

Overview

Commencing Monday 2nd April a series of earthquakes, the largest reportedly registering 8.1 on the Richter Scale, struck the Western Provinces of the Solomon Islands (about 10kms deep near the town of Gizo and 345 kms west of Honiara). Large tsunami waves (reports range from 2m to 10m) are reported to have struck the islands in the Western Province area of Solomon Islands and some parts of PNG.



DG Mike Gregory advises he has appointed RIDN John Lawrence to handling fundraising, IPDG Charles Guesdon to coordinate all relief and reconstruction, and DGN Wayne Morris is our man on the ground in the Solomon Islands. He reports that several thousand people in Gizo are homeless and without food, water or sanitary facilities. Whilst there are many Australian and NZ aid agencies currently on site providing assistance, the need for further aid is increasing as remote communities are progressively contacted.

IPDG Charles as Relief / Reconstruction Coordinator reports:.

Currently Rotarians on the ground from Honiara and Gizo, together with personnel from the Australian NGOs AusAID, OXFAM, Care Australia as well as NZAid are covering immediate needs. The urgent priorities are shelter, sanitation, cooking utensils water collection and storage. Shelter Boxes, Aqua Boxes and Solar Water purifiers are in transit from the UK and South Australia. NZ has been extremely helpful.

- Establish communications with suppliers of Shelter Box, Aqua Box and Solar Water Purifiers to arrange purchase and transport of these commonalities. 200 Shelter Boxes, 200 Aqua Boxes and 30 Solar Water Purifiers arrive in Brisbane on Thursday.
- Processing about 150 email during the 2 day period following the tsunami relating to offers of help, fund raising in conjunction with John Lawrence, establishing contact with Rotarians on the ground in conjunction with Wayne Morris, Nathan Kere and RC of Gizo's Jackie Thomas, enabling an assessment of the scope of urgent needs such as cooking utensils, shelter, sanitation and clean water.
- Contact with AusAID, and DFAT with the aim of obtaining approval to use Fed Govt air transport from Brisbane to Honiara/Gizo.
- Currently the aid boxes from the UK and elsewhere arrive by air in either Brisbane or Sydney, Rotary in Australia then tranships to Gizo.
- Collating offers of HR assistance for future use as Project Volunteers in the infrastructure reconstruction phase.

Later this week our "Coordination Group" comprising me, John Lawrence (fund raising), Bill Waterfield (transport and storage, DIK), and Jack Rynn (disaster management) will meet to discuss the way ahead . To date our contact has been by phone. The last few days have been busy, with progress hampered by the Easter holiday and the absence of access to public officials.

RIDE John Lawrence – Fund Raising

Phase 1- Easter Saturday. All D9600 clubs have been contacted and encouraged to collect in the major shopping centres on Easter Saturday. This placed quite a strain on many clubs and some shopping centre bureaucrats – some rising to the occasion while others will schedule collections over the ensuing weeks. Some 50 posters and display kits were designed & printed by John Miesen and then driven to distant clubs by David Kumeta of Ashgrove /The Gap (as well as managing 3 collection booths on Saturday)—**an unbelievable achievement!!!!!!**

We also asked all Australian and New Zealand Districts to help and first cabs off the rank leading the way were Wishart with \$700 donation and Toowoomba North collecting \$1,500. We have had helpful contact with UK and Scottish clubs, especially about shelter boxes supply. District 9600 results are still coming in by phone and mail, with the average collection by clubs averaging \$1,000 - typical results include: Mooloolaba collecting \$4,500; Ashgrove/The Gap \$4,100, Noosa Heads Daybreak \$1,064; Planetarium about \$1,500 (and were “moved along” twice in the city but plan to be out there for the next 3 weekends!); Pine Rivers Daybreak \$1,143; Aspley \$937; Brisbane Mid City \$318 (and planning more collections). Cheques from D9630 clubs received today (Tuesday) include RC Salisbury \$1,000 and RC Woolloongabba \$500. We have also received many club pledges – and look forward to getting them all into the trust fund, then across to RAWCS-NR OAF (Western Solomons Tsunami Appeal).

Phase 2: Clubs initiate further collections using their own arrangements and helped by the kits we provided.



Walter Buchanan from RC of Aspley (and our newly announced DG 2009-10) collecting at the Hyper-dome on Saturday