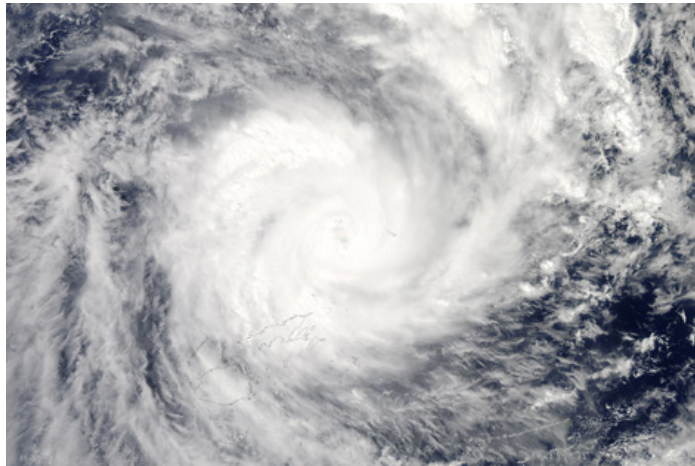


Wednesday 19 December 2012

ShelterBox responds to Cyclone Evan in Fiji



Photograph by NASA –

NASA's Earth Observatory

A ShelterBox Response Team (SRT) has arrived in Fiji to assess the need for emergency shelter following Cyclone Evan, the biggest cyclone to strike the Pacific nation in two decades that has left western parts of the main island Viti Levu the hardest hit.

To enable a rapid response to the disaster, the SRT members, Owen Smith and Ross McKenzie, are from New Zealand and were on standby to be flown out on the next available flight as soon as the storm passed over Fiji.

The category four storm with winds of over 200 kilometers per hour and heavy rains destroyed homes, caused flash floods and cut power. The Fiji times reported Lautoka, the nation's second largest city, looking like a 'war zone'.

Due to advanced government warnings, more than 8,000 people found safety during the cyclone by taking shelter across 137 evacuation centers, according to the Ministry of Information.

ShelterBoxes prepositioned

There are ShelterBoxes prepositioned in Fiji with Rotarians that the disaster relief charity worked with on its previous response last April to heavy flooding in the same area. ShelterBox will therefore be able to quickly bring shelter and dignity to displaced families in need.

"We are very concerned by media reports of the destruction in Fiji caused by Cyclone Evan," said Smith before the SRT flew out. "We are well prepared to respond and will be doing everything we can to deploy ShelterBoxes quickly and effectively."