



REPUBLIC OF VANUATU/RÉPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

VANUATU METEOROLOGY AND GEO-HAZARDS DEPARTMENT  
DÉPARTEMENT DE LA MÉTÉOROLOGIE ET DES GÉORISQUES DE VANUATU

Phone: (678) 24686, 22932 VOIP: 5305 Fax: (678) 22310  
Email: [admin@meteo.gov.vu](mailto:admin@meteo.gov.vu) Website: [www.meteo.gov.vu](http://www.meteo.gov.vu)  
Address: PMB 9054, Lini Highway, Port Vila, Vanuatu

(Address correspondence to Director)  
(Toute correspondance doit être envoyée au Directeur)



**Our Ref:** PV/MET-Cli/PM

**MEDIA RELEASE**, Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Cyclone season is here: Vanuatu to have 2-3 tropical cyclones for 2016/17 season**

Vanuatu is expected to have 2 to 3 Tropical Cyclones (TC) in 2016/2017 cyclone season. The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazard Department (VMGD) appeals to the general public to prepare for this season. Possible impacts coupled with current forecast for weak La Niña event can have adverse impacts on the livelihood of our people.

Vanuatu is located in the hotspot of tropical cyclone activity in the region. Each year Vanuatu and New Caledonia experience the greatest cyclone activity with at least 2-3 cyclones passing close to the countries. The Pacific region is forecast to have 8-10 named tropical cyclones from November 2016 to April 2017. TC activity for Vanuatu is anticipated to be average this season which means between two and three tropical cyclone events. The season is shaping up to be a normal to elevated risk of cyclone activity during the early (November 2016 to January 2017) and late months (February to April 2017).

The current weak La Niña conditions are forecast to last until early 2017. In the past, with similar conditions, there is a higher probability of experiencing Category 3 cyclones with reduced likelihood of category 4 or 5 systems occurring this season based on the selected analogs. Communities should make sure that they are well prepared by taking appropriate action and stay up to date with the latest information from VMGD. All communities should remain alert and be well prepared for severe events, as elevated risk of tropical cyclone activities are expected.

(To contact VMGD Divisions directly)

<b>Observations:</b>	Ph: 22433   Email: <a href="mailto:observers@meteo.gov.vu">observers@meteo.gov.vu</a>	<b>Climate :</b>	Ph: 23866   Email: <a href="mailto:climate@meteo.gov.vu">climate@meteo.gov.vu</a>
<b>Forecast:</b>	Ph: 22932   Email: <a href="mailto:forecast@meteo.gov.vu">forecast@meteo.gov.vu</a>	<b>Geo-Hazards :</b>	Ph: 24686   Email: <a href="mailto:geohazards@meteo.gov.vu">geohazards@meteo.gov.vu</a>
<b>Climate Change:</b>	Ph: 22331   Email: <a href="mailto:pccap@vanuatu.com.vu">pccap@vanuatu.com.vu</a>	<b>ICT and Engineering :</b>	Ph: 24686   Email: <a href="mailto:helpdesk@meteo.gov.vu">helpdesk@meteo.gov.vu</a>



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In Vanuatu, tropical cyclone activity is at its peak during the months of December to February but highest in January. From 1969/70 to 2009/2010 seasons, Vanuatu experienced 116 cyclones that have passed within a 500km of Port Vila. The conditions forecasted for the upcoming tropical cyclone season are similar to the seasons of 1969/1970: 1983/84; 1992/93; 1995/96, 2005/06 and 2010. With the La Niña event, Sea surface temperatures have increased in the western Pacific region therefore can influence the occurrence of TC events in the Vanuatu region. During La Niña events, there is high possibility of elevated tropical cyclones activities in the Coral sea and these systems forming in this area normally move southeastwards towards Vanuatu.

Vanuatu is in the hotspot of TC genesis area and due to the normal to elevated tropical cyclone risks for the upcoming season, people living in Vanuatu should remain vigilant at all times. People are advised to take heed of this information, and undertake preparedness actions for this season knowing that any tropical cyclone impact coupled with the current weak La Niña will have great effect on the socio-economic livelihood of people living in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department (VMGD) will continue to monitor the cyclone season with daily five day Tropical Cyclone Outlook. Information can be accessible through VMGD website ([www.meteo.gov.vu](http://www.meteo.gov.vu)), or VMGD's Facebook page. Tropical cyclone information is also included in the monthly *Vanuatu Climate Update* bulletin. SMS will be disseminated during any event while people are advice to listen to all radio outlets at all times. For specific planning advice, contact the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department on telephone 24686 / 22932.

### Further information:

David GIBSON, Director, Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department (VMGD).

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Climate Change:	Ph: 22331   Email: <a href="mailto:piccap@vanuatu.com.vu">piccap@vanuatu.com.vu</a>	ICT and Engineering :	Ph: 24686   Email: <a href="mailto:helpdesk@meteo.gov.vu">helpdesk@meteo.gov.vu</a>