



**BUSINESS LICENCE  
APPLICATION PROCESS  
- GUIDELINES FOR  
TOURISM OPERATORS**

## WELCOME

The Vanuatu Department of Tourism (DoT) is pleased to present you with the **Business Licence Application Process – Guidelines for Tourism Operators**, developed for Vanuatu's tourism industry as part of the **Vanuatu Tourism Accreditation System (VTAS)**.

The DoT would like to thank all the tourism industry stakeholders who have participated in the process so far and supplied us with valuable feedback and suggestions on how we can support you, our tourism operators, through the 2015 Accreditation System rollout.

During the 2015 grace period, you will be issued a Tourism Permit even if your business does not meet all the Minimum Standard requirements listed on the Self-Assessment Forms. This year we are focusing on information and feedback collection to allow us to make amendments to the Minimum Standards before the end of this year. This will hopefully ensure that what we have ready for 2016 is realistic and a system that is practical and workable for Vanuatu.

You are not required to provide proof or any supporting documents at this stage – but we encourage you to be honest when filling in the forms. After collecting all information, we will be conducting spot-checks and scheduled consultations to go through the forms and discuss a way forward for operators that have any shortfalls. We want to support operators so they can address these areas before 2016 (when this system becomes mandatory) as well as get feedback from everyone regarding the proposed 2016 implementation plan.

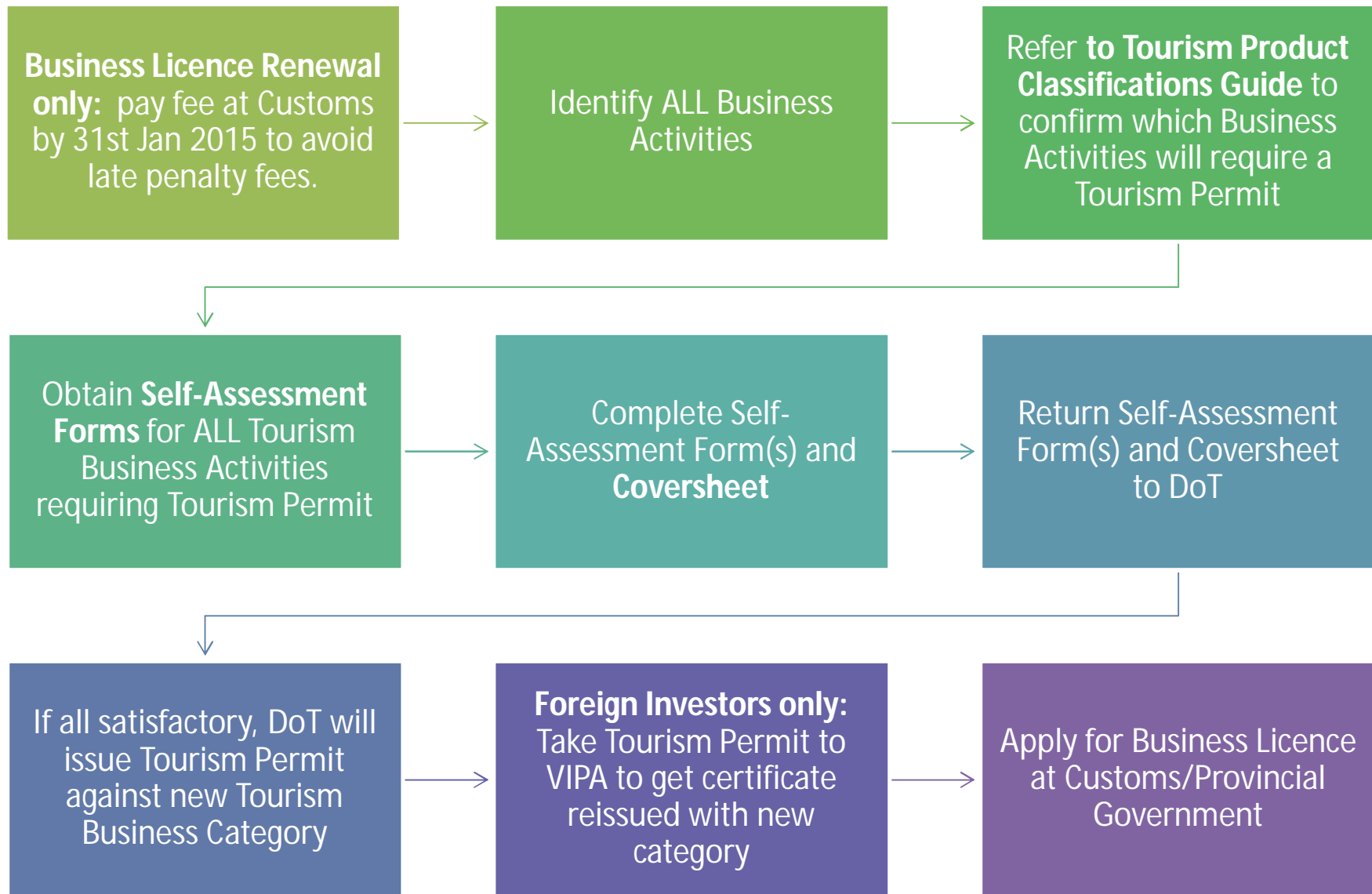
Please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Tourism with any queries – in person, or by email: [tourismpermits@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:tourismpermits@vanuatu.gov.vu)

*Tankiu tumas*

  
  
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**Business Licence Renewal only:** pay fee at Customs by 31st Jan 2015 to avoid late penalty fees.



If you already have a Business Licence, you will need to lodge an application for renewal **before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015**. Please apply at Customs/Provincial Authority using your current Business Category. As long as you lodge before 31<sup>st</sup> Jan, you will avoid any late penalty fees. Operators who will be applying for a Business Licence for the first time in 2015 do not need to act before 31<sup>st</sup> Jan.

Identify ALL Business Activities



If your business caters to **tourists only** or a **mixture of tourist and local** clients, then it is classed as a Tourism Business Activity. Tourism Business Activities must be classified under one of the below Categories:

**Category D3 (Requires Tourist Permit)**

All Tourist Accommodation

**Category D3 (Does NOT require a Tourist Permit)**

Restaurants  
Catering Services  
Cafés  
Bars  
Takeaway Outlets

**Category E3 (Requires Tourist Permit)**

Travel Agents  
Tour Agents  
All Tour Operators  
Other Tourism Support Services:

- Air tourism activities
- Water tourism activities
- Tourism yacht or boat charters
- Land Transport services to tourists (bus/taxi)
- Rental or hire services to tourists
- Tours and transfer services

**Category E4 (Requires Tourist Permit)**

Vehicle Rental and Hire Services  
Equipment Rental and Hire Services  
Boat Rental and Hire Services  
Other Rental and Hire Services

**Category G2 (Does NOT require a Tourist Permit)**

Personal, Social and Recreational and Repair Services  
Recreational and pleasure grounds and facilities  
Spas, beauty salons and centers  
Barbers and hairdressing services

Note: Many businesses will have multiple Tourism Business Activities on offer for example:

Spider Man Bungalows

- Island Bungalow
- Transfer service for guests
- Restaurant for guests
- Custom Village tour
- Kayaking

Refer to **Tourism Product Classifications Guide** to confirm which Business Activities will require a Tourism Permit



If a Tourism Business Activity requires a Tourism Permit for 2015, it will be listed in the **Tourism Product Classification Table**

If a Tourism Business Activity is NOT listed in the **Tourism Product Classification Table**, it does NOT require a Tourism Permit in 2015 and you may proceed to Customs/Provincial Government and apply for your Business Licence.

## 2015 TOURISM PRODUCT CLASSIFICATION TABLE

BUSINESS SECTOR	BUSINESS TYPE (Licence Category)		DESCRIPTION (Key Characteristics)	DoT REQUIREMENTS
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	D3 (a)	<b>Hotel</b> [Business]	Accommodation establishment with no less than ten (10) units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including a reception and meals for visitors</li> <li>• Room service available</li> <li>• Daily housekeeping services</li> <li>• Availability of a safe storage area</li> <li>• Restaurant, food and beverage facilities</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Tourist information desk</li> <li>• Toilet facilities available around common public areas</li> <li>• Tea and coffee making facilities</li> </ul>	<b>Tourism Accommodation Operator Standards</b>
		<b>Resort</b> [Family, Beach]	Accommodation establishment with the same key characteristics as a hotel plus recreational activities and swimming pool.	<b>Tourism Accommodation Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (b)	<b>Motel &amp; Self Contained</b>	Accommodation establishment with no less than five (5) units that can range from studio apartments through to one to three (1-3) bedroom apartments that are self-contained. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic kitchen</li> </ul>	<b>Tourism Accommodation Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (c)	<b>Unique</b> [Modern Bungalow, Tent Lodge, Glamping, Theme]	Accommodation establishment that provides a unique Vanuatu experience .	<b>Unique Accommodation Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (d)	<b>Holiday Home</b> [House, Vacation Rental - short to long term stay, Cottage, Holiday Lodge, Villa]	Accommodation establishment that allows full/complete use of accommodation for no more than three (3) months.	<b>Tourism Accommodation Operator Standards</b>

	D3 (e)	<b>Guest House</b> [Hostels, Backpackers, Bed & Breakfast]	Accommodation establishment with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common room/hall</li> <li>• Single bedroom or</li> <li>• Shared rooms with bunk beds, dormitory rooms</li> <li>• Kitchen with all facilities for cooking and dining.</li> <li>• Guests must be able to cook for themselves.</li> <li>• Shared bathroom and toilet</li> <li>• Less than 15 rooms available</li> <li>• On site Manager</li> </ul>	<b>Guest House Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (f)	<b>Island Bungalow</b>	Accommodation establishment traditionally built with thatched room(s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Architectural design reflects local Vanuatu island historical building structure</li> <li>• Village setting with basic facilities</li> </ul>	<b>Island Bungalow Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (g)	<b>Home Stay</b>	Accommodation establishment that allows for a visitor to rent a room from a local family in a home-like setting. It is common to visitors to use this for improving their language skills and getting familiar with the local culture and lifestyle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate room is provided</li> <li>• Meals available daily</li> </ul>	<b>Home Stay Operator Standards</b>
	D3 (h)	<b>Camp Site</b>	An establishment where visitors set up their temporary tents and/or book temporary dwelling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communal cooking facilities</li> <li>• Toilet and shower facilities</li> <li>• Barbeque facilities</li> <li>• Tent sites available for hire</li> </ul>	<b>Camp Site Operator Standards</b>
<b>BUSINESS SECTOR</b>	<b>BUSINESS TYPE</b> (Licence Category)	<b>DESCRIPTION</b> (Key Characteristics)	<b>DoT REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>Air Tourism Transport</b>			
	E3 (1)	<b>Helicopter &amp; Plane</b>	Tour packages that include air transportation.	<b>Air Tourism Transport Operator Standards</b>
	<b>Sea Tourism Transport</b>			
	E3 (2a)	<b>Water Transport</b>	Watercraft used to provide public or private transport. Operating in a similar manner to a taxi or service bus.	<b>Marine &amp; Motorized Water Operator Standards</b>
E3 2(b)	<b>Yacht or Boat Charters</b>	A ship, boat or vessel (differ in sizes) that can be powered by a motor or sail. They are locally based operators and are mainly used for leisure purposes such as holidays or a cruise. This service allows for the chartering or hiring of a boat and could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational sailing, power vessels or boats</li> </ul>	<b>Yacht &amp; Boat Charter Operator Standards</b>	

		Land Tourism Transport		
	E3 (3a)	<b>Land Transportation</b>	<b>Service Bus</b> A service vehicle available with a driver to transport passengers to specific drop off bus stops at a fixed price as approved by the Land Transport Board.  Vehicle model used must meet DoT Approved list.	<b>Tourism Transportation Operator Standards</b>
			<b>Taxi</b> Is a service vehicle fitted with a taximeter, hired exclusively along with the driver to transport passengers to any specific destination(s). Higher cost than buses as it stops right outside the place you need to be.	<b>Tourism Transportation Operator Standards</b>
TRANSPORTATION	E4	<b>Rental &amp; Hire Services</b> [Car, Bicycle, Scooter, Coach, Trucks, Quads, Tuktuk, Bus]	Is a service whereby the owner hires out vehicle(s) based on an agreement where a payment is made for the temporary use of the asset or service, based on an agreed price.	<b>Rental Service Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (3b)	<b>Tours &amp; Transfer</b>	A Licenced tourism business that operates selected products for a tour and is also a passenger transfer service using vehicle(s) with suitable passenger seats.  The primary purpose of this business is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide visitor transfer service from specific pick up and drop off points</li> <li>A tourism business and not any other</li> <li>Does not operate from taxi ranks or be used to ply for hire or tout on any other public places</li> <li>Can charter the services of other vehicles provided they (other vehicle) must meet DoT requirements and also, must display temporary tour and transfer business signage on for the period of charter.</li> </ul>	<b>Tour &amp; Transfer Operator Standards</b>
BUSINESS SECTOR	BUSINESS TYPE (Licence Category)		DESCRIPTION (Key Characteristics)	DoT REQUIREMENTS
TOURISM TOURS & ACTIVITIES	E3 (4a)	<b>Educational and Interest Tours</b>	A tourism business operator that packages and organises tour(s) through existing interest based establishments. Examples include (but are not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffee factory tour</li> <li>Garden tour</li> </ul>	<b>Educational &amp; Interest Tour Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (4b)	<b>Travel Agency</b> [Outbound Operator]	A tourism business operator that packages and organizes travel arrangements for departing tourists/travelers to another destination outside of Vanuatu. These arrangements can include hotel reservations, tours of the area, airport transfers, meals, etc.	<b>Travel Agency Operator Standards</b>

	E3 (4c)	<b>Inbound Operator</b> [Tour Agent]	Business operator that handles domestic travel arrangements (packages and organizes travel arrangements) for arriving tourists. These can include hotel reservations, airport transfers, meals, Shore Excursions/Tours, etc.	<b>Inbound Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (4e)	<b>Handicraft &amp; Arts Shop</b>	A small-scale retail set up selling locally produced arts and crafts.	<b>Handicraft &amp; Arts Shop Operator Standards</b>
<b>TOURISM TOURS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Tour Products (Sea/Water based activities)</b>			
	E3 (5a)	<b>Marine &amp; Water Adventure</b>	Tours that involve participation in a water experience that fulfils an individual's adventure travel desire. Experience can be unusual, bold, exciting and perceived risk. Examples include (but are not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parasailing</li> <li>• Underwater walks</li> <li>• Fly board</li> <li>• Paddle board</li> <li>• Glass bottom boat</li> <li>• Snorkeling</li> <li>• Traditional canoe tour</li> <li>• Kayaking</li> </ul>	<b>Marine &amp; Motorized Water Tour Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (5b)	<b>Scuba Diving</b>	A form of underwater diving tour with breathing equipment. Stands for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus. Specific recreational interests include cave, deep sea reef and wreck diving.	<b>Scuba Diving Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (5c)	<b>Game Fishing Tour</b>	This activity involves recreational anglers pursuing fish for sport.	<b>Game Fishing Operator Standards</b>
	<b>Tour Products (Land based activities)</b>			
	E3 (6a)	<b>Land Adventures</b>	Tours that involve physical participation that could be unusual, bold and exciting with a perceived risk. Examples include (but are not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Zip line</li> <li>2. Zorbing</li> <li>3. Blo kart</li> <li>4. Quadbike</li> <li>5. Bicycle tour</li> <li>6. Abseiling</li> <li>7. Horse riding</li> <li>8. Waterfall</li> <li>9. Suspended bridge tours</li> <li>10. Cave tour</li> <li>11. Volcano</li> <li>12. Hiking [bush trekking]</li> </ol>	<b>Land Adventure Operator Standards</b>
	E3 (6b)	<b>Traditional &amp; Cultural Activity</b>	This tour can involve a variety of activities for visitors. Examples include (but are not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Custom Village</li> <li>2. Land diving</li> <li>3. Fire walking</li> <li>4. Custom Dance</li> <li>5. Cultural Feast</li> <li>6. Traditional Farm Tour</li> </ol>	<b>Traditional Activity Operator Standards</b>



Obtain **Self-Assessment Forms** for ALL Tourism Business Activities requiring Tourism Permit



**Self-Assessment Forms** are available for each of the Tourism Business Activities listed in the **Tourism Product Classification Table**

You must complete a Self-Assessment Form for EVERY Tourism Activity you currently operate, or intend to operate in 2015.

Complete Self-Assessment Form(s) and **Coversheet**



**Self-Assessment Forms** are a checklist for the Minimum Standards for each Tourism Business Activity.

In order for the Department of Tourism (DoT) to issue your Tourism Permit - and give your business the benefits of Tourism Accreditation - you must meet all of the requirements listed as 'mandatory'.

If you are unable to meet any of the 'mandatory' requirements, please indicate this on the coversheet, and a DoT staff member will contact you to discuss your particular situation and offer support if necessary.

The Self-Assessment Form includes a declaration in which you agree to the DoT conducting a spot-check during 2015. If you have made a false declaration, this could result in your Tourism Permit and your Business Licence being cancelled.

Return Self-Assessment Form(s) and Coversheet to DoT



Please return the Self-Assessment Forms, the Cover Sheet and proof of current Tourism Association membership to the DoT as soon as possible.

**By hand:**

Reception  
Department of Tourism  
Georges Pompidou Area

**By email:**

[tourismpermits@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:tourismpermits@vanuatu.gov.vu)

If all satisfactory, DoT will issue Tourism Permit against new Tourism Business Category



Once forms are received, the DoT will check the 'mandatory' requirements before issuing the Tourism Permit.

The DoT is here to assist you with understanding and implementing the Minimum Standards which are needed to obtain your Tourism Permit. We wish to support business owners, so will be flexible where you are unable to meet a 'mandatory' requirement at time of Self-Assessment. The DoT has the authority to make exceptions based on individual circumstances so it is important that you note any issues on the Coversheet and/or discuss with the DoT.

In line with

**Foreign Investors only:**  
Take Tourism Permit to VIPA to get certificate reissued with new category



Foreign Investors will need to obtain an updated VIPA certificate before applying for their Business Licence against their new Tourism Business Category.

Please take your Tourism Permit to VIPA so it can be reissued with the new category. It will be reissued free of charge against the same certificate validity period.

Apply for Business Licence at Customs/Provincial Government



Please take your Tourism Permit to the relevant Authority to process your Business Licence. Please note a separate application is required for each municipality and/or local government in which you conduct business.

You will need to complete a Business Licence Application Form, available from your issuing Authority.