

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU
REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

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ASEAN-PINS TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON FISHERIES
TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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BACKGROUND PAPER ON
FISHERIES TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN VANUATU

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Fisheries in Vanuatu is a relatively new Department, having been in existence for less than 15 years. The staff of the Department of less than 40 are charged with carrying out all functions of Fisheries Development, research, monitoring and legislation in Vanuatu. The country itself has a population of about 150,000, about 300 small scale commercial fishermen fishing for deep reef snappers, and a large subsistence sector exploiting the shallow reef.

Due to the small size and newness of the Department, much of the training required by the staff is been carried out using institutions outside the country, where the specialised equipment and staff that are required is situated. It is unlikely that facilities will be developed in Vanuatu that will be able to provide any specialised, or high level training, simply because the numbers needing to be trained at these levels are so small that the costs of establishing institutions and acquiring the qualified staff to run them would not be cost effective. For this reason the Department of Fisheries looks to overseas institutions for higher education in Fisheries.

It was recognised in the early 1980's that basic fishing technology skills, business management and mechanical skills were lacking among the fishing community, and this type and level of training is appropriate to the numbers and costs involved but apart from annual 'ad-hoc' training courses for fishermen and for some of the Extension Workers in the Department, no long term training plans were developed until 1986 (as part of the EC Funded Extension Service and Training Centre Project) and these were not implemented until the arrival of an Expatriate Training Officer in 1988. The infrastructure at the new Training Centre was not completed until 1991, and the Ni-Vanuatu training staff were not available until 1990.

FISHERIES TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE IN VANUATU

The Department acquired (through the EC Funded project), a training centre to satisfy the basic skills training required by Fisheries Staff and Fishermen in the country. This facility is located on the island of Espiritu Santo in the North of the Country, and occupies a site shared with the workshop, Administration (Northern Region), and Extension (Santo). In 1993 the Government Boatyard will also be located on the site. The Training Centre buildings were completed in 1989 and the shore works handed over in early 1991. Before this training was carried out in temporary buildings both on and off the site.

The training centre consists of dormitory accommodation for 24 students and three visiting lecturers, an office, a workshop/woodworking room, a classroom and a wet room. Cooking and washroom facilities are included. Shore side facilities are a slipway, finger jetty and pier for small boats up to 12m. Ice production and cold storage units have been installed. Accommodation for the staff of the centre was also constructed.

The centre has a variety of small boats available to it. These include:-

- a 10m VAN1 inboard diesel
- a 28ft FJ design inboard diesel
- two 5.6m Hartley skiffs with 25hp outboards
- a KIR4 canoe with 15hp outboard
- a sandskipper catamaran
- a Yamaha style skiff with 25hp outboard
- a CK1 style skiff with 15hp outboard

FISHERIES TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN VANUATU

All the vessels are equipped for deep reef snapper fishing and gear for other methods and areas is available when required.

In addition to the vessels and infrastructure directly operated by the Training Centre, the resources of the Fisheries Department (Northern Region) are available to it, which include a fully equipped workshop, office facilities, covered storage areas, vehicles and the Extension Office of the Northern Region. The local fish market is also very cooperative.

STAFFING

The centre is staffed by a Manager/Instructor, an Assistant Manager (not yet appointed), two instructor fishermen, and two labourers. It also has a permanent clerk/typist. Staff from other sections of the Fisheries Department or from other Government Departments are called upon to assist in specialist areas during training courses, and on occasion a visiting lecturer from overseas has been invited to provide instruction.

Until the end of 1991 the Manager was assisted by an Expatriate Adviser, who has now departed, but it is hoped that he will be replaced in 1992.

THE TRAINING CARRIED OUT.

There are two main target groups for Fisheries Training at the Training Centre, these are:-

- a) Fishermen, who can be subdivided down into those with previous experience in fishing, and those new to the industry.
- b) Fisheries Department staff, notably Extension Workers.

NEW FISHERMANS TRAINING

Due to the structure of the Fishery in Vanuatu, whereby commercial activities have been in the past restricted to those fishermen persecuting the Deepwater snapper resource on the reef drop-offs, training for new recruits to the fishery has over the last few years concentrated on methods suitable for this fishery. This includes both the fishing technology and the supporting subjects such as small business skills, engine and boat repair and maintenance, safety at sea and care of the catch. The course lasted two months, and although there was no course fee the prospective fisherman was expected to find his own way to and from the Training Centre at the beginning and end of the course. The training was coupled to a scheme run by the Fisheries Extension service, whereby a fisherman who had successfully completed the course could use a boat owned by the Department, for up to one year, and under the supervision of the Extension Officer, so that the Department and the Fisherman himself could judge whether he was suitable to continue on and make fishing a career. To do this he would have to obtain finance from the Development Bank of Vanuatu, and this finance would only be forthcoming if he had proved himself suitable. Only about 30% of the trainees entering the courses proved to go on to be successful fishermen. Eight recruits were taken on for each course and the course run 4 times a year.

This type of training was however felt to be too restrictive for new recruits, as it concentrated too much on one resource and one main fishing method, and since the beginning of 1992 the training course has been restructured and lengthened, to include fishing methods for other target species on the reef (both fish and crustaceans), small pelagics and fishing round FADs. The new course is run twice a year for three months and starts off with 12 trainees.

Fishermen are chosen for the course if they show enough interest and are from an area where back up from Extension workers is available. Often several fisherman from one village are accepted onto a course so that a core of trained personnel is established in one area.

ESTABLISHED FISHERMEN

Established fishermen receive training on an ad-hoc basis covering subjects in which they require further instruction. Courses in simple business management, motor maintenance or boat repairs are organised, usually for groups of fishermen from one area, to reinforce and build on what the fishermen learned during their initial training. Other sections of the Department, such as the boatyard and workshop assist with these types of courses.

FISHERIES STAFF

Fisheries staff are trained for their job, through an ongoing upgrading programme covering the skills necessary for extension workers. Theoretically one course of one month is held every year for all the Extension Workers, which concentrates on one aspect of their work, and also acts as a refresher course. The Extension Workers receive other training as well, especially on specific skills which it is apparent that they are lacking and which are shown to be necessary to their work. This extra training is usually organised informally, by attachment to one of the other sections within the Department, or, on occasion, through Government Sponsored Training Schemes open to all the Civil Service. Special courses, (such as a Mates II course held in 1991), for all the Extension Workers, can also be arranged if necessary. The costs of transporting Extension Workers to and from the Training Centre are borne by the Extension Section of the Fisheries Department.

OTHER USERS OF THE TRAINING CENTRE

The training centre is used by other Government bodies and NGOs for running their own training courses in the Northern District. The cost of transporting participants to the capital (Port Vila) is such that if there are enough people from the Northern District alone to make up a course, then it is cheaper to fly up the instructors to Santo than to fly the participants down to Port Vila. Several Government Departments and NGOs take advantage of this and hire the facilities of the centre when it is not fully occupied in fisheries training activities. The hire fees also go some way to making the centre self sufficient in funds.

The Department is keen to see the facilities at the centre used as much as possible, and requests from International Organisations to use the centre are welcomed. As a result the SPC/Nelson Polytechnic Fisheries Officers course practical module is to be held in Santo in 1992.

CAPABILITIES OF THE CENTRE

Given the small teaching staff and the fairly limited resources available to the Fisheries Training Centre in Santo, training can only be carried out at the present level, which whilst adequate for the needs of fishermen and extension workers, is not high enough for staff that need more specialist training or at a higher level. The numbers requiring this higher level of training are inadequate to justify the expenditure required to provide it in Vanuatu. For this reason there are no plans to expand the Training Centres activities beyond those that it performs at present. Other forms of training will have to be sought overseas.

TRAINING BUDGET

The Training Centre attempts to generate as much revenue as possible. This is done through the sale of the catch generated by the practical training programmes, the sale of ice from the ice production facilities on the site and through charges made for hiring the facilities or vessels by other users. This income does not completely cover the costs of running the centre. The Government, through the Department of Fisheries budget also provides a sum of 2,500,000vt (approx US\$23,000) which is used to top up the revenue generated from other activities. The salaries of the Manager, Assistant Manager and the clerk/typist are paid by central Government.

OVERVIEW

It can be seen that the Training Centre in Espiritu Santo is a small operation, befitting the numbers of students and level of training required for Ni-Vanuatu fishermen and extension workers, but does not offer specialist or academic types of fisheries education. For short courses where the specialist trainers and lecturers would be bought in it does offer possibilities for regional training on specific subjects.

Robert H Lindley.....April 1992
Principal Fisheries Extension Adviser