



**Utilities  
Regulatory  
Authority**

**Media Release:** 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

### **URA adopts feed-in tariff program in Port Vila**

The Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) has issued an order to implement a limited solar feed-in program in UNELCO service area in Port Vila. The program shall allow domestic and small commercial customers to reduce their electricity bills by generating their own solar energy. Customers can still use grid power at the normal retail tariffs to supplement their electricity use when solar power is unavailable. Any excess solar power generated can be provided to the network and will further offset electricity bills.

URA CEO Dr. Hasso Bhatia said “We are very pleased to establish this program, as it empowers customers, contributes to renewable energy targets, and brings Vanuatu in pace with modern electricity services. Many countries including pacific islands already offer some form of feed-in scheme, and they have proved very successful in Australia, New Zealand and other places.”

URA Chief Economist James Ryan added “This program allows customers to install solar panels to reduce their electricity expenses without constraining their total usage. The benefits of the low cost solar excess energy sent to the network will be shared with all customers, and reduce our dependence on imported diesel fuel.”

The program contains limits on the size of individual installations, and also the total installed capacity. A customer may install solar panels equivalent to the subscribed kVA of their current connection, up to 20kWp. The total program is limited to 500kWp, with approximately 50-70 domestic customers, 10 commercial customers, and 3 High voltage customers.

Application forms will be available from the URA website and UNELCO’s office from 15<sup>th</sup> September, and can be submitted from 1<sup>st</sup> October.

The URA Commission also established the Utilities (Restriction on Provision of Financial Support) Rules 2014 to regulate certain utility financial transactions with third parties. The Rules ensure that revenue collected from consumers is used prudently, so that utility services are not jeopardized.

Both Orders are available on the URA website [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu), or from URA Office at the VNPF Investment Building, Port Vila. The URA can be contacted by phone on 23335 or at [info@ura.gov.vu](mailto:info@ura.gov.vu)