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Large scale aid delivery to support those affected by Tropical Cyclone Winston ^[2]



Tropical Cyclone Winston, the strongest storm ever recorded in the Southern Hemisphere, tore across Fiji on Saturday 20 February, devastating the Pacific nation.

CARE Australia is on the ground with local partner Live & Learn in some of the worst affected areas, assessing damage caused by the storm and working with the Fijian Government to reach those in urgent need.

With the help of CARE Australia's airline partner, Virgin Australia, CARE aid workers have been transported to Fiji to join the emergency response efforts. CARE and Live & Learn teams are working to ensure the most vulnerable, including women and children, can access safe and clean water and families who have lost everything can get back on their feet.

Head of CARE Australia's emergency response team in Fiji, Charlie Damon says: "Our key focus is on rehabilitating water supplies and promoting sanitation and hygiene, as safe drinking water is crucial and we know diseases can spread so easily after this type of event."

As part of the response, CARE Australia, Virgin Australia and Live & Learn are coordinating one of the first large scale aid relief movements in to Fiji. The first cargo load of approximately three tonnes of sanitary aid will leave Melbourne Airport bound for Nadi at 9.45am on Saturday 27 February.

Media are invited to capture the loading and departure. For further information or an interview, please contact Sam Bolitho, Senior Media Advisor, CARE Australia on 0419 567 777, or Jennifer Woodward, Virgin Australia Public Affairs on 0448 511 938.

DETAILS

Date: Saturday, 27 February, 2016

Time: 8.00am arrival and airport registration for 8.45am filming opportunity

Photography/Footage: The cargo loading of aid to VA185 MEL-NAN (Departs at 9:45am).

CARE Australia spokesperson available on request

Location: Melbourne Tullamarine Airport Tarmac, Virgin Australia Terminal

Media registration: Please RSVP to Jennifer.woodward@virginaustralia.com [3] to confirm photography request and to gain tarmac access at Melbourne airport. Please bring photo ID to be permitted access.

On Saturday 27 February, please present to the Virgin Australia Duty Manager at Counter K.

Further Background:

- Soap Aid have donated five tonnes of soap to CARE Australia and Live & Learn to be distributed as part of a wider water, sanitation and hygiene response to ensure families in Fiji can stay clean and healthy in the aftermath of this disaster
- In the immediate aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Winston Virgin Australia announced an extra return service to assist guests returning from Nadi, Fiji
- There are restrictions in place 'in country' on what aid materials will be accepted, therefore the Australian public is encouraged to provide cash donations to relevant organisations rather than individual goods donations at this time
- Virgin Australia will soon have collection tins for CARE Australia's Cyclone Winston Emergency Appeal in selected airports around Australia. For more information or to donate, people can also visit www.care.org.au/winston [4] or call 1800 DONATE (1800 020 046)

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[3] <mailto:Jennifer.woodward@virginaustralia.com>

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