



MEDIA RELEASE

Territory Water Expert Returns To Aceh

An Alice Springs water expert is packing his bags today ahead of his third flight this year to the Indonesian province of Aceh.

Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts regional manager of natural systems, Graham Ride, flies to Banda Aceh tomorrow where he has already twice helped World Vision improve water supplies to areas affected by last year's Boxing Day tsunami.

Mr Ride's expertise on his two previous visits prompted World Vision to again ask that he return for another month to help identify and develop sustainable water resources.

"The previous two visits have involved working in fairly torrid conditions but it is the contribution you make at the end of the day that counts," Mr Ride said.

"Banda Aceh's population is roughly the same as Adelaide and half of the city was wiped out by the tsunami, as well as nearby towns and villages, so there is still a lot of work to do".

"My area of expertise is in ground and surface water so assessing Banda Aceh's shallow tsunami polluted aquifer is one of my main tasks."

Mr Ride, 62, moved from Melbourne to Alice Springs more than 40 years ago before becoming the Territory's first cadet engineer.

His background includes nine years at the Conservation Commission as its chief planner and working on the Yulara Resort development as its project manager.

NRETA has many staff with expertise in drilling and assessment of groundwater. They have been assisting Mr Ride with specialist advice on suitable drilling and assessment methods.

Mr Ride said the Acehnese people were very friendly and has so far had the pleasure of attending three traditional weddings earlier this year.

"The Australian defence force who worked here soon after the tsunami struck have left a very strong impression on the Acehnese as Aussies are well liked over there," Mr Ride said.

"The Acehnese are really friendly with a great sense of humour and it helps keep you going as the conditions can get quite trying at times.

"The sun reflects off the foundations so it is extremely hot and there are few trees around but once they grow again it will be a lot like it is up in Darwin."

Media note – For more information contact Graham Ride on 8951 9203

Ends

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