



MINISTRY OF TOURISM,
TRADE, COMMERCE AND
NI-VANUATU BUSINESS

Vanuatu Electronic Single Window Project Monthly Newsletter

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IN THIS EDITION:

- Vt43.2million Vanuatu AW-CDS Project approved
- Type Approval Module Prototype developed
- Vt1.9million Server purchased
- VeSW featured in UNCTAD ASYCUDA 2020 Compendium
- Post SPS module implementation events
- VeSW showcased at the opening of the VAMU Office

UPCOMING EVENTS IN MARCH

1. Testing and Training of Energy module Prototype
2. VeSW to participate in the WTO Aid-For-Trade Stock take event

Vt43.2 million Vanuatu AW-CDS Project approved Vanuatu to be the first-ever LDC country to have such an interface



A Project valued at US400,000 in total, Vanuatu was selected out of [22 LDC countries](#) worldwide to pilot the initiative to link the ASYCUDA system to the Postal system, CDS. The announcement came on 7th December 2020 when the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) approved the funds for the ASYCUDA component of the project for a value of over vt21.6 million (USD200,000), while Japan will be funding the CDS (UPU) component for an equivalent amount.

The implementation of an ASYCUDA-CDS interface in Vanuatu will promote trade facilitation and e-commerce and reduce time and costs of trading across borders by:

1. Establishing closer collaboration between Customs and Post operator;
2. Reducing time spent at Customs both for outbound and inbound items;
3. Using advance risk management techniques to cope with increasing volume of postal consignments;

4. Increasing transparency in the clearance process and calculation of duties and taxes;
5. Promoting the development of MSMEs with affordable and secure means of delivery of goods;

Moreover, the ASYCUDA-CDS will also benefit the Government of Vanuatu through:

6. Support for the Government's Trade Facilitation and e-commerce initiatives;
7. Better information for Government decision-making; and
8. Better management of border risks.

Type Approval Module Prototype deployed Latest VeSW module developed for the Department of Energy

A screenshot of the module's e-application

Despite the festive session and some administrative delays in the extension of the VeSW Project for 2021, the VeSW Project team and UNCTAD experts have been working remotely

to develop the next VeSW module, which is a Type Approval module to be used by the Department of Energy.

The module will be used by importers or their agents in Vanuatu to apply for the approval of energy efficient appliances that meet the approved standards from the Department of Energy. These regulated appliances include Air Conditions, Refrigerators and Freezers, and Lightings.

Similar to the SPS module, this module will also add extra control to the imports of these appliances to ensure that only approved appliances that meet the required energy standards are imported into Vanuatu. A process that is currently being done manually.

Testing and training of the new module is scheduled for March.

vt1.9 million Server purchased

To accommodate the increasing load of the VeSW system

“This level of investment will cater for further development in the VeSW system as more agencies and users are expected to be connected to the system in the future”

It is not surprising that with all border agencies (Customs, Immigration and now Biosecurity) and their external stakeholders connected to the VeSW system, there would be a higher demand for system capacity. With the increase in system transactions and submitted electronic documents, the VeSW servers require more server memory and additional storage capacity to cater for this increased load.

For these reasons, the VeSW Project purchased a vt1.9million (AUD22,697) server in 2020, sufficient to cater for this increased system demand. The server arrived in Port Vila from the supplier in Sydney on December 2020. It is now currently being installed by the technicians

from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) at the Government Data Centre.

Over 350 users are currently registered in the VeSW system, with over 100 users connected daily, submitting and processing Biosecurity permits and certificates, Customs declarations, uploading Immigration visas and processing passengers, to name a few.

This level of investment will cater for further development in the VeSW system as more agencies and users are expected to be connected to the system in the future, with more VeSW modules to be created.

Since systems are installed in a virtual environment at the Data Centre, this server will be in a shared with other systems, but with the specific required resources allocated to the VeSW system alone.

This is not the first time that the VeSW Project has contributed to boosting the resources of the Government Data Centre. The last assistance provided by the Project was to purchase additional licenses of the software used by Government System Administrators to remotely access systems at the Data Centre. These are classic examples of sharing investments in the Government ICT infrastructure.



The brand new server currently being installed by OGCIO technicians to further boost the capacity of the VeSW system.

VeSW featured in UNCTAD ASYCUDA 2020 Compendium



UNITED NATIONS
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The Vanuatu SPS Module in particular was featured in [UNCTAD's ASYCUDA 2020 Compendium](#) which was released on 12th February 2021. Vanuatu was amongst 25 ASYCUDA countries (out of 120+ ASYCUDA countries worldwide) to be featured in

this 2020 edition of the ASYCUDA Compendium.

The 2020 edition of ASYCUDA's Compendium of case studies highlights some of the achievements and benefits reported by user-countries following efficient and effective collaboration with the ASYCUDA Programme and trade stakeholders.

This level of acknowledgement on a global scale is a clear indicator of Vanuatu's advancement in automation to facilitate trade, protect borders and collect Government revenue.

Post SPS module implementation activities

VeSW continues to provide system support and development assistance to Biosecurity

Online verification of Biosecurity SPS Export Certificates

Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Export Certificates of plant and animal products are important trade documents issued by Biosecurity Vanuatu. The certificates certify that the product to be exported has met all SPS requirements, including specific import requirements of the importing country, and has met all the product standards, some of which are specific to Vanuatu standards.

The Export Certificates will therefore not only allow the Vanuatu product to enter the importing country but will ensure that we continue to protect Vanuatu's export markets abroad which is very vital to Vanuatu's economy when you consider commodities such as kava, copra, cocoa, beef, amongst others.

On that note, it is absolutely crucial that the Export Certificates are authentic and correct for the products to be accepted into the importing country by the authorities concerned. Any fraudulent certificates could be a threat to the environment and livestock of the importing country, as well as jeopardise the reputation of the Vanuatu product and even the reputation of Vanuatu as a trading country.

Efforts have therefore been done by the Single Window team and UNCTAD experts to provide an online mechanism for authorities abroad to verify any SPS Export Certificates from Vanuatu. This mechanism is now online as is accessible on at the [Single Window Portal](#).

Approved Suppliers of plant products captured in the SPS module

Biosecurity Vanuatu allows the importation of certain plant and plant products from certain Approved Suppliers only. This means that it is prohibited to import these specific products from other suppliers.

To assist Biosecurity facilitate the processing of Plant Import Permit (PIP) applications, the SPS module has been updated to allow applicants capture the Approved Suppliers Codes on PIP applications, where applicable.

Failure to capture available Supplier Codes may delay the processing of permits or even cancellation of applications.

Licenses of Kava Exporters controlled in the SPS module

Regulating of the Kava Commodity is under the authority of Biosecurity Vanuatu. As part of the regulatory requirements, only licensed Kava Exporters are authorised to export commercial kava from Vanuatu. This control is already configured in the SPS module, however this month, the Project team has added further control to the license of the Kava Exporters in the system. This new configuration will prevent the Kava Exporter to apply for a Phytosanitary certificate in the system if their licenses have expired.

Authorised Kava Exporters must meet certain requirements and conditions in order to be licensed to export this valuable commodity to ensure Vanuatu continues to protect its export market.

Review of Biosecurity risk profiles

Having connected to the VeSW risk management module (back in July 2020), it is crucial for Biosecurity to review its risk profiles in the system on a regular basis, to ensure that its level of intervention is applied systematically with the limited human resources that the agency has at the border. Lack of proper risk management can not only create a barrier to trade facilitation but also jeopardise the risk to Vanuatu's flora and fauna.

Since this concept is rather new to Biosecurity, the VeSW team provided guidance on how this exercise works, using the team's experience with applying the same concept in Customs.

A major review of the profiles was conducted in December 2020, 6 months after the automation of the Biosecurity risk management in the VeSW system. As a result of this exercise, the Biosecurity Border team was able to effectively target areas of risk while at the same time facilitate trade.



The VeSW system is now the core system used at Biosecurity to assist with its SPS operations, from admin to border control

VeSW showcased at the VAMU office opening

Officiated by the Hon. Minister of Trade, MP James Bule, at the presence of DG Trade, Development Partners and Government Officials on Friday 26th February. VeSW was showcased as one of the project being administered by the Vanuatu Aid-for-Trade Management Unit (VAMU).



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[link on the Single Window website.](#)

The overall objective of the Vanuatu Electronic Single Window project is to expand Vanuatu's GDP through increased exports. The project outcome is to increase Vanuatu's competitiveness through the reduction of cost and time of trading across its borders.

The Project is kindly funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and the Australian Government. The Vanuatu Government is also providing in-kind contribution towards the project, in terms of personnel and ICT support.

The main implementing partner in the Project is United Nations for Trade and Development, UNCTAD.

