

Fiji completes refurbishment of third Emergency Operations Centre

Written by Zarin Khan

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The newly refurbished Tavua District Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was opened today by the Assistant Minister for Rural and Maritime Development, National Disaster Management, and Meteorological Services, Honourable Joweli Cawaki. This is the third emergency operations center refurbished in Fiji funded by the European Union through the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) Project. This government led activity, supported by the BSRP Project aims to increase disaster preparedness through improving communication during disaster season. The EOC refurbishment cost \$FJD75,917 which also included the equipment installed in the new facility.

Honourable Cawaki said the new office will ensure Government service is not disrupted during an emergency and ensures increased communication within the divisions across the country. “The new office will ensure disaster operations are effectively maintained and services to our people continue during disaster. The new office will further enhance Fiji’s efforts in building resilient people and also strengthens disaster preparedness and management.

“We also acknowledge the assistance from the European Union funded ACP-EU BSRP project,

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which is implemented by the Pacific Community that has supported the upgrading of our Emergency Operations Centres across the country,” he said. Economic Cooperation, Agriculture Team Leader Emmanuelle Guiheneuf said “the important role of communications before, during, and after disaster is critical to ensuring we reduce the loss of life and impact disaster causes on the people of the Pacific and this work is testament to strengthening resilience in the face of great challenges. This work is commendable and a very well followed lesson from the most recent disaster in Fiji.”

The Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project Manager Mr Taito Nakalevu said “the need for increased communication was identified by Fiji as a priority after the devastation of Cyclone Winston through detailed consultations and country-wide lessons learned research. This work now ensures divisions are able to both engage locally and communicate with the National Disaster Management Team to increase coordination in times of crisis and provide robust data and information in times of crisis”.

This is the third upgrade and retrofitting of district based emergency operations centre under the BSRP project with Nadi and Lautoka’s opening in November 2016. The Central and Northern division will be the final upgraded in the coming 12 months ensuring the country has a robust network during times of crisis.

Background:

BSRP is a €19.37million ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project (BSRP) funded by the EU and implemented by SPC. The objective of the project is to reduce the vulnerability, as well as the social, economic and environmental costs of disasters caused by natural hazards, thereby achieving regional and national sustainable development and poverty alleviation in ACP Pacific Island States.

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