



MEDIA RELEASE

Alice Springs Water Expert Returns From Aceh

An Alice Springs water expert has returned home after his third four week stint this year at the Indonesian province of Aceh, which was devastated by the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts regional manager of natural systems, Graham Ride, was seconded by aid organisation World Vision to help identify and develop sustainable water resources during his four weeks in Aceh which began mid-October.

Mr Ride returned home on November 12 after completing a report for World Vision on the alternative approaches to providing the water supply, treatment and disposal of waste water to the houses being built in the tsunami impact zones.

He is now using his spare time in Alice Springs to complete design and construction manuals, land and water resource assessments and on a database that is being used by a range of government and non-government organisations.

“I would like to think I have made a positive contribution to the rebuilding of Aceh but in the end that all depends on whether they choose to adopt the recommendations I have and will make,” Mr Ride said.

“Returning to Aceh for a third time was a really positive experience, despite the hard work, to see the amount of rebuilding that is continuing by World Vision and other aid organisations.

“The size of the task is immense as there are still some 400,000 refugees who need to be fed, clothed and provided with temporary shelter and basics but this program has been well organised and executed.

“There are many houses being built with many more to be built as well as schools and other vital infrastructure such as roads but everything is heading in the right direction which is a huge positive.”

Mr Ride said drinking water was still being trucked into affected areas so it was his focus to help eliminate or reduce the amount of contamination of the ground water that is used for bathing, washing and cooking.

“I have so far been able to complete guidelines on the design, construction and siting of wells, septic tanks and effluent disposal systems on the small urban house blocks,” Mr Ride said.

“The aim is to adapt the traditional local designs so they operate more effectively and the health risks from contamination can be eliminated or reduced and the trick is to build systems which can be maintained by householders.

“At this stage I am not sure if or when I will return to Aceh but I would like to thank World Vision and the Northern Territory Government for providing me with such great support and backing on this.”

Media Note _ For more information contact Graham Ride on 8951 9203

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