



# CAPABILITY STATEMENT: HELPR-1

HEALTH EMERGENCY LOGISTICS PREPAREDNESS + RESPONSE VESSEL



# THE HELPR PROGRAM

Many Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are at risk and have experienced devastating natural and health disasters in recent years, which have greatly impacted their people and health systems.

To empower national and regional emergency response teams across the Pacific to respond more effectively to local disasters, and to support regular outreach of health and other services to remote communities, Respond Global founded the HELPR Program - Health Emergency Logistics Preparedness and Response.

The program was established in recognition that many Pacific countries have developed response teams, and undoubtedly have the skills, language, and cultural awareness to be best placed as first responders, but often lack the operations and logistics support. The HELPR program aims to build that support platform, to better allow a national and regional response.

Providing both land and sea-based capabilities, HELPR-1 is a unique response vessel and is the first such capability within the HELPR Program. While its design enables emergency response, its true value lies in its day-to-day support of full-time outreach programs, including health, education, climate change, and resource and disaster management preparation.



# HELPR-1

HELPR-1 is an emergency response and logistics support vessel designed to be fully operational for approximately 300 days per year. It is uniquely designed to support health and other response teams for long periods of deployment for outreach missions and emergency response.

Based in Vanuatu, HELPR-1 provides a safe logistics, operations, and accommodation base for use by national response teams, with support from Respond Global, other response agencies, and teams as required. The vessel is capable of transporting and supplying medical and other emergency response equipment, personnel, and training wherever needed in Pacific Island Countries, from PNG to Samoa, and beyond.

The 34-meter vessel has a range of over 2,500km, a cruising speed of 10 knots, is registered in Vanuatu, and meets all applicable Australian standards for design, construction, stability, and safety equipment. HELPR-1 carries up to 32,000 liters of diesel and at least 1,000 liters of unleaded fuel for its three tenders and for power generation onshore. It carries 24,000 liters of fresh water and has the ability to make 5,000 liters of potable water per day for use onboard and transfer ashore when needed.

A shallow draft of 2.4 meters allows access to lagoons and inlets to easily stage responses to remote and hard-to-reach areas. This is further enhanced with three fit-for-purpose tender crafts that can cross shallow reefs, and land, discharge, and load equipment and personnel from beach and rocky access points.





# CAPABILITIES

## INTEGRATED HEALTH DELIVERY

HELPR-1 currently supports Vanuatu's provincial health teams to deliver an integrated health program and other essential services to the outer islands. These additional services focus on education, climate change, resource and disaster management preparation for outlying communities. It does so in a sustainable way, by supporting provincial authorities in delivering their existing programs to difficult-to-reach areas, and a regular service to outlying island communities.



## ADVANCED NAVIGATION & SAFETY SYSTEMS

The vessel is equipped with the latest navigation and safety equipment. It carries marine and land based communications systems including installed HF, VHF and satellite phone and data systems and handheld backups. The vessel maintains a 24/7 operational capability with round the clock marine crew watches and sailing capability in most weather conditions.





# MEDICAL CAPACITY

The medical capacity on board is to the level of Intensive Care, with a fully equipped resuscitation room housing bottled oxygen, an oxygen concentrator, two ventilators, full cardiac monitoring, and the entire range of medical and trauma equipment and drugs required to manage trauma, critical illness and cardiac events.

Several sets of fully equipped trauma response bags are kept on board, as well as everything that is required for a response team to medevac a sick patient off the vessel to shore or to the nearest hospital.



# ONBOARD FACILITIES

## Medication and vaccination storage and preparation room

- Cold chain is maintained using three Australian TGA-approved vaccine fridges with inbuilt temperature recording and alarms.
- All three vaccine fridges are connected to a visual and audible siren system that goes off in the vessel's main corridor to alert health staff 24 hours per day of any cold chain breach.

## Onboard laboratory diagnostic capacity

- Two Cepheid GenXpert machines capable of processing up to 8 concurrent multi-test cartridges for illnesses such as COVID-19, Influenza, HIV, TB, HPV Hepatitis, etc.
- Rapid Detection test kits for COVID-19, Malaria, and Dengue.
- Capacity for further testing machines and capability as required.

## Deployable cold chain capacity

- Three mobile battery-powered vaccine fridges (and backup generators).
- Multiple cold chain temperature data loggers.
- Multiple spare backup long-life cool-boxes, cool packs, and freezer, and ice making facilities onboard for secure end to end vaccine system.

## Storage of mobile communications equipment

- Radios, three satellite phones, and distress beacons for use by deployable health teams are stored and recharged each evening before being distributed each morning.

## Medical team briefing room and office space

- Work area for 6-8 people.
- Space for daily briefings.
- Multiple laptops and printing/scanning facilities.

## Pharmacy and medical stores

- A well-stocked pharmacy, and supplies for mass casualties to support the higher level medical equipment in the main treatment room.
- Three fully equipped vaccination and response packs are stored and replenished each evening as required.
- Outreach teams assemble their health equipment here each day.





# ADDITIONAL RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

## Oxygen concentrator and compressor

Newly fitted, this 800kg piece of equipment is capable of refilling oxygen bottles with medical-grade oxygen to the largest (G-size) cylinders. This represents a unique capability in the Pacific and allows the vessel to refill oxygen bottles for any outlying clinics as well as district and capital city hospitals in case of disruption to this vital medical resource.

## Cyclone response cache

The vessel carries enough chainsaws and response equipment to service three small chainsaw and debris clearance teams and provides a light search and rescue capability. Training has already been conducted in association with our partner Global Support and Development (GSD) in safe chain saw operations for national personnel and vessel crew. This equipment is vital when required to clear access to airfields, roads and other critical infrastructure post-disaster.



### **Maritime search and rescue**

The vessel has been requested on multiple occasions to search for (and successfully rescue) persons lost at sea. We have a close working relationship with Vanuatu Marine Safety Authority (VMSA) and respond to their requests where possible.

### **Response clinics**

HELPR-1 is equipped with three full sets of shade shelters, generators, and the required furniture to create three separate pop-up clinics for vaccination in three separate locations, or to bring all equipment to one location for a very large clinic. This capability will expand significantly in 2023.





# MISSION / DEPLOYMENT CAPABILITIES

Since arriving in Vanuatu in May 2022, HELPR-1's missions have focused on providing logistical and health support to the Vanuatu Ministry of Health in its COVID-19 vaccination rollout. In addition, it has supported the restoration of essential health services, childhood vaccines, and the delivery of supplies to remote and hard-to-reach communities impacted by the pandemic. HELPR-1 has contributed to positively impacting thousands of children and adults throughout the remote island communities of Vanuatu.

This integrated deployment approach will continue throughout 2023 to support programs run by central and provincial agencies and departments. The vessel can be used for remote access by teams from national disaster management and emergency services, health, education, fisheries, and agriculture as well as for research purposes by national and international teams and partners.



# TRAINING

HELPR-1 has the capacity to facilitate onboard training of national teams preparing to respond to natural disasters and emergencies.

The vessel accommodates training spaces in both outdoor and indoor areas, allowing for simulations of medical and other emergency response missions, water safety training, and disaster preparedness.

The vessel has a large number of cabins to accommodate teams onboard while they are undertaking training, making it a cost-effective and unique educational experience.

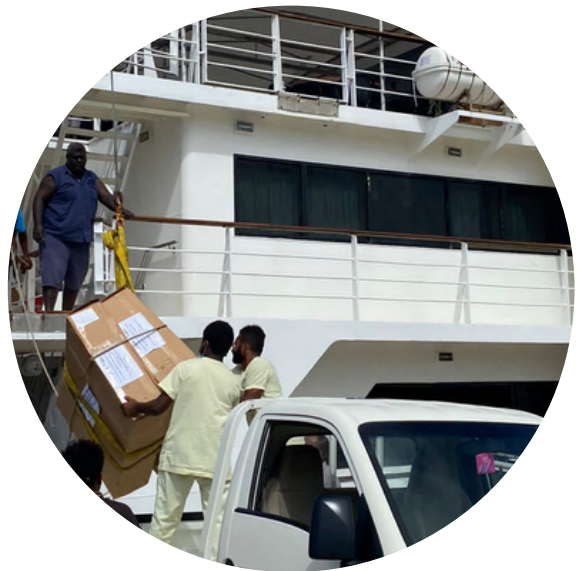
The first such training (cyclone response coordination and chainsaw safety) occurred in late 2022 with 26 participants, eight faculty, and all crew onboard. Training occurred onboard and onshore for one week including a full simulation on the final day.





# LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN SUPPORT

HELPR-1 has been active through much of 2022 in delivering critical supplies to outlying communities and clinics. This included heavy equipment such as solar panel systems and hospital beds, as well as critical medical supplies, vaccines, and large quantities of anti-malaria equipment such as thousands of bed nets.





## CREW AND DEPLOYMENT TEAMS

HELPR-1 carries 44 crew and deployment members comfortably, with capacity for up to 56 during emergency deployments. The 14-person marine crew includes two international and twelve Ni-Van crew members.

The crew includes a Master (Captain) and Chief Engineer, two officers, two additional engineers, a bosun, two deckhands, a cook, a galley assistant, administration officer and two cleaners.

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is comfortable, with 26 cabins available, 4 being doubles and 22 twin-shares. All cabins have ensuite toilets and showers and the vessel is equipped with laundry facilities - all linen and towels are supplied.





# COMMON AREAS

The vessel is equipped with two main lounges and a large open area on the top deck. All areas are well furnished for the rest and recovery of staff and are easily reconfigured to become training and briefing areas.



The galley and main dining area can accommodate rapid service, provides adequate seating for the entire ship's manifest to eat at once, and has a brand-new walk-in fridge, freezer, and pantry. The fridge is stable at 2 degrees C, and the walk-in freezer at -20-25 degrees C. There is a full commercial galley onboard to cater to onboard and shoreside deployment requirements.

The upper deck (Deck 4) has a large open-air seating area that is designed as a secondary briefing or training venue. This area is also used for physical fitness activities and is equipped with an exercise bike, row machine, and a selection of gym equipment for use by those onboard when free time permits.



The forward lounge on Deck 3 has two flat-screen televisions and is a multi-purpose space, used for teaching up to 30 persons, for rest and relaxation, and can be converted to an emergency operations room. It has preferential access to onboard satellite Wi-Fi and will be equipped in 2023 with dedicated base station radio access for communication with land-based teams (to boost the current hand held systems).





# LANDING CRAFT



The Explorer has been upgraded to include two large cargo cages, allowing the safe transport of equipment and supplies weighing over 1500kg, along with a 27-person health team on each trip to a remote beach or island.

HELPR-1 can lower a large “Explorer” tender into the water, allowing health teams to enter directly from the aft deck and be safely lowered into the water without difficult stair or rope access.

The Explorer tender can be used for the evacuation of at least four stretchered patients at a time, or for other personnel and cargo movements.



HELPR-1 also carries one smaller aluminum tender, suitable for beach and rocky surface landings, and one rigid inflatable rescue craft which is lowered into the water via an onboard crane.





# EMERGENCY & DISASTER RESPONSE

HELPR-1 provides a unique capability to the Pacific, offering the specialised ability to rapidly deploy small disaster response teams to impacted islands immediately following a sudden onset event, thereby providing an immediate response to impacted Governments.

Respond Global is a member of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Emergency Medical Team (EMT) Mentorship and Classification Initiative.

HELPR-1 can assist national EMTs and other forms of rapid response teams to reach disaster areas, minimise operational delays, and provide support for rapid impact assessment and a national response. It can also provide additional health and logistics personnel to boost capacity in the most vulnerable communities.

With HELPR-1's unique logistics platform, critical personnel, supplies, and debris clearance teams can rapidly deploy within hours of an event. With the support of the vessel, these teams are fully self-sufficient and carry additional capacities to support local infrastructure such as oxygen, and clinical and pharmaceutical supplies.

The vessel crew and clinical support team would be joined by others involved in the response.

The following can be configured according to the event:

- Vessel, crew, and health team supporting onboard and land-based national response teams as a self-sustained hub, including floating emergency operations center with full satellite, data, and radio communications
- Respond Global (RG) would deploy mission leads and leads for medical, nursing, and logistics support functions to supplement its onboard teams
- RG can deploy a full EMT if required (type 1 fixed or mobile and specialist teams)
- National EMT and other Government responding personnel
- Debris removal, infrastructure repair, and logistics teams (National or International)
- Clinical and public health specialists to address high-risk areas or critical gaps, such as obstetrics, etc
- National recovery teams
- Hosting other international teams responding to the event (e.g. AUSMAT, NZMAT, PACMAT, SOLMAT, FEMAT, TMAT, SPC, USAR, etc).







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