

# REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

## BILL FOR THE VANUATU TOURISM OFFICE (AMENDMENT) ACT NO. OF 2026

### Explanatory Note

This Bill amends the Vanuatu Tourism Office Act [CAP 142] (“the Act”).

The Government recognises the importance of strengthening the institutional, governance, and regulatory framework governing destination marketing in Vanuatu. Tourism remains a critical pillar of the national economy, and sustained growth requires a modernised legislative framework that clearly defines the functions, powers and financial arrangements of the Vanuatu Tourism Office (“the VTO”).

While ensuring transparency, accountability and alignment with national tourism policies and strategies, the Government seeks to formalise and secure the financial contribution of the tourism industry towards destination marketing initiatives. This is essential to support investment overseas, regional markets, increase brand awareness, strengthen trade and airline partnerships, diversify international source markets, and enhance consumer confidence in Vanuatu as a competitive and trusted tourism destination.

This Bill provides for the following:

- correct typographical errors to ensure clarity and accuracy of the Act; and
- replace references of “Chairman” and “Deputy Chairman” with “Chairperson” and “Deputy Chairperson”, for gender equality;
- inserts new definitions such as “destination marketing”, “source market”, and the “Tourism Marketing Trust Fund” as these terms are used throughout the Act;
- clarify and expand the VTO’s functions to include undertaking destination marketing domestically and internationally, operating commercially, diversifying international source markets, strengthening partnerships, integrating cultural heritage, and adopting digital and sustainable marketing practices;
- provide the VTO with the power to support destination marketing objectives, enter into partnership arrangements, sponsor promotional activities, manage intellectual property ownership, and pursue commercial and revenue-generating initiatives;
- establish the Tourism Marketing Trust Fund (TMT Fund) as a dedicated trust fund to finance destination marketing activities in accordance with the VTO Annual Work

Program and the Destination Marketing Plan approved by the VTO. This includes provisions on the sources, permitted uses, financial management, and accountability requirements of the TMT Fund (covering industry contributions, partner contributions, audit obligations, and reporting through the VTO Annual Report);

- empowers the VTO to establish a committee, comprising a majority of representatives of the Association as its members to manage, oversee and create policies for the TMT Fund;
- strengthen governance of VTO, including setting the term of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to promote stability, accountability and continuity.

## **Ministry of Trade and Commerce**



**REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**

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VANUATU TOURISM OFFICE (AMENDMENT)  
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**Arrangement of Sections**

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# REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

## **BILL FOR THE VANUATU TOURISM OFFICE (AMENDMENT) ACT NO. OF 2026**

An Act to amend the Vanuatu Tourism Office Act [CAP 142].

Be it enacted by the President and Parliament as follows-

### **1 Amendment**

The Vanuatu Tourism Office Act [CAP 142] 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 VANUATU TOURISM OFFICE ACT [CAP 142]

#### **1 Whole of the Act**

- (a) Delete “Chairman”, substitute “Chairperson”
- (b) Delete “Deputy Chairman”, substitute “Deputy Chairperson”

#### **2 Section 1**

Insert in their correct alphabetical positions:

““destination marketing” means the act of promoting Vanuatu as a tourist destination;

“TMT Fund” means the Tourism Marketing Trust Fund established under section 14A;

“tourist” means a person who travels to Vanuatu for leisure, recreational or business purposes;

#### **3 Subsection 3(1)**

Delete “tourism marketing in overseas and domestic markets”, substitute “destination marketing of Vanuatu in overseas country and within Vanuatu”

#### **4 Subsection 3(2)**

Repeal the subsection, substitute

- “(2) Without limiting the functions of the Office under subsection (1), the Office must:
  - (a) establish partnership arrangements between the Office, airline partners, cruise and maritime partners, and other industry stakeholders to coordinate the promotion of Vanuatu as a tourism destination; and
  - (b) operate on a commercial basis and seek to maximize the use of the Office budget for marketing purposes; and
  - (c) diversify the international source markets for tourists to contribute to the long-term sustainability of tourism industry in Vanuatu; and

- (d) undertake an annual assessment of the performance of overseas agents against agreed targets relating to the following activities:
    - (i) implementing an annual marketing plan; and
    - (ii) undertaking market research; and
    - (iii) participating in expositions and trade shows to promote Vanuatu as a tourist destination; and
    - (iv) maintaining the national marketing brand for the promotion and marketing of Vanuatu; and
    - (v) producing and distributing a monthly marketing update to the tourism industry; and
    - (vi) securing adequate funding for destination marketing; and
    - (vii) ensuring that all destination marketing activities integrate and enhance the cultural heritage of Vanuatu; and
    - (viii) implementing an annual work program as the implementation schedule for the destination marketing plan; and
  - (e) facilitate the digital transformation of tourism services through innovative platforms and support for digital marketing tools; and
  - (f) support partnerships and enhance public relations for sustainable tourism initiatives, including those focused on climate resilience, community-based tourism, and low-impact tourism development.
- (3) For the purposes of paragraph 2(c), “source markets” means the countries from which tourists originate.”

**5 Subsection 4(1)**

After “functions”, insert “in destination marketing”

**6 Paragraph 4(2)(b)**

After “any”, insert “destination marketing”

**7 Paragraph 4(2)(c)**

Delete “Department of Finance”, substitute “Ministry of Finance and Economic Management and the Director General of the Ministry of Trades and Commerce”

**8 Paragraph 4(2)(e)**

After “of”, insert “consumer and market”

**9 After paragraph 4(2)(e)**

Insert

“(f) enter into partnerships with overseas marketing suppliers to improve the effectiveness of marketing and promotional activities;”

**10 Paragraph 4(2)(g)**

After “competitions”, insert “for the purposes of destination promotion and brand awareness”

**11 Paragraph 4(2)(i)**

Delete “copyright”, substitute “and own intellectual property”

**12 Paragraph 4(2)(j)**

Repeal the paragraph, substitute

- “(j) charge fees and explore opportunities for other revenue for services rendered by it for destination marketing;
- (k) appoint agents to represent the Office in overseas countries to strengthen its efforts in destination marketing;
- (l) establish and manage subsidiary business entities in tourism marketing or services to generate revenue;
- (m) enter into public private partnerships or joint ventures in order to achieve its objectives.”

**13 Subsection 5(3)**

After “Minister”, insert “, on the recommendation of the Office,”

**14 At the end of section 7**

Add

“(3) The Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson are to hold Office for a period of 3 years.”

**15 After subsection 9(3)**

Insert

“(3A) Despite subsection (3), if the Chairperson is absent or unable to attend a meeting of the Office, the Deputy Chairperson may convene a meeting of the Office and preside at that meeting.”

**16 After section 14**

Insert

**“14A. Establishment of the Tourism Marketing Trust Fund**

- (1) The Tourism Marketing Trust Fund is established.
- (2) The TMT Fund consists of:
  - (a) private sector industry contributions collected monthly, quarterly or annually; and
  - (b) contributions from airline partners and other public or private sector partners; and
  - (c) grants or donations received from identified partners for the purpose of marketing tourism; and
  - (d) any other monies received by the Office for marketing activities.
- (3) The purpose of the TMT Fund is to finance destination marketing activities of the Office, aligning with the Annual Work Program and the Destination Marketing Plan approved by the Office.
- (4) The TMT Fund may be used for all or any of the following:
  - (a) to carryout regional and international tourism promotion campaigns;
  - (b) to conduct market research and intelligence activities;
  - (c) to establish travel trade partnerships and overseas representation;
  - (d) to implement branding and communication activities;
  - (e) to undertake digital marketing and produce promotional materials;

- (f) to participate in expos, trade shows and roadshows;
  - (g) to provide capacity building in marketing for tourism stakeholders;
  - (h) any other purpose that the Office approves and that is consistent with the objectives of the TMT Fund.
- (5) The Office must establish a Tourism Marketing Trust Fund Committee to manage, oversee and set policies on the TMT Fund.
- (6) The members of the Tourism Marketing Trust Fund Committee must consist of a majority of representatives of the tourism association.
- (7) The Tourism Marketing Trust Fund Committee must keep proper accounting records in relation to the TMT Fund, and must cause annual statements of account to be prepared for the TMT Fund.
- (8) The TMT Fund for each financial year must be audited within 3 months after the end of the financial year by the Auditor-General or a person authorised by the Auditor-General.
- (9) Details of monies paid into and out of the TMT Fund must be included in the annual report for the Office.”