



## CAFC Haiti Earthquake Response

### Status Update #4

January 21, 2010

Leading the Caribbean in Joint Training For Fire, Rescue & EMS



#### CAFC President

CFO Gregory Richards  
St. Croix, US Virgin Islands

*"As word got out about our commitment to Haiti Support I have received so many calls from medical personnel ready and willing to go to Haiti,"*

#### CAFC President Deploys with team to Haiti

On January 22, 2010, leading EMT and Paramedic teams from St. Thomas and St. Croix Rescue, CAFC President CFO Gregory Richards deploys to La Plen, Haiti in response to the devastation caused by the massive 7.2 earthquake which hit the Caribbean nation earlier this month. The team also includes (St. Croix Rescue) Albert Malliard and Jason Henry and (St. Thomas Rescue) Chief Gerry Simon, Victor Adams, and Ronald Shaw.

"These Rescue members are volunteers with full-time employment in private business and government," explained Rescue Public Information Officer Elizabeth Goggins. "Arrangements have been made to grant them administrative leave. This does present a hardship locally," Goggins said, "but there is an overwhelming desire by everyone in the Virgin Islands to help the effort in Haiti."

The team is the first part of a 3 month commitment which will rotate the team with new rescuers, 2 weeks at a time.

The Fire Chief from San Pedro, Dominican Republic and his team will provide logistical support for the US Virgin Islands team, a hallmark of the CAFC Motto "**One Caribbean Fire Service**".

#### Commitments & Deployments

CAFC member nations are in various stages of readiness in the response to support the rescue and recovery effort in Haiti. The following is our collective status as of 20:00 EST.

- **Chief Dupuis (Dominica)** – "Up to this minute, we are still in Standby mode. I am less confident today that Fire Officers will be activated but



who is to say.....I am aware of a few Police Officers who have been activated.

I am having a briefing/review with Officers from my Search and Rescue Unit today. You will be further appraised of any significant development re this matter at the earliest.”

- **Chief Delaveux (The Bahamas)** – The Government of The Bahamas to determine what can be committed to the effort.
- **Commissioner Williams (Jamaica)** – Jamaica has deployed a SAR team to Haiti. Commissioner Williams will provide a detailed update of this the deployment.
- **Chief Richards (US Virgin Islands)** – The USVI is Deploying (on an extended rotating basis) a 7 man team providing EMTs Paramedics to La Plen Haiti January 22, 2010. CAFC President Chief Richards will do the in-country long term needs assessment for rotating the personnel for this deployment and will assess the current status of the Haiti Fire Chief and the Haiti Fire Department.
- **(San Pedro, Dominican Republic)** – The Fire Chief from San Pedro, Dominican Republic and his team will provide logistical support for the US Virgin Islands team.
- **Chief Lewis (British Virgin Islands [Airport])** – The BVI Government has decided to make all contributions through the BVI Red Cross, so we at the BVI Airports Authority will have to channel our efforts through that medium. However, if the request is made to the Government for man power I am sure it will be granted.
- **Chief West (Montserrat)** – Montserrat is currently still responding to the eruption of the Soufriere Hills volcano.

“Just to give an update on Montserrat's contribution as well as the Fire Service. The last figure I heard for fund raising in Montserrat was just over 70,000.00 and appears to be still climbing. One thing that was really remarkable was the fact that we raised \$51,000.00 on the air in 2hrs. The radio station ZJB had four lines opened and Montseratians and residence, young and old as well as the diaspora calling in and pledging money as well as clothing. It was heartwarming and the program we believe was a success. Some persons who did not want to be heard on the air had off-line access and just rolling in the cash. --amazing--

The Fire Service gave \$500.00. We have also planned a carwash to raise money specifically for the Firefighters in Haiti.”

- **Chief Rawlins (St. Kitts & Nevis)** – “I have had one request so far for one of my officers to be part of a special task force. As a result of pending general elections next Monday no one has left the island as yet. We are on a standby mode and will

await further instructions.”

- **Chief Fontinelle (St. Lucia)** – “The CEDEMA regional coordination mechanism is being staged in Jamaica and he apparently has his hands full.”

St. Lucia has a 12 member SAR team on standby awaiting deployment orders. Due to language issues (Creole is predominant in Haiti and also spoken in St. Lucia), the St. Lucia team is critical the CAFC member deployment in-country.

“On the other hand, the Caricom Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU) has requested only one EMS officer from St Lucia for dispatch to Haiti. He did some training with them some time last year along with some other Police officers who were also dispatched.

The group left St Lucia Wednesday morning for Jamaica where they will be briefed before taking up duties in Haiti. Although he is providing Emergency Medical services, he had to be dressed in military fatigues to be uniformed with the group. So apparently, uniformity and identity must be a big consideration.”

The CAFC maintains a close relationship with Dr. Hittmann of the 911 Fund and is sharing coordination information and resources with his group in response to the Earthquake related crisis in Haiti.

### **Dr. Hittmann (911 Fund)**

Medical team deploying January 23, 2010 with equipment and supplies. A 40 foot trailer of supplies is now ready to ship to Haiti from Miami. We are working with Dr. Hittmann to see how we can get this container shipped.

- **14 January**- Began discussions with Steve Vetter at Partners for the Americas about coordinating aid.

- Lt. Nate Lasseur (firefighter and paramedic in the Ft. Lauderdale FD, and head of International Firefighters Assistance that's been providing humanitarian assistance and training in Haiti for several years) and a team of medical and firefighter SAR personnel deployed to Port-au-Price for an indefinite period. (We're in contact.)

- Discussion with the Mt. Sinai Medical Center in NY who issued a burst e-mail throughout their hospital network seeking medical personnel for deployment (see copy below).

### **15 January**

- Began discussions with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and await direction from John Holmes (Under Secretary General in NY) and Adriana Carvallo (OCHA in Geneva) about where, how and what specific assistance we can provide.

- Began discussions with Hassan Christian at Congressman Kendrick Meek's of Florida's office about getting aid into Haiti. (Congressman Meek has been extremely active in this area.)

**16 January**

- Provided logistical support to a group of 100 EMTs who flew from JFK to Port-au-Prince on a private charter for a one-week deployment. (Sharyn Runyon is the team leader.)
- Received a truckload of clothing and school supplies (from a group called the "Friends of Haiti" in Buffalo, NY), as well as turnout gear and firefighting equipment (from several FD's in upstate NY). These materials, delivered to our Bronx NY warehouse, will be merged with medical equipment (crutches, backboards, rescue baskets, Ferno transport chairs, Ferno ambulance stretchers, traction splints, boxes of gauze, neck braces, etc.) and additional firefighting equipment at our Yonkers NY warehouse (turnout gear, helmets, boots, SCBA, etc.), then picked up by Salcedo Cargo Express within the next few days, put in a container and shipped to the Dominican Republic, where it will then be trucked to Monte Cristi (on the border with Haiti), to await instruction as to where and to whom in Haiti it should be delivered. **(Note: If air freight from the NY-area becomes available, we can ship this material by air instead of by sea container.)**

**19 January**

- Support for the LA USAR team who are deploying to Haiti for an indefinite deployment. (Deputy Chief Donald Austin is the team leader.)

**N.B.**

- We have a commitment of packing material and shipping containers for future donations from NY.
- We've been in discussion with companies that provide building materials for future donations.
- We're assembling a team of medical and firefighting personnel who we're planning to deploy within the next three weeks, the date dependent on flight availability.

This is going on above and beyond our ongoing: (a) Training elsewhere in Latin America (Colombia in February, the Dominican Republic in March, Argentina in April, etc.); and (b) donations of apparatus and equipment (e.g., during 2009, we donated two ambulances and a fire truck to the Dominican Republic, an ambulance and eight fire trucks to Argentina, etc.).

Sincerely yours,

*Gregory Richards*

Chief Gregory N. Richards  
President - CAFC