



GUIDE

PROACTIVE PUBLICATION

GOVERNMENT OF VANUATU

Published by the Right To Information Unit

Department of Strategic Planning, Policy & Aid Coordination
Office of the Prime Minister
Republic of Vanuatu



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CONTENT

1	Introduction To Proactive Publication	1
<i>a</i>	<i>Scope of Proactive Releases</i>	
<i>b</i>	<i>Principles & Legislations</i>	
<i>c</i>	<i>Proactive Disclosure Duties</i>	2
2	How To Proactively Publish Information	3
<i>a</i>	<i>Disclosure & Publication Scheme</i>	
3	What To Publish	4
4	Updating Published Information	5
5	Setting Up & Publishing On Social Media	6
<i>a</i>	<i>Create A Facebook Page</i>	
<i>b</i>	<i>Sharing A Website Link</i>	7
<i>c</i>	<i>Public Interest Information</i>	
<i>d</i>	<i>Watermark</i>	
<i>e</i>	<i>Hashtag Guide</i>	8
<i>f</i>	<i>Publishing Formats</i>	10
6	Language Level Of Publication	11
	Acronyms	12

1. INTRODUCTION TO PROACTIVE PUBLICATION



This Agency Proactive Publication Guide is produced in pursuant to section 71 of the Right to Information Act. This guide has been developed to assist government agencies, relevant private entities and private entities to develop internal policies and practices in relation to the proactive release of official information, including responses to requests for information under the Right to Information Act No 13 of 2016.

A. SCOPE of Proactive Releases

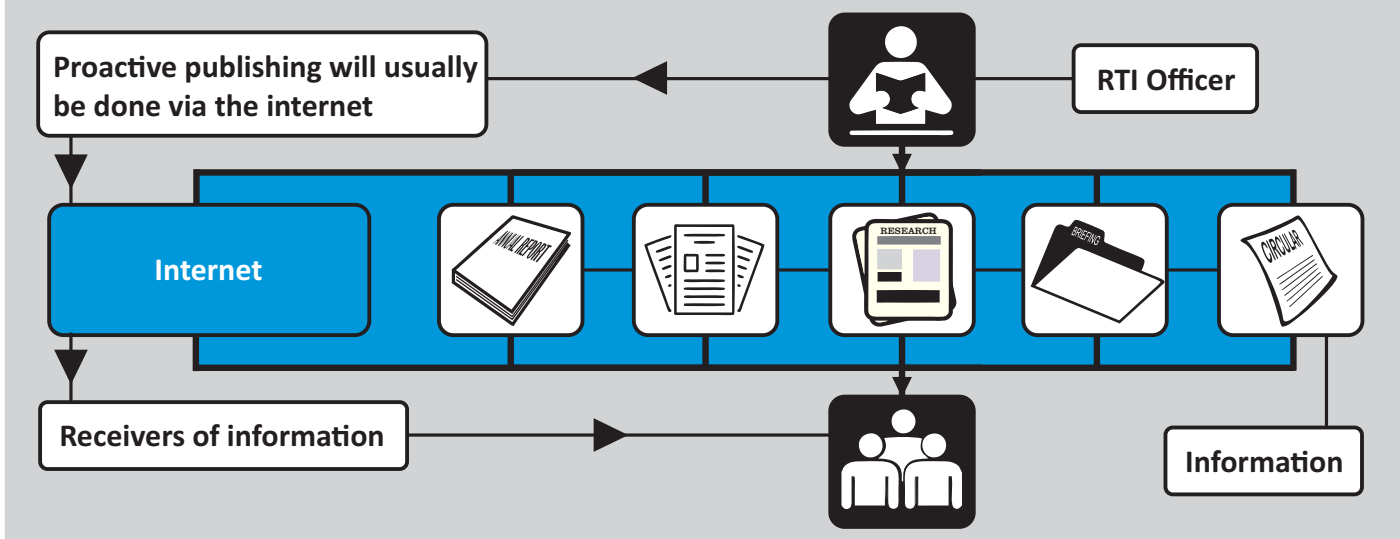
Individual agencies will understandably have their own publishing protocols; however this guide will guide each agency to publish according to the proactive requirements of the RTI Act.

Due to the variety of information that is required to be published, each publication must be treated in a proactive and innovative manner. This guide will assist agencies to manage the risks associated with types of information that are required to be published.

Proactive release of information includes:

- **Publishing a wide variety of agency-produced documents without any request from the public.** (e.g. Annual Reports, Statements of Intent, Research Reports, Briefings, Circulars, Activity Reports and etc.)
- **Publishing the same (or edited) information that has previously been released to an individual under the RTI Act.**

Figure 1: Proactive Release Diagram



B. PRINCIPLES & LEGISLATION

The Guiding Principles

- **Support increased proactive release (including publishing appropriate RTI Act responses) in line with the RTI Act's purpose to make official information more freely available.**
- **Ensure that employees exercise caution and due diligence before making official information available and to assess the potential effect of releasing the information.**

c. PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE DUTIES

The Right to Information Act not only requires the Government to provide information upon request, but to also impose a duty on public bodies to actively disclose, disseminate and publish, as widely as possible.

This has a number of positive outcomes:

- **It minimises the time, money and effort required by the public to access important but routine information.**
- **It helps people to better understand what information they can access and how and where to seek it.**
- **It reduces the overall number of individual requests that agencies have to process, thereby reducing the administrative burden on the government to implementing the right to information law.**

THE RTI ACT HAS A VERY COMPREHENSIVE PROACTIVE PROVISION UNDER PART 2



2. HOW TO PROACTIVELY PUBLISH INFORMATION



Section 6(8) of the RTI Act requires that “any information required to be published under section 6 is to be disseminated widely and in such a form and manner that is easily accessible to the public”.

Publish means making known or communicating information to the public through existing and innovative means.

This is a proactive provision for government agencies and relevant private entities because it establishes the need to disseminate information through innovative, reliable and accessible options, and it discourages the habit of storing information and it promotes publishing and sharing information as widely as possible.

The published information must be made available to the public in a format that is **acceptable** and **comprehensible** to all literacy levels. The proficiency of the language that is to be used must be produced for public comprehension and not merely as a form of public record.

Acceptable

Meaning that information must be published in a format that will satisfy and engage recipients, for example; a video publication, infographic, a photo or a text file.

Comprehensible

Meaning that information must be published in the level of language that can be understood by anyone, regardless of their literacy levels.

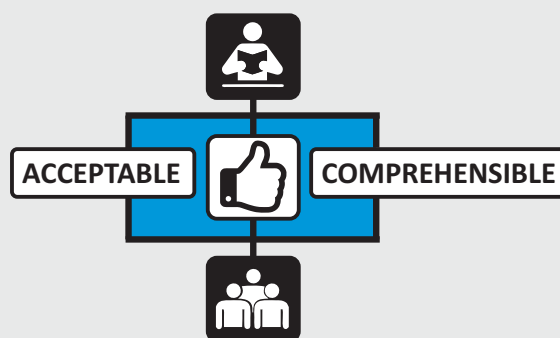


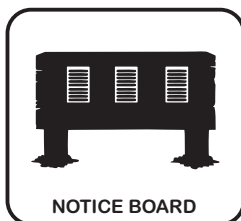
Figure 2: *Acceptable & Comprehensible.*

Government agencies will need to consider the different forms of disseminating information at all levels including Area Councils and Provincial Headquarters where more reliance may be placed on noticeboards and other physical platforms.

They will also have to devise their own disclosure and publication schemes/strategy in line with their agency publication policy.

A. DISCLOSURE & PUBLICATION SCHEME

Government agencies, relevant private entities and private entities may publish information for the public through:



Or any other available means for publishing information as the Minister may specify by order.

At a minimum, all information should be routinely put on your organisation's website (if you have one; if you don't, you should consider creating one, as the internet is an increasingly useful tool for disseminating information in Vanuatu).

However, since the internet is not yet readily accessible in areas throughout Vanuatu, such information should also be kept as hard copy at each of the offices/units of your organisation for people to access.

Each governing authority must identify the communication platforms that their area of governance can effectively utilize.



Information must be published on platforms that are most convenient to the respective governing authority.

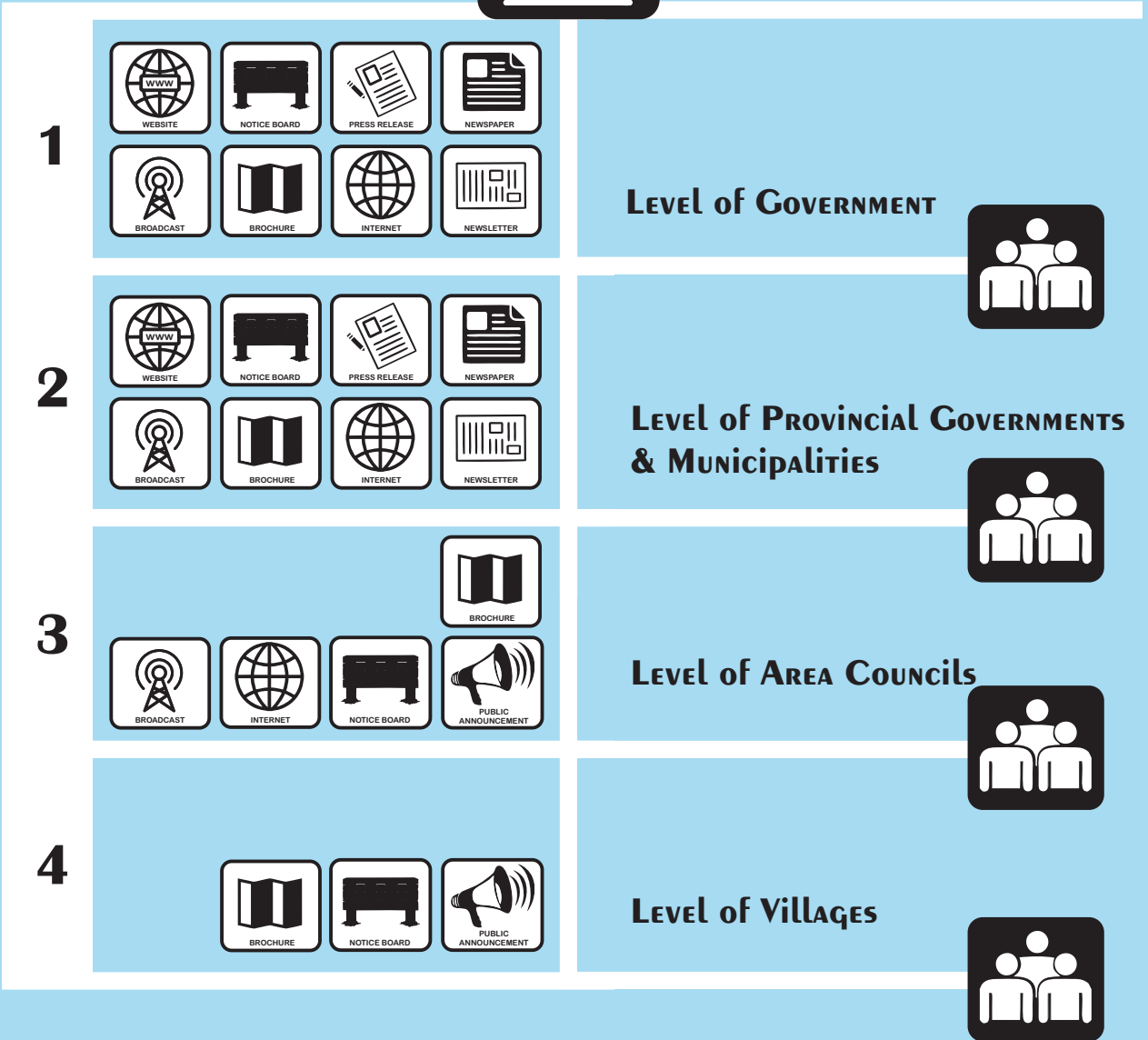


Figure 3: Levels of Publication Platforms

3. WHAT TO PUBLISH



The RTI Act Section 6 sets out a list of 15 categories of information which have to be proactively disclosed by all Government agencies and relevant private entities.

This information must be published and disseminated in each official language. Information to publish includes the following:

- a. A description of its structure and functions.
- b. A list of the entities falling under it including their location, opening hours, and subjects handled.
- c. The title, business address and contact details of the Principal Administrative Officer.
- d. The particulars of its finances.
- e. A directory of its officers and employees and a brief description of the functions and powers of its officers and employees.
- f. The procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability.
- g. A simple guide to its information-keeping systems.
- h. A statement of the types and forms of information and categories of documents that are held by it or used by its officers and employees in the discharge of its functions.
- i. Relevant details concerning any services it provides directly to members of the public.
- j. The content of all decisions or policies it has adopted which affect the public, along with the reasons for them, any authoritative interpretations of them and any important background material.
- k. The particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with or representation by the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation of its policies.
- l. The procedure to be followed in making an application for information, the particulars of facilities available to citizens for obtaining information, including the working hours of a library or reading room, if maintained for public use.
- m. Any direct application or complaints mechanisms available to members of the public regarding acts or a failure to act by that Government agency or relevant private entity, along with a summary of any applications, complaints or other direct actions by members of the public and that Government agency or relevant private entity's response.
- n. The names, designations, contact details and other particulars of its Right to Information Officers.
- o. Such other information deemed necessary in the public interest or as may be prescribed by this Act or any other Act.

The Government must also publish information about its functions and activities including:

- p. Laws, rules or guidelines applicable to elections.
- q. Electoral rolls for public inspection.
- r. The broadcast sessions of Parliament across Vanuatu.
- s. Transcripts of parliamentary proceedings.
- u. Copies of all Bills and subsidiary legislation; and terms of reference, submissions and final reports of Parliamentary Committees.
- v. Court decisions.

If a Government agency or relevant private entity or private entity publishes information required as stated above, then the Government agency or relevant private entity or private entity to which the information relates is to be treated as having complied with its obligation to publish under the RTI Act.

The Information Commissioner will publish names of any Government agency or a relevant private entity that fails to comply with Section 6 of the RTI Act.

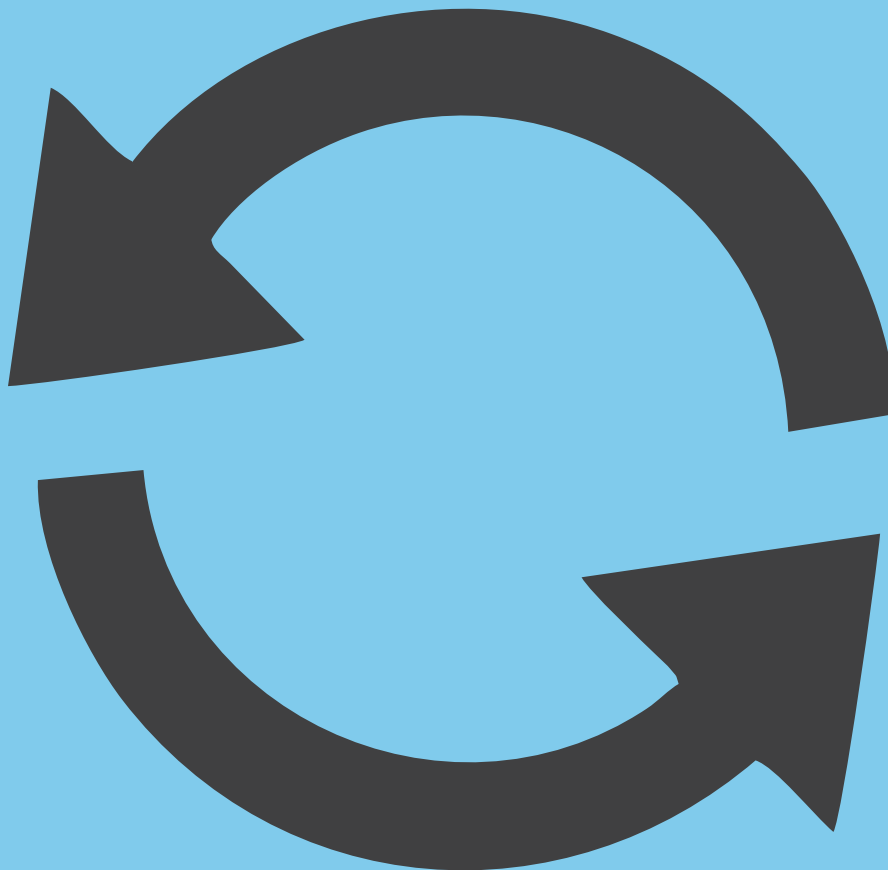
4. UPDATING PUBLISHED INFORMATION



Section 6(2) of the RTI Act requires that, at a minimum, information should be updated every 12 months and at intervals of not more than 6 months.

However there are certain information that can be updated earlier, for example the names and the contact details of Right To Information Officers should be updated at least every month.

Government agencies and relevant private entities must consider the best approach that will satisfy public interest and demand, certain information will need to be published or updated on a timely basis so as to maintain public accessibility and trust.



4. SETTING UP & PUBLISHING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

As of 2017 about 82% of Vanuatu have the ability to access the internet according to the Telecommunications Radiocommunication Broadcasting Regulator, therefore government agencies will need to utilize this development as an opportunity to reach more people with their publication.

The recommended social media network for RTI publications in Vanuatu is Facebook due to its large number of users in Vanuatu, however that does not restrain initiatives to use other networks like Twitter and YouTube.

Government agencies are encouraged to create Facebook Page accounts and to actively publish information through their Facebook networks. It is important that your Facebook account act as an extension of your agency's website and not as an independent online site.

Things to do when creating a Facebook account:

- Enter your website's html address in the allocated bars.
- Your cover image must be updated regularly with the watermark of your agency and the Government of Vanuatu
- Your agency's logo or an identifying image that represents your agency must be used as a profile image.
- Contact details, location address, and postal address must be inserted into the allocated bars.

A. CREATE A FACEBOOK PAGE (AGENCY) ACCOUNT

You must create a Facebook Personal Account to be able to create the Page account, if you already have an account please follow the steps below to set up your agency's Facebook Page Account.

Note: If your agency already has a Facebook Page, please ensure that your account is set to the the requirements of this publication guide.

STEP 1

Go to facebook.com/pages/create

STEP 2

Click **'Standard'** when Facebook asks you to choose Page type.

STEP 3

Fill out the required information

STEP 4

Click **'Get Started'** and follow the on-screen instructions.

Notify the Right To Information Unit's Publications Officer when you have completed setting up your Facebook Page to receive further assistance.

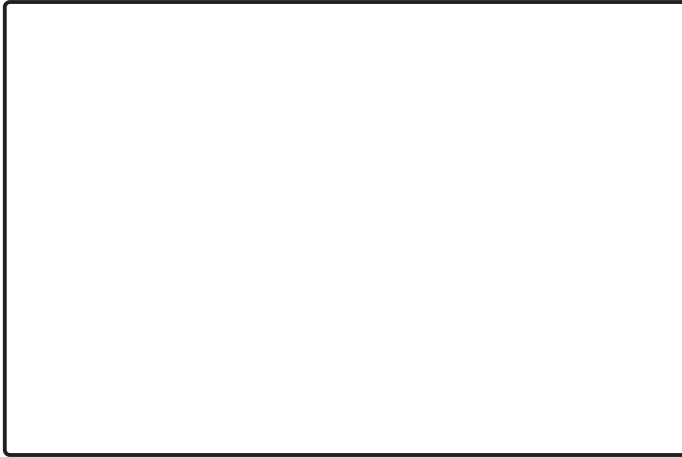
Email: hkevin@vanuatu.gov.vu
 Tell: 23150
 VOIP: 2680

If you need assistance please do not hesitate to contact the Right To Information Unit.

Tell: 23150
 VOIP: 2680

b. SHARING A WEBSITE LINK

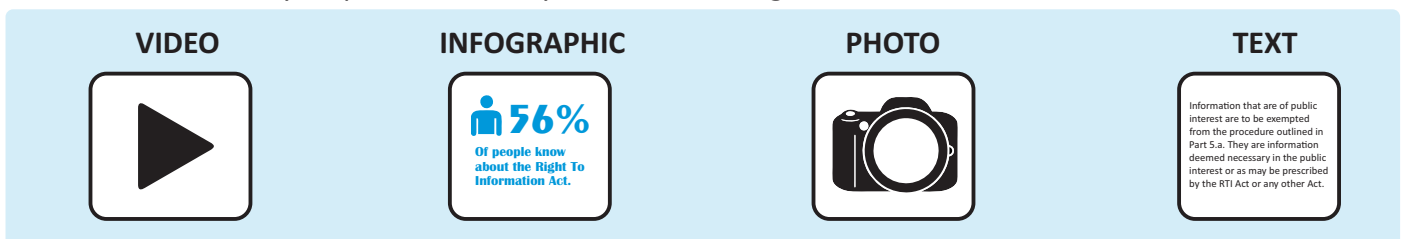
Your Facebook Page Account is an extension of your website, therefore published posts on your website must be shared as a link on your Facebook account with a title and a brief description including the hashtag rules.



c. PUBLIC INTEREST INFORMATION

Information that are of public interest are to be exempted from the procedure outlined in Part 5.a. They are information deemed necessary in the public interest or as may be prescribed by the RTI Act or any other Act.

This information may be published in any format, including;



c. WATERMARK

Watermarking is the insertion of an identifying image on a video or an image to claim ownership of the material.

Any information published inline with Part 5 of this guide must be watermarked with the identifying images of the publishing agency or agencies.

If there are other partners involved in the project or activity their identifying images should be included according to their approval.



c. HASHTAG GUIDE

A hashtag is a metadata tag used on social networks to make it possible for users to easily find your messages. To make it easier for people to find your publication, you must include the following hashtags;

#youragency #raetblongsave

Replace **#youragency** with the hashtag of your agency from the following list:

#	Hashtag	AGENCY
1	#vanpmo	Prime Ministers Officer
2	#vanpac	Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination
3	#vanco	Citizenship Office
4	#vanlang	Language Services Department
5	#vangrt	Government Remuneration Tribunal
6	#vpmu	Vanuatu Project Management Unit
7	#vanmfa	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
8	#vandfa	Department of Foreign Affairs
9	#vandet	Department of External Trade
10	#vanance	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
11	#vandfot	Department of Finance and Treasury
12	#vanmlnr	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
13	#vanland	Department of Lands
14	#vanalffb	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity
15	#vanbio	Department of Biosecurity
16	#vanmia	Ministry of Internal Affairs
17	#vanternal	Department of Local Authorities
18	#vanlabour	Department of Labour
19	#vancivil	Civil Status Department
20	#vanclimate	Ministry of Climate Change
21	#vmgd	Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department
22	#vandoe	Department of Energy
23	#ndmo	National Disaster Management Office
24	#vanenviro	Department of Environment
25	#vanmjcs	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
26	#vancorrectional	Department of Correctional Services
27	#vanwomen	Department of Women's Affairs
28	#vanmoe	Ministry of Education
29	#vaneducation	Department of Education
30	#vanmigration	Department of Immigration
31	#vqa	Vanuatu Qualification Authority
32	#ura	Utilities Regulatory Authority
33	#vanculture	Vanuatu Cultural Centre
34	#vanarchives	National Archives
35	#vanombudsman	Office of the Ombudsman
36	#vnpf	Vanuatu National Provident Fund
37	#varstc	Vanuatu Agriculture and Research Training Centre
38	#vfsc	Vanuatu Financial Services Commission
39	#vancommerce	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
40	#trbr	Telecommunications, Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator

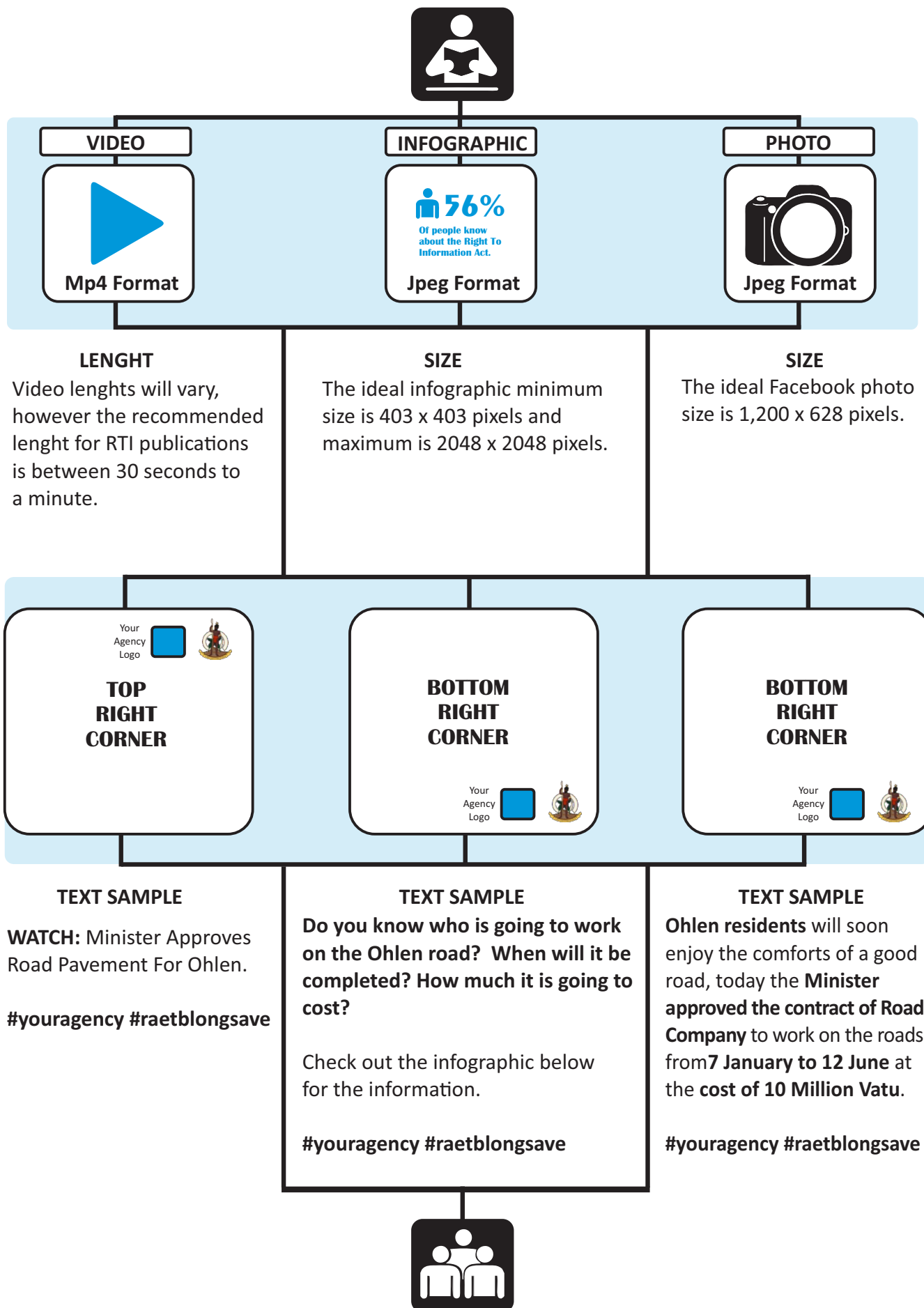
Replace **#youragency** with the hashtag of your agency from the following list:

#youragency #raetblongsave

#	Hashtag	AGENCY
41	#vantourism	Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, Industry and Ni-Vanuatu Business
42	#vanindustry	Department of Industry
43	#vanperative	Department of Cooperative
44	#vanfisheries	Department of Fisheries
45	#vanhealth	Ministry of Health
46	#vanpubhelt	Department of Public Health
47	#vandcspp	Department of Corporate Services, Policy and Planning (Ministry of Health)
48	#vansecurity	Vanuatu Police Force, Vanuatu Mobile Force, Police Maritime Wing
49	#vanelectoral	Electoral Office
50	#vanec	Electoral Commission
51	#pvmc	Port Vila Municipal Council
52	#vanstats	Department of Statistics
53	#vancustoms	Department of Customs
54	#vanagri	Department of Agriculture
55	#vanforest	Department of Forestry
56	#vanlivestock	Department of Livestock
57	#vantourism	Department of Tourism
58	vancomms	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

b. PUBLISHING FORMATS

When publishing a video, a photo or infographic on Facebook make sure that your publications are saved in this formats for good quality and cheaper accessibility:



b. LANGUAGE LEVEL OF PUBLICATION

The target recipients of published information may be categorised as being in the intermediate and novice level of the English, French and Bislama language. The intermediate and novice levels includes everybody regardless of their literacy and language comprehension level.

Therefore, information published according to this guide must be in the intermediate or novice level, below is a brief description of the levels and their examples;

LEVEL SAMPLES	LEVEL DESCRIPTION
<p>We cannot continue to be stagnant in the age of scientific and technological advancement in the world.</p> <p>I challenge institution heads, that Vanuatu must change its complacency mentality to advance more opportunities for our people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUPERIOR</p> <p>Superior level uses a lot of technical and very 'official' type vocabulary.</p> <p>This language level is usually used by people with academic background.</p>
<p>We cannot continue to be quiet in this time of science and technology.</p> <p>I challenge the head of schools, that Vanuatu must change its relaxing behaviour and create more opportunities for our people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">INTERMEDIATE</p> <p>Intermediate level uses what we will call the 'people's vocabulary'.</p> <p>This language level is used universally in every day communication.</p>
<p>We cannot be quiet. Technology is coming up.</p> <p>Every school must change how they work. They must make more chances for our people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NOVICE</p> <p>Novice level uses very simple language that can be understood by children.</p> <p>This language level is usually used by people learning a new language.</p>

It is a requirement for information published under the Right To Information Act to be in the most effective methods of communication as stated in Part 2 Section (8) of the Act.

ACRONYMS

DSPAC

RIM

RTI

Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination

Records and Information Management

Right To Information



GUIDE

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