

OFFICE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Gold and silver confiscated from Australian passenger at Jacksons International Airport

On Thursday, 14th May 2026, Aviation Security Officers detected suspicious items belonging to an Australian citizen traveling on a Qantas Flight from Port Moresby to Brisbane. Two separate detections were made:

- At Checked Baggage Screening (CBS 1), Aviation Security officers identified two containers of raw gold particles and one silver bar.
- At the International Departure Screening Point, three gold nuggets were found in the passenger's carry-on bag.

When questioned, the passenger stated that he is an employee of Rippa Holding Ltd, who are based in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and are specialised in heavy equipment machines for mining.

He further stated that he was not aware of the process in place and had no intention of smuggling the items out of the country but had taken them for the purpose of testing and raising funds for the community back in Buka.

The passenger was immediately referred to PNG Customs, who confirmed the items to be gold and silver. The items were then confiscated by PNG Customs, and the passenger was issued a Customs Custody Receipt before being permitted to continue his travel. The matter was referred to the Customs Investigation Unit, and the passenger is required to report back with documentation upon his return to Papua New Guinea.

This latest detection is the sixth case of attempted gold smuggling at Jacksons International Airport this year, highlighting critical intervention and action by all concerned organizations in safeguarding Papua New Guinea's resources.

Illegal attempts to smuggle gold out of the country undermine national wealth and development, and economic sovereignty.

NAC warns that any attempt to smuggle gold or other undeclared valuables will be detected, confiscated, and referred directly to PNG Customs for further action.

We also call on the traveling public to play their part. If you observe or suspect any unusual or suspicious behaviour at our airports, report it immediately to Aviation Security or Customs officers. Together, we can protect Papua New Guinea's wealth and keep our airport safe.

Approved for release



Dominic Kaumu, ML OBE
Acting Managing Director & CEO
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Caption: Photo of gold particles in a container, a silver bar and pieces of smelted gold detected by NAC Aviation Security and referred to PNG Customs