

# Ambrym now on tourist map

By Anita Roberts

**SEVEN LOCAL TOURISM** services on the island of Ambrym were officially launched last week by the department of Tourism, ready for international marketing. Their launch has been made possible through the training and business development support of the Australian AID funded Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) program.

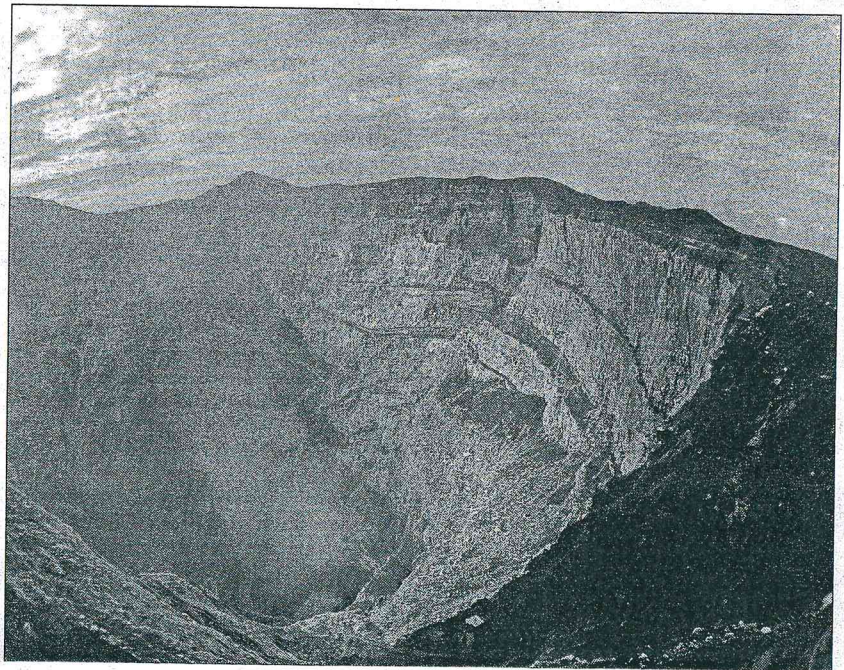
The local business include: two bungalows - Sea Roar Bungalow in the south-east and Ranon Beach Bungalow in the north - Terter Host Spring Guest House, Sylline Homestay, the Hawor Sam-Sam Cultural Tour in the west, the island's newly-unveiled tourist information board and the national accreditation of the volcano tour guide leaders.

Throughout the various event launches, the director of the department of Tourism, George

Borugu, told the people that their island is special and that the tourism department was enthusiastic about promoting it, and had been for some time, but had not been able to do so, before now, there had been no organised tourism sector and the products had not meet the required national and international standards.

However, after the days he spent visiting all these businesses, he was satisfied with what he had seen. He joined the TVET Program team leader, Anna Gibert, to express his delight at the quality of the bungalows and the improved management, cooking and food preparation and decorations to meet tourists' expectations as well as the local tours, custom dances and revived carving skills.

The enormous progress has been made through the Malampa TVET centre's provision of industry coaches and accredited training, in partner-



ship with the Vanuatu Institute of Technology.

Tourism is the main driver of the country's economy. The tourism department, in collaboration with the TVET centre's business support, has enabled 'clients' to dramatically improve the quality of the services they offer and be in a position to advertise their products to international

travel operators and tourism industry partners.

There is now significant demand from tourists to travel to Ambrym, particularly from New Caledonia.

In a few weeks' time, most of these businesses will be included in the 'Malampa Travel Call Centre', the first web-based call centre of its kind in Vanuatu that pro-

vides direct telecommunications and booking support to local entrepreneurs from the province, confirmed the Malampa Province tourism officer, Edna Paolo.

For four days, a high level delegation from the tourism department and the TVET Program launched the different services around different parts of the island.

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