

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Australian Government, PDRF distribute emergency communications equipment to select LGUs**

**AUGUST 15, 2024, METRO MANILA**—The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), with the support of the Australian Government, recently turned over emergency communications equipment to select cities and barangays in Catanduanes, Agusan del Norte, and Eastern Samar to support their communications during disasters.



*Butuan Mayor Ronnie Vicente Lagnada and officials of the Provincial Government of Butuan with Australian Ambassador Hae Kyong Yu, PDRF President Butch Meily, and representatives from Australian Government, PDRF, and Project REACHED partners during the equipment turnover in Butuan, Agusan del Norte*

The Resilient Emergency Communications for Enhanced Disaster Response (REACHED) Project distributed a total of 206 essential communications equipment such as Starlink, radio systems, portable generator sets, power stations, access points, satellite phones and drones to 15 disaster risk reduction and management offices and select barangays in Virac, Catanduanes, Butuan, Agusan del Norte, and Borongan, Samar. The project will also be providing these offices with Smart Communications Inc.'s Ligtas Kits to enhance disaster response capabilities.

Australian Ambassador Hae Kyong Yu attended the ceremonial turnover with representatives from the Australian Government, Office of Civil Defense, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Globe Telecoms, PLDT-Smart, and the World Food Programme.

"I am so delighted that the Australian Government could be a part of this really wonderful partnership. To help you in some way to deal with disasters that may come your way. In a way that is humane, kind, and caring. In a way where we can try and protect as many human beings as possible during crisis," said Ambassador Yu.

Mayors of the recipient cities also expressed their gratitude to the Australian Government and PDRF and share the project's impact to their cities and constituents.

"Project REACHED has a long-term effect and is a game-changer for local government units. Its system is doable and could be replicated in other towns. I believe that other LGUs will follow through in adopting this kind of technology," said Borongan City Mayor Jose Ivan Agda.

"At PDRF, we believe that the private sector has a role to play before, during, and after a crisis. It is our hope that Project REACHED and the provision of the communication equipment between these cities will lead to a safer life for the people who live there and their children," said PDRF President Butch Meily.

Project REACHED is a two-year project that offers a solution to the recurring problem of establishing communications during and after a major disaster. The project aims to provide the necessary primary and secondary communications equipment to target barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces, including the skills to use these to support coordination and response operations.

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#### **About PHILIPPINE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOUNDATION**

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster resilience. As an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster risk management capabilities of the private sector in the country, PDRF aims to contribute to the sustainable development and the general welfare of the Filipino people. For more information, visit [www.pdrf.org](http://www.pdrf.org).

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