



**Australian High Commission**  
**Vanuatu**

19 June 2020

## **Media Release**

### **Australia supporting journalism and media in Vanuatu**

The Australian Government will continue to support a diverse, inclusive and professional media in Vanuatu, with an additional eight million vatu of assistance.

Australian High Commissioner, Her Excellency Sarah deZoeten, announced the new support at a reception for media representatives and journalists at the Australian High Commission on Thursday 18 June.

The funding is part of Australia's long-standing support to Pacific media through the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) and will provide training and workshops to build the skills of media practitioners.

"Media plays a vital role in building strong communities and engaging citizens," said Her Excellency Sarah deZoeten. "That is why we're proud to support media in the Pacific through PACMAS and other initiatives such as the Douglas Gabb internships with the ABC and Australia Award scholarships."

"PACMAS welcomes the ongoing commitment from the Australian Government to media development in Vanuatu. We look forward to working with our media partners – the Media Association of Vanuatu, VBTC and private media – to support building the knowledge and skills of the talented journalists and media professionals of Vanuatu. Today's announcement builds on PACMAS's long-term commitment and highly valued relationships in Vanuatu and across the Pacific, where it has worked for the past decade," said Yasmine Bjornum, PACMAS in-country representative.

During the reception at the High Commission, Her Excellency Sarah deZoeten acknowledged Vanuatu's journalists for their hard work this year covering the election and multiple crises, including COVID-19, Tropical Cyclone Harold and the Tanna ash fall.

PACMAS is a regional media assistance program delivered by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. PACMAS works with Pacific media to implement regional training programs and empower the voices of Pacific people, including youth and women. It facilitates discourse across government, business and civil society via Pacific media.

In Vanuatu, PACMAS recently partnered with the Media Association of Vanuatu to deliver training to journalists and social media content makers ahead of Vanuatu's national election on 19 March.



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*Australian High Commissioner, Her Excellency Sarah deZoeten, with journalists and media industry professionals at the Australian High Commission*

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