

Pacific – Cyclone Harold

ETC Situation Report #3

Reporting period 01/05/2020 – 12/05/2020

ETC Pacific SitReps on Cyclone Harold will be distributed in line with the evolving situation on the ground.

Highlights

- The ETC in the Pacific has been allocated US\$199,262 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for the response to Cyclone Harold in Vanuatu.
- The connectivity solution created by the ETC, Crisis Connectivity Charter (CCC) signatory Intelsat and regional satellite partners has been prepared for deployment to three key sites in Vanuatu to set up connectivity services for humanitarians and affected communities.
- In Fiji, CCC signatory Inmarsat is supporting the ETC by providing government assessment and response teams with satellite capacity.



Wantok Vanuatu prepare satellite equipment they donated, with satellite capacity from Intelsat, ready to deploy to three sites in Vanuatu.

Photo: Wantok Vanuatu

Situation Overview

Between 1-9 April, Cyclone Harold tore through the Pacific, causing widespread destruction in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga. At its peak, the cyclone reached severe category 5 as it made landfall in Vanuatu where it became the second strongest tropical cyclone to ever hit the country. The cyclone caused extensive damage across large parts of Vanuatu – including to communications networks, broadcast radio and television infrastructure and power on the islands of Santo, Malekula, Pentecost, Ambae, Maewo, Ambrym and Epi. In Fiji, Cyclone Harold caused extreme flooding, power outages and severed communication links across the largest island of Viti Levu, the Southern Lau group and Kadavu island.

At the same time, most Pacific Island Countries are in states of emergency as they respond to COVID-19 and have enforced travel restrictions to slow the spread of the virus.

ETC Activities

Vanuatu

- The ETC in the Pacific has been allocated US\$199,262 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for the response to Cyclone Harold in Vanuatu. The CERF allocation will cover the installation of shared connectivity services and solar power solutions in three cyclone-affected locations. It will also be used to assist Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) to restore broadcast radio and television transmission infrastructure in two locations affected by the cyclone, to bring key sources of information for the affected communities – such as Radio Vanuatu – back on air.
- The ETC in the Pacific continues to work with national authorities and Crisis Connectivity Charter (CCC) signatory Intelsat – and assisted by regional satellite partners Wantok Vanuatu, Gilat and Av-Comm – to set up shared connectivity services via satellite for humanitarian and affected communities in three cyclone-affected locations; south Pentecost, West Coast Santo and north-east Malekula.
 - As per the ETC response project implementation plan, Wantok Vanuatu has tested the inter-agency connectivity solution at the test site in Port Vila – capital of Vanuatu – to ensure it will be fully functional in the three identified locations.
 - Since 11 May, logistical arrangements have been ongoing to transport the satellite equipment and temporary power solutions to the three remote sites in Vanuatu.

Fiji

- The ETC has extended the provision of satellite terminal equipment to the Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to support the data needs of remote teams deployed to Kadavu and Southern Lau, which were both severely damaged by Cyclone Harold. The satellite capacity was enabled by CCC signatory Inmarsat.
- Inmarsat satellite capacity is supporting several response teams from the government of Fiji who deployed by boat on 3 May to conduct further detailed assessments as well as to distribute food rations.

Funding

- The ETC in the Pacific has been allocated US\$199,262 in Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF) for the response to Cyclone Harold in Vanuatu.

Challenges

- Movement restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to limit response activities.
- Deployment of ETC services to the three sites of south Pentecost, West Coast Santo and north-east Malekula are complex as these locations are remote and hard-to-access.



Information

- A dedicated information-sharing space on the ETC's response to Cyclone Harold in the Pacific can be found on the [ETC website](#).
- ETC Pacific [Cyclone Harold Infographic](#).
- A story on the ETC's response to Cyclone Harold including the activation of the CCC in the Pacific can be found [here](#).

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