



Australian High Commission  
Vanuatu

Tuesday 4 July 2023

## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

### New medical incinerators for each province

The Honourable Gaetan Pikioune, Minister of Health, and Ms Clemency Oliphant, Australian Deputy High Commissioner to Vanuatu, participated in a handing-over ceremony of five medical incinerators on Tuesday 4 July 2023.

Acting Director General of the Ministry of Health, Judith Melsul, Director for Curative and Hospital Service, Dr Sereana Natuman and Acting Director of Corporate and Planning and Policy Unit, Dorothy Ericson, along with other health sector representatives witnessed the ceremony at Vila Central Hospital.



*Australia's Deputy High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Her Excellency Clemency Oliphant, hands over five medical incinerators to the Minister of Health, Honourable Gaetan Pikioune, for each provincial hospital to dispose of their medical waste in a safe and environmentally sustainable way.*

As populations continue to grow, finding sustainable ways to manage waste has become increasingly important. One technique that has gained popularity in recent years is incineration: the process of burning waste materials at high temperatures.



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The Ministry of Health has already opted for this practice at Vila Central Hospital, and the Australian Government through the Vanuatu-Australia Health Partnership has now provided medical incinerators that will soon be installed in five provincial hospitals.

“On behalf of the Government of Vanuatu, I thank the Australian Government for supporting the Ministry of Health decentralise its services to the provincial level with these five new medical incinerators,” said Minister Pikioune.

Biomedical engineers based at Vila Central Hospital and Northern Provincial Hospital will install the new medical incinerators, together with Andrew Lyons, an Australian biomedical engineer working in Vanuatu to support the Ministry of Health with the maintenance of medical equipment.

“Waste management is a major challenge facing communities worldwide and Australia is pleased to have been able to provide these incinerators to Vanuatu to support the Ministry of Health’s decentralisation efforts. They will help the provincial hospitals in Tafea, Malampa, Sanma, Penama and Torba manage their waste in a safe and environmentally sustainable way” said Australian Deputy High Commissioner Oliphant.

Australia and Vanuatu have worked together over the past three years through to build vaccine storage facilities in each province, distribute medical equipment to dispensaries and health centres across the country and refurbish damaged health centres to support the delivery of quality health services for all in Vanuatu.

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