

To: Judges, Masters, Magistrates, Island Courts, Court Officials and Courts support staff and Members of the Legal Profession (Public and Private Lawyers) and Court users

A Protocol in times of an approaching Tropical Cyclone

There are three levels of Tropical Cyclone Warnings, also known as colour alerts, which are widely published in Vanuatu in the event of an approaching tropical storm. I am hereby setting out for all legal practitioners and Court staff what these warnings mean in relation to the operation of the Magistrate's Courts, the Island Courts, and the Supreme Court and Registry.

Level One: Blue Alert

A Cyclone is forecast to affect Vanuatu within 24 hours – BE PREPARED as Gale Force winds will start within 24 hours

While a blue alert is in place, all the Courts and the Supreme Court Registry will continue to operate as normal during the working day.

Level Two: Yellow Alert

A Cyclone is forecast within 12 hours – GET READY, ACT NOW as Gale Force winds will start within 12 hours

While a yellow alert is in place, the Courts and the Supreme Court Registry will close immediately and remain closed until 2 hours after the alert level is reduced. Thereafter operations will return to normal.

Level Three: Red Alert

A Cyclone is imminent – STAY IN SHELTER OR SAFE PLACE

While a red alert is in place, the Courts and the Supreme Court Registry will remain closed. The alert level may reduce to Level Two, in which case the Courts and Supreme Court Registry will remain closed until 3 hours after either the Level is reduced to Level One or there is no further alert in place. In the event that the reduction or removal of Alert Levels occurs after 2pm, then normal operations will resume from the following day.

In exceptional circumstances due to devastation caused, I reserve the option of extending the length of Courts and Registry closures while clean-up and repairs are undertaken. In that event, announcement of such extension will be widely disseminated.

I introduce this protocol so that there is no confusion within the legal community and the Court users as to what each Alert Level means in relation to the operation of the Courts and the

Supreme Court Registry. If there are any questions relating to this Protocol as well as any queries that arise during a tropical storm please contact the Chief Registrar, Supreme Court on:

(00678 26715).

(00678 7744060).



Chief Justice, Vincent Lunabe

27 May 2022