

President Christian Attends Yap Fiber Optic Ceremony



PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On November 29th, 2018 President Peter M. Christian, in addition to special guests from Nippon Electric Company (NEC) and PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia, participated in the Yap State Fiber Optic Cable Inaugural Ceremony held in Gilman, Yap. Organized by the Government of Yap in conjunction with the Federated States of Micronesia Telecommunication Cable Corporation (FSMT Cable), the event was a formal celebration of the completion and operation of the new fiber optic cable in Yap State.

In partnership with the World Bank, the FSM has committed towards improving Information Communications Technology (ICT) in the FSM. After creating FSMT Cable, and upon the completion of preliminary work, the FSM developed a contract with NEC in March 2016. By August 2017 the Wet Plant—that's the physical cable in the ocean, repeaters, etc.—was installed. In June 2018 the Dry Plant—the land cable through ductings, connecting to a cable landing station—was installed. The Yap State fiber optic cable has been in operation since July 2018.

Yap State's internet capacity, when it relied on the satellite connection before the fiber optic cable was completed, was 50 megabytes per second. Now the system capacity is up to 500 gigabytes per second. In other words, the capacity has increased about 10,000 times. In layman's terms, the internet capacity went from slow to fast. If the satellite connection was like traveling from Woleai to Ulithi in an outrigger canoe, the fiber optic connection is like traveling from Woleai to Ulithi in the MV Hapilmohl. However, internet capacity is not the same thing as internet speed.

Some citizens may appreciate learning the distinction between FSMT Cable, FSM Telecommunications Corporation (FSMTC), and the FSM Telecommunications Regulation Authority (TRA). FSMT Cable is the submarine cable company connecting Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae to promote broadband adoption in the FSM; they are a wholesaler and not-for-profit. FSMT Cable's customers are the Internet Service Providers (ISPs), of which at the moment the only ISP available is FSMTC. However, per the Telecom Act of 2014, the FSM intends to liberalize its marketplace i.e. allow multiple ISPs to exist and compete with each other, with the goal being

cheaper and better internet, television, and phone service for all citizens in the FSM. The purpose of the TRA, then, is to regulate those ISPs.

Learn more about the fiber optic cable projects in the FSM by visiting the FSMT Cable website here:
<https://fsmcable.com/>