



**Press Release:**

**Bush Fire in Victoria, Australia**

**Port Vila, Vanuatu – 16 Jenuware 2026** | Ministri blong Intenol Afea, tru long Dipatmen blong Leba mo Employem Seves , i wantem givim wan apdet long saed blong ol Ni-Vanuatu wokman long Victoria, Australia, we ol bin bush faea hemi afektem olgeta eli long manis ia.

Ministri blong Intenol Afea i bin kasem ofisol infomesen long Vanuatu High Commission long Canberra, tru long Dipatmen blong Employment mo Workplace Relations (DEWR) blong Australia. Infomesen we DEWR i givim i talem se wan Approved Employer anda long Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme i bin ripotem ofisoli se 55 Ni-Vanuatu wokman long Victoria weh bushfaea hemi afektem olgeta. Wan narafala wokman tu i bin kasem impact, be long taem ya hem i bin stap long proses blong gobak long Vanuatu.

Blong mekem sua se ol wokman oli sef, oli bin tekem olgeta long narafala ples (evacuation) long 9 Januari i go long Mildura, Shepparton, mo Bendigo. From i gat bigfala damej long ol wok ples long Bendigo, employer i bin muvum ol wokman i go long Shepparton long 11 Januari, mo oli stat wok bakegen long Mande, 12 Januari.

Approved Employer i bin putum sam moa sapot folem fasin blong helpem ol wokman we oli bin kasem impact, we i inkludum:

- Muvem olgeta i go long narafala ples blong slip mo/ o narafala wok ples; mo
- Givim faenansel help blong pem klos mo olketa personal samting blong ol wokman we oli bin evacuat.

Dipatmen blong Leba mo Employem Seves bae i gohed blong wok klosap wetem DEWR blong lukluk gud se ol sapot oli stap givim long Approved Employer blong mekem sua se olketa oli folem olgeta rul blong PALM Scheme, we i inkludum welfea blong wokman, minimum aoa blong wok, minimum net pei garanti, mo standed blong akomodesen. Dipatmen blong Labour mo Employment Services i bin notem se DEWR i stap hapi se employer i stap folem olgeta responsibiliti blong hem long saed blong ol wokman we bush faea hemi afektem olgeta.



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Vanuatu Country Liaison Officer (CLO) long Australia, Mr. Pita Foliaki, tu i stap wok klosap wetem DEWR mo employer, mo koordinasen i stap gohed yet. Ministri i welkam mo apresiatem wok tugeta ia wetem Vanuatu CLO blong mekem sua se ol Ni-Vanuatu wokman oli kasem stret mo gud sapot.

Ministri tu i wantem talem tangkyu mo apresiatem bigwan sapot we Vanuatu komuniti long Victoria oli stap givim, we i bin help bigwan blong blong helpem ol Ni-Vanuatu sitisen long ol had taem olsem.

Ministri blong Intenol Afea i wantem letem famle mo pablik i save se welfea mo sefeti blong ol Ni-Vanuatu wokman long ovasi i stap olsem wan bigfala praoriti, mo bae mifala i givim moa apdet sapos i nid.

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**Blong karem moa infomesen:**

**Visitim MOIA website: <https://moia.gov.vu>**

**Kolem mifala: 33200**

**Ministri blong Intenol Afea**

**PMB 9036,**

**Port Vila, Vanuatu**



Press Release:

**Bush Fire in Victoria, Australia**

**Port Vila, Vanuatu – 19 January 2026** | The Ministry of Internal Affairs, through the Department of Labour and Employment Services, wishes to provide an update regarding Ni-Vanuatu workers in Victoria, Australia, who were impacted by recent bushfire events.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has received formal information from the Vanuatu High Commission in Canberra through the Department of Employment and Workplace Relation (DEWR). Information received from DEWR was that they had received formal reports from one Approved Employer under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme confirming that **55 Ni-Vanuatu workers in Victoria were affected by the bushfires**. An additional worker was also impacted; however, this worker was already in the process of returning to Vanuatu and has since safely arrived home.

As a precautionary measure, the affected workers were evacuated on **9 January to Mildura, Shepparton, and Bendigo**. Due to extensive damage sustained at worksites in Bendigo, the employer relocated workers to Shepparton on **11 January**, where they resumed work on **Monday, 12 January**.

The Approved Employer has implemented additional support measures for the affected workers, including:

- Relocation to alternative accommodation and/or worksites; and
- Financial assistance to purchase clothing and essential personal items for workers who were evacuated.

The Department of Labour and Employment Services will continue to closely monitor and work with DEWR to ensure that support is provided to the Approved Employer to ensure full compliance with PALM Scheme obligations, including worker welfare, minimum hours of work, minimum net pay guarantees, and accommodation standards. The Department of Labour and Employment Services has noted that DEWR is satisfied that the employer is meeting its obligations in relation to the affected workers.



The Vanuatu Country Liaison Officer (CLO) in Australia, Mr. Pita Foliaki, has also been engaged with DEWR and the employer, and coordination remains ongoing. The Ministry welcomes continued collaboration with Vanuatu CLOs to ensure Ni-Vanuatu workers receive appropriate support.

The Ministry also acknowledges and appreciates the continued support provided by the Vanuatu community in Victoria, whose assistance has been instrumental in offering immediate and firsthand support to Ni-Vanuatu citizens during this difficult period.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs reassures families and the general public that the welfare and safety of Ni-Vanuatu workers overseas remain a priority, and further updates will be provided as necessary.

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**For more detail:**

**Visit our website: <https://moia.gov.vu>**

**Call us on: 33200**

**Ministry of Internal Affairs**

**PMB 9036, Port Vila, Vanuatu**