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# TVL charters plane, engages expert to restore lost network services

By Jonas Cullwick

**TELECOM VANUATU LIMITED** (TVL) chartered a plane Wednesday that brought an expert from Australia with critical spare parts to fix the problem at the Central Exchange of the largest telecommunications company

in the country and return almost 80% of its services lost since Tuesday morning.

The full services were fully restored last night around 8 o'clock.

TVL Chief Executive Officer, Ibrahim Nooreh Din Mahamed, explained that the problem of the near

total blackout is a result of the thunder storms that have been striking Vanuatu, especially Efate since January.

"We were hit, especially our Central Exchange, which is located at the IDS, behind Independence Park, has been struck two times since January.

"So, when we were struck by the lightning each time, this has brought instability in the telecommunication system in our Central Exchange.

"The fact that the instability due to the lightning, made our network a little bit unstable on the power side and on

the core networks where all the nervous systems are," he explained.

"Following that each time when there is a power cut, which has been very common since January due to the same problem that is striking Vanuatu through thunderstorms, the system

went on "safe" mode and we were able to address it but yesterday (Tuesday) when it went on "safe" mode (after another power outage) it was very, very difficult to bring it back to service and the "safe" mode is as if it is locked.

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# TVL network restored after company engages Australian expert

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"That system with all its own redundancy has gone on safe mode and not coming back again.

"We did all our best to bring it back and yesterday (Tuesday) night when we were not able to get the safe mode back we got the Nokia expert in Australia who had been working with us since yesterday (Tuesday) afternoon and together decided that the expert is coming here.

At 1 o'clock in the early

morning of Wednesday TVL decided that an expert needed to move from Australia to here. So the expert took the plane chartered by TVL leaving Australia 9.30 in the morning with all the critical spare parts to fix "this very rare problem that we are facing".

CEO Din Mahamed said Wednesday that: "We are trying our best to have the service working this afternoon or during the night because I know that it is an expectable trouble shooting which the

expert is coming with all the critical spare parts to address this issue to that level of that expertise.

He explained that the problem has not been a total blackout because the mobile data is working, as well as the analogue fixed line which is also working.

What is not working are two things - the mobile voice and the SMS, which lost from the Central Exchange the nervous system, and the digital lines and the fixed connections,

which is the fixed to mobile, mobile to fixed lines services.

They are trying their best to address all concerns from customers and stakeholder as a result of the situation, and as part of this on Tuesday as priority number one they reported the problem to the Office of Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) who then informed the stakeholders including the government officials and then to the radio, social media using a communiqué sent to

everyone possible to explain the situation TVL was facing.

On Wednesday, early in the morning the CEO and senior TVL executives went to TRR with their timeline to explain how they were addressing the situation because they are accountable to the TRR.

"We explained everything to TRR and OGCIO and finally to the Prime Minister.

"We've just come from the Office of the Prime Minister where we briefed the Prime Minister on everything, what

happened, all the sequence since January up to now and what are the actions that we are taking with the expert coming with all the critical spare parts to resolve the problem.

"Let me tell you this thing rarely happens in telecommunication, a sequence of events from lightning strikes that resulted in the weakening of the Central Exchange and then was compounded by the power outages that followed," the TVL head said.