



Australian High Commission
Vanuatu

Thursday 10 May 2018

Media Release

26 public buildings on Tanna funded by Australia officially opened

Three years after Tropical Cyclone Pam, Prime Minister, Charlot Salwai, and Australian High Commissioner, Jenny Da Rin, in the presence of a high-level delegation have officially opened ten schools, 13 police houses, the TAFEA police headquarters, a new tuberculosis ward at Lenakel Hospital and the Nikoletan Council of Chiefs building, fully funded by the Australian Government.



Vanuatu prime Minister, Hon Charlot Salwai, with Australian High Commissioner, HE Jenny Da Rin, Ministers and members of parliament officially open twenty-six public buildings on Tanna.

The Prime Minister and High Commissioner were joined by ministers, parliamentary secretaries and MPs, provincial leaders, kastom chiefs and the community. His Excellency, President Obed Moses Tallis witnessed the official reopening of the Nikoletan Council of Chiefs.



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Forty-eight hours after Tropical Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu, Australia was the first aid partner to provide support to Vanuatu. At the time, Australia made its largest ever commitment to help Vanuatu rebuild. The 26 buildings opened this week demonstrated the breadth of Australia's support, including policing, education and health, and to Vanuatu's cultural institutions such as the Nikoletan Council of Chiefs.

"I am proud of Australia's support to the Vanuatu Government to fully finance and rebuild critical infrastructure in cyclone-affected areas. This has been a strong partnership. Our support demonstrates the strong relationship between our countries," said Australian High Commissioner, Jenny Da Rin.

Most of the buildings were constructed by local contractors and engineers. This has helped to grow the local economy, created jobs and developed local skills. The income has also benefitted the community: more money for school fees, more money for local stores and more for community organisations.

Now complete, these buildings will have a great impact on the island, with better policing, modern education facilities, improved community health and stronger kastom governance. The buildings are built strong, to withstand cyclones, and will provide safe shelter for the community.

"The openings today represent a huge step forward for Australia's Tropical Cyclone Pam recovery program but it will not end here. Our commitment to rebuild Vanuatu has not finished and we expect to open more schools, health facilities and other critical infrastructure this year," Ms Da Rin said.

On 23 May 2015, Australia's Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, announced \$35 million in grants to help rebuild Vanuatu following the devastation caused by Tropical Cyclone Pam. This was in addition to \$15 million in immediate emergency relief and early recovery support announced in March and April 2015.

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