

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Office of the Public Solicitor

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Bureau de l'Avocat Public

LEGAL AWARENESS REPORTS

Type of Awareness: Legal

Venue: Nimatautu Nakamal, West Tanna

Island/Country: Tanna Island

Name of Officer: Regi Melsul Temankill

Awareness Date: 24 February 2025

Funding: None

Others



BACKGROUND

On 19 February 2025, a Police Officer arrested several natives from the Nimatautu Community. In response to these arrests, the Chief of Nimatautu Community requested that the Office of the Public Solicitor conduct a legal awareness session for the community. The

legal awareness session was scheduled for 24 February 2025, running from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

At approximately 8:30 AM, the community chief arranged transportation to pick up myself, Mr. Regi Melsul Temankill. We departed from the Office of the Public Solicitor in Isangel and arrived in the Nimatautu Community after a 30-minute journey. Upon arrival at the Nimatautu Nakamal, we were greeted by community members who had been awaiting our arrival.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the legal awareness program was to inform the members of the Nimatautu Community about the actions that are prohibited under the Penal Code. The session aimed to educate the community on various legal matters, emphasizing the importance of understanding the law and its implications. By providing this knowledge, the program sought to raise awareness about criminal offenses and ensure that individuals are aware of the legal consequences of engaging in unlawful activities. Ultimately, the goal was to empower the community with information that would contribute to the promotion of legal compliance and a safer environment for all.

SUMMARY OF AWARENESS CONTENT

The legal awareness session was conducted at the Nimatautu Supreme Nakamal, delivered orally in Bislama with an interpreter present to translate the information into the Nimatautu native language. The session was divided into four separate parts.

In the first session, the focus was on bail, including the requirements and process for obtaining bail for individuals remanded in custody, as well as the strict conditions that must be followed by those granted bail. This session also covered the rights of individuals who have been arrested by the police. After the first session, attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions, which were answered by the lawyer. A 5-minute break followed.

The second session covered offenses against public order and offenses relating to religion. During this session, community members actively engaged, asking questions that were addressed by the presenter. A 30-minute lunch break followed.

In the third session, the focus shifted to offenses against morality and offenses against persons. As with previous sessions, community members participated by asking questions and receiving answers. After a 5-minute break, the final session began.

The final session covered offenses against reputation, offenses against property, and offenses against public interest. The session concluded with more community questions and answers.

At the end of the awareness program, the community chief expressed his gratitude to the Office of the Public Solicitor for responding positively to his request. He affirmed his intent to continue seeking legal awareness programs for his community. In response, Mr. Regi Melsul Temankill, representing the Office of the Public Solicitor, thanked the chief for inviting the office and assured the community that the OPS would remain available to provide legal awareness upon request, particularly from the community chief.

PARTICIPANT DETAILS

The awareness program was attended by a diverse group of community members, including men, women, youth, and children from the Nimatautu Community. In addition, several chiefs and youth from neighboring villages also participated in the session. The inclusive nature of

the program ensured that individuals from all age groups and backgrounds were informed about the legal topics discussed. The presence of these additional community leaders highlighted the broader interest in legal awareness, demonstrating the commitment of surrounding communities to enhance their understanding of the law and its implications.

METHODS OF AWARENESS DELIVERY

The awareness session was delivered orally in a face-to-face format, allowing all participants the opportunity to engage, interact, and freely ask questions. This interactive approach fostered an open dialogue, ensuring that everyone could actively participate and gain a deeper understanding of the legal topics discussed.

CHALLENGE(S)

The delivery of the awareness session was relatively fast, as I aimed to cover a wide range of topics within the allocated time.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

I recommend that, when planning a legal awareness session, it is important to consult with the community chief to gather information on the criminal activities that frequently occur within the community. By focusing the awareness on specific topics relevant to the community, we can ensure that the information provided addresses their most pressing concerns. This approach would allow adequate time to thoroughly discuss these particular offenses, helping the community members better understand the issues and their legal implications.

Signature of Officer

Date

ENDORSEMENT:

Signature of Public Solicitor

Date