

Special Thanks to:

The Embassy of Samoa in Japan for the photos on page 3.

Iwaki City Sports Promotion Division for the Iwaki-Samoa MoU Signing Ceremony photo on page 4.

Cover Photo: Toyoma Beach. The popular surfing area was devastated by the tsunami in 2011, but is now being restored as part of a scenic route along the coastline.

Book Cover Photo: Runners in this year's 8th Iwaki Sunshine Marathon heading towards Aquamarine Fukushima.

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From the Editor

Iwaki has started 2017 with some big international events. One of those was the signing ceremony of a memorandum of understanding between the city and Samoa, paving the way for Iwaki to hold training camps for Samoa's national rugby union team in the lead up to the 2019 Rugby World Cup and Tokyo 2020 Olympics. This followed a visit to the city by various local government officials from the UK as part of a CLAIR sponsored study tour held earlier this year. This edition covers those events, the announcement of Iwaki hosting the next Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALMS Summit) in 2018, and also includes the final edition of our series that has revealed Iwaki's recovery after the 2011 disaster.

Even though there is still three years until the Olympics, two years until the Rugby World Cup and one year until the next PALM Summit, 2017 is bound to be a busy year for Iwaki – providing many opportunities for the city to prove it is actively engaged in internationalisation and promote itself on an international scale.

- Ben

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