

CONSULTATIVE MEETING

FSM National Government and Guam Contractors Association

February 18, 2021

Zoom Videoconference Meeting (PPA Conference Room)

Suggested Talking Points for Opening Remarks: DTC&I Sec. Carl Apis

Time: Thursday, February 18th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

WELCOME REMARKS

- Welcomes Mr James Martinez, President of Guam Contractors Association.
- Welcomes all members of Guam Contractors Association.
- Acknowledges the presence of
 - Iso Nahnken John Adolph
 - Hon. Jesse Salalu, Lt. Governor of Yap
 - Hon. Arthy Nena, Lt. Governor of Kosrae
 - Mr. Francis Itimai, Chief of staff
 - Mr. Kembo Mida, CEO Chuuk Public Utilities Corporation
 - PMO Offices

GENERAL REMARKS

- Today's session is what is hoped to be the first of many interactions between the FSM and Guam on matters of infrastructure, and more so the practical, and dare I say "concrete matter", of **construction of the built environment** within the four States of the FSM. As the cabinet member of the Panuelo-George administration responsible for infrastructure-related issues, I can tell you that the current administration attaches top **priority to infrastructure development** to improve the **quality of life for its citizens**

and to support the **development of the private sector**. We see organized, quality infrastructure development as key to attaining **national self-sufficiency** as an interim objective, which in itself can serve as a launching pad for even higher national goals.

- Over the near to medium term future the FSM will be embarking on a construction drive on a scale never before equaled in its history. This coming construction boom will be fueled by already secured funding from a wide spectrum of reliable sources. **(Estimated at \$400 million in committed funding)**
- However, while we have a surety of funding in the near to medium future, we also have to grapple with an ongoing issue of a scarcity of contractors that possess the requisite capacity and standards for medium and major construction works.
- The FSM and Guam share many similarities and traditions. As Micronesians there are strong linkages of geography, culture, history and socio-economic traditions to name a few. However, we are not afraid to acknowledge that as time progresses into the 21st Century, the FSM has some degree of catching up in order to be on par with our Chamorro kin from an infrastructure and construction capacity perspective. We recognize the growth of the construction sector in Guam over the years, not just in the volume of work undertaken and completed, but also in the quality of the work and your general adherence to the highest international standards.
- So today, in this virtual meeting with the Guam Contractors Association, we would like to use this opportunity to provide some more specifics on our upcoming construction program. Just as importantly though, I hope that this meeting ultimately proves to be pivotal in forging successful and fruitful professional and business relationships between the Guaminian construction sector and that of the FSM.
- Thank you for this opportunity to address all present and may we all have a productive session today.

(Hand over to Robert in his role as facilitator)