

ATHENS: EARTHQUAKE

14 September 1999

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situation report no. 2

period covered: 10-13 September 1999

Rescue and relief activity has continued unabated over the weekend. Meanwhile, the Hellenic Red Cross, which is coordinating the relief effort, is stepping up its programme to include shelter, medical, psychological support and food components.

The disaster

A strong earthquake struck the Greek capital Athens at 14.56 hours local time on Tuesday, 7 September, measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale, lasting ten seconds and bringing death, injury and destruction in its wake. The tremor was felt as far away as Corinth, 100 km south of the city. An unknown number of people are still trapped in collapsed buildings, while aftershocks were still being felt over the weekend. As the official inspection of buildings continues, the number of municipalities now known to have suffered extensive damage is growing and includes: Menidi, Ano Liosia, Thracomacedones, Philadelphia, Zefiri, Metamorphosi, Petroupoli, N.Ionia, Moschato, Fili, Kamatero, Ilion, Elefsina, N.Halkidona, Peristeri, Ag Anargiri, Haidari and Galatsi.

According to the latest figures, 115 people are dead, 85 individuals have been rescued, and another 21 are listed as missing. These figures, however, as well as the estimates of those made homeless, remain tentative. Difficulties with the telecommunications and electricity systems noted in earlier reports have now been overcome.

The Greek Government is coordinating all the activities through the Prefecture of Attica, the authorities in the affected municipalities, and the Hellenic Red Cross.

Latest events

Over the weekend, rescue and relief activities continued unabated, including search and rescue, shelter provision and distributions of hot meals, bottled water and bed-sheets. The figure for people who will be left homeless is still not clear, since the official inspection of the houses has yet to be finalised. Meanwhile, large numbers of people continue to sleep in the open.

The first phase of housing inspections will be completed shortly, to be followed by more detailed surveys.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Hellenic Red Cross staff and volunteers, drawn from all sectors of the community, have been in the forefront of the emergency response effort from the start. To date the Society, which is coordinating all relief activities, has distributed: 3,070 tents, 2,900 mattresses and 500 blankets; in addition 53,720 people are receiving three meals per day. The programme, including medical and psychological support, is being implemented through 13 permanent Red Cross teams covering 18 municipalities.

Relief Assistance w

Over the weekend, the following Red Cross Red Crescent relief items arrived in Athens:

- { 10,000 mattresses and 10,000 blankets from Skopje (Balkan stock);
- { 3,000 tents and 30 rolls of plastic sheeting from Iranian Red Crescent stocks;
- { 28 tents, three tent-heaters and 67 hospital beds from the Finnish Red Cross;
- { 690 tents from the German Red Cross.

Outstanding needs

Relief items urgently needed, which are shown in Annex 2, include: tents (2,972), blankets (9,400), mattresses (12,388), field beds (21,933), hygiene parcels (10,000) and baby parcels (2,000); funds are also requested for the purchase of food locally. The Hellenic Red Cross has requested the Federation to assist in coordinating all offers of international assistance. Shipping instructions are reflected in Annex 3.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

***For further information please contact the following at the International Federation, Geneva:
Penny Elghady; tel +41 22 730 4319; mobile +41 79 205 1959; email: elghady@ifrc.org***

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Renny Nancholas
Director
Europe Department