



Australian High Commission
Vanuatu

Australian assistance to Tropical Cyclone Harold

July 2020



A message from Australia's High Commissioner to Vanuatu

Her Excellency Sarah deZoeten



Australia and Vanuatu share a close and longstanding friendship that spans forty years of diplomatic relations. It is enhanced by our people to people links and underwritten by our shared values and desire for a prosperous and secure region. Australians were touched by the response of the Government and people of Vanuatu during the recent bushfires in Australia. When the people of Vanuatu face challenges Australia wants to be there to help them too. That is why we did not hesitate to respond to the Vanuatu Government's request to provide assistance following Tropical Cyclone Harold.

Australia has provided Vanuatu with more than 885 million vatu in immediate relief assistance. This includes: humanitarian relief supplies such as blankets, lanterns, shelter kits and hygiene kits; support for the Government of Vanuatu in areas including health, education and policing; and support to international and local NGOs and the Vanuatu Red Cross. A total of 125 tonnes of humanitarian supplies have been delivered to Vanuatu on Royal Australian Air Force C-17 flights, with more supplies, including school tents, coming by sea.

We stand with the people of Vanuatu, especially those in SANMA, MALAMPA and PENAMA provinces as they recover from the devastation caused by Tropical Cyclone Harold.

Since TC Harold made landfall in Vanuatu on 6 April 2020, Australia has:



Provided **885 million vatu** to support Vanuatu's Tropical Cyclone Harold response



Delivered over **125 tonnes** of medical and humanitarian supplies including shelter, WASH and kitchen kits and solar lights



Released Australian-funded **prepositioned relief supplies** for immediate distribution by the Vanuatu Red Cross society



Supported **32 medical teams** to provide health services to over 5500 patients in Tropical Cyclone affected areas



Supported the deployment of **additional police personnel and long-term security advisors** to affected provinces



Supported **local and international NGOs** to assist with the Vanuatu Government's efforts to provide immediate assistance to affected communities



Agriculture and food security

The Australian-funded Vanuatu Skills Partnership is helping support immediate access to food, as well as ongoing food security, for many communities affected by Tropical Cyclone Harold. This support includes providing agricultural training, seeds and equipment to farmers and using its Skills Centres to establish 'food corridors' between cyclone affected communities and those that have a surplus of crops.



Education and Training

Australia is supporting the Ministry of Education and Training to provide school tents so children whose schools have been damaged by TC Harold can return to class. Australia is also helping fund the reprinting of curriculum materials and is working with the Ministry on plans to build back better some damaged education facilities including school classrooms and kindergartens.

Australia, through the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, is also supporting the women in the Malampa Handicraft Centre in Malekula to weave and distribute essential household items including protective floor mats for families whose houses were destroyed or damaged by the cyclone. The Partnership also recently helped the Handicraft Centre to run a successful sale in Port Vila injecting much needed funds back into the province.

Policing and Justice

Australian Federal Police and Defence personnel worked alongside their Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) colleagues to support the immediate cyclone response and help them continue to deliver critical services, including those led by the Family Protection Unit. Australia is also providing funding support for immediate repairs to damaged VPF infrastructure.

Australia, through the Defence Cooperation Program, is providing enduring assistance to Vanuatu's police vessels RVS *Tukoro* and *Turoroa* to enable their ongoing operation and logistical support to cyclone response.

Australia, with the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, is also supporting the distribution of "offices in a bag" to Authorised Persons in affected areas to create awareness about domestic violence and if needed, to issue protection orders to keep families safe.



Infrastructure

Assessment teams confirmed that Australian-funded school building and the Luganville market house, which were built by local companies to Vanuatu building code standards, withstood the Category 5 winds.

Australia has provided an additional 117 million vatu to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities – Public Works Department (PWD) to undertake critical repairs to some roads and bridges damaged by the cyclone. This rebuilding will improve access to markets, and medical and education facilities, and will provide local employment and economic stimulus.



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