

On the Scene

WINTER 2011 NEWS & STORIES FROM THE SALVATION ARMY

SPECIAL REPORT • SPECIAL REPORT

Queensland disaster response

“The Salvation Army has been overwhelmed by the needs we have encountered in Qld communities impacted by flooding and Cyclone Yasi earlier this year,” says Major Paul Moulds, who is heading up The Salvation Army’s flood response effort. “The needs have been massive and we are now increasing our response. We plan to stay working within devastated communities as long as required,” he says.

From the outset of the crisis, **The Salvation Army’s** response has included assisting in the immediate relief effort by supporting and feeding those affected by floods, and then moving into an ongoing recovery phase.

A detailed plan for use of all donated funds is well underway and includes:

- 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.
- **Additional staff** have been employed to personally contact the thousands of people affected by the disasters.
- **Disaster Relief Assistance Centres** and mobile outreach teams are providing assistance in all affected 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.
- **Specialist 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.
- Additional **Financial Counselling Services** are being provided in Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Brisbane, Caboolture, Toowoomba and Townsville.
- The Salvation Army **Outback Flying Chaplains** are reaching



- out to isolated properties providing assistance and emotional support.
- A **holiday camp** for families affected by the floods was held during Easter holidays at The Salvation Army Collaroy Centre, Sydney.
- **Partnerships** have been formed with a number of other groups, with The Salvation Army providing building materials to volunteer tradespeople who are rebuilding and repairing housing.

Additional teams of Salvation Army volunteers are being mobilised from all areas of Qld and NSW to reinforce The Salvation Army’s frontline efforts during May to July. These teams are moving throughout the community, visiting households and providing assistance and, most significantly, checking on people’s emotional wellbeing.

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.

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

A detailed six-month report on The Salvation Army’s flood response efforts will be available in July. *o*

Immediate Support

The Salvation Army fed thousands of flood and cyclone affected people in evacuation centres at Rockhampton, Theodore, Emerald, Bundaberg, Brisbane, Strathpine, Ipswich, Gympie, Toowoomba, Warwick, Maryborough and Grantham, and then via mobile units as people moved back to clean up their homes. (In Brisbane alone, around 30,000 meals were served over a 10 day period.)

Christchurch earthquake update At 15 April 2011

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 then continued 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 distributed 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 provided around 800 food parcels a day and other goods, as well as food, fuel and clothing vouchers and warehousing which was secured in the Christchurch suburb of Hornby.

Around 122 Salvation Army personnel also served on 'Suburban Squad' teams touring the worst-affected eastern suburbs of Christchurch, assessing residents' needs, property and infrastructure. This included the elderly living in isolation, those with chronic health conditions, and others

who were 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 have been based at welfare centres, providing care and support to people evacuated from their homes.

The Salvation Army has now concluded its concentrated visitation program following the Christchurch earthquake and has entered the next phase in its recovery response. This will be focused on helping people become more independent and meeting medium and long-term needs in the city.

For the first time, The Salvation Army has permission to send a team of eight psychosocial workers into the orange zone of the CBD to check on residents allowed to move back into their homes. The orange zone has been off limits since the quake. It will be the first time for many of these residents that they have received comprehensive support.

Demand on Salvation Army Community Ministries is gradually diminishing, with food parcel distribution down to around 200 a day, compared to 800 in the days following the quake.

The Salvation Army is currently having three purpose-built shower units manufactured in China. The showers will be capable of providing up to 400 people with showers each day. With colder weather and continuing



problems with water and wastewater infrastructure in Christchurch, the arrival of the shower units is expected to be warmly welcomed by residents.

A Community Care van donated by Westpac Bank and fitted out as a mobile office is being used in areas where there is no Salvation Army presence. ○

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 operating in areas devastated by the earthquake and tsunami that hit the north-east coast of the country in early March 2011.

Emergency service personnel from The Salvation Army International Headquarters also travelled to Japan to assist with the Army's relief effort in affected areas and to support those

evacuated from areas of potential danger resulting from damage to nuclear power stations.

More than 1,100 meals and other necessities were distributed in Sendai on 23 March.

At Iwaki-city, which is just outside the 30-kilometre exclusion zone from Fukushima, a team of seven Salvation Army workers distributed 500 hot meals and 6,000 bottles of water in response to a request from the director of the emergency response volunteer desk.

Kesen-numa – about 120 kilometres north of Sendai – was badly damaged by the tsunami.

The Salvation Army in Sendai arranged for two Salvation Army emergency teams to carry out daily distributions of food and other necessities from 12 to 15 April. ○

