

## YachtAid Global Announces Industry Wide Fundraising Campaign to Assist in Continuation of Disaster Relief Efforts/Aid to Devastated Islands of Vanuatu after Cyclone Pam

Superyacht Owners and Crew Collaborated in Unprecedented Manner to Deliver Critical Life Saving Emergency Aid & Water to Islands of Vanuatu via Yacht-Helicopter Air Drops

**28 April 2015, San Diego, California USA:** YachtAid Global, the yacht industry non-profit based in San Diego, CA who coordinates developmental/disaster relief aid and deliveries via private yachts to communities in need around the world, is calling on the yachting industry to support its ongoing fundraising efforts for critically needed aid in the island nation of Vanuatu after Cyclone Pam, Micronesia after Cyclone Maysak and other ongoing and future projects.

YachtAid Global (YAG) is launching its “#TAGYAG” fundraising campaign which will emphasize the continued need in Vanuatu, and globally, for YAG programs that procure purchased and donated aid items and coordinate delivery of same via private vessels to address disaster relief and other needs in remote communities globally.

**CALL TO ACTION:** To help address this humanitarian crisis in a known yachting paradise, YAG is seeking minimum donations of \$50 - \$100 per person/crew member and/or \$1000 per corporation from yachting/marine related industries whereby all make a difference, coming together as a community and beyond.



Once a donation is made, please #TAGYAG on your Social Media outlets and urge others to as well to “Pay it Forward.”

<http://yachtaidglobal.org/wp/donate-now/>

After a historical two week disaster relief mobilization effort in Vanuatu by two yachts (officially acknowledged by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) water, food and medical supplies were airlifted to the most devastated islands in the remote islands and saved lives.

YachtAid Global is emphasizing the time-sensitive nature of this crisis: resources are needed immediately to address both aid/sustenance as well as longer term developmental programs. Additionally, on March 30<sup>th</sup> another Category 5 storm Typhoon Maysak hit Micronesia with 250kph winds, displacing several thousand more victims after similar total devastation to entire islands.

Vanuatu, a nation made up of more than 80 islands spread over 800 miles in the South Pacific Ocean, was devastated on March 13<sup>th</sup> by the worst cyclone ever to hit this region with sustained winds in excess of 160 mph. Many islands in the archipelago took a direct hit and all structures, trees, roads, boats, schools, crops, water and food supplies were completely destroyed. While casualties were minimal, many in Vanuatu including children and infants have been left with no shelter, no natural shade, clean water, food and medical care.

“The people of Vanuatu—already one of the most undeveloped countries in the world prior to the Cyclone—desperately need our help. Although we have had two yachts that responded immediately to the crisis and have helped save lives and stabilize this humanitarian crisis, there are scores of islands that are in need of basic necessities like water, food, clothing, fuel, building materials, school supplies, medication and medical supplies, etc. We are counting on the yachting community to spread the word,” says YachtAid Global founder Mark Drewelow.

Privately owned and managed yachts possess several vital characteristics—common to that of a floating city—thereby making them invaluable for disaster relief operations in which lives are saved as a result of their deployment. Given the many logistical and other challenges of disaster relief operations, including a lack of communications, superyachts are self-contained, mobile disaster relief staging platforms in addition to being aid transport vehicles that efficiently address the following critical disaster relief priorities:

- 1) **Drinking water.** Clean, safe drinking is absolutely most critical item to saving lives. Both of the yachts operating in Vanuatu made fresh water onboard and transported that water ashore using multiple methods such as airlifting containers via helicopters, running all-purpose tender boats ashore with small containers including large-scale pumping operations with fire hoses from tenders into above-ground storage tanks on shore.
- 2) **Communications.** Yachts are broadband state-of-the-art global communications centers. They can get actionable info out to disaster management teams and organizers, which worked in Vanuatu in the aftermath of Cyclone Pam.
- 3) **Medical.** Yachts have crew aboard with medical training – some with EMT and search & rescue/military, and medical credentials / experience that can be housed on yacht and complement existing crew.
- 4) **Power.** Yachts are a reliable source of power, both low voltage and high voltage which can provide critical capabilities when in operating in a disaster zone, and;
- 5) **Mobile Air Lift Platform.** Yachts with helipads and helipad trained crews provide critical reconnaissance/assessments, staging and rapid air lift aid delivery via helicopters to remote villages.



YachtAid Global recently collaborated with two privately owned yachts which mobilized to Vanuatu for several days in the wake of Cyclone Pam’s devastating blow on March 13, 2015. These yachts, including the 151’ Damen Sea Axe motor yacht UMBRA, delivered via helicopters from their helipads approximately 140,000 liters of water and several tons of aid over a ten day period, requisitioned emergency medivac and administered critical medical care, cleared roads,

helped re-build schools and homes, and completed needs assessments in collaboration with local partners and the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO, the equivalent of FEMA here in the USA).

Almost 10 years of experience came into play in preparing and evolving YachtAid Global in bringing together a carefully crafted tried and tested network for the Vanuatu Cyclone Pam relief mobilization. YAG's call to action to the yachting community a week before the storm was responded to in a major way including yacht owners, crew, agents and vendors as well as many in the yachting community globally donating to support this ambitious task of reaching hundreds of villagers on scores of islands covering hundreds of miles. YachtAid Global would like to acknowledge the support of its network of trusted local partners including the work of Kaleva Yachting Services, Promedical, LIFT and the Butterfly Trust in the case of Vanuatu and their importance to the success of this most recent mobilization.

Special attention and praise should be given to the crews and agency representatives on the yachts and on the front lines of this incredible effort: they are the heroes, laying everything on the line, often operating in dangerous, very challenging conditions but putting all of the risk and extra-long days aside in order to help those in critical and in some cases life-threatening need of aid. It should be noted that superyacht crews are generally multi-talented and team-oriented, many of them able to perform in multiple roles, functions and skills and in most cases in this type of operation all having to step up and execute whatever was needed whether it be navigating a 200+ ft yacht over 1,200 miles in 3 days in a race against time or clearing trees with chain saws and volunteer island crews, with little to no margin for error in highly time-sensitive operations. "The yacht captains and crews put it all on the line to go into a disaster zone and the unknown to help people. Thank you to those Captains and crews," adds Mark Drewelow. "The crew and their owners that support each aid collaboration are the real unsung heroes in this remarkable network."

**As a result of this complicated but successful helicopter aid/air drop operation executed by YAG and its support network, the disaster relief community - including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs—have all formally acknowledged the role of private yachts in international disaster relief programs and their value in stabilizing humanitarian crises in the aftermath of major incidents such as Cyclone Pam.**

YAG has been gathering support and momentum from the industry with monetary and in-kind donations from marine technology leader MTN Communications (increased Internet bandwidth for two yachts delivering aid) and monetary donations from companies like Rivergate Marina & Shipyard based in Australia—part of the funding for transport of 23,000 liters of water from vessel UMBRA to those in need in Vanuatu.





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Media Contact

Dhardra Blake

+1.813.484.5663

[dhardra@yachtaidglobal.org](mailto:dhardra@yachtaidglobal.org)

### **About YachtAid Global**

YachtAid Global—the nonprofit division of C2C, Inc.—coordinates the delivery of supplies/relief aid to those in need/located in remote areas around the world via yachts. YAG is a charitable project of United Charitable Programs Inc. — a registered 501(c)(3) public charity. Donations to YachtAid Global are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the fullest extent allowed by law. Please see the UCP website, [www.UnitedCharitablePrograms.org](http://www.UnitedCharitablePrograms.org), to view all charitable, financial, solicitation, and registration documents. For more information about YachtAid Global, how to get involved with this international humanitarian charity contact Captain Mark Drewelow at (619)630-4626, [info@yachtaidglobal.org](mailto:info@yachtaidglobal.org) or visit [www.yachtaidglobal.org](http://www.yachtaidglobal.org)