



Annual Report 2020

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 2020 Annual Report is provided to fulfil the stated obligation and to provide transparency to Vanuatu citizens, the TRBR’s key stakeholders and other interested individuals on activities that were undertaken by the institution, including decisions made throughout the year.

The 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 honor for me to provide you, as the Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Services, with the TRBR's 2020 Annual Report, its 13th such Report.

The 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 office in 2008, the TRBR 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 the TRBR for its regulatory work and activities carried out in 2020 and provides transparency by informing our many stakeholders of TRBR's activities during 2020.

2020 was a particularly demanding, challenging and a difficult year for TRBR as the country was faced with the COVID-19 Pandemic, devastated Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Harold, and the ashfall on the island of Tanna. However, at the same time, it was a fulfilling year for both myself as the Regulator and the Staff of the TRBR, with achievement of significant activity throughout the year, assisting the operators through this difficult year, and at the same time striving to keep the professionalism and integrity of the institution intact. The increased challenges arose because the pandemic started very early during the year and the TC Harold came through the Northern part of Vanuatu in early April, leaving behind destruction to telecommunications and broadcasting infrastructure. Further, the international borders were closed making it difficult for experts and equipment to be shipped to Vanuatu. The country's economy began to drop as well as the purchasing power of consumers, while operators were pushed by the TRBR and the government to recover communications to the affected areas after the TC Harold.

In the spirit of collaboration and cooperation to keep the licenses operating in the market while retaining their staff and providing the essential telecommunications services to the consumers throughout the Country, the TRBR granted exemption to License fees and levies to assist the operators through these difficult times. Furthermore, the TRBR established VSAT terminal stations in some of the unserved areas with the help of Kacific Broadband Satellite to provide communications after TC Harold. The TRBR has also collaborated with the Office of the Chief Government Information Officer (OGCIO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), and issued temporary license to Intelsat, and established VSAT stations on Malekula, Santo and Pentecost for communications after TC Harold. The program was fully funded by the WFP.

The 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 that “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 the Parliament.

I particularly wish to inform you, Hon. Prime Minister, that the TRBR needs to be supported in its review of its legislative framework to cater for the technology evolution that we are experiencing today. I also assure you that in fulfilling our duties, we have adhered to our critical responsibilities and acted fairly, independently, and impartially in performing all 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 independent and impartial decisions, determinations and orders, for the outcomes of all of the TRBR’s work. As a key outcome of such a strong stand by the TRBR, Vanuatu (through the TRBR) has been recognized regionally and internationally for its achievements and has continued to enjoy such benefits; with the TRBR being a recognized and benchmarked regulatory institution at a national, regional, and international level.

The TRBR fully appreciates and acknowledges that this positive recognition was reinforced in July 2019 with the Government and the TRBR’s input and significant contribution to the organization of 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. Furthermore, in late 2019 in Butan, Vanuatu through the support of the OGCI and TRBR, I was elected as Vice Chairman of the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT) Policy and Regulation Forum (PRF) representing the Pacific Islands Sub-Region with a term of two years. This shows our commitment and willingness to collaborate and corporate with the international community.

The Vanuatu telecommunications sector has continued to witness significant changes in 2020. With the uptake in mobile services and smartphones adoption, the increasing availability of 3G and 4G has stimulated access to data services as the two mobile operators continue to offer data promotions with increased value at affordable prices. Some key highlights of the development are listed below:

- Mobile subscription decreased by 7% in 2020
- Mobile penetration fell to 84%
- Mobile data revenue grew by 20%
- Mobile data downloads increased by 66% to 6,300 terabytes in 2020
- Gross market revenue declined by 2%. However, the long run trend still shows positive growth

- Mobile data revenue continues to dominate the mobile market during this pandemic with increasing demand of online contents such as OTT services, E-Learning, Zoom Meeting platform, YouTube and Netflix that have gained popularity in this COVID-19 situation.

Provision of broadband access to the citizens of Vanuatu continues to increase in 2020, including the upgrading of the VSAT Terminals and community Wifi by TRBR on the island of Hiu in the Torres group and Merelava in the Banks group, roll out of the VSAT terminal and community Wifi by the TRBR on South West and East Malo, Bwatnapne and Melsisi on Pentecost after TC Harold, and Erata Community on Tongariki as part of the TRBR Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG) program, providing them access to the internet for the first time.

Despite the TRBR's challenges, I am pleased to report that the TRBR team has been able to meet majority of its main deliverables and outcomes as detailed in the TRBR 2020 and Onwards Work Plan. Some key achievements, major issues, challenges and activities include:

- assisting the Telecommunications Licensees during the post TC Harold destruction and recovery efforts despite financial challenges;
- assisting the Broadcasting Licensees during the post TC Harold destruction and recovery efforts;
- assisting the Licensees during the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- assisting the OGCIO in the communications recovery efforts after TC Harold;
- assisting the WFP after TC Harold for provision of VSAT to unserved areas;
- connecting some of the most remote islands of Vanuatu to the internet and ICT services;
- the 2020 Consumer Rights Day Celebrations in Luganville;
- conducted a range of successful consumer awareness programs;
- granting of new licenses;
- revocation of few licenses;
- Quality of Service (QoS) Audit and Coverage audit, country wide and identification of underserved and unserved areas in Vanuatu; and
- the TRBR's CTG awardees for 2020.

Further highlights, achievements, challenges and activities are detailed in the body of this 2020 Annual Report. The TRBR's Sector Report for 2020 also outlines the state of telecommunications developments in Vanuatu.

The outcome of the ITU 2020 ICT Regulatory Tracker presented in 2021 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 the Country. This includes infrastructure facility sharing, co-location site sharing and other matters that requires attention to ensure provision of wider options to consumers and to facilitate more competition in the marketplace.

The TRBR wishes to recognize the Government's contribution during the past years in bringing Vanuatu to that level of regulatory regime and the TRBR seeks continued Government support to ensure that the TRBR can play its role in enabling the global technology evolution trend to be well controlled and managed at the 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 the TRBR remains as an independent regulatory body with its operations and decision making free of any external interference, to enable the TRBR to continue making independent and effective decisions that will positively impact the Vanuatu telecommunications and broadcasting 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 last face to face GSR-19 event, which was rated by the ITU and participants as one of the most successful GSR events hosted in a small island country like Vanuatu and was still remembered as very successful last face to face GSR event before the COVID-19 pandemic.

This 2020 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 is also available from the 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 including financial 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 the TRBR will continue to fulfill its role in ensuring that the telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting market are appropriately and effectively regulated.

The 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Winji', with a circular flourish at the end.

Brian Winji MOLITAVITI

Telecommunications, Radiocommunications & Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR)

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A message from the Regulator



Brian Winji MOLITAVITI

Regulator

It is with pleasure I provide the TRBR 2020 Annual Report: my second Annual Report as the Regulator after my appointment in July 2019.

The TRBR, under its legal mandate in section 11 of the Telecommunications Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulations Act No. 30 of 2009 as amended 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, the 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
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 - (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 the TRBR for its regulatory work and activities carried out in 2020 and it also provides transparency to and informs our many stakeholders of the TRBR's activities during 2020 and its financial report of 2020.

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 the TRBR has continued to fulfil its roles and strictly observing all of its mandatory functions and obligations particularly in section 7 (12) of the Act, as well as applying the principle of fairness, balanced views and appropriate decisions in carrying out the TRBR's required regulatory functions.

2020 was a particularly demanding, challenging and a difficult year for the TRBR but, at the same time, it was a fulfilling year for both myself as the Regulator, serving 18 months since my appointment, and leading TRBR forward through the COVID-19 Pandemic and Post TC Harold situation.

Having had 18 months experience as the Regulator by the end of this reporting period, I am strongly of the view that regulatory institutions like the 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 the 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 the citizens of Vanuatu can continue to enjoy the benefit of the market environment and moreover, support an environment that can boost economic growth, 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, the TRBR continues to experience global pressure with respect to technological evolution and technological convergence. Being a Small Island Developing state (SID), Vanuatu (through the 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.

The TRBR continues to uphold, build, and raise the bar of Vanuatu's standing in the region, and at the international level; one example being the successful hosting of GSR-19. The 2020 ITU ICT Regulatory Tracker (<https://tracker.gen5.digital/country-cards/Vanuatu>) released in 2021 saw Vanuatu's regulatory regime being listed in the top ten regulatory regimes in the 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 the TRBR to rethink and move faster in improving its regulatory legislation that will best accommodate the evolving technology and technology convergence in line with global trends and to facilitate more competition in the Vanuatu Market.

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

In 2020, the Council of Ministers (COM) approved through COM Decision 146 of 2020 to reaffirm the COM decision 184 of 2019 for the amendment of the TRBR Act and further approved for review of other sections of the Act including Part 2, 10 and 11, to reflect sections to be amended following decision 184 of 2019. The COM also approved the TRBR to work with the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) to ensure complete separation and transfer of the regulatory role

from VBTC to TRBR. The TRBR acknowledges the support of the Australian Government to assist with the funding of an expert to assist the TRBR to complete the drafting instructions for the Bill for the amendment of the TRBR Act.

During the year 2020, and like other organizations in Vanuatu, the TRBR continued to experience unfair and unjust criticism and substantial external pressures. This was primarily due to limited understanding of the TRBR's duties and its mandatory functions and, particularly, its critical need to be and to remain independent.

Despite the TRBR's challenges, I am pleased to report that the TRBR team has been able to meet the majority of its main deliverables and outcomes as detailed in the TRBR 2020 and Onwards Work Plan. Some key achievements, major issues and challenges and activities include:

- assisting the Telecommunications Licensees during the post TC Harold destruction and recovery efforts;
- assisting the Broadcasting Licensees during the post TC Harold destruction and recovery efforts;
- assisting the Licensees during the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- assisting the OGCIO in the communications recovery efforts after TC Harold;
- assisting the WFP after TC Harold;
- connecting some of the most remote islands of Vanuatu to the internet and ICT services;
- the 2020 Consumer Rights Day Celebration in Luganville;
- conducted a range of successful consumer awareness programs;
- granting of new licenses;
- revocation of licenses;
- drafting instruction for TRBR Act amendment following COM Decision 146 of 2020;
- QoS Audit and Coverage audit, country wide and identification of underserved and unserved areas in Vanuatu; and
- awarded the TRBR's CTG awardees for 2020.

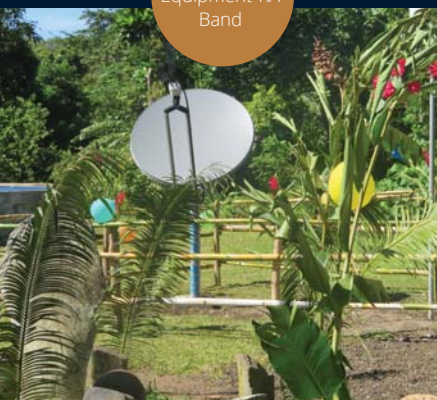
Further highlights, achievements, challenges and activities are detailed in the body of this 2020 Annual Report.

The TRBR's Sector Report for 2020 also outlines the state of telecommunications developments in Vanuatu and the 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. The TRBR's Sector Report can be viewed on our website at <https://www.trbr.vu/en/public-register/reports/telecommunications-sector-report/2020>.

The 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 to enable them to make informed decisions.

1

VSAT
Equipment-KA
Band



Erata
Community
and their
Councilor

2020 Regulatory Highlights

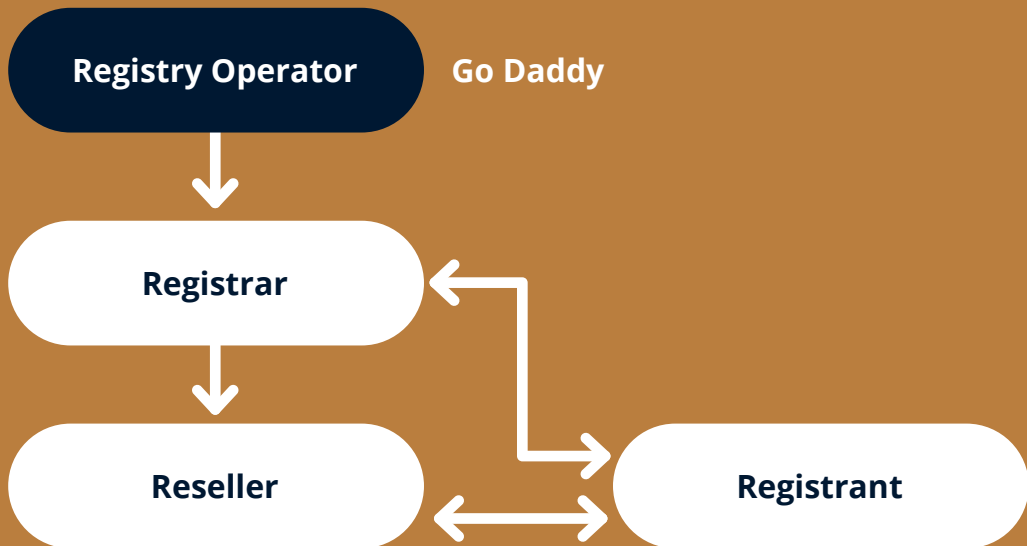
1.1 2020 Awardees for TRBR Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG)

CTG is an initiative from the TRBR in line with the Government's UAP to achieve the objectives of the UAP. The people of Erata Community on the Island of Tongariki were the happiest people when their ICT and Internet facility was declared open by their councilor on 31st May 2020 in the presence of the TRBR Staff and the Erata community, for use by the communities. Improved communications is a critical need for the people, as the access to mobile coverage was very difficult in the area, and people must look for certain spots to make essential call or send a text. However, at most times, mobile signals at those locations were not available due to network issues.

In his speech during the opening ceremony, the Councilor said that the installation of the facility by TRBR is the answer to their long time need, and he and his people have pledged their commitment to ensure that the facility is put into good use and be well looked after. He concluded with a donation of 10,000 Vatu towards the operation and maintenance of the facility.

1.2 Complete Separation of Registry and Registrar Functions for .vu ccTLD

GoDaddy as the
Registry Operator



Neustar Vanuatu Limited (now GoDaddy) has finally taken over as the Registry Operator of Vanuatu's .vu country code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD), after all the technical transition tasks were completed in February 2020. The TRBR has also accredited a number of Registrars including Local and International Registrars to supply registration services with terms and conditions that are in compliance with the laws of Vanuatu and the .vu Domain Name Regulation.

With extensive experience of ccTLD registry operations both large and small, Neustar Vanuatu Limited now GoDaddy, is committed to bring further growth to the namespace through active promotion and increased collaboration with the Registrars, as well as providing significantly improved Domain Name System (DNS) security, stability and integrity of the .vu domain zone.

With this new development, GoDaddy will help to make .vu the preferred online identity for Vanuatu businesses and organisations and their investment of a new DNS node in Vanuatu will enhance domain resolution speeds for internet users in-country and the speed of global users visiting Vanuatu websites.

GoDaddy's goal is to provide the technical, marketing and identity foundations to support local investment, capability, and capacity in e-commerce and internet technologies.



1.3 2020 Accredited Registrars

Under the Domain Name space, Registrars play an important role in registering domains. Registrars are made up of local and international Registrars and as of 2020, there were more than 20 international accredited Registrars and 3 local accredited Registrars. Registrars of .vu domain names are accredited by the TRBR and are required to comply with the laws of Vanuatu, the .VU Domain Name Regulation and any directions issued by the Regulator pursuant to the .VU Domain Name Regulation and the TRBR Act. The TRBR also ensures that the International Registrars of

.vu ccTLD are also accredited by The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which is an internationally organized, non-profit corporation that has responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domain name system management, and root server system management functions.

Local
Registrars
in 2020



Vodafone Vanuatu
vodafone.com.vu

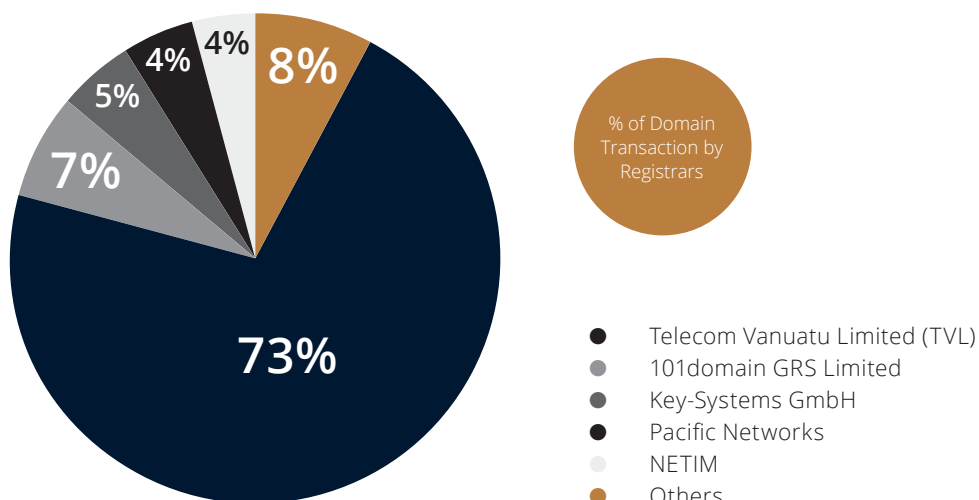
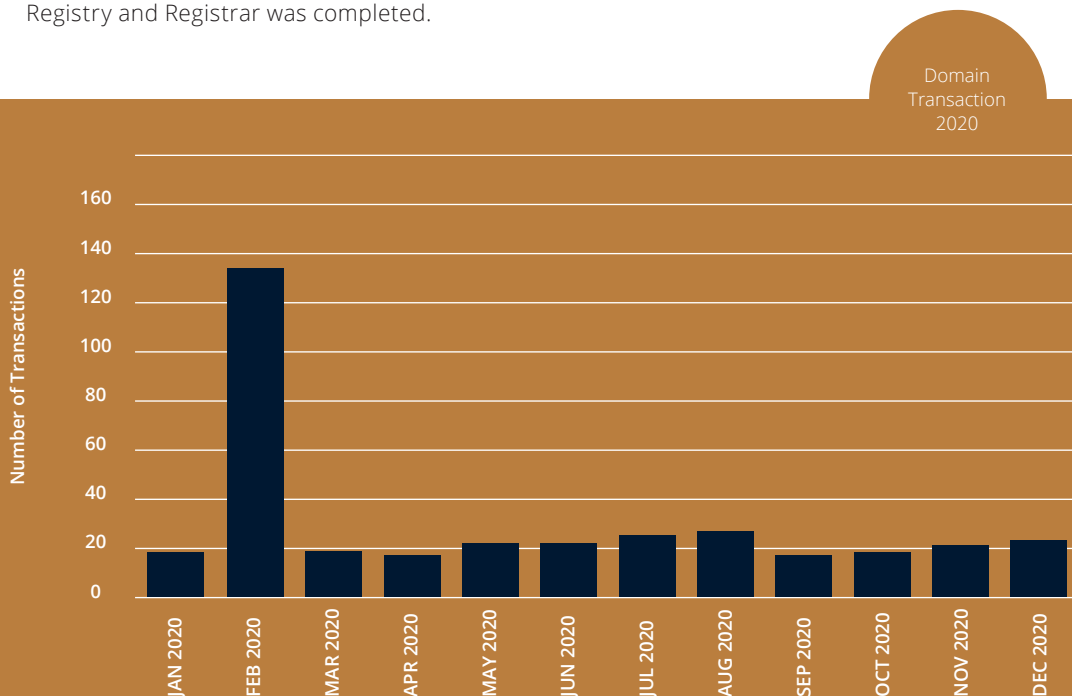
**Network and Telephone
Calling Services**
pacificnetworks.com

**Home - SPIM -
Emerging Technology**
spim.co

1.4 2020 .vu CCTLD Development Trend

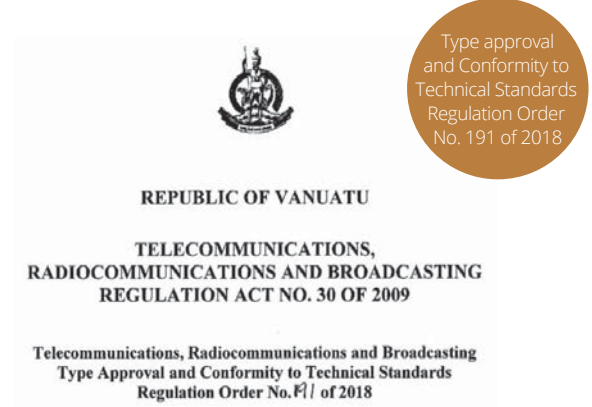
Since the transition of the .vu ccTLD to GoDaddy Registry in early 2020 from Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL), the ccTLD saw an initial growth through the first three quarters of 2020 and total cumulative growth of around 25% in Domains Under Management (DUM) by the end of 2020. 73% of the new domain were registered by TVL (or Vodafone) and the rest were registered by Pacific Networks and the remaining by the international registrars.

The graph illustrated a high spike in February, after the separation of the Registry and Registrar was completed.



1.5 Introduction of Type Approval (TA) Certificates and Import Permit

Type Approval (TA) is a compliance process by which all devices using frequency are pre-approved before they are imported to Vanuatu for use or sale. The TA process requires manufacturers and importers to apply to the TRBR for a certificate to import or export frequency enabled devices to Vanuatu. It ranges from small devices such as Blue Tooth speakers up to Telecom equipment being used by Telecom Service providers to provide telecommunications services in Vanuatu. The TA is in line with the recommendations from ITU and the World Health Organization (WHO) so that imported devices such as these, conform to certain health standards, safety, and quality. The Type approval and Conformity to Technical Standards Regulation Order 191 of 2018, came into force in 2018 and the TRBR is now implementing the law to ensure that all importers and exporters must have their devices type approved. Working in tandem with the Vanuatu Customs Department at the



border, any non-type approved devices entering Vanuatu borders would not be allowed to the Vanuatu market if they do not meet the standards specified in the Regulation. The Regulation is available on the TRBR Website at https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/744/official_gazette_no_81_of_2018.pdf.

1.6 Quality of Service and Coverage Audit

Following the COM Decision 291 of 2019 to extend the implementation period of the UAP, the Office of the TRBR have initiated the Quality of Service (QoS) and Coverage Audit focusing on the two Mobile Operators and 14 main islands of Vanuatu with over 90% of Vanuatu's population, including Efate, Santo, Tanna, Malekula, Pentecost, Ambae, Maewo, Erromango, Paama, Epi, Ambrym, Tongoa, Gaua, and Vanualava. The project was completed by the end of the first quarter of 2020, and it identified the remaining underserved and unserved areas in relation to mobile broadband and narrowband coverages in Vanuatu. This exercise was carried out using specialized equipment with the help of Midwex, an overseas company specializing in QoS and coverage testing. Benchmark tests were carried out in the 14 most populated islands in Vanuatu including drive tests and stationary tests to collect the relevant data. Technical reports were also generated to identify QoS gaps for improvement by respective operators. A report was also presented to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Government detailing the remaining areas that are required to be addressed in order to close the digital gap in Vanuatu.

1.7 2020 Consumer Rights Day Celebration

Annually, on the 15th of March each year, Consumers International, the committed and recognised body of 240 members across 120 countries in the World, celebrates the event to promote the rights of Consumers. The TRBR since 2015, has been facilitating the celebration of the World Consumer Rights Day in Vanuatu, and in 2020, a Task Force was set up consisting of key stakeholders, and took the ownership to oversee the core activities of the day.

The theme of 2020 event was declared as “Sustainable Consumer” by the Consumer International and the aim of sustainable consumption is to increase resource efficiency and fair trade while helping to alleviate poverty and enable everyone to enjoy a good quality of life with access to food, water, energy, medicine and more.

This year’s event was hosted in Luganville town for the first time on the 13th of March, and there were over 500 people who were present



Consumer Rights Day Celebration Parade, Luganville Town, 13 March 2020

throughout the day at the Luganville Unity Park including the students and members of the public.

In addition to the activities of the day, there were also discussions on the topics that helped to promote public participation and debate on sustainable consumption including promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers, standards for the safety and quality of consumer goods and services, distribution facilities for essential consumer goods and services, dispute resolution and redress. More information is in Section 11 of this Report.



1.8 TC Harold Assistance

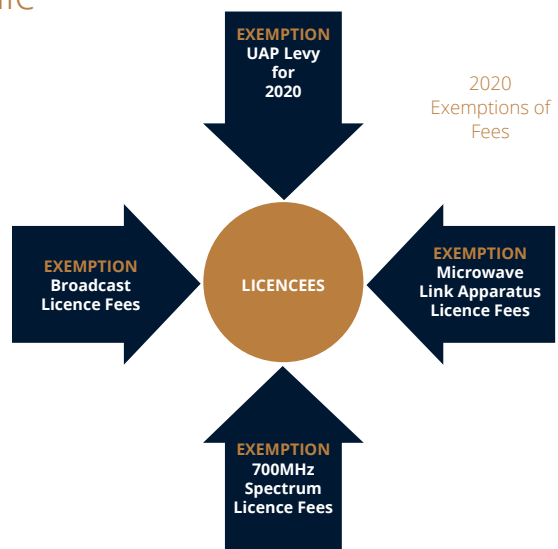
The destruction left behind by TC Harold in early April 2020 on the northern parts of Vanuatu, to the telecommunications infrastructure was quite extensive, including damage to several telecommunication and broadcasting towers. The offices of the TRBR and OGCIO collaborated on providing communications solutions to villages in the unserved areas, to allow communications with the population on the affected areas while the operators are tirelessly working to restore mobile services, and relief efforts are conducted by the NDMO office and partner Agencies.

The village of Bwatnapne on Pentecost, Atariboe Clinic on South Malo and Kitahu Primary School on East Malo have been provided with VSAT Solution funded by the office of the TRBR. The office of the TRBR and the OGCIO in collaboration with the WFP have also delivered three VSAT solutions for Northwest Malekula, Pangi on Pentecost and a clinic on West Coast Santo. These three VSATs were fully funded by the WFP.



1.9 TRBR Assistance to the Operators During COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 Pandemic has provided the opportunity for working remotely, but at the same time has impacted a lot of businesses and the consumers. Consumers reprioritised their spending, while the telecom and broadcasting operators faced difficulties in sustaining their business and retaining staff on their employment roll. As such, the Office of the TRBR reached out to support the licensees through exemptions on various levies and License Fees Including UAP levies for 2020, 700Mhz Spectrum License fees for 2020, Microwave links Apparatus license fees for 2020, and Broadcasting License fees for 2020.



1.10 Registrar Symposium

The Office of the TRBR as the ccTLD administrator of .vu hosted a face-to-face Regulatory Internet Forum/Registrars Workshop with international speakers presenting online, for the existing and prospective local registrars in Vanuatu at “The Grand Hotel,” Port Vila on October 22, 2020. The event was organized as part of the ongoing capacity building initiatives for the local .vu Registrars.

The TRBR was fortunate to have a number of international facilitators representing the APTLD Members including, GoDaddy Registry, Afiliat Registry, Gransy Registry and many others who were able to present important information on being an effective domain registrar during the full day workshop.

Discussions on that day revolved around the three main topics, all moderated by the TRBR including:

1. The role of Registrars;
2. Marketing .vu; and
3. Registrar Best Practices.

The full day workshop was attended by representatives from TRBR, Vodafone, Pacific Networks, SPIM, Digicel, OGCIO, ODC Vanuatu, Computer Network Services (CNS), Vanuatu Intellectual Property Office (VANIPO) and the Vanuatu Financial Service Commission (VFSC).

On-line
interactive
sessions with
international
speakers



1.11 Business and School Awareness on .VU

The office of the TRBR organized an Internet Workshop/Capacity building on .vu ccTLD from 28th to 29th October 2020, an initiative designed to raise awareness on the benefits and Importance of registering and using .vu domain name such as .edu.vu, .vu, .com.vu, .net.vu or .org.vu for business, both -profit and non-profit and the Educational sector. 28th October was dedicated for schools and 29th October was for the business community on Sanma Province.

The TRBR in collaboration with the Registry Service Provider (GoDaddy) and accredited Registrars has the responsibility to promote the benefits and importance of using .vu domain name, and hence to boost the growth of registration in the market.

The main purpose for the workshop is to provide the schools and small businesses an opportunity to;

- learn more about .vu ccTLD in general;
- discuss the benefits of using a .vu domain name in Vanuatu;
- educate Schools and small businesses on their responsibilities based on the .vu regulation and operational guidelines;
- provide an opportunity for them to know how to register a domain name; and
- to provide an opportunity to obtain feedback from School principals and small business owners.

The workshop was attended by about 30 small business owners and 30 school Principals from Sanma Province.

Participants in the .vu workshop in Luganville, 28-29 October 2020



1.12 The Moso Retreat and TRBR Staff Capacity building

The TRBR for the first time in 11 years of its operations, held its retreat outside of Port Vila from 10-11 December 2020, and in line with the domestic tourist initiative to support the tourism industry. The TRBR staff was hosted by “The Moso,” for two days to review its 2020 Business Plan and to draft its 2021 and Onwards Business Plan. The Retreat provides also an opportunity to capacity build the staff of the TRBR in recognising their roles towards achieving the National Sustainable goals, and further, to build their knowledge on international requirements expected from the TRBR. Each Division was briefed by the Regulator on their roles in relation to the Act of the TRBR. The outcome of the meeting was the draft 2021 and Onwards Business Plan for approval by the Regulator.

TRBR Team during the Retreat on Moso Island



1.13 2020 Telecommunications Industry Trends

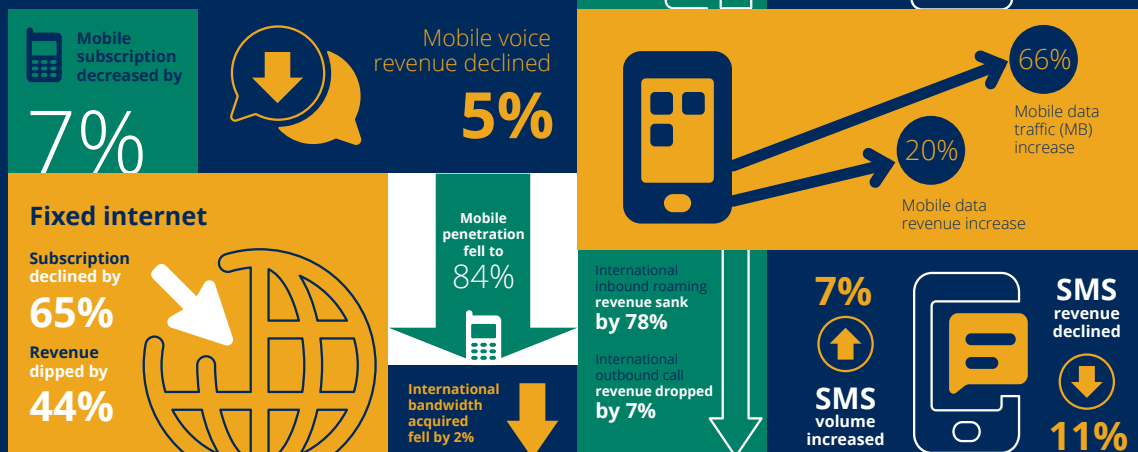
The Vanuatu telecommunications sector has continued to witness significant changes in 2020. With the uptake in mobile services and smartphones adoption, the increasing availability of 3G and 4G has stimulated access to data services as the two mobile operators, Vodafone and Digicel, continued to offer data promotions with increased value at affordable prices. Some key highlights from the Sector report are:

- mobile subscription decreased by 7% in 2020
- mobile penetration fell to 84%
- mobile data revenue grew by 20%
- mobile data downloads increased by 66% to 6,300 terabytes in 2020
- gross market revenue declined by 2%, however long run trend still shows positive growth as
- mobile data revenue continues to dominate the mobile market during this pandemic with increasing demand of online contents such as OTT services, E-Learning, Zoom Meeting platform, YouTube and Netflix which has gain popularity in this COVID-19 situation.

Snapshot of the Vanuatu Telecommunications sector trend in 2020

KEY TRENDS IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

Key observation trends that TRBR has been able to capture for the year ending in 2020, are shown below:





2

About TRBR

2.1 Regulatory Regime

Vanuatu has a unique telecommunications regulatory regime and is recognized as a benchmark in the Region, and this regime has been debated and challenged over the years since its establishment. It was established in 2009 through approval by the members of Parliament at that time, the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act N0. 30 of 2009 (the Act). It is unique because the legislation promoted independence of the Regulator enabling independent regulatory decisions by the TRBR after consultations with all key stakeholders to ensure decisions are fair, balanced, and always promote good governance.

In 2019, there has been an attempt to change the Regime and the Bill was not able to be passed in the Parliament.

Towards the end of 2019, the COM through Decision 184 of 2019 also authorized for the amendment of the TRBR Act, and further, in 2020, the COM through Decision No. 146 of 2020 reaffirmed the COM Decision of 2019, and approved the review of the TRBR Act, and other relevant Acts to regulate the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting sector to ensure compatibility and conformity. The Review only focuses mainly:

- (a) on transferring all the regulatory role of the Broadcasting and Media from VBTC to the TRBR
- (b) to cater for the provisions for any Broadcasting and Media Regulatory Framework and Universal Access Policy in the broadcasting sector; and
- (c) on ensuring fair competition in the broadcasting market.

2.2 Our Role and Function

2020 was a challenging year for the TRBR due to the devastated impact of Tropical Cyclone Harold, the ashfall on Tanna, and the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic. Furthermore, the TRBR continued to work on the amendment of the Act following the COM Decision N0. 184 2019 and COM decision 164 of 2020, carried out a major Quality and Coverage Audit, and at the same time continued to maintain its stand to ensure the legislation and rules established under the Act were effectively and efficiently enforced.

For the TRBR to embrace its new broadcasting responsibilities and work effectively towards achieving its vision and mission, it developed a “2020 and Onwards Annual Work Plan” that encompassed its broadened responsibilities. The 2020 Annual Work Plan was developed in conjunction with TRBR’s three-year 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan, to outline and effectively guide the implementation of the TRBR’s vision and performance of its functions throughout the three years.

While delivering on the TRBR’s core functions, responsibilities, duties and powers as set out in the Act and other laws of Vanuatu, it is critical that the 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 the TRBR’s creditability, integrity, and ongoing positive working relationship with all its stakeholders is constantly maintained.

The TRBR continues to maintain the recognition it has among its peers as one of the leading Regulator in the Pacific Region; despite the challenges the institution had to face in 2020. Our wish is to continue to hold the TRBR’s status and its performance at that level and work harder to improve on other areas, such as broadcasting.

After the Category 5 TC Harold and the current pandemic situation, one of the key foci for 2020 was to maintain its role and, also support the operators and the government through the COVID-19 pandemic and to recover from the effects of TC Harold and the ashfall on the island of Tanna.

TRBR’s deliverables expected in the year 2020, can be viewed on TRBR website: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/780/2020_and_onwards_annual_work_plan.pdf

2.3 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.

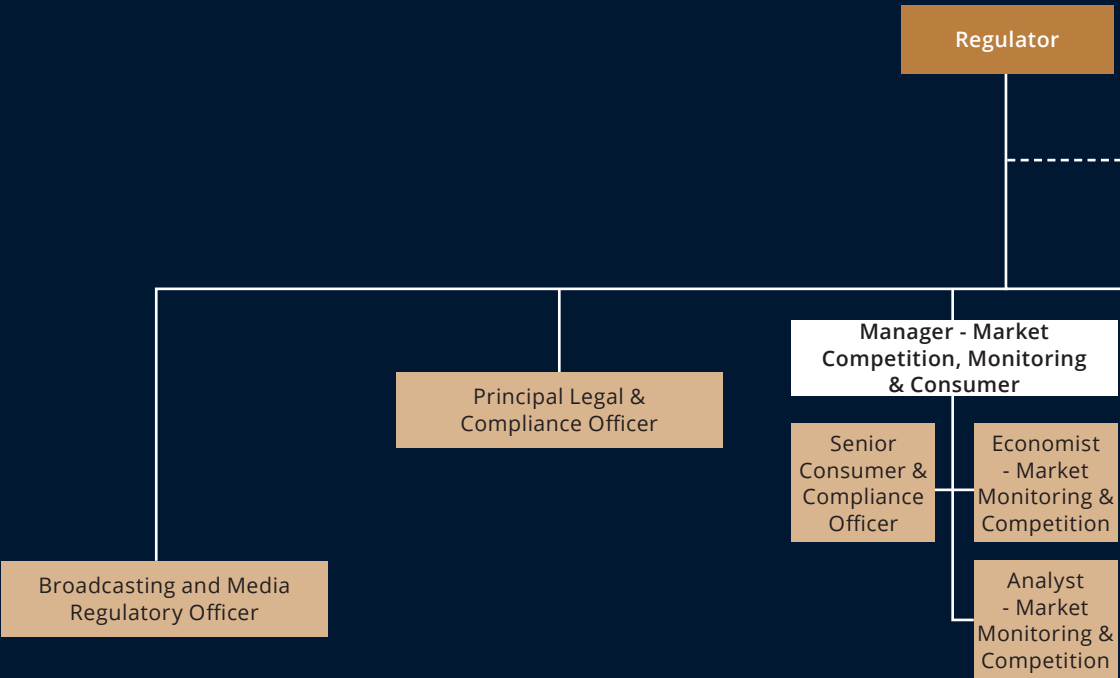
Commitment Our drive and determination to achieve excellence, our discipline in the execution of our duties, our focus on the development of our team, and our sense of responsibility instill passion for the development of Vanuatu.

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.

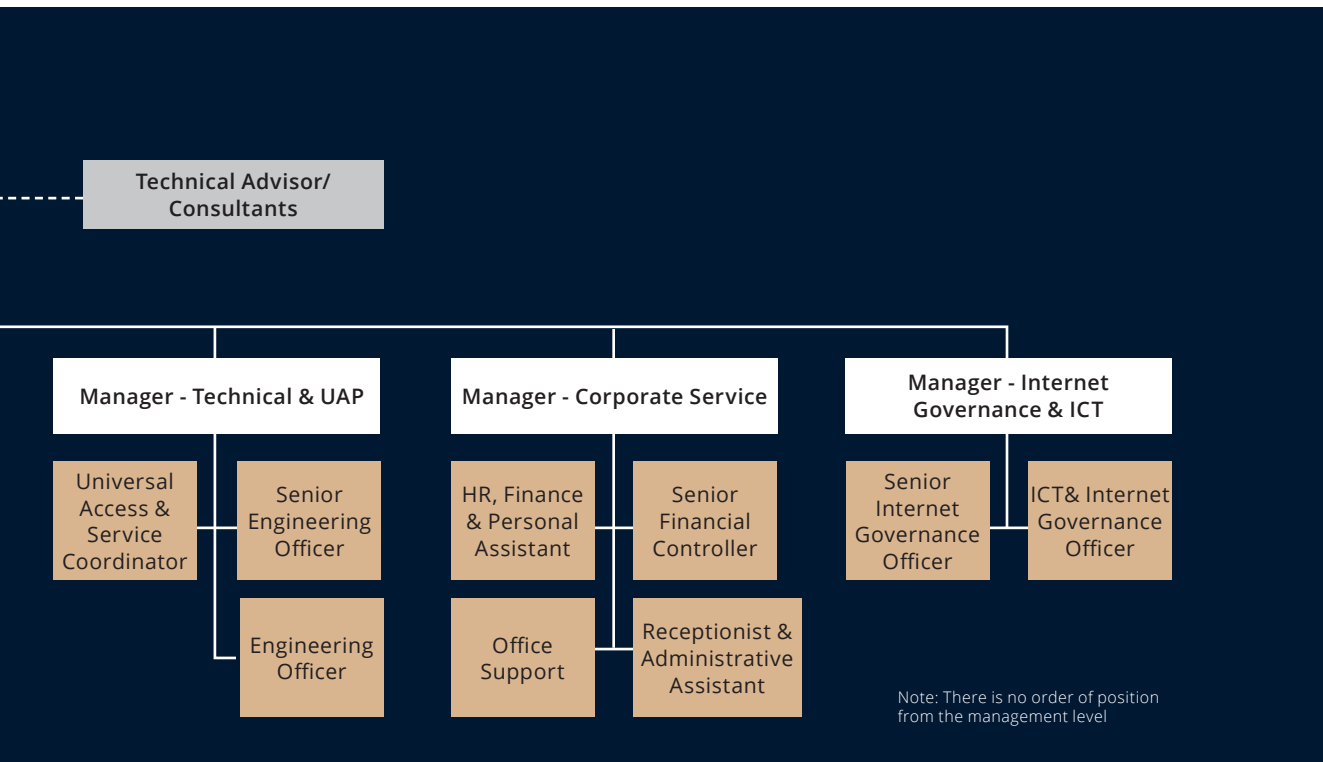
2.4 Our Team and Organization's Structure



Building on from 2019 the TRBR team norms and pledges, there are no changes made for this year, 2020.

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:

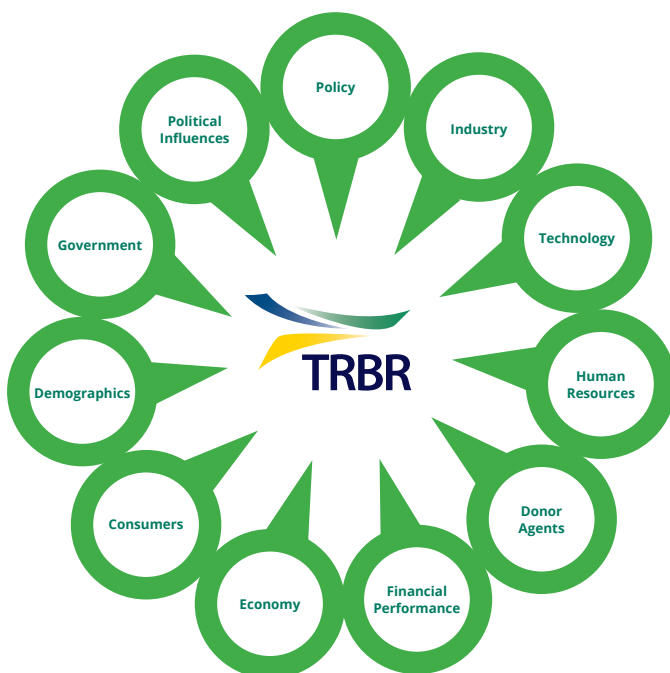
- 1. Be considerate and trust each other;
- 2. Be a committed and active team player;
- 3. Support our Leaders and each other in achieving outcomes;
- 4. Be loyal and respectful; and
- 5. Have open, honest dialogue.

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

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

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

The 2019–2021 Plan continues to serve as a high-level tool for executive direction and a fair and transparent blueprint of the TRBR's planning and achievement agenda for the three years ending 2021. 2020 and onward work plan was developed in conjunction with the Strategic Plan.



The Strategic Plan can be accessed on the TRBR website via the following link: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/770/trbr_strategic_plan_2019_2021.pdf.

2.6 TRBR's 2020 and Onwards Work Plan and Priority Deliverables

The TRBR has been developing its annual work plan since its establishment. The 2020 and Onwards Work Plan can be viewed on the TRBR's website (www.trbr.vu). It guides and sets out the TRBR's priority deliverables and work focus for the year 2020. The TRBR had 29 priority project and 56 other lesser priorities but important projects for 2020.

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

2.7 Training and Capacity Building

Team Building and skills development was one of the key foci of the TRBR.

In 2020 the COVID -19 Pandemic brought about opportunity for in-country face-to-face training as well as online training.

The 2020 TRBR Retreat and staff capacity building was held on Moso Island from 10-11 December 2020. The TRBR staff were hosted by “The Moso Resort,” for two days to review its 2020 Business Plan and to draft its 2021 and Onwards Business Plan. The Retreat was also an opportunity to capacity build the staff of the TRBR in recognising their roles towards achieving the National Sustainable goals, and further, to build their knowledge on international requirements expected from the TRBR. Each Section of TRBR was briefed by the Regulator on their roles in relation to the Act of the TRBR. The outcome of the meeting was the 2021 and Onwards Business Plan for approval by the Regulator.

The online training courses attended by the TRBR staff in 2020 included;

- “Security and QoS in Internet Network”, 13–20 April 2020, which was organized within the framework of ITU Centre of Excellence Network for Europe, and was delivered through the ITU Academy. This course contents were relevant for managers, engineers and employees from regulators, government organisations, telecommunication companies and academia, who are interested in understanding, implementation and regulation of Security and QoS in Internet Network, including technologies, standardization, regulation and content.

TRBR staff at the
Retreat at
The Moso Resort



- “Human Exposure to Radio Frequency Electromagnetic Fields” was held online organized jointly by the ITU Academy and the ITU and the Wireless Communication Centre, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia on 23 November-6 December 2020, as part of the Wireless and Fixed Broadband programme under the auspices of the ITU Centres of Excellence for Asia-Pacific. The course aims to equip participants with an understanding of the effect of radio frequency electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure to humans and its relation to body tissue dielectric parameters and frequency.

TRBR staff also benefited from overseas training before the borders were closed, including the 47th Public Utility Research Center (PURC) training at the University of Florida, an international training program organized by Purc in collaboration with the World Bank on Utility Regulation and Strategy from January 13-24, 2020.



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 the TRBR to apply regulation(s) appropriately.



3

Relations with the Government of Australia (GfG Program)

The Government of Australia, through its 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.

The 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 the TRBR being recognized as a regional benchmark Regulator in the region.

The TRBR recognizes GfG's support and the confidence it has in TRBR for the administration of the Grant that has been provided, as such, the 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 with Government Ministries and Departments

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

Since the TRBR is an effective and competent Regulatory body with empirical evidence to back up that view, the ongoing independence of the 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 the TRBR staff, the 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 External Trade and Ministry of Internal Affairs to provide advice and guidance on regulatory and policy issues.

Throughout the year 2020, the TRBR actively participated in the National Trade Development Committee (NTDC) meetings held each quarter organized by the responsible Ministry. The core objective of the TRBR's attendance at these meetings is to provide appropriate advice and updates in respect of the telecommunication sector and the implementation of the Government UAP Policy.

The TRBR continued to collaborate with Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) and the OGCIO in respect to the 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 the TRBR and OGCIO to support the implementation of the Government's UAP.

The implementation period of the Government's UAP has now been extended to the 1st January 2022 through COM Decision 291 of 2019. The TRBR has continued to work in collaboration

with the OGCI and other government departments to reach out to the communities with various projects to address network coverage challenges to those areas not covered by the initial UAP implementation program.

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 the rural areas. Although these Pilot programs ended in December 2017, the TRBR has continued to provide monitoring on the CLICC and TFS facilities. In 2020, the TRBR conducted an audit program to do an

inventory of the sites, in order to restore sites that have been out of service due to technical and managerial issues, following an initial audit done in 2019 funded by GFG. The expectation is for the TRBR to provide more assistance and support to these sites with the financial assistance from the Australian Government's GfG Program in 2020 and 2021.

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.

4.2 Relations with Government Agencies

In 2020, the TRBR has been working very closely with the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu under an MOU signed between the two Government Regulatory entities. With the collaborative efforts under this MOU, various milestones have been achieved including the issue of the non-objection letters for TVL Mobile Wallet and Digicel My Cash in February 2020.

The TRBR has on 22nd July 2020 also signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Vanuatu Financial Services Commission (VFSC) for the exchange of information.

The signing of the MOA was between the TRBR Regulator, Brian Winji Molitaviti and the Commissioner of VFSC, Branan Karae, and witnessed by legal officers of the two institutions and the management team of the TRBR.

Regulator Molitaviti and VFSC Commissioner Karae, both shared common understanding for these two entities to collaborate with mutual interest to exchange information not only to facilitate good governance, but also to ensure that regulatory compliance is enforced to unlock business opportunities and to protect Vanuatu's national integrity when dealing with existing companies or new investors.

The MOA outlines clearly that the use of any information exchanged between the Parties is restricted for the purposes relevant to monitoring, investigation, and ensuring compliance from existing companies or new investors under the laws administrated by the Parties.

The said MOA is based on mutual respect, in a spirit of goodwill and does not affect the independence of these two statutory bodies as stipulated in their respective legislations.





Regulations, Rules, Orders, Decisions & Litigations

5.1 General Rules and Regulations

Each year a variety of regulatory and legal activities are carried out 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 they are fit for purpose.

This year 2020, has been one of the most challenging years that the Telecom and Broadcasting Industry and other industries have experienced, as the Country faces economic downturn from the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic, Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Harold and the ashfall on Tanna, resulting in a State of Emergency (SOE) being declared by the Government of the Republic on Vanuatu. As the SOE declaration came into effect the Office of the TRBR had to ensure that the Telecommunications and Broadcasting operators continue to comply with legislations as well.

As such, the following Decisions were made in 2020 including, the decision for the Exemption on the Spectrum Licence Fees and the Decision on the Type Approval Certificate Fee. Additionally, an Order 73 of 2020 was gazetted, for the Supply of Data on International Broadcast Channels, and amendment of the TRBR Act continue to progress to transfer all Broadcasting Regulatory roles from VBTC to the TRBR following COM Decisions 184 of 2019 and 164 of 2020.

5.2 Material Litigation

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

This is a long-standing Civil Claim that has been ongoing since the walk off from former TRR (now-TRBR) staff in 2015. These claims were filed as a joint claim in 2015 and in 2018 the court dismissed the claims so that they would if they wish to file their claims individually. The claims have been filed individually as per the Court Rules. However, both Counsels agreed that the matter will be heard as a Class Action since the claims are similar in nature.

The claims were dismissed again, however, the Claimants appealed out of time as they had changed their legal Counsel, and in the last Court of Appeal session in 2020 the Court accepted the Application to appeal out of time allowing the appellants the opportunity to appeal the decision of the Supreme Court Decision. The Court of Appeal heard the appeal, and their appeal has been referred to the Supreme Court for hearing.

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

The TRBR Office received a Notice from the Court that the matter has been adjourned for taxation on the 18th February 2020, following the Court ruling for the defendant to meet the cost for the claimant. Through the SLO, acting on behalf of the defendant, the Office has been compensated in this matter accordingly, and the matter finally came to a close in the first Quarter of 2020.

5.3 Review of the Amended TRBR Legislation

The TRBR has worked in collaboration with the OGCI to ensure that the amendment to the TRBR Act complied with the procedures that the State Law has sent out to different institutions. Following COM Decision 184 of 2019 and COM Decision 164 of 2020, the amendment was to include the transfer of the broadcasting regulatory role from VBTC to TRBR and to ensure that the content that are being broadcasted by the broadcasters comply with the laws of Vanuatu.

The Amendment was also inclusive of consumer protection and competition, and catered for the provisions of any future Broadcasting and Media Regulatory Framework and UAP in the broadcasting sector.

5.4 Type Approval and Conformity to Technical Standards

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, the TRBR informed importers of its requirements, and as part of its implementation, the Office of the TRBR has made a decision on 29th September 2020 in regard to the Type Approval Fee, published as "Decision 01 of 2020 - On the Type Approval Certification and Import Permit application processing fees, of the Republic of Vanuatu", and this is to ensure that proper validation procedures are carried out in the importation or sale of devices in Vanuatu.

Type approval is a process by which Information, and ICT equipment and devices, such as Radiocommunications and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment (RTTE), are authorized for sale and use in a country. It involves verification of the equipment specifications against the applicable international standards and requirements to ensure that the ICT equipment or RTTE will not cause any interference, or long or short-term damage to the radio and telco networks, the environment and the consumers in Vanuatu.

Decision 1 of 2020 can be accessed from https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/812/decision_01_of_2020_on_the_type_approval_certification_and_import_permit_application_processing_fees_for_the_republic_of_vanuatu.pdf.

5.5 Review of the Radio Spectrum Fees for the Republic of Vanuatu

The TRBR, has reviewed Decision 01 of 2016 on Radio Spectrum fees and the High Value Spectrum band for the International Mobile Telephony (IMT) applications for the Republic of Vanuatu, and released as "Decision 02 of 2020, Decision on the Review of Decision 01 of 2016 Radio Spectrum Fees for the Republic of Vanuatu". The objective of the review was to:

- fulfil the requirements to review Decision 01 of 2016 fees schedule in 2018, which was delayed till this year 2020;
- capture the full range of high value spectrum bands that was not captured in the Decision 01 of 2016; and
- adopt additional spectrum for IMT application from the resolution of the World Radiocommunication Conference of 2015 (WRC-15), that have not been included in the Decision 01 of 2016.

The TRBR also in this Decision released frequency band in the 800 MHz range for IMT applications due to increasing demand for use to increase mobile coverage. Decision 02 of 2020 can be accessed from: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/807/decision_02_of_2020_on_radio_spectrum_fees.pdf.

5.6 Review of the Prescribed Radio Apparatus License Fees

The TRBR has completed its review of the Decision 02 of 2014 and Decision 01 of 2015 on the prescribed fees for radio apparatus licences and released it as "Decision 03 of 2020-Amendment to Decision 02 of 2014 and Decision 01 of 2015 on the prescribed radio apparatus license fees." The objectives of the review were to consider:

- the changes as per the Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulation Act No. 30 of 2009 as amended by Amendment 22 of 2018 (the Act);
- a fair fee schedule as requested by few operators and licensees; and
- different categories of radio apparatus devices.

Decision 03 of 2020 can be accessed from https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/816/decision_03_of_2020.pdf.

5.7 Universal Access Implementation Guideline

The Universal Access Guideline published as “Guideline on Universal Access” on 21st October 2020, relates to the administration of the UAP implementation program by the Regulator and the staff of the TRBR in accordance with the TRBR Act as amended by Amendment No. 22 of 2018.

The Guideline has been prepared and published to provide fuller context and information for stakeholders in the Universal Access Program, and to enable them to better understand the approach that the Regulator is taking on the implementation of the UAP programs.

In particular, the Guideline seeks to provide some administrative rigor for the better management of UAP issues, and to ensure that the Universal Access Program continues to effectively and efficiently achieve its primary purpose of providing modern, affordable and sustainable telecommunications services, particularly to areas and communities that are unserved or underserved or which have high service costs and demand below levels that would justify investment on commercial grounds. The Guideline can be accessed from https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/821/guideline_on_universal_access.pdf.

5.8 Consumer Protection Regulation for Broadcasting & Media

The TRBR continues to progress its consultations with the key stakeholders (the Government and the telecommunications, broadcasting, and media industry), and has stepped up its consumer education and awareness programs promoting consumer protection in integrated telecommunications/ICT and broadcasting and media services. The TRBR during the 2020 celebrations of Vanuatu’s Consumer Rights Day celebration in Luganville, coordinated 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 the TRBR’S commitment to consider appropriate regulatory approaches to facilitate consumer protection in any broadcasting and media services offered in Vanuatu market.

As technology continues to evolve rapidly, it is important that we find a common ground on how to protect consumers who access broadcasting and media services. Furthermore, with the increasing use of the OTT services and broadcasting of on-line content, it is important that an appropriate means to ensure that consumers are accessing appropriate contents and are safe online. As such, the TRBR has started working on a Broadcasting Regulatory Roadmap of Vanuatu in collaboration with the ITU in consultation with the industry and the civil society, and also on a Broadcasting Code of Conduct for Vanuatu.



6

Market and Competition Activities

6.1 Sector Overview and Development

Competition remains vibrant and service providers continue to offer innovative products with affordable prices to stimulate the demand and uptake of telecommunications services. The Providers also realized the importance of being competitive to gain higher market share by subscription. Furthermore, the continuous competition forces the existing service providers to upgrade their technology to gather for growing demand. As a result, mobile network providers upgraded most of their sites from 3G to 4G.

In 2020, the entire industry has witnessed the drastic impact of COVID 19 in which businesses must navigate their financial and operational challenges while rapidly addressing the needs of their customers and suppliers. In April 2020 one of the internet service providers, TELSAT BROADBAND LIMITED that was in the market for 6 years decided to sell its business ownership to another competing ISP, WANTOK Network LIMITED. A few Licensees had their licenses revoked as well by the Regulator following their non-compliance to regulatory requirements.

Despite the global pandemic challenge, the demand and the conduciveness of the business environment continued to attract new investors as people saw the potential opportunity to venture into the telecommunication market in Vanuatu. This year, the TRBR successfully granted licenses to 4 new entrants including Kacific Broadband Satellites, 3 LINK, VCOMM, and AELAN INTERNET.

ICT and Telecommunication continue to improve the reduction of financial exclusion to the remote part of the country through mobile technology. This year the country has witnessed introduction of MY CASH launch by Digicel Vanuatu and Mobile Money by Vodafone. These innovations intend to help people to do business remotely and online while borders are still closed, and movements are restricted.

6.2 Telecommunications Licensee -2020

In 2020, there were three active telecommunications wholesale licensees, and one was revoked. On the retail, 8 active licenses and two were revoked.

License Category	License Name	Status	Type Of Telecommunication Service Offered
Wholesale (upstream)	INTERCHANGE LIMITED (ICL)	ACTIVE	Internet Capacity
	FERTILITY CORP COMMUNICATION (FCC)	ACTIVE	Internet Capacity
	SPEEDCAST	REVOKED	Internet Capacity
	KACIFIC	ACTIVE	Internet Capacity
Retail (downstream)	PACIFIC GROUP LIMITED	REVOKED	Internet
	VODAFONE VANUATU	ACTIVE	Internet and Mobile
	DIGICEL VANUATU	ACTIVE	Internet and Mobile
	WANTOK LIMITED	ACTIVE	Internet and VOIP
	SPIM LIMITED	ACTIVE	Internet
	TELSAT BROADBAND LIMITED	REVOKED	Internet
	PACIFIC LINK LIMITED	ACTIVE	Internet
	3-LINK	ACTIVE	Internet
	AELAN INTERNET	ACTIVE	Internet
	VCOMM LIMITED	ACTIVE	Internet / international transit / data center

List of Telecommunications Licensees in 2020

6.3 Participation in the National Trade Development Committee Meetings

The TRBR continued to show its full support and commitment to participate in the national trade development committee meeting held quarterly each year. As far as trade development is concerned, ICT and Telecommunications perform a vital role as a tool to facilitate trading service and “fast track” the economy.

The TRBR's participation as a member to this committee is to provide advice on issues and matters related to telecommunication sector, and also to provide updates on the Government UAP implementation, and the status of digital connectivity in the country.



Photo credit. Trade development division ministry of trade

6.4 Telecommunications Market Statistics, Trend Monitoring and Development



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

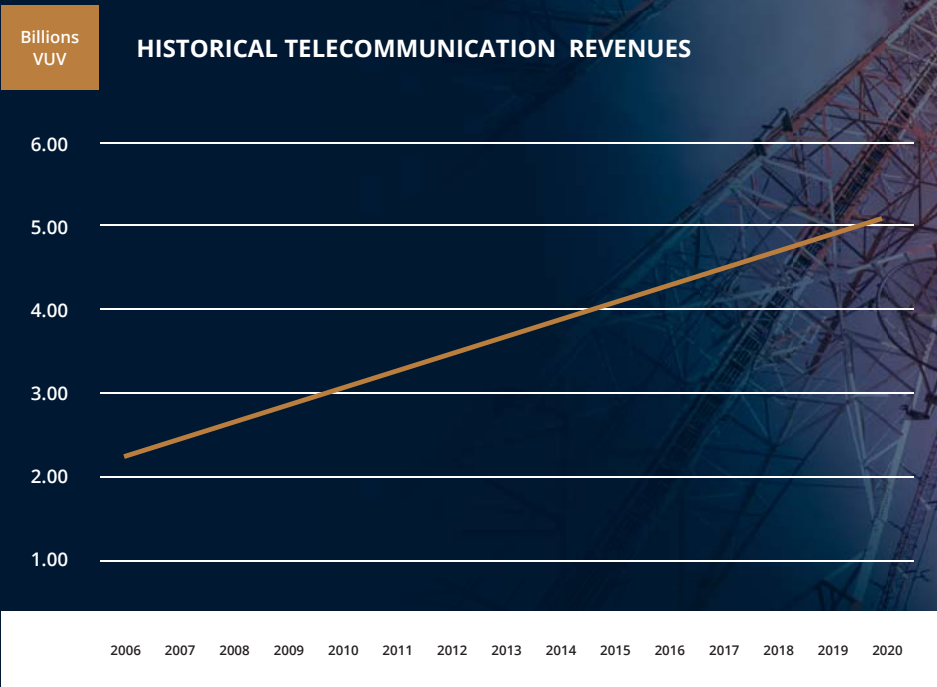
2020 was a very challenging year for the Vanuatu's telecommunications sector as the emergence of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impact of TC Harold caused a lot of disruption to telecom businesses and consumer experiences. The substantial damage by TC Harold has forced a decline of total mobile subscriptions and device ownerships especially in the northern islands.

Nevertheless, the telecommunications market continued to experience strong uptake of internet access and data usage as demand for connectivity accelerated during the COVID19 pandemic.

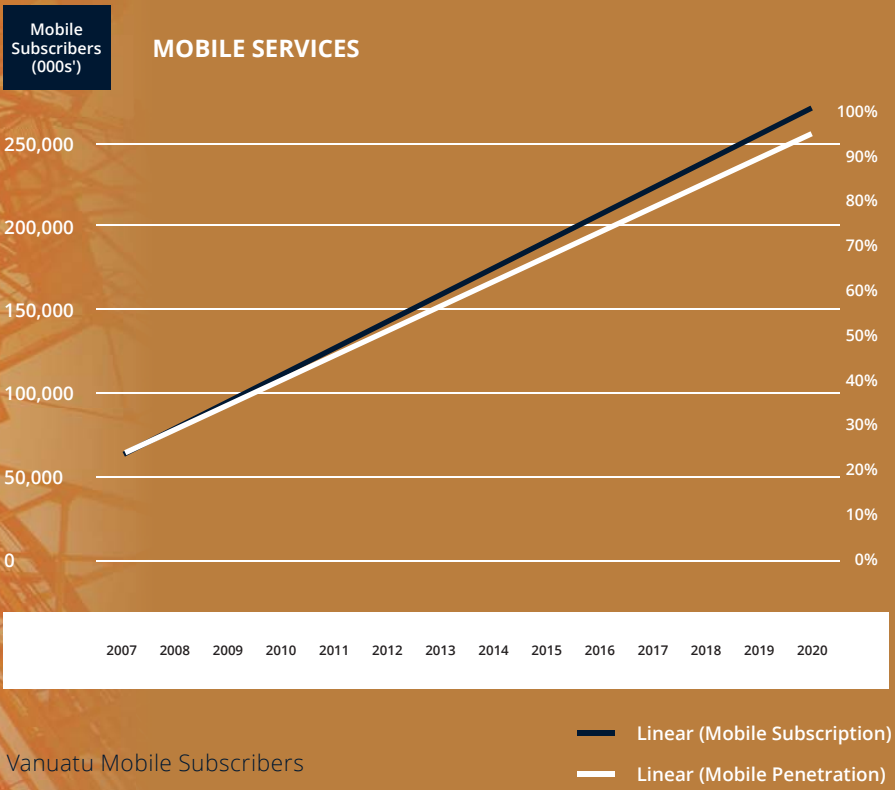
Furthermore, the entry of Kacific Broadband Satellites and the continuous capacity utilization of Interchange Cable Network (ICN1) was also a very important contributor to boosting internet access and capacity uptake over both mobile and fixed networks. The short-run recovery of TC Harold and social distancing requirements followed by continuous investment and deployment of 4G and 4G+ mobile technology again triggered a huge explosion of data downloads which was evident through the uptake of large affordable plans offered in the market.

6.4.1 Telecommunications Gross Revenues

Provisional data analyzed by the TRBR indicated that telecommunications market was impacted by COVID-19 and TC Harold, with revenues dipping off by 2% in 2020. Although the total market revenue experienced a downward trend, the market outlook remains positive as telecommunications companies have benefited from a flow in traffic of data, as a result the sector still maintaining and performing well compared to another sub-sector. Some companies are strengthened by the short-term spike in data traffic and increase in the use of broadband services as more people are working, studying, or teaching from home. Traffic growth in fact demonstrated increased reliance on connectivity and digital services.



Gross revenue collected from 2006-2020

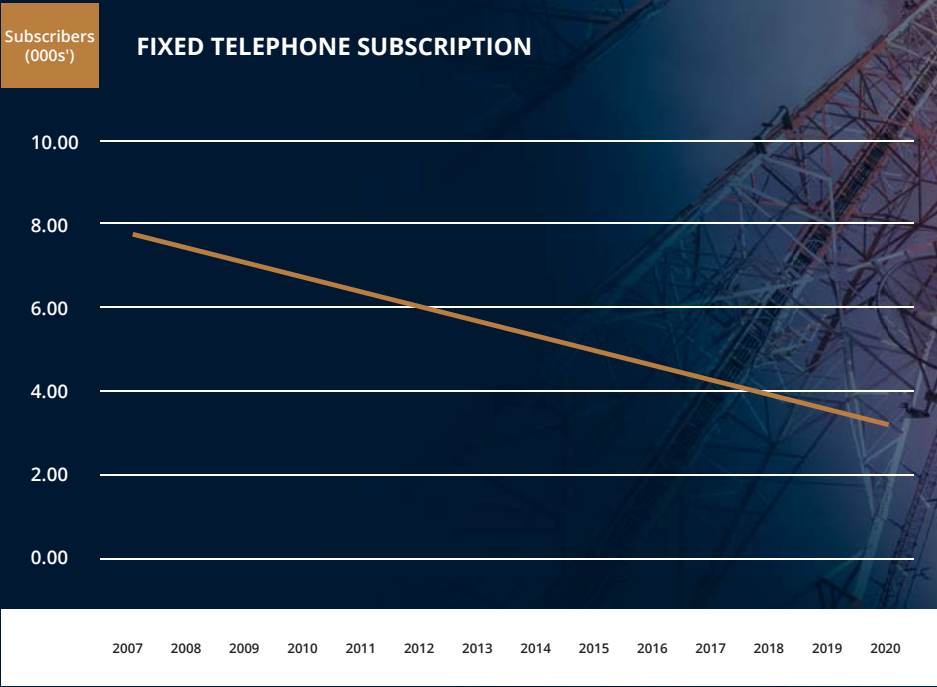


6.4.2 Mobile Subscribers

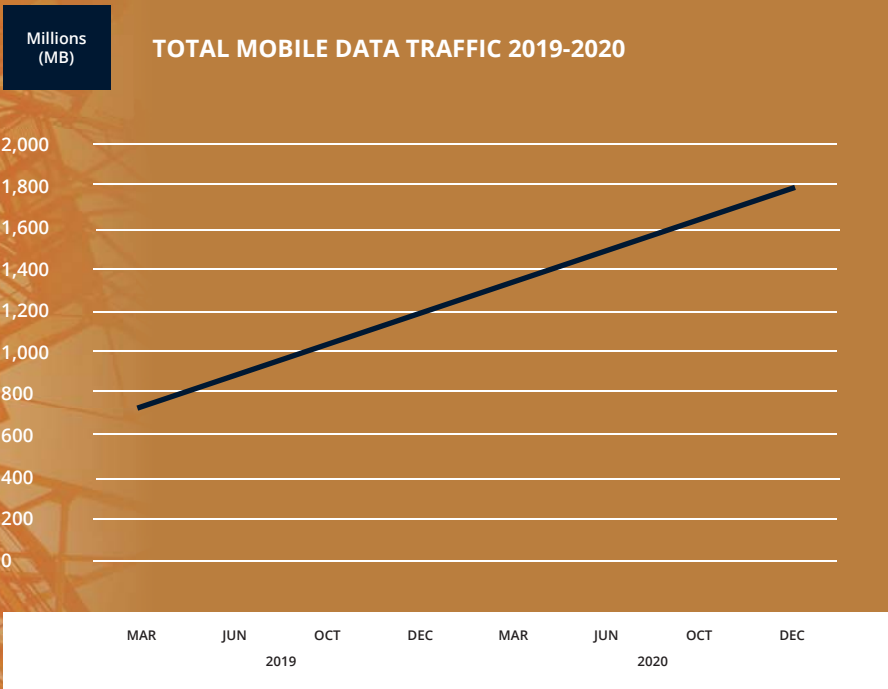
The destructive impact of TC Harold in Northern Islands of Vanuatu caused a significant dropped in the growth of mobile subscribers by 7% in 2020. The damage to homes and telecommunications infrastructure left a lot of people without cell phones and most of the areas continued to experience poor to no mobile services. Consequently, this led to the downward trend of mobile penetration in Vanuatu. Data shows that mobile penetration fell by 9% recording a new penetration rate of only 84% in 2020. The COVID-19 situation was also a challenging factor that contributed to the drop in mobile subscribers as consumers such as those in the service sectors became jobless or earning a very low income, unable to continue to afford the use of mobile services.

6.4.3 Fixed Telephony

The Vanuatu fixed telephony market continued to experience a downward trend. The graph above revealed a further drop in the fixed telephony subscription by 9% recording only less than 3,500 subscribers in 2020. This drop in the number of subscribers led to the decline in fixed telephony revenue by 19% in the same year. The important factor causing this on-going decline is the increasing demand for mobile services and more and more people are adopting alternative means of communications such as OTT services. Many businesses, corporate and Government departments are switching slowly to IP (VoIP) for their voice and data traffic rather than using traditional telephone systems which require lines and customers expending more than these VoIP services. However, with the existing demand of fixed telephone in the market, service providers are becoming more innovative in offering more attractive services bundled with other services to ensure revenue is generated.



Fixed Line Subscription



Mobile Data Traffic download in 2019-2020

6.4.4 Mobile Data Traffic in the last Twelve months

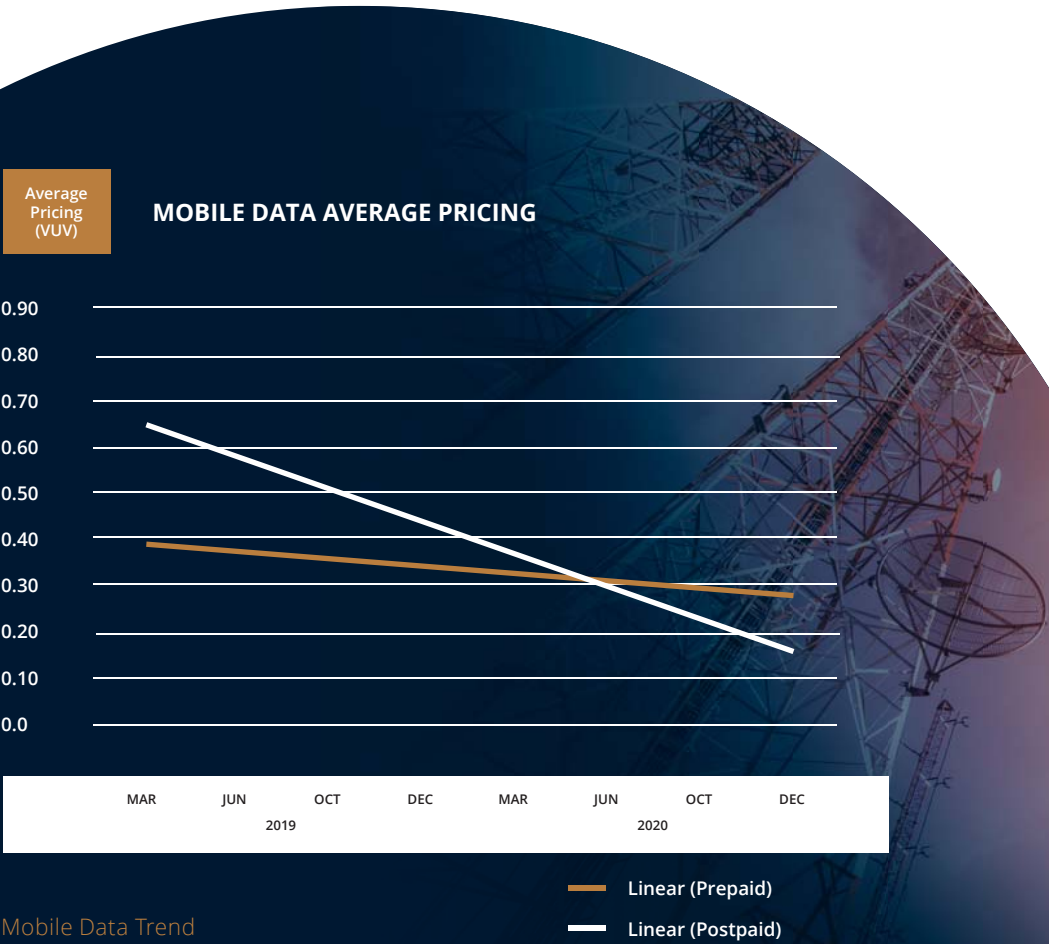
Mobile data usage continues to dominate the market as data downloads has experienced another huge explosive growth as illustrated in the graph above. Data analysed by the TRBR confirms that total annual download increased by 66% recording a download volume of over 6.4 billion megabytes in 2020 compared to 3.8 billion megabytes in 2019. The increase in data usage stimulated mobile operator’s data revenue to increase by 20% in the same year.

The robust growth in the use of smartphones, boosted by the rapid adoption of 4G, has stimulated increasing demand of data-intensive content such as social media platforms and video-rich applications such as Netflix, YouTube and more, which have high data consumption has driven traffic boomed experienced in 2020. Furthermore, the reliance of consumers on the mobile networks to stay connected as well as working or studying from home during COVID-19 followed by low prices of mobile broadband packages in the market, affordable smartphones and increased time spent by people online also contributed to the huge growth of mobile data traffic recorded for Vanuatu in 2020.

6.4.5 Mobile Data Average Pricing

The COVID-19 situation forced mobile operators to rethink and change their business models to becoming more creative and innovative in their operations. In addressing this situation, both mobile operators (Digicel & Vodafone) have shifted focus to operate as Digital operators. Since then, these operators have added huge value in terms of data allowance to their current data plans and continue to release new promotional offers and plans at affordable prices that stimulated increase in the data usage. The pricing of data bundle for both prepaid and post-packages has continued to fall with annual average prepaid bundle price recording a lower price of 0.30VT/MB while post-paid average annual price experienced a 48% dropped hitting 0.26VT/MB in 2020.

The statistics illustrated in the graph shows a continuous declining trend of the average mobile data pricing which has been triggered by the rapid growth of mobile data downloads and revenue due to increasing demand of data usage. Though post-paid average pricing per MB has now gone below prepaid average price, both prepaid and post-paid average price remain well below 0.4VT/MB in quarter 4 of 2020.



Engineering and Technical Compliance

7.1 National Numbering Management Plan and Procedures

Building on from the work undertaken in the previous years on the national numbering activities, the Office of the TRBR continued 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, the 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.

The 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 No. 22 of 2018, more allocation of numbers blocks to the operators specifically the mobile operators,

and new definitions that needed to be added into the NNPP. The Office of the TRBR also received requests from licensed Operators for the introduction of number ranges for new services and technologies. Therefore, further research and consultation is required, before considering these changes in the NNPP. The TRBR conducted an internal review in 2020, and observed that the NNPP is required to be updated to cater for the following:

- (a) create capacity in the NNPP to facilitate introduction of new number range for VOIP services;
- (b) study the use of International Premium rate numbers;
- (c) harmonize the Short Codes and emergency number requirements and specifications with ITU
- (d) re-structuring of the NNPP;
- (e) Update the numbering table in relation to the recent number allocation to both operator; and;
- (f) Introduce numbering administrative fees for Vanuatu.

7.2 New Number Range Allocation in 2020

In 2020, the TRBR received several applications for number allocation of which several were not successful. This included the request for international premium rate numbers, voice over IP (VoIP) numbers, value added service (vas) numbers and short codes which were for emergency services and/or Government and NGO information services.

The following numbers were issued to our clients in 2020;

	Number	Client	Category
1	119	Ministry of Health-COVID-19	Life and safety
2	160	Ministry of Education	Government and NGO Public information service
3	161	Ministry of Justice-Domestic Violence	Government and NGO Public information service
4	9100000-9119999	VCOMM	VoIP

7.3 Radio Spectrum Management

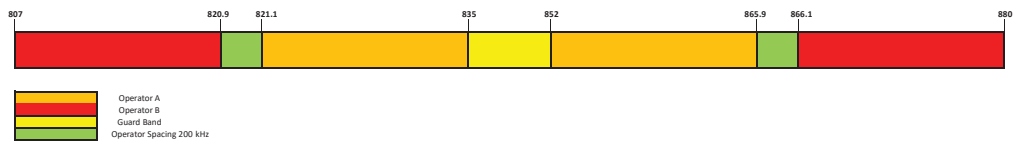
7.3.1 General

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, the 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.

In ensuring that adequate bandwidth is available for network development, the TRBR reviewed the Decision 01 of 2016 Radio Spectrum fees for the Republic of Vanuatu and made amendment to that decision with the updated Decision 02 of 2020, considering the extension of the 900MHz using Band 28, and also the introduction of fees for Band 2, Band 38, band 43 and Band 52 that are now made available to the operators for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) services. The TRBR believes that the implementation and utilization of this additional spectrum range, in consultation with the telecommunication operators and the government, will promote more expansion of mobile coverage in the rural areas.

7.3.2 800Mhz band plan

The Office of the TRBR has been approached by the operators for additional IMT spectrum, to support expansion of mobile network as most of the lower mobile spectrum bands allocated for IMT in Vanuatu are now exhausted. As such, the TRBR have investigated Band 28, and allocated the extended spectrum (800MHz) for IMT applications using FDD planning in Decision 02 of 2020. The standard operator spacing of 200KHz will be observed by the operators when deploying the spectrum.



7.3.3 Spectrum Monitoring and Interference Resolution

During the year 2020, the TRBR investigated, identified and resolved occurrences of interference, and most of which were amicably resolved by the parties involved. The TRBR investigated FM radio's interference issues with LED advertisement boards (screens) around Port Vila, GSM boosters on the 900 MHz, and Intermodulation of signals on the 900Mhz IMT band. All were 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. The TRBR will closely work with the operators and other suppliers for the radio operators to ensure there is minimal occurrences of radio interference.



7.4 Radio Spectrum and Radio Apparatus Licensing

7.4.1 Spectrum License Fees for the 700 MHz

The 700 MHz spectrum is a very unique spectrum that is widely used around the world due to its unique penetration capabilities. Hence, this spectrum is being sold at very expensive rates for those who wish to use it.

The TRBR introduced the 700Mhz via Decision 01 of 2016 on Radio Spectrum fees for the Republic of Vanuatu and in 2020, TRBR has exempted the operators from the 700Mhz spectrum fees until November 2021; an incentive to encourage the roll out of 4G and 4G+ across the country. This spectrum is now being deployed by Digicel and Vodafone in

Santo and Efate and proved to be a very good in terms of penetration.

During the QoS and coverage drive tests done in Q1 of 2020 conducted by TRBR and Midwex, results obtained indicated huge improvement in terms of coverage and quality of service especially in areas where the 700Mhz was deployed. The TRBR will continue to monitor the rollout of the 700 MHz across the country and ensure that operators make good use of the 700Mhz spectrum with 4G and other technologies.

7.4.2 Radio Apparatus Licenses and their obligations

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

In 2020, the TRBR recorded an increase in the number of radio apparatus holders from 615 to 654, and the TRBR will continue to provide awareness and encourage Radio Apparatus holders to apply for radio apparatus licenses.

Land Mobile	81
Amateur	10
Amateur Visitor	0
Marine	83
Fixed Links	410
Aeronautical & Aircraft	39
VSAT	17
Satellite Earth Station	4
Broadcasting	10
Total Radio Apparatus Licenses	654

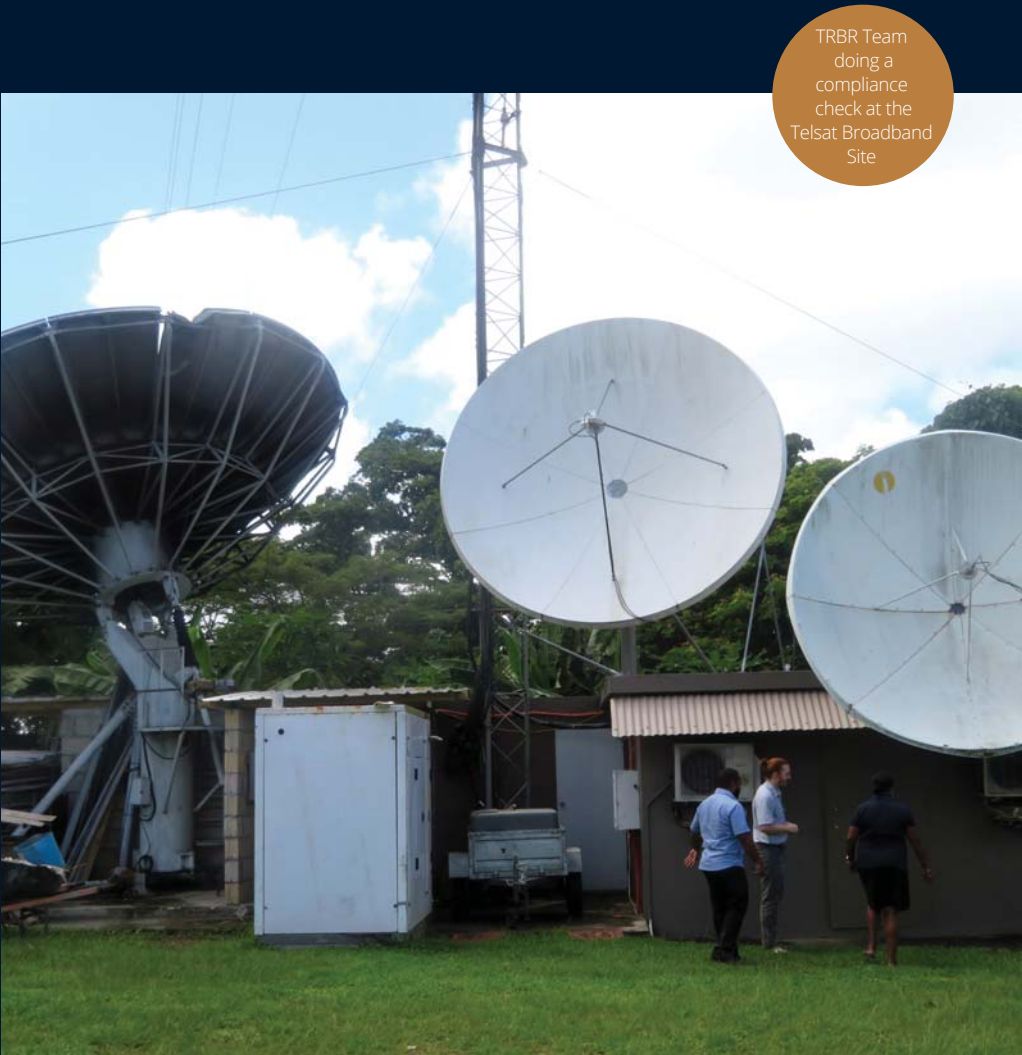
Total Apparatus Licenses issued in 2020

The TRBR also reviewed Decision 02 of 2014 and Decision 01 of 2015 on the prescribed radio apparatus license fees for Vanuatu following the results of feedback from radio apparatus licensees regarding the fee schedule and published the decision on the reviewed fees as Decision 03 of 2020 on 13th October 2020, which is accessible from: https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/816/decision_03_of_2020.pdf.

7.5 Technical Compliance and Enforcement

The TRBR continued to actively monitor and enforce compliance with, and in accordance with its regulatory framework and the Act. In 2020, TRBR continued to collaborate with the Maritime Regulator (OMR) to ensure that maritime license holders operate with valid licenses.

Furthermore, TRBR continued to work closely with the broadcasters, mobile operators, land mobile users, amateurs, Satellite users and aeronautical users to ensure they all have valid licenses to operate any radio stations and/or other apparatus that required a license.



7.6 Type Approval and Conformity Standard Regulation and Decision

The Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Type Approval and Conformity to Technical Standards Regulation was gazetted in 2018. In 2019, the 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, as such, the TRBR established administrative fees for certification under Type Approval Decision 01 of 2020 on the Type Approval Certification and Import Permit application processing fees for Vanuatu for both the Manufacturers and Local importers

Through the Regulation, the TRBR promoted only safe and quality ICT products coming into Vanuatu. The TRBR also worked closely with the 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.

The TRBR team was also actively involved in the media to provide awareness and information to the general public on the importance of type approval compliance and the process for obtaining type approval certification from TRBR.

Since the establishment of the Type Approval Regulation and the compliance mechanisms, the TRBR has received over 400 applications for type approval certifications from both the Manufacturers, suppliers and local importers.

TRBR Team
on a tokback
show with VBTC on
the process and the
importance of Type
Approval certification
in Vanuatu



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

The 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 in Vanuatu.

Furthermore, 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 the 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.

In 2020, the TRBR initiated the QoS and Coverage Audit focusing on the two Mobile Operators and 14 main islands of Vanuatu with over 90% of Vanuatu's population including Efate, Santo, Tanna, Malekula, Pentecost, Ambae, Maewo, Erromango, Paama, Epi, Ambrym, Tongoa, Gaua, and Vanualava. The project was completed by the end of the first quarter of 2020, and it identified the remaining underserved and unserved areas in relation to Mobile broadband and narrowband coverages in Vanuatu. This exercise was carried out using specialized equipment with the help of Midwex, an overseas company specializing in QoS and coverage testing. Benchmark tests were carried out in the 14 most populated islands in Vanuatu, including drive test and stationary test to collect the relevant data. Technical reports were also generated to identify QoS gaps for improvement by respective operators. A report was also created and presented to the Prime Minister and the Government detailing the remaining areas that are required to be addressed, in order to close the digital gap in Vanuatu.

Test Locations for Free Mode Voice and Free Mode Data



Free Mode Voice

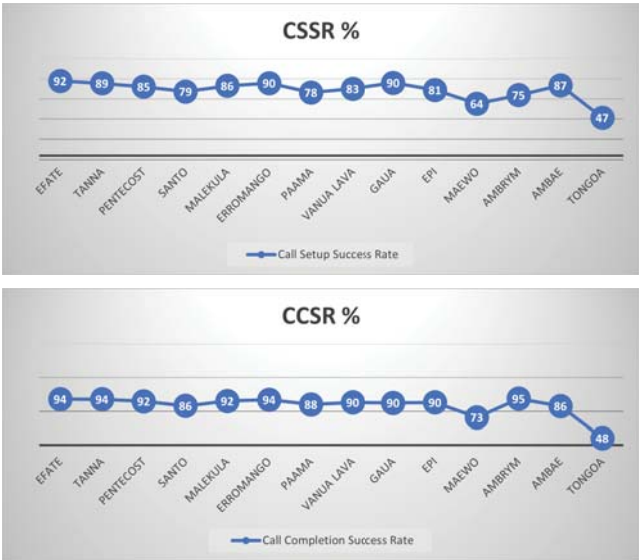


Free Mode Data



7.7.1 Voice Performance

The voice protocol used in the measurement, indicates a rate at which voice communications are successfully established and maintained for the duration of the call. The results from the graph indicated that the call setup success rate and call completion success rate were still low compared to other countries as well as the 98% success rate published by TRBR in the QoS guideline. Improvement in coverage could reduce call drops and call setup unsuccessful rate.

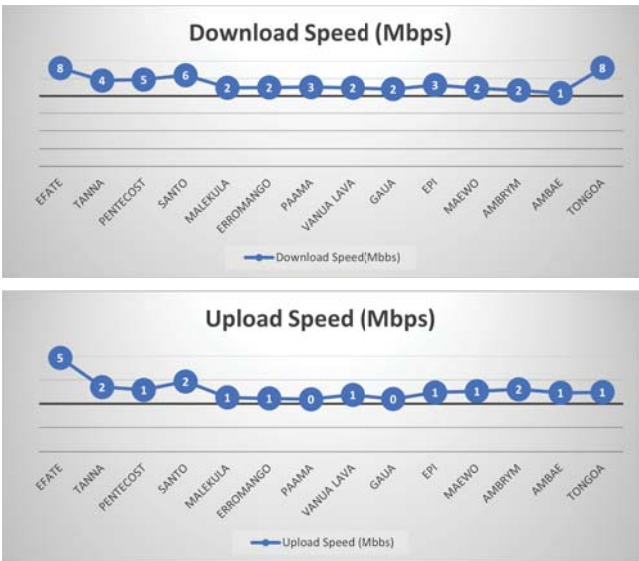


Call Setup success rate and call completion success rate

7.7.2 Data Performance

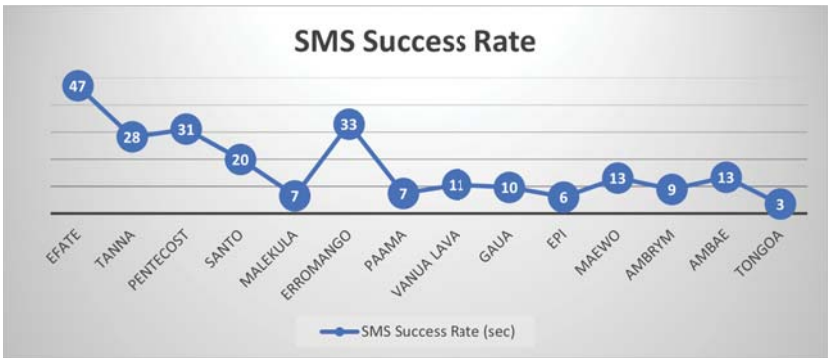
The Download and Upload protocols used in the measurement, correspond to the download and upload speed during a data transfer of 15 MB and 5 MB file respectively with timeout of 150 seconds. This rule is developed from the QoS parameter in the QoS Guideline published by the TRBR, and the measurements were carried out on HTTP server located in India.

During the measurement, the TRBR observed that in most of the islands, the uplink and downlink throughput is very low for both service providers except for few islands. To improve the user experience, better data throughput is required which could be possible by upgrading 3G network to 4G network with 4G enabled services.



Download Speed and Upload Speed

7.7.3 SMS Performance



SMS Success Rate

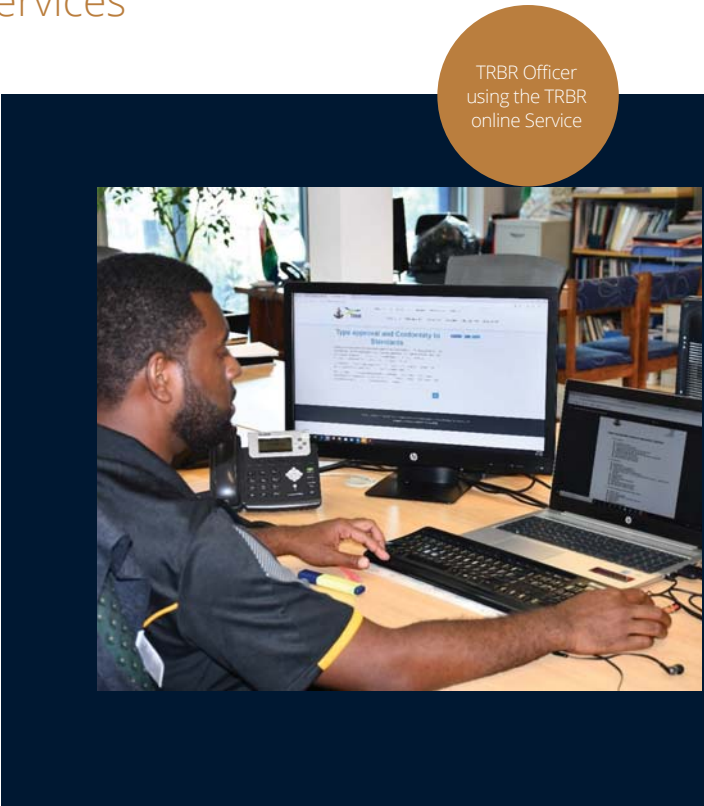
The SMS protocol satisfies the following rule for measurement: the measurement is considered successful if the SMS is sent within 10 seconds. This rule was developed from the QoS parameter in the QoS Guideline published by the TRBR.

From the graph, it appeared that the rate of SMS delivered within 10 seconds was still very low for all islands compared to the approved parameter of 95% success rate.

7.8 TRBR Online Services

The implementation of online services within the technical sector of the TRBR aiming to improve client service through greater flexibility, cost saving, faster delivery of products, increase professionalism and time savings. TRBR in 2020 established.

- the online radio apparatus application forms; and
- the Type Approval payment portal.



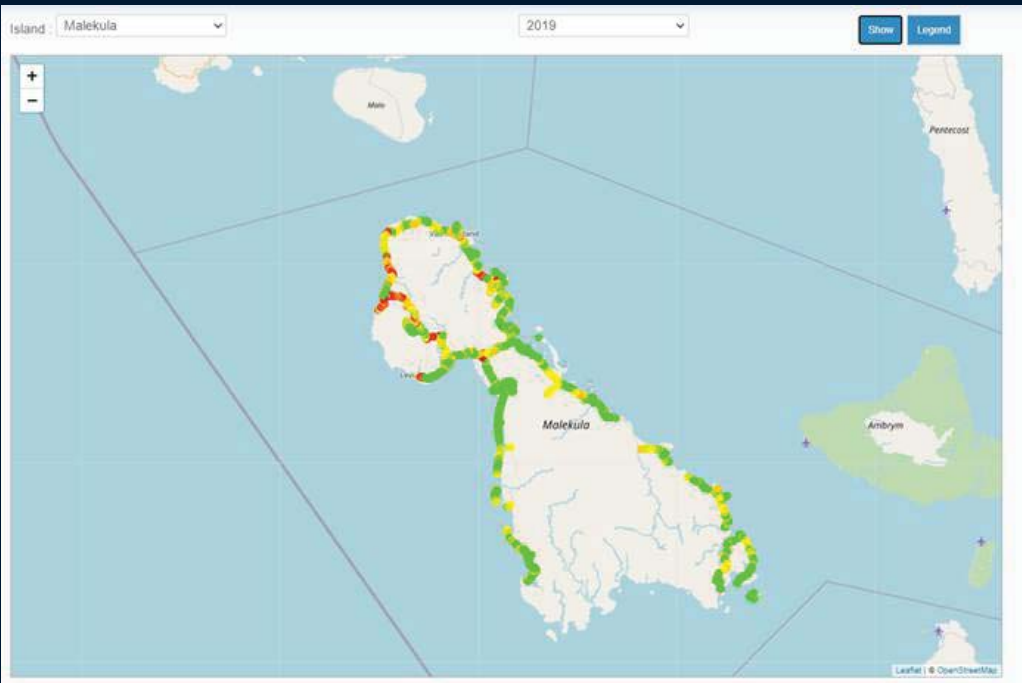
7.9 Mobile Coverage Monitoring in Vanuatu

In 2020 the TRBR published and kept updating an interactive coverage map for some islands of Vanuatu where the TRBR team visited during the coverage verification activities. The TRBR team has been continually engaged in the mobile signal verification activity in some islands of Vanuatu to check the availability of telecommunications services and the Mobile signal strength. The TRBR's aim is to cover as many islands of Vanuatu as possible, and this would be an ongoing activity in order to monitor and advise the consumers on where services are available.

Measurement data was collected for both Mobile Operators (TVL & Digicel) and the results displayed in the TRBR website (<https://www.trbr.vu/en/coverage>) as an aggregate of both operators and is irrespective of the mobile technologies i.e 2G/3G/4G.

The signal data collection is arbitrary, meaning there were no arrangements between the Telecommunications Mobile Operators and the TRBR on when and how to do the test. Therefore, there may be some areas with mobile services available but were not shown on the maps. This may have been due to the sites being turned off by the operator, sites were offline due to network fault, or the coverage had not been improved in those areas before the measurement activity was carried out.

TRBR Interactive tool for checking coverage for your area





8

Implementation of the Universal Access Policy (UAP)

8.1 General

The UAP is a policy developed by the Government of Vanuatu to ensure broadband and narrowband covers at least 98% of the population of Vanuatu. Due to difficult terrains and continuous population displacements due to climate change and natural disasters, maintaining a coverage level at 98% is very difficult. However, the TRBR continued to remain committed to its obligation on the Government UAP and continuously working with the operators to achieve the objectives of the Policy, and the COM approved the extension for the implementation period of the UAP on October 2019, progress has been ongoing toward achieving the UAP Objectives. The TRBR has finalized a list of the underserved and unserved areas and is in consultation with the Telecommunications Operators on the appropriate technology solutions to address coverage in the remaining identified areas.

In its other Programs, the TRBR continued to reach out to the communities with VSAT solutions. These includes maintaining telecommunications services at the areas affected by TC Harold, provision of ICT and Internet facilities through its Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG) and continued monitoring of its existing projects in the schools.

8.2 Government Universal Access Policy Implementation

The implementation of the Government UAP is progressing well, and with the COM Decision 291 of 2019 on the extension on the implementation period of UAP to the 1st of January 2022, the TRBR is working closely with the Telecom Operators and the Communities to ensure coverage are addressed at all locations that are identified as underserved or unserved.

The TRBR has put together a list of the remaining underserved and unserved areas in Vanuatu, and total of 44 areas have been identified and TRBR is working in collaboration with the operators on the appropriate technology and the capital cost to address coverage improvement at those locations.

The TRBR in 2020, established a UAP Working Group with the objective of ensuring that the UAP successfully achieved its objectives. The responsibilities of the UAP working group includes, identifying new UAP sites, discuss projects related to UAP, discuss way forward on the UAP implementation, support the UAP Coordinator in the monitoring of the implementation of the UAP and discuss any related issues and risk and recommend ways to mitigate the risks to the TRBR. The members of the Working Group are from the OGCIO and the Office of the TRBR.

Furthermore, the TRBR has developed a UAP Guideline in consultation with the licensees and the government, and the Guideline relates to the administration of the Universal Access Program and to ensure that the UAP continues to effectively and efficiently achieve its objectives. The Guideline can be accessed from https://www.trbr.vu/attachments/article/821/guideline_on_universal_access.pdf.

8.3 Community Telecommunications Grant (CTG)

The Office of the TRBR continued to reach out to the communities through its CTG program annually. In 2020, two new sites were added to the list, including the VanIGF and Melsisi College on the Island of Pentecost. The support to the VanIGF included upgrading their online reporting and database system. This project will enable VanIGF to collect useful data on the types of online abusive cases in Vanuatu. Furthermore, this data will be shared with the Internet Governance Stakeholders for appropriate action to ensure that the internet remains open, transparent, useful and safe to use and for doing business. The project also supported the field work for awareness on the safe use of internet and capacity building on the use of the reporting system.

For Melsisi College, the CTG supported the College with an internet facility. This was a step up for the teachers and the students in their learning environment, as internet is becoming an important tool for learning in Vanuatu. Erata Community on the Island of Tongariki was also a beneficiary of the Grant in 2019. However, their Project was completed in 2020. Erata Community was supported with an ICT and Internet facility and a Solar Power System. The facility included laptops, a printer, a 72 Inch TV Screen and a satellite VSAT equipment. The facility was also set up with a voucher system to collect funds for the sustainability of its operations.



Erata Community Leaders and TRBR Officers, and Solar System installation for the Internet Facility

8.4 Upgrade of Hiu and Merelava VSAT Equipment

Some remote rural areas of Vanuatu mostly depend on satellite coverage, and the TRBR has been using Kacific International Broadband Satellite (or Kacific) for most of its remote community projects. As of last year 2020, Kacific has announced switching from KU Band to KA Band, as such, some of these sites have been offline. Following these changes, the TRBR stepped in with its financial support in collaboration with the licensees, to reconnect Martin School on the Island of Hiu in the Torres and Tasvare School at Merelava using Ka Band VSAT solution from Kacific.

There are other sites that are currently down and the TRBR will be addressing them in 2021 to ensure they are put online. Those sites include Venie Mataipevu in Santo, Walarano College and Lambubu School in Malekula and Sulua School on the Island of Maewo.



Martin School,
Hiu Island and
Tasvare School-
Merelava

8.5 Addressing Coverage at TC Harold affected Areas

Telecommunications Services was among other services that were disrupted by the devastating impact of TC Harold as a result of the mobile network towers being severely damaged by the Cyclone.

The office of the TRBR and OGCIo have collaborated on providing communications solutions to the villages in the unserved areas, to allow communications with the population on the affected areas while the operators are tirelessly working to restore mobile services.

The Village of Bwatnepne on Pentecost, Atariboe Clinic on South Malo and Kitahu Primary School on East Malo have been provided with VSAT Solution funded by the Office of the TRBR. The Office of the TRBR and the OGCIo in collaboration with the WFP, also delivered another three VSAT solution to Northwest Malekula, Pangl on Pentecost and a Clinic on West Coast Santo. These three VSATs solutions are fully funded by the WFP.



Atariboe
and Kitahu VSAT
stations on Malo

ICT and Internet Governance

The TRBR has a mandatory function to appropriately manage and administer Vanuatu's country code Top Level Domain name, .vu as well as carry out the ICT responsibilities as outlined in the Vanuatu National ICT Policy.

As a requirement under the Vanuatu National ICT Policy, the TRBR has an obligation to implement a free public Wifi on identified areas in order to provide access to Internet users to the citizens of Vanuatu. Although Vanuatu has faced a lot of challenges due to the global pandemic COVID19, the TRBR has developed a Request for Proposal as an initiative to allow the operators to bid for the project. Work on this project is intended to be continued in 2021.

9.1 .vu ccTLD Transition and Development Trend

2020 was an interesting year for the .vu ccTLD as it was the year the .vu ccTLD Registry has been transferred from TVL to Neustar Vanuatu Limited by the office of the TRBR. The process started after the .vu ccTLD Regulation was finalized in 2016, and took over 3 years to complete after much collaboration with TVL (now Vodafone) and Neustar Vanuatu Limited.

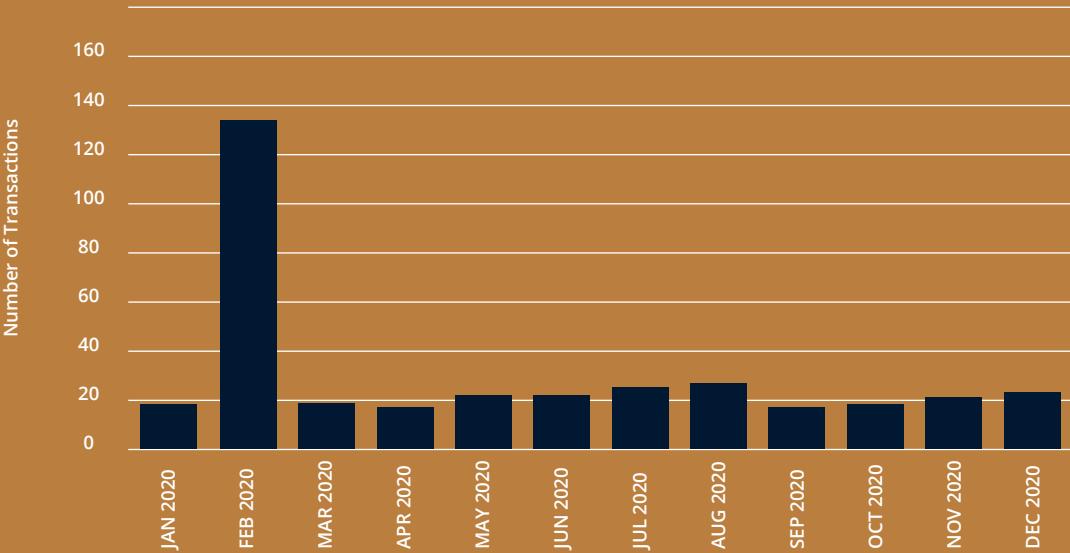
In August 2019, the TRBR appointed Neustar Vanuatu Limited (Neustar) as the new Registry and DNS services provider for the .vu ccTLD and, Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL) to continue as a Registrar for .vu domain names and other new Registrars will be introduced as well to increase competition in the retail market.

Neustar finally took over as the Registry Operator of Vanuatu's .vu ccTLD after all the technical transition from the former Registry to the new Registry was completed in February 2020. The TRBR also accredited a number of Registrars including Local and International Registrars to supply registration services with terms and conditions that are in compliance with the laws of Vanuatu and the .vu Domain Name Regulation.

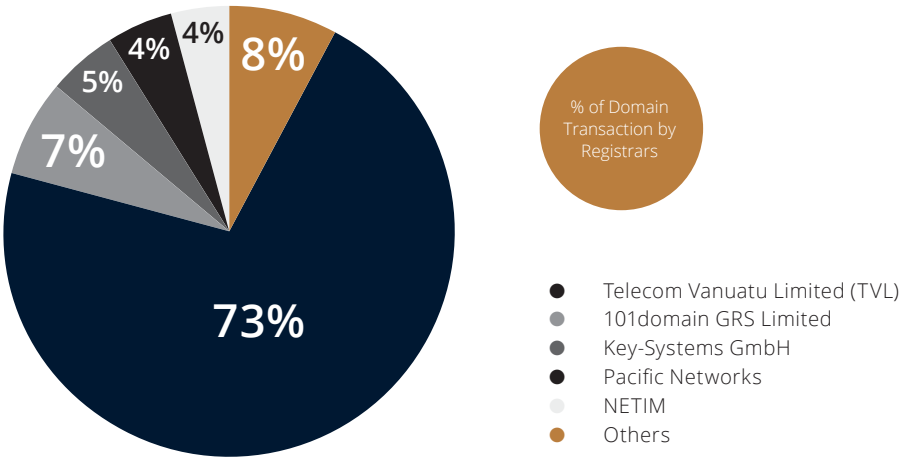
With extensive experience of ccTLD registry operations both large and small, Neustar Vanuatu Limited (Neustar), now GoDaddy, is committed to bring further growth to the namespace through active promotion and increased collaboration with the Registrars, as well as providing significantly improved DNS security, stability and integrity of the .vu domain zone.

With this new development, GoDaddy will help to make .vu the preferred online identity for Vanuatu businesses and organisations. Their investment of a new DNS node in Vanuatu will enhance domain resolution speeds for internet users in-country and the speed of global users visiting Vanuatu websites. Furthermore, GoDaddy's goal is to provide the technical, marketing and identity foundations to support local investment, capability, and capacity in e-commerce and internet technologies.

Since the transition of the .vu ccTLD in early 2020, the ccTLD had seen an initial growth through the first three quarters of 2020 and total cumulative growth of around 25% in DUM by the end of 2020. 73% of the new domain were registered by TVL (or Vodafone) and the rest were registered by Pacific Networks and the remaining were registered by the international registrars.



The graph illustrated a high spike in February, after the separation of the registry and registrar was completed.



9.2 2020 Approved Registrars

Under the Domain Name space, Registrars play an important role in registering domains. Registrars are made up of local and international Registrars. As of 2020, there are more than 20 international accredited Registrars and 3 local accredited Registrars. Registrars of .vu domain names are accredited by the TRBR and are required to comply with the laws of Vanuatu, the .VU domain Name Regulation and any directions issued by the Regulator pursuant to the .VU Regulation and the TRBR Act. The TRBR also ensured that the International Registrars of .vu ccTLD were also accredited by ICANN.



Vodafone Vanuatu
vodafone.com.vu

**Network and Telephone
Calling Services**
pacificnetworks.com

**Home - SPIM -
Emerging Technology**
spim.co

9.3 TRBR's participation in the APTLD 77 Members Meeting

The TRBR attended the APTLD77 Members meeting through sponsorship from GoDaddy Registry. The 77th APTLD Members Meeting, and AGM took place in Melbourne, Australia, from 20 to 21 February 2020. Hosted by auDA (the .au ccTLD registry), the meeting was the biggest APTLD gathering so far, attracting over 130 Members' representatives and guests representing the Asia Pacific organizations and the global domain names industry, as well as the Government of Australia.

The main mission of APTLD is to improve the security, stability and resilience of the internet for all its clients, including industry leading TLDs such as .co, .us, and .au. Its focus is on innovation, abuse mitigation, and the empowerment of individuals, businesses and brands to succeed online according to George Pongas, Senior Director of Corporate Affairs & Business Development of the GoDaddy Registry.

The TRBR was part of the panel presenters and has delivered a presentation on the .vu Registry Transition from TVL to Neustar (now GoDaddy). Among other activities, Andrew Molivurae of the TRBR, who was also the Vice Chair of PICISOC, signed an MOU with the APTLD Chair Ai-chin Lu for PICISOC to work together on future plans for Pacific IGF and APTLD in the Pacific Island region.



Participants at the APTLD77 Members meeting, Melbourne Australia, 20-21 February 2020



TRBR presenting during the APTLD77, and Andrew Molivurac during the Signing of the MOU



9.4 Regulatory Internet Forum/Registrar Workshop 2020

The Office of the TRBR, the ccTLD administrator of .vu hosted a face to face and online Regulatory Internet Forum/Registrars Workshop for the existing and prospective local registrars in Vanuatu at the Grand Hotel, Port Vila on November 22, 2020. The event was organized as part of the ongoing capacity building for local .vu Registrars.

The TRBR was fortunate to have representatives from the internet community and also highly valued the contributions from the Registrar's and stakeholders' including the local Registrars and International speakers' to promote the dialogue between the Registry and Registrars to grow .vu ccTLD to reach the economies of scale.

The one-day Regulatory Internet Forum/Registrar Workshop drew over 40 participants, 2078 online followers and featured a number of speakers representing the APTLD Membership: GoDaddy Registry, Afiliis, and Gransy, as well as IETF, and experts from New Zealand and UAE.

Discussions of that day revolved around the three main topics which were all moderated by the TRBR;

1. The role of Registrars
2. Marketing .vu
3. Registrar Best Practices

The main goal of this workshop was to educate .vu Registrar's on their roles and responsibilities in the .vu name space and especially their new opportunities in marketing .vu, to grow their business.

Internet Forum/
Registrars Workshop,
November 22, 2020



On-line
interactive
session at the
Grant Hotel,
Port Vila



9.5 .vu ccTLD Business Awareness



Following on from the transition of .vu ccTLD, and the Regulatory Workshop on .vu ccTLD, the TRBR organized a business awareness workshop for the schools and business communities on Luganville from 28 to 29 October 2020, with over 30 small business owners and 30 school principals from Sanma province attended the sessions. This was an initiative designed to raise awareness on the benefits and Importance of registering and using a .vu domain name such as, .edu.vu, .vu, .com.vu, .net.vu or .org.vu for the public sector, private business sector and the educational sector.

The main purpose for this workshop was to provide capacity building to the schools and small businesses and give them an opportunity to;

- learn more about .vu ccTLD in general;
- discuss the benefits of using a .vu domain name in Vanuatu;
- educate Schools and small businesses on their responsibilities based on the .vu regulation and operational guidelines;
- provide an opportunity for them to know how to register a domain name, and
- finally, to provide an opportunity to obtain feedback from School principals and small business owners.

9.6 SMART Sistas Support

The Office of the TRBR has been supporting the “SMART Sistas” program since its inception in 2016 and has been providing ongoing sponsorship for the annual “SMART Sistas” ICT Camp as well as the Global Robotics Program that the “SMART Sistas” has been participating in since its Inauguration in 2017.

In 2020, the office of the TRBR again supported the “SMART Sistas” program through Gold sponsorship, with the aim of empowering girls to be involved in multimedia program production, graphic design, web design, leadership, and entrepreneurship in the ICT sector. The SMART Sistas Camp from 24-28 August 2020, also allowed the girls to increase their knowledge in careers related to telecommunications, broadcasting, computer hardware and software engineering fields.



SMART Sistas participants in 2020, and TRBR sponsorship handing over to SMART Sistas Representative





Regulatory Broadcasting and Media Activities

10.1 General Information

Among other challenges in 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic, brought with it some challenges as well. The broadcast and media operators and the telecommunications operators faced economic challenges and therefore hesitated to increase investment to provide coverage to the rural areas, and further due to these financial challenges, some of the broadcasters either laid off staff or reduced staff working hours to a manageable level.

Some of the major projects for broadcast/media planned to be undertaken by TRBR this year 2020 according to the TRBR annual work plan, were delayed to 2021 due to the delay in the amendment of the TRBR Act to transfer all the broadcasting and media regulatory role from VBTC to the TRBR. Work started on the broadcast media content regulatory framework, broadcasting roadmap and the Code of Practice (CoP) which should be completed in 2021 after the amendment of the TRBR Act.

On 15th July 2020, the TRBR issued an Order to all Broadcasting licensees for information gathering and have been working with the broadcasters for compliance to the Order.

10.2 Broadcast/Media Roadmap

The Vanuatu television market is relatively small with an estimated 47000 television households with approximately three quarters located in the rural areas. Local and international television broadcasts are available, but the national broadcaster “Television Blong Vanuatu” (TBV) or VBTC is the only free-to air broadcaster in Vanuatu. Other broadcasts can be accessed on Telsat’s Digital Pay TV service or via satellite or on the Internet.

The television market in Vanuatu is not only small but also fragmented in terms of infrastructure. Analogue free-to-access (FTA) television is available in the main centres of the two provinces, Shefa and Sanma, comprising six channels, viz. TBV (public service broadcaster), CCTV, ABC (overseas

public services), Hope TV, God TV and TBN a religious broadcasting network (Trinity Broadcasting Network). Broadcasters typically operate from different telecommunication operator-owned sites utilizing their own transmitter and independent antenna system.

Four pay television broadcasters are available throughout Vanuatu. Telsat Pacific operates a terrestrial microwave IP network serving Port Vila with an English-based 16-channel standard package with additional channels at additional cost. Canal+ provide pay TV services over satellite, having a local sales presence in Vanuatu.

In 2020, the TRBR in consultation with Civil Society and its stake holders including the Broadcast licensees, and assistance from ITU started working on the first-ever Broadcasting Regulatory roadmap for Vanuatu. The project was fully funded by ITU and aims at providing recommendations to improve the regulation of the broadcasting and media sector in Vanuatu.

10.3 Broadcasting/Media Code of Practice

Globally, the broadcasting industry and its operations have been undergoing rapid changes, driven by technological advancements and changes in audience behaviour. People are getting more content access through the Internet using fixed or mobile broadband. Though online delivery of media suffers from the QoS beyond the control of the media or broadcast service provider, it complements and fulfils the need of providing access to media. The broadcast industry has been migrating from analogue to digital over the complete value chain from acquisition to delivery. Although some people in Vanuatu have access to digital satellite services such as Direct-to-Home (DTH), Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and access to audio -video over the Internet, the high broadband prices and limited availability (penetration to various geographical locations) reduces the outreach. There are also audiences in Vanuatu that listen to the radio and view television through analogue broadcast services, OTT services via the Internet to receive radio and television programmes as well as downloaded music and films are also being accessed by people in Vanuatu.

As part of steps taken by the TRBR in addressing the broadcast/media content regulatory framework, the TRBR in 2020, started developing a Code of Practice (CoP) for the Broadcasters, and will go for public consultation with the operators and stakeholders, after the enactment of the TRBR Act (amendment).

The CoP is to set ground rules to foster ethical behaviour of broadcasters and publishers of content for public consumption in Vanuatu.

10.4 Broadcasting Regulatory Compliance

As part of the TRBR's role under section 7(2A) of the TRBR Act, the Regulator is to regulate and set ethical standards of broadcasting, and also secure proper standards of television and sound broadcasting with regard to both programme content and technical performance of Broadcasts.

On 17th August 2020, Order 73th of 2020 was gazetted for Broadcasting licensees to provide to the Regulator any agreements, contracts, subscriptions or free to air agreement between any national broadcasting operator, international broadcasting operators or content provider with content proprietary rights and the local broadcasting licensee for broadcasting or re-broadcasting through their network, within 30 days from the commencement of this order. The Order also instructed all the licensees to not broadcast or re-broadcast content, signals or channels, either paid or free to air, if they do not have the necessary agreements, contracts, subscriptions or free to air agreement between any national, international broadcasting operators or content provider with the content proprietary rights and the local broadcasting licensee for broadcasting or re-broadcasting through their network.

The TRBR continued to monitor compliance with the order, compliance with the COPYRIGHT AND RELATED RIGHTS ACT NO. 42 OF 2000 and any other laws of Vanuatu, and the terms and conditions of their Broadcast License.

10.5 List of Broadcast Licensees in 2020

Broadcasting Licensees in Vanuatu comprises of commercial and community licensees. The VBTC is funded by the government (partly), and party commercial funded through advertising and sponsorship programs. The Community licensees are privately sponsored and are not allowed to carry out any commercial activities.

The table below list the active broadcasting licensees in Vanuatu in 2020.

Type of broadcast service	Company Name
Radio	• Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) (Commercial)
	• Multimedia T/A Capital FM107 (Commercial)
	• Daily Post (Commercial)
	• Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) (Community)
Television	• Television Blong Vanuatu (TBV) (commercial and Community)
	• Hope TV Vanuatu (Community)
	• Canal Plus (Commercial)
	• Telsat Pacific (Commercial)
	• Digicel Vanuatu (Commercial)
	• Servicom (Commercial)

List of Broadcasting Licensees in 2020



Consumer protection, relationships & awareness

11.1 General

Empowering consumers with information is always a priority of the TRBR to enable them to be smart users of telecommunications and broadcasting services, as well and be able to make informed choices when dealing with their service providers. Throughout 2020, the TRBR has been engaging with many different consumer activities and projects in line with the Consumer Protection Regulation, the TRBR Strategic Plan and the TRBR Work Plan of 2020. Furthermore, the TRBR successfully organized the 2020 Consumer Rights Day in collaboration with Key stakeholders with the theme “Sustainable Consumer.”

11.2 Improve on the Effectiveness of Community Consumer Champions (CCC) Program

The TRBR continuously supported its CCCs across the six provinces within the country every year to ensure they are well equipped with knowledge and skills to deliver good and appropriate consumer protection awareness and digital educational information to the local communities and schools in the rural areas.

Throughout 2020, awareness programs were conducted in both the primary and the secondary schools, churches, and the local communities. The TRBR's CCCs also assisted the Office of the TRBR to track network coverage within their respective areas or districts using Network Cell Infor Lite Mobile App installed on their mobile devices. The results from the network audit were used to identify the remaining unserved and underserved areas for the UAP rollout program.

The recommendations and feedback gained from the TRBR CCCs across the six provinces from awareness and digital education, were used to improve the delivery of community awareness and decimation of information and also improve the contents of the programs delivered to the communities. Some of the major awareness programs in 2020 completed by the TRBR CCCs included;

Malampa
Province:
Awareness at Farun
Village and Akamb
Island, South
Malekula



Tafea
Province:
Awareness at
Lounapiktuan
Community
on Tanna



Penama
Province:
Awareness at
Bwatnapni Secondary
School and Toile
Primary School



Shefa Province:
Awareness at
Falekera and
Lembro Village

- the awareness to the local community members at Bonvor ,Malvakal, Farun community and Akamb Island during Malampa Day Celebration, attended by over 100 people;
- the awareness at Lounapiktuan Community attended by over 150 people;
- three days awareness at eight schools and six villages on Paama Island; and
- two days awareness at South Epi local including community members of nine Villages.

11.3 Celebration of World Consumer Day – 13 March 2020

Annually, on the 15th of March each year, Consumers International, the committed and recognised body of 240 members across 120 countries in the World, celebrates the event to promote the rights of Consumers. The TRBR since 2015, has been facilitating the celebration of the World Consumer Rights Day in Vanuatu, and in 2020, a task force has been set up consisted of members from various Institutions including the Department of Trades, the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu (RBV) , the Utility Regulatory Authority (URA) , the Vanuatu Bureau of Standard (VBS), the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Crime Prevention Unit under the Vanuatu Police Force took the ownership and oversee the core activities of the day, to highlight the importance of the theme, and to empower the consumers to understand their rights and responsibility.

This year's 2020 event was hosted in Luganville town on the 13th of March for the first time, to give a fair opportunity to the people in the northern parts of the country to have access to basic information, educating them on consumer rights and responsibility, and other mechanisms to help them as consumers to make inform choices.

The theme of 2020 event was declared as **“Sustainable Consumer”** by the Consumer International and the aim of sustainable consumption is to increase resource efficiency and fair trade while helping to alleviate poverty and enable everyone to enjoy a good quality of life with access to food, clean water, energy, medicine and more. The theme is of great importance to the nation of Vanuatu as well, as it is in line with the National Sustainable Development Goal (NSDP) agenda priority of the national Government under Economy pillar 1 (A stable economy based on equitable sustainable growth). There were over 500 people who were present throughout the day at the Luganville Unity Park including the students around Sanma province and the members of the public.

In addition, there were discussions on the topics that helped contribute to promote public participation and debate on sustainable consumption including:

- promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers;
- standards for the safety and quality of consumer goods and services;
- distribution facilities for essential consumer goods and services;
- dispute resolution and redress;
- education and information programmes;
- electronic commerce;
- financial services; and
- measures relating to specific areas such as water, utility, food, energy, tourism, telecommunication and pharmaceuticals.

Consumer Rights Day Parade in Luganville, 13 March 2020



Consumer Rights Day Celebration at the Unity Park, Luganville Town, 13 March 2020

Through wider participation from different institutions and departments or stakeholder's engagement to work collaboratively to promote the theme and provide educational awareness to the consumers on how best we can all work together to achieve sustainable consumption, have a greater impact in improving the livelihood of the people to understand their basic rights and responsibilities and provide them with information to make a well-informed decision.

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

In 2020, the TRBR Consumer team continued to promote and raise awareness of its complaint handling procedure, and on the rights and responsibilities of consumers of ICT and telecommunications services to the communities and schools including Malapoa College, Lycée Louis Antoine De Bougainville and Epauto Adventist High School. Over 500 students from these schools attended the awareness programs.

The Office of the TRBR was part of a capacity building workshop organized by the Vanuatu National Youth Program as well, with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, held in Port Vila on September 2020. This event has brought together Youths from Torba Province, Sanma Province and Luganville and Tafea Province to participate and be part of the great learning activities. During the event, the TRBR was fortunate to provide its educational program to more than 100 youths and civil servants of the National Government. The awareness covered a broad understanding of telecommunication service, but most importantly, how ICT can help to shape the livelihood of the young generation and the importance of ICT as a tool for small and medium businesses.

A joint consultation awareness with the Office of the OGCIO on the Vanuatu National Cyber Security Strategy 2020 to 2030, was also conducted specifically on Penama Province. Awareness was also conducted at the area council's headquarters, provincial headquarter at Saratamata on Ambae, and schools on Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo.



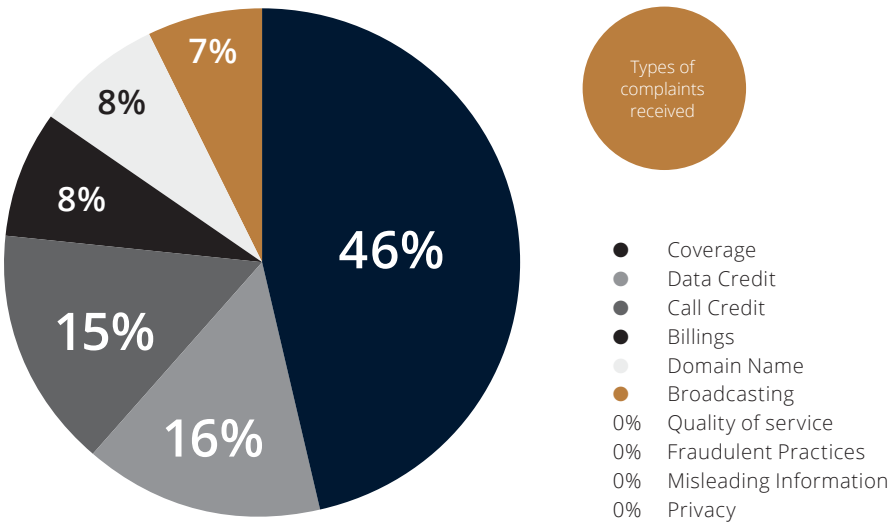
The consultation on cyber security and awareness was tailored for the Area Secretaries, Area Administrators, Community Leaders, Chiefs, Women Leaders, Youth Leaders, and people with special needs who interact with the Internet and technologies on a day-to-day basis. The National Cybersecurity Strategy (NCSS) is a plan of action designed to improve security and resilience of Vanuatu's national infrastructures and services.

11.5 Complaints received from the consumers

The TRBR each year deals with consumer complains in accordance with its complaint handling process. Through out 2020, TRBR received at total of 13 complaints, and addressed these complaints received from the consumers of both Telecommunications and Broadcasting Services accordingly with the relevant service providers, and also tailored its awareness programmes to address issues related to these complaints. The 46% of the complaints received were related to coverage issues across the country, 16% were related to data credits, while 15% were call credits related.

The majority of the 46% coverage related complaints originated from the TC Harold affected areas, and the Volcanic Ashfall affected areas on Ambae and Tanna. These major events or natural disasters and the slow recovery of the telecommunications infrastructure were the main contributing factors to the availability of mobile network coverage in the Northern part and Southern part of the country, specifically Sanma Province, Penama Province, Penama Province and Tafea Province.

The second highest number of complaints were related to data credits, and most of these complaints came from consumers with little or no knowledge of how their data was used, or were not aware of affordable data bundles from the mobile service providers. As such, future awareness must be tailored to educate these consumers to be a smart users of the telecommunications and broadcasting services.



11.6 Dissemination of Consumer Information

On the 25th of September 2020, the Office of the TRBR through its Consumer Unit donated Consumer Fact sheets, Annual Reports and its Sector Reports to the Port Vila City Public Library, the National Library and National archives for public access.

The primary purpose of the donation of these useful reports and informational flyers was to help educate and empower the general telecommunications and broadcasting consumers. The TRBR will continue to provide valuable information to these Public Libraries to help educate the consumers on the role of the TRBR, provide them a general view on the growth of the telecommunications and broadcasting sector in Vanuatu, and to educate the consumers to be smart users of the telecommunications and broadcasting services.



TRBR also continue to promote its App, **“TRBR Facts info,”** which can be downloaded from Google Play Store to any Android devices. The mobile App also assists and enhances a user's knowledge of Telecommunications information and development in Vanuatu.

The application carries information relating to the general operations of TRBR and more importantly Consumer Protection Information designed to assist and guide consumers, at least in their knowledge and understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the Telecommunications and Broadcasting sector. **Importantly for all users to note, the app has a functionality to lodge an online formal complaint to the TRBR whenever a consumer is not happy with his or her service provider, provided he or she has exhausted avenues to resolve the matter with his or her respective service provider.**



Relations with other Key External Stakeholders

The TRBR continued to work closely with the international organizations including ITU, APT and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO) through the government of Vanuatu membership, the World Bank, Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association (PITA), Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) through an MOU, and others. The TRBR represented by the Regulator, is the current Vice-Chairman of the Policy Regulation Forum (PRF) of the APT representing the Pacific Islands sub-region, who was elected in 2019 PRF-19 in Bhutan with a term of 2 years, until PRF-21.

Since the TRBR took over the management of .vu ccTLD in 2009 when the TRBR Act was gazetted, the TRBR continued to maintain its membership with Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which is an internationally organized, non-profit corporation that has the responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domain name system management. TRBR also maintains its membership with the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Name Association (APTLD), an organization for the country-code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) registries in the Asia Pacific region.

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Financial Statement & Auditor's Report

Income Statement

For the year ended 31 December 2020

Expressed in Vatu

	2020	2019
Operating Revenue	155,323,363	150,934,075
Operating Expenses	(138,557,058)	(184,061,369)
Operating Surplus before payment to Universal Access Fund	16,766,305	(33,127,294)
Universal Access Fund	-	-
Operating Surplus / (deficit) after payment to Universal Access Fund	16,766,305	(33,127,294)

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2020

Expressed in Vatu

	2020	2019
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	103,768,550	126,492,844
Receivables	25,918,393	26,773,720
Other Assets	1,839,932	1,712,160
Non current assets		
Plant and Equipment	18,431,419	13,670,041
Total Assets	149,958,294	168,648,765
Current Liabilities		
Creditors and Accruals	36,457,049	73,509,327
GFG Grant - current	18,736,481	3,024,715
Provisions	1,500,489	1,354,993
	56,694,019	77,888,945
Non Current Liabilities		
Provisions	13,119,605	8,644,974
GFG Grant – non-current	-	18,736,481
Total Liabilities	69,813,624	105,270,400
Net Assets	80,144,670	63,378,365
Accumulated Surplus / (deficit)	80,144,670	63,378,365

Annex 1: Register of Consultants in 2020

Name	Position Held	Area of Expertise or Project Responsibilities
Ronald Box	National Numbering Specialist	Provide specialist assistance and guidance to Technical team on the Vanuatu National Numbering Plan and Procedures.
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, including TRBR's Legal and Market Competition Manager.
Incite Consulting Ltd	Telecoms Competition and Economic Regulatory Expert	Incite consulting provides general, wide ranging expert telecommunication regulation guidance; including analysis and determination of relevant markets, strategic measure of addressing anti – competitive actions, and relevant economic and competition assistance to TRBR team.
Keith Davidson	.vu ccTLD Domain Name Development, Management and Administration Specialist	Provide guidance and support TRBR to smoothly facilitate .vu ccTLD (registry) transition processes.

