

KEY FACTS

Official name: Ripablik blong Vanuatu (Republic of Vanuatu)

Head of State: President Iolu Abil (from 2 Sep 2009)

Head of government: Prime Minister Moana Carcasses Kalosil (from 23 Mar 2013)

Ruling party: A coalition led by Vanua'aku Pati (VP) with National Unity Party (NUP), Union des Partis Moderés (UPM) (Union of Moderate Parties), Leba Pati (Vanuatu Labour Party) (VLP) and independents (since 2004; re-elected 30 Oct 2012)

Area: 11,880 square km (82 islands)

Population: 250,000 (2012)*

Capital: Port Vila (on Efate)

Official language: Bislama (Ni-Vanuatu Pidgin), English, French

Currency: Vatu (V) = 100 centimes

Exchange rate: V98.25 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

GDP per capita: US\$3,125 (2012)*

GDP real growth: 2.70% (2012)

GDP: US\$783.00 million (2012)*

Inflation: 1.40% (2012)*

Balance of trade: -US\$242.84 million (2011)

Foreign debt: US\$111.00 million (2010)

* estimated figure

Vanuatu

Strong commodity prices and a good year for copra and coconut oil lead gross domestic product (GDP) growth to almost double in 2011, to 4.3 per cent. Tourist arrivals fell, however, by 3.5 per cent from the 2010, level although these had been inflated after floods in Fiji caused tourists to divert to other destinations.

The *Asian Development Bank Economic Outlook 2012* reported that the current account deficit was steady at 5.9 per cent of GDP in 2011, and was more than covered by foreign investment and donor inflows. By December 2011, foreign exchange reserves had risen to 6.3 months of import cover, from 5.8 months in March 2011.

Construction, agricultural production and tourism (additional flights are planned from Australia and Fiji) are likely to see growth of 4.5–5.0 per cent in 2012. Inflation is expected to pick up as the economy grows, to around 3.0–4.0 per cent in the next two years.

Vanuatu became WTO's 154th member in November 2011. This meant reductions in tariffs, although the resulting loss in revenue will be partly offset by excise tax increases. Taxes as a share of GDP are already relatively low at around 19 per cent of GDP. As the indirect tax base erodes, the government will need to consider bringing in measures to broaden the tax base, such as a progressive income tax.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Historical profile

Human settlement dates back to around 4,000 BC.

1606 Portuguese explorers, Luis Váez de Torres and Pedro Ferdinand de Queirós, arrived on the island they called Espiritu Santo, at Big Bay.

1792 Captain Cook explored the islands in 1792, calling the group the New Hebrides.

1887 The islands were administered as a joint French-British naval commission.

1906 An Anglo-French Condominium was established. Over half the male population was conscripted as indentured workers into Australia. The native population dropped dramatically, falling to 45,000 by 1935.

1938 A new religion emerged called the John Frum Cargo cult.

1956 The John Frum Cargo religious cult was recognised by the authorities.

1960s An independence movement, NaGriamel, grew; it advocated the return of land to the native Ni-Vanuatu.

1971 With over 36 per cent of the land owned by foreigners, NaGriamel petitioned the United Nations to prevent further sales to non-indigenous people.

1977 The UK, France and local representatives agreed independence plans.

1980 The leader of NaGriamel attempted to gain independence for Espiritu Santo, but the insurrection was put down and the entire state of New Hebrides gained independence on 30 July, under the new name of Vanuatu. The first prime minister was Walter Lini, an Anglican priest.

1981 Vanuatu joined the United Nations.

1995 A coalition government of the Union des Partis Moderés (UPM) (Union of Moderate Parties) (Francophone) and the National United Party (NUP) (Anglophone) took office and Serge Vohor became prime minister.

1998 Donald Kalpokas formed a coalition government, comprising his Vanua'atu Party (VP) (Party of Our Land) and the NUP.

1999 John Bernard Bani was elected president. Parliament elected Barak Sopé prime minister, ousting Donald Kalpokas.

2001 Sopé and his government were ousted following a no-confidence vote. A new government was formed with a coalition of the UPM and the VP; Edward Natapei became prime minister.

2002 An earthquake struck Vanuatu, causing US\$700,000 of damage. The UPM won the parliamentary elections.

2004 Cyclone Ivy caused flooding in many areas and some 1,000 people were evacuated to temporary shelters in Port Vila. In snap elections no clear majority was achieved, the VP, NUP, Vanuatu Republican Party (VRP), National Community Association (NCA) and People's Progressive Party (PPP) formed a coalition government. Alfred Masing Nalo was elected president by an electoral college, but the Supreme Court removed him and after several attempts to resolve the matter, Kalkot Mataskelekele finally became president. Serge Vohor became prime minister and formed a government of national

unity. Vohor was ousted in a no-confidence motion and Ham Lini Vanuaroroa was elected prime minister.

2008 Vanuatu completed the domestic requirements of the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA). In parliamentary elections, the ruling VP and NUP won most seats (11 and eight respectively); Edward Natapei (VP) became prime minister.

2009 Iolu Abil, supported by Natapei and VT, won the presidential election in parliament. Prime Minister Natapei was expelled from parliament, although a legal challenge led to the decision to bar him being ruled as unconstitutional.

2010 While out of the country, Prime Minister Natapei was ousted in a parliamentary vote of no-confidence; he was replaced by the deputy prime minister, Sato Kilman.

2011 Prime Minister Kilman lost a parliamentary vote of no-confidence and Serge Vohor was elected prime minister in April. Kilman and his supporters lost a legal appeal against the procedure of his ousting. In May, the Court of Appeal ruled that the appointment of Serge Vohor as prime minister was unconstitutional and that the decision of the Speaker of the House of Parliament when he ruled to remove Sato Kilman from office as prime minister was 'not in existence'. Kilman was reinstated. On 16 June the Supreme Court invalidated the December 2010 election of Sato Kilman as prime minister, since the parliamentary speaker had failed to hold a secret ballot. In the interim Edward Natapei was reinstated. However, Mr Natapei he would not stand for re-election. On 26 June, Sato Kilman stood for the post of prime minister and was re-elected by parliament. Vanuatu became the 120th country to adopt the Rome Statute System of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

2012 On 1 February, legislation to endorse the ICC system became operational. In May parliamentary elections were announced for 30 October. On 14 October the first independent FM radio station in Vanuatu was launched. Parliamentary elections were held on 30 October, in which the VP won eight seats (out of 52), the PPP won six, UPM five, NUP four, Graon mo Jastis Pati (GJP) (Land and Justice Party) (a political party launched in 2010) four; 11 other political parties and four independence won the remaining 25 seats. On 19 November parliament re-elected Sato Kilman as prime minister by 29 votes, defeating Edward Natapei with 23 votes.

2013 Eight MPs crossed the floor and joined the opposition on 20 March. Prime Minister Kilman resigned and on 23 March Moana Carcasses Kalosil was elected

prime minister by parliament. He became the first nationalised citizen (he was born in French Polynesia) to lead the country. During his first 100 days he revoked 'about ten' diplomatic passports, tore up a defence co-operation agreement with Indonesia, and told China to relocate a major aid project. On 29 July the Prime Minister led a parade celebrating 150 years since the ending of 'blackbirding', the practice whereby Pacific Islanders were kidnapped for forced labour in Australia. He later called on the Australian government to apologise for the treatment of people taken from the islands.

Political structure

Constitution

The constitution created a republic, headed by a president with ceremonial powers only. The president is elected by a two-thirds majority in an electoral college from members of parliament and presidents of regional councils including Shefa, Sanma, Penama, Tafea, Malampa and Torba. The president serves a five-year term.

A Malvatumauri (National Council of Chiefs) advises the government on matters of custom, land tenure and the preservation of Vanuatu's traditions. Members of the council are hereditary peers and may not sit in parliament unless given leave to and elected by their peers.

Independence date

30 July 1980

Form of state

Republic

The executive

The executive consists of a Council of Ministers headed by the prime minister who is elected by parliament from among its members. The prime minister and the 12 co-members of the Council of

Ministers oversee the administration of the 13 government ministries.

The president, who is head of state, is elected for a five-year term by an electoral college made up of the members of parliament and the presidents of the six provincial governments. A two-thirds majority is required.

National legislature

The 52-member parliament is elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term in multi-seat constituencies.

Legal system

Based on English law.

Last elections

30 October 2012 (parliamentary); 1–2 September 2009 (presidential)

Results: Parliamentary: the Vanua'aku Pati (VP) (Party of Our Land) won eight seats (out of 52), Parti Progressiste Popula (PPP) (People's Progressive Party) six, Union des Partis Moderés (UPM) (Union of Moderate Parties) five, National United Party (NUP) four, Graon mo Jastis Pati (GJP) (Land and Justice Party) four; 11 other political parties and four independence won the remaining 25 seats.

Presidential: After three rounds of voting by an electoral college in parliament (plus the six heads of provincial governments), Iolu Abil won with 41 votes and Kalkot Mataskelekele 16.

Next elections

30 October 2016 (parliamentary); 2014 (presidential indirect)

Political parties

Ruling party

A coalition led by Vanua'aku Pati (VP) with National Unity Party (NUP), Union des Partis Moderés (UPM) (Union of Moderate Parties), Leba Pati (Vanuatu Labour Party) (VLP) and independents (since 2004; re-elected 30 Oct 2012)

KEY INDICATORS

Vanuatu

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	*0.23	*0.24	*0.24	*0.25	*0.25
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	0.59	0.59	0.68	0.74	*0.78
GDP per capita	US\$	2,594	2,528	2,856	3,036	3,125
GDP real growth	%	6.2	3.5	2.2	3.3	*2.7
Inflation	%	4.8	4.3	2.8	1.2	*1.4
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	41.9	55.2	51.3	67.4	–
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	317.8	187.2	209.8	310.2	–
Balance of trade	US\$m	-275.9	-131.9	-239.6	-242.8	–
Current account	US\$m	-176.0	-12.0	-105.2	-126.9	*-52.0
Total reserves minust gold	US\$m	115.2	148.6	161.4	164.1	–
Foreign exchange	US\$m	109.4	142.2	155.2	161.9	–
Exchange rate	per US\$	101.33	106.74	96.91	87.03	91.83
* estimated figure						

Political situation

Who owns and who has the right to determine the fate of either tribal or public land has created problems for the government. On the one hand the government wishes to take up partnerships with foreign companies and provide land for commercial endeavours to develop the islands. On the other hand, local people consider traditional lands to be in the ownership of all the community and are not in the government's purview to sell or lease. Vanuatu came top of the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business* in the Pacific in 2010, as well as the *Lonely Planet's* best destination. At the same time Australia condemned Vanuatu as an offshore tax haven that allowed its citizens to evade tax and criminals to launder money.

Population

250,000 (2012)*

To improve the reliability of official records, a new scheme was introduced in November 2009, whereby births and deaths in rural areas can be registered via text-messages using mobile phones provided at schools and health clinics.

Last census: 2009: 234,023

Population density: 20 inhabitants per square km (2010). Urban population 26 per cent (2010 Unicef).

Annual growth rate: 2.5 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

Ethnic make-up

The great majority of the population is Melanesian in origin, with around 5 per cent of European descent.

Religions

About 80 per cent of the population is Christian, although animism is still in evidence, and the cargo cult remains on Tanna Island. There have been localised secessionist movements in Santo, Malekula, Ambrym, Aoba, Pentecost and Maewo.

Education

In 2003, the EU awarded a grant of eur8 million to 14 Pacific countries to be used to enhance basic education, and in the case of Vanuatu, to extend compulsory schooling to eight years. The government has backed the 'one laptop per child' programme (OLPC).

Literacy rate: 53 per cent adult rate in 2004

Compulsory years: Six to 12.

Enrolment rate: 117 per cent gross primary enrolment; 28.5 per cent gross secondary enrolment, of relevant age groups (including repeaters) (Unicef 2004).

Health

HIV/Aids

In August 2004, Vanuatu had two confirmed HIV/Aids cases.

Life expectancy: 68 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate: 3.9 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef)

Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000): 18 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012)

Main cities

Port Vila, on Efate (capital, estimated population 51,319 in 2012), Luganville (Santo) (14,427), Port Olry (3,042), Mele (2,667), Norsup 2,428), Isangel (1,734).

Languages spoken

English is spoken by 60 per cent of the population and French by 40 per cent. There are 115 indigenous languages.

Official language/s

Bislama (Ni-Vanuatu Pidgin), English, French

Media

Press

In English, the only daily is *Vanuatu Daily Post* (www.dailypost.com.vu), other weeklies are *Port Vila Presse* (www.news.vu/en), *The Vanuatu Independent* (www.independent.vu), *Nasara*, and in Bislama *Ni-Vanuatu*.

Broadcasting

The state-owned Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) is responsible for public transmissions.

Radio: The VBTC operates Radio Vanuatu AM and Nambawan FM, in Bislama, English and French. External services by RFI Radio France, BBC and Radio Australia are received. Laef FM is a religious radio station.

On 15 October 2012, the first independent FM radio station, Buzz FM 96, in Vanuatu was launched.

Television: VBTC operates Television Blong Vanuatu, the only public service.

Cable and satellite services are available including Vanuatu TV (<http://vanuatu.tv>).

Other news agencies: ABC Pacific Beat:

www.radioaustralia.net.au/pacbeat

Pacific Magazine:

www.pacificmagazine.net

Pacific Islands New Association (Pina):

www.pina.com.fj

Economy

The economy of Vanuatu is dominated by its service sector, which constitutes over 70 per cent of GDP; agriculture, comprising around 20 per cent, is the other major component with industry and manufacturing contributing less than 10 per cent of GDP.

The majority of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture, with copra as the principal export crop, followed by cocoa, with timber, beef and fish providing smaller earnings. Tourism and the tax-free financial centre offset the recurring trade deficit, while providing greater

employment. Tourism contributed over 30 per cent of economic output in 2010, (tourism foreign revenue was estimated at US\$219.6 million). Vanuatu is the oldest offshore financial centre and tax haven in the Pacific, opened in 1971, it has around 2,000 registered financial institutions and trust-fund services, providing an important source of foreign exchange. GDP growth was 6.2 per cent in 2008, falling to 3.5 per cent in 2009, and still further to 2.2 per cent in 2010 as tourism was weaker than expected, GDP grew to an estimated 3.3 per cent in 2011.

The traditional herb kava has been used in the Pacific for generations to alleviate stress and strains. It is typically chewed but can also be brewed; most Western countries banned its use due to the risk of liver damage. However international trade talks managed to get this ban lifted and in 2010 a new kava bottling plant (LAV Vanuatu Kava) opened in Rentepau on Efate,

The tourism sector is recognised by the government as a key sector in its economic development to provide employment opportunities for its young and rapidly growing population. Although bureaucracy is one of the issues facing new investment, there have been some successful investment proposals approved by the Vanuatu Foreign Investment Board, which have centred on the tourism, international finance and agricultural sectors. Vanuatu's beef industry has been a success, mainly due to access to export markets, since domestic demand for beef is not sufficient to keep the enterprise going.

External trade

Vanuatu is a member of the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (Sparteca) along with 12 other regional nations, which allows products duty free access by Pacific Island Forum members to Australian and New Zealand markets (subject to the country of origin restrictions). It is also a member of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (with Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands) as a sub-regional trade group, whereby customs tariffs have been harmonised under the Melanesian free trade agreement (MFTA).

Agriculture

Agriculture provides 80 per cent of commodity exports, however tourism is the largest export earner. A new sector in financial services has been introduced by the government.

Imports

Principal imports are machinery and equipment, live animals and foodstuffs, vehicles and fuels.

Main sources: China (26.7 per cent of total in 2011), Singapore (21.2 per cent), Australia (13.5 per cent).

Exports

Main exports are copra, beef, timber, kava and tuna.

Main destinations: Thailand (56.7 per cent of total in 2011), Japan (21.4 per cent), Philippines (3.9 per cent).

The agricultural sector accounts for around 20 per cent of GDP, employs 70 per cent of the workforce and provides up to 80 per cent of the country's exports.

Agricultural production and livestock rearing is mainly carried out by smallholding farmers. More than 90 per cent of all the fruit and vegetables consumed in Vanuatu are imported.

Around 41 per cent of the land area is cultivatable, although only half is utilised. The soil is generally fertile and rainfall adequate, although crops can be subject to cyclone damage. The sector is hampered by a general lack of capital and investment, technical skills as well as the isolation of farmers.

Copra is Vanuatu's main export crop, accounting for approximately one-third of total export earnings and 6 per cent of GDP. A mechanised coconut-desiccating factory opened, in the northern region, capable of processing 24,000 coconuts per day. It is projected that this plant will produce 44 tonnes of coconut oil and 118 tonnes of coconut meat per day expanding export markets.

Kava, used for manufacturing tranquilliser drugs, has become an important export commodity, although production was scaled back due to plant disease and medical concerns over the substance's effects on the liver. Australia and New Zealand lifted a ban on kava after finding that these claims could not be substantiated, although in early 2006 Australia was considering banning the import as it was having an adverse affect on Aborigine communities.

Cattle rearing and forestry are becoming increasingly important foreign exchange earners.

An experimental project to seed reefs with trochus raised in hatcheries is under way (the shells are collected and sold as buttons). Investment project permits have been issued for fish farming.

The typical annual fish catch is over 27,000t, with 850t other seafood and 100,000 units pearls and shells.

Access only by sea to exploitable forests has limited timber production. The government is working to achieve certification by the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) to prove that the country's forests are being sustainably managed. This would increase the added value of timber products.

Industry and manufacturing

The industrial sector accounts for approximately 12 per cent of GDP and employs 5 per cent of the workforce. Manufacturing contributes about 5 per cent of GDP. Main industries include copra processing, meat canning, fish processing, soft drinks bottling, furniture making, timber production, metalwork and handicrafts for the growing tourist market.

Japan has played an important part in helping to improve regional commercial centres for transporting and distributing agricultural products and other goods, providing investment for wharves on Tanna and Malekula Islands.

Industrial production increased by 1 per cent in 2003.

Tourism

The Pacific islands that constitute Vanuatu offer a range of tropical resorts, which are most popular with Australian visitors. In 2009 visitor numbers totalled 101,000, but fell to 97,000 in 2010 as the global economic crisis depressed the market. However the sector recovered in 2011 and in the first quarter of 2012, the number of visitors arriving by cruise liners outnumbered visitors arriving by air, 20,506 by sea and 6,343 by air.

Chief Roi Mata's Domain is included on Unesco's World Heritage List and is the historic home of Vanuatu's last paramount chief and moral leader.

Travel and tourism plays a vital role in GDP, by contributing an average 49.4 per cent (2007–11), while providing employment for 43.7 per cent of the workforce (27,420 jobs) in the same period. Visitor revenue grew from US\$141 million in 2007 to US\$291 million in 2011. To maintain the health of the industry travel and tourism attracted an average 21.6 per cent of total capital investment in 2007–11; in 2012 it was predicted to attract 26.9 per cent of total capital investment.

Mining

While Vanuatu has mineral resources, including precious metals, these have yet to be exploited. In 2006, the government signed an agreement with a Swiss-American company to exploit the manganese spoil left over at an abandoned mine on Efate. Hundreds of jobs are expected to be created.

Hydrocarbons

There are no known hydrocarbon reserves. All domestic energy needs must be met by imported petroleum products, typically 1,000 barrels per day of oil.

Energy

Total installed generating capacity was around 12MW in 2006, all of which was powered by imported diesel oil. Unelco

Vanuatu Limited (Unelco) is responsible for generation and supply of electricity. The government is encouraging renewable energy companies to invest in Vanuatu, as it became the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to attempt to base its entire economy on renewable energy. It plans to reach that goal by 2020, with electricity generated by geothermal heat, wind and solar power and locally manufactured hydrogen-based fuels, which could also be exported.

In 2009 the Australian company KUTH Energy was awarded two licences to undertake a study into the feasibility of using the hot springs on Efate Island for geothermal energy.

Geothermal energy is planned to provide electricity for Efate by 2014, following the successful connection of the preliminary power plant, near the hot pools by Takara village, to the grid on 7 July 2011.

Banking and insurance

The introduction in 1983 of the International Companies Act helped Vanuatu to develop as an offshore banking centre, attracting some 100 banks. Following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, the US cut off all direct financial dealing with Vanuatu. The aim was to block all financial transactions that could be linked to terrorists, although Vanuatu was not considered to be a haven for terrorist assets. Vanuatu complied with the requirements of the OECD and was removed from the list of nations with 'tax havens' in 2003.

Central bank

Reserve Bank of Vanuatu

Main financial centre

Port Vila

Time

GMT plus 11 hours

Geography

Vanuatu comprises an irregular archipelago of about 80 islands in the south-west Pacific Ocean, spread over a distance of about 900km (560 miles) from north to south. The islands lie about 1,000km (600 miles) west of Fiji and 400km (250 miles) north-east of New Caledonia.

Most islands are mountainous and volcanic in origin. The capital and second largest town are on the islands of Efate and Espiritu Santo, respectively. Mount Tabwemasana, on Espiritu Santo, (height 1,877 metres) is the highest peak in the archipelago.

Hemisphere

Southern

Climate

Temperatures can range from 16–33 degrees Celsius and rainfall varies from 1,000–2,000mm per annum. Cyclones may occur from December to April.

Entry requirements

Passports

Required by all and must be valid for six months from date of arrival.

Visa

Required by all except citizens of the Commonwealth, EU, and the US for stays of up to 30 days. For a full list of exceptions see

www.vanuatu.discoverparadise.org and follow link to *resources to travel tips* then to *Visa Requirements*. All travellers must hold onward/return tickets and sufficient funds for their stay.

A visa application can be downloaded from the above internet address (and follow links) and must be forwarded to the Principal Immigration Officer, The Immigration Department, Port Vila, Vanuatu, PMB 014 and must be approved before entry.

Prohibited entry

Anyone whose demeanour is not considered acceptable is prohibited entry.

Currency advice/regulations

The import and export of local and foreign currency is unrestricted.

Travellers cheques are widely accepted.

Customs

Personal items are duty-free. All goods of commercial value must be declared.

Prohibited imports

Firearms, ammunitions, illegal drugs, animals, plants and goods carried on behalf of other persons.

Health (for visitors)

Mandatory precautions

Vaccination certificate for yellow fever if travelling from an infected area.

Advisable precautions

Vaccinations for diphtheria, tetanus, hepatitis A and typhoid are recommended. Other vaccinations that may be advised include tuberculosis and hepatitis B. Malaria prophylaxes are required including mosquito nets, insect sprays and long clothing at night. Sunscreen is highly recommended, even in winter.

Any medicines required by the traveller should be brought into the country. Medical insurance is essential, including emergency evacuation.

Hotels

A 10 per cent tax is added to hotel bills.

Credit cards

Major credit cards are widely accepted. ATMs are available in most banks.

Public holidays (national)

Fixed dates

1 Jan (New Year's Day), 21 Feb (Father Lini Day), 5 Mar (Custom Chief's Day), 1 May (Labour Day), 24 Jul (Children's Day), 30 Jul (Independence Day), 15 Aug (Assumption Day), 5 Oct (Constitution

Day), 29 Nov (Unity Day), 25–26 Dec (Christmas).

Variable dates

Good Friday, Easter Monday, Ascension Day.

Working hours

Banking

Mon–Fri: 0830–1500.

Business

Mon–Fri: 0800–1100, 1300–1700.

Government

Mon–Fri: 0730–1700.

Shops

Mon–Fri: 0730–1630/1700 (large supermarkets open until 1930). Sat: 0800–1200. Some shops open Sun morning.

Telecommunications

Telephone/fax

Domestic and international telecommunications are operated by Telecom Vanuatu. Formed in 1989, this is jointly owned by the government of Vanuatu and British and French telecommunications companies. A domestic firm, Communication Services (Vanuatu) Ltd, was granted a telecommunications licence in 1999.

Mobile/cell phones

There is a 900 GSM service in operation.

Electricity supply

220V AC, 50 Hz with flat, three-pin plugs.

Weights and measures

Metric system

Social customs/useful tips

Tipping and bartering are not considered polite behaviour. It is customary to shake hands on meeting and taking leave. An informal attitude prevails in business. Sometimes business cards are exchanged after introduction. Business is often conducted in Pidgin, English or French.

Getting there

Air

National airline: Air Vanuatu

International airport/s: Port Vila-Bauerfield (VLI), 6km from Port Vila (on Efate); duty-free shop, currency exchange, hotel reservations, post office, car hire and business lounge.

Airport tax: Departure tax: V2,500, included in ticket price.

Surface

Main port/s: Port Vila and Luganville (Santo)

Getting about

National transport

Air: VanAir operates inter-island services to 16 destinations from Port Vila-Bauerfield airport. A V400 service charge is imposed at every airport for any domestic flight.

Road: There are some 150km of surfaced road on Efate, and 100km on Espiritu Santo, which are passable in dry weather.

Buses: Privately run minivans operate unscheduled and unspecified routes around the islands.

Water: Inter-island sea links are unscheduled but generally good.

City transport

Taxis: Taxi services are plentiful and metered. Journey time from the airport to the city centre is about 10 minutes.

Buses, trams & metro: Buses serve the whole of Port Vila. Journey time from airport to city centre is 10 minutes.

Car hire

Car hire is available in Port Vila and Luganville. International, French and UK licences are acceptable.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections.

Telephone area codes

The international direct dialling code (IDD) for Vanuatu is +678 followed by subscriber's number.

Useful telephone numbers

Police: 22-222

Fire: 22-333

Ambulance: 22-100

Chambers of Commerce

Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, PO Box 189, Port Vila (tel: 27-543; fax: 27-542; e-mail: vancci@vanuatu.com.vu).

Banking

ANZ Bank (Vanuatu) Ltd, Private Mail Bag 003, Port Vila (tel: 22-536; fax: 22-814).

Banque d'Hawaii (Vanuatu) Ltd, PO Box 29, Lini Highway, Port Vila (tel: 22-412; fax: 23-579).

European Bank Ltd, PO Box 65, International Bldg, Kumul Highway, Port Vila (tel: 27-700; fax: 22-884).

National Bank of Vanuatu, PO Box 249, Air Vanuatu House, Rue de Paris, Port Vila (tel: 22-201; fax: 22-761).

Central bank

Reserve Bank of Vanuatu, PMB 62, Port Vila, Vanuatu (tel: 23-333; fax: 24-231).

Travel information

Air Vanuatu, Air Vanuatu House, Rue de Paris, Port Vila (tel: 23-838; 23-878; fax: 23-250, 26-591; internet: www.airvanuatu.com).

Bauerfield Port Vila International Airport, Civil Aviation Department, PMB 068, Port Vila (tel: 22-993, 22-819; fax: 23-783).

The Principal Immigration Officer, PMB 014, Port Vila.

Tour Vanuatu, PO Box 409, Port Vila (tel: 22-733; fax: 23-442).

National tourist organisation offices

National Tourism Office of Vanuatu, PO Box 209, Port Vila (tel: 22-515, 22-685; fax: 23-889; internet site: <http://www.vanuatutourism.com>).

Ministries

Ministry of Finance and Housing, PO Box 31, Port Vila (tel: 22-951).

Ministry of Postal Services, Telecommunications and Meteorology, Private mail Bag 011, Port Vila (tel: 25-059; fax: 23-142).

Ministry of Trade, Co-operatives, Energy and Industry, Port Vila (tel: 23-979).

Prime Minister's Office, Private Mail Bag 053, Port Vila (tel: 22-413).

Other useful addresses

Asian Development Bank (ADB), South Pacific Regional Mission, La Casa di Andrea, Fr Dr W H Lini Highway; PO Box 127, Port Vila (tel: 23-300; fax: 23-183; email: adbsprm@adb.org; internet: <http://www.adb.org/SPRM>).

Department for Foreign Affairs, Port Vila (tel: 22-913, 22-347; fax: 23-142).

The Immigration Department, Port Vila, PMB 014, (tel: 22-354; fax: 25-492).

Other news agencies: ABC Pacific Beat: www.radioaustralia.net.au/pacbeat

Pacific Magazine: www.pacificmagazine.net

Pacific Islands New Association (Pina): www.pina.com.fj

Internet sites

Investment promotion authority: www.investinvanuatu.com

Telephone directory (worldwide): www.teldir.com

Vanuatu government: www.vanuatu.gov.vu

Vanuatu online: www.vol.com.vu

Vanuatu portal: Vatu.com

Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation: www.vbtc.com.vu