



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

Media Release
3 October 2009

Australian Government Helps Tsunami Victims

The Australian Government is underpinning vital relief efforts to help support those affected by the devastating tsunamis in Samoa and the surrounding region, following news that a second earthquake struck of Tonga yesterday.

Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson MP, says Australia is doing everything it can to support the Samoan government.

"I have been advised by the office of the Hon. Stephen Smith MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, that a chartered aircraft with medical personnel from Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia left for Samoa on Thursday," Ms Grierson said.

The aircraft also included Australian Government personnel from AusAID, Emergency Management Australia, the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

A Defence C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying humanitarian supplies was also sent.

Australia's initial package of support, worth \$2 million, includes disaster relief items such as tents, tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets and water containers.

"I offer my full support and sympathy to the local Pacific Island community, especially those who have had family affected by this catastrophe," Ms Grierson said.

Australians who have concerns for the welfare of family and friends in Samoa should first attempt to contact them directly, or call the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on **(02) 6261 3305** or within Australia on **1300 555 135** (for the cost of a local call).

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