

# Business Link Pacific Portal Launch Event - Vanuatu

## Event Agenda

**Date:** Thursday 1st August 2019

**Time:** 3pm to 6pm (VUT) (Including networking, kava, finger food & drinks)

**Venue:** Vanuatu Convention Centre, Port Vila, Vanuatu

**Guest of Honour:** His Excellency, Mr. Jonathan Schwass, New Zealand High Commissioner to Vanuatu

3pm	<b>Welcome</b> Introduction by Event Host - Mr. Howard Aru Acknowledgement of VIPs & guests <b>Introduce BLP:</b> - Ms. Yvonne Leo Taiki, Vanuatu Business Link Pacific Business Services Manager - Mr. Paul Wendland, Business Link Pacific Deputy Director - Vanuatu Business Link Pacific Business Advisors Network
3:10pm	<b>Opening Address</b> His Excellency, Mr. Jonathan Schwass, New Zealand High Commissioner to Vanuatu
3:15pm	<b>Business Link Pacific Online Portal video</b>
3:20pm	<b>Guest speaker #1:</b> Mr. Shaun Gilchrist – President, Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce & Industry A round up of Vanuatu’s “hot button” issues & impact on Vanuatu’s SMEs
3:30pm	<b>Guest speaker #2:</b> Mr. Jack Loughman, General Manager, Vanuatu Cooperative Business Network Innovative SME business models: cooperatives & public private partnerships
3:40pm	<b>Guest speaker #3:</b> Mrs. Votausi Mckenzie-Reur, Managing Director, Lapita Café The recipe for SME success in Vanuatu
3:50pm	<b>Guest speaker #4:</b> Mr. Glen Craig, Chairperson, Vanuatu Business Resilience Council Are you prepared for disaster? SME business resilience
4:00pm	<b>Business Link Pacific Online Portal video</b>
4:10pm	<b>Panel &amp; Portal Q&amp;A Session</b>
4:30pm	<b>Closing remarks</b> Mr. Howard Aru, Director of PBDE & Event Host
4:35pm onwards	<b>Networking</b> Guests proceed outdoors for finger food, kava & drinks
6:00pm	Event ends

**Registration is appreciated: [Click here to register](#)**  
or call Yvonne on 779 0124, or Savvy Vanuatu on 550 5500

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## Speaker Biographies

### Howard Aru



Howard Aru has a deep passion for Vanuatu's private sector development, built over his 20 years career in strategic leadership roles within the Vanuatu Government and private sector.

In 1997, he established Vanuatu's first investment promotion agency, and was the Vanuatu Investment Promotion Authority's (VIPA) first CEO and lead the agency for eight years.

Howard has served as Director General for two key Government Ministries – the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity. He has since undertaken strategic consultancy work for Government and the private sector.

Howard is now Director of PBDE, a private consultancy firm that specialises in events management agency and other work. He has coordinated numerous events since 2003, including the 2017 Pacific Week of Agriculture and the 2019 4th National Arts Festival. He holds dual Masters Degrees in Public Policy and Diplomacy.

### Shaun Gilchrist



Shaun is the President of the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and is actively involved in ongoing dialogue with the Vanuatu Government on a range of VCCI strategic initiatives including trade agreements, labour and investment laws.

Shaun has represented the VCCI and private sector at regional forums, including the successful 2019 New Caledonia trade negotiations and the recent tripartite mission to the International Labour Organisation in Geneva. He is also a director of a number of national private and public boards in Vanuatu.

An Australian Citizen by birth and resident of Vanuatu since 2009, Shaun is Chairman and CEO of Azure Pure Water, Vanuatu's first and largest bottled water manufacturer.

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## Jack Loughman



Jack Loughman is the dynamic General Manager for the Vanuatu Cooperatives Business Network (VCBN). He has a background working in government and as a farmer, and currently represents small business on the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

VCBN is responsible for empowering Vanuatu's cooperatives including by developing productive market linkages for farm produce. Since the establishment of VCBN, it has become a public agent for all cooperative farmers through the Ministry of Trade and is an effective business link between farmers and the private sector.

Under Jack's leadership, VCBN has recently partnered with Fine Foods Ltd. to process a 100% cold pressed pineapple juice, using organic pineapples from pineapple farmer cooperatives. They are also partnering on "kava juice" – an innovative new product designed and packaged for the export market. Watch out for the new "100% Yumi Coop" brand.

## Votausi Mckenzie-Reur



Votausi Mckenzie-Reur is a ground-breaking food entrepreneur and Managing Director of Lapita Café, one of Vanuatu's leading food brands. She recently co-hosted the TV program, Pacific Island Food Revolution.

Votausi is known as "The Queen of Ni- Van Cuisine" and has spent 30 years advocating in Vanuatu for healthy lifestyles including as a home economics secondary school teacher. She has a Masters in nutrition and worked as a National Nutritionist for the Ministry of Health before briefly setting up local restaurant Lapita Cafe.

A true Vanuatu SME trailblazer, Votausi has transformed her small business into a catering company and then expanded it into a major Vanuatu food processing brand producing iconic Vanuatu products such as Lapita Cafe manioc flour, taro chips, tamarind sauce and nangai nut cookies. Her company works on the "farm to table" agritourism model by sourcing local food from a network of over 1,000 farmers, processing, packaging and distributing Lapita Cafe products to consumers and directly to restaurants, resorts and Air Vanuatu.

## Glen Craig



Glen Craig is the Chairperson of the Vanuatu Business Resilience Committee and Managing Partner of specialist business advisory firm, Pacific Advisory.

Pacific Advisory is the largest South Pacific based consultancy and provides a broad range of advisory, consulting and strategic services to Governments, financial institutions, corporates, regional agencies and institutional investors in the region.

The Vanuatu Business Resilience Council provides a coordination mechanism for the private sector to engage with government and partners on resilience building, response and recovery activities.

Glen is a Vanuatu Citizen and has resided in Vanuatu for 15 years and sits on numerous private and public boards and committees. He has a significant private sector background in tourism, agriculture, climate finance, policy development with practical "hands on" knowledge of the intricacies of the region.

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