa Cable Ltd and the OPT Group through its wholly owned subsidiary ONATi in French Polynesia, have today announced a connectivity partnership providing the Cook

Islands with its first international fibre cable connectivity. Using the Manatua cable, the landmark deal links Rarotonga through to Tahiti Internet Exchange, and beyond to major international internet hubs in Hawaii and Los Angeles, USA.

The partnership builds on the strong relationship developed between ACL and OPT as partners on the recently completed 3600km Manatua Cable Project across the South Pacific.

Vodafone Cook Islands will be the first to take advantage of the new service, providing its customers in Rarotonga and Aitutaki with state-of-the-art fibre powered connections transiting across a huge swathe of the Pacific Ocean to the USA. The service will come into effect immediately.

For the OPT Group, the contract signals a bold move for their international connectivity business and the ability to leverage their substantial network investments and expertise to contribute to improved connectivity for neighbouring countries.

Dr Ranulf Scarbrough, Chief Executive Officer Avaroa Cable Ltd said:

“ACL recently announced the launch of connectivity between Rarotonga and Aitutaki in the Cook Islands on the new Manatua Cable. Today’s announcement is the second step in our strategy, opening up the first international fibre cable connectivity. ACL is excited to work with ONATi to deliver this crucial link for the Cook Islands. There is more to come in ACL’s strategy and we will make further announcements as we work to put in place the optimum international connectivity for the Cook Islands over the months ahead. This is a fantastic next step for us.”

Jean-François MARTIN, President of OPT said:

“Both OPT and Onati have worked closely with ACL on the ground-breaking Manatua Cable Project. This partnership builds on the strong relationship and mutual respect we’ve developed and leverages Onati’s proven connectivity experience and resources for the benefit of the Cook Islands providing direct, low latency access to Internet content via Tahiti. We are delighted to be taking our relationship with ACL to the next level and helping our Polynesian neighbour transform their connectivity.”

Phill Henderson, Chief Executive Officer Vodafone Cook Islands, said:

“International fibre connectivity is a key part of the partnership Vodafone recently signed with Avaroa Cable. This announcement unlocks a universe of exciting potential applications for our customers in Rarotonga and Aitutaki. We look forward to helping our customers realise the full potential of this important new infrastructure for the Cook Islands.”

ENDS

Image 1 of 1:



Description: Avaroa Cable’s recently appointed Systems Engineer and Cook Islander, Tania Apera, making final checks in the Manatua Cable Landing Station in Rarotonga before connecting the Cook Islands to the global internet.

Further information

Enquiries about this news release should be made to Rebecca Tavioni on +682-56621 or rebecca.tavioni@avaroacable.com.

About Avaroa Cable Ltd (www.avaroacable.com)

ACL is the Pacific's newest international fibre operator providing wholesale connectivity services in the Cook Islands. ACL is a crown corporate entity (CCE) and manages the Cook Islands involvement in the Manatua Cable project and its commercialisation as an international and domestic wholesale operator. ACL has been established, and the independent board which oversees it is appointed by, the Cook Islands Investment Corporation, which is the government body responsible for crown corporate entities and state-owned enterprises. ACL's board is chaired by local business woman Tatiana Burn. Funding has been provided by the Cook Islands Government, the New Zealand Aid Programme and the Asian Development Bank.

About Office des Postes et Telecommunications (OPT) and ONATi (www.opt.pf)

OPT Group of French Polynesia is a government-owned company with 3 main subsidiaries. ONATi operates and delivers fixed line infrastructure and services, is the ISP and the mobile operator; Tahiti Nui Telecoms former international operator is still hosting equipment's such as satellites Teleport, Honotua, Natitua cable landing stations and now focusing on Data Centers and services, sells computers and provides IT services; Fare Rata provides postal and banking services. With its 87 stores spread on a surface as vast as Europe, OPT Group delivers services to all inhabited islands.

About Vodafone Cook Islands (www.vodafone.co.ck)

Vodafone Cook Islands is a telecommunications services provider offering mobile, fixed line, broadband and a range of other telecommunications technology-based services. Controlling ownership of the business is held by Amalgamated Telecom Holdings Limited, a publicly listed company on the Fiji stock exchange. The business is 55% locally owned.

About the Manatua – One Polynesia Cable

The Manatua cable is 3600km long connecting Samoa, Niue, Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Tahiti and Bora. The cable is capable of operating at up to 10 tera bits per second (= 10,000,000 megabits per second) using state-of-the-art fibre optic technology, enough speed to download 300 high definition movies every single second.

About the Manatua Cable Consortium

The ground-breaking Manatua cable consortium was formed following the signing of an International Treaty in November 2018 between the governments of the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and French Polynesia. The purpose of the consortium is to build and operate the Manatua cable. The consortium comprises Avaroa Cable Ltd (for the Cook Islands), Niue Telecom, the Samoa Submarine Cable Company and Office de Poste et Telecommunications (for French Polynesia). It is the first consortium of its type anywhere in the Pacific.

About the New Zealand Aid Programme (www.mfat.govt.nz/en/aid-and-development)

The Cook Islands involvement in the Manatua Cable project has been part funded with NZ\$15m of grant funding from the New Zealand Aid Programme.

About the Asian Development Bank (www.adb.org)

The Cook Islands involvement in the Manatua Cable project has been part funded with US\$15m of loan funding from the Asian Development Bank.