

**Note for Editor: Intended for publication in period: 26 to 28 February 2009**

**This is a regular update on progress with the Millennium Challenge Corporation Vanuatu Project compiled by the Design and Build Contractor – Downer EDi Works Vanuatu Ltd on behalf of the Project Team.**

## **MCA Update #9: Efate Ring Road & Santo East Coast Road**

### **Highlights: Santo Visit and Continuing Progress on Efate**

A small team is visiting Santo to advance arrangements for starting work on the Santo East Coast Road. Significant progress has been made with work in the Malafau swamp section.

### **Work Done Last Week**

We completed two culverts within the Malafau swamp section and have widened this entire section to its full width and shaped it ready to receive the overlay layer.

Clearing of the seaward side of the road has reached Snake Hill and a start has been made on the landward side working back towards Tanoliu. The bulk fill at the base of Meten Hill is now virtually complete.

### **Work Planned for This Week**

We plan to lay the final culvert on the Malafau swamp section and start two others near Lakenasua. Work to lay a 300 mm thick overlay on the newly widened and shaped pavement across the Malafau swamp will commence. When this is complete the pavement plant will work on shaping the pavement between Siviri and Emua villages. Vegetation clearing will continue on the landward side between Snake Hill and Tanoliu.

### **School Visits**

“Rod Sefti Awenes” presentations have been made to pikinini at: Tanoliu School, Betheny Christian School and Ulei Junior Secondary School. These sessions are designed to advise pikinini of the hazards that may exist at a roadworks site and give them information on what to do when they are in an area where road works are under way. The ready co-operation of the all school’s teaching staff and the attention of the children during these sessions is much appreciated.

### **Visit to Santo**

The joint MCA, MCC and Downer EDi Works team arrived on Santo last Tuesday 24 February and after an initial meeting with SANMA Secretary General Joel Path have had a series of meetings with other Provincial personnel and key agencies such as PWD, Water and Health. A public meeting with local stakeholders was conducted on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February. Two training workshops have been held to prepare local Santo and SANMA personnel in the environmental and social aspects of the Project. MCA and the SANMA Province Secretary-General have progressed discussions towards an agreement on how MCA and SANMA can work together to make the Santo East Coast Road project a success.

The Team are also visiting some land owners and leaseholders to gain their consent where the planned work is anticipated to affect them in some way, for example, requiring the relocation of a fence, removal of a food crop, shifting of an existing sign or trimming of a roadside tree. The assistance and co-operation of all has been noteworthy and is much appreciated. The team have made a site visit to Port Olry and have noticed that some people are already shifting their fences. This co-operation with the work is appreciated but these owners should check that the position of the new fence is in accordance with the Project’s plans.

One of the requirements of the Contract is that the road is in a trafficable condition before being handed over to the Design and Build Contractor. A meeting is scheduled with PWD to finalize a work program to build on and speed up what PWD have started at the Port Olry end of the road and in excavating additional outlets to drain water. The team are also working with the SANMA Province and HIV/AIDS Awareness Committee to integrate plans to provide additional HIV/AIDS Awareness training along the East Coast Road prior to the contractors commencing work in an area. MCA’s International Engineer and Environmental Specialist arrived Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February to ensure that plans comply with international good practice.

The team leaves Santo on 2 March.

Downer’s pavement investigation team have reached Port Olry and finished their measuring and testing exercise. The information gathered will now be passed onto our pavement and road geometry designers to use.

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**Next update will be provided on Thursday 5 March 2009**

