

For immediate release

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## LATTER-DAY SAINT SHIPMENT ARRIVES IN SAMOA

**APIA** – An aircraft carrying supplies to assist with relief operations in tsunami-ravaged Samoa arrived in Apia yesterday morning at approx. 2.00am (Samoa time). The shipment, organized by *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, will be used to supplement the large-scale relief efforts of government authorities in Samoa, as well as the contributions from the Australian and New Zealand governments.

The Church brought the supplies together from its warehouses in Salt Lake City, Utah. The aircraft, a DC-10, contained 150,000 lbs (75 short tons) of materials. This included food [*cans of tuna, rice, dry milk, beef, pork, corn, peaches and pears*], hygiene kits, clothing and linen, wheelchairs, crutches, collapsible water containers, water bottle filters and mosquito nets. The great majority of the aid will be distributed via Samoan government agencies and the Red Cross. Latter-day Saint assistance is provided to people in need irrespective of their religious affiliation.

Elder Tad R. Callister, the president of the Church's Pacific Area, welcomed the arrival of the shipment and praised those who have played a part in coordinating the Latter-day Saint response.

“Although the Church has a large storage of items which are used for disaster relief around the world, these items in fact come from the financial contributions of individual Church members,” said Elder Callister. “This is a perfect example of the widow's mite being added to the offerings of those who may be more prosperous. Church members from all walks of life find great joy in assisting those who are in dire circumstances whether in their local communities or on the other side of the globe.”

Elder Callister said that the Area Presidency and Church authorities in Samoa had worked closely with the Church's Welfare Department staff in Salt Lake City to prepare the Church's response. “We are very grateful for the speed with which they have brought together the Church's shipment and the work of our colleagues in Samoa who have done so much already to assist those who are suffering. We also thank the Samoan government for allowing us the opportunity of helping. We marvel at the success of their efforts in so short a time and yet know there still is much to be accomplished.”

The delivery of Church humanitarian aid often involves partnerships with other organizations and individuals. In the case of the Samoan response, Islamic Relief funded a significant portion of the cost of the transportation of the goods which the Church is supplying. Another portion of the flight cost was donated by Rex Maughan, a former Latter-day Saint missionary to Samoa who is known to many Samoans because of his establishment of the Robert Louis Stevenson Foundation which works to preserve important historical and natural sites in the country. The final portion of the cost of transportation was funded by the Church.

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“Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones and, as a result, are undergoing severe distress,” said Elder Callister. “Although food and raiment may assist with the obvious outward needs, we understand that much yet needs to be done to calm the inner fear and pain that comes from so great a loss as the death of a family member. At times such as this, we take great comfort in the certainty of Jesus Christ’s resurrection and his promise of life beyond the grave. May each of those who have suffered find that same comfort in God’s promises to us all.”

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