

The CIX VFR Club

Christmas Caper – 2019

Day 4 - Vivigani to Girua via Wanigela



On October 27, 1942 the Australian Army 2/12th Battalion arrived at Vivigani with a US Army airfield engineer made a report saying that the airstrip one mile northwest of the mission could be prepared for emergency use by clearing rocks and vegetation, and advising 'Permanent strip 6,000 feet long can be constructed.'

Immediately, RAAF No 7 Mobile Works squadron worked to expand Vivigani Airfield. Days into the initial construction, on October 31, 1942 an RAAF Anson low on fuel, made an emergency landing at Vivigani. Fuel was shipped in and the plane departed on November 9, 1942 just missing the mangrove swamp at the end of the runway on take off.

During April 1943 an emergency strip was constructed and a road was also built from the docks to the airfield. During June to September 1943, the airfield was expanded and improved. When completed, it had two parallel runways measuring 6,600' x 150' plus taxiways and a revetment area.

On May 17, 1943 Vivigani Airfield was first used by six Beauforts from 100 Squadron, staging out of Gurney Field for a bombing mission against Gasmata. Afterwards, used by both American and Australian liaison, fighter and bomber aircraft.

Still in use today as Vivigani Airport and served by weekly domestic flights.

For more information sclick on the link below:

<https://www.pacificwrecks.com/airfields/png/vivigani/index.html>

The Route

Leg 1	Vivigani to Wanigela	69 nms
Leg 2	Wanigela to Girua	60 nms

This days flying is 129 nms and can be comfortably undertaken in a Cessna 172. Even accounting for the tea & buns at Wanigela, the trip should not take much more than 1hour 20 minutes.