



Telecommunications &
Radiocommunications
Regulator

PO Box 3547
Port Vila
Vanuatu
t: +678 27621
e: enquiries@trr.vu

**MAKING ANNOYING, PRANK AND MALICIOUS PHONE CALLS (HOAX CALLS) IS AN OFFENCE:
DO NOT MAKE THEM – PARTICULARLY TO EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS!**

The public might be aware that Vanuatu has several Emergency Services Operators which monitor phone lines for rescue and emergency situations.

The Office of the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator (TRR) wishes to raise public awareness of these numbers and inform Vanuatu citizens of current problems with hoax calls to these operators.

Those operators and the emergency phone numbers allocated to them are:

- Emergency Phone Numbers	- Emergency Service Operators
- 111	- Police
- 112	- Vila Central Hospital and Ambulance
- 113	- Fire Brigade
- 114	- Maritime Emergencies
- 115	- ProMedical - VEMSA

Because of their critical nature, calls to these numbers are purposely “*free of charge*”, to assist and help people in critical and emergency situations to reach appropriate Emergency Services Operators they need for help and assistance.

There currently is a problem, however, in that some people are abusing this privilege and assistance mechanism, and distracting the Emergency Services Operators from undertaking their critical tasks.

What are some people doing in ringing those emergency numbers?

Unfortunately, there are individuals who are abusing the system and taking the opportunity of calling those numbers with the *sole intention of making hoax calls* to annoy, distract and sometimes threaten the emergency operators. This is not just an irresponsible thing to do, but it is a criminal offence.

TRR wishes to warn those individuals that such action is an offence under the Telecommunications Act [CAP 206] and you are liable, upon conviction, to a fine or imprisonment.

In 2012, TRR made two Decisions which order telecom operators (particularly TVL and Digicel) to disconnect mobile phone numbers that make hoax calls to emergency numbers. This action is taken following a warning, through SMS, to hoax callers to cease making hoax calls. These Decisions are being enforced by TRR and we will come down hard on ALL hoax callers.

TRR wishes to inform all citizens that making prank and malicious calls with “private” or “unknown” number(s) cannot “hide” the phone numbers from operator awareness. We also wish to warn hoax callers that your phone will be disconnected and the number will be suspended, because telecom operators are authorized by TRR to divulge and disconnect those phone numbers in such circumstances.

What is the need to take such drastic measures?

The public at large need to be aware that each time hoax calls are made to disturb the Emergency Services Operators, the lives of people in need of emergency assistance, the emergency operators rushing to the location of a genuine caller for emergency assistance, and other citizens and motorists are at stake.

Do you want the rescue teams and the medical services to disconnect their emergency phones or ignore calls? NO – because lives are at risk or emergency help is required!

Hoax callers are extremely foolish individuals who have an intention to annoy or threaten Emergency Services Operators but do not appreciate or realize that their inappropriate acts and potential criminal offences are putting someone else’s life at serious risk.

TRR urges hoax callers to cease their foolishness immediately. Please consider the consequences of your actions, your family members (and yourself) as you may need the assistance of Emergency Services operators one day, and your fellow Vanuatu citizens. If you know someone who is making hoax calls, speak with them and tell them to stop - immediately!

DO NOT MAKE HOAX OR MALICIOUS CALLS BECAUSE IT IS AN OFFENCE BY LAW. THEY CAN COST LIVES. If you do, your SIMs will be disconnected and appropriate action will be taken against you.

If you have any queries, please contact the Office of Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator at 27621 or visit our website on www.trr.vu