Vanuatu - Checking into Aneityum and Costs involved

This information comes from Diego on Meccetroy and David on Elysium – June 2019

If you are coming from New Zealand to Vanuatu it is useful to be able to check into Aneityum. (Also called Anatom if you have French charts).

As you will see from the Vanuatu Customs web site, if you want to check into Anetyum you need to request approval by sending an email to customsborder@vanuatu.gov.vu. You may not get a timely response so send it well ahead of departure. And if you get no response, just make sure you have a copy of your email to show the police in Anetyum if they ask for it.

On arrival, (and check the GHR photo gallery for pictures of the anchorage near Mystery Island that Diego took), you will go ashore and start the check in process with the officials that are there. However, you will not be able to complete this process until one of their colleagues from Port Vila arrives. They only fly in when there is a cruise ship to clear.

The cruise ship timetable for Mystery Island is on the MSC website. There are 3-4 ships a month during the cruising season.

<http://crew-center.com/mystery-island-vanuatu-cruise-ship-schedule-2019>

This will give some idea as to how long you will have to wait in Aneityum for this process. It is a pleasant place to stay unless there is a westerly. (In these conditions you may consider just going up to the little U shaped anchorage on the north side and coming back later).

Costs for check in at Aneityum are, in vatu,

6000 Biosecurity

5500 Customs

4800 Immigration

You will get some signed and stamped forms that show you have paid this. If a receipt is needed you may get that in Port Vila. You can change money at the bank but if you are definitely going there you may want to arrive with sufficient vatu for there and Tanna. On July 1, 2019 1USD was 115vatu.

It should be mentioned that the above costs are not cast in stone as other boats have had different charges when they checked in at Port Vila. Europeans get three months free entry on arrival. Non Europeans get one month free then can apply immediately for an extension of 3 months for 6000vatu. In Vila it appears that costs for non Europeans are 5500 plus 6000 for Customs and Biosecurity plus 6000 for the extension.

Elysium did their check in at the Miko Guest House with cordial officials. They will tell you to keep your garbage on board and deposit it with Biosecurity when you get to Port Vila. You will be able to purchase a Digital phone card at Esters on the far west side of the town/bay. (Walk west past the small stream and it is another 100 meters or so . The tourist /bank building is the middle part of the N side of the bay).  These phone cards are 500 vatu and you can top up online or with top up cards. Other sources of phone cards add a surcharge. If a ship is in port the internet is reliable 24/7 but otherwise it is dependent on solar power so maybe off at night time. During the day they may run a generator to charge the internet AP.

Onto Tanna.

To visit Tanna’s Mt Yasur volcano, and this is a spectacular trip, you will be charged 9750 vatu per person. Roughly 100USD. Transport for two people from Port Resolution is 5000vatu for two so your round trip is roughly USD250 for two people. Try and pick a clear night and each person needs a flash light. It is worth the cost.

What may not be worth a stop in Tanna is the ash that might cover your boat if you end up down wind! In this case you may want to consider a flight from Port Vila and a stay in one of the rustic motels. This has the added advantage of allowing you to visit the isolated village that has ‘homes’ up in the banyan trees. A two night stay is needed for this. In trade conditions you will not be too affected by soot.