

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

BILL FOR THE
ROAD TRAFFIC (CONTROL) (AMENDMENT)
ACT NO. OF 2026

Explanatory Note

This Bill amends the Road Traffic (Control) Act [CAP 29] (“the Act”) to fill in several gaps and limitations within the Act that have not been addressed or implemented effectively over the past years.

The amendment includes the following:

- (a) the definition of “Minister” is amended to refer to the Minister responsible for public works, instead of the ‘Minister responsible for Transport’;
- (b) prohibits the installation of additional lighting on motor vehicles that are likely to increase the risk of accidents or endanger other road users;
- (c) allows any person (“either the owner or anyone else on behalf of the owner) to drive a motor vehicle to the vehicle examiner for the annual vehicle examination and empowers the vehicle examiners to request the assistance of a police officer when carrying out their functions;
- (d) prohibits any person from obstructing a vehicle examiner or a police officer in the exercise of their duties and powers under the Act;
- (e) repeals Part 5, removing the requirement for third party insurance. The amendment will now allow each person to decide whether or not to purchase such insurance;
- (f) requires a person who applies for a driving licence to be physically present in Vanuatu at the time of application;
- (g) prohibits heavy-duty vehicles from being driven on public roads during peak hours in order to ease traffic congestion, and improve punctuality for employees and school children;
- (h) provides for other specific matters that can be provided for in the Regulations..

These amendments will strengthen the work of the Police and officers of the Department of Public Works by ensuring that the Act is effectively implemented. In particular, the amendments will:

- (a) minimise the likelihood of accidents and enhance the safety of all road users by prohibiting the use of additional lights that pose a risk; and

- (b) give flexibility by allowing any person not just the owner, to present a motor vehicle for its annual examination, and by enabling vehicle examiners to obtain police assistance; and
- (c) promote fairness for public transport owners by removing the compulsory requirement to pay third party insurance annually; and
- (d) reduce traffic congestions and ease traffic flows by empowering the Minister to prescribe peak hours during which heavy-duty vehicles are prohibited from being driven on public road.

Minister of Infrastructure and Public Utilities



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BILL FOR THE ROAD TRAFFIC (CONTROL) (AMENDMENT) ACT NO. OF 2026

An Act to amend the Road Traffic (Control) Act [CAP 29].

Be it enacted by the President and Parliament as follows-

1 Amendment

The Road Traffic (Control) Act [CAP 29] is amended as set out in the Schedule.

2 Commencement

This Act commences on the day on which it is published in the Gazette.

SCHEDULE

AMENDMENTS OF ROAD TRAFFIC (CONTROL) ACT [CAP 29]

1 Section 2

Insert in its alphabetical position:

““vehicle examiner” means a person authorised by the Director under subsection 32(1A) to examine motor vehicles;”

2 Section 2 (Definition of “Minister”)

Delete “transport”, substitute “public works”

3 Section 2 (Definition of “motor bicycle”)

(a) Delete “or”, substitute “,”

(b) Delete “but excluding manual power”, substitute “or a combination of electrical and manual power”

4 After section 27

Insert

“27A. Installation of additional lighting in motor vehicles

A person must not install or use any lighting on a motor vehicle other than the lights required or permitted under section 27 or as prescribed by the Minister.”

5 Subsection 32(1) (Definition of “vehicle examiner”)

Repeal the definition.

6 After subsection 32(1A)

Insert

“32(1B) A police officer to assist vehicle examiner under consignment

A vehicle examiner may request a police officer to assist the examiner in carrying out his or her functions under this Act.”

7 Subsection 32(2)

Repeal the subsection, substitute

“(2) A motor vehicle must be presented to a vehicle examiner once in every year for examination to determine whether that motor vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.”

8 Part 5

Repeal the Part.

9 At the end of section 44

Add

- “(2) A person who intends to obtain a driving licence under subsection (1), must be present in person in Vanuatu at the time of making the application.
- (3) To avoid doubt, subsection (2) applies only to applications for new driving licences and does not apply to the renewal of a driving licence.”

10 After section 53A

Insert

“53AA. Offences relating to obstruction and non-compliance

A person who:

- (a) wilfully obstructs, threatens or uses an insulting language against a police officer or a vehicle examiner in the exercise of their functions or powers under this Act; or
- (b) fail or refuses to submit a document or reports for examination as requested by a police officer or a vehicle examiner,

commits an offence punishable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT500,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding term 2 years, or both.

53AB Heavy-duty vehicle not complying with the prescribed peak hours

A person who drives a heavy-duty vehicle on a public road outside of the prescribed peak hours commits an offence and is punishable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 months, or both.”

11 Section 54B

Repeal the section.

12 After paragraph 59(2)(c)

Insert

- “(ca) prescribe the time or peak hours during which a person may drive a heavy-duty vehicle on a public road; or
- (cb) prescribe a demerit point system for any offence or category of offence that a person commits under this Act; or
- (cc) provide for administrative procedures for matters required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed; or”