

GOVERNEMENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU VANUATU

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## **URA Organizes Public Forum in Luganville about Electricity Bills Issues**

The Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) is organizing a public forum on 14 April 2011 at 10:00am in the VNPF Building conference room in Luganville, Espiritu Santo. **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

The Utilities Regulatory Authority's Commissioners and staff will meet with customers and address their concerns regarding their electricity services. Carmine Piantedosi will explain how the new tariff structure was set and how it is being applied by the utility.

The URA has learned that consumers in Luganville have raised a number of issues concerning their electricity bills. The URA would like to encourage customers to contact us directly with their complaints. You can send an email from the website – [www.ura.gov.vu](http://www.ura.gov.vu) – or call at (678) 23335.

The URA's CEO Carmine Piantedosi said "I am hoping that the forum will be less formal and more about listening to the people and their concerns."

The Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) has two main goals, first to increase access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity services in Vanuatu, and second to protect the long-term interests of the consumers. After consulting with the people in Vanuatu, the URA set up a new electricity tariff structure last year and monitors the utilities to make sure they apply it correctly.

The URA is working closely with Vanuatu Utilities and Infrastructure Limited (VUI) and the Government to understand the recent complaints about higher electricity bills in Luganville, and to develop a solution.

The URA seeks to reassure electricity customers in Luganville that their concerns are being reviewed thoroughly and outcomes of the investigation will be shared with the public in due course.

### **About the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA)**

The URA was set up under the *Utilities Regulatory Authority Act No. 11 of 2007*. It acts independently of the Government and its primary purpose is to ensure safe, reliable and affordable electricity and water services, 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 URA manages consumer disputes and advises the Government on matters related to electricity and water. It also renegotiates tariffs under the rules of the Concessions Agreements and relevant legislation.

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### **Notes to the Editor**

#### **About VUI**

Vanuatu Utilities and Infrastructure Limited (VUI) is a subsidiary of Pernix Group, Inc. Pernix Group's Power Operations and Management Services (O&M) division provides an integrated scope of services to maintain and manage all aspects of power operations. VUI has operated Luganville's electricity concession since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

#### **About UNELCO**

Union Electrique du Vanuatu Limited (UNELCO) is a subsidiary of GDF Suez. It operates the electricity concessions for Port Vila, Malekula and Tanna. It has operated in Vanuatu since 1939.