

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

BILL FOR THE STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT NO. OF 2026

Explanatory Note

This Bill provides for amendments to the following Acts:

- (a) Citizenship Act [CAP 112];
- (b) Consolidation of the French and English Texts of the Laws of Vanuatu Act [CAP 295];
- (c) Legal Practitioners Act [CAP 119];
- (d) National Security Act No. 41 of 2019;
- (e) Tax Administration Act No. 37 of 2018.

Item 1 amends the **Citizenship Act [CAP 112]**.

The Act currently provides for the Citizenship Commission to meet for not more than 12 ordinary meetings and 12 extraordinary meetings within a year.

This amendment provides that the Citizenship Commission is to hold 12 ordinary meetings within a year and may hold such other meetings as are necessary for the proper performance of its functions. This amendment is necessary because of the increase in citizenship applications received under the Citizenship by Investment Programs. The current provision does not allow more meetings for the Citizenship Commission to consider applications. The Commission will now have the flexibility to hold meetings as is necessary to ensure timely processing of citizenship applications.

Item 2 amends the **Consolidation of the French and English Texts of the Laws of Vanuatu Act No. 20 of 2003**.

Currently under the Act, the Attorney General is empowered to issue written directions on the preparation or publication of the French Text Consolidation or the English Text Consolidation.

This amendment provides for the additional power of the Attorney General to issue written directions to ensure that texts of the French Consolidation are consistent with the English Consolidation.

Item 3 amends the **Legal Practitioners Act [CAP 119]**.

The Act currently provides that the Secretary of the Law Council is a public officer, however, the Act does not provide for the appointing Authority of this position.

This amendment provides that the Secretary of the Law Council is a public servant who is to be seconded by the Public Service Commission as the Secretary of the Law Council.

Item 4 amends the **National Security Act No. 41 of 2019**.

The Act currently provides that the decisions of the National Security Council must be endorsed by the Council of Ministers before they can be implemented.

This amendment provides that all decisions of the National Security Council that relate to administrative matters do not need to be approved by the Council of Ministers before they can be implemented.

Item 5 amends the **Tax Administration Act No. 37 of 2018**.

Currently the Act contains no provision for the issuance of penalty notice. With this amendment in place, penalty notices can be formally issued to taxpayers of penalties imposed for non-compliance and will in effect generate revenue for the Government.

Prime Minister



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An Act to provide for the amendments to certain Acts.

Be it enacted by the President and Parliament as follows-

1 Amendments

The following Acts are amended as set out in the Schedule:

- (a) Citizenship Act [CAP 112];
- (b) Consolidation of the French and English Texts of the Laws of Vanuatu Act [CAP 295];
- (c) Legal Practitioners Act [CAP 119];
- (d) National Security Act No. 41 of 2019;
- (e) Tax Administration Act No. 37 of 2018.

2 Repeal of the Act

- (1) This Act is repealed on the day following the day on which all provisions of this Act have commenced.
- (2) The repeal of this Act does not, because of the operation of section 11 of the Interpretation Act [CAP 132], affect any amendments made by this Act.

3 Commencement

- (1) This Act commences on the day on which it is published in the Gazette.

SCHEDULE

MINOR AMENDMENTS

1 CITIZENSHIP ACT [CAP 112]

Subsection 7(1)

Repeal the subsection, substitute

“(1) The Commission is to meet 12 times within a year and may hold such other meetings as are necessary for the proper performance of its functions under this Act.”

2 CONSOLIDATION OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH TEXTS OF THE LAWS OF VANUATU ACT [CAP 295]

Subsection 13(1)

Repeal the subsection, substitute

“(1) The Attorney General may, after consultation with the Consolidators and the Parliamentary Counsel, issue written directions to the Consolidators on any of the following:

- (a) on the preparation or publication of the French Text Consolidation or the English Text Consolidation; or
- (b) to maintain consistency between the French Text Consolidation and the English Text Consolidation.”

3 LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT [CAP 119]

Section 4

Repeal the section, substitute

“4 Secretary to the Law Council

The Public Service Commission is to second a public servant to be the Secretary of the Law Council.”

4 NATIONAL SECURITY ACT NO. 41 OF 2019

Subsection 5 (2)

After “decisions”, insert “, other than administrative decisions,”

5 TAX ADMINISTRATION ACT NO. 37 OF 2018

After section 92

Insert

“92A Penalty Notice

- (1) The Director may serve a penalty notice on a person if it appears to the Director that the person has committed an offence under any provision of this Act.
- (2) A penalty notice is a notice to the effect that if the person served does not wish to have the matter determined by a Court, the person may pay within a time and to a person specified in the notice, the amount of penalty stated in the penalty notice.
- (3) A penalty notice may be served personally or by post.
- (4) If the amount of penalty prescribed for the purposes of this section for an alleged offence is paid under this section, no person is liable to any further proceedings for the alleged offence.
- (5) Payment under this section is not to be regarded as an admission of liability for the purpose of, nor in any way affect or prejudice, any civil proceeding arising out of the same occurrence.
- (6) The Regulations may prescribe the amount of penalty payable for the offence if dealt with under this section.
- (7) The amount of a penalty prescribed under this section for an offence must not exceed the maximum amount of penalty which could be imposed for the offence by a Court.
- (8) This section does not limit the operation of any other provision of, or made under, this or any other Act relating to proceedings that may be taken in respect of offences.”