

Annual Report 2019



A communications environment that enriches the social,
cultural, customs and commercial fabric of Vanuatu





The Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulation Act No. 30 of 2009 and Amendment No. 22 of 2018, (hereinafter referred to as “the Act”) mandates the Regulator to provide the Minister responsible for Telecommunications with a summary of regulatory activities performed throughout the year.

11 Annual report

- (1) The Regulator must provide to the Minister an annual report including, but not limited to:
 - (a) a summary of the activities of the Regulator, and
 - (b) such financial statements and auditor’s reports as are required by this Act or other law; and
 - (c) a list of all entries and deletions to the Register in the preceding year; and
 - (d) a summary of material litigation involving the Regulator; and
 - (e) a list of consultants and advisors retained by the Regulator and a description of the matters in relation to which they have consulted or advised.
- (2) A contravention of subsection (1) is deemed to be a serious breach of duty by the Regulator.
- (3) The annual report provided to the Minister pursuant to subsection (1) must be made available to the public on the website.

This 2019 Annual Report is provided to fulfill the stated obligation and to provide transparency to Vanuatu citizens, TRBR’s key stakeholders and other interested individuals on activities that were undertaken by the institution, including decision making throughout the year.

27 November 2020

Honourable Prime Minister,
Honourable Bob Loughman Weibur,
Minister Responsible for Telecommunications &
Broadcasting,
PMB 9057, Port Vila

Dear Honourable, Prime Minister,

It is with great pleasure and an honor for me to provide you, as the Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Services, with TRBR's 2019 Annual Report, its 12th such Report.

TRBR, under its legal mandate in Section 11 of the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulations Act of 2009, as amended by Amendment No.22 of 2018 (the Act), is obliged to provide an Annual Report each calendar year to the Honourable Minister responsible for Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting. Since the establishment of the TRBR in 2008, it has been faithfully complying with and delivering this important obligation.

Section 11 of the amended Act, clearly states that:

- (1) **The Regulator must provide to the Minister an annual report including, but not limited to:**

 - (a) **a summary of the activities of the Regulator, and**
 - (b) **such financial statements and auditor's reports as are required by this Act or other law; and**
 - (c) **a list of all entries and deletions to the Register in the preceding year; and**
 - (d) **a summary of material litigation involving the Regulator; and**
 - (e) **a list of consultants and advisors retained by the Regulator and a description of the matters in relation to which they have consulted or advised.**

This Report fulfils that objective and legal requirement of TRBR for its regulatory work and activities carried out in 2019 and also provides transparency by informing our many stakeholders of TRBR's activities during 2019.

2019 was a particularly demanding, challenging and difficult year for TRBR but, at the same time, it was a fulfilling year for both myself as the newly appointed Regulator commencing in July 2019 and the deemed Regulator (filling the vacancy in accordance with Section 4 (11) of the Act if there is no appointed Regulator), with significant activity throughout the year along with both Regulators striving to keep the professionalism and integrity of the institution intact. The increased demand and challenges particularly arose because the TRBR was administered in the first 6 months by the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA), Chief Executive Officer, Mr. John Obed Alilee, (in accordance with the Act where a Regulator has not been appointed) who also had a very busy schedule and range of responsibilities under the URA Act as well as having to provide overall supervision of all telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting regulatory matters under the Act.

As such, I wish to publicly acknowledge the work of Mr. John Obed Alilee, for his efforts and service to TRBR during that period.

My recruitment was undertaken 9 months after the former Regulator, Ms. Dalsie Baniala's contract lapsed in 2018. It was undertaken through an Expression of Interest notice and recruitment process with my appointment confirmed on 03rd July 2019. I commenced as the TRBR Regulator on the same date. Just after this transition Vanuatu, under TRBR's management, held a World Class ITU regulatory meeting - the Global Symposium for Regulators – (GSR), for the first time in the history of the Pacific region; including Australia and New Zealand. Despite the transition, challenges and difficult times faced, the institution of TRBR with its excellent teamwork was able to enable fruitful outcomes and experiences for the many world telecommunications and radiocommunications leaders and delegates who attended the event. As such, Vanuatu, through TRBR's efforts successfully delivered on the Government commitment made towards GSR 2019 (GSR-19), where 325 participants across the world attended; bringing awareness of Vanuatu, its achievements, challenges and attributes.

TRBR continues to fulfil its roles and functions, observing and implementing its mandatory duties and obligations as stipulated in section 7 (12) of the Act, particularly where the Acts stipulates *"The Regulator must act independently and impartially in performing its responsibilities, functions, duties and powers set out in the said section of the Act and other related laws of Vanuatu."* I wish to assure you Honorable Minister that the TRBR will continue to honor and fulfil its mandate in accordance with the legislation that has been approved by Parliament.

I particularly wish to inform you, Hon. Prime Minister, that TRBR needs to be supported in its review of the regulatory regime to cater for the technology evolution that we are experiencing today. I wish to assure you that in fulfilling our duties, we have adhered to our critical responsibilities and acted fairly, independently, and impartially in performing all of our functions under the Act.

Similar to other Regulator's experience in other jurisdictions with similar regulatory regime, I am taking (and the former Regulators took), strong stands to act independently, fairly and without prejudice, to enforce all aspects and, particularly, the mandatory obligations of the Act, in making such independent and impartial decisions, determinations and orders, for the outcomes of all of TRBR's work. As a key outcome of such a strong stand by TRBR, Vanuatu (through TRBR) has been recognized regionally and internationally for its achievements and has continued to enjoy such benefits; with TRBR being a recognized and benchmarked regulatory institution both at a national, regional, and international level.

TRBR fully appreciates and acknowledges that this positive recognition was reinforced in July 2019 with Government and TRBR input, and significantly contributed to awareness and appreciation for Vanuatu's telecommunications/ICT developments, through the ITU GSR 2019 in Port Vila. In that regard, we thank the Government for its support and for making the commitment to host this very important ITU event.

2019 saw a continuous increase of ICT developments and services across Vanuatu, especially with specific statistics collected and summarized below:

- Mobile subscriptions rose by 10% in 2018;
- Mobile penetration increased to 89%;
- Mobile data subscriptions grew by 52%;
- Mobile data downloads increased by 222% to 2,132 terabytes in 2018;
- Total market revenue went down by 8%, however long run trend still shows growth and
- Mobile data revenue has overtaken traditional Voice and SMS revenue as OTT services are becoming popular.

Provision of narrowband and broadband access to the citizens of Vanuatu continues to increase especially to the remote islands of the country as further roll outs continue to occur. This includes the roll out of VSAT and community Wifi by TRBR to the island of Hiu in the Torres group and Merelava in the Banks group, providing access to the internet for the first time.

Despite TRBR's challenges, I am pleased to report that the TRBR team has been able to meet a significant majority of its main deliverables and outcomes as detailed in the TRBR 2019 and Onwards Work Plan. Some key achievements, major issues and challenges and activities include:

- The long-appointed Regulator vacancy period;
- The recruitment of a new Regulator;
- Development of TRBR's 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan;
- Vanuatu's hosting of the GSR-19;
- Formal establishment of a regulatory working relationship between TRAI and TRBR;
- Connecting some of the most remote islands of Vanuatu to the internet and ICT services;
- The 2019 Consumer Rights Day Celebration;
- Basic ICT training needs for rural communities have been identified;
- Appointed more Community Consumer Champions and conducted a range of successful programs;
- Established the Dot VU (.vu) administration and transition of registry services;
- 10th Year Anniversary for Vanuatu's regulatory regime and market liberalization; and
- Distributed TRBR's community telecommunications grant awardees for 2019.

Further highlights, achievements, challenges and activities are detailed in the body of the 2019 Annual Report. TRBR's Sector Report for 2019 also outlines the state of telecommunications developments in Vanuatu and TRBR's interaction with the sector.

The outcome of the ITU 2018 ICT Regulatory Tracker presented in 2019 has signaled to Vanuatu the need to review its legislation to facilitate market competition in Vanuatu to positively impact the livelihoods of the citizens of Vanuatu.

TRBR wishes to recognize the Government's contribution during the past years in bringing Vanuatu to that level of regulatory regime and TRBR seeks continued Government support to ensure that TRBR can play its role in enabling the global technology evolution trend to be well controlled and managed at a national level.

Having oversight and management of the TRBR's operations now for about 18 months, I am strongly of the view that the institution is an effective and highly competent body with empirical evidence to back up this view. As such, it is critical that TRBR remains as an Independent regulatory body with its operations and decision making free of any external interference in order to enable TRBR to continue to make independent and effective decisions that will positively impact the Vanuatu telecommunications industry and enable consumers to enjoy the benefits of effective competition.

I am very pleased to inform you Honorable Minister that this year, the TRBR continues to hold its status as the exemplar Regulator in the region. It has further raised the bar in respect of Vanuatu's standing in the region by supporting the Government in the overall coordination of the GSR-19 which was rated by the ITU and participants as one of the most successful GSR events hosted in a small island country like Vanuatu.

This 2019 Annual Report provides detailed information of the activities that TRBR has engaged in during the year and includes its financial statement as well. The soft copy of the reports are also available from TRBR's website at www.trbr.vu for our stakeholders and interested parties/persons,

particularly those who may not have received or be able to access a hard copy of the Report.

I am proud to inform you that despite the challenges and heavy pressures faced, we have met a majority of the institution's main deliverables and outcomes expected as outlined in this Report.

I assure you that TRBR will continue to fulfill its role in ensuring that the telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting sectors are appropriately and effectively regulated.

TRBR will continue to keep you regularly abreast of telecommunications and broadcasting market developments and will provide you with support in achieving the Government's ICT objectives.

Yours faithfully,



Brian Winji
Telecommunications, Radiocommunications & Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR)

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A message from the Regulator

» It is with pleasure I provide this TRBR 2019 Annual Report: my second Annual Report as the Regulator after my appointment in July 2019.



Brian Winji
Regulator

TRBR, under its legal mandate in section 11 of the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulations Act No. 30 of 2009, and amendment by Amendment No. 22 of 2018, (hereinafter referred to as “the Act”), is obliged to provide an Annual Report each calendar year to the Honorable Minister responsible for Telecommunications/ICT, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting. Since the establishment of the TRR in 2008, now renamed TRBR, TRBR has been faithfully complying with and delivering on this important obligation.

Section 11 of the amended Act, clearly states that;

- (1) The Regulator must provide to the Minister an annual report including, but not limited to:
 - (a) a summary of the activities of the Regulator, and
 - (b) such financial statements and auditor's reports as are required by this Act or other law; and
 - (c) a list of all entries and deletions to the Register in the preceding year; and
 - (d) a summary of material litigation involving the Regulator; and
 - (e) a list of consultants and advisors retained by the Regulator and a description of the matters in relation to which they have consulted or advised.

This Report fulfils that objective and legal requirement on TRBR for its regulatory work and activities carried out in 2019 and it also provides transparency to and informs our many stakeholders of TRBR's activities during 2019.

I wish to join my TRBR Regulatory predecessors who have expressed their views in previous TRBR Annual Reports and in signaling to all our stakeholders and the readers of this Annual Report my view that TRBR has continued to fulfil its roles and strictly observe all of its mandatory functions and obligations particularly Section 7 (12) of the Act, as well as applying the principle of fairness, balanced views and appropriate decisions in carrying out TRBR's required regulatory functions.

2019 was a particularly demanding, challenging and a difficult year for TRBR but, at the same time, it was a fulfilling year for both myself as the newly appointed Regulator commencing in July 2019 and the deemed Regulator (filling the vacancy in accordance with Section 4 (11) of the Act if there is no appointed Regulator), with considerable activity throughout the year along with both Regulators striving to maintain professionalism and keep the institution's integrity intact. The increased demand and challenges particularly arose because the TRBR was administered in the first 6 months by the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA), Chief Executive Officer, Mr. John Obed Alilee, (in accordance with the Act where a Regulator has not been appointed). Mr Alilee also had a very busy schedule and range of responsibilities under the URA Act as well as having to provide overall supervision of all telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting regulatory matters under the TRBR Act. As such, I wish to publicly acknowledge the work of Mr. John Obed Alilee for his efforts and service to TRBR during that period.

As I commenced my position and role as TRBR Regulator, Vanuatu through TRBR's management and oversight, was preparing to stage a World Class ITU regulatory meeting for the first time in the history of the Pacific region; including Australia and New Zealand. Despite the challenges and difficulty of the transition of Regulators, the TRBR team took up the challenge and delivered with fruitful outcomes experienced, where 325 participants across

the world attended the Global Symposium for Regulators – (GSR) in July 2019 (GSR-19).

Having had 6 months experience as the TRBR Regulator by the end of this reporting period, I am strongly of the view that regulatory institutions like TRBR must always be respected and allowed to be fully independent, given that the nature of obligated responsibilities are always unique and challenging. Importantly, I also echo my TRBR Regulatory predecessors stand that TRBR must be free from any external interference in decision making for it to continue to drive and maintain sustainable market competition in Vanuatu. This is also important to keep the state of the market competition environment sustainable, attractive, healthy and orderly at all times, so that citizens of Vanuatu can continue to enjoy the benefit of the market environment and moreover, support an environment that can boost economic flow, particularly in the rural communities across Vanuatu. Unless Vanuatu's telecommunications/ICT and broadcasting regulatory regime continues to be valued, respected and supported in its approach to cater for the technology evolution that the citizens are experiencing today, the majority of the communities across Vanuatu will not gain these benefits and are highly likely to only continue to experience the same standard of access and services they receive today.

Like most countries world-wide, TRBR continues to experience global pressure with respect to technological evolution and technological convergence. Being a Small Island Developing state (SID), Vanuatu (through TRBR) like other SIDs, is actively considering the appropriate regulatory framework required; noting world-wide developments and trends to date. With these new developments and evolutions, such as the fifth generation of mobile technology (5G) that provides a platform for increased use of Internet of Things (IoT) services and Over The Top (OTT) services, many countries have chosen not to regulate at all the OTT and IOT services, whilst some have limited regulation in place.

» TRBR continues to uphold, build, and raise the bar of Vanuatu's standing in the region, and at an international level; one example being the successful hosting of GSR-19. The 2018 ITU ICT Regulatory Tracker <https://www.itu.int/net4/itu-d/irt/#/tracker-by-country/regulatory-tracker/2018> released in 2019 saw Vanuatu's regulatory regime being listed in the top ten regulatory regimes in Pacific region. Vanuatu's Regulatory Regime is listed under Generation 3 regime which promotes an "enabling environment, investment, innovation and access; dual focus on stimulating competition in service and content delivery and consumer protection." This grading is signaling to Vanuatu and TRBR to rethink and move faster in upgrading its regulatory legislation that will best accommodate the evolving technology and technology convergence in line with global trends.

Regionally and internationally, TRBR continues to maintain its external working relationships, with donor partners and international organizations such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the Asia Pacific Tele-community (APT), Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA) and more other organizations that TRBR is affiliated to.

During the year 2019, and like other organizations in Vanuatu, TRBR continued to experience unfair and unjust criticism and substantial external pressures. This was primarily due to limited understanding of TRBR's duties and its mandatory functions and, particularly, its critical need to be and to remain independent.

Sadly and disturbingly, TRBR experienced an attempt towards amendment of its primary legislation, the Act, without any consultation on it to obtain more views and opinions as to the benefits and what and how the changes might best serve the citizens of Vanuatu.

Despite TRBR's challenges, I am pleased to report that the TRBR team has been able to meet a significant majority of its main deliverables and outcomes as detailed in the TRBR 2019 and Onwards Work Plan. Some key achievements, major issues and challenges, and activities include:

- the long- Regulator vacancy period;
- the recruitment of a new Regulator;
- development of TRBR's 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan;
- Vanuatu's hosting of the GSR-19;
- formal establishment of a regulatory working relationship between TRAI and TRBR;
- connecting some of the most remote islands of Vanuatu to the internet and ICT services;
- the 2019 Consumer Rights Day Celebration;
- basic ICT training needs at the rural communities have been identified;
- appointed more Community Consumer Champions and conducted a range of successful programs;
- established the Dot VU (.vu) administration and transition of registry services;
- 10th Year Anniversary for Vanuatu's regulatory regime and market liberalization and
- distributed TRBR's community telecommunications grant awards for 2019.

Further highlights, achievements, challenges, and activities are listed in the body of the 2019 Annual report.

TRBR's Sector Report for 2019 also outlines the state of telecommunications developments in Vanuatu and TRBR's interaction with the sector.

In particular, and pleasingly, the Sector report identifies the uptake and continued growth of the telecommunications services outside Port Vila and Luganville. The statistics and trends indicate that the market will continue to grow. TRBR's Sector Report can be viewed on our website at <https://www.trbr.vu/en/public-register/reports/telecommunications-sector-report/2019>.

TRBR will continue to fulfil its mandatory obligations and will always make independent, fair and balanced decisions to ensure that sustainable market competition remains in place and consumers are provided with regular information flows to enable them to make informed choices.

1. 2019 Regulatory Highlights



» 1.1 Regulator Vacancy Period

After the former Regulator, Ms. Dalsie Baniala's contract ceased on the 1st of December 2018, the appointed Regulator's position was vacant for seven months from the 2nd of December 2018 until the 2nd of July 2019). As such, TRBR was managed and regulated in accordance with Part 2, section 4(11) of the TRBR Act, which reads, *"If the office of the Regulator is vacant, the Chief Executive Officer of the Utilities Regulatory Authority is deemed to be the Regulator until such time a person is appointed to be the Regulator."*

Mr. John Obed Alilee, the Chief Executive Officer of the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA), based on the formal notification letter by the outgoing Regulator, Ms. Baniala, to the Minister responsible (the Hon. Prime Minister), immediately took on board the regulatory responsibilities of TRBR under the TRBR Act, as well as those of his responsibility under the URA Act, providing a considerable burden on Mr. Alilee with the heavy, additional workload. (Part 2.2.1 of this Annual Report provides further information.)

Mr. Alilee is to be commended for his efforts and service to TRBR during that vacant period.



New Regulator, Mr. Brian Winji
with Hon. Prime Minister
Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas

» 1.2 Recruitment of New Regulator

The new TRBR Regulator was recruited on the 3rd of July 2019 by the Prime Minister of the day, Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas. Mr. Brian Winji Molitaviti, whose island of origin is Malo, is the first ni-Vanuatuan male Regulator. Mr. Winji had served as TRBR's Technical and Universal Access Manager in 2016 and was also the former Technical Manager for Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL) (now rebranded as Vodafone) for 10 to 12 years. Brian has a wealth of technical and engineering experiences and knowledge, and administrative knowledge and skills to assist TRBR in its further development.



1.3 TRBR 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan

TRBR's 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan sets out TRBR's desired objectives that it seeks to achieve over that period. By considering the pressures that impact on our working environment TRBR is trying to embrace what it currently sees, thinks and feels. The action plan looks at utilising available TRBR resources and TRBR's core competencies so that the Plan is feasible, realistic and appropriate, recognising that the process is flexible. TRBR wants its Strategic Plan to be dynamic and adaptable to changing conditions.

TRBR's Strategic Plan is complemented by its annual Work Plan(s) that set out TRBR's priorities for each of those 3 years. Internally, the Strategic Plan has been further drilled down to formulate internal TRR 90-day Action Plans, aligned with the Annual Work Plan detailing targets and performance measures.

In developing its 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan, TRBR took account of its widened role to now regulate the broadcasting sector as well as the telecommunications and radiocommunications sectors. It also took into account that its sphere of operations has widened its core functions. The TRBR has also expanded to include the emerging technologies such as Over The Top (OTT), Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) which is being deployed globally and some aspects gradually around Vanuatu.

Given the technological evolution taking place, TRBR wants its Strategic Plan and direction to cater for these changes and inform its stakeholders of its regulatory approach.

Importantly, TRBR's Strategic Plan provides transparent awareness of its strategic intentions as well as providing a check and balance mechanism to evaluate TRBR's operations, effectiveness, outcomes delivery and commitment. TRBR's Strategic Plan can be accessed from its website via this link: <https://www.trbr.vu/en/about-us/strategic-plan>.



1.4 Vanuatu Hosted the ITU Global Symposium for the Regulators 2019 (GSR19)

With a theme "*Inclusive Connectivity: The Future of Regulation*," Vanuatu hosted the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) at "The Warwick, Le Lagoon Resort," in Port Vila, from the 9th to 12th of July 2019 (GSR-19).

Vanuatu was the first nominated Small Island State in the Pacific region including Australia and New Zealand to host a GSR. The preparations for this event began in late 2017 and throughout 2018. Preparations were based on the arrangements and agreements between the Vanuatu Government and the ITU. In late 2018, a contract was signed between the Government and the ITU on the conditions for the Symposium, confirming Vanuatu's commitment towards the event leading to a successful hosting and program for GSR-19.

The ITU GSR is an annual global event, that brings together heads of national telecom/ICT regulatory authorities, ICT policy makers, industry leaders, Academia's and other key ICT stakeholders to discuss regulatory matters and requirements that assist and contribute to a positive impact of global and country ICT development. It also provides an avenue for leaders to share views and experiences on pressing regulatory issues that have been identified. (Section 12 of this Report provides further information on GSR-19).



Participants on the 1st day of the forum



The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Chair, Dr. Ram Sewak Sharma and TRBR's Mr. Graham Theuil, the Manager responsible for Consumer Affairs Protection & Market Monitoring and Competition appreciating and acknowledging each other's contributions towards building a working relationship, shaking hands in New Delhi, India on 10th October 2019).



1.5 Formal Establishment of Regulatory Working Relationship between TRAI and TRBR

Considering the need to build the human resource capacity of TRBR staff and to further develop TRBR regulatory functions and experience, particularly through secondment, the TRBR and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) established formal arrangements through a "Letter of Intent" that outlined the conditions through which each institution will apply for secondment between the two institutions. These are expected to occur in coming years. The arrangement first discussed during the TRBR's participation in the Asia Pacific Regulator's Round Table Forum that was held in New Delhi, India in 2017.

2019 saw the signing ceremony which took place in India, with TRBR represented by the Manager of Consumer Affairs, Monitoring and Market Competition, Mr. Graham Theuil, on behalf of TRBR Regulator Mr Brian Winji.

In his remarks at the signing, the Chair of TRAI, Dr. Ram Sewak Sharma stated that the Letter of Intent would initiate technical cooperation between TRBR and TRAI and to provide capacity building of TRBR staff in the field of telecommunications and broadcasting. It would also further improve collaboration between the two institutions.

The TRBR Regulator, Mr Brian Winji, believes this is a major achievement for TRBR as Vanuatu is the first country in the Pacific region to sign a regulatory agreement with TRAI, an international regulatory institution. This will establish collaboration between the two institutions in the regulatory matters related to telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting.



TRBR Regulator Mr. Brian Winji and Hon. Prime Minister Mr. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas cutting the cake



1.6 10th Year Anniversary of Vanuatu's Telecommunication Liberalisation and Regulatory Regime

November 27th, 2019 marked the 10th year of telecommunications market liberalization and the establishment of a telecommunications and radiocommunications regulatory regime through the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act No. 30 of 2009; including the establishment of TRBR (then TRR). As part of the celebrations, TRBR organized a press conference followed by a formal gathering at "The Holiday Inn Resort" to mark this event.

During the Press Conference, the Chief Information Officer of the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. Gerard Metsan, presented the view of the Government on current ICT policies and potential future policies for the telecommunications and broadcasting sector. A brief history of Market Liberation in Vanuatu and a view of the consumers was presented by Mr. Fred Samuel of the Pacific Group (and former CIO). The TRBR Regulator Mr. Brian Winji outlined the Vision and Strategic Plans of TRBR. (See part 2.1 of this Report for more information).

Hiu Island in the Torres group and Merelava Island in the Banks group are now connected to the World)

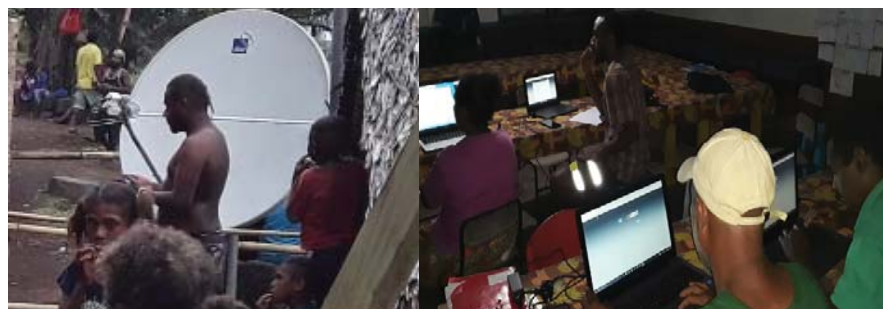


1.7 Connecting the Most Remote Islands of Vanuatu to the World

One of TRBR's 2019 and onward Annual Work Plan priority deliverables was to establish, monitor and improve access initiatives for locations that are currently unserved or underserved. Among other related regulatory priorities, TRBR has successfully connected the most remote Islands in the North of Vanuatu (Merelava and Hiu) to the world.

Tasvare Primary School on Merelava in the Banks group and Martin Primary School on Hiu in the Torres group, both in the TORBA Province, now have access to high speed internet through technical and financial assistance provided by TRBR as part of the Computer Laboratory and Internet Community Centre (CLICC) Program.

Building on from the works previously implemented on UAP roll out of access to unserved and underserved areas across Vanuatu, TRBR continued to deliver on its priority activities, especially working with respective service providers to improve on service coverage and quality of such services to citizens who have limited to, or no access at all. (Part 8 outlines more information on this project).



1.8 Consumer Rights Day 2019 Celebrations

Consumer Protection in all forms is a vital national need in Vanuatu. Citizens world-wide have a mandatory right to be protected from any harmful treatment, abuse, misinformation, to be free to practice their God given rights and at the same time understand, to practice and promote their rights and responsibilities in their daily lives.

Each year, since 2015, the TRBR coordinates and facilitates the celebration of the World Consumer Rights Day in Vanuatu. Vanuatu joins with many other countries in the world to celebrate an event yearly, fully aware that consumers are a very important in the economic development of a country at all levels. The event was coordinated with the support and contribution from a range of stakeholders of the public sector, the private sector, NGOs and civil society - all of whom have recognized the importance of consumer protection.

The event is celebrated in a way to ensure that the rights of all consumers are known and are being protected against any form of market abuse and social injustice. (Part 11 provides more information on this event).





» 1.9 2019 TRBR Community Telecommunications Grant Awardees

2019 saw the communities of Gambule Primary and Secondary School and Erata Community benefiting from the Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG) initiative introduced three years ago.

Gambule was supported with a computer laboratory and Internet facility. The facility is a significant achievement as it has been a long-time need for the school. Mr. Hudson Bal, a mathematics teacher and at the same time the “on the ground” coordinator at Gambule, stated that the facility has improved issues such as shortage of textbooks, reading books and other learning resources given these issues can now be substitute by online resources, since the launching of the project in late 2019.



It has also provided the opportunity for students and teachers to increase their ICT knowledge and skills in using ICT services. The Gambule school with a total of 433 students and 15 teachers, is one of the biggest schools in Maewo and the Erata Community in Tongariki Island is also benefiting from a similar facility. This is expected to be completed in Quarter 1 of 2020. (Part 8 provides for more information on this project)



Walarano College

» 1.10 Basic ICT training at the rural Communities

In its audit and review of the CLICC and TFS sites, TRBR identified a major contributing factor to the slow uptake of ICT services in the rural communities. This is related to the lack of basic understanding and skills on how to use ICT devices to go on line and use digital services effectively and efficiently.

There is a need to continue providing digital education and awareness to all age groups throughout Vanuatu to empower the users of ICT services to be able to go online and use these services confidently and effectively. Expansion of telecommunication's infrastructure, provision of digital services and provision of digital education are important building blocks of bridging the digital gap in Vanuatu and getting the unconnected connected.



Oldest person attending the training



1.11 .VU Transition

Management and administration of the country code Top Level Domain Name (ccTLD) is a big challenge not just for Vanuatu but across the small Island states in the region as well. This is particularly so in terms of market competition activities, and especially for service providers who are providing internet services for their customers under a banner of .vu domain name.

TRBR on Vanuatu's behalf, as mandated by the TRBR Act, took the leading role to ensure that the resource is appropriately managed given the nature of its market environment. Importantly, given that the security of users of internet services is a global pressure and vital for all national governments, to ensure the users are safe and secured while enjoying the benefit of the internet.

TRBR finally appointed Neustar Vanuatu in August 2019 as the new provider of the backend Registry and .vu ccTLD DNS Services, through a competitive tender process and completed the transition arrangements to begin the separation of the Registry and Registrar of .vu domain names. (See part 9 of this Report for more information).



Standing from right to left, Frank Kenneth, David Joy, Regulator Brian Winji, Stephanie Kaltoi, George Imbert, George Hapsai of TRBR



1.12 Community Consumer Champions a continuing successful program

Through competitive recruitment process, four new Community Consumer Champions (CCC) have been recruited to assist TRBR in its consumer protection affairs including dissemination of information, awareness and educating the consumers in their respective areas.

Mr. George Imbert from Big Bay Santo is now responsible for Big Bay area; David Joy from Wusi Village is responsible for West Coast of Santo; Frank Kenneth from Farun Village is responsible for South Malekula and Stephanie Kaltoi from Epau Village for North Efate and Shepherd Outer islands. (Read part 10 of this Report for more information)

2. About TRBR



Hon. Prime Minister
Charlot Salwai
Tabimamasmas presenting
Key Note speech



2.1 Vanuatu's 10th Year Anniversary of its Telecommunication Liberalization & Regulatory Regime

27th November, 2019 marked the 10th year for telecommunications market liberalization and the establishment of the telecommunications and radiocommunications regulatory regime through the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act No. 30 of 2009; including the establishment of TRBR (then TRR). As part of the celebrations, TRBR organized a press conference followed by a formal gathering at "The Holiday Inn Resort" to mark this event, with the theme *"Enhancing a vibrant communications environment for economic growth."*

During the press conference, the Chief Information Officer of the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. Gerard Metsan, presented the Government's view of the current ICT policies and potential future policies for the telecommunications and broadcasting sector. A brief history of market liberalization in Vanuatu and a review of consumers was presented by Mr Fred Samuel of the Pacific Group (and former CIO). The TRBR Regulator Mr. Brian Winji outlined the vision and strategic plans of TRBR. Key stakeholders such as the Government, service providers and consumers including NGO's, businesses and funding partners were present. They helped to celebrate the birth of the liberalized regime, reflecting on how far Vanuatu has come in terms of telecommunications development and the significant contribution to the national economy by the industry.

It was recognized how much of a positive impact the current regulatory regime has had on telecommunications/ICT development and roll out in Vanuatu as the major reason to introduce and maintain market liberalization.

The 10 year anniversary theme of "Enhancing a Vibrant Communications Environment for Economic growth" forecast a need for to focus in the coming period on: accessibility, affordability and quality of service, education of consumers of telecommunications services being the building blocks for digital transformation and a digital economy. TRBR will continue to work collaboratively with all of its stakeholders, including the Government, towards this objective being achieved with no one being left behind.

Vanuatu, out of all of the Pacific Island states, has a unique telecommunications regulatory regime, recognized as benchmark in the Region. This regime has been debated and challenged in its 10-year period. It was established in 2009 through approval by the members of Parliament at that time of the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act NO. 30 of 2009 (the Act). It is unique because the legislation promoted independence of the Regulator enabling independent regulatory decisions by TRBR after consultations with all key stakeholders to ensure decisions are fair, balanced, and always promote good governance.



Attendees at the 10th year Anniversary Function

In his opening Remarks, the Regulator Mr. Brian Winji thanked his predecessors, the existing and former hard-working staff of the TRBR, the CIO and his staff for their efforts and continuously supporting the objects of the Act and TRBR regulatory activities. He especially thanked the Government through the Ministry responsible for Communications and ICT, the Prime Minister's Office, the Australian Government through its GfG program and the Australian High Commission and other aid donors, including the World Bank and the Japanese Government. International organizations such as International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT), Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA), Pacific Telecommunications Council (PTC), Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO), Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association (apTLD), Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC), Internet Society were also thanked for their support provided in the last 10 years of regulatory development. He stressed the pressing need for continued collaboration between TRBR, the Government and the private sector, across sectors and across borders towards the development of the telecommunications, broadcasting and ICT sector in Vanuatu to ensure the market environment is balanced, fair and competitive to enable economic growth for all to enjoy.

The keynote speech was delivered by the Hon. Prime Minister Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas before the cutting of the cake to mark the 10 year anniversary of the liberalized regime. In his speech, the Prime Minister reminded attendees that Vanuatu is an archipelago. As such, a reliable, affordable and accessible telecommunication service is essential infrastructure that has the capability of connecting people together and saving lives during a disaster. He urged all to join efforts in delivering an accessible, affordable and safe telecommunication services and assist Vanuatu in delivering on its 2030 National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG goal) "Leaving No One Behind."



2.2 TRBR Executive Developments

2.2.1 Regulator Vacancy

After the former Regulator, Ms Dalsie Green Baniala's contract ceased on the 1st December 2018, the TRBR Regulator's position was vacant for seven months until the 3rd July 2019. In accordance with Part 2, section 4(11) of the Act, which states: *'if the office of the Regulator is vacant, the Chief Executive Officer of the Utilities Regulatory Authority is deemed to be the Regulator until such time a person is appointed to be the Regulator.'*

Accordingly, Mr. John Obed Alilee, the Chief Executive Officer of the Utilities' Regulatory Authority (Utilities Regulator), immediately took on board the TRBR Regulator responsibilities under the TRBR Act, in addition to his own responsibilities under the URA Act. This meant that Mr. John Obed Alilee who also had a very busy schedule and range of responsibilities under the URA Act had to additionally provide overall supervision of all telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting regulatory matters under the TRBR Act.

Mr. John Obed Alilee is thanked and recognized for his contribution, efforts and service to enable TRBR to continue to function during that vacant period.

However, there were major challenges faced by the institution, the deemed Regulator and TRBR staff as they maintained focus and had to keep delivering through that vacancy period. A major challenge faced was related to the pressing and rigorous preparations towards Vanuatu's hosting of GSR-19, that was scheduled to be chaired by the TRBR Regulator. The lengthy delay in the appointment of a Regulator provided little time for any executive transition between the former Regulator (Ms. Dalsie Green Baniala) and the deemed Regulator. Moreover, a majority of the TRBR staff, including Managers during the vacancy period were new and lacking experience, executive history and information on specific, general and/or sensitive regulatory outstanding telecommunication regulatory matters for redress, let alone the hosting of such an important event. However, it was fulfilling for TRBR staff to learn and develop experience despite the challenges faced. With considerable effort, focused on teamwork and support from all TRBR staff, the deemed Regulator and external supporters, TRBR managed to successfully prepare for GSR-19 and deliver regulatory outcomes in accordance with the Act through this period, up until the new Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator was recruited on 3 July 2019.

2.2.2 Appointment of New Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator

The new Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator, Mr. Brian Winji, was recruited on the 3rd July 2019 by the Prime Minister of the day, Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas. Mr. Brian Winji, whose island of origin is Malo, is the first Ni-Vanuatu male Regulator. Prior to his appointment, he had served as TRBR's Technical and Universal Access Policy (UAP) Manager in 2016 and was also the former Technical Manager for Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL) (now rebranded as Vodafone) for 10 to 12 years. Mr Winji had also been engaged by the Government of Vanuatu through the Office of the Chief Information Officer in 2017 as the Technical Advisor for the reconstruction of the E-government microwave backbone Network after Cyclone PAM from Port Vila to Luganville.

Upon his commencement, Mr. Winji, immediately thanked the outgoing deemed Regulator Mr. Alilee for his positive support and service provided in the first half of 2019 and the former Regulator, Mrs. Dalsie G. Baniala for her efforts during her term until December 2018.

2.3 Our Role and Function

2019 was a special year for TRBR with its name and its mandatory functions and responsibilities changed to include broadcasting through the amendment of the TRBR Act, Amendment No. 22 of 2018. TRBR continued to maintain its stand to ensure the legislation and rules established are effectively and efficiently enforced. For TRBR to embrace its new broadcasting responsibilities and work effectively towards achieving its vision and mission, it developed a 2019 and Onwards Annual Work Plan that encompassed its broadened responsibilities. The 2019 Annual Work Plan was also developed in conjunction with TRBR's three-year 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan to outline and effectively guide the implementation of TRBR's vision and performance of its functions throughout the year(s).

While delivering on TRBR's core functions, responsibilities, duties and powers as set out in the Act and other laws of Vanuatu, it is critical that TRBR continues to act independently and impartially in accordance with Section 7(12) (a) to (d) of the Act. The Regulator's decisions and actions are best carried out, always, free of political influence. This is to ensure that TRBR's credibility, integrity and ongoing positive working relationship with all its stakeholders is constantly maintained.

In having this independence and because of its efforts to date since its establishment, TRBR continues to maintain the recognition it has among its peers as the leading Regulator in the Pacific Region; despite the challenges the institution had to face in 2019. Our wish is to continue to hold TRBR's status and its performance at that level and work harder to improve on other areas, such as broadcasting.

A key focus for the past 6-months of this year was on building working relationships with key stakeholders given the TRBR Regulator was only appointed six months into this year. Gratitude must be given to the past Regulators for building a framework that guides TRBR's implementation of its functions that we continue to enjoy today. TRBR's deliverables expected in the year 2019, can be viewed on TRBR website: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/743/trbr_2019_and_onwards_annual_work_plan_280819.pdf.

Sections 3 to 10 of this Report provides detail of TRBR's regulatory activities carried out throughout the year 2019.



2.4 Our Vision, Mission and Values

TRBR's vision, mission and values are as follows:

VISION

A communications environment that enriches the social, cultural, customs and commercial fabric of Vanuatu.

MISSION

To develop a competition led market for the provision of innovative information and communications services, available to all, which **encourages** sustainable and economically efficient investment; **respects** the interests of consumers; **fosters** ecologically friendly initiatives and **supports** the social, cultural, customs and commercial welfare of the Vanuatu.

To continue to build as an exemplar regulator within the region through thought leadership and to be the employer of choice by **investing** in our people to develop a professional, passionate team; **transparency** and **fairness** in operations and **adherence to quality assurance**.

VALUES

Inspiring Our imagination, clarity of thought and clear leadership stimulates innovative thinking that meets the needs of tomorrow.

Commitment Our drive and determination to achieve excellence, our discipline in the execution of our duties, our focus on the development of our team, and our sense of responsibility instill passion for the development of Vanuatu.

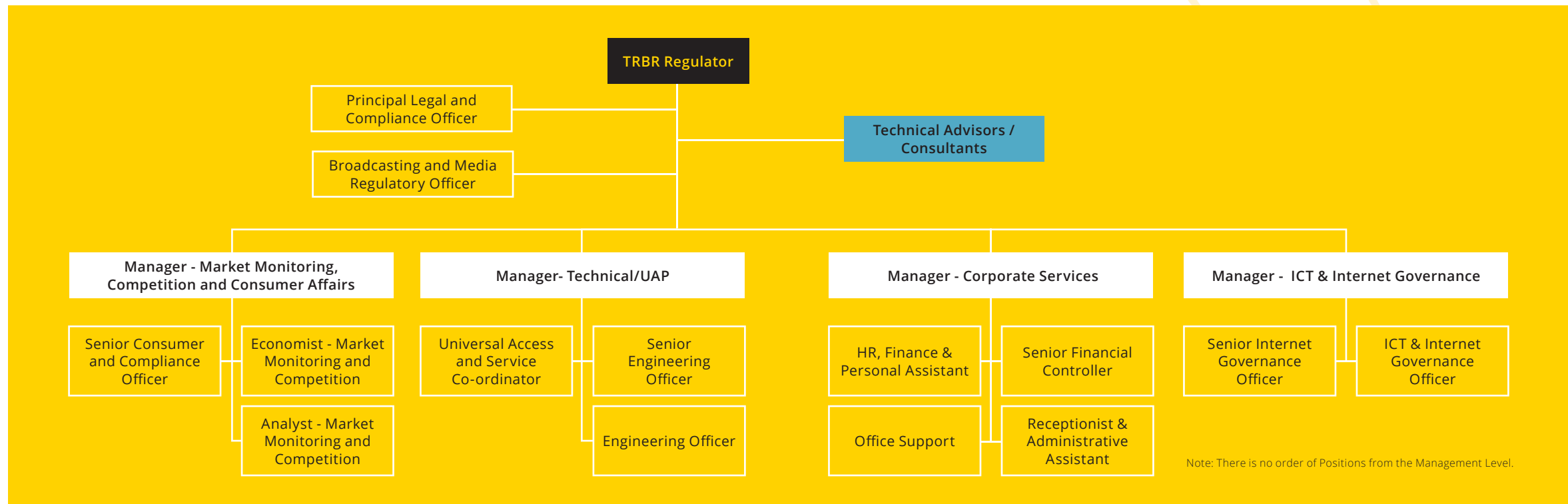
Respect Our respect for each other is ensured by listening, collaborating, and having consideration for each other, the public and licensees we work for, the rule of law, confidentiality, intellectual property, customs, environment, and future generations.

Balanced Our evidence-based approach to decision making and our adaptability ensure that we remain proportionate, consistent, fair, and just.

Transparency Our open and inclusive approach to regulation ensures that we are held responsible and our actions and decisions are understood.



2.5 Our Team and Organization's Structure



Building on from 2018 TRBR team norms and pledges, there are no changes made for this year.

TRBR Team Norms:

1. Be proactive;
2. Respect each other;
3. Co-operate and help each other;
4. Be resilient and adapt to new challenges;
5. Believe in yourself;
6. Be an engaged team member;
7. Be responsive (to all stakeholders and staff) and
8. Do not be afraid to be wrong – give it a go!

TRBR Team Pledges:

We pledge to:

1. Be considerate and trust each other;
2. Be a committed and active team player;
3. Support our Leaders and each other in achieving outcomes;
4. Be loyal and respectful and
5. Have open, honest dialogue.

As reported in the previous reports, TRBR team has always done its best in adhering to the team norms and pledges to deliver projects and responsibilities reported in this report.

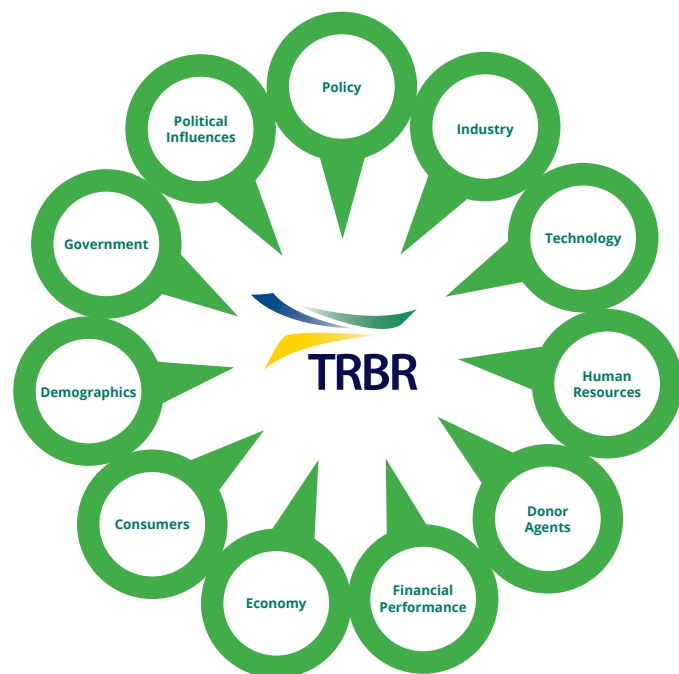


2.6 TRBR's Three Year Strategic Plan (2019 – 2021)

Building on from the 2015 – 2017 Strategic Plan, TRBR and its team developed its 2019 -2021 Strategic Plan based on experience with the first TRBR Strategic Plan and its additional responsibilities to include the broadcasting sector.

The Plan was developed with TRBR's whole team participating in an interactive and consultative approach, and as part of capacity team building and further, it is result-oriented. From TRBR's experiences and challenges encountered in the implementation of, and the directions provided by, TRBR's 2015 to 2017 Strategic Plan, the 2019-2021 Plan now serves as a high level tool for executive direction and a fair and transparent blueprint of TRBR's planning and achievement agenda for the three years ending 2021.

During the teambuilding exercise, the TRBR team identified particular key pressures that the TRBR continues to experience and the associated impact on its resources. The Plan also outlines an action plan that will guide the TRBR to annually plan its regulatory activities to contribute minimizing the rate of specific pressures. The Strategic Plan can be accessed on TRBR website via the following link: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/770/trbr_strategic_plan_2019_2021.pdf.



2.7 TRBR's 2019 and Onwards Work Plan and Priority Deliverables

TRBR has been developing Annual Work Plan since its establishment. The 2019 and Onwards Work Plan can be viewed on the TRBR's website, (www.trbr.vu). It guides and sets out TRBR's priority deliverables and work focus for the year 2019. TRBR had 28 priority project and 11 other lesser priority but important projects for 2019.

More detailed reports on respective projects are included in Part 3 to Part 10 of this Report.



2.8 Training and Capacity Building

In 2019, team building, and skills development was one of the key focus for TRBR staff. Understanding how to operate well as a team and what makes a team stronger, has helped us to be more efficient and focused to achieve required outputs. Training included 3 modules that introduced team dynamics, personalities and the role of a leader. This has developed team competence and the ability of staff to cope with changes, such as the introduction of the new Regulator and changes in management style. By addressing team norms and objectives, TRBR has competently integrated new staff in understanding the organization's objectives.

The training has also improved staff delegation and leadership skills. It assisted in an understanding of the important need to listen and understand the big picture and to complement each other's strengths and weaknesses.

The TRBR team also underwent focused skills upgrade training, including effective communications and planning. Several Senior Officers had the opportunity to attend capacity building training workshops on Leadership and Project Management training. During the TRBR team building exercise, the team and the Regulator continued to recognize and promote the effectiveness of the TRBR team norms and pledges, as they are the main guidance to all of TRBR's staff performance and models of undertaking TRBR activities throughout the year.

TRBR staff have also benefited from some overseas training and capacity building experience through attendance at important training events through fellowship funding from ITU, APT, apTLD, APNIC, ICANN, PITA and the Government of Australia through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trades (DFAT) organized program.

In the daily regulatory operations, both soft skills training and specialized training and/or capacity building are important for the TRBR team to be part of, and to enable TRBR to apply appropriate regulation(s). An example of valuable specialized TRBR staff training is the Telecom Cost and Pricing Model conducted in Nadi, Fiji.



Market Competition team attending Telecom Cost and Pricing Model

3. Relations with Government of Australia (GfG Program)

The Government of Australia, through its Governance for Growth (GfG) program, continues to financially support some of the TRBR's specific projects; particularly through Grant support for consultants towards the achievement of key TRBR regulatory areas and issues such as anti-competitive behavior in the wholesale and retail market, broadcasting and important regulatory issues and matters.

TRBR appreciates and acknowledges this valuable and strong partnership it has with the Government of Australia through the GfG team, signals a positive working relationship and valued support that has been developed towards achievement of key TRBR regulatory priorities and required outcomes, as well as TRBR being recognized as the Regional benchmark Regulator.

TRBR recognizes GfG's support and confidence in TRBR for the administration of the Grant that has been provided, as such, TRBR continues to maintain regular face to face meetings with the Program Director (GfG) and his team, and provide Quarterly Reports as to the use of the Grant.

4. Relations with the Vanuatu Government



4.1 General Working Relations

TRBR continues to build on its strong, cooperative working relationship with the Government and the OGCI by providing technical advice and guidance on regulatory and policy advice matters, whilst ensuring it maintains its independence, regular reporting and updates on TRBR's operations and progress of activities throughout the year. This ensures that the Minister responsible for Telecommunications, Broadcasting/ICT, and OGCI are kept abreast of all key matters that TRBR is addressing throughout the year.

Since TRBR is an effective and competent Regulatory body with empirical evidence to back up that view, the ongoing independence of TRBR, free of any external interference in decision making is a critical and essential need for it to operate and regulate fairly, effectively and impartially and for it to continue to drive and maintain sustainable market competition in Vanuatu and also importantly, to keep the state of market competition environment sustainable, attractive, healthy and orderly at all times.

Through the Regulator and appropriate TRBR staff, TRBR actively worked with the Ministry of Education; Ministry of Climate Change through the National Disaster Management Office; Ministry of Trades; Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities through the Office of the Maritime Regulator (OMR) and Civil Aviation Authority;; Ministry of Lands; Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) through the Department of Customs and Inland Revenue and the Department of Finance and Treasury; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ministry of Internal Affairs to provide advice and guidance on regulatory and policy issues.

Throughout the year 2019, TRBR actively participated in the National Trade Development Committee (NTDC) meetings held each quarter by the responsible Ministry. The core objective of TRBR's attendance at these meetings is to provide appropriate advice and updates in respect of the telecommunication sector.

TRBR continued to collaborate with Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) in respect towards improvement of telecommunications/ICT issues; including household indicators data collection throughout Vanuatu. Preparations are in hand for a national ICT Indicators Survey that is planned for 2021 by TRBR and OGCI to support the implementation of the Government's Universal Access Policy.

The implementation period of the Government's Universal Access Policy (UAP) has now been extended to the 1st January 2022. Although TRBR successfully met the aims of the Government's first UAP, an extension to it was approved by the Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting on 30th October 2019 to focus on the remaining areas that are still unserved and underserve under the "Play or Pay arrangement." The initial implementation end date of the UAP was 1st January 2018. Since then TRBR has continued to reach out to the communities with various projects to address network coverage challenges to those areas not covered by the initial UAP.

Since schools are seen to be the hub of telecommunications/ICT in the wider communities, the TRBR Pilot Programs on the Computer Laboratory and Internet Community Centre (CLICC) and the Tablet for Students (TFS) projects have been seen as a milestone in ICT development in rural areas of the country. Although these Pilot Programs ended in December 2017, TRBR has continued to provide monitoring on the CLICC and TFS facilities. The expectation is for TRBR to provide more assistance and support to them with the financial assistance of the Australian Government's GfG Program in 2020.

Other programs including the Community Telecommunications Grant, Basic ICT training, Community Access and Service initiatives are a TRBR aim of telecommunications and ICT services delivery to the outer Vanuatu communities and are discussed further in part 8 of this Report.

5. Regulations, Rules, Orders, Decisions & Litigations

» 5.1 General Rules and Regulations

A variety of regulatory and legal activities are carried out annually based on the approved TRBR Annual Work Plan. This Annual Report outlines many of these activities. Regulatory Determinations, Decisions and Orders are made and/or updated regularly to ensure that operators and all stakeholders adhere to the mandatory requirements and/or Notices of the Regulator.

There were no Instruments, Determinations, Decisions and Orders released in 2019.

» 5.2 Material Litigation

5.2.1 Former TRBR Staff Ne Civil Claim 2134/18, 2136/18/2137/18, 2139/18, 2140/18, 2141/18, 2142/18

There were ex-TRBR staff claims that were filed individually in 2019 relating to previous claims. In respect of these claims TRBR through its Counsel, filed an Application to the Court for the individual parties to be joined. Both Counsels agreed at the hearing for the former TRBR staff individual parties to be joined in respect of their claims. A strike out application that was filed by TRBR on 8th February 2019 and the matter was then listed for trial on the 24th of April 2019 as all appropriate sworn statements had been filed and both Counsels made legal submissions to the Court.

The Judge reserved his Judgement to the 29th of May at 2:00pm. However, the judgement was delayed by the Judge by adjourning to the 11th June 2019 and again further delayed to the 29th June 2019.

To date a Judgement has not been entered and both Counsels are still waiting for a date for judgement to be heard. TRBR understands that the matter will be further delayed due to the resignation of the trial judge.

5.2.2 FORMER REGULATOR - DALSIE BANIALA - vs- Prime Minister & Gerald Metsan JR 3511/17

An Application was filed after the Appeal by the Prime Minister for costs. The case was filed in November of 2018 and served on the State Law Office. This is in relation to the case of the former Regulator, Ms Dalsie Baniala vs the Hon. Prime Minister and Gerard Metsan.

Later during the year, the Office received a Notice from the court that the matter has been adjourned for taxation on the 18th February 2020.

» 5.3 Harmonization of the TRBR Telecommunications Act No. 30 of 2009

In implementing and undertaking TRBR's regulatory functions, TRBR observed that there may be, or may not potentially be inconsistencies and overlap between the TRBR Act and other related legislation and the roles that other institutions play, especially now that the role of TRBR includes broadcasting regulatory responsibilities. TRBR recognises that it is critical that it works with all other institutions to ensure that it progresses positively and redefines our boundaries as appropriate. TRBR is internally reviewing all relevant legislation and noting any potential loopholes that may require to be updated. More information on this activity can be found below in Section 5.4 of this Report.

» 5.4 Review of the Amended TRBR Legislation

TRBR is investigating if some change to its legislation is necessary given the telecommunications/ICT market sector is evolving with the sector, consumers experiencing convergence and digital transformation. This includes the appropriate regulatory framework for the changing arrangements and appropriate applications in Vanuatu.

TRBR has raised its issues and is collaborating with the Office of Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) to ensure that any appropriate amendment is made and followed through with. TRBR believes it is important and appropriate that a Council of Ministers Paper is considered and its proposals accepted so that appropriate amendments to its legislation are

applied equally to both the telecommunication and broadcasting. A Task Force to determine any such amendments has been appointed by the Hon. Prime Minister and it is to begin work in the new year.

» 5.5 Type Approval and Conformity in November of 2018

The Type Approval and Conformity Regulation, approved and gazetted in November of 2018 as the Type Approval and Conformity to Technical Standards Regulation Notice No 191 of 2018 is going through its implementation phase. Through the media, TRBR informed importers of its requirements, through Notice 191 of 2018 for any telecommunications or broadcasting devices to ensure that they have Type approval and certification that complies with the Vanuatu Regulation before they can legally be imported. Additionally, TRBR is working with the Customs Department for a “single window clearance” so that all importers not only comply with custom’s rules but also with the Type Approval Regulation.

» 5.6 Consumer Protection Regulation for Broadcasting & Media

During its harmonization exercise conducted in 2018, TRBR’s internal review of the amendment to the Act via amendment No.22 of 2018, identified that there were potential loopholes that prevent TRBR from developing specific rules and regulations around consumer protection of broadcasting and media services.

The TRBR continues to progress its consultations with key stakeholders (the Government and the telecommunications, broadcasting and media industry) and has stepped up consumer education and awareness programs promoting consumer protection in integrated telecommunications/ICT and broadcasting and media services. In particular, TRBR during the celebrations of Vanuatu’s Consumer Rights Day coordinated (refer to part 10 of this report for more information) and consulted with its stakeholders on work carried out with the industry and Government to build respect, trust and relevance for ICT, broadcasting and media. Such collaboration was aimed at signaling confidence to consumers in respect of TRBR’S commitment to consider appropriate regulatory approaches to facilitate consumer protection in any broadcasting and media services offered.

» 5.7 Review of Industry Regulatory Framework

Whilst telecommunications/ICT technology is quickly and widely evolving, the policies and regulatory approaches, world-wide continue to catch up. TRBR sees that the situation is becoming critical and presented a need for Vanuatu’s regulatory framework to be upgraded. TRBR has positively progressed through research and consultation, to drafted observations and contributions from stakeholders on the importance of developing an appropriate regulatory framework to cater for technology evolution.

It is important to note that such an exercise requires a long lead time with focused attention and importantly, expertise and empirical evidence to ensure that an appropriate framework is developed that is sound and does not limit further development in telecommunications/ICT, broadcasting and media. TRBR anticipates that by 2020 and onwards, it will be in a better position to present briefing notes on what is expected.

» 5.8 Review for Effectiveness for Regulatory Framework

Building on from the developments outlined on regulatory activities in this Report, a review of the effectiveness of the regulatory framework has been undertaken internally by TRBR. Through its internal review, TRBR has determined that further investigation and technical input and, importantly, consultation with industry is required on technologies that are appropriate and workable in Vanuatu’s unique topography; particularly because Vanuatu citizens are currently experiencing integrated services through internet and or ICT services.

TRBR in its three-year 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan, continues to consider the global pressure of technology evolution and the integrated services currently existing and as experienced by its citizens, to actively engage with all appropriate stakeholders. This engagement and dialogue are important in order to build a strong understanding and awareness of the importance of TRBR activities, particularly on the review of its existing regulatory framework and the possibility of upgrading its framework to cater for integrated services including broadcasting and media, and ICT. This is an ongoing project.

6. Market and Competition Activities



6.1 Dominance Review

TRBR has a mandatory obligation and power under the Act to identify and determine the relevant markets in accordance to the criteria provided in Part 5 section 20.

In June 2015, TRBR conducted a consultation on Market Definition for Regulatory purposes. Market definitions are an effective regulatory tool in monitoring the level of competition in the telecommunications market and making sure market power exercised by a dominant service provider does not raise prices above a competitive level that may stifle consumers demand, generate loss and harm the public interest. Furthermore, TRBR monitors markets share and potential collusion activities with price levels closely observed to avoid abuse of market power.

As part of a monitoring exercise, TRBR further (internally) looked at and analyzed the market definition defined in previous TRBR responses to market determination consultations to see how the market had progressed and, importantly, to identify potential areas of improvement or expansion in respect of defining a relevant market definition for today's circumstances. The outcome of this exercise indicated that the current market definitions are required to be expanded to reflect current markets in Vanuatu. This is an ongoing project.



6.2 Monitoring of License holders

As part of its market monitoring exercises, TRBR must ensure that all license holders adhere to their obligations under their licence arrangements and agreements. One of the important obligations that a service provider must comply with is the submission of the Terms and Conditions (T&C) of their Services and file any changes in Tariff with the Regulator. TRBR continuously reviews these terms and conditions to ensure that consumers are able to understand the T&C of the services they wish to purchase.

Part of TRBR's monitoring exercise is the submission of 6 month's statistical data from service providers. TRBR works closely with licensees in the timely submission of their statistical report and their market data and releases this for transparency to TRBR's stakeholders, including the Minister responsible for Telecommunications/ICT and Broadcasting.

Another obligation that TRBR closely monitors is the Universal Access Levy paid by service providers to the Government through the TRBR. On that note, TRBR is pleased to see that under the UAP implementation "Play or Pay" arrangement, the licensees who are not playing continue to show a positive working relation and compliance with their licence requirements.

In 2019, TRBR issued a telecommunications license to new internet service provider, Pacific Link Limited, which is based in Luganville, the northern town of Vanuatu. This implies that there are investment opportunities in the telecom sector across Vanuatu and is a sign of a growing market.



6.3 Monitoring of Price

TRBR's regulatory approach is to facilitate and monitoring competition and price adjustment is a result of market forces in play.

Digicel (Vanuatu) Limited made claims of anticompetitive practices in relation to high pricing of international internet bandwidth at the wholesale level by Interchange Limited (ICL). As such, in November 2019, Interchange Cable Limited (ICL) signed a service agreement with both Telecom Vanuatu Limited (now Vodafone Vanuatu) and Digicel Vanuatu Limited to reduce the international bandwidth pricing and at the same time increase the committed capacity to the both operators over a period of time. With these Agreements in place, the average wholesale bandwidth price has dropped by around 60% recording a lower average price of USD65.00 Mbps per month since November 2019.



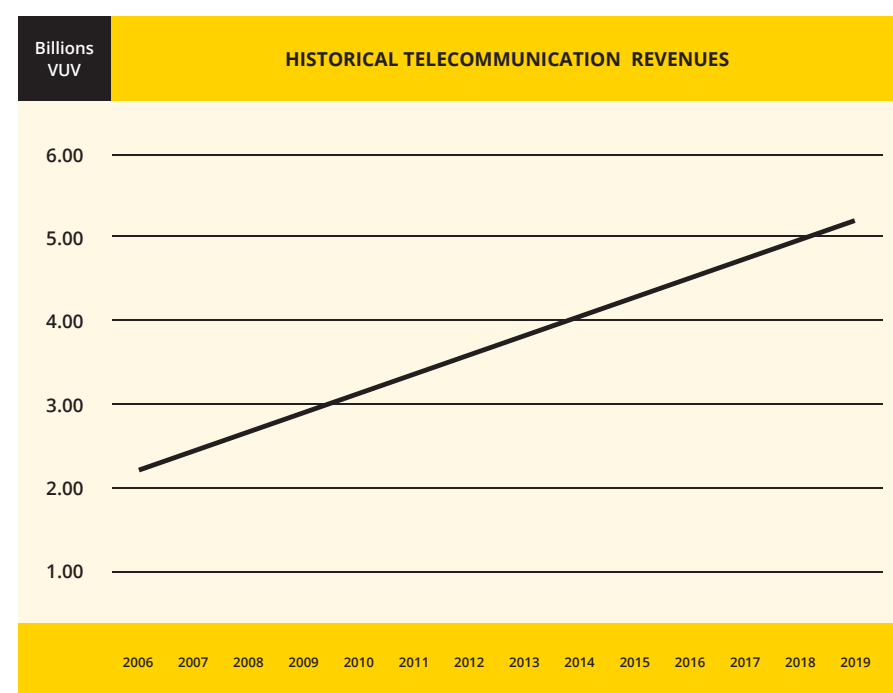
6.4 Market Statistics, Trend Monitoring & Development

TRBR has been collecting statistics through its data collection framework from all telecom licensees to monitor and understand trends in the Vanuatu's telecommunications markets, digital economic trends and, importantly, for transparency and to inform the industry and the public on the key developments that the sector is experiencing through its Annual Sector Reports.

In 2019, the Vanuatu telecommunications market continued to show strong growth and uptake as total mobile subscription, device ownership, internet access and data usage continued to increase. Regular capacity utilization of Interchange Cable Network (ICN1) has also been a very important contributor in boosting internet access and capacity uptake over both fixed and mobile networks. Further, though the use of mobile devices that support 4G services, explosive data downloads was evident through uptake of large data plans offered in the market.



6.5 Gross Revenues



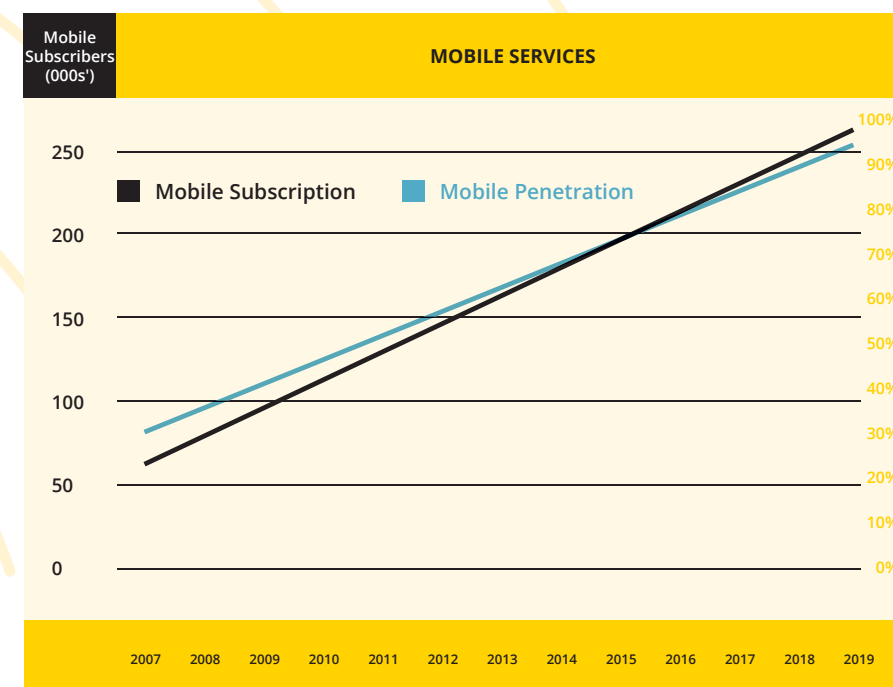
Graph showing trend on gross revenue collected over the years

The market gross revenue continues to increase as seen in the graph despite a downward trend in relation to the revenue collected from traditional voice and SMS services.

Both mobile operators have continued to increase the value of their bundling packages, stimulating huge voice and SMS traffic where users are paying lower than the normal rates that have directly affected the revenue collected through these two services. However, the gross revenue remains positive as mobile data and fixed internet services revenue are gaining momentum, signaling growth in the market.



6.6 Mobile Subscribers

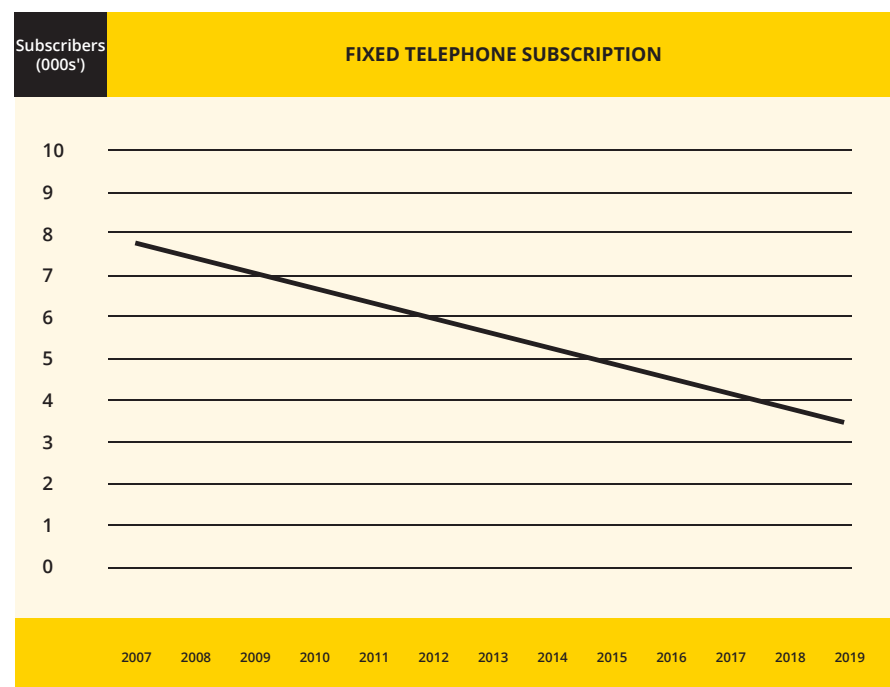


Vanuatu Mobile Subscribers

As illustrated in the graph, mobile subscribers continue to show significant growth in 2019 with an annual increase of 5% from 2018. An important contributing factor contributing to this growth is the increase in mobile cellular penetration that has led to an increase in the penetration rate of 92%¹ in 2019. The growth was also stimulated by an increase in investment and upgrades of mobile networks by the two mobile operators enabling more people to now have access to a 4G communications network. Another important factor contributing to the growth of mobile subscribers is the increase ownership and use of affordable mobile devices with dual SIMs that supports up to 4G services and therefore increase mobile penetration rate as well.



6.7 Fixed Telephony

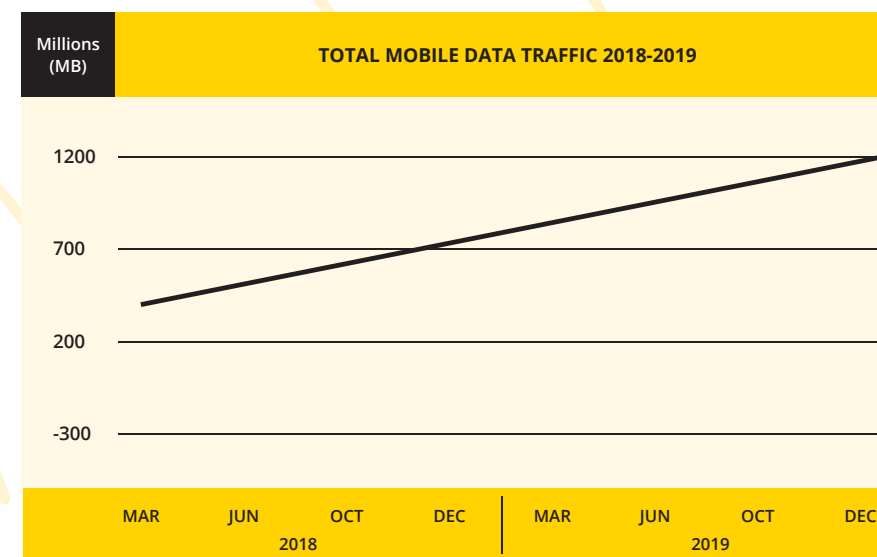


Fixed Line Subscriptions

On the other hand, the fixed telephony sector continued to experience a steady downward trend. As illustrated in the graph above, an 8% drop of fixed telephony subscriptions occurred in 2019. The impact of the drop meant that fixed telephone revenue has also fallen by 8% in the same year. Although fixed telephone subscriptions continue to decline, it is still valued by business as important element of the business communications. Fixed telephony providers have sought to offer more attractive fixed services bundled with other services as a means to offset the fall in revenue on fixed.



6.8 Mobile Data Traffic in the Last Twelve Months



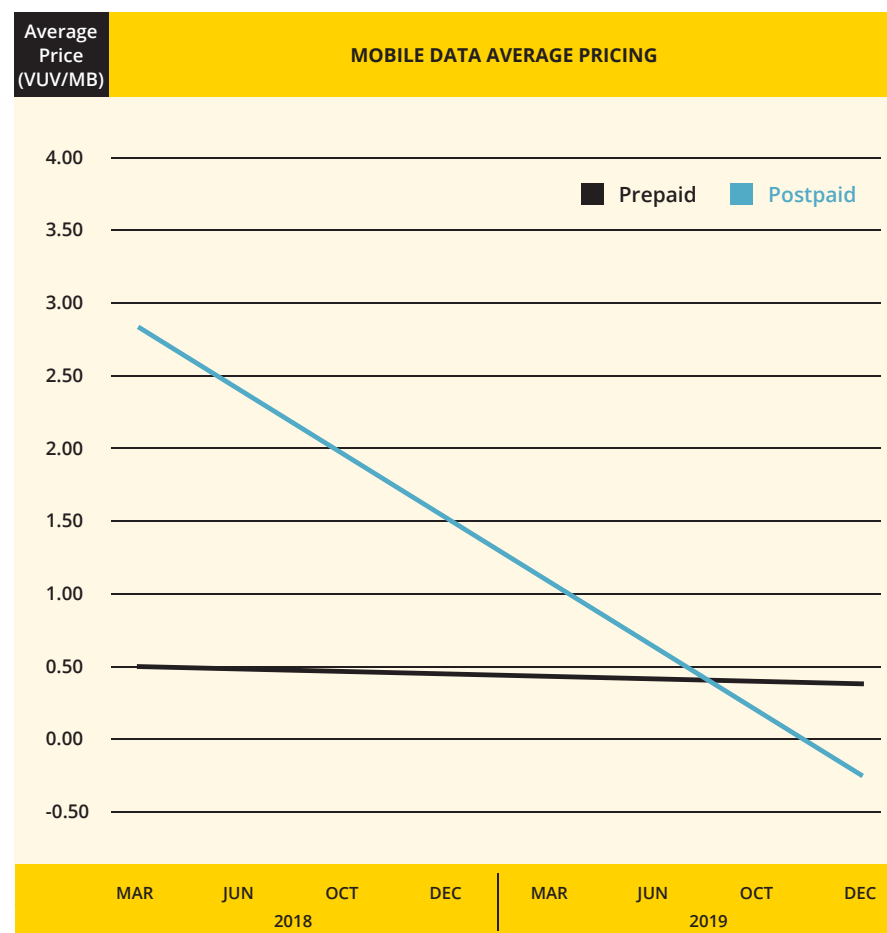
Showing Mobile data traffic download in 2018-2019

Mobile data downloads continue to experience explosive growth as illustrated in the graph above. Data collected shows that total annual downloads has increased by 79%, reaching a download volume of 3.8 billion Megabytes in 2019, compared to 2.1 billion megabytes in 2018. The increase in data usage has stimulated mobile operator's data revenue to increase by 35%.

With the 60% reduction of wholesale bandwidth price of the ICL submarine cable, mobile operators continue to offer attractive packages and provide more benefits that increases value tailored to mobile end users, thereby boosting an increase of data usage seen through 2019. Furthermore, the on-going deployment of 4G network by both Digicel and TVL throughout the country has also led to the rapid uptake of mobile data usage.



6.9 Mobile Data Average Pricing



Mobile data price trend

mobile operators (Digicel and TVL) to review and add more value to their current data plans and to continue to release new promotional offers and plans at affordable prices that stimulated increase in data usage. The data bundle for both prepaid and post-paid packages has continued to fall with annual average prepaid bundle price hitting a lower price of 0.37VT/MB and 0.50VT/MB for the post-paid price in 2019.

The statistics shown in the graph above illustrate a steady declining trend of mobile data average pricing. Though fluctuation of post-paid was visible in 2018, both prepaid and post-paid average price remained below 0.5VT/MB in quarter 4 of 2019.

7. Engineering and Technical Compliance



7.1 National Numbering Management Plan and Procedures

Building on from the work undertaken in previous years on the national numbering activities, TRBR continues to closely monitor compliance with its National Numbering Plan and Procedures (NNPP) and ensuring that numbers are not abused. The NNPP details the management, administration, and governance of numbers in Vanuatu and acts as a resource and guide to both the TRBR and all the service providers in Vanuatu. As part of its monitoring exercise, TRBR requested the operators to report on the use of numbers allocated to them. The outcome of the exercise signaled that mobile services continue to grow as seen from the growth of mobile number uptake.

TRBR acknowledges that there is a need to review and update the NNPP to accommodate changes that are happening in the telecommunications sector. These changes came about from the amendment of the TRBR Act in 2018, Amendment 22 of 2018, through more allocation of numbers to consumers, specifically the mobile consumers and new definitions that need to be added into the NNPP.



7.2 Radio Spectrum Management

7.2.1. General

A key TRBR mandatory obligation is to ensure that the radio spectrum is always appropriately managed and administered at a national level and in accordance with the ITU-Radio Regulations. In doing so, TRBR continues to update its frequency allocation table and monitors usage when spectrum ranges are assigned. Radio spectrum is a natural and highly valuable national resource. Therefore, without appropriate spectrum management and administration, there will likely be serious issues in respect of the safe and correct use of telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting services across Vanuatu.

7.3 Spectrum Management System for Developing Countries (SMS4DC)

The SMS4DC is an internal database system of which TRBR continually inputs updated frequency assignment information for operators. The system provides a structured management and reporting for usage of spectrum. Importantly, the database is useful because it provides TRBR the ability to ensure that spectrum allocated by TRBR is free from interference.

7.4 Asia Pacific Tele community (APT) Frequency Information System (AFIS)

AFIS is a web-based information portal designed to share the usage of frequency spectrum in Vanuatu within the APT Member countries. It is a useful tool for APT Members who are considering the introduction of new applications and services and who would like to benefit from the experience of other members who are at a more advanced stage of development of their radiocommunications systems.

AFIS is also a useful tool for the industry and operators to prepare business plans and make investments. A major advantage of AFIS is that it assists in developing a common or harmonized approach to future spectrum usage in the region. Further, the AFIS also contributes to the underdeveloped/developing nations for the development of electronic version of their National Frequency Allocation Table (NFAT) and a comprehensive information system for the work of spectrum management. TRBR completed its transfer of data to the AFIS database information system in 2019. This now requires a further update of the system to include the decisions/determinations of the ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC19) that took place in Egypt in 2019. Based on the determinations of WRC19, TRBR will structure and populate the AFIS for Vanuatu in 2020.

7.5 National Frequency Allocation Table (NFAT)

The National Table of Frequency Allocation Plan is a top-level plan based on the ITU Radio Regulations table of frequency allocations for Region 3 (Asia-Pacific region) which indicates how the radio frequency spectrum is divided into bands that can be used for defined services. It serves to guide the Regulator and the user community about how radio frequencies are and will be assigned and licensed in Vanuatu. In February 2019, TRBR published its NFAT for the Republic of Vanuatu. An ongoing exercise for TRBR is to update the NFAT so that spectrum is harmonized throughout Vanuatu and Region 3.

7.6 Spectrum Monitoring and Interference Resolution

During 2019, TRBR investigated, identified and resolved occurrences of interference, most of which were amicably resolved by the parties involved. However, TRBR investigated interference, especially with FM radios on the 900MHz IMT band, that was resolved after identifying the source of the interference.

It is anticipated that in 2021, a framework will be developed to cater for broadcasting services thus avoiding interference with low power devices. TRBR will closely work with the operators and other suppliers for the radio operators to ensure there is minimal rate of radio interference.

7.7 Radio Spectrum and Radio Apparatus Licensing

7.7.1. Spectrum Licence fees for the 700 MHz

TRBR has introduced the 700MHz via Decision 1 of 2016 on Radio Spectrum fees for the Republic of Vanuatu and has exempted the operators from the 700MHz spectrum fees until November 2019; an incentive to encourage the roll out of 4G across the country. TRBR hopes this will encourage Mobile Operators to make good use of this unique spectrum with very good penetration characteristics, to expand their mobile coverage throughout the country.

In 2019, Digicel implemented the 700Mhz for a few stations on Santo. The results obtained from a drive test conducted by TRBR indicated huge improvement in terms of coverage and quality of service. TRBR will continue to monitor the rollout of 4G across the country to ensure that operators make good use of the 700Mhz spectrum.

7.7.2. Radio Apparatus Licenses and their obligations

Every year, TRBR issues new license and renew existing licenses in accordance with the Radio Apparatus Licence (Fees) Regulation Order No. 153 of 2012. In the beginning of Quarter 1 and end of Quarter 4 each year, TRBR publishes public notices notifying all Radio Apparatus Licence Holders to renew their Licence and/or make sure they are legally operating their radio apparatus for the current calendar year.

In 2019, TRBR recorded an increase in the number of radio apparatus holders from 515 to 615. TRBR will continue to provide awareness and encourage Radio Apparatus holders to apply for radio apparatus licences.

Table 1: Table below shows the total Apparatus Licenses issued in 2019

Land Mobile	93
Amateur	6
Amateur Visitor	11
Marine	63
Fixed Links	406
Aeronautical	11
Aircraft	14
VSAT	1
Broadcasting	10
Total Radio Apparatus Licences	615



7.8 Compliance and Enforcement

TRBR continued to actively monitor and enforce compliance with, in accordance with its regulatory framework and the Act. In 2019, TRBR continued its established collaboration with the Maritime Regulator (OMR) to ensure that maritime license holders operate with valid licenses.

Additionally, TRBR continued to work closely with the broadcasters, land mobile users, amateurs and aircraft pilots to ensure they all have valid licenses to operate any radio stations and/or other apparatus that requires a license.



7.9 Type Approval and Conformity Standard Regulation

The Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Type Approval and Conformity to Technical Standards Regulation was gazetted in 2018. In 2019, TRBR received 137 Type approval applications from manufacturers and local importers for the certification of their ICT/ Radio and Telecommunication Terminal Equipment's (RTTE) for importation into Vanuatu. The object of this Regulation is to ensure telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting devices and equipment coming into the country is type approved and meets the appropriate required conformity standard.

Through the Regulation, TRBR promotes only safe and quality ICT products coming into Vanuatu. TRBR works closely with key stakeholders such as Customs and Inland Revenue at both international gateways (airport and sea), the service providers (broadcasting and telecommunications), importers and other suppliers and vendors of radio devices coming into the country.



7.10 Report on Quality of Service (QoS) Status for Vanuatu Telecommunications Services

TRBR monitoring of the QoS is regarded as a Key Performance Indicator exercise to ensure that service providers meet the standards of recognized institutions in respect of QoS and that a benchmark is set to locate areas for improvement for service providers at the national level.

Additionally, the monitoring exercise will contribute to inform the public in the simplest way possible on some key indicators of QoS for mobile services. In doing so, affected consumers can make informed choices and have a better understanding of the telecommunications market. The exercise also assists TRBR to continue to have access to a timely, relevant, and accurate information regarding QoS to enable it to effectively perform its role and functions contributing to sustainable market competition.

After the completion of a consultation on QoS with stakeholders, operators and the public in 2018, in 2019 an Expression of Interest was released to firms, organizations and consultants with expertise in conducting a QoS benchmarking exercise. Interested and eligible consultants provided their response to TRBR's Terms of Reference. Training and knowledge transfer in the form of on-site discussions and coaching was also required and to be provided by the selected expert.

TRBR decided, after a comprehensive analysis of offers, to contract an independent vendor MidWex to carry out this important task. The TRBR tender process was conducted in accordance with the Government of Vanuatu tender requirements. The activity is scheduled for implementation in early February 2020.



7.11 General User Radio Licence Guideline

In December 2019, TRBR announced the introduction of the General User Radio Licence (GURL) Guideline for National Type Approval Framework and Short - range Radiocommunications Devices (SRDs) for the Republic of Vanuatu, after consultation with stakeholders; the result being strong stakeholder support for the implementation of the Guideline.

TRBR proposed development of this Guideline SRD users in Vanuatu to overcome present and/or potential interference issues on these licensed frequency bands. All SRDs and like equipment that are intended to be imported into, or to be manufactured and used in Vanuatu, must be in compliance with this Guideline.

8. Implementation of the Universal Access Policy (UAP)

» 8.1 General

The implementation period of the Government's Universal Access Policy (UAP) has now been extended to the 1st January 2022 by the COM Decision 291 of 2019. (See also Section 8.6 of this Report). The extension was approved by the COM Meeting on the 30th October 2019. The initial implementation end date of the UAP was 1st January 2018, which TRBR successfully met and achieved all goals. Since then, TRBR has continued to reach out to the communities that remain underserved or not served, through various projects, such as the Computer Laboratory and Internet Community Centre (CLICC), the Tablet for Students (TFS) and Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG) projects.

Schools are seen to be the hub of telecommunications/ICT in the communities. The Piloted Program on CLICC and TFS projects, under the original UAP, has been a milestone in ICT development in rural areas of the country. Although the Pilot Program ended in December 2017, TRBR has continued to provide monitoring of the UAP introduced CLICC and TFS facilities and will now continue to support them with the financial assistance of the Governance for Growth (GfG) Program in 2020.

Other UAP programs include the CTG program, Basic ICT training, Community Access and Service initiatives are a TRBR arms of telecommunications and ICT services to the Communities as well.

» 8.2 Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG)

The CTG is an initiative of TRBR funded from the TRBR contribution to the UAP trust fund, to enhance the uptake of the telecommunications

and ICT services in the rural communities. The CTG came into effect to supplement the Government's UAP to support a broad range of impacted areas including Community Training and Capacity Building, Health Support, Education Support, Culture Heritage and Arts Support, Aged and Disability Support, Family and Youth Support.

In the two years since the commencement of the CTG, so far, a number of schools and communities have benefited from the Grant including Brenwei School on North West Malekula; Pepeyo Cultural Village Efate; Further Arts Efate; Gambule School Maewo and Erata Community, Tongariki.

Gambule School and Erata Community were the awardees of a Grant in 2019 CTG. Gambule was supported with a computer and Internet facility and was a significant achievement for the school. A teacher at Gambule stated that the facility will improve issues such as shortage of textbooks, reading books and other learning resources. It would also provide the opportunity for students and teachers to improve their ICT knowledge and skills. Gambule school is both Primary and Secondary, has a total of 433 students and 15 teachers and is one of the biggest schools on the island of Maewo. Erata Community in Tongariki Island is benefiting from a similar facility that is expected to be completed in quarter 1 of 2020.



Gambule Computer and Internet facility



Server stored inside rack

8.3 Connecting Merelava and Hiu Island to the World

The people of Merelava in the Banks group and Hiu Island of the Torres group of islands for the first time in October 2019 were able to connect with families and friends through the use of OTT services such as Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp etc.

TRBR supported Hiu Island and Merelava Island, specifically Martin Primary School and Tasvare Primary School respectively, with an internet facility and Laptops through the TRBR contribution to the UAP funds. The internet access was provided using Kacific High Throughput Satellite (HTS), installed and serviced by Telsat Broadband Limited, powered by solar cells that were installed by Power Communications Solutions (PCS). Over 200 students and 400 plus people benefit from the facilities at both locations.



Martin School – Hiu Island



VSAT Equipment – Tasvare School, Merelava Island

8.4 Strengthening the Operations of the CLICC/TFS Programs

After the Pilot Program on Projects and the Tablet for Students (TFS) Project ended in December 2017, sustainability of the sites has been an on-going challenge in various aspects of their operations. Management and technical issues have also been a major challenge. TRBR in 2019, identified nine CLICC and TFS sites that have experienced significant difficulty and will work with them to address their issues in 2020. These CLICC and TFS sites include: Lamap Community Centre; Lambubu School; Walarano School; Venie Mataipevu School; Saint Ann School; Torgil RTC; Orap School; Eles School and Sulua School.

8.5 Community ICT training

ICT literacy is critical to ensuring the uptake of ICT services in the communities. Based on the findings obtained from the evaluation of the Piloted Program on the CLICC and TFS, the communities lack basic ICT skills resulting in a lack of motivation to access the facility, with the use of these facilities at a minimum. Therefore, in 2019 TRBR conducted basic ICT training in various communities to address this gap.

Six CLICC and TFS sites were considered as hosting locations for the ICT training for locals in the communities. The sites include: Merei Centre School South Santo; Walarano College Central Malekula; Lini Memorial College North Pentecost; Sulua Primary School Maewo; Laukatai Centre School and Tafea College on Tanna. The training delivered at each site was tailored to suit the need identified in the related communities and participants attending the training were from Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), business operators, students and interested individual members in the community.

TRBR will continue to deliver such basic ICT training in 2020.



Tafea College



Participants at Merei Centre School - Tassariki

GfG has been the major donor of the Pilot Program with initially 19 Schools and 1 community centre having benefited from the CLICC and TFS projects. Furthermore, GfG has provided financial support for evaluation of the Program that was completed in 2018. The outcomes and findings from the evaluation have confirmed the strengths and challenges encounter during the operation of the facilities, and the report is accessible at; https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/755/clicc_and_tfs_evaluation_report.pdf

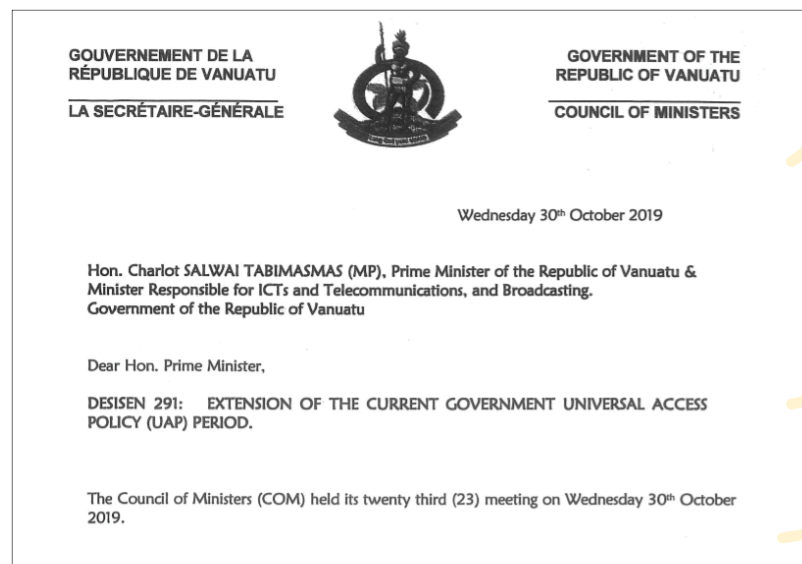
The CLICC and TFS continued to remain as an ICT hub to the schools and the surrounding communities.



8.6 Government Universal Access Policy (UAP) Extended

The Council of Ministers (CoM) meeting on the 30th October 2019 approved for the period of the implementation of the UAP be extended from the 1st January 2018 to the 1st January 2022 according to COM decision 291 of 2019. The extension of the UAP was due to the fact that the Office of the TRBR and the Prime Minister's Office continued to receive complaints about the poor coverage and the poor quality of service being experienced.

Following that, TRBR has engaged an independent Coverage Auditor, Midwex to undertake coverage and Quality of Service (QoS) audit for both mobile network operators; Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL) and Digicel Vanuatu (Digicel). A requirement in the undertaking of the coverage audit is to identify habited areas that are underserved and unserved. Following the QoS audit, which will take place in 2020, TRBR will consult with the operators on the identified areas to agree on an implementation plan based on the "Play or Pay" approach under the initial UAP. The "Play or Pay" approach was an initiative intended to motivate the operators to implement the Government's UAP at their own cost and was a successful approach leading to higher expectations being reached in terms of rollout coverage under the first UAP.



Decision of the CoM on the extension of UAP period

9. ICT and Internet Governance



Building on from the works undertaken and completed in 2018, TRBR continues to enforce and, at the same time, monitor general internet governance and ICT activities, with a particular focus on cybersecurity activities and on the implementation of .vu ccTLD Management and Administration Regulation.

9.1 ICT Code of Practice Workshop

As a requirement under the Vanuatu National ICT Policy, TRBR has an obligation to consult with the internet community in Vanuatu to develop an Online Code of Practice document for the Government.

The National ICT Policy provides for TRBR to be responsible with assistance from OGCI for undertaking the Online Code of Practice consultation with the internet community and any other internet users to develop a clear roadmap for a policy implementation by the Government.

A workshop was held on 14th November 2019. This was attended by various stakeholders that included, regulators, content providers, content hosting providers and ISP's. The purpose of this consultation workshop was to stimulate discussions on the Online Code of Practice for the ICT industry for co-regulation in areas of Internet content. The Code consultation seeks to identify what the Vanuatu internet community regards as harmful, offensive, pornographic, violent or prohibited materials found on the internet which may undermine Vanuatu cybersecurity as well as its social and religious values. The follow up Workshop is planned for 2020 before a policy advised will be made to the Government.



9.2 .VU ccTLD Transition

2019 was a special year for the .vu Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) as it was the year the .vu ccTLD transition concluded following the implementation of the Vanuatu Domain Name Management and Administration Regulation Order No. 206 Of 2016. The transition included the re-delegation of the .vu ccTLD from TVL to TRBR and the contracting of a new back-end Registry provider. Further, at the Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Board meeting held on Friday 14th March 2019, in Kobe, Japan, it was announced that the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) would transfer the .vu top level domain name from Telecom Vanuatu Limited to TRBR. TVL has been responsible for management of the .vu domain name for Vanuatu since its initial delegation on 10 April 1995. Under the "Vanuatu Domain Name Management and Administration Regulation Order No 206 of 2016" TRBR is required to manage.vu, and to attend to the process of splitting the Registry and Registrar functions of this domain name.

In 2018, a tender was advertised for companies to express interest in providing the back-end Registry support for the .vu. Nine companies submitted expressions of interest and, after a lengthy process of tender review (that was conducted in accordance with the Vanuatu Government's national tender requirements), Neustar Vanuatu Ltd was selected as the approved company and was announced publicly on 5th August 2019.

On the 12th of December 2019, the .vu ccTLD Registry data was successfully migrated from TVL servers to the Neustar Vanuatu Ltd without any DNS interruptions.



9.3 DNSSEC Training

Following on from the 2017 stakeholder training, ICANN partnered again with TRBR to organize the second DNSSEC technical training on 20th to 22nd March 2019, targeting engineers and network administrators of ISP's in Vanuatu. The invitation was sent to over 40 institutions and 18 participants successfully completed the 3 day hands-on technical workshops facilitated by Champika Wijayatunga of ICANN. The challenge now in Vanuatu is the implementation of DNSSEC to secure the DNS environment for internet users in Vanuatu.



9.4 Regulatory Support towards Innovative ICT application Development

In line with the Vanuatu National ICT Policy, TRBR continues to be open minded about ICT development rollouts outside urban areas, especially in the rural communities. TRBR continues to monitor and provide regulatory support towards any innovative activities such as the Robotic Competition through SMART SISTAS program, new innovative products released by the Service Providers such as the M-Vatu mobile app service supplied by TVL, mobile TV supplied by Digicel and other internet products and services offered through various intuitions including the Banks.

As part of TRBR's consumer related activities, TRBR continues to monitor their impact towards Vanuatu's economy and the citizens across the nation and attend to relevant complaints submitted to the office of the TRBR.

10. Regulatory Broadcasting and Media Activities



10.1 General Information

In the Quarter 3 of 2018, broadcasting regulatory functions were transferred to TRBR from the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) to align with the amendment of the Act via Amendment 22 of 2018.

Formalities for the transfer were undertaken in late 2018. However, other follow up meetings were carried out in 2019 including a follow up meeting with VBTC in the first quarter of 2019 in respect of handover of regulatory responsibilities from VBTC to TRBR.

In 2019, TBRB undertook consultation with broadcasters to discuss a roadmap and a way forward to exchange ideas on the basis of what TBRB is expecting and how regulatory support would positively contribute to support the growth of the broadcasting and media sector in Vanuatu.



10.2 Broadcasting Licence Regulatory Framework

The broadcasting licensing framework was arranged and approved by the Regulator for an interim period until a proper Licensing framework is finalized after consultation with the stakeholders. Further consultation and face to face meetings were carried out in 2019 and more will be carried out in 2020 to determine the most workable and appropriate framework for licensing to provide a proper structure for issuing licenses.



10.3 Broadcasting/Media Content Regulatory Framework

TRBR fully appreciates that there is a need for regulatory intervention on media content and broadcasting information to the consumers. TRBR has conducted its own internal research and has consulted externally with stakeholders to obtain their views, opinions and reactions on regulating broadcasting and media content. Although this was a limited initial starting exercise, through it TRBR is aware that there are both positive and negative reactions towards regulating media/broadcasting content.

TRBR will continue its investigations in 2020.



10.4 Establishment of Broadcasting and Media Consumer and Business Advisory Group

TRBR established a Consumer Advisory and Business Advisory group (CAG-BAG) to contribute with sharing of experiences that the consumers are experiencing in the broadcasting and media market. Through these CAG and BAG meetings, TRBR sought contributions from the group on potential framework that will effectively support the growth of broadcasting and media activities and importantly, protection of consumers while they are enjoying the benefit of these services.

The CAG and BAG points of view will provide valuable feedback and views towards the development of TRBR's proposed regulatory tools and framework for this market.

The CAG and BAG consist of representation from respective sectors, institutions, and other individual consumers namely: Media Association of Vanuatu (MAV); Vanuatu Christian Council of Churches (VCC); Vanuatu National Youth Council (VNYC); Vanuatu National Council of Woman (VNCW); Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organizations (VANGO); Right to Information (RTI) and the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI).

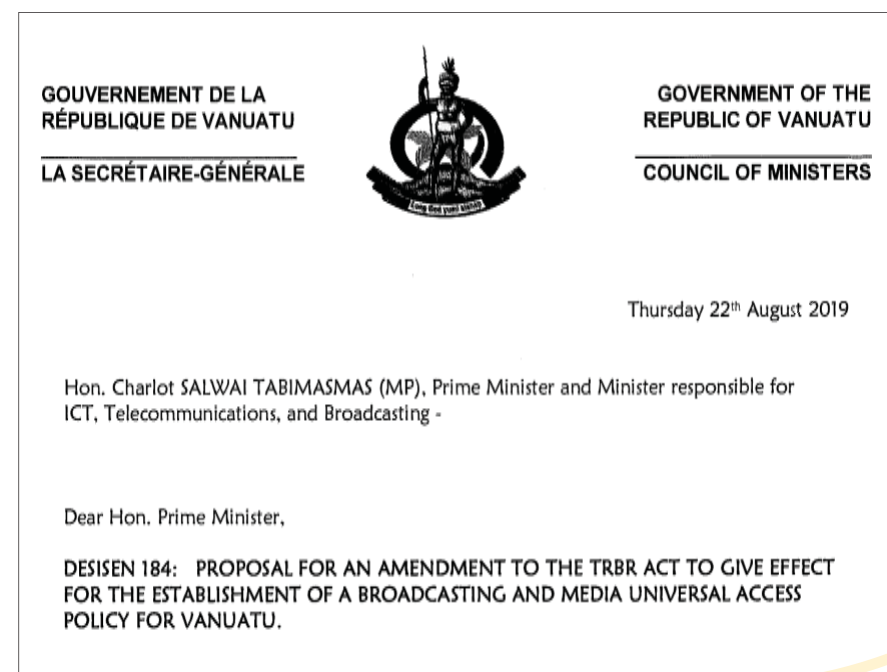


10.5 Universal Access Policy (UAP) for Broadcast

In its meeting held on the 22nd August 2019, the CoM approved a proposal submitted by TRBR for an amendment to the TRBR Act via Decision N0. 184 of 2019 to give effect for the establishment of a Broadcasting and Media Universal Access Policy for Vanuatu.

The CoM also approved for the Minister responsible for telecommunications/ICT, who is also the Prime Minister, in consultation with TRBR to appoint a Task Force to work on an appropriate amendment to the Act and for TRBR to hold a public consultation process for any proposed amendment before it is presented to the Parliament.

The Government of Vanuatu and TRBR believes that it is essential to have a Universal Access Policy for Broadcasting to improve broadcast coverage, especially to the rural areas.



Approved COM Decision for an Amendment to the TRBR Act



10.6 2019 Broadcasting Operators with Valid License

A list of licensed broadcasting providers that are currently operating in Vanuatu and especially in Port Vila is shown in the Table below.

Type of broadcast service	Company Name
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) • Multimedia T/A Capital FM107 • Daily Post • Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN)
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Television Blong Vanuatu (TBV) • Hope TV Vanuatu • Canal Plus • Telsat Pacific • Digicel Vanuatu

List of Broadcasting providers

11. Consumer Protection, Relationships & Awareness

» 11.1 General

In 2019, TRBR focussed on five main priorities towards consumer protection, awareness and its relationship with consumers, as outlined below.

» 11.2 TRBR's Successful Community Consumer Champions (CCC) Program & New CCC's

TRBR places, and has always placed, a high focus on working closely with its Community Consumer Champions (CCCs) to enhance their capability on delivering appropriate consumer protection awareness and educational information to consumers in their respective provinces. This year, in August 2019, TRBR recruited four new CCCs to assist other fourteen other TRBR CCCs in conducting community awareness in their local communities and schools outside Port Vila spread across the country.

The four new CCCs are George Imbert from Big Bay Santo who is responsible for Big Bay area; David Joy from Wusi Village who is responsible for West Coast part of Santo; Frank Kenneth from Farun Village who is responsible for South Malekula and Stephanie Kaltoi from Epau Village who is responsible for North Efate and the Shepherd Outer Islands.

In 2019, TRBR's through the CCCs conducted consumer awareness programs in all of the six provinces of the country. The awareness programs were conducted in both Primary and Secondary Schools, Churches and the local communities. TRBR's CCCs also helped in tracking network coverage using their own network cell Infor Lite Mobile App and have sent the raw data back to TRBR for analysis.

From the reports received from each CCC, TRBR is able to identify common challenges, gaps, needs and opportunities and will be able to tailor appropriate awareness and digital education content for future awareness campaigns.



Standing from right to left, Frank Kenneth, David Joy, Regulator Brian Winji, Stephanie Kaltoi, George Imbert, George Hapsai of TRBR

» 11.3 Assessment of Telecommunications and Broadcasting/Media user experience

TRBR produces its Consumer Experience Report based on responses from a paper-based survey conducted by the CCC's across the country every two years.

From August to October 2019, TRBR conducted a nationwide consumer survey to collect consumer feedback on a range of telecommunications topics related to:

- Mobile Data;
- type of service available to rural communities;
- common challenges faced;
- experiences on current pricing offered for a selected type of service;
- fixed telephony services across the country;
- Mobile Broadband services;
- average Internet experiences and
- broadcasting /media services.

Information collected will provide valuable insight on consumption behavior, general trends, views, and experiences with their service providers. Most importantly, the information provides the TRBR with data that can shape the way forward for TRBR to further assist consumers and also provides important elements and references for policy and industry planning for the Telecommunications sector and the Broadcasting sector in Vanuatu.

The third consumer experience report will be published in 2020. For more information about the release of the previous Telecommunications Consumer Experience Report, please visit TRBR official website OR follow the link below: <https://www.trbr.vu/en/consumer/consumer-reports>.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND BROADCASTING CONSUMER EXPERIENCE REPORT - 2019



Consumer survey conducted at Teouma Valley, South of Efate



11.4 Celebration of World Consumer Day – 15 March 2019

Each year on 15th March, since 2015, TRBR, has been facilitating the celebration of the World Consumer Rights Day in Vanuatu. In 2019 TRBR once again coordinated the event's logistics and program with the support and contribution from many of its stakeholders of the public sector, the private sector, NGOs and civil society.

The event was celebrated in a way to ensure that the rights of all consumers are clearly understood and consumers are protected against any form of market abuse, misinformation and social injustice which could undermine their rights.

A **"Trusted Smart Product"** was the theme for the 2019 World Consumer Rights Day. In line with the digital innovations and technological evolution, the theme drew particular focus on how smart products could impact on a consumer's life in both a positive and negative way and the prerequisites that consumers should have before engaging in the usage of smart products and services.

This year's program was designed to facilitate the delivery of basic knowledge and advice about consumers' basic rights and the procedures or mechanisms that are in place, or should be in place, so that consumers can and should use whenever they feel their rights as a consumer are not being respected or are abused. The aim was to promote a safe environment, fair treatment and transparency when dealing with consumer rights.

There were over 400 people who attended throughout the day at the Seafront Park in Port Vila, including students and members of the public. Information was also disseminated around Port Vila via a mobile team to the remote areas and other islands through radio live coverage sponsored by FM 107 and FM 100.

The main aim of this year's event was to continue to raise awareness to all telecommunications consumers on their rights in respect of the goods and services, offered and, at the same time, provide a platform for service providers and retailers to promote the quality of the services they provide so that consumer rights are respected and the quality of the products provided to their customers are appropriate.

The key message of the celebratory day was for all consumers to:

- have Access to fair and trusted products;
- understand their rights and responsibilities before engaging in the usage of services or products;
- enjoy products and services that comply with set criteria to meet a certain quality;
- be aware that service and goods providers should provide information to their customers so they can understand if a product and service they use can be trusted or not;
- raise awareness on the mechanisms in place for consumers to raise their complaint to the relevant institutions whenever a complaint arises;
- have the right to access to products and services and
- consumers to understand their rights and responsibilities before they use internet for transactions and/or use smart products.



Consumer Rights Day celebration at the Sea Front, 15 March 2019, Port Vila



11.5 Vanuatu's National ICT day Celebration, 17 May 2019

The World Telecommunications, Information and Society (WTIS) day is an annual event celebrated since the 17th May 1969 to mark the date of the founding of ITU and the signing of the first international Telegraph Convention in 1865.

Vanuatu, at a national level, uses the day to advance and promote its telecommunications/ICT development activities. This has made it an annual Vanuatu National ICT celebration to commemorate the WTIS day since 2012, mostly in the capital Port Vila. In later years, the celebrations have been taken to other main centres of the country such as Norsup, Malekula in 2018. This year, 2019, the celebrations took place again in the main capital Port Vila and on the island of Pentecost.

The celebration has been decentralized to help promote the use of technology and dissemination of information to other provinces, to enhance Government service delivery, business activities and the general awareness of all users. TRBR and the Government recognizes and appreciates that ICT is an enabler of development. As an example, there has been a huge increase in the uptake of telecommunications services, as well as the reduction of prices and increase in revenue in the telecommunication market since the introduction of the undersea fibre optic cable to Vanuatu in 2014.

This year's theme for the WTIS day was ***"Bridging the Standardisation Gap,*** to allow ITU member countries to focus on the work that the Union has done, and will continue to do, to ensure that developing countries are able to increase their ability to contribute to and benefit from the important ICT standardization work. Thereby member countries may contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals and enhancing the identification and analysis of emerging trends in the Telecommunication and ICT environment.

Apart from the main ICT Day celebrations in Port Vila, Government Officials, Civil Servants, the private sector officials, students and communities on Pentecost Island gathered at the Melsisi Catholic Mission on the 17th May 2019, to celebrate the 2019 ICT Day for the first time. TRBR, in collaboration with the Government through the OGCI, hosted the event as a parallel activity to the main event in Port Vila; intended to continue raising the awareness on ICT related topics in the remote communities of central and south Pentecost.

A sub theme of this year's event, derived from the 2019 main theme is ***"ICT Business has a great impact in our Societies" translated into Bislama "ICT Bisnis hemi gat bigfala impak long sosaeti,"*** highlighted the important role of ICTs in society to empower individuals and small business owners to explore the opportunities and benefits that ICTs have to offer.

Throughout the day over 300 people attended the ICT Day celebration at Melsisi. The main activities scheduled during the full day celebration included the Official Parade, Speeches from the Prime Minister delivered by the Public Relations officer (PRO) of the Prime Minister's Office, TRBR and various community leaders, booth visits, a Leader's Closed Session discussion, a General Awareness for students and parents from OGCI, TRBR and the Operators and finally the Closing Remarks.



ICT Day Celebration on Melsisi, Pentecost on 15th May 2019



11.6 TRBR's Commitment to its Consumer Education and Awareness Program

TRBR continued to promote and raise awareness of its complaint handling procedure and on the rights and responsibilities of consumers to be smart users of ICT services.

In 2019, TRBR took the opportunity to go on air through a talk back show programme and educate the general public on the positive aspects of the use of ICT devices and the use of telecommunications services as an enabler to drive their business forward. TRBR also put considerable emphasis on enabling students to make the best use of their ICT devices and telecommunications services to improve their learning capabilities.

A main highlight of TRBR's consumer awareness activity in 2019 was the three days awareness program at the first ever Financial Inclusion Exposition, coordinated by the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu from 23rd to 25th October, 2019, at the Seafront Park in Port Vila, Vanuatu. This was an opportunity where up to 600 people had access to information disseminated during this three day event. The anticipated outcome is for this information to be spread to other consumers who were not able to make it to the event.



Awareness program during the talk back show and ICT day



Awareness activities conducted during the Financial Inclusion Exposition



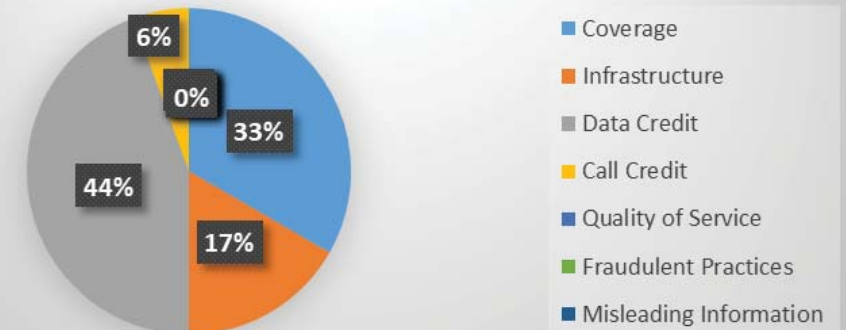
11.7 Enhancement of TRBR's Complaint Handling Processes

Each year, TRBR conducts a range of awareness campaigns across the country either through the TRBR CCCs or through its Consumer Team. In 2019 awareness programs were also conducted through FM107 radio broadcasts, Talk back show programs on television and press releases publications in newspaper i.e. "The Daily Post."

In 2019, TRBR addressed all the complaints received from the consumers. The complaints received assist TRBR in its assessment of common issues consumers are facing and as the basis of addressing some of these common issues with the operators. Furthermore, the knowledge gained from these complaints assist TRBR in tailoring its awareness and consumer education programs to enhance consumer knowledge on the use and telecommunication services, thus addressing some of these common issues faced by the consumers.

In 2019, 44% of complaints received were related to data credit followed by complaints related to coverage at 33%, then call credits at 17%. This signaled to TRBR that more awareness and education programs should be tailored toward these most common issues faced by consumer. In addition, through the introduction of TRBR Mobile App called "TRBR Facts Info," consumers can access up to date information from TRBR from their location, or launch complaints through the Mobile App anywhere and anytime. "TRBR Facts Info" is compatible with Android devices and Smart phones and can be downloaded from App Store and Play Store.

Types of Complaints Received



Types of complaints received from the consumers in 2019



11.8 Community Support Programs

TRBR has supported several community programs financially through its community support fund and its technical expertise particularly to promote telecommunications and ICT in Vanuatu. Through these programs, TRBR disseminated information and provided awareness to the consumers who attended the program, with the intention that the information would be passed on to other consumers who were not present during these programs. This included Police Open Day, Smart Sistas Program, ICT Day 2019 and Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum.



TRBR Manager ICT and Internet Governance, Norman Warput and Corporate Manager Kalkoa Samson handing over financial support for Smart Sistas program 2019

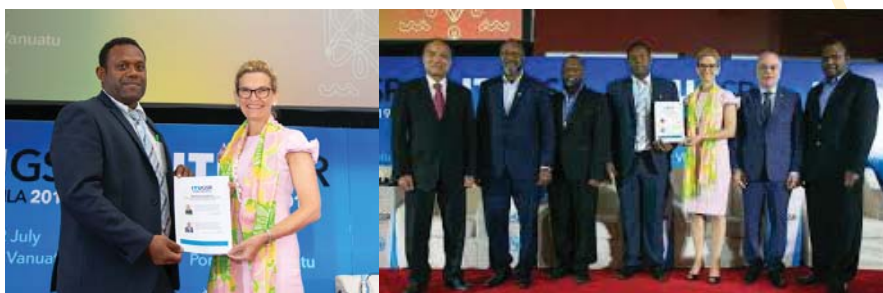
12. Relations with other Key External Stakeholders



12.1 Vanuatu Hosted The ITU-Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-19)



The Prime Minister of Vanuatu Honorable Minister Charlot Salwai Tabimasmias and the ITU Secretary General during the GSR-19 Opening, delivering respective speeches.



Left: Regulator Brian Winji as the Chair of GSR-19, and ITU BDT Director Mrs. Doreen Bogdan-Martin. Right: group photo of ITU executive, Vanuatu government and TRBR.

Building on from Vanuatu's 2018 preparations for GSR-19 (as outlined in TRBR's 2018 Annual Report), preparations in the first half of 2019 was a major focus for TRBR given it was selected as the key implementer for the agreement signed between the Vanuatu Government signed and the ITU for Vanuatu to host the ITU-GSR19.

With a theme "Inclusive Connectivity: The Future of Regulation", GSR-19 was held at "The Warwick, Le Lagoon Resort" in Port Vila from the 9th to 12th of July 2019. The Regulator was the Chairman of the GSR-19.



Regulator Brian Winji as Chair of GSR-19 giving his Opening Remarks

Vanuatu was the first nominated Small Island State in the Pacific region to host a GSR. The preparations for this event began in late 2017 and throughout 2018. Preparations were based on the arrangements and an agreement between the Vanuatu Government and the ITU. In late 2018, a contract was signed between the Government and the ITU on the conditions for the Symposium, confirming Vanuatu's commitment towards the event leading to a successful hosting and program for GSR-19.

The ITU GSR is an annual global event that brings together heads of national telecom/ICT regulatory authorities, ICT policy makers, industry leaders, Academia and other key ICT stakeholders to discuss regulatory matters and requirements that are able to assist and contribute to a positive impact of global and country ICT development. It also provides an avenue for leaders to share views and experiences on pressing regulatory issues that have been identified.

With the assistance of the Event Coordinator, the Pacific Group Limited (PGL) directed by Mr. Fred Samuel (hired by the Regulator's Office), the event preparations were successfully organized and coordinated despite the challenges TRBR experienced during that period without an appointed Regulator. A National Taskforce, chaired by TRBR, was established to assist with planning. The National Taskforce included representatives of respective Government ministries, institutions and private organizations, including the telecommunications operators who heavily contributed to the event, including financial assistance. TRBR appreciates all the support it received towards a successful outcome and hosting.

A total of 325 registered participants attended this important event.



A group photo of participants at the first day of the forum



Participants at the first session of the GSR-19 Forum

GSR provided the mechanism for ICT regulators and stakeholders to share experiences, knowledge, collaborate and identify means to bring affordable, safe, secure, and trusted connectivity and online access and use to people everywhere across the globe. GSR-19 was a successful event with a variety of experiences and knowledge shared during the 4 day forum.

The focus of the discussions was on digital strategies and policies; infrastructure regulation; innovative investment and financing mechanisms; and trusts. The main content of the forum consisted of thematic events including Heads of Regulators Executive Meetings, Regulatory Association's meeting, Private Sector, Chief Regulatory Officers meeting, leader's debate during main sessions, informational sessions, side events including ITU academy, GSMA Capacity building sessions on competition policy in digital age, Opening and Closing ceremonies, Pacific Night, a Welcome Ceremony, group photo sessions, corridor face to face meetings, GSR19 best practices guidelines, press conferences by respective leaders and other activities that occurred within the coordinated event.

TRBR was pleased that a number of the "big players" in the global technological arena attended the meeting, including Google, ICANN, Facebook, Internet Society, GSMA, AT&T and SAMENA Telecommunications Council.

GSR-19 participants also had the opportunity to go site seeing and contribute to Vanuatu's economy through shopping of gifts to take home.

The following links will direct you to the 'Best Practice Guideline and the Chairman's report of GSR-19: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/GSR/2019/Pages/Documents.aspx>

» 12.2 Other Relations with Key Stakeholders

Aside from the GSR preparations and the event itself, TRBR continued to show its external support to a range of important stakeholders.

TRBR has participated in various APT events. In 2019, Regulator Mr. Brian Winji accepted the nomination and was elected as the Vice-chair of the APT Policy and Regulation Forum (PRF) representing the sub region - Pacific islands.

TRBR has actively participated in the ITU's different survey provided. One of the important outcomes of the survey is the ranking of ICT regulatory activities of respective nationals across the globe of listed in the ICT regulatory tracker. TBRB is pleased to announce its contribution toward this important task has placed TRBR as one exemplar in terms of regulatory regime in the region.

TRBR also affiliated to other stake holders such as ICANN, APTLD, Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA) and regularly participated in the events facilitated by these organizations.



2019

Financial Statements

13. 2019 Financial Statement & Auditor's Report

Income Statement

For the year ended 31 December 2019

Expressed in Vatu

	2019	2018
Operating Revenue	150,934,075	161,444,598
Operating Expenses	(184,061,369)	(147,438,576)
Operating Surplus before payment to Universal Access Fund	(33,127,294)	14,006,022
Universal Access Fund	-	-
Operating Surplus / (deficit) after payment to Universal Access Fund	(33,127,294)	14,006,022

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2019

Expressed in Vatu

	2019	2018
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	126,492,844	147,759,494
Receivables	26,773,720	23,943,544
Other Assets	1,712,160	1,767,055
Non current assets		
Plant and Equipment	13,670,041	14,719,244
Total Assets	168,648,765	188,189,337
Current Liabilities		
Creditors and Accruals	73,509,327	61,652,749
GFG Grant - current	17,080,350	2,122,910
Provisions	1,354,993	1,179,550
	91,944,580	62,832,299
Non Current Liabilities		
Provisions	8,644,974	4,967,273
GFG Grant – non-current	4,680,846	21,761,196
Total Liabilities	105,270,400	91,683,678
Net Assets	63,378,365	96,505,659
Accumulated Surplus / (deficit)	63,378,365	96,505,659

Detailed 2019 Financial Audited report can also be accessed from TRBR's website www.trbr.vu

14. Annex 1: Register of Consultants 2019

Name	Position Held	Area of Expertise or Project Responsibilities
Ronald Box	Advisor to the Regulator	Former Regulator (2015-2017) provided high Level Advice and support to the Ni-Vanuatu deem Regulator Mr. John Obed Alilee.
Eric Braun	Legal Specialist	Provide legal advice and specialist assistance and guidance to TRBR on legal, regulatory, and economic policy matters. Eric works closely with the Regulator and TRBR Managers and staff.
Incite Consulting Ltd	Telecoms Competition and Economic Regulatory Expert	Incite consulting provides general, and a wide range of expert advice on telecommunications and broadcasting including but not limited to the analysis and determination of relevant markets, strategy of addressing anti – competitive behavior, and relevant economic and competition assistance to the TRBR team.

Keith Davidson	.vu ccTLD Domain Name Development, Management and Administration Specialist	Provide guidance and support to the TRBR staff to smoothly facilitate .vu ccTLD (registry) transition.
Dalsie Baniala	External Regulatory Support Advisor to the deemed Regulator	Provides external regulatory support to the deemed Regulator, Mr. John Obed Alilee. Provide support to the New Regulator Mr. Brian Winji during the GSR-19 Event.
Pacific Group Ltd	Events Coordinator for Global Symposium for Regulators 2019 (GSR-19)	Provided support on the facilitation, coordination, and management of Global Symposium for Regulators 2019 (GSR-19).

