

Local News

Preparing SANMA for 2014-2016 cruise ship promotion

By Anita Roberts

ALL EXISTING AND START-UP local tourism products, including tours, restaurants and bungalows on the island of Santo were expecting an important visit from P&O Cruise Ship agents yesterday and today.

The Vanuatu government, through the Sanma Department of Tourism (DOT), in collaboration with the Australian government-funded TVET (Technical and Vocational Education Training) center have organised for the P&O agents to conduct a two-day review on recommended tour products for the next three years -2014 to 2016 - for P&O cruise ship promotion and marketing.

Tourism is the main driver of the country's economy. While the number of cruise ships is expected to increase next year, Santo, the biggest island of Vanuatu, up to now formally offers very few products to cruise ship tourists, apart from its WWII wreck-diving sites and famous 'blue holes'.

In the past, the majority of the local recreational activities, accommodation and restaurants, have not been able to meet the required national and international standards set by the tourism sector.

That is why the tourism department, with the assistance of Sanma TVET center's training and business support, is working to enable 'clients' to dramatically improve the quality of the services they offer and be in a position to advertise products to international travel operators and tourism industry partners.

For the last two years, the DOT in partnership with the Australian government-funded TVET Sector Strengthening Program have been doing the same work as Malampa province: improving the quality of local products to the stage that they can be officially launched and set for international marketing.

This has resulted in significant increases in tourist arrivals to the province and the economic development of the province.

The Sanma tourism program is comprised of a combination of VNTC (Vanuatu National Training Council) accredited training courses and complementary on-site mentoring sessions by TVET program industry experts, Pascal Guillet and Pascal Gavotto. The program has also involved joining up the DOT provincial staff and TVET Centre Business

Development Coordinator, Elise Sailas, with the selected tour operators and various restaurants and bungalows prior to the product review session.

The team has been providing those existing and newly established products with face-to face business counseling and advice in regard to the problems and the opportunities of the sector.

According to the November cruise ship product review program', the agents are Barry Amos from South Sea Shipping, chief executive officer and risk management advisor from Adventures in Paradise and Santo Cruise Ship agents, Dave Cross and Sandy Kelvin.

They will carry out inspections and safety assessments at almost twenty sites, commencing at BP Pond, Saint Michel in Luganville then on to the showground area, Banban, Matevulu, Port Olry, Shark Bay and Hog Harbour in the east, and also south Santo.

Santo is internationally recognised for its unique



Santo's Champagne Beach (Photo: tripodvision)

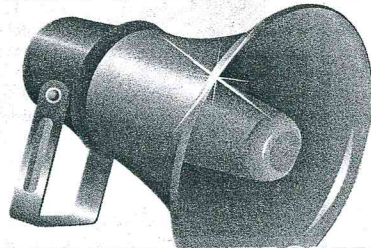
Champagne Beach as well as many eco-tourism tours. Santo has been hailed as

the place in Vanuatu which has the biggest potential for tourism in the future.

in that it includes World War II history, the Reserve Nature Park at Matantas, and famous caves, as well as the highest mountain in

Vanuatu, Mt. Tabwemasana, which is home to some of Vanuatu's - and the world's - rarest birds and butterflies.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The cables ship CS "Ile de Re" is currently installing a high capacity fibre optic cable to link Vanuatu to Fiji. As part of this installation, the vessel will be conducting operations in Mele Bay around 27th November, along the route detailed in the navigation warning below. As the vessel is restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, all marine users are asked to keep well clear during operations.

NOTICE TO MARINERS/COASTAL NAVIGATION WARNING:

Good day,

We confirm that C/S ILE DE RE will perform a cable laying operation between FIJI and VANUATU.

Please see below related schedule and information:

- A. CS ILE DE RE.
- B. Start 10th November 2013.
- C. End 28th November 2013.
- D. Planned passage plan:

	Latitude	Longitude
1.	S18 07.8080	E178 28.1080
2.	S18 10.1491	E178 27.9335
3.	S18 11.0918	E178 28.0468
4.	S18 55.2548	E177 40.2780
5.	TW/CZ FII S18 57.5107	E177 36.0160
6.	CZ/EZ FII S19 02.2422	E177 24.7025
7.	S19 31.0530	E176 18.0878
8.	EZ FII/EZ VUT S18 43.0654	E173 27.9955
9.	S18 35.9401	E172 56.1525
10.	S18 21.4380	E171 21.4093
11.	S18 11.7980	E169 35.9372
12.	EZ/CZ VUT S18 10.2537	E169 26.4514
13.	CZ/TW VUT S18 05.6542	E169 07.9929
14.	S18 05.2343	E169 06.4295
15.	S18 02.9241	E168 37.6108
16.	S17 58.5659	E168 21.3848
17.	S17 50.8430	E168 13.0549
18.	S17 48.0603	E168 12.2195
19.	S17 45.6827	E168 13.0024
20.	S17 42.2301	E168 17.2094

E. Wide berth requested minimum 1.0 nautical mile.

- Inside reefs : minimum 500m.
- Cable landing : vessels crossing between vessel aft and shore are prohibited.