

**GOVERNEMENT DE LA
REPUBLIQUE DU VANUATU**

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**Utilities Regulatory Authority
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Ministry of Finance and
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Utilities Regulatory Authority of Vanuatu

Media Release: 19 November 2010

The URA Acknowledges the Appointment of Pernix Group, Inc. as the New Electricity Provider in Luganville

The Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) congratulates the Government of Vanuatu on its decision to appoint the Pernix Group, Inc. as the new operator for the Luganville electricity concession.

The URA welcomes and congratulates Pernix on its successful appointment as the new electricity provider in Luganville.

The URA will continue to work closely with UNELCO and Pernix to ensure that the transition between the two utilities goes smoothly so as not to interrupt electricity services.

As of 1st January 2011, the URA will apply the new tariff set out in its *Electricity Tariff Final Decision May 2010*. A key part of the electricity tariff decision is a reduction by 49% in the electricity tariff for small domestic customers (<60 kWh a month). The URA's tariff decision is for a new base price of Vt 47.17. This tariff will translate into a price reduction of around 6.80% for most electricity users in Luganville. This will allow the people of Luganville to have access to safe, reliable and more affordable electricity.

The URA will collaborate with both UNELCO and Pernix to implement their investment plans for increasing the number of new connections, improved operations and customer service throughout Vanuatu. The introduction of competition for the electricity market will provide reliable and affordable services to consumers, and support the Government's policies for economic development and growth.

To meet its objectives and increase access to electricity services in the country, the URA will collaborate with the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources as well as the utilities to protect the long term interests of the people in Vanuatu.

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Notes to the Editor

About the URA

The URA was set up under the Utilities Regulatory Authority Act No.11 of 2007. It is independent from the government and its purpose is to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water and electricity.

It monitors the electricity concession contracts for Port Vila, Luganville, Tanna and Malekula. It renegotiates tariffs under the rules of the existing contracts, it manages consumer complaints, and it advises the government.

About the Pernix Group, Inc.

Pernix Group, Inc. is a US-based electricity and construction company with operations in the North and South Pacific. Some of Pernix's work in this region includes the operation and maintenance of 78MW of power for the Fiji Electricity Authority on a 20-year long term contract. Pernix was also awarded as a prime contractor the building of the new US Embassy in Suva, Fiji. This project will be completed in January of 2011.

About UNELCO

UNELCO Vanuatu Limited is a fully owned subsidiary of GDF Suez. It operates the monopoly electricity concessions for Port Vila, Luganville (until December 31, 2010), Malekula and Tanna. It has operated in Vanuatu since 1939.