



Department of Water Resources (DOWR)  
Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MOLNR)  
Newsletter 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter  
(Jul, Aug, Sept 2018)

### 1. Port Vila BAN Editor Response



Daily Post published an article on Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> of September with the title reading “Victims punished in Port Vila’s dirty harbour”, published in issue no. 5507.

The article conveys the point that the level of bacteria present in the waters of Port Vila harbour are not being disputed, it is the fine a person, or persons incurs is the subject. The article further expresses that the relevant authorities are failing in their part to educate and inform the public on the Ban and the fine (as per notice no:72, 2018), this may be true in part, however the Department working with the full team and the Port Vila Municipal Council (PVMC) to make sure the public is made aware.

The article also insights that the department has in fact caught and penalised some members of the public already since the ban, this is not true. It is still in the process of informing the public with the emphasis on how unsafe it is for swimming via word of mouth, the department of Water Resources Facebook page and talkback shows while the notice boards are in production.

Subclause (2) of the notice reads: “A person who contravenes subclause (1) commits an offence under section 32 of the Act (Water Resources Management Act [CAP 28] punishable on conviction by a fine of **not** exceeding VT 1, 000, 000 or to imprisonment for a period of **not** more than 2 years, or both”. These are set limits, the amount of fine and prison term will depend on certain categories of which the Department of Water Resources is working to establish.

The important thing to note is, the department is doing this for the people, to protect us all. We need everyone to come together to make this work.

## 2. Strengthened Support to Communities for Access to Clean Safe Water by Government



**Port Vila, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018:** The Department of Water Resources (DoWR) began the roll out of a process to strengthen Vanuatu communities' access to clean and safe water.

“While the New Zealand Government and other donor partners have funded a number of projects in communities, their support is important in improving the way the Government is delivering water to the people of Vanuatu in a much more sustainable and systematic way”, stated Alfred Maoh, Minister of Lands & Natural Resources. “This process means that Area Secretaries play a stronger role in identifying where the needs are at the community level”, he added.

To ensure everyone has access to clean and safe water, communities in Vanuatu need a Drinking Water Safety and Security Plan (DWSSP). It is important that non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations or individuals involved in water projects ensure the development of a Drinking Water Safety and Security Plan with participation by the community is part of all projects. Over 100 Drinking Water Safety and Security Plans have already been completed by government, individuals, and non-governmental organizations.

“This is a new approach adopted by the DOWR and is a Roadmap that guides the development and implementation for both New and Existing water supply systems using the Drinking Water Safety and Security Planning tool” stated Erickson Sammy, Director, Department of Water Resources. “This process is using the Decentralisation structure with the bottom-up approach to receiving water supply requests” Mr. Sammy further stated, and is being led Acting Manager of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Mr Erie Sami.

## 3. SIBIOMBU Water System Launching



**Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> of September, 2018** marked a historic day for the community of Sibiombu, Erromango as the Department of Water Resources (DOWR) Director, Mr. Erickson Sammy launched their fully installed and functional water supply.

The village of Sibiombu sits on the Eastern part of Erromango, where the only means of access is by boat on the rough ocean waters and boat fare to and from Ipota is above Vt10, 000 per trip. No infrastructure in place means they have no easy access to roads, shops, schools, health facilities and safe clean drinking water.

To collect water for drinking, cooking, washing and bathing the people of Sibiombu have to walk a distance of roughly 200 – 300 meters.

The DOWR contracted Spring Life, in 2015 in response to the El Nino crisis to set up water systems in a number of locations in Vanuatu and Sibiombu community is the first one to be successfully accomplished.



The delegation accompanying DOWR Director Sammy included the 1st Political Advisor to the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MOL), Mr. Sero Kuautonga, on behalf of Minister Alfred Maoh; 2nd Political Advisor to the Ministry of Youth and Sport and Mr. Joel Nilwo on behalf of the MP of the TAFEA outer islands, Tomker Netvunei.

Also representing the Provincial Government was the Area Administrator and delegated high chiefs of the area including one chief residing in Vila.

#### 4. Provincial WASH - In Emergency Coordination Training



**A 3-day Provincial Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) — in Emergency Coordination Training** in the capital ended yesterday.

The workshop was conducted by Mr Jason Snuggs, a technical advisor with the Department of Water Resources (DOWR).

Held from the 24th to 26th of September 2018, the WASH training was for NGOs and Government departments, mainly the Department of Health and DOWR, focusing on improving the team's coordination of WASH response to an emergency.

The objective was to train all relevant sectors in the WASH cluster to better coordinate their response to emergencies within their respective organizations and departments, and as a whole WASH cluster to ensure effective and efficient response.

Access to WASH includes safe water, adequate sanitation and hygiene education.

Established by UNICEF, the WASH team works in over 100 countries worldwide to improve water and sanitation services, as well as basic hygiene practices.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water and that is one of the major messages spread by the WASH cluster in times of disaster when coordinating to provide safe and clean water for the victims during an extreme natural event.



Vanuatu is considered to be one of the world's most vulnerable countries to natural hazards.

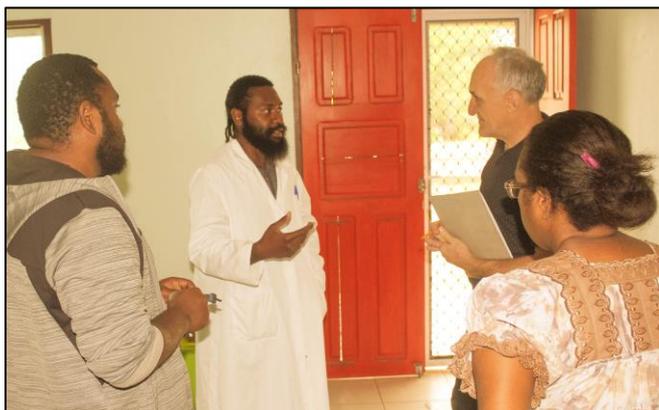
Comprised of over 80 islands, the country is located on the earthquake-prone "ring of fire" and sits at the centre of the Pacific cyclone belt.

These hazards result in a high frequency of volcanic eruptions, cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, storm surges, coastal flooding, and landslides.

In addition, the country is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Sea level rise and the increased intensity of extreme events have led to changes in agricultural productivity and water availability.

Therefore, this same WASH – in Emergency Coordination training will be held in all five remaining provinces, TAFEA, TORBA, MALAMPA and SANMA within the next two months.

## 5. COMMONWEALTH STANDARDS NETWORK (CSN)



FROM L TO R: MICHEL LEODORO (GEO SCIENTIST), MICHAEL MANIEL (WATER QUALITY OFFICER), ALAIN PEYRE (CSN) AND BEVERLY MARANGO (BUREAU OF STANDARDS)

The Commonwealth Standards Network (CSN) project is a trade facilitation initiative announced by the UK's Prime Minister at the Commonwealth Business Forum Meeting in April 2018. The CSN is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and implemented by the British Standards Institution (BSI).

The project aims to deliver transformational change by utilising the Commonwealth's shared values, languages and institutions, to increase the export potential of the Commonwealth's least developing economies whilst boosting intra-Commonwealth Trade. The greater wide scale use of international standards will increase the opportunity for companies to export to markets that use the same standards.

**Key activities** of the Commonwealth Standards Network include:

- Establishing an online portal to increase information sharing between Commonwealth National Standards Bodies and other stakeholders;
- Creating a repository of information to support standardisation throughout the Commonwealth and a forum for Commonwealth National Standards Bodies (NSBs) to share learning and experience;
- Developing a toolkit to support standardisation throughout the Commonwealth;
- Delivering training programmes for Commonwealth NSBs in countries eligible to receive Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) as well as workshops in ODA-eligible countries to raise awareness and promote the benefits of standardisation to key stakeholders from Government and the private sector;

- Providing three Technical Assistance projects in selected Commonwealth States in the Caribbean, Eastern Africa and Oceania regions.

Standards play a crucial role in promoting productivity and efficiency, reducing costs, removing barriers to trade, and driving economic growth.

Scott Steedman, Director of Standards at BSI, said:

*"Independent research in 2015 found that 41% of SMEs and 36% of large companies in the UK are more likely to export if they use industry standards."*

*The launch of the Commonwealth Standards Network will strengthen the economic performance of the [Commonwealth] member states through closer cooperation in the use of international standards, which increase competitiveness, support social responsibility and provide a 'passport to trade'.*

*We want to help companies throughout the Commonwealth to become more competitive and economically successful. Using standards brings growth."*

Mr. Alain Peyre, from the CSN was accompanied by Mrs. Beverly Marango of the Bureau of Standards here in Vanuatu, visited DOWR and Geology and Mines lab to gather information on their status.

Visits such as this one are planned to be conducted in all Government sanctioned laboratories to identify what resources are available and what are not, machines available or are lacking thereof, tests being conducted, materials existing, procedures followed, the number of lab assigned technicians, and what areas that the project can provide training to officers to fill in these gaps.

Setting up a national network comprising of each Government Laboratories will be very beneficial for the Government for a number of reasons including having better coherency in operations, equipment order in bulk package deals and test assistance between labs.