

COMMUNITY CONSUMER CHAMPIONS HANDBOOK



Telecommunications,
Radiocommunications &
Broadcasting Regulator

TRBR COMMUNITY CONSUMER CHAMPIONS

Consumers have been identified and recognized worldwide as drivers of the economy and are influential in developing markets of all sectors.

In the telecommunications markets, consumers are vital to the operators, the Government, and society, in general, to provide revenue in return for their services and drive the economy.

There is also a critical need for the consumers to be educated, empowered, aware, and protected under Part 8 of the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications, and Broadcasting Regulations Act as Amended (“the Act”).

This Handbook guides the Consumer Champions to understand the TRBR’s role, and their respective roles and responsibilities in accordance with the Consumer Champion’s Project set up by the TRBR.

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ABOUT TRBR

Background

Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator's Office (TRR) was established in February 2008, later codified in the Act in 2009. In 2018, the Legislation was again amended to cater for Broadcasting which then changed the institution name to Telecommunications, Radiocommunications, and Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR) to carry out the following broad objectives as defined in the Act and to perform the following functions but not limited to:

- Advise the Minister on policy matters.
- Protect consumers as stated in the Consumer Protection Regulation No.157 of 2015.
- Regulate the telecommunications, radiocommunications, and broadcasting sectors in Vanuatu.
- Encourage sustainable and fair competition.
- Issue licenses for telecommunications, radio apparatus, and spectrum.
- Manage telecommunications resources such as telephone numbers, short telephone codes, .vu domain names; and
- Manage and appropriately assign the use of the radiofrequency spectrum.
- Monitors the telecom and broadcasting market to ensure no anti-competitive behavior amongst telecom and broadcasting service providers.
- Ensures that service providers are protected from unfair practices by telecom and broadcasting consumers.
- Ensures an interconnection agreement between telephone service operators was required.
- Ensures that there is fair pricing in the telecom and broadcasting market.
- Ensures there is good Quality of Service in the market.
- Investigates anti-competitive complaints.
- Mediate consumer complaints.
- Implements the Government Universal Access Policy (UAP); and
- Administers the UAP Fund as a trustee.

General Powers of TRBR

TRBR may, with the approval of the Minister, make regulations, among other matters, and under the Act, and is required to:

- Regulate telecommunications and broadcasting and advise the Minister on Policy, making of Regulations, and any other matter requested by the Minister responsible.
- Implement, facilitate, and enforce the provisions of the Act.
- Grant, suspend, vary, and revoke the Act's licenses and exceptions.
- Allocate telephone number blocks and other telecommunications system numbers administered by the ITU.
- Allocate, assign, and manage the radio spectrum.
- Prescribe standard terms in various licenses and exceptions.
- Manage and administrate the country code top-level domain name(s) and domain name(s) registration for Vanuatu.
- Impose restrictions or limitations upon the importation, sale, or use of equipment related to telecommunications or radiocommunications; and
- Establish and manage a National Numbering Plan and allocate numbers.

TRBR COMMUNITY CONSUMER CHAMPIONS

Background

The TRBR Community Consumer Champions (CCCs) project is a TRBR developed initiative that is derived from the Consumer Protection Regulation No. 157 of 2015. The initiative is aimed at establishing an island or provincial - based team that can assist TRBR in its obligation to provide awareness to the citizens of Vanuatu on the telecommunication and ICT services, their engagement is only part-time, and they work closely with the Consumer Affairs Officer at TRBR. The team is selected from time to time after an expression of interest is advertised

This Handbook is a guide for Consumer Champions to understand TRBR's role and responsibilities. and will be reviewed when is necessary to reflect the changes in the telecommunication and ICT markets.

The structure below illustrates the contributing factors and issues that different consumer segments are experiencing and the approach that TRBR is undertaking and to launch to assist the consumers to continue to be empowered and protected while enjoying telecommunications services and products that are available.



ROLE FOR TRBR COMMUNITY CONSUMER CHAMPIONS

CCCs will assist TRBR in its implementation of the Consumer Awareness Protection Plan (CAPP) to address the key challenges that the consumers are facing to meet the following objectives:

- An informed and empowered citizen of Vanuatu leading to Vanuatu's national vision of 'a just, healthy, educated, and wealthy Ni-Vanuatu.
- TRBR's implementation of one of the Vanuatu Government's priorities of Building trust (mitigating risks & threats related to the ICT development).
- Consumer awareness and protection as stated in the Vanuatu National ICT and Cybersecurity policy.
- Stimulation of a sustainable Telecommunications/ICT market in Vanuatu and extension of these services to the rural areas, to bridge the digital divide.
- An aware, active, and respectful vocal citizen – in a Vanuatu way – to ensure consumer's rights are recognized and protected.
- Promotion of consumer empowerment, safety, consumer responsibilities, and appropriate consumer redress.
- Implementation of TRBR's Consumer Awareness Protection Plan (CAPP).
- Protection of citizens from Digital Shock – "high and unexpected" bills.
- Information dissemination on the use of telecommunications/ICT devices.

TRBR Contact Point

This Community Consumer Champion's Handbook is prepared purposely for TRBR's Community Consumer Champions. For Champions that do not fully understand the rationale of this Handbook, or wish to provide feedback on it, and have any other queries regarding its content, please get in touch on telephone number + 678 27621 or email inquiries at enquiries@TRBR.vu.

TRBR's contact point regarding this Handbook and its CCC program is the TRBR's Consumer Affairs Officer.

CONSUMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

Consumers referred to in this document by TRBR denote citizens who utilize telecommunication services. The Act defines them as end-user, "a person who is the ultimate recipient of a telecommunications service...."

The Consumer Rights are recognized around the World, which are also embraced in Vanuatu, include:

Consumer Rights

1. **The right to satisfy basic needs** – To have access to basic, essential goods and services: adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, public utilities, water, and sanitation.
2. **The right to safety** – To be protected against products, production processes, and services hazardous to health or life.
3. **The right to be informed** – To be given the facts needed to make an informed choice and be protected against dishonest or misleading advertising and labeling.
4. **The right to choose** – To select from a range of products and services offered at competitive prices with an assurance of satisfactory quality.
5. **The right to be heard** – To have consumer interests represented in government policy-making and existing and developing products and services.
6. **The right to redress** – To receive a fair settlement of just claims, including compensation for misrepresentation, shoddy goods, or unsatisfactory services.
7. **The right to consumer education** – To acquire knowledge and skills needed to make informed, confident choices about goods and services while being aware of fundamental consumer rights and responsibilities and how to act on them
8. **The right to a healthy environment** – To live and work in an environment that is non-threatening to the well-being of present and future generations

These rights are essential and are also applicable to consumers of telecommunications services.

Equally crucial to consumer rights are consumer responsibilities. Being a responsible consumer entails taking responsibility for your behavior, attitude, and practices as you enjoy your rights. Further, all consumers must take the necessary steps to be educated, empowered, and protected and practice their consumer responsibilities.

Consumer Responsibilities

1. **Critical awareness** - consumers must be aware of the need to question the quality of goods and services.
2. **Involvement or action** - consumers must assert themselves and ensure that they get a fair deal.
3. **Social responsibility** - consumers must act with social responsibility, concern, and sensitivity to the impact of their actions on other citizens, particularly about disadvantaged groups in the community and about the economic and social realities prevailing.
4. **Ecological responsibility** - there must be a heightened sensitivity to the impact of consumer decision on the physical environment, to promote conservation as a critical factor in improving the actual quality of life for the present and future generations.
5. **Solidarity** - the best and most effective action is through collaborative efforts by forming consumer/citizen groups who together can have the strength and influence to ensure that adequate attention is given to the consumer interests.
6. Linking this knowledge and understanding, consumers of the telecommunications/ICT industry have a crucial role in protecting them from fraudulent, unfair practices, high billing rates, unclear services, disclosure of private and confidential information and so on. They can do this by expressing their dissatisfaction and complaints to their service provider(s) and, where appropriate, after liaising fully with their service provider and the outstanding issues remains, TRBR for its awareness and possible action.

Key Discussion Points on Consumer Rights and Responsibilities

Are consumers' Rights and Responsibilities recognized in Vanuatu?

What can a consumer do if their rights are not heard?

What are the impacts if consumers do not take responsibility for their commitment?

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR recognizes the need for and has established a Consumer Protection Regulation. The Regulation was developed and is in force.
- The Consumer Protection Regulation will provide consumer protection to all citizens an establish contents for awareness by community Consumer Champions in the rural communities.



CONSUMER COMPLAINTS HANDLING

Background

The Act established a regulatory framework for telecommunications and related purposes. The Act has also given the power to the Regulator to act independently and make legislative Instruments.

For (TRBR's Guidelines for Consumer Complaint Handling, a "Consumer" has the same meaning as "end-user" used by the Act, which means a person who is the ultimate recipient of a telecommunications service, or another service provided using that telecommunications service but did not include affiliates of a service provider.

What Customers can do if they are not happy with the services offered by their operator

1. You as a consumer may submit your complaint to your respective Service Provider.
2. The Service Provider responsible must respond within five working days.
3. If you are not happy with the response from Service Provider, you may refer your complaint to the Regulator's Office, and TRBR will investigate.
4. The flow chart on the next page summarizes the process of the TRBR Complaint handling process

Key Discussion Points on Consumer Complaint Handlings Procedures

What complaint handling processes do service providers provide to their customers?

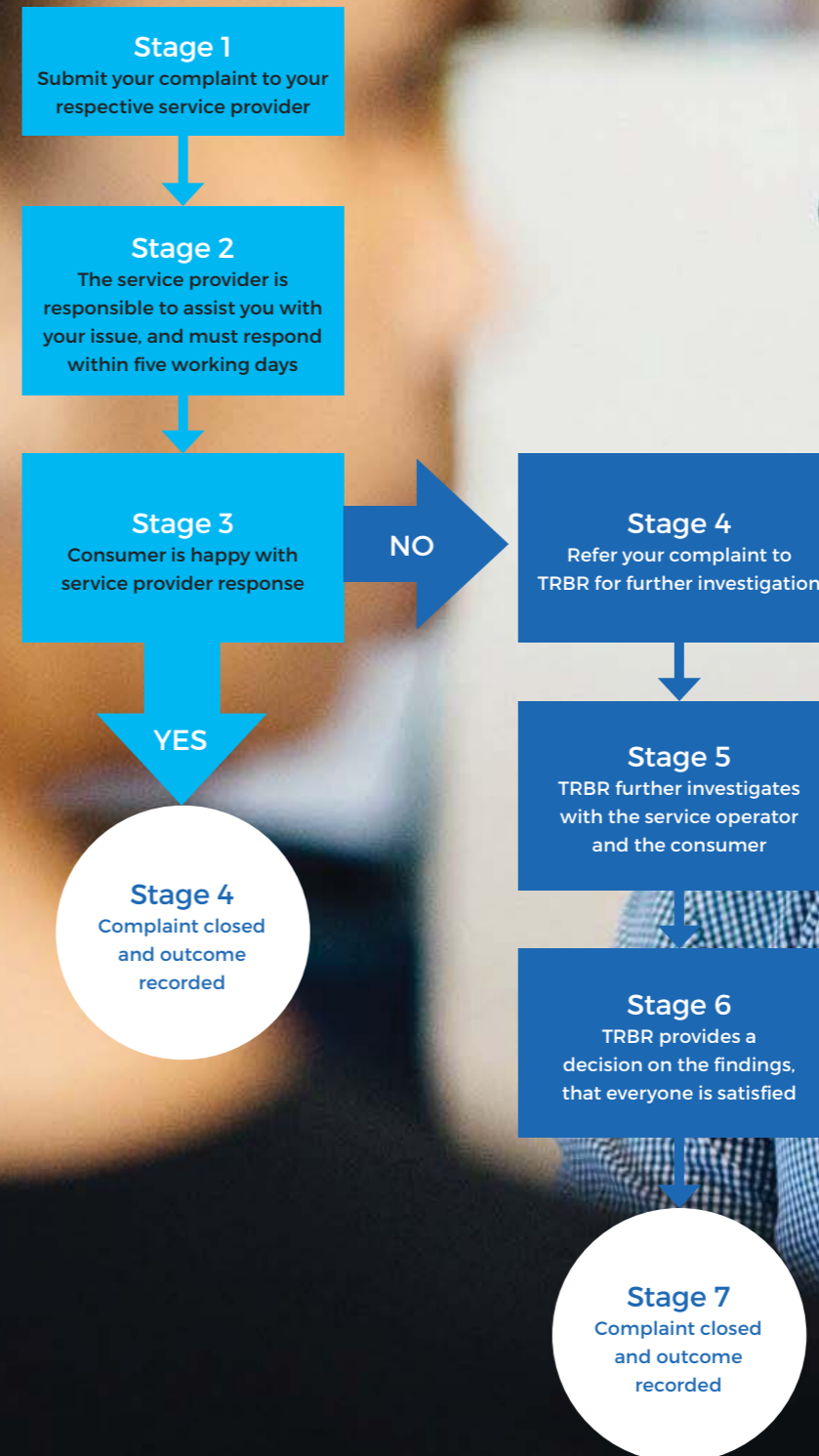
How do customers from the rural communities complain to their operators?

What does a customer do when they do not have their issue resolved by their service provider?

TRBR Views and Approach:

All telecommunications providers have a license obligation to provide their respective customers with their Consumer Complaints Procedures and Processes.

When you as a consumer is not satisfied with the resolution or outcome provided by your service provider, you may follow the TRBR's Complaint Handling process for the issue to be dealt with by TRBR.



Where to find and what to do at the TRBR when you are not happy with our service provider

1. TRBR is opposite the Bred Bank, an arcade down to La Tentation (Old Rossie). Look for the TRBR sign on the side of the wall of the building. You can also call TRBR on tel. 27621 for direction.
2. Collect a **consumer complaint** form from the reception, download an electronic copy or send your complaint directly to TRBR using the online complaints form found on the TRBR website or in the **TRBR App**. Please attach evidence of your attempt for redress with your Service Provider. Refer to the website www.trbr.vu under the heading Consumer Affairs or **call 27621** for assistance.

What to do when applying

1. You must submit a completed form to TRBR with evidence of your attempt for redress with your Service Provider and keep your copy.
2. Once a TRBR Officer receives your complaint, she or he will register and direct it to the officer responsible.

TRBR's handling of a complaint application

1. TRBR will attempt to mediate and resolve your complaint brought to its attention. If the complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction within 15 days, you may choose to give TRBR more time or seek other avenues.

What after TRBR when you are not satisfied with the order made by TRBR per the Consumer Complaint Handling Processes

1. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you may seek other avenues of redress outside of TRBR.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET COMPETITION



Background

The role of an effective competitive environment in the digital communications sector is crucial to the success of the Vanuatu's economy and social welfare for the benefit of the consumers. The increasing demand of telecommunications services by business community, the education sector, health sector, and access to finance and government services has stimulated the growing recognition that the effectiveness and extent of competition is greatly influenced by not only the natural aspects of technology evolution, but also by the government policies and regulatory framework.

The focus of such regulatory frameworks is to promote and ensure competition whenever feasible and desirable and to ensure there are no abuses from a monopoly power when competition is limited.

An effective regulatory environment that promotes competition such as in the Vanuatu's telecommunications sector, opens a lot of new range of economic opportunities that ensures flow of private capital and boosting the expansion of the telecommunications services to the remote areas of Vanuatu. While ensuring an effective regulatory framework, competition in Vanuatu has also driven prices of services down and enable provision of more innovative packages in the market and therefore provides a wide range of choices and options to the consumers.

The TRBR Act ensures an effective competitive environment and provides for:

- a. The determinations of relevant telecom markets,
- b. Designation of dominance,
- c. Discourages anti-competitive practices
- d. Avoids the abuse of dominance in the market.

The Benefits of Competition in Vanuatu

The regulatory framework currently implemented by TRBR promotes effective competitive environment that facilitates the service providers to grow their business, fostering innovation, diversity of supply and provision of attractive prices for consumers and businesses.

Below are some benefits stimulated by competition in Vanuatu.

Liberalization.

The economic reform in 2008 which heavily focused on competition, has ensured that there is a proper legislation that permits the liberalization of the Vanuatu's telecommunications market. Thus, ceases the monopoly power from Vodafone to allow other operators to enter the market. There is now more than one operator in the Vanuatu telecommunications market. In the year 2021, there was total of three (3) mobile operators , and three (3) pure Internet Service providers (ISP) who are providing their services via satellite. The three mobile companies also provided internet services via fiber or submarine cable and satellite as well.

Low prices for all.

For the service providers perspective, gaining a higher market share would mean offering a better pricing as well. For the past 13 years, Vanuatu has been experiencing competition and prices has been able to drop. As more consumers can afford to buy telecommunications services and products, it encourages service providers to provide more innovative prices and products. For example, data price per MB has fallen to below 1VT per MB in 2021.

Better Quality of Service.

Competition has forced service providers to extend and improve the quality of their

goods and services and quality of experience in order to attract more customers and gain more market share.

More Choices.

In a competitive environment like Vanuatu, telecom service providers are competing to deliver innovative services and products that are different from others to stimulate demand. This has resulted in greater choice and consumers have more options to choose from, especially the products that offers the right balance between price and quality.

Innovation.

In a competitive market environment, the service providers are committed to be more innovative in the market with their product concepts, design, production techniques and services including value-added service. For example, Digicel and Vodafone has now launched Mobile Money applications that supports financial inclusion.

Strengthens Competitors

Competition within Vanuatu has able to strengthen competitors to be able to compete in global market against global competitors. For example, offering low international roaming rates.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS TARIFFS

Background

A Tariff is the price a service provider charges for providing and using its service or services. The Act provides that the operators notify the Regulator of (certain) charges before imposing them on the market. The Regulator must ensure that the tariff does not contain excessive amounts or is likely to inhibit competition in the market.

Along with tariffs of different services, comes with the terms and conditions offered to consumers/ potential customers, and must be made available to the consumers before selling them a particular product or service.

Subject to the provisions of Part 7 of the Act, Tariffs are approved by the Regulator before service providers can impose them in the market, and service providers especially the dominant service providers, face additional rules that they must meet according to the Act. There are tariffs for mobile, fixed telephone, and internet services in the telecommunications market, and service providers provide discount tariffs, primarily through promotions, to attract customers to use their services and products.

TRBR Tariff Approach

- TRBR allows market prices to be driven by the market forces of demand and supply. In any case where there is a complaint or concern raise due to a negative impact of a price change, then the TRBR will intervene to regulate and set prices.
- TRBR will always actively taking the oversight role and monitor the Markets to protect the interest of end-users. TRBR encourages light-touch regulation and does not heavily regulate the market but develop legal instruments and arrangements to facilitate a conducive environment for competition, provision of lower prices, and protection of consumers.

TRBR has issued a Competition Guideline and an Advertising Guideline to guide the service providers. TRBR also carries out monitoring activities to ensure that the Act and License conditions are not infringed, and to ensure a healthy competition.

- TRBR provides consumer awareness programs and initiatives to assist consumers and enable them to understand different services and products they are getting from their service providers.
- For new tariff approval, the TRBR ensures that tariff is cost-based to ensures that the impact of price change will have a positive impact on both the consumers and the service operators.
- A service provider must not impose any charge or make any claim or demand in respect of a tariff not file with the TRBR.

IMPORTANCE OF READING AND UNDERSTANDING TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR A SERVICE

Background

Terms and conditions of a service provided by a service provider plays a vital role in defining the relationship between a consumer/customer and the service provider and what the consumer 'actually' will or will not get. Usually, these terms and conditions are a form of contract between the consumer and the service provider. A contract is a binding document and defines certain obligations and terms of a service that a service provider will provide to a consumer. The consumers, however, must first agree to these terms and conditions before signing the contract, prior to the service being provided to them. Consumers must CAREFULLY READ and UNDERSTAND ALL the terms and conditions of service they are agreeing to purchase to limit disputes with their service provider.

The TRBR Act provides that the terms of service should:

- be consistent with the Act and any TRBR Regulations, Rules, Orders, and license conditions.
- describe the basic terms of the business relationship between the service provider and its customers to whom the service is provided.
- Set out the terms and processes for billing and payments.
- Explain the process of resolving invoice error; and
- Set out a calculation of any refund that may be provided to a consumer.

Key Discussion Points on Terms and Conditions of Service

Consumers must request to see, read, and understand the terms of service before signing up for a particular service or a telecommunication product offered to them.

Must Seek guidance or explanation from the service providers on any parts of the terms and conditions of services that are unclear to them before subscribing to the service.

READING AND UNDERSTANDING ADVERTISEMENTS



Background

Advertising is the practice and techniques employed to bring attention to a product or service and it aims to put a product or service in the spotlight with hopes of drawing attention of consumers who will then decide whether or not to buy the product or service. These advertisements come in different forms, either through SMS, social media, TV, and newspapers.

Reading and understanding an advertisement is, thus, very important because the telecommunications market in Vanuatu has grown considered become more complex. Much more varieties of services and products are now available in the market with competitive prices that gives consumers multiple options to choose from.

Key Discussion Points on Reading and Understanding Promotional Texts and Advertisements

Are consumers satisfied with the existing types of promotional messages and advertisements in the market?

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR encourages all consumers to take on self-ownership and the 'personal' responsibility of making themselves aware and protecting themselves by practicing the following:
 1. Pay close attention to thoroughly reading, questioning as required, and being fully aware of promotions and advertisements to assist your understanding and avoid being misled.
 2. Carefully read advertisements to fully understand and be aware of the terms and conditions of service, to ensure that you are not trapped ("locked-in") by an ad through misunderstanding or misreading.
 3. Before entering into a contract with a service provider or before buying a product, you, as a responsible consumer, must make sure you read the terms and conditions of the service offered very carefully thoroughly and ensure you understand them. If you are not sure, ask questions. Continue to do so until you fully understand and make a reasonable choice/decision.
 4. Make sure that you fully understand terms such as "unlimited," "free," "bonus," etc., in the context for which any advertisement using any of those terms was made. Seek clarification if you are unsure but NEVER make assumptions.
 5. Ensure that you receive the special charge or product advertised when subscribing to a promotion. The promotion service is available for the entire duration stated in the advertisement.
 6. Ask questions and more questions! If you are unsure of a product you are interested in, a potential service offered by a service provider, or a new concept, ask the appropriate persons for clarification.
 7. Request help if you need it. Your service providers must provide customers with the assistance; for instance, they should ensure you understand and make informed decisions.
 8. When buying a service or product, particularly new ones, always ask questions if you are unsure how they work, how to use and get the best from them, and ensure you can be protected.
 9. Read the fine print of the advertisements – carefully - to ensure you fully understand what is expected of you and what is being provided – again, ask questions if you do

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS LICENCES

Background

Radiocommunications

Radiocommunications means any emission of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, or intelligence of any nature by radio waves.

Radio License

A unilateral grant of permission to a person or a group of persons to use a radio transmitting device as required by section 12 (2) of the Act. The term of a radio license is currently one year and runs from 1st January to 31st December each year.

Spectrum License

A spectrum license is a unilateral grant of permission by the Regulator to a person or a group of persons, for the use of a band of frequencies in a geographical area, usually for the provision of telecommunications services and identifying lower and upper-frequency limits. The term of a Spectrum License is typically several years. The spectrum licensee is also a telecommunications licensee; the time of a radio license is currently one year and runs from 1st January to 31st December each year.

Telecommunications License

Under section 12 (1) of the Act, it is a requirement that a person must not provide a telecommunications service except under and by a license or exception. This is known as a telecommunications license. A telecommunications license is a unilateral grant of permission by TRBR to a person, or a group of persons, to provide telecommunications services. It must not be regarded as a contract or bilateral agreement.

Radio Apparatus License

A person must not install or operate a radiocommunications device in Vanuatu or its territorial waters or airspace or in any ship or aircraft registered in or under the law of Vanuatu without having a license. This license is known as a Radio Apparatus License. Therefore, a person or a business must have a license to operate a radio transmitting apparatus.

Common types of radio equipment requiring a radio license

Common types of radio transmitting equipment or transmitting stations requiring a radio license are:

- Tele-radio Station (Land-based) stations (HF, VHF)
- Ship stations (HF, VHF, UHF, VSATs, EPIRBs, etc.)
- VSAT Stations (Hotels, Bungalows, Health Centers, schools, private individuals, etc.)
- Aircraft stations (HF, VHF, UHF, satellite, etc.)
- Land mobile stations (HF, VHF, UHF, satellite, etc.)
- Fixed stations (HF, VHF, UHF, Microwave links, Satellite Earth Stations, etc.)
- Broadcasting stations (Radio and Television)
- Amateur Radio Stations (HF, VHF, UHF, Satellite)

Radio Apparatus license fees for a radio transmitting device

For example, any user for Radio apparatus or equipment used on ships and planes needs a fee to TRBR for every piece of transmitting equipment except for those under the general authorization or GURL. Equipment such as mobile telephones, cordless telephones, wireless modems, etc., fall under the same category of radio transmitting equipment; however, they are not required to be individually licensed as they are covered by a general user radio license (GURL)

General User Radio License (GURLs)

Currently, GURLs cover:

- . Mobile telephone handsets and mobile devices
- . Citizen Band radios (CB)
- . Cordless telephones
- . Short-range Radio Devices (SRD), such as toys, car door openers, garage door openers, etc.

I need to pay a license fee.

The Act allows TRBR to manage the radio spectrum and charge appropriate fees. TRBR uses license fees to carry out its spectrum-related duties, such as license monitoring and compliance.

Payment of a radio license

Because the fee is only valid for 12 months, license holders must pay an annual fee to use their radio transmitter for the following year. In other words, a license holder needs to pay a fee for their license.

Renewal of License Fees

Licenses will not be automatically renewed, so unless a licensee no longer wants to use the spectrum/apparatus, it must be restored, and the necessary fee paid. TRBR will usually send renewal notices to current radio license holders, who may also contact the TRBR office.

Importance for renewal of license

If someone uses radio equipment without a valid license, they are breaking the law and will be prosecuted by a Court of Law. They must ensure that their equipment always has a valid license.

Key Discussion Points on Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Licenses

Who can apply for a Telecommunications and Radio Apparatus license?

Once a license is issued to a person, the person's conduct is governed by the license terms and conditions, including the Act and relevant regulations and regulatory instruments developed by TRBR.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR's views are clearly expressed above in the Background Section of this Handbook.
- As part of its functions under Section 7(2) (e) of the Act, TRBR is responsible for allocating, assigning, and managing the radio spectrum. TRBR has developed a Spectrum Management Principles document, National Frequency Allocation Plan, Spectrum Planning, Allocation, and Assignment documentation. These are to guide efficient and effective spectrum management in Vanuatu.
- TRBR conducts compliance checks and performs radio frequency interference testing. When someone or a company is found to be using radio equipment or spectrum without a license, they are warned to rectify the situation as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in TRBR taking legal action against the person or company illegally using spectrum or operating radio equipment with a valid license.
- TRBR has established a Telecommunications or Radio Apparatus license here in Vanuatu. TRBR has the Power to issue both radio apparatus and spectrum licenses.

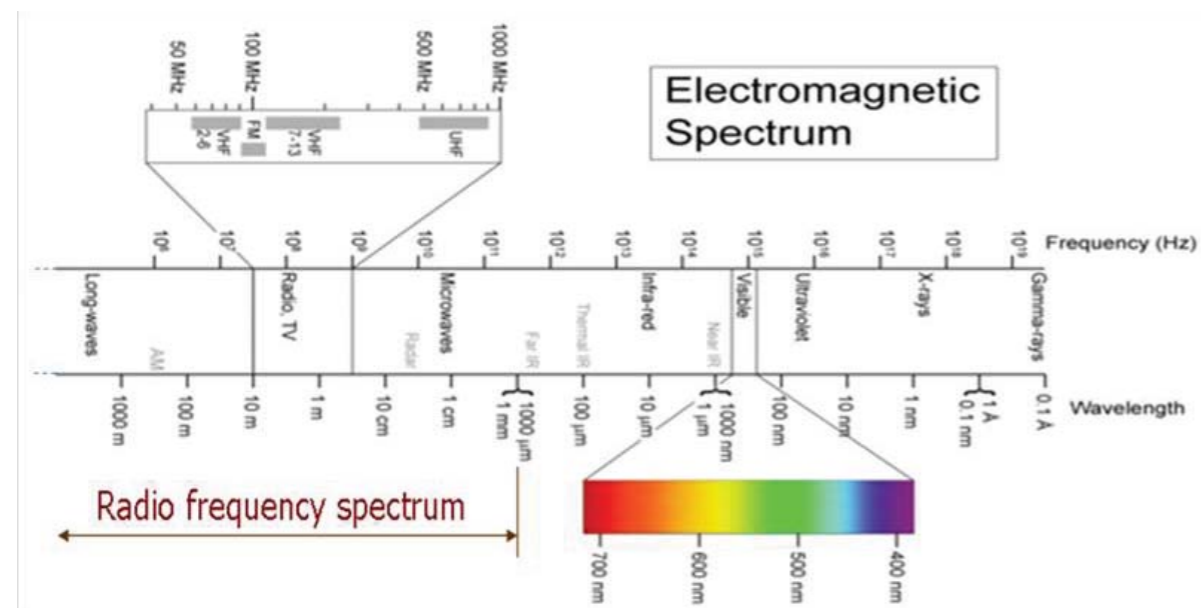
As technology evolves, it is expected that more and more radio devices will be developed, and many may qualify for GURL status. TRBR will assess and issue GURLs to cover such devices in such cases.

RADIOFREQUENCY SPECTRUM (OR RADIO SPECTRUM)

Background

Radio Spectrum

Radio Spectrum is a vital natural resource; the term 'radiofrequency spectrum' or 'radio spectrum' refers to the range of frequencies in that part of the electromagnetic spectrum over which information can be transmitted and received by radio waves through radio transmissions. It is a band of frequencies ranging from about 3 KiloHertz (kHz) to 300 GigaHertz (GHz). This resource must be managed well as it is not infinite, and bad management can cause a shortage of this asset for other industries using the spectrum.

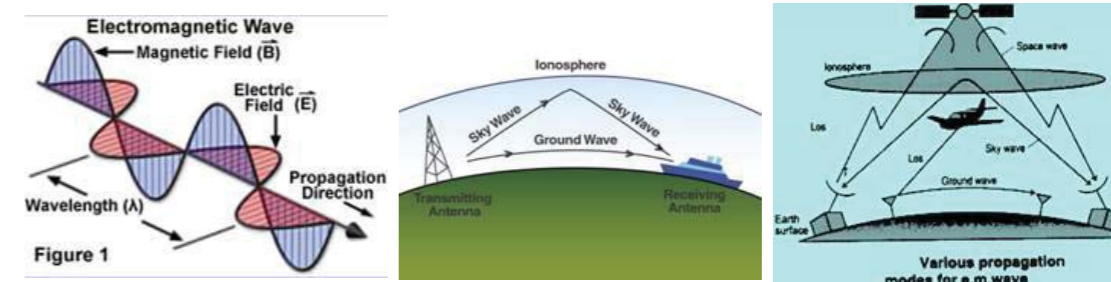


Generation of radio waves

Radio waves are generated in two ways; they are either naturally occurring or are artificially generated.

Naturally occurring radio waves are generated by lightning strikes or by astronomers. In contrast, controlled oscillations generate radio waves in a radio transmitter for radiocommunications, broadcasting, radar, communications satellites, navigation systems, computer networks, and many other applications.

The generation of radio waves is strictly regulated by the Government in most countries and coordinated by an international standards body called the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).



Owner of the radio spectrum

Radio spectrum is a natural resource, and, in most countries, natural resources are generally owned by the State. They are either managed by Governments or by Government Statutory Bodies, such as an Authority, a Commission, or a Regulator - like in Vanuatu, governed executes it. In collaboration with the Regulator, the Government sets Policies, Regulations, and

Guidelines on how the radio spectrum should be used. Due to its increasing demand as a vital resource for the telecommunications, radiocommunications, and broadcasting industries and being a contributor to the economy, the Government ensures that it is strictly regulated for proper management for the benefit of the users and country.

Importance of the radio spectrum

The radio frequency spectrum resource is vital to an ever-widening range of services. It is crucial to communications and the national economy. It is used to support many electronic communications services and applications. Radio frequencies are essential for telecommunications, particularly aviation, shipping, defense services, public safety, broadcasting, wireless broadband access, mobile communications, satellite, and countless other applications, such as medical instrumentation and domestic appliances.

How is it possible that so many services can use the radio spectrum at the same time?

The radiofrequency spectrum is divided into different bands. Different frequencies have other characteristics. Other bands are divided into smaller sub-bands, further divided into even smaller blocks known as channels. Similarly, other services usually have additional spectrum requirements; hence they are allocated various radio frequency bands and media. This ensures that different services can all operate simultaneously without interfering.

Table of ITU Radio Spectrum Bands

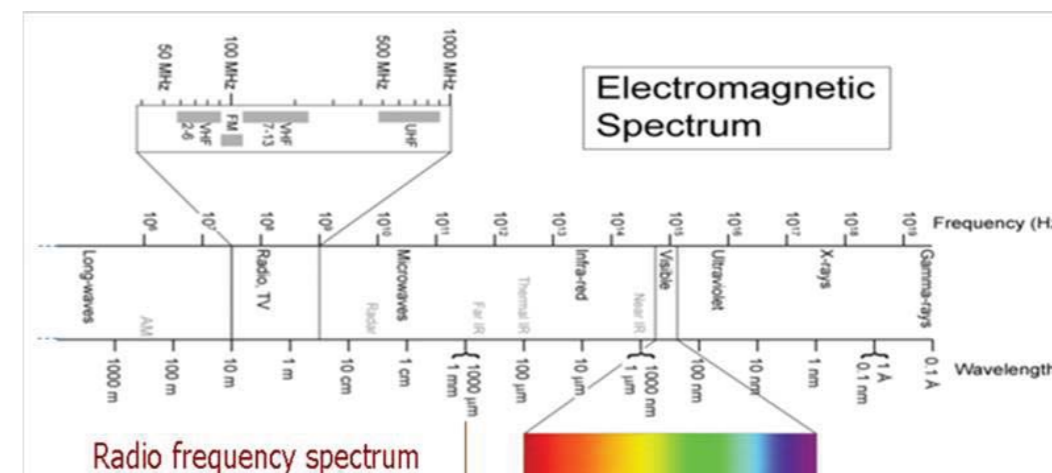
Band Number	Symbols	Frequency Range	Wavelength
4	VLF	3 – 30 KHz	1 – 100 km
5	LF	30 – 300 KHz	1 – 10 km
6	MF	300 – 3000 KHz	100 – 1000 m
7	HF	3 – 30 MHz	10 – 100 m
8	VHF	30 – 300 MHz	1 – 10 m
9	UHF	300 – 3000 MHz	10 – 100 cm
10	SHF	3 – 30 GHz	1 – 10 cm
11	EHF	30 – 300 GHz	1 – 10 mm
12	THF	300 – 3000 GHz	0.1 – 1 mm

Can radiofrequency spectrum be stored or stockpiled?

Unlike other natural resources, the radiofrequency spectrum cannot be stored or stockpiled for future use. It is a finite but inexhaustible natural resource. Its use in one area only denies users its use area, but it is not exhausted or depleted.

Responsible Office for managing radio spectrum

In Vanuatu, the Government has mandated TRBR to manage this natural resource on its behalf to promote national social and economic development.



NUMBERING

Key Discussion Points on Spectrum

Why is it essential to manage the spectrum in Vanuatu?

What would happen if any person or business operator uses the spectrum without consulting TRBR?

TRBR Views and Approach:

TRBR's views are clearly expressed above in the Background Section of this Handbook.

- Radio Frequency or Spectrum is a finite, non-exhaustible resource via an ever-widening range of services spectrum is crucial to communications in Vanuatu and the national economy. Industries that use the spectrum, such as broadcasting and cellular mobile telephony, make substantial economic contributions, while other manufacturing and service industries use it to increase productivity.
- To maximize the efficient and effective use of the radio spectrum by all sectors of society, the overall goal of the radio spectrum in Vanuatu is to create a predictive environment for current and future spectrum usage, which is in the public interest.
- Like the RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS AND LICENCES' Section, as part of its functions under Section 7(2)(e) of the Act, TRBR is responsible for allocating, assigning, and managing the radio spectrum. TRBR has developed a Spectrum Management Principles document, National Frequency Allocation Plan, Spectrum Planning, Allocation, and Assignment documentation. These guides help with efficient and effective spectrum management in Vanuatu.
- TRBR conducts compliance checks and performs radio frequency interference testing. When someone or a company is found to be using radio equipment or spectrum without a license, they are warned to rectify the situation as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in TRBR taking legal action against the person or company illegally using spectrum or operating radio equipment with a valid license.



Numbers are helpful resources to provide end-user service and promote competition and innovation in telecommunications services. Network operators require numbers to implement telecommunications services and deliver them to end-users of telecommunications services such as:

- Fixed telephony.
- Mobile telephony.
- Internet-based telecommunications services.
- Short codes including Emergency services and directory services.
- Value Added information Services, countrywide services, and commonly recognized national services.
- Premium Rates Services (PRS).
- Toll-Free numbers, and
- Defined numbering blocks reserved for future allocation and applications.

Management of Numbering Resources

The management, administration, and governance of the Vanuatu National Numbering Plan are provided under the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act No. 30 of 2009 (the Act) and the National Numbering Plan and Procedures.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS POLICY (UAP)

Background

The Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulators' Act No. 30 of 2009 as amended by amendment No. 22 of 2018, part 4 mandates the provision of Universal Access. Section 17 provides that the Minister responsible for Telecommunications must develop a policy for improving access to telecommunications services for locations that are not or not adequately served by existing services. In November 2013, a Universal Access Policy (UAP) was developed and approved by the Council of Ministers (COM), with a timeframe that ended on the 1st of January 2018. COM decision 291 of 2019 then extended the UAP implementation timeframe to the 1st of January 2022. However, discussions are underway to further develop the timetable due to the COVID-19 situation, which has significantly impacted the effectiveness of the UAP implementation progresses.

Furthermore, the UAP provision mandates the establishment of a UAP trust fund by the Minister and that the Operators pay a UAP levy of up to 4% of their net revenue to the fund. Additionally, it provides that any person may voluntarily contribute towards the UAP Fund, and such person may specify that such contribution is applied in a specific manner. With this provision, a UAP trust fund was established; the Government, through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and the Office of the TRBR, are the signatories to the UAP trust account.

Implementation of the UAP

The primary objective of the UAP is that 98% of the Vanuatu population should have access to telecommunications services by the end of the UAP rollout. The telecommunications services include voice, narrowband, and broadband internet services that enable a download speed of 2mbps and upload speed of 1mbps. The secondary objective is that these services must be accessible in schools, health facilities, and public offices in remote areas.

The implementation of the UAP is based on an approach called the 'play' or 'pay.' Operators who are willing to roll out their network to the underserved and unserved areas identified by TRBR will be exempted from paying 4% UAP levy, which in this case it is the Play approach. Operators unwilling to participate in the UAP rollout will have to pay 4% levy, the payment approach. Vodafone (Vanuatu) Limited and Digicel (Vanuatu) are the major players in the UAP, while the other ISPs such as Wantok and SPIM pay the levy. However, in a recent undertaking agreement signed in June 2021, Wantok has agreed to join the two big players to implement UAP.

The initial implementation of the UAP has had its benefits and challenges. While UAP is putting smiles on people's faces, the challenges remain with the Operators; some of the challenges are highlighted below:

- The UAP towers are uneconomical; with the low population in an area, return on operators' investment is difficult, which may affect the sustainability of the tower operation.
- Land dispute cause delay in the building of tower or the removal of the tower
- Commercial disputes with local labor whereby demand for more money and other benefits above and beyond what had been contractually agreed continued to impede works at sites and increase costs for construction.
- Acts of extortion or blackmail from various communities to extract a more significant financial benefit or some other benefit such as vehicles and free phones/credit.
- Threats of violence towards personnel engaged in the infrastructure building impact the completion of UAP sites.
- Theft or the removal of equipment from sites impacting infrastructure build, delaying completion, and increasing costs.
- Increasingly rugged terrain requiring a significant amount of pre-work with road construction and clearing before civil works commence. Due to this, maintenance issues are a considerable concern, and the costs go up due to other markets forces. This has led to Players modifying site location to reduce the capital cost required for establishment.
- Continuous electrical supply, the requirement for electrical grid systems and fuel depots to supply generators.

UAP Other Programs

The UAP other programs were initiated to supplement the implementation of the Policy. While a significant part of the UAP is focused on mobile coverage, the UAP's other programs mainly address Internet and ICT development in schools and provide Wi-Fi coverage around their surrounding communities in rural areas. The other UAP program initiatives contribute a lot to closing the gap on the digital divide, enabling a point of access to the community members, particularly in the areas where it is uneconomical to cover with a mobile network.

Projects under the UAP Programs incl the Community Telecommunications Grant and other initiatives implemented under the scope of UAP, which are further discussed below:

Community Telecommunications Grant

The Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG) is an annual grant established in 20continuescontinues to operate. The purpose of the CTG is to support the ICT and Internet projects, particularly in the areas where access to Telecommunications services is difficult. The Grant is open for applications during February and March. Three million vatu (VUV 3,000,000) is allocated annually towards the grant, and a successful applicant is entitled to a ceiling of up to VUV 1,500,000. Nine (9) schools and communities have benefited from the Grant.

Other Initiatives

The Regulator may also initiate and consider projects for areas that critically need telecommunications coverage. These may apply to areas that are very remote and isolated and where lives may have been lost due to such difficulties. Yakavegamena Community on the Island of Hiu in the Torress and the community of Tasvare School on the Island of Merelava in the Banks have benefited from such initiative. Additionally, TRBR, through the UAP initiatives, has supported telecommunications recovery following the severe impact of TC Harold on the Northern Islands of the Country. The two communities on the island of Malo, the community of Kitacu School, Atariboe Community, and the community of Bwatnapne School on the Island of Pentecost, have benefited from VSAT equipment and Solar system.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR is engaging with the telecommunication service providers and its wider stakeholders, including the Government, to implement the Government's UAP to achieve its objectives. TRBR will continue to cooperate and contribute effectively towards its significant role and as mandated by the UAP, to create opportunities for connecting schools and communities through the Government ICT programs and other initiatives
- The primary focus of these programs is to foster the development of telecommunications services in rural areas, stimulate the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and ensure that all community sectors benefit to the best of their potential.
- The UAP project will bridge the Digital Divide and enhance school learning through ICT and internet services. It will improve the illiteracy rate and preserve cultures and traditional values. It is anticipated that our health development in rural communities will improve.
- Through UAP programs, farmers will also have more opportunities to sell their products

PROPER USE OF EMERGENCY SHORT CODE NUMBERS

Background

Emergency numbers are short three-digit telephone numbers (also called Emergency Short Code numbers) that are easy to remember and be used in an emergency, compared to standard fixed or mobile telephone numbers, which are usually longer and cannot be easily recognized, particularly during instances when one is faced with an emergency or is overwhelmed with anxiety or is panic-stricken. More importantly, calls to emergency numbers can be made from any fixed or mobile network and are free of charge to the caller.

Emergency Short Cords are currently available for emergency services in Efate, specifically Port-Vila, where most emergency operators are established. In the future, these same emergency short code telephone numbers will also be used to alert emergency services in another province. Ultimately, the system will be available to all of Vanuatu.

The table below contains the current active Emergency telephone numbers and used in Efate, specifically in Port-Vila and its outskirts.

Emergency numbers provide direct access to the required emergency service, i.e., Vila Central Hospital Ambulance, Police, Fire Brigade, Maritime, and Pro Medical Ambulance.

Emergency Short Code Numbers	Emergency Service Operators
111	Police
112	Vila Central Hospital Ambulance
113	Fire Brigade
114	Maritime
115	Pro Medical Ambulance

Since calls to emergency short code numbers are free of charge, some people make non-emergency calls and often without reasonable excuse (prank/hoax/malicious/nuisance calls) through these short code numbers, which interfere directly with the smooth operation of the emergency services and, in so doing, but the lives of those people who genuinely need emergency services, in danger.

TRBR has advised the public that making annoying, pranks, and malicious phone offenses is punishable. They should never be made – mainly to emergency phone numbers! Making annoying, joke, and hurtful calls to emergency numbers are discouraging to and distracting for the emergency operators since they prevent genuine emergency calls from getting through promptly and can cost lives.

Making such annoyance caused through telephone calls is an offense under the Telecommunications Act [CAP 206], where anyone convicted of such a crime is liable to a fine or imprisonment.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- Making annoying, prank, and malicious calls from “private” or “unknown” number(s) cannot “hide” the phone numbers used to make the call(s). There is an arrangement between the Police and the Telecom Operators (TVL and Digicel). TRBR can request information from the operators to identify the telephone numbers of people making hoax calls to emergency numbers. Hoax callers can have their disconnected and the number suspended under this arrangement.
- TRBR facilitated the establishment of the National Emergency Response Group (NERG) in 2011 that assisted TRBR with the assignment and implementation of the current short codes telephone numbers for emergency services implemented in late 2011. The NERG includes telecom licensees, emergency operators, OGCIO, TRBR, and interested parties. NRG has provided valuable assistance in addressing the issue of hoax/prank and malicious calls to emergency numbers.
- TRBR and the NERG have organized public awareness initiatives through Radio Talk Back Shows and newspaper articles on the importance of emergency numbers and to help combat the issue of hoax/prank and malicious calls to emergency numbers. TRBR, through its Consumer Affairs team, also included this issue in its outreach ICT awareness programs to the communities.

- Consumers should **only call Emergency Short Code numbers** when in an emergency or witnessing an emergency. Misuse of the emergency service short code numbers will lead to unnecessary expense/time for the Emergency Service operators, loss of trust by the Emergency Service operators in the community, and loss of confidence by the public in Emergency Services for non-responsiveness to emergency calls.
- It is Important to Remember that Prank/hoax/ malicious:
- Calls to emergency services can block genuine emergency calls from getting through and can cost lives.
- Callers may have their numbers blocked from calling an emergency service; and
- Calls to Emergency Service short code numbers may be charged for making such calls as a criminal offense.

Key Discussion Points on Emergency Short Code Numbers

It is an offense to make hoax/annoying calls to emergency numbers.

What are the implications of making hoax/annoying calls to emergency numbers?

How are TRBR and others addressing the issue?

PROTECTING CRITICAL ICT INFRASTRUCTURE



Background

Critical ICT infrastructure refers to elements that are fundamental to the operations of ICT networks to enable service provision. Essential ICT infrastructure elements are often referred to as the leading carriers or backbone of the ICT network infrastructure. They are interconnected parts that transport the bulk of an ICT’s network traffic, delivering them to customer distribution nodes before it reaches customers. They are not often directly connected to customers. Any damage to one will hinder the operations of others that depend on it, consequently affecting ICT service delivery to end-users.

These elements include wired and wireless infrastructure, including telecommunication towers, external Wi-Fi transceiver stations and antennas, satellite earth stations, copper or fiber distribution cables, and domain name servers to process internet directory services.

Much critical ICT infrastructure is located in areas accessible to the public. For this reason, consumers and the public at large must be aware of their importance and, therefore, mindful of protecting them.

THE INTERNET

Background

Wikipedia defines the internet as "The Internet (or internet) is the global system of interconnected computer networks tha public, academic, business, and government network of local to global scope, linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless, and optical networking technologies. The Internet carries a vast range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents and applications of the World Wide Web (WWW), electronic mail, telephony, and file sharing".

Mobile internet is accessing the internet using a mobile device through Wi-Fi or cellular network compared to the traditional cable internet. About 92% of all internet users use mobile internet, and the number is growing by the day.

The internet is used for communications, entertainment, business transactions and activities, research, education, and many other services.



Key Discussion Points on Critical ICT Infrastructure

It is essential to protect critical ICT infrastructure.

Who should protect critical ICT infrastructure in Vanuatu?

TRBR Views and Approach:

- The Government of Vanuatu, through the Act, aims to facilitate the development of the telecommunications sector to promote national social and economic development.
- To promote social, economic, and individual progress, Vanuatu requires a developed and scalable ICT infrastructure for a more efficient ICT sector while promoting development and innovation. Among other benefits, ICT facilitates access to Government services, increased training opportunities through distance learning, healthcare services through telemedicine, improved literacy, and access to economic opportunities.
- Consumers must understand the significance of protecting critical ICT infrastructure. It is essential that all citizens understand the link between critical ICT infrastructure and ICT for development, as technology is a vital part of this country's disaster management and recovery (e.g., how text messages from two operators have greatly assisted in saving people's lives during cyclone Pam on the 13th of March 2015). Its development strategy and investment are critical to protecting Vanuatu residents, enhancing Vanuatu's standard of living, and creating so many other benefits enabled by ICT.
- Communication and ICT networks are critical infrastructure and underpin many other critical networks (e.g., tourism, education, energy, finance, aviation). Therefore, the malfunctioning or disruption of the communication channel provided by the necessary ICT infrastructure will have a cascading effect on several other infrastructures or services that depend on it, potentially across Vanuatu.

TRBR encourages the protection of critical ICT infrastructure by all stakeholders (Government, private sector, and consumers) and will continue to promote this via radio shows and consumer awareness programs.

Key Discussion Points on the Internet

What the internet is and its benefits to the user

Benefits of the internet:

- Secure, reliable, and instant communication.
- Educational content at the fingertips
- Enhance business activities.
- Easy financial transactions
- Instant news feeds.
- Instant disaster reports and responses

Challenges facing the use of the Internet:

- privacy breaches.
- Risk of cybercrime activities and harmful content

TRBR maintains an active role in promoting the safe use of the Internet, mainly through its consumer awareness and protection mechanisms.



ONLINE SECURITY

Background

The internet has both genuine and non-essentials. The user must identify what is actual and unreal, fraudulent, or deceiving with criminal intent.

Best Practices for users

- Use strong passwords – Use complex passwords and change them regularly for online accounts or logins.
- Enable multi-factor authentication – Use two or more levels of authentication
- Ensure your network is s of new secure – Most public Wi-Fi is unsecured, so be cautious.
- Make sure you use a firewall – Even on secure networks, you should still use a firewall and enable it on your device.
- Protect your identity – Don't share personal information publicly. The less information that is 'out there, the safer you are. Sharing is not always for caring!
- Be scam aware – Check all emails and messages carefully before clicking on any links or opening any shared files.
- Do necessary updates – It can be annoying to keep updating devices and software, but they often contain critical security updates. Better safe than sorry!

Key Discussion Points on Online Security

How can the user be safe online?

Is there sufficient user education and awareness in Vanuatu about Internet threats?

TRBR Views and Approach:

TRR leads or assists several initiatives to promote the online security of users in Vanuatu:

- Regular Awareness of internet pros and cons
- Support the Vanuatu government in implementing internet-related policies. will continue to promote this via radio shows and consumer awareness programs.

SPAM

Background

Spam generally refers to bulk unsolicited or unwanted electronic messages. Simply put, spam is any unwanted online communication. The most common form of spam is unwanted email. You can also get text message spam, instant message spam, and social networking spam. Unwanted, undesired, or illegal email messages, newsgroup postings, and unwanted advertisements are examples of spam. What that means is that messages are sent to multiple recipients. Email spam can be either as:

- a single e-mail message addressed to many recipients or
- many email messages, each addressed to one or more recipients or
- a mail merges.

Some spam is annoying but harmless. However, some spam is part of an identity theft scam or another fraud. Identity theft spam is often called a phishing scam.

Spam messages are sent from senders you do not know and are sent via computer, using commonly accepted communication protocols between the source and destination e-mail servers. A spammer is a person who sends out spam messages. Spam messages are mainly about advertising or selling a product, and spammers use this form of development because it is cheap. Recipients incur the costs of the email system processing the spam mail. So, if your email address is likely to receive a spammer's email listing, you are most likely to receive spam emails. Spammers hijack email addresses through newsgroups and chat rooms, website subscriptions, or visiting and entering your email address on attractive sites.

To protect yourself against email spam, use email software with built-in spam filtering.

Spam is a massive problem for many countries and is discussed at international law enforcement conferences and multi-stakeholder organizations, including the Internet Engineering Task Force and the Internet Governance Forum.



STOCK IMAGE

Key Discussion Points on SPAM

In the era we live in today, communication is becoming accessible with just a click on a device. Almost everybody has an Email Address, maybe from Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo mail, AOL, or vanuatu.com.vu webmail. Whichever email provider you may have subscribed to, it is essential to ask if the service provider provides mailbox spam protection or spam filter that filters and remove spam messages and allows legitimate emails into your email box.

Spam is a significant concern to internet users.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR's views are clearly expressed above in the ONLINE SECURITY and other Sections of this Handbook.
- SPAM messages are disturbing, time-consuming, and occupy our communication data links for business or work matters. The ISPs and Email providers try to eliminate spam messages from delivering into our mailboxes. But not all spam messages are blocked; some spam messages will get through the spam filters and be delivered into our mailbox.
- TRBR advises and raises consumers' awareness about spam messages, what they are, and how to avoid them. TRBR also advises and raises consumers' awareness about their responsibilities when they are on the internet browsing the websites they visit and to be careful when entering email addresses or personal details on suspicious websites or untrusted websites. There are many ways for spammers to access your email address, and consumers need to be always on guard.

CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION (COP)

Background

Keeping young users safe online has emerged as an increasingly urgent issue in a world where the Internet permeates almost every aspect of life.

The explosion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has created unprecedented opportunities for children and young people to communicate, socialize, share, learn, access information, and express their opinions on matters that affect their lives and their communities while at the same time posing significant challenges to children's safety.

Harmful activities can include:

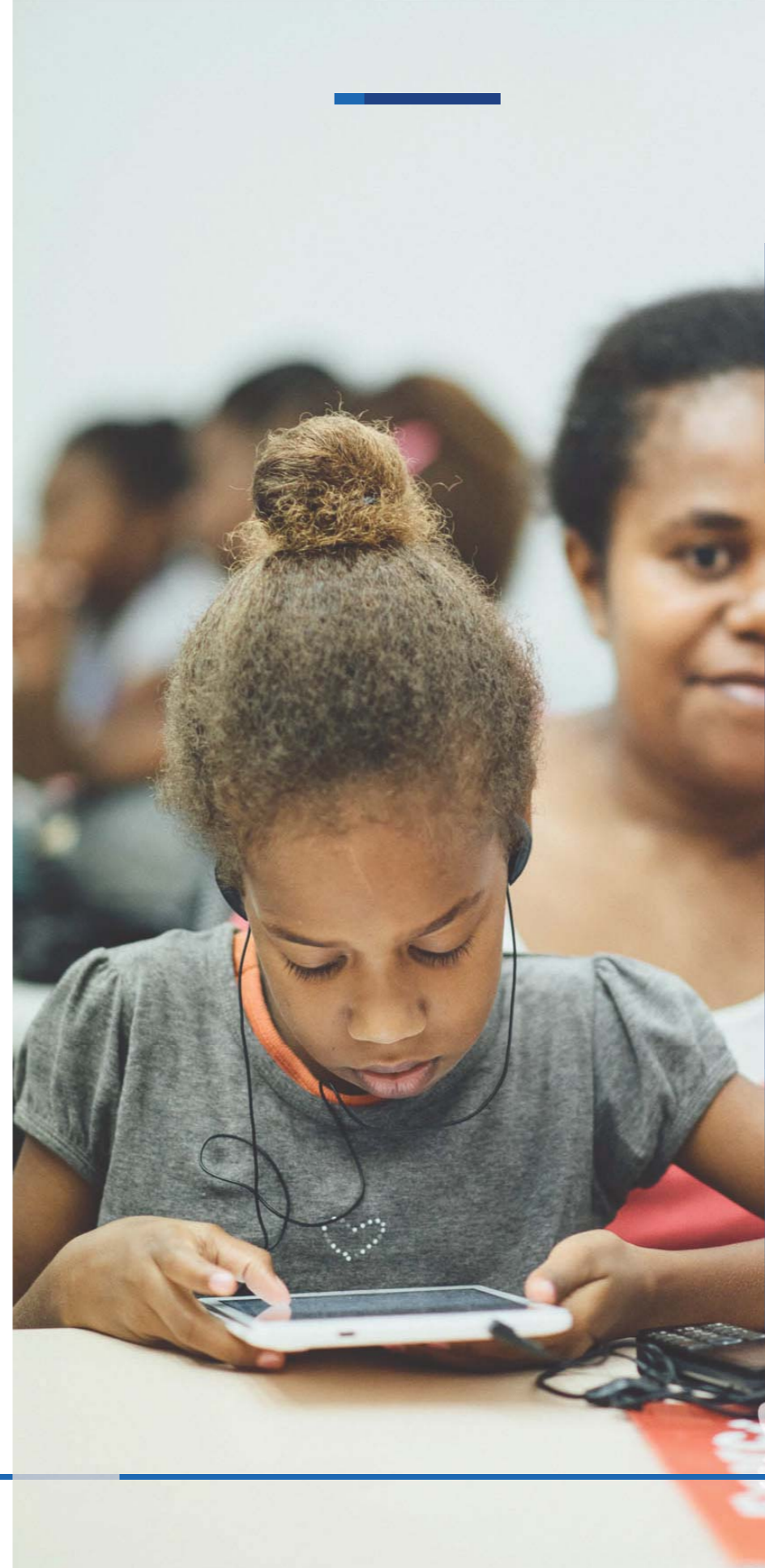
- Exposure to inappropriate images or content, whether inadvertently or deliberately.
- Solicitation by sexual predators in chat rooms, other forms of social media, and by email.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Inappropriate disclosure of personal information and data theft (through over-sharing or other means).
- Spyware, viruses, and malicious software.
- Scams.
- Excessive commercialism via advertising and product-related websites.
- The consequences of the temptation to engage in piracy of software, music, or video

bullying and harassment, identity theft, and online abuse (such as children seeing harmful and illegal content, being exposed to grooming for sexual purposes, or the production, distribution, and collection of child abuse material).

- Lost opportunities when children become addicted to spending prolonged hours online, e.g., trade time to play online games rather than physical sports in a learning environment.

These are all threats to children and young people's well-being and a challenge that all stakeholders, including children themselves, must address. While providers of online services should do whatever they can at a technical level to make the Internet as safe as it can be for children and young people, the first and best defense mechanism in protecting children and young people is creating awareness of online activities and communicating the understanding that an online problem encountered does have a solution. Therefore, empowering children and young people through education and awareness-raising is paramount. TRBR plays a vital role in that respect, and many other entities, including Government and Ministries, operators, and service providers, also have essential functions to play

Children need a safe and secure online environment to utilize the benefits of new internet technologies and applications.



Key Discussion Points on COP

What is being done to protect children when they are online?

Can technology, education, and awareness protect young people from online threats?

TRBR Views and Approach:

- TRBR has a part to play in ensuring minors can experience a safe and rewarding internet environment so do others, as discussed above in this Section of the Handbook.

Current works and achievements led by the Government in collaboration with TRR include:

- National Cybersecurity strategy is part of the Vanuatu National Security Strategy.
- Cybercrime legislation completed.
- Child online protection-focused tasks of the National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG) led by the Ministry of Justice under the Child Desk. The working group is working to finalize the new Child Protection legislation, including Child Online Protection.

UNDERSTANDING INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES

Background

Domain names

A domain name is an identification string that defines a realm of administrative autonomy, authority, or control within the Internet. Domain names are used in various networking contexts and for application-specific naming and addressing purposes. In general, a domain name identifies a network domain or represents an Internet Protocol (IP) resource, such as a personal computer used to access the Internet, a server computer hosting a website, or the website itself or any other service communicated via the Internet. As of 2019, there are about 360 million registered domains. For example, the Internet address of Vanuatu's Telecommunications & Radiocommunications Regulator (TRR) is "to.Vu," and the Vu website is the unique presence of TRR on the Internet.

Use of a domain name

A domain name is a unique identifier of a person or an organization on the internet. It can be used for a website or an email address. No two-domain name's unique names are the same, and the internet infrastructure security make sure each domain name is maintained and not compromised. For example, www.try.vu or www.yourcompany.com and email addresses, where the domain name follows the '@' symbol likeenquiries@trbr.vu or info@yourcompany.com.

How domain names work

Domain names enable anyone to find the sought-after website and a consumer's electronic mailbox. Every computer on the public Internet has a unique numeric address - like the uniqueness of a telephone number - a string of numbers that is difficult for most people to remember. This string is called the "IP address." IP stands for "Internet Protocol." Every domain name published on the internet has a unique IP address allocation. This address is used to locate and transfer data from one location to another. The Domain Name System or the DNS makes this happen.



Types of domain names

TLDs are classified into two broad categories: generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs).

Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLDs) is a generic top-level domain name that identifies the domain class associated with (.com, .org, .edu, etc.).

Country Code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD) is a two-letter domain extension, such as .vu or .fr, assigned to a country, geographic location, or territory.

Process of obtaining a .vu domain name

To register a .vu domain name, you first need to contact a .vu authorized registrar. A registrar is an organization authorized to register and manage domain names on behalf of registrants or users such as you. In other words, a registrar holds the right to register a domain name. The list of registrars can be found on this link <https://www.hello.vu/sell-vu/>. Registration of a domain can be done online except for Vodafone, which also offers manual registrations over the counter.



Key Discussion Points on Domain Names (especially .vu)

Why and how important are the domain name systems and the .vu domain name?

TRBR Views and Approach:

TRBR is the administrator and manager of the .vu ccTLD, and as such, its role is to make sure that the .vu is widely used and is securely available 24/7.

E-WASTE

Background

Electronic waste or E-Waste describes discarded electrical or electronic devices. Used electronics destined for reuse, resale, salvage, recycling, or disposal are also considered E-waste (Wikipedia).

Computers, televisions, VCRs, stereos, mobile phones, copiers, and fax machines are everyday electronic products.

Dumping e-waste anywhere on the land is hazardous to humans since they contain mercury, cadmium, lead, phosphorus, arsenic, and beryllium. Whenever e-waste ends up in landfills, it eventually ends up in the ground and our water supply. Informal processing of E-waste by countries may cause serious health and pollution problems.

E-waste also presents a potential security threat to individuals and countries sending their e-waste products away to recycling plants. For example, hard drives that are not properly erased before the computer is disposed of can be reopened, exposing sensitive information. Credit card numbers, private financial data, account information, and individuals can access records of online transactions for their gain.

E-waste is a global issue, and not much has been done to solve this global issue in the Pacific Region. Tons of millions of E-waste are produced each year., Consumers worldwide purchase millions of electronic products that we discard within 3-4 years of purchase, driving the global growth in e-waste. There aren't enough recyclers globally, especially in developing countries, to handle all the electronics we're throwing away. This also applies to us here in Vanuatu; consumers purchase many electronic products and dump them within 3 to 4 years.

Key Discussion Points on E-Waste

E-waste issue should be everybody's business.

Consumers in the communities should support initiatives to minimize and carefully manage E- in Vanuatu.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- Electronic waste is a fundamental matter that needs to be considered seriously at the Government and community levels.
- TRBR will continue to consult with the relevant Government departments, NGOs, and community on e-waste management in Vanuatu
- TRBR promotes E-waste management by creating awareness among consumers concerning their responsibilities to take care of the environment and making it safer for everyone by not appropriately disposing of electrical and electronic equipment. Attention is usually in the areas such as:
 - Dangers of E-waste to the environment when disposing along with other rubbish or waste in any landfill
 - Proper management of E-waste disposal - Recycling
- TRBR assists in support programs relating to E-waste management to enable Vanuatu to be an E-waste free nation.

TRBR TYPE APPROVAL

Background

Type approval is a process by which Information, and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment and devices, such as RTTE, are authorized for sale and use in a country ("approved"). It involves verifying the equipment against the applicable international standards and requirements to ensure that the ICT equipment or RTTE does not cause any interference or long or short-term damage to the radio and telco networks, the environment, and the general public.

Subsection 7(3) and Paragraph 7(4) respectively of the Act provide the powers to the Regulator to make such regulations as may be necessary and impose restrictions or limitations upon the importation, sale, or use of any equipment or likely to be used in connection with radiocommunications or telecommunications.

- There are two types of type approval application forms. Type approval application form for Manufactures
 - Application for Manufacturers who are Overseas and want to Import equipment into Vanuatu
 - An administrative fee of 6000 vatu
- Type approval form for local importers
 - Application for Local who want to import equipment into Vanuatu
 - An administrative fee of 1000 Vatu

Key Discussion Points on Type Approval

What would happen if any person or business operator imports equipment into Vanuatu without a Type Approval certificate?













TRBR Views and Approach:

- Manufacturers, Importers, and business operators must have an approved Type-Approval certificate provided by TRBR before importing any equipment into Vanuatu
- Any equipment that is not certified by TRBR will not be allowed into the Country
- To ensure that only quality and fit for use equipment and products are imported into the country
- To ensure that the equipment does not cause interference with other equipment, does not cause damage to health and the environment
- To ensure that Vanuatu is not used as a dumping site for non-quality products and increased the need for e-waste in Vanuatu.

TRBR'S RECOMMENDED TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICT COMPLIANCE MARK AND STANDARDS

TRBR strongly recommends that consumers should only use approved equipment that uses the following compliance marks:

Electro-Magnetic Compliance (EMC)

Shorthand	Compliance Mark	Compliance with requirements of:
CE		Directives issued by the European Commission
GS		GS Mark. Germany. Europe.
FCC		Federal Communications Commission (FCC) (USA)
C-Tick		Australian and NZ C-Tick
VCCI		Japan's VCCI Mark
PSB		Singapore Safety Authority, Productivity and Standards Board.
MIC		South Korean Ministry of Information and Communications.
BSMI		Taiwanese Bureau of Standards, Metrology, and Inspection.
HKSI		Hong Kong Safety Institute Mark
Ek		South Korea. UK Mark.
KCC/MIC		Ministry of Communications (RoK)
LR		Marine Approval (Lloyd Register)

Environmental Compliance

Shorthand	Compliance Mark	Compliance with requirements of:
A-Tick		Australia.
HKSI		Hong Kong Safety Institute Mark is also Hong Kong Safety Mark.
S		S-Mark. Europe
KC		KC Mark will replace the old eKthat Mark in RoK.
CCC		China Compulsory Certification (CCC) Mark
KCC/MIC		Ministry of Communications (RoK)
UL		North American Product Safety
Demko or VDE		European Union Product Safety
Ex		European Union Hazardous Locations
LR		Marine Approval (Lloyd Register)
WEEK		Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directives
RoHS		RoHS Directives. Restriction of Hazardous Substance).
ISO 9001/14001		Quality/Environmental Management System

QUALITY OF SERVICE



The TRBR Act provides that the regulator shall lay down the quality of service offered by the service providers and conduct a periodical survey of such service provided by the service providers to protect the interest of the consumers of telecommunication services.

A guideline was issued on 6th October 2021 with critical parameters for the quality of service and the benchmarks for meeting the parameters by the service providers listed in the Quality-of-Service guideline.

Monitoring of Quality of Service

To ensure the quality of service and to monitor the performance of service providers against the QoS parameters prescribed in the regulations, TRBR adopts a twofold strategy: (i) conduct a Performance Monitoring report and audit of QoS from service providers; (ii) Survey of Customer satisfaction across the country on service being offered.

TRBR Views and Approach:

- Are customers receiving the benefit of service and the value they are paying for.
- Customer satisfaction and experience are predominately important.

TRBR Views on Quality of Service:

- Improve customer quality of experience.
- To ensure the customer receives the actual level of service they are paying for.
- To ensure the customer experience the level of experience promised by their service provider.
- Improve overall customer satisfaction.

SIM CARD REGISTRATION

The Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) registration initiative was introduced as part of the national identity approach. The idea is to attach a mobile number to the identity of a real person. The required all mobile phone subscribers to register their SIM cards with their respective mobile network operators. The latest amendment of the Telecommunication Radiocommunication & Broadcasting Regulator's Act of 17 December 2021 provides the regulator mandatory power to make Regulations for registration of SIM cards and SIM Card registration database.

The rationale of this amendment stems from directive No. 13 issued by the National Disaster Management office under the state of Emergency regulation order No. 35 of 2020, responding to excessive abuse, treatment, and misleading information on social media by fake IDs during the country's state of emergency.

SIM Registration has been implemented in several countries globally, and there are a lot of success stories despite the challenges faced by service providers and customers. Overall, SIM registration was designed to capture the identity of mobile phone subscribers for identity and security management.



Key Discussion on Point

What happens when someone commits an offense using mobile devices?

TRBR Views and Approach:

- To help mitigate security concerns and address criminal and anti-social behavior".
- Ensure the consumers treat and respect each other online to restore traditional value and respect within our society.
- Maximize the use of the National ID system in Vanuatu, and help the uptake of ID registration with the department of Civil status
- Assist financial inclusion in relation to mobile money transactions, e-commerce and doing business on-line.

