

U.S. Coast Guard dispatches assistance to Vanuatu in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Lola



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HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard was on scene to provide timely assistance and support to the island nation of Vanuatu following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Lola, Oct. 26, 2023.

Tropical Cyclone Lola moved through the South Pacific island chain earlier this week inflicting significant damage. The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department, Port Vila,

issued the final warning, indicating that the storm was no longer a threat to the island nation prompting assessment and the disaster relief process.

The Coast Guard received the request in the afternoon of Oct. 25 from the U.S. Embassy Port Moresby to support the Government of Vanuatu with post-storm overflight and assessment of ports and critical infrastructure following Tropical Cyclone Lola.

“The Coast Guard’s C-130 mission is a testament to our commitment to provide critical support and capabilities to Vanuatu during these challenging times,” said Cmdr Andrew Williams, the enforcement branch chief for District 14. “Our C-130, deployed in support of the Forum Fisheries Agency – Operation Kuru Kuru, has been diverted to perform post-storm assessments of the affected areas, contributing to response and recovery efforts.”

Vanuatu is a South Pacific island nation, roughly made up of 80 islands with a population of approximately 335,000 individuals. It is located about 1,090 miles east of Australia. Vanuatu has two shipping ports, the Port of Vila and the Port of Luganville in Santo, that ensure supplies are delivered to the island and its inhabitants.

The Coast Guard leverages unique capabilities and expertise as a first responder to all threats and hazards in the maritime environment and lifesaving service. Coast Guard aircraft capabilities serve multiple functions including damage assessment of the affected area, search and rescue, real-time situational awareness for senior leaders, logistical support for safe transportation and supply delivery, environmental hazard monitoring, and public safety communication.

The Coast Guard remains dedicated to assisting the international community in times of need. This mission exemplifies the organization’s commitment to ensuring the

safety and well-being of those affected by natural disasters,
even in distant corners of the world.