



**Date:** 22<sup>th</sup> April 2014

**Press Release**

**New solution for street lighting in Port Vila**

Over the past weeks, the Port Vila Municipality, UNELCO and the URA have worked together to reach an agreement to improve street lighting services in Port Vila. This agreement will see UNELCO assume full responsibility for operation and maintenance of street lighting in the municipal area.

In the past, the SL service has suffered from a lack of investment and payment issues as the municipality was unable to maintain or pay for the Street lighting services. The Government of Vanuatu, concerned about inadequate street lighting in the capital city donated over VUV 7.5 million to the UNELCO in November 2013, in order to shore up the Street Lighting in Port Vila.

URA CEO Dr. Hasso Bhatia commented “well-lit and functioning Street Lighting service promotes public safety, security and commerce in the area. It acts as spur for tourism, night-life and retail activities”. URA believes that as part of its responsibility it must assist the local authorities and municipalities to improve civic services and public amenities. Therefore URA proposed that the responsibility to maintain and operate the municipal street lighting should be transferred to the local utility.

The URA, UNELCO and the Municipality have agreed that the transfer of Street Lighting responsibility to UNELCO is in the best public interest.

As part of the agreement, UNELCO will increase the number of Street Lights from current 572 to a total of 667 before March 2015, installing additional LED lighting equipment donated through an ADB initiative. Port Vila citizens will experience street lighting from dusk to 2am on the main thoroughfare and dusk to midnight for secondary streets covered by the network. Hours of operation may be adjusted as necessary. Also, the arrangement covers all street lighting within the entire municipal boundary instead of being limited to the main thorough fares as in the past.

There will be no immediate tariff effect. However cost of Street Lighting services shall be included as part of UNELCO’s expenses for the calculation of electricity in future tariff reviews. URA estimates tariff impact shall be approx. 0.15 vatu per Kwh. UNELCO shall submit a report to the URA detailing a development plan for street lighting services extended to the entire concession area, with detailed costs and an implementation plan.

The URA thanks the Municipality and UNELCO for their support to arrive at a long term sustainable solution to providing advanced Street Lighting services to the citizens of Port Vila.

The Commission Order was signed at 10 am this Tuesday, April 22 in the URA Office under the attendance of the Lord Mayor and UNELCO representatives.

Persons interested in finding more about the Commission Order can visit the URA web at [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu), or get a copy at our Office located within the VNPF compound in Port Vila, or contact us at the following number 23335.

The commission order, further reports and information are available on the URA website [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu) and at the URA Office, located at the VNPF Investment Building, corner of Pierre Lamy & Andre Ballande Street.

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