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## PRESS RELEASE

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### CRIM AND VANUATU RURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK SIGN MOU TO STRENGTHEN SECURE DIGITAL IDENTITY VERIFICATION

**Port Vila, Vanuatu – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026** | The Department of Civil Registry and Identity Management (CRIM) and the Vanuatu Rural Development Bank (VRDB) have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen secure and reliable identity verification services in support of banking operations and regulatory compliance.

The signing ceremony took place today at 10:00am at the CRIM Conference Room. The MOU was signed by the Registrar General of CRIM and the General Manager of the Vanuatu Rural Development Bank.

This agreement forms part of the Government of Vanuatu's broader digital transformation agenda and reflects the Ministry of Internal Affairs' leadership role in advancing digitalisation strategies aimed at improving secure, efficient, and accountable public service delivery across government institutions.



As the national authority responsible for civil registration and identity management, CRIM continues to play a key role in supporting digital governance initiatives by strengthening secure access to identity verification services while ensuring the protection and integrity of official records.



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Under the MOU, CRIM will provide secure verification access through its controlled system while maintaining the integrity and security of its database. CRIM will also designate a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), maintain access logs for audit purposes, provide guidance and training on system usage, and reserve the right to suspend or restrict access where misuse or security risks are detected.

On its part, VRDB will use identification information strictly and solely for lawful identity verification purposes. The Bank will ensure all authorised officers are formally registered with CRIM, have signed confidentiality undertakings, and received appropriate data protection training. It will also implement strong technical and organisational safeguards, including role-based access controls and password protection.

Furthermore, VRDB will maintain audit logs of all verification requests, immediately report any suspected data breach to CRIM within 48 hours, and promptly report any identity mismatch detected. Customers will be informed where discrepancies require correction. The Bank will also ensure that no official CRIM-issued document is altered, modified, or falsified under any circumstance.

The MOU does not authorise the transfer, sale, replication, or bulk sharing of CRIM databases. Access granted under the agreement is strictly limited to identity verification purposes only, ensuring personal information remains protected and confidential at all times.

Through this partnership, both institutions reaffirm their shared commitment to strengthening secure digital services, enhancing public trust in identity management systems, and supporting the Government's vision for a modern, digitally connected, and service-oriented Vanuatu.