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SAR BRIEF: VANUATU



**Vanuatu Maritime Safety
Authority (VMSA)**

Wharf Road Roundabout, Nambatu
Kumul Highway
P.O. Box 6499
Port Vila
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU



Lloyd M. Fikiasi
Deputy Commissioner International/Legal Affairs

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1. SAR Governance

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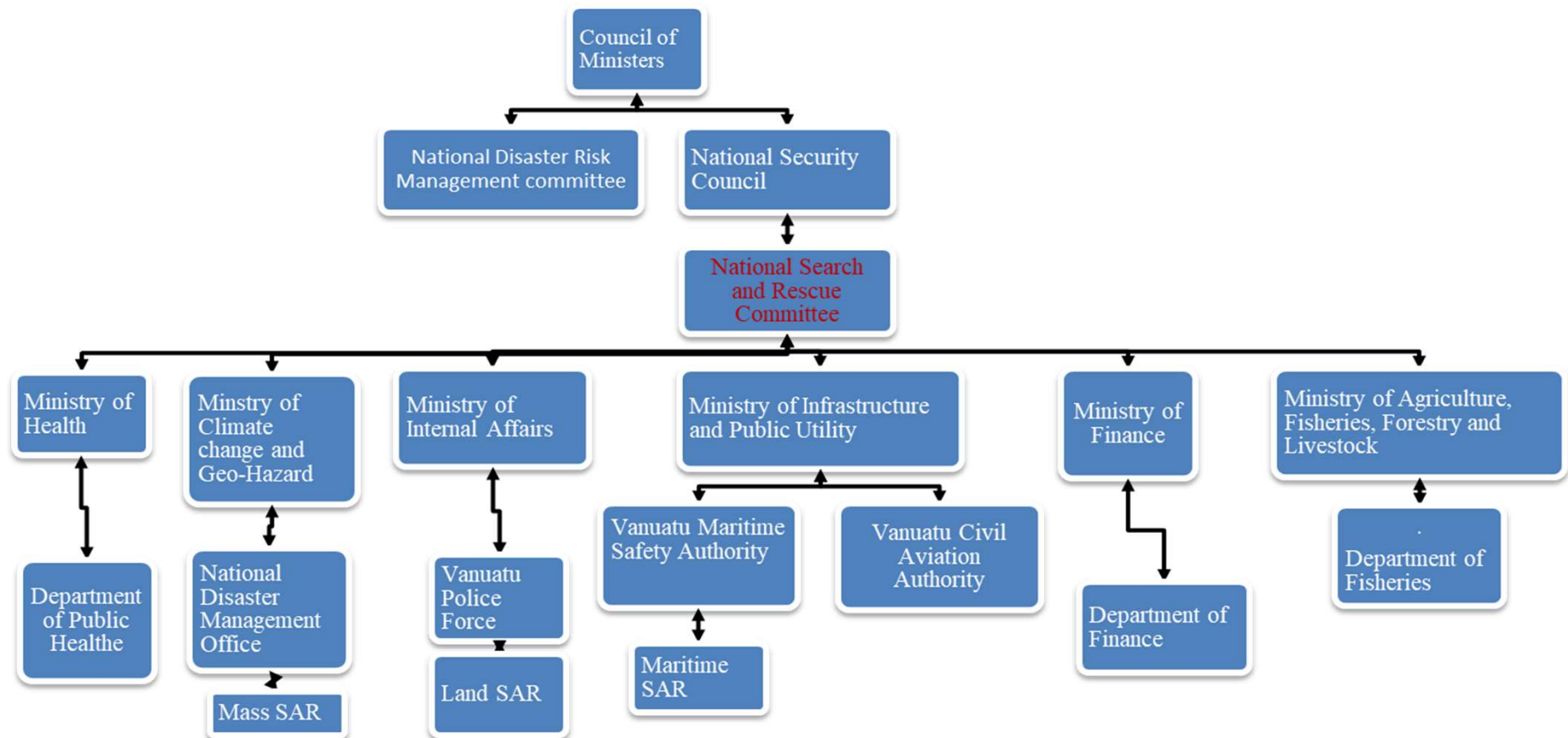


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Vanuatu SAR GOVERNANCE



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Frameworks

International & National Legal Frameworks	National frameworks and Arrangement	Maritime SAR	Land SAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1979 SAR Convention (ratification) • 1978 SOLAS Convention (ratification) • 1944 CAV Convention (ratification) • VMSA Act No. 26 of 2016 • Disaster Management Risk Management Act No. 23 of 2019 • Police Act [Cap 105] • Fisheries Act 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft National Search and Rescue Plan • SAR MOU with New Caledonia, Noumea MRCC • MOU with Police Maritime Wing • MOU with Department of Fisheries • MOU with Department of Ports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VMSA • Department of Ports and Harbour, • Police Maritime Wing, • National Disaster Office • Fisheries Department • National Disaster Management Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanuatu Police Force • Vanuatu Mobile Force • National Disaster Management Office

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SAR Legislation in place	National SAR Committee established	National SAR Plan in place	Signatory to SAR Tech Arrangement for Cooperation
Partially	Partially	Partially	Yes

Ratification of various safety conventions of UN, IMO, and ICAO			
International Civil Aviation 1944	Maritime Search and Rescue 1979	Safety of Life at Sea 1974	Convention on the High Seas 1958
Yes	Yes	Yes	No

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Agencies Responsibilities

Agencies	Status	Responsibilities
National Search and Rescue Committee	TBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements the National Search and Rescue Plan of Vanuatu • Coordinating forum for national SAR matters • Provide national level strategic governance and leadership to Vanuatu Search and Rescue (SAR) sector (land, sea and air). • Monitor Vanuatu international SAR obligations
Vanuatu Maritime Safety Authority	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate maritime SAR, policy and regulatory frameworks • MRCC focal points
National Disaster Management Office	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritime Disaster coordination • Manage emergency funds • Cluster groups
Vanuatu Police Maritime Wing	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation • Deployment
Department of Ports	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation • Deployment
Department of Fisheries	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination for maritime rescue of fisherman • Funding and equipment support
Local ship operators	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation • Deployment
Vanuatu Helicopters	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation • Deployment
Air Taxi	Active	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation • Deployment



VANUATU MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE (Functions and Responsibilities of Divisions)

MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

VMSA Members (3)

DG -Finance
DG -Ministry responsible for Maritime
1 Member (appointed by Minister)
(Adhoc member (Commissioner))

COMMISSIONER

**DEPUTY
COMMISSIONER/INTERNATIONAL
(Legal Advisor)**

**DEPUTY
COMMISSIONER/DOMESTIC**

**POLICY AND REGULATION
Manager**

- Regulation/Rules/Standards and guidelines
- Port Concession/Regulations
- IMO Conventions
- Tariff analysis
- Regulatory Plan
- Marine Orders
- Vessel Standards
- Regulatory/compliance Audits
- System Safety

**OPERATIONS
Manager**

- Port and Flag State Inspection regimes
- Flag State Inspection
- Seafarers Certification/Welfare/Registration
- Shipping Registration
- Coastal Pilotage
- Industry Support
- National System Transition
- Province Marine Safety Program
- STCW

**RESPONSE
Manager**

- Crisis Preparedness and Response
- SAR (MRCC)
- Aids to Navigation operations
- Hydrography
- Marine Casualty/Investigation
- Salvage/Wreckage
- Insurance compliance
- Marine pollution management

**CORPORATE SERVICES
Manager (Accountant)**

- Executive Officer
- Filing Clerk
- Human Resources
- Finance Officer
- Information Technology Services
- Administration Officer
- Receptionist
- Driver
- Cleaner

IMO

IMO REP

**SHIPPING REGISTRY
VISR-Operation &
Management**

- Assistant Commissioner
- Special Agents

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2. SAR Coordination

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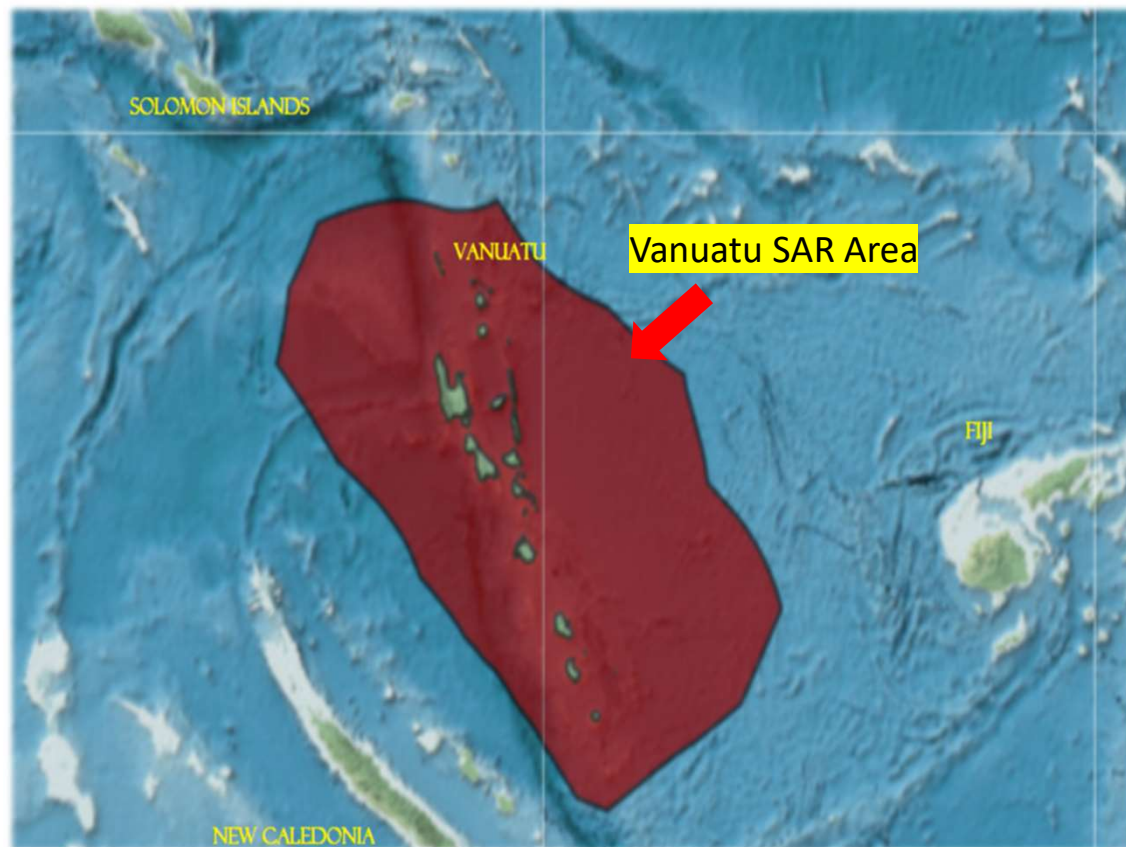


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2. SAR COORDINATION

- **Search and Rescue Region**
 - 623,424 sq.km
 - Neighboring countries: Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and Fiji
- **Rescue Coordination Centre**
 - VMRCC-OPS – VMSA
 - MRCC Noumea
- **Key capabilities**
 - Guardian class patrol Boat can use for SAR
 - MOU SAR with New Caledonia request assistance on Air and SAR training
- **Key issue**
 - Human resources- 1 staff
 - Lack of equipment and asset to deploy on time
 - VMRCC under resource
 - Access to Emergency funds



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SAR COORDINATION

Maritime or Joint Coordinating Authorities established	Coordinating Authorities have appropriate systems, processes, and procedures	Coordinating Authorities have appropriate communication systems and response planning tools
Yes (5)	Partially	Partially
List of deployable assets is developed and maintained	Coordinating Authorities have effective system for monitoring and documenting responses	Lessons management process is in place to support continuous improvement
Yes	Partially	Partially

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3. SAR Response

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3. SAR RESPONSE

Resources available

- 1 Guidant-class Police Patrol Boat
- 1 Government Tug Boat
- Private domestic ships and aircraft
- Vanuatu and New Caledonia MOU

Key challenges

- Lack of proper maritime radio infrastructure and facility
- Access to technologies to support SAR operations and monitoring
- Lack of dedicated SAR facility/equipments to deploy on time
- Weather
- Accessing Emergency fund within national budget



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SAR RESPONSE

SAR Standard Operating Procedures that align with the National SAR Plan are developed and in use	Training Needs Analysis is undertaken; Training Plans are developed and in use	Exercises that focus on preparedness for key risks are undertaken	Effective communication systems are established to support SAR coordination and response
Partially	Partially	No	Partially

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4. SAR Prevention

4. SAR PREVENTION

Initiatives

- Small Boat Safety Awareness program in rural communities
- Monthly, quarterly, bi and annual inspection of vessels to ensure safety is maintain at all times
- Public display of rescue operation during maritime days, DRR and other public events
- Lobby Government to set aside dedicated fund for SAR

Opportunities

- Private partnership discussions
- Workshops and technical assistance from IMO and other partners
- MOU arrangement including trainings
- FFA MOU in discussion to utilize FFA aircraft



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SAR PREVENTION

Maritime safety education programmes are implemented	Maritime safety regulations (and compliance regimes) are in place	Mariners have access to appropriate safety equipment	Increased use of technology-based safety equipment (e.g. distress beacons, mobile/emerging technologies)
Yes	Partially	Yes	Yes

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WHAT IS THE ONE THING...

- **We do really well:**

- Awareness and advocate on safety to prevent SAR
- Effective cooperation and coordination among agencies and contracting Government
- Effort to use existing facilities and equipment to response to SAR

- **We could do more effectively?**

- Dedicated equipment and facilities for SAR response
- Dedicated budget for SAR operations
- Established the National SAR Committee and National SAR Plan
- Strengthen existing VMRCC to ensure it capable of initiating and coordinating maritime SAR 24hrs/7days a week
- Having long-range dedicated SAR assets, able to conduct operations throughout the Vanuatu SAR region and in support of neighboring SAR regions



Recent SAR operation December 17 2022

A local Fisherman was rescued 20NM south of Vanuatu by joint operation coordinated by VMRCC-OPS and NOUMEA MRCC. The coordinates was given to a nearby vessel, P&O Cruise ship Pacific Adventure to divert course and rescue the Fisherman. The fisherman activates his PLB given to him by Fisheries Department. The COPSAT message was picked by NOUMEA MRCC and VMRCC was alerted. The coordinates was communicated to the cruise ship to search the coordinates and rescue the Fisherman.



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Thank you

QUESTIONS