

Hon Georgina te Heuheu

**Minister for Pacific Island
Affairs**

18 June 2009



Media Release

Minister deplores passport fraudsters

Pacific Island Affairs Minister Georgina te Heuheu has urged the Pacific community to contact the police if they have any information about a false passport scam.

False passports and visas have been offered for sale for \$500 at meetings in South Auckland and Hamilton attended by large numbers of Pacific people.

'It's deplorable that anyone would do this to some of the most vulnerable people in our country,' she said.

'My Ministry has been active during the day ensuring that word goes out to the Pacific communities that any information about this scam should be given to the police.

'Pacific people must be very cautious about anyone offering deals like this.

'These fraudsters are likely to move on to the Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Nelson and Marlborough regions where a lot of Pacific people are working in the horticulture and agricultural sectors and under the Recognised Seasonal Employment scheme.'

Mrs te Heuheu said Immigration New Zealand is the only legitimate body in this country which can issue visas and permanent residency.

Media contact: Rose Hart, Press Secretary

04 817 9878 or 021 279 9878