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**** For Immediate Release ****

Donated computers to boost disaster response



Caption: *Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu receives the handover certificate of the 9 desktop computers donated by Live & Learn Fiji and CARE International through funding under the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) from Ms. Doris Susau.*

SUVA- The Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management, through the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) received nine desktop computer sets donated by Live and Learn Fiji and Care Australia this week to boost future disaster response operation in the Northern Division.

Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu officially received the handover certificate of the donated items which have been shipped to the North.

The computers will be used to complement the High Frequency Radios which are currently being installed in several blackspot areas in the Northern Division.

“Such thoughtful actions are commended and the benefits, I must say, that we will not only be a huge boost to the 9HF radio capabilities in the Northern Division but more importantly service delivery component – communication - of the Ministry during disasters,” Hon. Seruiratu said.

The HF radios were gifted to the Ministry through the support of the Japanese Government and is already installed in the 9 District Offices in the North, namely Nabouwalu, Lekutu, Kubulau, Seqaqa, Labasa, Savusavu, Tukavesi, Saqani and Taveuni.

“The greatest advantage of these HF radios is its capability to make communications in long distance stations between the ground level and base Emergency Operation Centers during disasters, and also its reliability to communicate even when the network has been altered or communication towers damaged. Now with the capacity of the 9 new desktop computers, the HF radios can be connected to these computers and they also have the ability to send emails.”

“Such timely support is indeed a boost to our communication systems, before, during and after disasters – and this act of generosity marks a clear direction to fulfilling the 2030 Global Agenda of reaching the furthest behind first and leaving no one behind’.”

In his remarks during the handover ceremony, AHP Fiji Country Committee Coordinator 2021 Mr. Josefa Lalabalavu said its partners appreciated the support and partnership of the Ministry and the NDMO and they looked forward to more opportunities for collaboration.

“This we believe will support preparedness activities within the northern division as well as facilitate response work during times of natural disasters,” Mr Lalabalavu said.

In addition to the computer sets, Live & Learn Fiji will also be supporting the 9 District Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) with prepositioned Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) as we head into the new cyclone season. This is envisaged to support the district EOCs with preparedness planning as the country continues to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The PPEs will include protective gowns, face masks, hand gloves and hand sanitizers.

The donated items are worth \$30,000.



Caption: *Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Inia Seruiratu receives the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from AHP Fiji Country Committee Coordinator 2021 Mr. Josefa Lalabalavu and Live & Learn Fiji Director Ms. Doris Susau.*

The Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management is responsible for implementing development strategies that bring Fijians living in rural and maritime regions the same level of access to essential services and economic opportunities as anywhere else in the country. We coordinate and implement the Fijian Government's rural and maritime development initiatives with a mission to empower Fiji's rural sector. We also spearhead disaster risk reduction initiatives at national and sub-national level including disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. We have offices for each of Fiji's 14 provinces including Rotuma, leading the Fijian Government's rural development and disaster risk management operations.

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