Management Response

## Summary of Management Response

The Government of Australia, through DFAT and AFP, welcome the Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (Stretem Rod blong Jastis mo Sefti) Evaluation Report and acknowledges the findings and recommendations.

DFAT and AFP\* commissioned this independent mid-term evaluation to assess the performance of the Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (VAPJP, or ‘the Program’) since its inception (2017 to 2019) and to recommend improvements for the remaining period (to end 2020) and beyond.

The evaluation covers a period of significant change in the policy, economy and security context. During the period covered by the review, the Vanuatu Government released its National Sustainable Development Plan and the Australian Government launched its Pacific Step-up. As part of this, the Prime Ministers of Australia and Vanuatu agreed to a package of enhanced security cooperation, which included the deployment of additional AFP advisers; support for infrastructure; and additional support to the Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) for training over 300 new recruits; and enhanced training and leadership opportunities for the VPF.

Key findings of the evaluation include:

* The Program has achieved significant progress in some important areas at systems, organisational and community levels that builds on Australia’s previous support and is resulting in better justice for vulnerable people, particularly women. The Program has contributed to:
  + 1. System level achievements - more victims of family violence reporting to the police; higher numbers of successful prosecutions of perpetrators of family violence; and improved collaboration and systems (including for data and case management) across the sector.
    2. Organisational level achievements - improved capacity and performance of the Office of Public Prosecutions and the VPF, particularly in relation to family violence.
    3. Community level achievements - increased awareness in vulnerable groups of their rights to access the justice system and increased access to services in the form of Temporary Protection Orders (TPOs) issued through the Authorised Persons pilot (an Authorised Person is a community member appointed under Vanuatu’s *Family Protection Act* to issue TPOs).
* The Program’s “chain of justice” approach, supporting each step in the justice chain (including communities, police, prosecutions and courts), has been fundamental to the results achieved.
* It is important to continue to provide a steady balance between long and short-term support; as well as between support for community engagement (‘demand’) and improving services (‘supply’).
* The Program has achieved a positive impact on gender equality, due to its strong focus on tackling family violence, although more could be done to integrate gender across implementation. To this end, the Program’s outcome statements have driven performance towards results, although its implementing arrangements (including Monitoring and Evaluation and management systems) should be clarified and simplified.

DFAT and AFP agree with all recommendations put forward in the evaluation report. Tangible actions — both planned and already underway — to address the recommendations and other issues are outlined in the table below (Section 1.2).

## FULL MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO EACH RECOMMENDATION

Figure 1: Individual management response to recommendations

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| Recommendation | Response | Explanation | Action plan  (include responsible areas and timeframes in brackets at end of each action) |
| 1. DFAT should continue the Program into a further four-year phase from 2021-2024 as an integral part of Australia’s aid investments in Vanuatu. | Agree | DFAT and AFP\* recognise the Program has achieved significant progress in important areas and is an integral part of Australia’s aid investment portfolio in Vanuatu.  Continuing the Program for a further four years requires Government of Vanuatu (GoV) agreement and DFAT delegate approval for budget allocation. | DFAT and AFP\* will discuss with the GoV and seek to agree a further four-year phase of the Program (Port Vila post, first quarter 2020). |
| 1. Australia should continue to support a joined-up policing and justice sector approach, with the hybrid modality and joint management. The benefits of this approach far outweigh the challenges, and have resulted in better outcomes than seen elsewhere. | Agree | DFAT and AFP\* agree that a joined-up policing and justice sector approach has significant benefits and has resulted in positive outcomes. DFAT and AFP support continuing a joined-up approach with a hybrid modality (DFAT/AFP/contractor) for the next phase of the Program. | DFAT and AFP\* will discuss with the GoV to seek agreement to the continuing modality (Port Vila post, first quarter 2020). |
| 1. The next phase of the Program should recognise explicitly the contribution that the Program makes towards supporting the GoV to maintain confidence of the public in stability and security in its outcome statements, and maintain a balance between short term gains and building momentum for long term sustainable change. | Agree | Vanuatu’s stability and security (and public confidence in the same) is an important shared interest between Vanuatu and Australia, to which the Program contributes.  DFAT and AFP\* acknowledge there has been some shift in resources as a result of the Vanuatu government’s release of the National Sustainable Development Plan and Australia’s Pacific Step-up. Maintaining a balance in focus between short term gains and long term change is essential to continuing to achieve outcomes. | Subject to GoV agreement to continue the Program, DFAT and AFP\* will commence a reset process (recommendation 7) to embed a balance between the focus on short and long-term gains. The reset will also consider explicitly recognising the Program’s contribution to maintaining confidence of the public in stability and security. (Port Vila post, by end 2020.) |
| 1. The Program should maintain its commitments and efforts to promote gender equality through its support of women’s networks, male gender advocates and important data collection and reporting disaggregated by gender, as well as the focus on family violence. While there is a strong external focus on gender through program activities and outcomes, greater attention could be paid to effectively progressing internal organisational agency gender issues. | Agree | In line with Australia’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy (which applies to all ODA delivery), gender equality should be effectively integrated into all parts of program implementation. | DFAT and AFP\* will work with the contractor to ensure gender equality remains both an external and internal focus of the Program and is effectively integrated into all parts of program implementation.  Both immediately and into the next phase, the Program will continue to focus on services for women, children and youth and to invest in women’s leadership and male gender advocates. It will explore additional ways to progress internal organisational agency gender outcomes, drawing on analysis and evidence (Port Vila post and Program leadership, immediately). |
| 1. The Program should continue to invest at the community level and facilitate government agencies to better engage in reflecting on the feedback from communities in planning and delivering their services.  Efforts should be made to support the GoV to lead implementation and take this approach to scale. | Agree | DFAT and AFP\* recognise that community engagement efforts are having a tangible impact. The Program supports a range of work at community level, such as the Authorised Persons pilot and community-level workshops and these should be continued. | DFAT and AFP\* will ensure the proposed next phase of the Program continue to invest in community engagement (‘demand’) and maintains this as a steady proportion of overall Program support.  DFAT and AFP\* will support the GoV to lead implementation of community-based initiatives, such as Authorised Persons under the Family Protection Act, and to explore scaling up such approaches. (Port Vila post, throughout 2020 and beyond). |
| 1. Program management should continue to refine and socialise the existing Capacity Development Strategy which is underpinned by the adaptive planning model (Problem Driven Adaption and Iteration, PDIA). | Agree | DFAT and AFP\* agree there is opportunity to adopt a more consistent approach to capacity building across the program. | During the reset process (recommendation seven), DFAT and AFP\* will support the Program to develop a ‘one team’ understanding of capacity development and link this to one theory of change. (Port Vila post, second quarter 2020). |
| 1. A “reset” process for further adapting and updating the program management and implementation arrangements should be conducted in 2020 to prepare for implementation of the next Phase from 2021-24. This is not a re-design but an opportunity to capture the ongoing adaptation and refinement that has occurred to date, and establish a renewed framework for program governance. | Agree | DFAT and AFP\* agree there is opportunity to better align the program logic, M&E framework, annual planning and budget systems. | DFAT and AFP\* will work with the GoV and implementing partners to commence a “reset” process. This process will capture adaptation to date in the Program’s M&E, management and implementation arrangements and renew the Program’s governance (Port Vila post, commencing second quarter 2020, completed by end 2020). |