



Australian Government

#PNGAusPartnership

HIGHLANDS EARTHQUAKE FACT SHEET

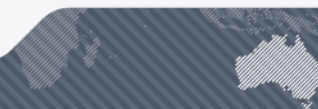
AUSTRALIA IS SUPPORTING PAPUA NEW GUINEA IN ITS RESPONSE TO THE EARTHQUAKE IN HELA, SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS, WESTERN AND ENGA PROVINCES



The RAAF C-130 delivering supplies to the earthquake-affected Highlands

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- The Australian Government has extended its sympathies to the people of Papua New Guinea, particularly in Hela, Southern Highlands, Western and Enga Provinces affected by the earthquake on Monday 26 February and ongoing aftershocks.
- On 1 March, PNG Prime Minister O'Neill announced a State of Emergency in Hela, Southern Highlands, Western and Enga Provinces, and made available 450 million Kina (approximately AUD 180 million) for disaster relief, service restoration and the rebuilding of infrastructure.
- At the request of the Papua New Guinean Government, Australia is playing a leading role in the international relief effort.
- The Australian High Commission has led the coordination of Australia's response efforts.
- Australia's total humanitarian commitment to PNG's earthquake response to \$1.6 million. Australia will provide:
 - up to \$1 million to support vulnerable women and children in the earthquake-affected areas, in partnership with UN Women, the UN Population Fund and UNICEF
 - \$400,000-worth of electrical transformers to re-establish reliable power supplies in Hela and Southern Highlands Provinces, which will benefit businesses, health clinics, schools and family homes
 - this will see reliable power restored to some 3,500 PNG Power customers



- up to \$200,000 worth of humanitarian supplies, including tarpaulins, water containers, blankets, tents and bed mats has been delivered through 16 RAAF C-130 flights into the affected areas
 - these flights also transported medical and humanitarian supplies from the PNG Government, UNICEF, the World Health Organisation, the UN Population Fund, PNG Red Cross, CARE, Oil Search Foundation and Population Services International.
- Since 2 March around 30 Australian High Commission staff have supported relief efforts by supporting coordination, logistics and distribution.
- The Australian Defence Force has launched *Operation PNG Assist 2018* to support the relief operation. In addition, Australian Defence Force members as part of the Australia-Papua New Guinea Defence Cooperation Program are providing direct support to the Papua New Guinea Defence Force in its operations to distribute PNG Government medical supplies and equipment to hospitals and health facilities in the Hela and Southern Highlands provinces.
- The Australian Defence Force has conducted a comprehensive damage assessment of the Highlands Highway, which has been passed to PNG authorities and is informing relief efforts, including immediate road clearing work.
- Following a request from the PNG Government, Australia deployed three CH47F Chinook helicopters and additional ADF personnel to help distribute supplies to affected communities
 - since 10 March the Chinooks continue to deliver supplies, including food, water and medical kits, to distribution points in the Southern Highlands Province (including Walagu, Mendi, Nipa, Kagua and Ialaibu) and in the neighbouring Western Province (Dodomona village).
- A RAAF C-17 Globemaster, loaded with humanitarian assistance and additional ADF personnel, departed from Townsville on 10 March to support the Chinooks' operations
 - A RAAF C-130J and B-300 Kingair will provide an air bridge, transporting supplies and personnel, between Port Moresby and the Southern Highlands.
- Australia is working closely with the Government of PNG and other humanitarian partners to coordinate relief efforts
 - two Australian-funded logistics specialists have deployed to assist with the distribution of relief supplies
 - two humanitarian specialists have been deployed to work with the Australian Defence Force, PNG Defence Force and humanitarian partners to ensure supplies reach vulnerable communities
 - an Australian-funded specialist working with the PNG National Disaster Centre is assisting with information management and coordination
 - Geoscience Australia is providing advice on the scientific basis for the earthquake and seismic activity in the region.
- The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) has additional information including a list of [accredited non-government organisations](#) and detailed information about public donations.

TRAVEL ADVICE

- The travel advice for Papua New Guinea on the Smartraveller website was reissued on 26 February to alert Australians to the earthquake and reports of damage to infrastructure and service.



- Australians in affected areas should follow the instructions of local authorities.

