

On the Scene

WINTER 2011 NEWS & STORIES FROM THE SALVATION ARMY

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Queensland disaster response

“The Salvation Army is fully committed to offering the greatest level of support possible to individuals and groups in communities in Queensland hit hardest by flooding and Cyclone Yasi,” says Major Paul Moulds, who is heading up The Salvation Army’s flood response effort. “The needs and devastation are great, and we plan to stay working within devastated communities as long as required,” he says.

Within the first weeks of the flood crisis in Qld, **The Salvation Army** released \$750,000 in cash assistance to the frontline of human need.

The Salvation Army’s response has included assisting in the immediate relief effort by supporting and feeding those affected by floods, and is now moving into the ongoing recovery phase.

A detailed plan for use of all donated funds includes a number of responses underway or in the planning stages. These include:

- **Immediate support** to flood victims – catering and emotional support have been provided by Salvation Army Emergency Services teams and chaplains, both in evacuation centres and then via mobile units as people moved back to clean up their homes. Thousands of people were fed by The Salvation Army at evacuation centres in Rockhampton, Theodore, Emerald, Bundaberg, Brisbane, Strathpine, Ipswich, Gympie, Toowoomba, Warwick, Maryborough and Grantham. (At the two main Brisbane evacuation centres alone, around 30,000 meals were served over a 10 day period). The Salvation Army has also assisted individuals and families affected by Cyclone Yasi, feeding around 1000 people a day.
- A Salvation Army Qld **Flood Relief Coordinator** has been employed.
- A Qld Flood Relief Call Centre has been established (24 hour) – **1300 66 22 17** – working with the existing Salvo Care Line telephone



counselling service.

- **Disaster Relief Assistance Centres** and mobile outreach teams are providing assistance in the Brisbane, Caboolture, Dalby, Greenslopes, Ipswich, Logan, Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba, Cairns, Bowen, Emerald, Rockhampton and Townsville areas. Assistance includes one-off grants for immediate needs (non means tested and given in the form of store gift cards); assessment for further assistance to replace essential goods not covered by insurance; supply of white goods and donated products.
- **Trauma counsellors** employed by The Salvation Army are working closely with The Salvation Army’s Flood Response Centres and teams, one based in south Qld, one in north Qld, and both mobile, to provide outreach into devastated areas.

- **Financial Counselling Services** are being provided in Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Brisbane, Caboolture, Toowoomba and Townsville.
- Two million dollars (from Woolworths funds) is being used for rebuilding **community infrastructure**.
- A **holiday camp** for 65 children and young people affected by the floods will be held during Easter holidays (16-21 April) at The Salvation Army Collaroy Centre, Sydney.

The Salvation Army flood response has been made possible through the generous support of Woolworths and the Australian public to The Salvation Army Flood Appeal, which has raised over \$23 million.

For assistance, phone the Flood Assistance Line on **1300 66 22 17**.

Cyclone Yasi aftermath

Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) teams continue in the recovery effort in the aftermath of tropical Cyclone Yasi, which lashed the coastal region of Queensland in early February 2011.

"The relief effort has moved to clean-

up," reports Salvation Army Major Bruce Harmer, "which we are doing in partnership with Townsville City Council. They give us the addresses of the elderly or people with disabilities who need assistance".

Envoy Simon Steele, The Salvation Army's Flying Padre, is also continuing to contact and support those living on remote rural properties.

In the immediate aftermath of Yasi, SAES teams served meals to emergency

services crews and evacuees at Innisfail. Access was initially cut to the worst-hit communities along the coast, but SAES teams went in as soon as the highway was reopened. Salvation Army teams then fed and supported evacuees and emergency service workers at a range of evacuation centres including those at Tully, Cardwell, Cairns, Townsville, Innisfail and Ingham, and are now working on welfare support into the recovery phase. ○

Christchurch earthquake update

The February 2011 earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, caused widespread damage and total destruction of a wide range of buildings, as well as tragic loss of life. On the day of the earthquake, Salvation Army volunteers served 1,500 meals to those unable to go back to their homes (and still continue to serve many thousands of meals daily). Salvation Army representatives were also on hand to comfort bereaved family members who attended police briefings on those missing and confirmed dead.

As part of its continuing support for earthquake-hit residents in Christchurch, The Salvation Army in New Zealand is currently distributing 4,000 'Care Cards', each loaded with NZ\$500, to affected households. The project was developed in partnership with Westpac Bank, and funded by The Salvation Army's Canterbury Earthquake Appeal.

The Salvation Army's Linwood Centre is providing around 800 food parcels a day and other goods, as well

as food, fuel and clothing vouchers and warehousing has been secured in the Christchurch suburb of Hornby. Specialist managers have been recruited to oversee the movement of bulk goods, heavy transport and accommodation.

Around 122 Salvation Army personnel are also serving on 'Suburban Squad' teams touring the worst-affected eastern suburbs of Christchurch, assessing residents' needs, property and infrastructure. The teams also comprise staff and engineers from EQC (the New Zealand Government's Earthquake Commission) and Christchurch City Council, and look to provide support to those in greatest need. This includes the elderly living in isolation, those with chronic health conditions and others who are particularly stressed or anxious. Such cases were followed up by 'flying squads' of 12 Salvation Army officers, with a large team of volunteers delivering food, water and other goods.

Another 14 psychosocial support workers are based at welfare centres, providing care and support to people evacuated from their homes. ○



For updates about The Salvation Army disaster response efforts in various locations, or to donate to our disaster relief appeals, please visit salvos.org.au/disaster

Japanese crisis response

The Salvation Army in Japan had three emergency service relief teams (at time of going to press in mid March) operating in areas devastated by the earthquake and tsunami that hit the north-east coast of the country in early March 2011.

Arrangements were underway for emergency service personnel from The Salvation Army International Headquarters to travel to Japan to assist with the Army's relief effort in earthquake and tsunami ravaged areas and to support those evacuated from areas of potential danger resulting from damage to nuclear power stations. Salvation Army divisions around the world have pledged prayers, funds and fundraising support.

