



**Media Release:** 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014

### **URA proposes lowering electricity prices in Luganville by 16%**

The Utility Regulatory Authority (URA) has released a Preliminary Decision to reduce electricity prices in Luganville by 15.7%, and is now undertaking a public consultation before its Final Order. CEO of the URA, Hasso Bhatia, said “A lot has changed since the base price was last reviewed for Luganville in 2010, including improvements in the operations of the Sarakata Hydro plant. Our aim is to pass the benefits to customers, after consulting with Luganville customers and other interested parties.”

The reduction in prices is a result of the increased use of hydroelectric power in Luganville, as well as other changes in the operations. Case coordinator Maureen Malas explains, “When the hydroelectric plant is used more, it means that less diesel needs to be burned to meet the power needs of Luganville. This price reduction is passing the benefits of lower fuel costs on to the customers”.

The URA will hold public meetings in Luganville: on Wednesday 29 January at the VNPF Conference Room in Luganville at 10am and at the Vanuatu Agricultural College at 4:30 pm and on Thursday 30 January at the Fanafo Community Hall at 10:30am and again at the VNPF Conference Room in Luganville at 4:30pm. At each meeting, URA staff will be present to answer questions on the Preliminary Decision, and will receive comments from consumers and interested persons. Anyone who would like to know more about the proposed price reduction is encouraged to attend. Interested parties can pick up a copy of the Preliminary Decision document from the URA office or website [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu), and also from the VUI office in Luganville. Queries may be directed to the URA on 23335 or at their office in the VNPF Investment Building at the corner of Pierre Lamy and Andre Ballande streets in Port Vila.

### **About the Utilities Regulatory Authority**

The URA was set up under the Utilities Regulatory Authority Act No. 11 of 2007. The URA is an independent body and its primary purpose is to increase access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity and water services to homes and businesses, and to protect the long-term interests of consumers throughout Vanuatu. In the electricity sector, the URA monitors the concessions operated by UNELCO in Malekula, Port Vila and Tanna; and Vanuatu Utilities and Infrastructure

Ltd (VUI) in Luganville. In addition, the Authority assists to resolve consumer disputes and advises the Government on matters related to electricity, water and energy policies.

Contact Information

Utilities Regulatory Authority

Phone: (678) 23335

Address: VNPF Investment Building, NPF Compound, corner Pierre Lamy and Andre Ballande

Postal address: PMB 9093 Port Vila VANUATU

Website: [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu)

Twitter: @URAvanuat